

## *Narrative Ethics of Post-Modern Visual Culture between Chinese “Diors Series” and Western “Loser Series” in Comparative Perspective*

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**Abstract.** The main characteristics of the post-modern culture such as counterculture, non-conformism, virtualization, fragmentation, mass culture, business culture and irrationalism etc., decide the post-modernity of visual culture. “Film”, as an indispensable element of visual culture, has a narrative ethics that can be used for an interpretation of ethical orientation and ethical values in post-modern visual culture. This article, by comparing “Diors image” in Chinese Diors series with “loser image” in western loser series, the typical post-modern visual image, takes the post-modern context as the focal point and makes a further study of “Diors culture” or “loser culture”, which is formed in the phenomenon of post-modern culture, and thus explores narrative ethics and ethical values in post-modern visual culture.

**Keywords:** post-modernity; visual culture; loser image; narrative ethics

### Introduction: The Characteristics of the Post-Modern Visual Culture

Gustavo Bombini once described the image symbols such as film, television, and network as “image culture” from the viewpoint of literary study (qtd. in Wang & Li 2003: 21). In 1913, when the Hungarian movie theorist Béla Balázs summed up cultural forms which are represented by films for the new visual culture, he formulated the concept of visual culture in the first place. W. J. T. Mitchell argues that visual culture is about cultural construction:

[...] it is learned and cultivated, not simply given by nature; that therefore it might have a history related in some yet to be determined way with the history of arts, technologies, media, and the social practices of display and spectatorship; and (finally) that it is deeply involved with human societies, with the ethics and politics, aesthetics and epistemology of seeing and being seen. (Mitchell 2002: 87)

Firstly, post-modern visual culture is a kind of irrational culture of senses. As Weibin, Liu in his monograph 后现代视觉文化研究 (*The Study on Post-modern Visual Culture*) points out:

Visual culture emphasizes extremely sensory experience brought on by the visual object, ruling out the space of rational thinking. In this context, not only are the original visual images exaggeratedly reproduced to become more powerful by visual technology to stimulate the senses of human beings the most. Those non-visual art forms, such as literature have seen the impact of visual culture. (qtd in Weibin 2011: 4, trans. by the author )

Secondly, the virtual value of visual culture, such as the sign value of film and television, is virtually created by computer technology. Thirdly, the cultural thoughts of visual culture: the post-modern visual culture is characterized by its anti-rationalism, anti-center, and counter-subjectivity. Finally, the artistry of visual culture: visual culture emphasizes the popularization and common life, it is against the legitimacy and the classic, pursuit of heterogeneity and contradiction within artistic language. Deconstructing the significance, characterization and signs of the text, the post-modern visual culture is often associated with post-modern culture in terms of anti-culture, anti-art, virtualization, fragmentation, mass culture, business culture, absurdity, and so on.

### “Loser or Diors Series”, “Loser or Diors Image” and “Loser or Diors Culture” in the Post-Modern Visual Culture

In 1990 in western countries Mr. Bean, starring Rowan Atkinson, sparked a rush for skits, absurd plays in the UK. Then came the American film *Loser* directed by Erik Burke in 1991. In 1996 followed another American *Loser* directed by Kirk Harris. In 1999, Canadian Jean-Marc Vallée produced *Loser Love*. The American director Amy Heckerling released *Loser* in 2000. In 2007, starring Olivia Côte and Judith Siboni, a French version of the loser series *Vous Les Femmes* came out; this drama has overturned the decent image of a French woman who wears a trendy dress and delicate makeup. The series shows various female characters struggling throughout their daily lives. They are not only under pressure from the office, but also have to deal with absurd and crazy accidents that happen every day. In 2011, another loser series *Knallerfrauen*, starring Martina Hill, was released: a German comedy in which most of the plots are similar to the French version. The unrelated, absurd plots, and unstable roles cover all aspects of the urban women including their work,

housework, sports, friends, baby, children, parents, and many other elements. The Dutch film *Lover of Loser*, American romantic comedies *Coyote County Loser* and *My Man is a Loser*; British comedies *The Inbetweeners I, II, and III*, the Turkish *The Loser's Club* and the reality TV *The Biggest Loser series* all cover the theme of losers. In China in 1991, Hong Kong actor Stephen Chow's *整蛊专家* (*The Ultimate Trickster*) predicted an epoch for Chinese losers ("Diors" in Chinese, a buzz net word) featured by "Wulitou of grassroots". Then in 2010 came Xu Zheng and Wang Baoqiang's series *人在囧途* (*Lost on Journey*), among many loser works, a series of network loser images starred by Dapeng were released in 2012, 2013 and 2015. During 2010–2016, the production of Chinese Diors series reached its peak, and thus formed the Chinese Diors culture.

