

Objective "Truth" and Subjective "Reality"

The Evolution of the Picture Modeling Language of Historical Humanities Documentary

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Abstract—With the transition of the creation concept of documentary, the historical humanities documentary has also made great progress in the picture modeling language. It is mainly in the several concepts. For example, the PIP composition (picture in picture) is changed from single to rich. The picture symbols are changed from true to virtual. The image style is changed from realistic to freehand. With the further breakthrough of the concept, it should make more diversified exploration and development of the picture modeling language of historical humanities documentary.

Keywords—creation concept; historical humanity documentary; picture modeling

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the documentary was born, it has been developing in the struggles between objective "truth" and subjective "reality". In the 1960s, the new historicism opened up the field of history research. And people perceived that it couldn't reproduce pure objective history. "What we can do is to continually rebuild history rather than discover history." However, the reconstruction of the past in essence is prepared to explain the past. The ultimate purpose of the interpretation is to serve for the present age. "All the history is contemporary history". [1] The history has the absolute and relative interpretation. After that, objective "truth" and subjective "reality" of the documentary also have a reasonable interpretation. Absolutely, it can't get objective "truth". And the infinite pursuit of documentary on the "truth" is relative, and is an interpretation and reconstruction of the truth. It needs to intervene in imagination and creativity in this construction. Therefore, the historical humanities documentary is survived in the cracks between the shortages of history and the essential truth of documentary. And then, it has ushered in its own spring. In the 21st century, the Chinese historical humanities TV documentary constantly gets rid of the stale and brings forth the fresh in the audio-visual language. In the picture modeling, it keeps the stability and makes some changes. And it strives to build a balance between the subjective and the objective through a wealth of audio-visual modeling when it has the accidents. It can explore the truth of history and the beauty of the humanities. At the same time, it can get

the present value and meaning of survival of the documentary.

II. FROM SINGLE TO RICH: PIP COMPOSITION (PICTURE-IN-PICTURE)

The famous art director of film, Herman Varem has declared: "The film should consist of living pictures." In essence, the picture modeling refers that the audio-visual art traces back to the painting. And it may refer that the painting is the extension in the field of film and television art [2]. With the characters (scene) modeling, scene scheduling, space, light and shadow, color, camera lens, montage and many other elements, it builds a unique aesthetic style of film and television images. And it reflects the unique aesthetic and creative view of the originator. With a full-length shot and actual sound, it created the early history humanity documentary in the influence of the concept of documentary. The image material, dictation, scenery shot and commentary constitute the whole story. The style is natural and simple. The rhythm is peaceful. And it lacks of changes in the pictures. In the 21st century, with the liberation of the concept of documentary creation and the rise of consumer culture, audience attention has become an expensive commodity. The superior documentary has begun to connect elite-style history and culture with audience awareness closely. And it also has made the diversified exploration in the picture modeling. What is more prominent is the diversified use of PIP composition.

In the film composition, it forms the visual effects through the use of tangible or intangible frame. And it is a way of film composition. Firstly, it originates from the painting. And then, it is often used in photography and film and television works. The patterns of "PIP" composition may increase the information on the screen to break the monotonous sense of single picture. It can create a unique visual effect and build image style. Also, it can convey one's ideas or feelings with visual metaphorical atmosphere. Usually, historical humanities documentary adopts the ways of PIP composition to build aesthetics styles. At present, there are several main ways of PIP composition. And they are shown as the followings:

A. Multi-format Frame

Multi-format frame is one of the patterns of PIP composition. In the frame, it cuts one picture into two or

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more than two images. And it would form the visual differences. And different images pass different information. Multi-screen complements each other. In 1983, "Story of the Yangtze River" had adopted this form. In the first episode "Long History", it has explained the tributaries of the Yangtze River at 4:57 seconds. In the upper right corner of the frame, there is a rectangular frame. In this frame, it inputs the Minjiang River, Jialing River, Wujiang River, Yuanjiang River, Xiangjiang River, Ganjiang River and other fonts to supplement the image description in turns. However, the use of the early multi-format frame is also relatively simple and blunt. And it can't enhance the beauty of the screen. In 2007, CCTV documentary "The South of the River" fully uses multi-format framing techniques to create flowing visual images with more changes. And it can build an aesthetic style with magnificent atmosphere. In the actual practice of multi-format frame, it has multiple forms. One picture may be cut into two points, or three points, or multiple points. And it may be cut from the diagonal, the middle or the surrounded. Also, it may be cut from the blurring to the reality. It also can be cut from the reality to the blurring. The main part is small, and the background is large. The main part is large, and the background is small. And it also has many other ways. The diverse ways have increased the picture changes. And it also has broken the silence of the screen. It has added the beauty of the screen.

