

Media Transformation and Film Literature Adaptation

Taking the Novel and Movie "Lust, Caution" as an Example*

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Abstract—The change of literary media will lead to the change of literary content. The change of the same text from the text media to the image media, in addition to the individual differences of the creators, it may also reveal the influence of media changes. This paper attempts to explore the relationship between media change and literary creation with "Lust, Caution" as a case, and tries to explore the media perspective research approach of literary adaptation as a literary style.

Keywords—text media; image media; "Lust, Caution"

I. INTRODUCTION

So far, literary media has evolved from oral media and text media to image media. Throughout the history of literary theory, the relationship between the carrier medium and the expression of artistic content is a heritage with profound research context. For example, Aristotle's "Imitation" divides the types of art through the media; Lessing's "Laocoon" analyzes the difference between the sculpture art and the literary art on the same subject; Qian Zhongshu's "Chinese poetry and Chinese Painting" talks about the differences between painting and literary expression elements.

Here, we do not continue to explore how art changes in the context of media transformation. Instead, we use such a way of thinking to discern the art form of literary film adaptation, and try to construct effective research methods from the media perspective. In this paper, we take "Lust, Caution" as an example to explore the changes that occur in different creators and different medias through the same subject text.

II. THE IMAGE MEDIA TRANSFORMATION OF "LUST, CAUTION"

The film "Lust, Caution" released in 2007 was directed by director Li An, it is adapted from Zhang Ailing's novel "Lust, Caution". From the novel text itself, "Lust, Caution" has a strong drama: its compact structure, a short day of real time interspersed with years of recollection time; its special perspective, away from Zhang Ailing's usual stories about old and young remains of the old society; its legendary

theme, combines beauty politics, assassination and singularity.

But these dramas are only displayed in words, the blanks from text media to image media can be obscured or filled by their own experience as readers of text media, but as readers of image media, their appeal is to see the director filling up these blanks. Director Li An enriched this ten thousand words novel into a film that lasted for more than two hours. The filling and deletion of this novel, in addition to the director's personal interest, also presented the appeal of media transformation.

A. Visualization of Abstract Time Lapse

Zhang Ailing's creations are inseparable from the film. Her first English works in the literary world are drama reviews and film reviews. What's more, her novels often have the magic touch just like a movie scene. These words themselves are rich in image and lens, and can be a good material of image media. But when the novelist is not interested in processing the "time lapse" into a picture, what should the image medium do? The film "Lust, Caution" has such processing.

The film "Color, Caution" adapted by Li An is consistent with the novel in the plot construction. Both started from a haze afternoon, and the fierce glare illumined the mahjong table, the contents of the women's frequent chats on the cards led to the main characters: Wang Jiazhi, Mr. Yi, Mrs. Yi. Then, through Wang Jiazhi's phone call to Kuang Yumin's group in the coffee shop, the hidden plan of assassination of Mr. Yi has been presented, and then traced the ins and outs of the assassination plan through Wang Jiazhi's memories. Like the novel, the real time after the recall is the climax of the plot, the final implementation of the assassination plan. In dealing with the handover of real time and recollection time, Li An adopted a multi-narrative approach: before the beginning of the recollection, the camera was pushed from Wang Jiazhi who made the phone call to Kuang Yumin who answered the phone. After the phone call, the camera turned back to Wang Jiazhi until she sat back on her position. In order to cover up her nervousness, she took out the perfume from the bag and applied it on herself and then looked out the window and returned back to her recollection. At the end of the recollection, the first thing that appears in the camera is Kuang Yumin who picks up the phone, then the camera is pushed from Kuang Yumin to Wang Jiazhi, who hangs up

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the phone and returns to the original position like last time, then she takes out the perfume and applies it on herself and then looks out of the window. The difference is that this time she see Mr. Yi's car. The cut-in of different sides at the same time point, the things happened in recollection is naturally distinguished from the real time. This kind of processing makes the transformation of recollection and reality in the novel text present on the screen vividly.

Li An's detail process is put forward from recollection and reality in the novel separately, is to illustrate the difficulty between the text of the novel and the imaging of the film. In addition to the grasp and display of time, the unique blanks or omissions of the artistic form of novel are not aesthetically pleasing when transformed into film art. In order to ensure the integrity of the film itself, Li An, as the director, must fill in these blanks and omissions autonomously.