As the subtitle suggests, Chinese nowadays replace losers with Diors. "Dior" in Chinese means rich, it refers to the male genitals or "bird" in the lexicon, metaphorically it means 'abusive' and 'derogatory', which then extends to signify "severe, stronger, good" in a post-modern context. In China the buzz word "Diors" came from the TV network in 2011, as young people used the word "Diors" as a form of self-mockery, implicating that they are short, poor against the handsome, rich and beautiful. It originated from Internet media such as blogs, micro-blogs, net forums, and bulletin board systems. It is called Diors for it is similar to the pronunciation of the French perfume "Dior", but it means "loser" or "pleb". "Diors or loser image" can be seen in many Chinese and western films and TV series. Diors can be male or female, they are nobodies, plain, ordinary, and have low incomes. Phoenix TV, Tencent once represented "Diors image" as the male with no high degree, low income, bad life status; they may be migrant workers, employees, workers, and even those who have a good education. They are the humble and the ordinary who possess uncertain futures, unrecognized by society, eager to obtain social identity, but are helpless and hopeless. The word also refers to women who are struggling with all kinds of daily chores. As the term took on a sarcastic sense, many youths became self-proclaimed male or female Diors, a way through which young people could relax. For example, Diors starred by Dapeng who plays all sorts of little people, a hairdresser, restaurant waiter, foot masseur, psychologist, even school teachers and the grass-root people in Stephen Chow's works. In western countries, the word "Diors" or "loser" are less common, according to the IMDB (Internet Movies Database), nearly 30 western Movies, TV series or variety shows focus on loser image as their main theme, most of which are comedies with relaxing plots, humorous language and extremely exaggerated body language, but a few plays are thrillers. Westerners are not so afraid to call themselves losers,

especially those who live on the ground floor with low income, bad work and living conditions, such as various insignificant people in Germany's Martina Hill's *Knaller Frauen* and Tom Ripley in *The Talented Mr. Ripley*.

"Loser or Diors" culture is not only part of post-modern culture, but of post-modern visual culture. Differently from elite culture of tradition and authority, "Loser or Diors" culture is the culture of appreciating ugliness and absurdity in the post-modern visual culture. According to the American sociologist Daniel Bell's interpretation of post-industrial society, "post" on one hand means that the industrial society has already passed, on the other hand, people feel confused about the future of the modern industrial society which has not yet arrived. It is a feeling of in-between. The "Loser culture" in the post-modern visual context can also be understood as a transitional culture, a confusing culture or a representative culture. Thus the ordinary things in daily life can be the focal point in post-modern visual culture. Hereafter in the following part III, I may use Diors more often than losers.

## The Narrative Characteristics in Post-Modern Visual Culture

This article will take 屌丝男士4 (*Diors Men IV*), 九品芝麻官 (*Hail the Judge*), *Mr. Bean*, *The Inbetweeners* as examples to present the narrative characteristics.

### 1. Vaudeville Narrative

Lack of rigorous logic among the plots, it features too many jokes and spoofs, which interrupt and disturb the order of storytelling. (Liu Kun, 2016:98, my translation)

#### Case 1:

Customer: Last time I came to your restaurant for meals, I found that the fish I ordered could fight with me. I came here for a meal again because I am generous. But you made me sad, you are ungrateful.

Boss: Please do not mind, ok? I won't let the fish come here again. (*Nervous.*)

Customer: But you bring me the hair. (*Then pulls a bunch of hair from the bowl.*)  
(*Diors IV*, my translation)

The vaudeville narrative is also embodied in many plots of western plays such as *Mr. Bean*, though there are no spoken lines in the play. The scene is shown as follows:

Mr Bean drives to the seaside, pulls out his swimming trunks, glances left and right, notices a man wearing sunglasses sitting nearby, and in a witty and embarrassing way, he puts on his swimming trunks. When he is elated (happy to have managed to change discreetly in the presence of the other person), the blind man in the sunglasses stands up and departs with a tactile stick. (*Mr. Bean*, Episode 1)

**2. Anti-Cultural Narrative.** Embodied by “Hippie Culture” which counters mainstream culture, “Diors Culture” is characterized by people seeking a non-materialistic way of life, preferring strange clothing and hair style, looking for a rebellious lifestyle set against the established society. “Smart” may be the typical image in the anti-cultural narrative. A smart with a bizarre hairstyle on a bus in *Diors Men IV* was immersed in square dance songs which some of the elite hate.

