Analysis of the Characteristics of Indian Film Creation

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Abstract

This paper provides a detailed summary of the distinct and diverse characteristics of Indian film creation. In terms of theme selection, Indian films predominantly adopt realism, focusing on and depicting issues faced by broad social groups, such as critiques of religious issues, attention to women's status, and the survival and breakthrough of individuals in the cracks of society. Regarding narrative methods, Indian films employ unique and captivating modes, often featuring young people in the new era rebelling against traditional old beliefs, growing through difficulties, and ultimately achieving success, showcasing confrontations between individuals and families, as well as collisions between new ideas and old traditions. Furthermore, Indian films integrate rich elements of national aesthetics during the creative process, such as gorgeous song and dance scenes and unique visual effects, endowing their works with a unique artistic style and aesthetic value. These characteristics collectively constitute the unique charm of Indian films, earning them the attention and praise of global audiences.

Keywords: Indian movies, film creation, movie theme

1. Introduction

In today's increasingly globalized world, the film cultures of various countries shine on the world stage with their unique charm. Among them, Indian films, with their distinct creative characteristics and profound cultural heritage, have gradually become a force that cannot be ignored in the international film industry. From themes that deeply reflect social reality to captivating narrative techniques, to audiovisual presentations that incorporate rich elements of national aesthetics, Indian films, with their diverse and unique artistic styles, have not only won a broad audience base in the domestic market but have also garnered high praise and recognition internationally. This paper delves into the diverse characteristics of Indian film creation, aiming to reveal the cultural connotations and artistic value behind them, and to further enhance understanding and appreciation of Indian film art.

2. Theme Selection

When selecting themes for creation, Indian films typically prioritize realism, highlighting issues of concern to broad social groups to achieve profound artistic interpretations. For example:

2.1 Religious Issues

Indian films are particularly sharp in their critiques of religious issues, manifested specifically in reflections on religious beliefs, exposures of religious hypocrisy, and critiques

of religious sectarian conflicts.

2.1.1 Reflections on Religious Beliefs

Indian films often guide audiences to deeply reflect on religious beliefs through storylines and character portrayals. This reflection not only focuses on the rationality and value of religion itself but also on the impact of religious beliefs on individuals and society. For instance, in *OMG: Oh My God* (2012), Kanji, an atheist, undergoes a peculiar experience of suing gods, prompting a profound reflection on religious beliefs. The film reveals some disorders in religious worship, especially the ugly phenomena of using religious worship to gain wealth. Kanji believes that the pursuit of truth does not require any religion, and that true faith should exist in the heart, rather than being bound by external religious rituals and ceremonies. This reflection challenges traditional religious concepts and encourages audiences to re-examine their own beliefs.

2.1.2 Exposure of Religious Hypocrisy

When critiquing religious issues, Indian films often expose the hypocrisy within religion. This hypocrisy exists not only among religious leaders and clergy but also in the faith practices of believers. For example, both *PK* (2014) and *OMG: Oh My God* (2012) use irony and humor to expose the ugly phenomena of deception and wealth accumulation under the guise of religion. These films point out that some religious leaders and clergy exploit the faith psychology of believers, using various means to deceive money and power. Meanwhile, some believers blindly worship religion, failing to discern the words and actions of religious leaders and clergy, and even defending their wrongdoings. This hypocrisy not only damages the reputation of religion but also misleads believers' faith.

2.1.3 Critique of Religious Sectarian Conflicts

As a multi-religious country, India has long faced the issue of religious sectarian conflicts. When critiquing religious issues, Indian films often focus on the harms and roots of such conflicts. For example, *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* (2015) tells the story of a Hindu man escorting a Muslim girl with a speech impediment back to Pakistan. Through this story, the film showcases realistic issues such as the India-Pakistan conflict and religious conflicts, ultimately returning to themes of love and humanity. The film points out that religious sectarian conflicts not only disrupt social harmony and stability but also cause suffering and sacrifices for countless people. At the same time, the film calls for people to let go of hatred and prejudice, facing different religions and cultures with love and tolerance.

Indian films are particularly sharp in their critiques of religious issues, manifested in reflections on religious beliefs, exposures of religious hypocrisy, and critiques of religious sectarian conflicts. These critiques not only reveal some disorders and harms within religious issues but also guide audiences to re-examine their own beliefs and values. Meanwhile, through storylines and character portrayals, these films convey positive messages and values, encouraging audiences to face religion and culture with a more rational and tolerant mindset.

