

Exploration of Embodied Cognition in Cross-cultural Memory Narratives From the Perspective of Film Phenomenology

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Abstract. How is embodied cognition expressed in cross-cultural memory narratives according to the approach of film phenomenology? Do not see memory in film merely as representation or symbolism; rather, this research holds that cross-cultural memory is often transmitted through bodily perception, affective texture, sensory displacement and haptic spectatorship. Integrate phenomenological descriptions of perception with film theory and cultural memory studies to explore how cinematic images structure memory through motion, touch, sound, spatial dislocation, and sensory deficits. Intercultural cinema frequently explores the experiences of the diaspora and historical rupture by avoiding direct narration and expressing fragmented identity through embodied forms of seeing and feeling. In short, embodied cognition offers a way to connect phenomenological experience in film with ethical, emotional and memory-related problems of intercultural memory.

Keywords: Film phenomenology; Embodied cognition; Cross-cultural memory; Intercultural cinema; Haptic visuality; Cinematic perception.

1. Introduction

Memory has been one of the most productive subjects of research in film and media studies recently. At the same time, with the rise of transnational cinema, diaspora studies and affect theory, earlier views on how films narrate the past have also been modified. Cross-cultural memory narratives are not just about the history of these countries. They frequently show dislocation, migration, trauma, interrupted belonging and instability of inherited identity. As a result, many films are no longer organized around memory as a consistent system of pictures or a clear-cut sequence of events. Memory is a sense that happens in the body, caused by a feeling of emotion, and reconstructed from fragmented senses.

Therefore, the idea of embodied cognition is needed now. Embodied cognition in the study of film does not only refer to a neuroscientific model of mental processing. Perception and emotion can also give rise to meaning through space, touch, sound and movement in film. Films can also be experienced by way of senses through stories and symbols. The body of the spectators serves as a place for experiencing memory rather than just learning about it. Therefore, through a rhythm of perception beyond direct description, cinema can portray the sense of cultural alienation, inherited trauma, or diasporic memory.

Film phenomenology can be used to investigate this phenomenon in a more focused way. Phenomenology can be used to study cinematic memory as an experience of living perception and the reciprocal relationship between the viewing body and the filmic world, rather than merely as a text-based code. It is highly suitable for the study of cross-cultural narratives, and historical memory often exists in embodied forms such as gestures, silence, texture, landscapes, accents, rituals and sensory atmospheres.

Using the lens of film phenomenology, this paper studies the expression of embodied cognition in cross-cultural memory narratives. It is proposed that the connections between films and memory will be more explicit when considering embodied, affective and sensory memories. Section 2 introduces the phenomenological and theoretical basis for this paper. Section 3 presents the organisation of cross-cultural memory in embodied cinematic forms. Section 4 presents some analysis paths for

investigating the ethical and aesthetic value of these expressions. Then, it will be pointed out what kind of effects the above methods have on other areas.

2. 2. Phenomenological Foundations of Embodied Memory in Film

Any talk of embodied cognition in film should start with the phenomenological priority of experience. Merleau-Ponty believes that perception is not a secondary function of the world that a detached mind applies to it; rather, it is the way in which the world is first given through the body [1]. The above shows the general characteristics of films. If perception is based on embodiment, then cinematic meaning cannot be reduced to images. Film addresses the spectator as a living body in time and space that is oriented by senses. Memory can be viewed as the reproduction of stored pictures, but it is also a re-experience of the physical relations people have had with spaces, objects and other people.

Early development of film phenomenology translated the philosophical claim into a theory of cinematic experience. Casebier wanted to show that the filmic representation could be understood phenomenologically, rather than in terms of formalism or anti-realism [2]. Although it does not focus on embodied representation later, his works are still significant because they have brought back the problem of how to understand cinematic appearance as meaningful presence. Sobchack made this leap in logic by claiming that film experience is a reversible relationship between the spectator and the film, and both are percipient and expressive subjects [3]. Vision in the account is not only a result of optics but also of the body and multisensory intentionality. That is to say, movies do not show history directly. It can make the memory a way of being in the world.