Da Peng: Could you please turn off the music? Do you think it is acceptable to make such noise in a public place like on a bus?

Young man (smart): Why not acceptable? Don't you think this song is cool and fashionable? Do you know what is in fashion?

Da Peng: A smart like you know the fashion?

Young man: How dare you are? Who do you think you are talking with?

Da Peng: You can ask the other guys here. Is this song cool as you say? (Unexpectedly all the rest passengers on the bus simultaneously say “Yes, it's so cool and fashionable”. And they start to ask Da Peng get out of the bus. (qtd. In *Diors IV*, my translation)

Unexpectedly almost all the people on the bus who strongly objected to the so-called elite culture were enjoying the cliché; and this is mass culture. Such weird scenes are also presented in the European and American movie *The Inbetweeners* (called *Loser Party*) in which four young men named Jay, Neil, Simon and Will, wearing weird cloaks, and skirts were shut out of the door by their classmates; especially during a scene at the airport where Will's mother gave him a “rape alarm” which is used for the prevention of rape and the scene where Neil pooped in public in the amusement park because of his fecal incontinence. All these scenes embody the losers' non-materialistic lifestyle and the counterculture life scenes.

Mum: Now, Petal, you know how much I worry. So I've got you a special holiday gift.

Will: Oh, thanks, mum.

Mum: It's... a rape alarm.

Will: What do you think is gonna happen to me?

Mum: Petal, I think you might get raped. Right, sweetie, it's better to have a rape alarm and not need it than to get gang-raped in an alleyway by men.  
(*The Inbetweeners*)

**3. Parody Narrative.** Parody is a common narrative technique used by post-modern writers by exaggerating, distorting, mimicking and mocking historical events, characters, or the contents and forms of classical literary works for the purpose of criticizing, satirizing and negating the tradition, the history and realistic value. In *文学批评术语词典 (Literary Criticism Terminology Dictionary)* Xianping, Wang and Youping, Wang cited Roger Fowler's point of view towards parody:

Parody is one of the most intentional and analytic technique in literature. By destructive imitation, it strives to highlight the weaknesses of the mock object, pretension and the lack of self-sense. (Xianpei 1999: 295, trans. by Luo Decheng )

As one of post-modern fiction's narrative approaches, "parody" often refers to ironic reference, collage or borrowing, not partial reproduction of the original text, but rather parody, alienation of the original text. Based on historical events and characters, the contents and forms of classical literary works are exaggerated and distorted by parody for the purpose of criticizing, mocking and negating the tradition, the history and the reality. Dr. Dooks in the movie *The Inbetweeners* said to Simon who is scared of marriage: "A friend with weed is a friend indeed" and then handed the confused Simon marijuana. Dr. Dooks parodied the aphorism "A friend in need is a friend indeed". Parodies are also seen in many Chinese Diors series. By parodying the trivial things in daily life, classical discourse, the classic story, directors attack Chinese and western mainstream ideology which has central significance, integrity and unity. For example, in Hong Kong Stephen Chow's *Hail the Judge*, Judge Bao asked the murderer why he committed a crime. Fiercely the murderer answered: "You dare try to catch me, do you know who my father is? My father is...". The line parodies "My father is Li Gang" . (the father of a young man who killed a girl in a car accident in 2017, but refused to take the responsibility for his wrongdoing and yelled at "You can prosecute me, but who cares? My father is Li Gang", who works as the deputy director of public security.)