B. The Highlight of the Specific Background of the Novel

Director Li An needs to use the image media to comprehensively express the unique atmosphere conveyed by the novel, and he needs to let the readers of the image media get a smooth viewing experience. As a text media reader, because of the linear nature of paper text, readers of text media are more likely to feel the finer artistic feelings of the details, atmosphere, etc. that the author wants to convey, but when such an easy-to-concentrate text media reader is watching the image medium, his visual range expands and he may notice all the details presented on the big screen, so he may ignore those more suggestive or artistic details. Therefore, in the process of film adaptation of the novel, the director will enhance the details of the iconic and symbolic nature.

Zhang Ailing once ridiculed "Lust, Caution": "(Wang Jiazhi and others) and a few like-minded classmates, they started to work as a special agent, which is just for fun. But later they got too serious and tried to become professionals and finally it cost all their money." [1] A few ridiculous words tell the story of the "Lust Caution": a group of ardent youths, a beautiful woman, a rat traitor, a failed assassination. This was a high-profile patriotic theme, but Zhang Ailing defines it as a deliberate play. The film "Lust, Caution" used a sentence to render the grass-roots team composed of students: When a group of students stood on the rocks washed by the sea in twos and threes, a boy said in a careless and anxious tone: "School is about the start without killing anymore".

Although the novel begins with the student's grass-roots team, it does not mean to describe the story of how the student became a revolutionary cause and the main force. It is like Zhang Ailing's consistent theme: this is a story about a woman who interprets life as a play. Therefore, the identity of student in the reading process of the text media is not important, and the identity of student does not hinder or promote the story. But as a image media, film has to reconstruct the image world around every sporadic definition of the characters. So the bookish students in image media have more symbolic details.

C. Rationalization Filling of the Character Logic

A text media reader will automatically fill the blanks in the narrative during reading. These blanks will be imagined or ignored according to experience, but when such an active text media reader is watching passive visualized image media, his imagination space is tight, the initiative is reduced, and he needs a more complete visual connection. This process magnifies the logical blanks in the novel, so in the process of film adaptation, the director's filling leads to the difference between film and novel.

In the film world constructed by image media of "Lust Caution", the biggest change is Wang Jiazhi. In the novel, Wang Jiazhi has always regarded the assassination as another performance on a different stage. She performed the assassination mission with the mentality of acting. The film has created another Wang Jiazhi and Kuang Yumin while filling the blanks of the novel. Wang Jiazhi in the novel has no history, only a few descriptions of emotional experiences. In the film, in order to filling the blanks why Wang Jiazhi can use her body at will, in the movie, she not only has a family, but also a broken family: her mother died young, her father immigrated to Britain with her brother, and the reunion is nowhere in sight. These images presented through letters, photos and dialogues have pushed Wang Jiazhi to willingly become the core of the assassination plan. These pictures not only answer Wang Jiazhi's background of using her body at will, but also hint the reason why she participate in this naive and immature beauty plan: She not only love Kuang Yumin secretly, but also trying to find a home for herself. Therefore, the film rendered one sentence emotion in the novel: "For a while she thought she might like Kuang Yumin, and later hated him and hated him like those others" into the admiration between Wang Jiazhi and Kuang Yumin, the gaze behind the stage, the embarrassment on the bus, and the invitation to meet at the rally three years later and a question "You can do it three years ago, why not?"

The largest adaptation of the film is the drama of Wang Jiazhi and Mr. Yi. Regarding the relationship between Wang Jiazhi and Mr. Yi, there is only one sentence in the novel". The fact is that every time together with Lao Yi, it's like to take a hot bath and all the accumulated stagnation has been washed away, because everything has a purpose." In the film "Lust, Caution", Mr. Yi and Wang Jiazhi are really in love. Whether it is the emotional drama of "The Wandering Songstress", or use the body as a medium for deepening expression of emotions: three times of love-making scenes, from the lens outside the glass window to directly to indoor lens, to show that the emotion is stronger time by time, in this process the hint is that Wang Jiazhi and Mr. Yi's love increased step by step.

III. ZHANG AILING'S IMAGE MEDIA TRAITS

Zhang Ailing, the novelist, and Li An, the film director, show their different views on human nature in the same story. These differences also seem to point to their respective works.