B. Frame Overprint

Frame overprint is one of the patterns of PIP composition. In one frame, more than two images are overprinted in an overlapping manner at the same time. It uses perspective image technology to achieve the superposition of space information symbols in different pictures. And then, it can increase the information of the pictures. Through the symbol resonance and mutual understanding among the pictures, it would complete the generation of narrative meanings of images. In the eighth episode "Longmen Grottoes" of World Heritage in China, it has explained the reasons for the formation of statue styles of Longmen Grottoes at 7:08 seconds. In this documentary, it has referred to the role of Emperor Xiaowen and the Xianbei nationality. In order to show the heroic posture of heroic horse riding of Xianbei nationality in concert with the commentary "They come with the arrows and horses the north", the background frame has selected the murals of the Xianbei nationality. On the background frame, it has overprinted the images of riding a horse from far to near. These two images increase beauty or brilliance by mutual reflection. And they complement each other. It not only embodies current reference of the film-grotto art, but also goes through the dust of the history. Then, it brings the audience into the long-term context. And then, it has got good artistic aesthetic effect.

The PIP composition of the images is different from the PIP composition of the painting and photography. The images can use the movement of camera lens and scene scheduling to achieve the dynamic presentation. So, the screen has flowing beauty. Also, it can attract the attention of the audiences. In the seventh episode "The Art of River" of "The South of the River", it has explained Yan Zhenqing and calligraphy art at 21:14 seconds. It is introduced by the

desolation of Yan Zhenqing's tomb. And then, it can touch the vigorous and form calligraphy art of Yan Zhenqing. The frame is divided into two parts. The right part is the desolation of Yan's tomb and overprint calligraphy art. The left part is the display of the inscription. With the explanation, the handwriting on left side moves from left to right slowly. And then, it disappears in the middle of the frame. It has fully appreciated the beauty of calligraphy art of Yan Zhenqing. And it also brings the audience into the ancient times. It has made intentional effects.

III. FROM TRUTH TO IMAGINATION: PICTURE SYMBOL EXPRESSION

In the film semiotics, it thinks that the image is a symbolic system consisting of various audiovisual symbols. The film builds meanings through the symbolic system [3]. The film symbol system has common codes in the other art forms (paintings, fiction, drama, etc.), such as people, objects, music, dialogues, etc. And it also has its unique codes, such as light, shadow, depth of field, and the movement of the camera lens and so on. These symbols are not isolated in the film. And they have common role and mutual meanings. In the development process of documentary, it can see variation process of clear picture symbol approach from the reality to the imagination. It reflects creative ideas of the documentary in the practice of documentary.

A. From the Truth to the Imagination: The Character Code

People are common symbols used in documentaries. The characters in early documentary are mostly the real characters in real space. With the characterization of actual sound "flies on the wall", it has expressed the dominance of the concept of documentary. With the popularity of the concept of new documentary and the influences of theory on the essential truth of the documentary, the practice of documentary has begun to carefully seek the breakthrough of the concept of absolute reality and the pursuit of the concept of relative reality. It has performed in the use of character codes. And it mainly reflects in two aspects. One is increasingly widely used in character performance. Character performance adheres to the principle of truth. And it can't get the objective data. It is a way of techniques for creation. And it reproduces real events and characters in the form of character performance. It can create a realistic historical situation and historical atmosphere to make up for the deficiency of imaging information in the creative process. With the use of creative techniques of the character performance, it has caused great controversy in theoretical cycle. With the contention of the theory, it also has found that the character performance has become a more popular creative approach in the historical humanities documentary since 21st century. And the character performance has been used in most of the historical humanities documentary. Not only that, there was a fictional historical figure in the documentary "Dunhuang" in 2010. And the fictional historical figure was Cheng Fuer. With the absorption of Dunhuang scholars' research results, the creator has made a fictional dancer in Tang dynasty according to history. In the film, the creator used a student of college of dance to play Cheng. With the use of this character code, it allows us to see

the changes with the concept of documentary creation. The pursuit of historical reality is transferred from the pursuit of objective truth to the pursuit of the relative truth. And the pursuit of historical reality is transferred from the discovery of history to the interpretation and reconstruction of history. It has shown the contemporary significance of the humanistic documentary. On the other hand, character code creation techniques have experienced the process from truth to imagination, and then to the reality and blurring. "Truth" refers to the real characters in more real space in the early documentaries. "Imagination" refers to the early use of the "character performance" approach. The new concept of new documentary has not yet demonstrated its strong power. The creator has made a certain degree of blurring on the actors who play the historical figures with the use of character performance in the history. For example, Cheng Fier is in "Dunhuang". The author hid the real face of the characters through the lighting, different scenery, different points of view and other means. In the frame, it has presented the silhouette of the characters for the audiences under the light projection. The historical humanities documentary in this period has made the virtual treatment with the use of character performance. It uses the film language to render the historical atmosphere, and the true faces of the characters have been hidden in the history. It uses the imagination of camera lens. And then, it would only have the outline of the characters. In the end, it could reduce the authenticity problems of character performance. In recent years, the virtual creation techniques of characters have been changed in the development. There has been a situation of "truth and imagination" situation. The truth and imagination refers that actor of historical figures in the film appears with the real face. And the history is the imagination. The present things are the reality. In 2015, the CCTV documentary "Mysterious Xixia" has used character performance and the reappearance of scene to explain the history. The clear character description and exciting plots have excited people's minds outside the screen.