**4. KUSO narrative.** Introduced to Taiwan from Japan, the word "kuso" means "evil" in Japanese. It originally referred to teaching players how to play bad

games seriously, and then extending to “Wulitou”, a creative style on Taiwan Internet which is beyond common sense with derailment performances. “Wulitou” is a dialect word in Foshan or Shunde in Guangdong province, and means that a person says or does something difficult to understand, without a clear purpose, randomly vulgar, with tantrums, but it is not unreasonable. Take the scene of asking for leave in *Diors Men IV* for instance:

Staff A: Boss, I want 2 days off, I cough too much. (*Starts coughing.*)

Boss: Cough, what do you mean? Come on here, let's take a look at your colleagues, (*pointing to the staff B*) his leg is broken. (*The guy with a broken leg is still in contact with the businessman. The boss turns to staff C who vomits much blood.*) He gushes out blood but still makes a contribution to the company. (*Then the boss turns to staff D who looks too sick from long-term overtime work.*) Look at her, she has been working overtime for three and a half years here from her puberty to menopause and she never has a relationship with a man. (*Pitifully, the boss turns to the fifth staff who lies on desk and is being given CPR by two doctors.*) He can apply for the medical expenses reimbursement after our company becomes a listed company.

Staff E (*stands up all of a sudden*): Boss, the solution can definitely work. (*Diors Men IV, my translation*)

**5. Derailment narrative** is a way of narrating which inserts suddenly a derailment scene that has nothing to do with the current scenario in order to achieve the comedic effect with cold humor, and to eliminate the “serious” sense caused by the tension and the “violence” sense by cruelty. The derailment narrative style can be seen everywhere in *Diors Men IV*. The boss holds a staff meeting, blames employees for their lack of inspiration when selling bath salts, even fights with the employees, the serious and angry atmosphere results in nervousness, but suddenly the camera shows a picture with the boss' tearful gratitude to the staff, and then a few employees stripped to the waist, with soap bubbles on the conference table, scrambling to express their ideas.

**6. Anti-art narrative** is another narrating method used by film directors who often select secular stories, routines to create visually beautiful images with a large number of superstars. The stars in *Diors Men* series are seen as ordinary people. Fond of spoofing, subverting tradition, *Diors* films are created with an obvious commercial aim, paying more attention to the audience's reaction. A scene in *Diors Men IV* describes the Chinese *Diors* Dapeng fighting with the German *Diors* star Martina Hill, while she is waiting for a bus at the bus station. The plot deviates from the normal logical thinking and narrative frame in which the two stars probably should chat in a friendly, polite and happy

manner. Another scene in *Diors Men IV* is one where the hero in a bar accosts a girl, acted by the beautiful German actress Martina Hill, by way of asking the girl how to attain the slim figure, which is most likely to happen in a senior fitness club, however, it turns out that the hero is taken to an open square where a throng of Chinese old ladies are dancing happily. The above two scenes are presented in a way of counter-art narration which is counter-intuitive, anti-art, and often full of tension, one of the most conventional methods of post-modern visual narration.

### The Comparison of Narrative Ethics in Post-Modern Visual Culture

As the author of this article, I believe that any culture has its own specific form of expression. The narrator applies some specific forms to narrate some cultural phenomenon in the work, such as the director can use a variety of narrative methods to illustrate the theme of the film. This article focuses on the “Diors or Loser Culture” phenomenon by dealing with some post-modern narrative characteristics which are mentioned in part III, thus comparing the characteristics of narrative ethics with the ethics value in the post-modern visual culture. Adam Zachary Newton in his book *Narrative Ethics* regards narrative as ethics:

Above all, as an ethics, narrative is performance or act-purgative, as in Turgenev’s “*The Country Doctor*” malignant, as in Camus’s *La chute*, historically recuperative, as in A. B. Yehoshua’s *Mr. Mani*, erotic and redemptive as in *The Thousand and One Nights*, obsessive and coercive, as in Coleridge’s *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. (Newton 1997: 7)

[...]

By purposeful contrast, my proposal of a narrative ethics implies simply narrative as ethics: the ethical consequences of narrating story and fictionalizing person, and the reciprocal claims binding teller, listener, witness, and reader in that process. (Ib. 11)

According to Newton, the core of narrative ethics is divided into three levels:

The triad comprises: (1) a narrational ethics (in this case, signifying the exigent conditions and consequences of the narrative act itself); (2) a representational ethics (the costs incurred in fictionalizing oneself or others by exchanging “person” for “character”); and (3) a hermeneutic ethics (the ethic-critical accountability which acts of reading holds their readers to). (Ib. 17, 18)

Wayne Booth points out in *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction* (qtd. in Booth 1998: 10) that ethical criticism should focus on the interaction between the narrator's moral spirit and the moral spirit of readers or listeners. Booth called this the process of conduction between the readers' reading experience and the life experience of their own. The moment when the reader's or viewer's own reading or viewing experience comparing with others' inference produces ethical values.

