

昭和二十九年 度
芸術祭 参加作品

近松物語

大映映画

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人生の死を前にて、前につく影に、九十九の最初で、最後の人生の春だ、うとうと結んだおさんと茂兵衛

(1954.12)
(1954.10)

Release year - 1954

Plot:

The movie is about a printer Mohei who works for samurai Ishun. Ishun is wealthy but miserly scroll-maker in Kyoto. He doesn't even want to help his wife Osan who was from a poor background.

Osan's brother asks for monetary help, but Osan didn't ask Ishun because of his stingy nature, rather asked the servant Mohei who handles the accounts for Ishun. Mohei tried to forge the nominal amount but was caught. He pleaded for help before master. O-Tama loves Mohei, she came to his defense and yells out that it was her fault. She claims that she had asked for the money. Ishun has tried on several occasions to seduce her, became more angry on seeing O-Tama's action. He ordered for house arrest of Mohei.

The twist began here, that night Osan went to O-Tama's room to thank her and instead came to know that her husband is cheating on her with this maid. To catch her husband red-handed, she swapped her place with O-Tama. The same night Mohei escapes from the attic and goes to O-Tama's room where he hopes to thank her before he tries to escape to avoid being handed over to the authorities. However, he discovers Osan in O-Tama's bed. At that exact moment, the shop clerk walks in and sees them together. The alarm is raised and general havoc ensues. In the commotion, Mohei manages to get away.

However, Osan is forced to face her husband's wrath. He gives her a dagger and tells her to do what a person of her status should do. However, instead of killing herself, she flees. As chance should have it, she runs into Mohei again. The two go on the run to Osaka. They come to realize their love for one another and swear to never be apart again.

But even after so many efforts they are finally caught and handed over to authorities. They are finally crucified.

Analysis of the movie

- The direction seems to be perfect. It is noticed that the director has taken the detailed shots, the angle shots are adjusted such that most of the frame is covered in the shot.
- The movie also shows how the society reacts to two lovers. They are being ashamed in public and then crucified. This is totally opposite to the society that portrayed in European Cinema.
- Hint of the end in the starting of the movie, one morning in Kyoto during the early Edo period, a somber procession makes its way down the main streets. People crowd into streetsides, doors, and windows to grab a peek at the main attraction of the parade. They watch as a horse walks by with two people, a man and a woman, tied back-to-back on top. They have been found guilty of adultery. Their punishment is crucifixion, for adultery is a capital offense under the Tokugawa shoguns. But first, they must be revealed to the public and shamed before they are executed.

- The movie not only shows how lovers are treated in Japanese society, but also shows that honor is more important to the person, and things happening in one's personal life affects the professional and social status of the person too. There are people who are always looking for such an event to happen to take benefit of the scenario.
- The deep pool of black the shots used by director dip into produce sublime images. Masterful composition, the sets are alive there seems to be rush in the movie which makes it more realistic, each extra a full person, each town teeming with people.

Conclusions

Perfectly modulated story of doomed love between a merchant's wife and a servant. The plot was perfect with proper and believable twist were there. The movie is a long melodrama but doesn't feel so much because of good storyline. The movie addresses the societal condition of women.