Rape And Murder In Rashomon: Film Analysis

Rashomon is a Japanese movie which about a rape and murder in different versions in which it leads to the true meaning of the author, Akira Kurosawa, that wants to emphasize about the nature of truth and reality. This film creates the arguments of what the resolution or truth actually is, but is what makes it such a great topic to study when learning about perception and reality.

The story includes the stories that have told by four witnesses; the woodcutter, the bandit, the wife, and the samurai himself, telling their stories of what they believe happened with their own point of view. The film gives us four viewpoints of the incident - one for each defendant - each revealing a little more detail. Roger Ebert has given his perspective in which he believes that each witness is telling the truth of how the situation of murder occurred. Therefore, since people have different points of view and remember different things, Ebert states that there are multiple truths suggesting that truth is subjective.

Ebert’s views related to the theory of expectation in which it states that people expect to be what people might see, meaning that people might expect that what they say is all true, therefore there are multiple truths. The expectation is influence how people see things in which people might suffer not only from visual illusions but also from illusions with each of other sense. This can explain why there is no absolute truth and everyone has different beliefs, making that truth is subjective to what one believe. In the movie, Rashomon, each witness has a different background and different memory which is why they speak of the murder in their expectations in their own ways.

In the bandit story, he expects that he is the one who kill the samurai due to his criminal background and what he has said that he would him. In the wife story which saying that she hold the knife, which she expects that she is the one who kills her husband since her dagger was in him. In the wood cutter story, he only sees after the murder which he expects to see what he wants to see. Therefore, people might misinterpret what they perceive because of the different experience they have created the expectation.Another theory that is related to Ebert’s view is eye-witness testimony in which it suggests that if people try to reconstruct and then try to explain but they have already lose some information- as well as “people cannot trust what they have seen”.

This theory also depends on emotions and memories in which sometimes people use the sense from the past or memory that other people have told in which every people observes and feels experiences differently, to reconstruct things. Emotions are also the influences on the truth and reality of a situation. It is what people use to make decisions especially when the quick decisions. The wife will be the good example of emotional effect in which she uses her emotion and tears to tell what was on her mind. In the bandit story, what he has said is also due to the emotion that he has some kind of an upset feeling, making him tends to see things in an over exaggerated manner as well as in the wood cutter story that he might feel afraid and fear which makes him says things over exaggerated as well. From this theory it can say that people might reconstruct something using their memory, emotion and some lie in which it lose some information.

Coherence also relate to Ebert's views of perception and truth because one usually try to use a reason to make a sense, therefore the witness could use their reasons to support to what they believe it is true to them. This is the another important aspect theory since truth can be true to one and false to another, as long as people have enough evidence to support it, then there will be no false for them because people try to use reason to make sense. This theory is also an important aspect to support Ebert's view that truth is subjective since people have different reasons then there should be reasonable multi truth as well. In the wife, she states her reason that she is the one who has the dagger in her hands and when she closes her eyes she found that the dagger is already on samurai's chest, so she might have kill him. While in the samurai's story that saying that the samurai has killed himself, the reason of this is he might feel a shame of himself because he is a samurai, so that is why he committed suicide. Akira Kurosawa also emphasizes that everything is possible which means that it can be true or false.

Since the witness has different reasons so they perceived reality differently because they have they own truth which can say that people use logic to determine solutions and conclusions to make it becomes more reliable.Even though there is the unclear result of who is murderer is, but Ebert's views and theories can explain why the four witnesses told a different story about the murder. Eye- witness testimony is depending on a character's emotions and experience towards the event and how they perceive it. All of these theories are dependent to an individual and suggest that why there is multi trust and not the absolute truth. In this Rashomon, Akira Kurosawa is trying to shows the reality in person in which there is no absolute truth as well. To conclude, some people might think that truth is objective without finding more information to support about it. What if there are more than one truth?

Works Cited

1. Lagemaat van de, Richard. Theory of Knowledge for the IB diploma. Cambridge University Press 2005. Textbook.