**1. The Comparison of Narrational Ethics.** Narrational ethics focuses on the ethics caused by narrating behavior. The narrational ethics in film and television is achieved by language or specific narrating behavior, it is a process to generate the requirements and responsibilities from the screenwriter to the narrator (director), and then to the narratees (the audience) "by what he said or how he said it". Let's compare the "homosexual theme" in Chinese *Diors* series and the western loser series.

Case 1: In a bar (*Diors Men IV*)

Dapeng: Where are you from?

Foreign lady: Germany.

Dapeng (*to the waiter*): Well, 2 bottles of pure imported beer from Germany.

Waiter: All right.

Dapeng: I treat the German lady to drink (*waiter serves, a male foreigner shows up*). Hi, buddy! I'm before you. (*To himself*.) You don't understand Chinese, right? (*Angrily stopping the guy putting his hands on the lady's shoulder*.) Don't do that! Don't do that, OK?

The foreigner (*pushes Dapeng*): You, go away, Fuck! (*Showing arm muscles at the same time, continuing to flirt with the girl*.)

Dapeng (angry): Let her go. Come for me. (*At this point, the switch*.)

Dapeng: I said that you come for me! (*Gently lays beside the foreigner, the two are laughing and flirting. Gay theme highlighted*.)

Case 2: In a yacht bedroom (*The Talented Mr. Ripley*)

Peter: I'm completely lost.

Tom: I'm sorry, Peter.

Tom: I'm lost, I'm stuck in the basement, am I? That's my, terrible, lonely in dark. And I lied... Who I am? And where I am? No one will find me... Peter, tell some good things about Tom, please. (*Tom comes to Peter tenderly leaning on Peter*.)

Peter (*tenderly*): Tom is talented, Tom is tender, Tom is beautiful.

Tom: You big liar (*crying*).

Peter: Tom, Tom is a mystery. Tom is not nobody. Tom has secrets he doesn't want to tell me, I hope he would. Tom has nightmares. That's not a good thing. Tom has someone who loves him. That is a good thing. Um, Tom is crouching me, Tom is crouching me, Tom, Tom (*chokes*), Tom (*wails*).

In case 1, the gay theme of *Diors* becomes funny, witty just through a simple and gentle scenario by freely using a different language such as English, the northeast dialect and Mandarin and by the use of a derailment narrative. However in case 2 the gay theme is full of tension through the narrative discourse including the basement, dark, lonely, horrible, lie... concerning the hero's heart and soul. In addition, Peter's gentleness is highlighted through his mumbling, but behind Peter's words and Tom's crying, the horror thriller genre is highlighted.

The film's narrative discourse is the new language reality. The same theme in different narrative expressions in Chinese *Diors* and western loser series shows different cultural backgrounds. In Chinese culture, the gay or lesbian theme in fiction or even in real life is always indirectly expressed, sometimes in a funny, comical and humorous way. While in western culture, the homosexual theme is often taken seriously, equitably and with respect. In the same scene, having a meal at the restaurant, Xiaobao Song, a typical Chinese *Diors* in *Diors Men IV*, focuses on the fish dish – “talking fish”, then in the next scene, his focus is on the 1-metre-long hair in the dish. By these dish discourses, the diet culture is emphasized. But in the same scene at the restaurant, the western losers in *Knaller Frauen* concern themselves with sex. In western films and plays, “sex” or “sex culture” is openly discussed. By comparison, Chinese *Diors* films pay more attention to the entertainment effect through relaxing humorous narration, or pay attention to the *Diors*' spirit striving for a better life; while the western loser films are open-minded about topics such as sex, homosexuality and paedophilia through irony. These topics are more subtle in China's *Diors* series.

