

The Utopia Dream in "*The Truman Show*"

Review of "*The Truman Show*"

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Abstract—The German philosopher Nietzsche once said "People either never dream or dream interestingly", life is like a dream, but whether or not this dream is wonderful need us to work on our own. The Truman show was a kind of criticism to real life, the director wanted to use the Utopian happy life in Truman's world to contrast the injustice of modern society. By chance I watched "*The Truman Show*" which directed by Peter Weir and it touched me deeply, Truman's simple and honest character, the harmony and beauty of the small town all so moving. Whether the movie plot, expression and wonderful soundtrack all reflect the director's criticism to real life, the late part of the movie "reality show" director said: "the outside world is the same hypocrisy, same lies and same fraud as the world I give to you", this sentence described the director want to create a harmonious society, this real society is too hypocritical too dirty. Why does our world have so many fraud, lies and theft? Truman's dream world can still become a reality? That is the question I would like to set forth herein.

Keywords—the Truman show; expression; dream; utopia

I. INTRODUCTION

In United States this film kingdom which mainly with commercial films, "*The Truman Show*" was like a unique work, the expression of this film was wandering between art and commercial film, it both had art film's unique narrative method and commercial film's entertainment and leisure characteristics. It used post-modernist narrative technique to show the daily life with alternative form, the director try to cover up human weaknesses and let Truman this charmingly honest but with no pursuit "ordinary person" to live in the virtual "Utopia" society which he created, the director of the film tried to escape from the reality in the plot and confused the truth and fake. In this paper, the author attempts to interpret the three kinds of escapism ways that the director Peter Weir expressed in the film, such as the escapism of the director, negative escapism of audience, subjective search but objective escapism of Truman, to explain the the central idea that the director want to express in author's eyes.

II. STORYLINE AND THE CHARACTERS' FEATURES

A. Storyline and Outline

"*The Truman show*" was a wonderful narrative film directed by Peter Weir and acted by comedian star Jim Carrey, the film used the ironical expressions to demonstrate the inner world of people desire for happiness to the audiences,

criticized the "money talks" values. Director used Utopian story structure, perfectly exhibited the perfect life in the virtual world, from another perspective, *The Truman show* was the complaint to selfish and money talks of today's world. Below is a brief summary of the content of "*The Truman Show*".

1) *Storyline*: The storyline unfolded in a narrative way, it is about an unknown man named Truman, he was living in a small town called Seahaven, he went school, work and get married in that town, his parents loved him and very concerned about him. However, due to an accident at sea, Truman lost his father, which made him very afraid of the sea. The story was actually very plain, but just this common leads people would never imagine, all this is a television reality show which produced by a company called Omnicom, thirty years ago this program was cleverly introduced a reality show which take a person's daily life as its main line, this program was very like the "growing pains" which launched from 1985 in United States, this TV series from the perspective of an ordinary family to tell wonderful stories, it tells the story of the daily life of The Seavers in New York's Long Island, it has been launched for 30 years, tells the joy, anger, sorrow and happiness of The Seavers within 30 years. The reality show-like scene play of the film "*The Truman Show*" has certain similarity with "Growing Pains", that is they all tell a story of family, but the difference is the hero in "*The Truman Show*" did not know that he was filming, in this long series in addition to Truman, other people in the town are all actors, and acted with him for 30 years.

2) *Outline of the story*: Story started from a series of unusual things happened before and after Truman's thirtieth birthday, Truman is a staff of the insurance company in the small town, he has a good job, considerate lover and a nagging mother. Truman had a dream since high school that is going to Fiji, the dream was from a first love story, in high school before Truman met his current wife MERO he liked a girl called Roland, Roland's strange words made Truman very difficult to understand, on the beach her father said they were going to move to Fiji Island, which makes Truman always wanted to go to Fiji Island. Before his 30th birthday Truman found everyone was staring at him, as if his everything was all pre-arranged, and after several complaints to his best friend Malone, he decided to leave this strange town and go to Fiji Island to start his new life. Through his efforts, Truman finally sailed to the edge of the sea, but found at the end of the sea there is wall, this so called Seahaven island small town is actually a huge film studio, and the director was in the studio

which is in the moon above directed this popular reality show every day. When Truman found the door out, the director Christopher tried very hard to persuade Truman not to leave this "real world" which he designed for him, and told him the whole truth, then told Truman that he is the world's most popular star, the outside world is more hypocritical than his world, but Truman did not succumb, still step out of the door resolutely, he left this "artificial paradise" and running away to find his freedom.

B. Features of the Characters in the Story

"The Truman Show" moved me with its humor and surrealistic plot, in the film everyone is acting their "Drama Life", each character is very full, and make the audience feel the vicissitudes of life and also at the same time saw their own reflections from it.

