



## A Study on Viewers' Viewing from the Angle of Desire—An Interpretation of Xiaofeng Li's "Calm sea"

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**Abstract:** As a visual feast, the sound and light images created by film viewing have different interpretation meanings for different levels of viewers. As the latest work directed by Li Xiaofeng, "Calm sea" not only continues the framework of the previous crime film with the nature of the author's film, but also contains the spiritual core that the obsessive can only leave the scene, which is of far-reaching significance. In this film, the protagonist and the outsider are in the unity of opposites, leading their own viewing behavior and self-examination under the peep of desire, and stripping the cocoon of visual images to reveal the source of pleasure obtained by the viewers from the perspective of desire.

**Keywords:** "Calm sea"; Viewing research; Desire

**Publication date:** March, 2021

**Publication online:** 31 March, 2021

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Koizumi said: "Film and life are determined by the aftertaste." It is not easy to achieve "aftertaste" with crime movies, and the participation effect created by watching has a high degree of completion. The author believes that in the watching activities of a film, the audience outside the screen is the obvious viewing subject. Although it can not determine the trend of the characters' stories in the play, it can also be regarded as an alternative perspective of God overlooking the joys and sorrows in the film, and the audience is not the only viewer. As a way of participation, in a complete movie watching activity, there are two kinds of viewers, namely, the dramatist and the outsider. The characters in the film watch and speculate from the basic story constructed by the screenwriter to the

inner virtual movie world. Whether the protagonist or the supporting actor, they observe the virtual world to provide clues for the story. Hugo Munsterberg, a German psychologist, believes that "the mental result caused by film does not exist on film, but in the hearts of the audience, in which the film is realized". In the real world, the audience is watching the role's every move, either with a sense of substitution or indifference, but watching itself brings pleasure to the real audience. Desire is the connecting point of the two. The desire of the characters in the film will mobilize the desire flow of the audience, so as to resonate between the two, break the limitation of the screen itself, and deepen the interpretation of the theme of the film<sup>[1]</sup>.

The film "Calm sea" describes Song Hao, an excellent student, who left his hometown and his original life path because of an accident. This change is caused by the common push of all parties' desires. Song Hao's own strength is excellent, and he also has the obsession to the qualification of recommendation; Song Jianfei is Song Hao's father. He has the obsession of expecting his son to become a dragon; Li Tang is Song Hao's good brother, but he has no mercy when it comes to his own interests, which is the obsession of crazy self. Fifteen years later, Song Hao returned to his hometown again. He thought everything had been calm. His reunion with his old classmate Pan Xiaoshuang was a long lost light. He decided to face the bloody scar and complete self salvation, but it was mercilessly destroyed by reality.

### 1 The desire of the audience in the play

#### 1.1 Self gaze and viewing behavior of characters

The author thinks that the role in the screen is the

main body of action, and the audience realizes this viewing behavior by watching the role's behavior in the film, but the role itself is watching in the picture world of the film, and the audience's viewing in reality is based on the viewing of the virtual world, so there are two kinds of innate viewing, namely, the dramatist and the dramatist Outsiders watch. In the movie world, the characters are the leaders of the world, and their behavior determines the development process of the world, that is, the development trend of the story. The characters observe the virtual world, just like the real audience to understand the world. Lacan once said: "Self is in an external environment, determined by external forces beyond its control, and has been permanently limited to alienation from itself." In the movie, Song Hao is the first character to gaze at himself. He is stubborn and has his own belief. He only considers simple right and wrong, so he is defeated in the face of worldly sophistication, and he also makes a big mistake to change the trajectory of his life. Song Hao is an escapee, he can not resist, but he chose to escape. But he couldn't escape the call of the structure. The circular fate finally recalled Song Hao and made him unable to get away. He tried to obey the structure, but wan Xiaoning's death made him go beyond the bloody flow of stupid slaughter. He finally woke up, killed himself and his father, completely interrupted the cycle of crime in the chain, and realized the victory of a passive dwarf hero. On the other hand, we must see Song Hao's personal identity. He is a top student of a middle-class family. The strength of this identity is that he has escaped the curse of the lower class and represents a broader situation<sup>[2]</sup>.