For example, the novelist Zhang Ailing always see through the warmth of human nature, and the various

heroines in her works interpret life as a stage, self-direct and self-performance from the beginning to the end. Such like director Li An always touches the world with the delicate warmth of oriental culture, whether Jack in the "Brokeback Mountain", or Simon, the loyal and understanding cohabitation lover in "The Wedding Banquet", all show their enthusiasm and temperature. Therefore, Li Ann's Wang Jiazhi was destined to be a woman who has risk her life for love and interpret the stage as life. But is this just an individual difference? As an effective writer of this discussion topic, Zhang Ailing is not only a novel creator, but also has many excellent works in script writing. What characteristics does the film writer Zhang Ailing present?

A. Zhang Ailing's Media Choice

Let's first look at a prose "Go, go upstairs" [2]. In the prose, Zhang Ailing tells that she has compiled a play. She emphasizes that this is a Chinese drama:

I made a play, there was a person who dragged his children to seek refuge with relatives, and they fell out with his relatives, he jumped up angrily: "I can't stand this. Go! Let's go!" His wife said: "Where are we going?" "He brought his wife and children together and said: "Go! Go upstairs! "-- When the meal is ready, one hail, they will come down.

Although Zhang Ailing has always emphasized that this is a drama about the Chinese, what is meaningful is the media choice made by Zhang Ailing. Zhang Ailing's novels must be Chinese novels, but "Go, Go Upstairs" presents humorous, jocular and ridicule which is entirely different from the novels. It is based on its bearing medium is play not a paper novel. In fact, Zhang Ailing's image media awareness is relatively strong. She not only analyzed the failure of "Pink Tears" with Xia Zhiqing is because the novel has been adapted into film: "Leave some of the components of the screenplay without digestion" [3]3, also she tried to rationally sum up the difference between the image medium and the text medium in prose: "In the "Reading the Book", she had mentioned the literary art and the film active and passive, because it was too long so she deleted it" [3] 180, still she had distinctive position facing the adaptation of her own novel into a film: "I have a more practical reason, that is, the "18 Springs" is a dramatic one, in the film, the two sisters could be acted by one person as positive and negative roles" [3] 60.

Therefore, looking at Zhang Ailing's film script creation, although it is also based on the stories of Chinese people she likes, the family ethics she is good at, and the familiar relationship between men and women, the characteristics from the perspective of the input to the expression of the emotions are different from those of the text media. As Zhang Yingjin said: "Zhang's literary world is completely desolated, full of decadence, depression, deformity and death; while the film world is lingering with humor, light, sensual pleasures and dreams come true" [4], in the creation of film scripts, Zhang Ailing described comedies.

B. The Authenticity of the Image Media

The choice of comedy shows Zhang Ailing's image media consciousness, so she chose to turn the unspeakable part of the human nature into film scenes which is accepted by the masses. So, what makes Zhang Ailing to make such choice?

Zhang Ailing wrote such a passage in "Children's Words": "Our experience of life is often the second round. With the help of artificial drama, it is difficult to demarcate between the drama of life and life." [5]. Zhang Ailing seems to have published the same sigh as Wilde: Art imitates life, but in fact, Zhang Ailing explores authenticity, which shows Zhang Ailing's perception that the image medium is closer to reality than the text medium. The image medium tells the story with frames of pictures, and the recipient of the image medium is more subject to physical perception.

Zhang Ailing sharply captured the image age we are in. In the article "Reading the Image", Berg refers to the image pointing to the real, "photo replaces the world and becomes direct evidence" [6]; Sontag further discovered in the history of photography that it is rather to say a photo presents people or things in real life, than people or things in real life are closer to photos. "Reality looks more and more like what the camera presents to us" [7]; just as Baudrillard said in "Le Crime Parfait": Image no longer makes people dream of reality, because it is reality. The image is no longer makes people to fantasy real things, because it is its virtual reality. More importantly, in the process of referring to the fables reality, film and television art has a more intuitive construction effect on the identity of the present world and self-identity. Based on this, Zhang Ailing presented a completely different text media creation and image media creation.

IV. CONCLUSION

From novels to movies, from text media to image media, the rewriting of these in addition to the personal interests of directors and novelists, also include the traits and laws of the two media. The cross-media characteristics of film literature itself make the characteristics of the two media to merge, rewrite, highlight or conceal, thus becoming an effective way to explore the law between the text medium and the image medium.

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