2.2 Women's Status

As an important carrier of Indian culture, Indian films have always been a crucial platform for reflecting social changes and exploring social issues. With the continuous development of Indian society, especially the rapid modernization process in recent decades, the status of women in Indian society has gradually improved. This change is also profoundly reflected in the content and themes of Indian films. Indian films have begun to pay more attention to women's issues, exploring social propositions such as gender equality, women's rights, and self-actualization through a series of stories centered on women, showcasing the awakening and elevation of Indian women's self-awareness.

2.2.1 Calls for Women's Rights

Early Indian films often adhered to traditional gender role stereotypes, with female characters mostly portrayed as homemakers or vulnerable individuals awaiting redemption. However, as time passed, especially after entering the 21st century, more and more films started to challenge these stereotypes, focusing on the realistic issues faced by women, such as domestic violence, workplace discrimination, and sexual assault. The film *Mom* (2017) is a typical example, telling the story of a mother seeking revenge for her daughter, not only showcasing the greatness of maternal love but also strongly advocating for societal attention to women's safety issues and challenging the silence and neglect towards female victims.

2.2.2 Self-Actualization and Career Pursuits

With the improvement in education levels and increased career opportunities, Indian women have begun to pursue more independent and autonomous lifestyles. The film *Dangal* (2016), through the true story of a father training his daughters to become wrestling champions, not only displays the spirit of sports but also reflects at a deeper level the desire of women to seek self-breakthroughs and career achievements under traditional constraints. Such stories inspire countless Indian women to bravely pursue their dreams and challenge gender boundaries.

2.2.3 Free Choice in Love and Marriage

In Indian films, women's right to choose their love and marriage has gradually become an important theme. Although the "Baahubali" series is an epic masterpiece, the female characters, such as Princess Devasena, exhibit strong willpower and the power to choose their own partners, challenging the traditional custom of arranged marriages. Meanwhile, in modern urban-themed films like *3 Idiots* (2009), Pia, though not the protagonist, embodies the image of a new-era woman with her independence, intelligence, and persistence in love.

2.2.4 Demonstration of Female Strength

In recent years, Indian films have started to showcase more of women's leadership and decision-making abilities, whether in politics, business, or social welfare. The film *Pad Man* (2018), based on a true story, tells the tale of a man who invents a low-cost sanitary pad machine, driven by his wife, who not only supports her husband's idea but also becomes an advocate for women's health education in the community, demonstrating the active role of women in solving social problems.

Indian films have made significant contributions in reflecting the improvement of women's status and the awakening of self-awareness. These films not only entertain audiences but, more importantly, they trigger profound societal reflections on women's issues, promote the popularization of gender equality concepts, and provide strong cultural support for the women's rights movement in India and globally. With the continuous progress of Indian society, it is believed that more heart-touching and transformative films on women's themes will emerge in the future, continuing to lead societal development forward.

2.3 Individual Survival

The themes of Indian films often concentrate on the survival and breakthrough of individuals in the cracks of society. Through vivid narratives and profound character portrayals, these films showcase the resilience and fighting spirit of individuals facing difficulties in Indian society.

2.3.1 Demonstrating Resilience and Struggle in Social Dilemmas

Indian films frequently focus on individuals struggling in social dilemmas, showcasing the tenacity and indomitable spirit of life through their resilience and efforts. For example, in the film *Dangal* (2016), the protagonist Mahavir Singh Phogat (played by Aamir Khan), a former national wrestling champion, is forced to abandon wrestling due to life's pressures. He hopes his son can help him fulfill his dream of winning a world-class gold medal. However, after having four daughters, Mahavir, who thought his dream was shattered, unexpectedly discovers their astonishing talent and sees the hope of becoming champions. Determined not to let their talent go to waste, he begins training his daughters to become wrestlers. In this process, the daughters face various challenges from society, family, and themselves, but with their father's encouragement and their own hard work, they ultimately shine on the international stage, earning honor and respect. This film not only showcases women's struggles and breakthroughs in the field of sports but also deeply reflects the resilience and indomitable spirit of individuals facing difficulties in Indian society.