In the process of watching, the audience will have sympathy and sympathy for the characters in the play, and even have the sense of empathy. However, the audience sometimes does not realize that the story context of the film world has been determined, and the characters can only complete their existing actions according to the routine. Whether they are early curtain call or involved in a larger story vortex, everything is to pave and promote the ending of the story. Characters can only passively watch things happen in an unobvious way, and most of the time the audience will not be aware of this, but the characters are indeed the observers of the virtual world. Although these contents are an illusion constructed by the screenwriter and director, the characters have to

comply with the setting of participation in watching a movie for a long time, and the audience will also face up to the problems encountered by the characters in the process of watching and it has different degrees of influence on the audience, resulting in emotional fluctuations.

## 1.2 Social identity of role and mainline service

Baudrillard once said, "commodities guide and dominate people's deep desire through the shining window display. The root of desire lies in one's own social identity. One's wealth, status and reputation must be displayed to others, which is a kind of morbid self display based on overlooking the bottom. The reason why Li Tang is unscrupulous is that he is too conceited about his own identity. He can easily rescue Song Hao from the gangsters in the game hall by using force. He can also plunder Song Hao's life for his own interests without scruple, which is the main cause of Song Hao's leaving his hometown. Once the literariness of crime movies is bound to the desperation in the dirty soil, the vision will become narrower. It's very easy to slide into the aesthetic taste of curiosity. The audience looks at the characters with indifferent overlooking pity and gives away their feelings. The suffering of the middle class has the broadest community. He avoids many flattering identities and turns to a more simple narrative. To some extent, he shows a painful reality, a collective reality and a real reality<sup>[3]</sup>.

The details are all for the main line of the story. Song Hao is escorted, Song Hao returns to his hometown to offer sacrifices to his mother, and Song Hao's wife pan Xiaoshuang is pregnant. The three-story nodes are calm before the storm. Each turning point is promoting the direction of the story, which makes Song Hao's accidental injuries continue to ferment and the scars are revealed again and again. Li Tang is at the top of the peep, which is equivalent to the end of the film's biological chain. From the beginning, he saw Song Hao and his father song Jianfei fall into this killing quagmire, and used it as a handle to control Song Hao's father to meet his own interests. Song Hao's every move after returning home is also in the peep of Li Tang. With the help of Song Hao's heart of making up, he pushed Song Hao into the abyss of human life, No more self redemption. Movies can dramatize and refine daily life, and even magnify and show the points that

people usually don't pay attention to on the screen, so that the audience can ponder in the process of watching. Krakauer's "wind blows leaves and makes waves" reflects this situation. When watching movies, the audience is also watching the art of images and appreciating the art of beauty<sup>[4]</sup>.

## **2 The desire and demand of the audience outside the play**

### **2.1 Peeping at desire**

As the main body of watching, the audience has a desire to peep. They are in the norms of daily society and can not release their real self. The audience's unknown peeping impulse in real life can be released in the cinema. "The screen box in the dark projection hall is like a keyhole", which opens the door of the audience's desire and can be satisfied by watching their own peeping needs. Every character in "Calm sea" has an undercurrent of struggle. Some critics believe that the group play presented by the actors is worthy of being shortlisted for the best group performance of this year's Chinese film. Generally speaking, the body elements in the visual image are the main level of peeping. In the traditional film narrative, women are the peeped subject of desire, and men get a kind of sensory visual carnival. In "calm sea", Song Hao, as the visual center, is naked in the rainstorm, which shows a sad male form beauty. The unformed muscle lines appear helpless and desperate, which makes pan Xiaoshuang leave an indelible impression in the process of peeping, and constantly subvert the cognition of the audience on the screen<sup>[5]</sup>.