It is very suitable for showing the culture of different groups. Marks suggests that intercultural films often present cultural experiences in a way that simulates touch, and thus require viewers to feel texture, absence and material surfaces through "seeing", rather than simply viewing a master image from afar [4]. To analyse the transnational memories in these films effectively, we need to consider the effects of diasporic dislocation, historical omission and unevenly distributed archival materials. Where official history has been omitted, film often uses sensory memories: graininess in images, texture of surfaces, sound residue, domestic objects, and bodily gestures. Embodied Cognition in these films is therefore not a decoration. It serves as a form of continuity for memory in the face of a break in direct historical transmission.

The phenomenology of cinema also points out this problem. Barker holds the view that film experience involves tactile, muscular and visceral relations with the spectator, and thus cinema can be felt as a texture that the body is in contact with [5]. Such a model can be viewed as a body-aware way of memory narrative. A cross-cultural memory film may not only present displacement or trauma in its content but also induce a state of disorientation, hesitation, closeness or vulnerability in the body of the viewer. Phenomenology is therefore not added to this story as an elaboration. It is one way by which the film thinks and remembers through embodiment.

Another effect of this phenomenological description is that cinematic memory does not need to be in the form of flashbacks or explicit memories. Memory can be conceived of as a form of being in the world; thus, any experience of space, sound, or touch may become a memory. Weight of the corridor, ambient noise pressure and slowness of a gesture can all be used to convey a sense of time without explicitly mentioning the past. It is particularly necessary for cross-cultural works that lack an organised testimony of memory. The body often carries what history has not yet recorded, and cinema presents this load through sensory arrangement rather than moral preaching.

3. 3. Embodied Cognition in Cross-cultural Memory Narratives

Cross-cultural memory narratives also include the inheritance of culture from place to place. They offer situations for living with memory across fragmented genealogies, displacement caused by geography, and cross-cultural interaction. Landsberg's idea of prosthetic memory can be applied here to explain how mass media help people develop emotional bonds with a history they have not

personally experienced [6]. It is also not restricted to identifications with plots and characters in films. It is often based on perception and sense experience. Thus, embodied cognition offers a way for viewers to experience memories that were not their own but have gained experiential meaning.

Ricoeur's reflections on memory and forgetting extend this idea by indicating that remembrance is always intertwined with absence, mediation and ethical responsibility [7]. Foreign films often have the above conflicts. Memory is not transparently recalled; rather, it is an incomplete return, and the body's sense provides evidence for what language cannot fully convey. A hand touching an old photograph, the sound of a forgotten lullaby, the rhythm of walking in a changed area, or hesitation before speaking in a foreign language can all serve as memory triggers. At this time, we can see that embodied cognition operates in narration; that is, memory is generated through sensory associations prior to verbal expression.

Research on cultural memory provides an extended social system for this argument. Erll believes that memory is transmitted through institutions, media and culture, and does not only occur in people's minds [8]. Assmann distinguishes between communicative memory and cultural memory, believes that remembrance occurs through lived interpersonal transmission, and thus is less stable in symbolic systems [9]. A movie can also be used to combine the two types simultaneously. It records gestures, voices, faces and spaces that are intimate and bodily, and also spreads them in large-scale transnational networks of memory. Therefore, cross-cultural memory narration in film is a place where bodily immediacy and cultural mediation meet.

Such intersections are often seen in films about migration, exile, the aftermath of war, colonialism and the diaspora. Elsaesser's research on German cinema and cultural memory indicates that cinematic memory is often formed through ethical problems of trauma, mediation and the difficulty of depicting historical violence [10]. Many of these works present memory indirectly through atmospheres of alienation, delayed recognition, broken chronology and unstable belonging. Embodied cognition enables these films to convey emotions across cultures by having bodily sensations of loss and proximity, which are universally understood. The spectator does not have the character's archive, but can still feel the weight of memory through cinematic representation.

Cross-cultural memory narratives also show that embodiment is not culturally neutral. Gestures, domestic spaces, food, clothing, ritualistic movements and bodily distances all have specific historical meanings, but cinema can convey them through sensory attention rather than direct conceptual equivalence. Therefore, phenomenological analysis of films is highly suitable for cross-cultural studies. Thus, the critic can investigate how a film fosters understanding by presenting unfamiliar rhythms of perception. Rather than assuming that memory is transmitted solely through verbal narration or historical recounting, such studies have shown that audiences may experience alterity by means of bodily recording of pace, texture, sound and affective atmosphere.