2.3.2 Deep Reflection on the Interweaving of Social Reality and Individual Destiny

Indian films not only show the individual's living conditions, but also reflect deeply on the impact of social reality on individual destiny. The movie *Hindi Medium* (2017) is a good example. It tells the story of a middle-class family's struggle to choose the best school for their child to receive the best education from an early age. In this process, they not only have to face fierce competition and expensive tuition fees, but also have to face problems such as uneven distribution of social classes and educational resources. The film, from the perspective of a couple of parents, reveals the unequal distribution of educational resources in Indian society and the profound impact of social class on individual destiny, which has triggered audience's reflection on the education system

and social equity.

2.3.3 Pass on Hope and Positive Energy, and Motivate the Audience to Face Difficulties

Although the stories of individual survival in Indian films are often full of hardships and challenges, they always convey hope and positive energy. The movie *Secret Superstar* (2017) tells the story of a 14-year-old Indian girl, Yoonhee, who overcomes discrimination and obstacles to pursue her music dream. Yin Xiya loves singing, but her father is extremely opposed to it. She can only upload her singing videos with a mask on her face. Unexpectedly, she becomes an internet sensation with her heavenly voice. However, when Yin Xiya faces a life choice, a series of twists and turns suddenly occur, which greatly hurts Yin Xiya. However, her mother bravely stands up to defend her daughter's dream. Through the journey of Yin Xiya's struggle, this film demonstrates the importance of persevering in dreams in difficult situations, while also conveying the greatness and perseverance of maternal love. Such stories not only inspire audiences to maintain a positive attitude in the face of adversity, but also promote social harmony and progress.

The efforts of Indian films in the aspect of individual survival are reflected in the display of the tenacity and struggle of individuals in social dilemmas, the profound reflection on the intertwined social reality and individual destiny, and the transmission of hope and positive energy. These efforts not only enriched the artistic expression of Indian films, but also promoted the audience's attention and reflection on social issues.

3. Narrative Methods

Indian cinema boasts unique and captivating narrative methods, often featuring young protagonists in the new era rebelling against traditional old beliefs, growing through various hardships and obstacles, and ultimately achieving understanding and success. A typical example is *3 Idiots* (2009), which highlights the protagonist's individual heroism, uses his tenacious resistance to subvert conventional definitions of success, retrieves lost emotions and memories amidst numerous obstacles, and ultimately culminates in a happy ending. This narrative pattern often exhibits the following characteristics:

3.1 Individual Confrontation with Family

In Indian films, confrontation between individuals and their families is a common theme, with films often showcasing individual struggles and growth, ultimately reaching some form of reconciliation or compromise. This confrontation not only enriches the story's layers but also deeply explores the complex emotions within family relationships.

In the film *Sultan* (2016), Salman Khan portrays Sultan, initially a man lacking ambition who, after falling in love, strives to win the approval of his beloved Alfa by diligently practicing wrestling and eventually becoming a champion. However, after achieving both career and love, Sultan faces the test of a mid-life crisis, where his excessive pursuit of honor leads him to neglect his family, resulting in the loss of his child and the breakup of his family. This series of setbacks plunges Sultan into despair, but with the encouragement and support of his loved one, he rebounds, not only establishing a blood bank for the locality but also restoring India's presence on the world wrestling stage. Sultan's story embodies the confrontation between individuals and their families and the eventual reconciliation, as he reclaims the warmth and happiness of his family through personal growth and transcendence.

Another film, *Kapoor and Sons* (2016), more directly explores the theme of family conflict and reconciliation. It showcases the preciousness of family bonds through depicting the contradictions, friction, and ultimate reconciliation among the members of the Kapoor family. Family members have conflicts over various trifles and even blame each other, but after the father's death in a car accident, they begin to regret and realize the value of family bonds. Through this series of plots, the film conveys the importance of forgiveness and being forgiven, as well as the necessity of using love to overcome mistakes.

Dangal (2016) is also a classic Indian film that showcases individual confrontation with family. The protagonist, Mahavir Singh Phogat, is a national wrestling champion who hopes his son can help him fulfill his dream of winning a world-class gold medal for India. However, fate has it that he has four daughters instead. Mahavir doesn't give up; he starts teaching his daughters wrestling and strives to make them world-class wrestlers. During this process, conflicts arise between Mahavir and his daughter Geeta, as she believes her father's

training methods are outdated and conservative, while Mahavir adheres to his beliefs. Ultimately, after experiencing the blow of failure, Geeta confronts her situation, finds a breakthrough, achieves self-growth and transcendence, and realizes her life goals. This process not only reflects the confrontation and compromise between individuals and their families but also showcases the power of paternal love and the preciousness of family bonds.

