



Analysis of the Characterization of Supporting Role in Creation of the Gods I: Kingdom of Storms

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Abstract: The performances of the supporting characters in *Creation of the Gods I: Kingdom of Storms* (Fengshen) sparked discussion among the audience. The performance of the supporting role in *Creation of the Gods I: Kingdom of Storms* is sometimes reflected in their relationship with the main characters. The director did not fully follow the traditional mythological roles during the filming process, but instead reconstructed contemporary character relationships through the performances of different types of actors.

Keywords: Performer; Supporting role; Contemporary character relationships.

1. Introduction

For example, a highly discussed topic among the audience is the relationship between Yin Shou and Daji, because Daji transformed from a fox demon to a human, and the audience believes that they are the relationship between the owner and the “pet”. The actress Naran, who played Daji, originally didn’t speak Chinese. Her identity sparked controversy after it was announced. Director Wuershan said in the documentary, “Daji’s beauty cannot be seductive or vulgar.” This overturned many of Daji’s film and television images. A more desirable adaptation strategy is not to be absolutely faithful to the textual description of the original work, but to make distinguishable and specific transformations. “[1] The director said that this version of Daji needs a sense of “unfamiliarity”. Naran is very introverted and not familiar with Chinese, which naturally gives her this sense of unfamiliarity. The director recalled that he was quite disappointed when he first met Naran. She was very introverted and didn’t dress up much. As the director was reminiscing, Naran was standing beside her with her head down, her expression indicating that she was indeed very introverted. The director asked her to perform a feeling of a small animal, and she carefully observed and imitated foxes, and diligently imitated them. At the end, her character sacrificed her magical power and lifespan as a fox demon to save her master, which moved many viewers.

2. New partnerships between roles

In the movie, her relationship with Yin Shou is also reconstructed: their relationship is more like a career or life partner, and Yin Shou seems to be more interested in Daji’s advantage in power struggle rather than her body and soul. This kind of character shaping makes Daji’s image more three-dimensional and credible. Daji began to have wrinkles on her forehead while eating Bi Gan’s Heart, with fine and accurate details. The prototype of Daji’s fox this time is an old fox, which is different from the cartoon fox image in popular culture and some animated movies. She crawled in the snow, licking Yin Shou’s wounds, hiding behind strangers with eyes, head and body movements, all resembling wild animals such as foxes. When creating the character Daji, the director deliberately broke free from certain traditional concepts, such as the notion that women have become scapegoats for history in traditional sayings like “beauty brings trouble” and “women harm the country”. This outdated and erroneous notion has long been abandoned by the times.

3. Jichang’s master interpretation

The portrayal of King Wen of Zhou, Jichang in the movie is the most impressive, thanks to the famous actor Li Xuejian. He has played so many classic roles that there is no need to praise his performance level anymore. Actor Pu Cunxi said that he was initially invited to play the role of Zhou Wenwang, but he felt he couldn’t do it, especially considering the scene of eating meat patties in the movie, which he found even more difficult to handle. And Li Xuejian is renowned for being an experiential actor who excels at combining roles into one. Experiential performance can “stimulate actors to vibrate from the depths of their hearts, turning some of their unique emotions and characteristics into characters’ survival abilities in passion, and instantly surpassing them, giving accuracy to the details of the performance on camera and the multidimensionality of the character’s personality, giving the final artistic image presented on the screen a subtle and gradual sense of life.” [2]