Erotic lens has always been an unavoidable image display in the film, not erotic for the sake of pornography, but the essence of human nature, which is an indispensable expression of the film theme. "The so-called post voyeurism, which has a sense of shame for peeping but still needs to practice, redefines the abnormal tendency of people in different degrees." Li Tang from high school green peep to adult unscrupulous peep, he threw away the last mask, disgusting, all interest centered, he metamorphosed into an inhuman state. Pan Xiaoshuang never forgets Song Hao, so he pursues love bravely. The author thinks that the touching scenes are better than Lust Caution, but they are indispensable. This video truly shows the most essential and beautiful soft

place of human nature. The family is the last refuge after all disasters. The wind is calm and the waves are gradually calming down. However, the film abruptly tears down the last protective layer, making everything invisible, making the crime infinitely enlarged, and completing the sublimation of the film<sup>[6]</sup>.

### **2.2 Desire to participate**

Freud believed that the fundamental driving force of human behavior is human primitive instinct. "The central concept of Freud's psychoanalysis is: Instinct theory." Any behavior has its subconscious performance. The audience can empathize with and resonate with the plot of the film, which is the desire to participate in it<sup>[7]</sup>.

There are several details in "Calm sea" that are very attractive. First of all, the plot of the proposal at the toll station. This is the most discussed point I heard after the show. Pan Xiaoshuang asked Song Hao to help her with the yogurt in the inner shelf. Song Hao bought it and put it in the co driver's car. This time, pan Xiaoshuang didn't stop her and let her leave. She couldn't hide her loss and anxiety After sadness, Song Hao comes back with yogurt and says "get married, we two" flatly. Pan Xiaoshuang is stunned for a few seconds and says "OK". Song Hao takes the yogurt and pan Xiaoshuang kisses it. The car comes and goes. She wipes the yogurt from the corner of his mouth for him. It's a sweet but not greasy proposal. Personally, there are two details. The first is that pan Xiaoshuang and Song Hao go home after their first date. With the pouring rain and the broken car window, pan Xiaoshuang holds up an umbrella. It's sad and romantic at the same time. The second is that Song Hao and Wan Xiaoning are in the passage, they don't speak, the voice control lights are on and off, the atmosphere is delicate and the content is rich. The audience has a deeper sense of expectation for the story in a specific situation, and it is easier to stimulate their desire to participate, which is also the ingenious point of "calm sea".

## **3 The connection of the desire of the audience inside and outside the play**

The author mentioned in the previous article that there must be two kinds of viewers in a complete movie viewing activity, namely, the viewers inside the play and the viewers outside the play. They are

not in their own independent viewing system. There are countless connections between watching and being watched. Taking a certain story node in the play as a link, the desire of the viewers inside and outside the play is aroused to connect and produce it resonates. Most of the films naturally interact with the audience inside and outside the play, especially in the film "Calm sea".

The audience becomes the plaything of illusion, at the mercy of a series of unpredictable actions and a series of exciting pictures. In "Calm sea", its grounded role setting and compact plot trend make the audience enter their own "role" as soon as possible. The audience is no longer the onlooker of calm waves, but the participant. The themes of friendship, family, love and so on gradually unfold, and all kinds of life are unlimited in the short duration of the film. But fortunately, the boat is not alone<sup>[8]</sup>.

In the process of watching "Calm sea", the audience is the main body of watching, but not the only one. Their inner desire source flows with the desire behavior of the characters in the play. The dramatists watch the world in the play, and the outsiders also watch the world in the play through the eyes of the dramatists, and watch the dramatists at the same time. And the outsider, that is, the audience, is watched by the director, screenwriter and other creators. There is no absolute gaze point for watching and being watched. It is because of the convergence

of their desires that all parties can have the same spiritual resonance in non parallel time and space, so as to achieve the ultimate experience of watching the film.

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