By depicting individual struggles and growth, as well as ultimate reconciliation or compromise, Indian films often deeply explore the complex emotions within family relationships. These stories not only resonate emotionally with viewers but also prompt people to reflect on how to maintain harmony and understanding in family relationships.

3.2 New Ideas vs. Old Traditions

In Indian cinema, the collision and conflict between new ideas and old traditions are a common and profound theme. The protagonists in these films often represent new thoughts, with their behaviors, beliefs, or values clashing fiercely with old traditions or beliefs. This conflict not only adds tension and depth to the plot but also deeply touches upon societal phenomena and explorations of life values, inspiring viewers' deep thoughts.

Take *3 Idiots* (2009) as an example; this film is a classic portrayal of the confrontation between new ideas and old traditions. The protagonist, Rancho (actually named Phunsukh Wangdu, with Rancho being his pseudonym), challenges the rigid teaching methods and exam-oriented system in the traditional Indian education system with his unique way of thinking and educational philosophy. He advocates independent thinking, pursuing interests and dreams, which forms a stark contrast with the old belief of rote memorization and the pursuit of high scores and rankings in schools. The conflict between Rancho and the dean, "Virus," is not just a personal confrontation but also a collision between new educational ideas and old educational traditions. Through Rancho's growth journey and ultimate success, the film conveys the power and importance of new ideas while also triggering reflections and calls for reform on traditional educational models.

Another film, *Rang De Basanti* (2006), similarly showcases the confrontation between new ideas and old traditions. The protagonists are a group of passionate and idealistic young people who oppose corruption, injustice, and social oppression, attempting to drive social change through non-violent means. Their actions and thoughts clash fiercely with traditional societal beliefs, power structures, and value systems. Through depicting their struggles and sacrifices, the film explores the tense relationships between individuals and society, new ideas and old traditions, and how to adhere to beliefs and ideals amidst adversity.

In *Secret Superstar* (2017), the protagonist, Insiya, is a girl with a dream of becoming a successful singer through her talent and hard work. However, her family and social environment are filled with traditional restrictions and biases towards female roles. Although Insiya's mother supports her dream, she is also bound by traditional beliefs, while her father is a typical conservative who opposes Insiya's dream. Through Insiya's struggle and growth, the film showcases the conflict between new ideas (pursuing personal dreams and gender equality) and old traditions (restrictions on female roles and family authority), and ultimately, through Insiya's success and family transformation, conveys the power of new ideas and the possibility of change.

These Indian films, through the confrontation between new ideas and old traditions, not only propel the plot's development but also deeply explore the diversity of societal phenomena and life values. They allow viewers to appreciate the story while contemplating how to find a balance between tradition and modernity, conservatism and openness, and how to embrace new ideas while respecting tradition, as well as how to adhere to their beliefs and ideals when facing adversity. These films are not only critiques and reflections on societal phenomena but also advocacy and calls for new ideas, thoughts, and values.

4. Ethnic Aesthetics

Indian cinema incorporates rich elements of ethnic aesthetics in its creative process, endowing its works with unique artistic styles and aesthetic values.

4.1 Magnificent Song and Dance Scenes

The magnificent song and dance scenes in Indian films are like flowing paintings, presenting viewers with a dual feast for the eyes and ears through their unique ethnic aesthetics. These song and dance sequences are not just

embellishments in the films but also vivid manifestations of India's rich dance and musical culture. They are integrated into the narrative structure of the films in colorful forms, becoming an indispensable soul of Indian cinema.

Take *Devdas* (2002) as an example; the song and dance scenes in this film are classic. From the opening "Devdas and Paro's Duet" to "Kites Are Flying," each song and dance sequence is imbued with strong emotional color and artistic beauty. Dancers, adorned in vibrant costumes, dance to the melodious tunes, with every movement exuding power and beauty, as if narrating moving stories. Especially the "Kites Are Flying" sequence, which not only showcases the exquisite skills of Indian dance but also cleverly conveys the film's themes and emotions through the plot and symbolism within the dance, making it a classic scene in the movie.

In *Asoka* (2001), the song and dance scenes are equally impressive. Sequences like "Jhumka Girls" and "Dholi Taro Dhol Baje" not only demonstrate the diversity and richness of Indian dance but also deepen the character relationships and emotional expressions in the film through the expressions, movements, and plots within the dances. These song and dance scenes are closely intertwined with the film's narrative structure, both propelling the plot's development and enhancing the film's entertainment value, allowing viewers to appreciate the themes and connotations of the film more deeply while enjoying the songs and dances.