Li Xuejian's lines are very attractive, and his control over the rhythm of the lines is very good, which can be said to be extremely difficult to forget after listening to them. There are various dialogue performance clips circulating online, which are popular on short video platforms. This is all thanks to his moving and rhythmic performance, becoming a classic. Among them, he was convicted of wandering the streets, dressed in tattered clothes, and walking while being smashed by people's vegetable leaves, which reminded the audience of the scene of Queen Cersei wandering the streets in the American TV series "Game of Thrones". The dialogue "I incite rebellion" is extremely tense and deeply shocks the audience. In the plot of killing, Ji Chang didn't react as much when he saw other young people killing his own father, which was a special handling of the character's emotions by the actors. Because on that day, Ji Chang had already gone to meet Yin Shou with the determination to die. When there should be a strong reaction, he always handles it in the opposite way, which is also a form of estrangement in art. This not only breaks the audience's expectations, but also lies within the tight logic of the movie plot. Ji Chang embraces Lei Zhenzi's kindness and compassion, as well as his dependence in Lei Zhenzi's arms at the end of the film, and the line "Let's go home" once again highlights the theme of "going home" in the movie. It can be seen that although binary opposition is indispensable in narrative, its connotation constantly changes with the times. Human beings need collective survival. If the judgment of 'good and evil' is based on 'purposefulness', it is usually considered that 'selfishness' is evil and 'selflessness for the public' is good. [3] Therefore, during the promotion of the film, a behind the scenes footage of Ji Chang's filming was exposed on a short video platform: he lay on his side in the rain to drive away wild dogs, hugged the box containing his son, and this performance moved the members of the cast present.

4. Jiang Ziya's innovative interpretation

Huang Bo's Jiang Ziya performed exceptionally well and was the most breakthrough character. In this movie, Jiang Ziya is both a common and worldly failure, as well as a humorous, just, kind, and resourceful hero. It showcases the close interaction between modern film media, traditional literary heritage, and folk culture. "[4] He breaks the inherent image of Jiang Ziya in people's hearts. In past adaptations of film and television works, Jiang Ziya often portrayed a thin white haired Taoist figure. Huang Bo's performances have always been known for their accuracy. Despite complex makeup and styling, he can still achieve accurate emotional expression, and he never forgets to guide young actors' performances on set. Huang Bo is already an extremely intelligent actor who has shown exceptional emotional intelligence and intelligence in other movies and variety shows. He exudes sophistication and smoothness, which is very similar to the portrayal of Jiang Ziya in the movie. He also incorporated his expertise in comedy performances into the plot of the movie, such as failing to bribe an officer, failing to cast spells, bumping his head while trying to escape, being timid yet extremely responsible, and wanting to uphold justice. These movie scenes all have a comedic tension and humorous meaning.

5. Other impressive supporting roles

The characters Yang Jian and Nezha are mocked by the audience as "couriers" because they always help transport characters and key props between Chaoge and Kunlun in the movie. The wind and fire wheels on Nezha's feet, as well as the door panels that Yang Jian stepped on during the fight, resemble ice skates and skateboards. The crew's design is very modern. The character Deng Yuchan became famous on the internet solely through the ending movie Easter egg, which can be considered a miracle. There are only one or two seconds of horseback riding scenes in her movie clips, and they are not included in the main film. Although the actress regrets not participating in the film promotion, she also appeared at a film event, and her era is approaching. Her appearance and horseback riding movements have a classical Chinese feminine beauty. From the behind the scenes footage of the movie, her martial arts and equestrian movements are clean and graceful, with a heroic appearance. The battle scenes between her and Ji Fa in the second movie are highly anticipated.

6. Vitality of young actors

The attractive aspect of this movie is not only the exciting plot, but also the young team in the movie. The audience believes that the aesthetic presented by the director through the physical performance of actors is very healthy, showing a vigorous vitality. Of course, "this visual presentation of primitive male beauty does not lack the meaning of satisfying certain 'male sexual consumption' with body wonders" [5] after all, it is difficult for the audience to see the main characters presenting such strong bodies and muscular lines in other ancient costume films. Director Ulsan filmed the content of three films together, with a long production cycle and huge workload, which involved a completely new production mode. "The trilogy of Fengshen consciously shapes a visual system with oriental temperament, and constructs a set of complete and independent expressions with distinctive characteristics at the level of image aesthetics... thus establishing an aesthetic pattern that belongs to the world of Fengshen alone, and arouses collective memory by means of oriental aesthetics, and participates

in building the cultural subject consciousness of the Chinese nation.”[6] In such a huge film shooting project, the director can accurately grasp the performance of each actor, so that every supporting role all performed brilliantly and stimulated their potential. This is the secret to the success of the movie ‘Fengshen’.

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