1) *Character of self transcendence – Truman:* First of all I want to describe the first character of Truman from his first line of the day, that is "Good morning, and in case I don't see you, good afternoon, good evening and good night", from this passage we can clearly feel Truman's kind, cheerful and passionate personality. Then the line that could prove his second character is what he said to his friend Malone at beach when he found his world is very strange, "Maybe I have been set up for something, I feel my whole life was build toward something, just between you and me, I am going away for a while." This sentence allows us to understand Truman's curious psychology and courageous character.

Truman's character actually caused by the people and things around him, since Truman is the lead of a reality show, considered audience's experience so the director did not want to make Truman's life troubled and with defects, so all people (actors) around him are struggling to create this Truman's world, which is reason of his cheerful, kind and passionate characters. Truman's character is curious, he wanted to escape from Seahaven, then what caused him try so hard to explore the outside world? May be his father's death, he always thought his father did not die, that the accident was his responsibility, so he wanted to leave Seahaven and looking for his father, or perhaps to look for his first sight lover. Truman is brave because he was able to fight for the truth, he was able to ignore all kinds of interference from mother, wife and friends, all the difficulties the director set up for him, and walked to the end of the world finally out of Seahaven.

How happy the Truman's world is, it seems that all the things are arranged, he would not lost his job, would not lost his wife, he will have a healthy baby, life will continue step by step. Then why does Truman insist to live in the outside world? It is because it is true? Or because it is unknown? Maybe Truman thinks the outside world is the world full of charms.

2) *Audience of satisfied dreams and desires:* In real life, everyone of us all have many dreams, Truman's world is the assemblage of people's all kinds of dreams for life. In the film the audience considered him as a "good friend and helpful friend", they feel happy when Truman is happy, when Truman are anxious, struggling, confused the audience will have the same feeling, the moment when Truman rushed out of his world, they are heated up. All this explains everything of

Truman's world satisfy audience's desires, the audience's desires not only are dreams, moreover it is the peep psychology, which is also an expression of people's desire. People always have peep desire when they feel empty, they wish to enrich their inner souls by understanding others inner world.

III. THE UTOPIA SPIRIT IN THE MAIN CHARACTER'S INNER WORLD OF THE TRUMAN SHOW

In "The Truman Show" I believe that the most important role shaping is not the lead Truman but the talented director Christopher in the film. He can not help but make people think of "God," yes, actually he acted the "God" role in the film, he created a society which is "more real than the real world", a utopia world. The reason why the director built such a world is because he hates reality, hates the shortcomings of human nature in the real world, so he created a "harmonious" Seahaven world, created Truman's "beautiful life" in the Seahaven world. This explains Christopher is an idealist in his heart, he wants to use Seahaven town to realize his ideal. His ideal was expressed through a film dialogue, in the film when "The Truman Show" the world's most popular reality show interviewed by the television, in the part of the communication between the director and the audience, the actor Roland who was a guest in the show called and denounced the director's acts, the director said: "I have given Truman the chance to lead a normal life. The world, the place you live in, is the sick place. Seahaven is a model world".

Truman is the main line of the story, through the development of various plots people will find Truman is a kind, humor and also idealistic character. Truman's inner change in Seahaven town story has three stages, which are optimistic - doubt - adventure. At first, he was very satisfied with everything in life, a comfortable life with a wife love him and smooth work, this stage his inner did not change much. Then, due to the variety of mechanical failures or human accidents, Truman gradually doubted this world, he thought "the whole world seemed to turn around by me", which was the first shake of his heart. The final stage is the key to impel Truman must leave this "world", after talked with Malone he determined to escape from this imprisoned world and began the adventure road, Truman eventually left Seahaven and start a new life. From this perspective, Truman's left proved that only after people break themselves, they could break their inner hearts and the external cage in order to out of the cage bravely. Cozy utopia has his advantages also detained people's freedom to change their fate, so weather the Utopian society is good or bad should be tested in the in the flood of history.

IV. CONCLUSION

Ever since watching the "The Truman Show", it left me a deep impression which is Truman's spirit, the spirit which can not be imprisoned, that is free and that is human nature. In the film the director who plays God wanted to create a free, democracy, no theft, no war harmony society, in other words Truman's world is the director's dream world. There is a contradiction in the film, the director wants the world he created is a "Utopia", but Truman who living in this society

and being deceived wants to rush out of this cage. In short, we can see through the film that the different systems in the world no matter capitalism or socialism or imperialism all has its advantages and disadvantages, we should learn the advantages of other societies, we should not blindly learning or blindly exclusion.

I believe that if there is a sequel, Truman should go to the outside world and find his dream lover, then he will live in the big city, one day he will miss the past, miss his "parents", so he will return to his "homeland" where he was born and raised with her.

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