Music is another highlight of the song and dance scenes in Indian films. In *3 Idiots* (2009), the song "Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara," with its cheerful melody and inspirational lyrics, has become a classic in the film. This song not only closely complements the scenes and plots in the movie, creating a unique audiovisual experience, but also conveys the film's themes and values through its lyrics and melody, allowing viewers to feel the positive energy and life philosophy conveyed by the film while enjoying the music.

Furthermore, with technological advancements, the song and dance scenes in Indian films have made significant progress in visual effects. In modern Indian films like *Baahubali*, the production of song and dance scenes has become more refined, from exquisite costumes to advanced photography techniques and post-production, all contributing to the visually stunning nature of these scenes. These sequences not only showcase the unique charm of Indian dance and musical culture but also, through advanced technological means, bring viewers an unprecedented cinematic experience.

The magnificent song and dance scenes in Indian films, with their unique ethnic aesthetics and exquisite artistic expressions, have become a distinctive feature of Indian cinema.

4.2 Unique Visual Effects

The achievements of Indian films in visual effects have undoubtedly set a new benchmark for the global film industry. By using advanced digital technology, Indian film production teams have not only successfully combined traditional storytelling with modern technology, but also created a series of realistic and imaginative special effects scenes, bringing unprecedented visual shock to the audience.

The *Baahubali* series of films, as a visual feast in the history of Indian cinema, is particularly outstanding in terms of visual effects. The war scenes, magnificent palace architecture, and the heroic performance of the protagonist, King Bhopal, are all perfectly presented through superb special effects technology. Especially those breathtaking battle scenes, whether it's the grand war layout or the delicate battle details, make the audience feel as if they are in an era full of heroism and legend. In addition, the mythological elements in the film, such as the battle between King Bajobali and the demon, and the giant stone statues, are vividly displayed through special effects technology, bringing a strong visual impact to the audience.

Enthiran 2 (2018) further demonstrates the innovative capabilities of Indian films in visual effects. The robot in the film is uniquely designed, with smooth and natural movements, as if it really has life. Especially the interaction scenes between robots and humans and the natural environment, whether it is the robots shuttling in the city or soaring in the sky, have been perfectly presented through special effects technology, allowing the audience to feel the power and charm of science and technology.

And *Enthiran* (2010) is a work that combines science fiction and romance. The robot protagonist in the film not only has a similar appearance and emotions to humans, but also has many unimaginable abilities. These abilities are displayed through special effects technology,

making the audience feel as if they are in a world full of fantasy. Especially in the emotional communication scenes between robots and humans, whether it is the gentle care of robots or the deep gaze between humans, they are all presented in a delicate and touching way through special effects technology.

The success of these Indian films in visual effects is not only due to advanced digital technology, but also to the meticulous polishing of details and the endless pursuit of creativity by the production team. Through continuous exploration and practice, they have combined traditional storytelling with modern technology to create many amazing special effects scenes. These scenes not only give the audience great visual enjoyment during the movie, but also make Indian movies widely recognized and praised around the world.

The achievements of Indian films in visual effects not only show the innovative capabilities and technical level of the Indian film industry, but also provide new ideas and inspiration for the development of the global film industry. With the continuous progress of technology and the changing needs of the audience, it is believed that Indian films will achieve more significant achievements in visual effects, bringing more surprises and emotions to the audience.

5. Conclusion

Indian films have won widespread attention and praise worldwide for their distinctive creative features and diverse cultural connotations. From the choice of realistic themes to the engaging narrative methods, to the unique display of national aesthetics, Indian films all embody profound cultural heritage and artistic charm. Through deep reflection on religious issues, deep concern for women's status, and delicate depiction of individual survival, Indian films not only reflect social reality, but also touch the hearts of audiences. At the same time, its unique narrative mode, such as the confrontation between individuals and families, the collision of new concepts and old traditions, not only drives the plot's ups and downs, but also triggers the audience's deep reflection on social phenomena and life values. In addition, the exploration of Indian film in national aesthetics is even more remarkable. The gorgeous singing and dancing scenes and unique visual effects not only enrich the artistic expression of the film,

but also bring unprecedented audio-visual feast to the audience. Looking forward to the future, I believe that Indian films will continue to contribute more to the prosperity and development of world film art with their unique creative style and profound cultural connotation.

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