B. From the Reality to the Animation: The Construction of Images

Heidegger has said that the world is grasped as an image. With the rapid development of computer technology, computer image generation technology (CG animation) has been introduced into the documentary production. The scene of documentary has transferred from the early real image to the animation [4]. In 2005, the CCTV documentary "The Imperial Palace" used 80-minutes CG animation to reproduce the construction process of the imperial palace and the grand ceremony. And the magnificent animation has greatly enhanced the visual performance of the documentary. In 2007, the first hand-painted animated documentary "Journey to the West in the Great Tang Dynasty" was on show. This documentary has added a large number of hand-painted images. And these images have been dealt by CG animation. Also, these images have been put in the oral history, historical exhibition and commentary. These pictures are produced by the historical figures and events. With the basis of the establishment of three-dimensional model, it is produced by comprehensive study on historical data. After broadcast, this documentary once aroused people's

discussion on the reality of the documentary. However, the combination of the traditional Chinese style, the Chinese culture and the animation is still popular with the majority of the audiences. In 2015, the creative approaches of animation documentary had once again made a breakthrough. CCTV documentary "Link" use the reproduction mean of clay animation. In the production process, it has reproduced some historical scenes by the hands. And it also has explained the role of Sinology dissemination in Chinese and foreign cultural exchanges. Clay animation has made a layer of simple and heavy artistic color on this documentary. Animation is fictional. However, it is produced on the historical research and the pursuit of real history. In fact, it has met people's cognitive characteristics in the visual era: "I see, I understand". And it achieves the popularization of historical knowledge and the real construction of art.

IV. FROM THE REALISM TO THE FREEHAND: LIGHT AND SHADOW VIDEO

Historical humanities documentary has once won the breakthrough in the concepts. And its artistic characteristics also show great vitality. The most obvious feature is the great development of the freehand style of pictures. And it is mainly shown in the following concepts.

A. Composition, Light and the Subject

Composition, light and the subject are the important elements of freehand style to create a picture. The freehand pursues the beauty of meaning between the reality and the imagination. Therefore, it should pay attention to leave white space, the position relationship between the subject and the object of picture, and the proportion of each other in the composition. Light and shadow are also indispensable parts of the construction of the freehand style. With light projection from different angles, it can get different shades in different degrees. Composition, light and the coordination between the subject and the object can create different styles of screen features combined with color and the movement of camera lens. The opening of "Bao Zheng" uses the black as the main colors. And the static composition is accompanied with the movement of camera lens. In the black screen, it is divided in the bright, sub-bright, dark, sub-dark and other different colors through the projection of light. And it has shown Bao Zheng's integrity. It also constructs dignified image style of the film. The description of Cheng Fier, the main character of "Dunhuang", has used the light and shadow effects. And it sets the shadow of Cheng Fier in the middle of the frame. The light comes from the opposite side of the main part. And it has formed a circle of halo around the main part. The posture of the main body in the halo is beautiful and elegant. The dance is shown in the light. The main body is black silhouette of the characters. And each action brings the flowing beauty in the light. The light will be set in the middle of the frame, and it has formed a round virtual frame. The main body dances in the frame. And the red dress and transparent veil are wrapped in yellow halo. It is romantic and elegant.

B. The Expression of Freehand Picture

The freehand is the unique style of Chinese painting, but also the representative characteristics of Chinese art. In the

promotion of Chinese culture, many historical humanities documentary should pay attention to the construction of freehand pictures. For example, the opening of Kunqu Opera: Immortal Legend uses the Chinese painting as the background. The focus of the picture is a budding pink lotus in the ink canvas. Lotus opened in turns. And the camera moved from the down to the up. And the distant picture leaped into the eyes. And a woman in red sleeves was dancing on the garden bridge in Suzhou. It was elegant. The camera lens continues moving. Behind the woman, there was a wash painting of mountains, birds and boats. It likes a scenic poem. On the right side, there was a woman in costume singing Kunqu opera with waving sleeves. The distant stage was faint. The bamboo leaves, roof, the small building with red lanterns came from far to near. In the pavilion, all the roles in the opera were on show. Kunqu opera has explained the history. With the help of CG animation, this unique Chinese freehand style was created to have some charm.

V. CONCLUSION

The evolution of picture modeling language of historical humanities documentary is guided by the new creative ideas. And it is the results of historical and cultural development. Also, it is demanded by the public. In the visual era, the historical humanities documentary will pursue diversified picture modeling to explain the history.

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