4. Analytical Paths for Film Phenomenology and Cross-cultural Memory

The first analysis can be to see embodied cognition as a way of narration rather than an extra phenomenon. Film phenomenology proposes that the meaning of narration is closely linked to how a film organises perception, motion and sensory information [3]. In cross-cultural memory narratives, this means that the story of the past is often transmitted less through explanatory exposition and more through rhythms of looking, listening, touching and dwelling. Therefore, in addition to what the memories are, we should also consider how a film creates a sense of uncertainty, intimacy, exile or return for the audience. Such attention shows that memory in cinema is often expressed non-verbally first.

A second way is to study haptic and tactile strategies as vehicles for intercultural memory. Marks and Barker have shown that tactile cinematic experience can present images as surfaces for touch rather than as distant objects of mastery [4, 5]. It is necessary to have an omission in film that cannot be revealed directly. Close-ups of fabric, skin, food, dust, architecture and domestic items can serve as

sensory links for different cultures and generations. These material details are not just memories; they are the continuous lives of memories in objects. The cross-cultural dimension of memory can be accessed through bodily sensation; thus, it is not lost in translation or culture.

Thirdly, connect the phenomenological analysis of films with the theory of cultural memory. Erll and Assmann believe that memory is always mediated, socially organised and historically situated [8-9]. Phenomenology does not assume an unembodied mediator either. Films spread cultural memory by providing emotional and sensory-rich encounters and ethical reflections for the audience. When the audience is transported to an unfamiliar world of perception, they will learn about the history of that culture and also experience some of its textures and absences in a bodily way. Landsberg's idea of prosthetic memory can be used to explain why this mediated encounter may be personally moving without losing the qualities of cultural difference [6].

A fourth is to investigate how bodily memory and narrative gaps relate to each other. Ricoeur believes that memory is associated with forgetting, delay and the incompleteness of representation [7]. Film phenomenology can help us experience these gaps sensorially, for instance, through darkness, off-screen sound, hesitant framing, temporal ellipsis, and prolonged attention to spaces devoid of their former occupants. These ways are more suitable for cross-cultural storytelling as they maintain a sense of distance from historical trauma and present it indirectly. Embodied cognition is not presented as a method for all-encompassing recovery here, but rather as a way to live with absence without striving to fix it.

Film phenomenology can be used to conduct an ethical reading of cross-cultural memory narratives. Based on Merleau-Ponty's philosophy and Elsaesser's discussion of collective memory, one's sense of connection to the past is rooted in embodied exposure to others rather than the learning of knowledge [1, 10]. Cross-cultural memory films often resist the fantasy of all-encompassing access. They make the audience feel uncertain, fragmented sensations and incomplete recognition. This limitation is morally required to prevent the transformation of memory into a consumable spectacle. By having people feel memory through embodied cognition rather than learning it fully by explanation, these films create a space for the harmonious co-existence of different cultures, historical wounds and sensory closeness.

The last analytical gain of this framework is methodological. It makes scholars consider the contents of cinematic memory in terms of theme, plot and symbolism, as well as tempo, camera distance, sound layer and body language. Such a way can be used to spread cross-cultural narratives, and it does not have to conform to a single language or country. Instead, it is hoped that cinema will convey memory through shared vulnerability of sensation and retain the irreducible singularity of historical experience.

5. 5. Conclusion

Embodied cognition can be used to explore the nature of cross-cultural memory narratives in film. According to film phenomenology, memory is not just a sequence of images from the past organised in a narrative. It is a life-experienced sense and feeling that occurs when the form of film meets the embodiment of the audience. Therefore, cross-cultural remembrance in cinema is frequently achieved through texture, mood, gestures, sound, breaks, space, and so on, rather than by direct explanation.

The paper has proposed that film phenomenology and studies of cultural memory are particularly beneficial to be combined. Phenomenology examines the process by which films think through the body, and memory studies investigate how such bodily experiences are situated in larger histories of transmission, rupture and mediation. Embodied cognition is a kind of connection that can be used to transfer the history of the world and human life across different cultures without abstract concepts.

Therefore, cross-cultural memory narratives are not only stories of remembrance. They are also types of perception that have prompted people to reflect on the weight of memory in new spaces. Therefore,

to study them phenomenologically is to see that cinema can serve as a medium for memory in a bodily, ethical, and cultural way simultaneously.

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