

The Depiction of Reality In The Films of Charlie Chaplin: A Marxist Perspective

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Abstract

Charlie Chaplin is considered a landmark figure in 20th Century Cinema. He represents the silent era of Cinema that can be appreciated by spectators from any lifestyle, particularly regardless of differences in language and culture. The purpose of the present study is to examine the depiction of reality in two of his numerous cinematic masterpieces, *City Light* (1931) and *The Circus* (1928) from a Marxist critical perspective. The plots of both these films are based on the worldly and sentimental phenomenon of love. Chaplin effectively exploits a simple subject to depict the flaws of appearance. For the purposes of the present study, the two primary sources were analyzed from a Marxist point of view with reference to the relevant theoretical literature on Marxism and Cinematography. Based on the Marxian understanding that reality is only the reality of the material relations of production, it can be argued that appearance is far away from reality. When reading the above cinematic masterpieces, it becomes apparent that the issues that have been neglected in the mainstream discourses are conveyed to the audiences coincidentally through the medium of comedy. Furthermore, the analysis of the afore-mentioned works of cinema reveals how reality has been undermined by ideology.

Keywords: Chaplin, Reality, Marx vision, Ideology, Discourse