The American singer Chad Future's adapted song *Loser* also has the narrative ethics, the song conveys a loser's mentality through the lyrics:

Loser lonely me faking tough and cowardly, Selfish wanna be In the mirror you're, Just a Loser oddity punk delinquent tragedy, Trash out in the street In the mirror, I'm a loser... Hate me cuz they know inside I was them... (*Chad Future*)

**2. The Comparison of Representational Ethics.** The second core of narrative ethics is representational ethics, which studies the ethical consequence caused

by the behavior of fictional characters who are based on real people. The representational ethics derives ethical responsibility out of the context from the perspective of the author. Maoguo Wu points out in his article 叙事伦理与伦理救赎 (*Narrative Ethics and Ethics Redemption*) that:

As the film with narrative art, the characters are always the basic means representing all sorts of ethics, and also the most simple and easiest means. (Maoguo 2011: 82, trans. by the author)

According to the behaviors of characters (Diors or losers) in eastern and western plays, four categories of the Diors or loser image are presented in this article.

Firstly, Diors or losers in humorous drama in which the role contains no specific meaning, and there is no connection between the plot, just random collage and sometimes some body language is used to obtain the effect of entertainment or amusement, such as in the Chinese version of the *Diors Men* series, the German series *Knaller Frauen*, the *Mr Bean* series and in the 2009 British comic series *The Inbetweeners*.

The second are Diors or losers struggling for a better life. In such films there is a clear goal and the plot of the story is complete, For example, 煎饼侠 (*Pancake Spider-man*) describes a trivial actor who wants to shoot a spider-man film with superstars to realize his childhood dream of rescuing the world. Hank in the western *Loser* in 1991 by Erik Burke is a loser and a hopeless blue-collar worker from the bottom of life who was brought to Manhattan, this dizzy city. He was unemployed at first, with no money, and no love, but then won the lottery. It is a story full of legendary cliches: drugs, pimps and a funny person. It is a comedy which overturns the yuppie nightmare of genre, contains Cracker Barrel<sup>2</sup> humanism and schadenfreude cynicism, but the theme is narrated and expressed in a happy and pleasant way. In 2000, the American director Amy Heckerling's *Loser*, a loser of the love story of Paul, the famous geek at a New York University striving for the beautiful Dora Dimond. The representational ethics value of the second is to inspire human beings to realize that life is not easy, but still full of hope.

The third kind of Diors or losers is the violent thriller. Different from the first two kinds, both of which are comedies, the latter is a thriller. For instance, 老炮 (*Mr. Six*), a Chinese Diors film, is full of fighting; *The Talented Mr Ripley*, an American film involving murder, has a dull and dark atmosphere. Kirk

<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cracker\\_Barrel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cracker_Barrel)

Harris' 1996 film *Loser* tells the story of a 23-year-old James Dean Ray who is a small-time drug dealer bent on self-destruction. The product of a broken home, Jimmy refuses help from those around him and spends his final hours hanging out and selling drugs along with committing the occasional robbery. The whole film conveys a kind of extreme hopelessness, helplessness and the feeling of melancholy. In 1999, the Canadian Jean-Marc Vallée directed *Loser Love* which is a thriller full of revenge.

To highlight the salvation function of some ideal “big love” in the film, someone can only be in the form of “he dead” in a hurry, “This kind of ethical redemption of love seems to break through the moral bottom line, life seems cruel and hard to accept, but the movie narrative just uses a variety of skills to achieve a reasonable narrative ethics of the big love”. (Maoguo 2011: 81, trans. by the author)

The fourth kind of loser is in love comedy. In 2009 Jason Naumann directed *Coyote County Loser*, a western love comedy, which narrates a realistic and romantic love story in the American West. Directed in 2011 by Dominic Burns, the comedy *How to Stop Being a Loser* tells the story of the hero James who is immune to women but under the guidance of artist Ampers and good luck, when learning the skills of charming women, he begins to suspect the intentions of Ampers and pondering about what can truly make one happy in life. Directed in 2013 by Mike Young, the romantic comedy *My Man is a Loser* tells the story of two married men who find a way to save their marriage with the help of their single playboy friend. Directors focus on the emotional life of ordinary people, closely concerning themselves with the conflict between reality and the ideal by presenting the post-modern visual image.

**3. The Comparison of Hermeneutic Ethics.** In Newton's view, a hermeneutic ethics is the ethic-critical accountability to which acts of reading hold their readers. Nie Zhenzhao thinks literary ethical criticism is characterized by interpretation.

Characterized by the interpretation, the main task of literary ethical criticism is to use their own unique approach to analyze, induct and summarize objectively all kinds of social phenomenon in the literary. (Nie 2011: 15, trans. by the author)

Hermeneutic ethics focuses on the reaction of readers or audience. By searching the relevant information about losers in the film and TV series, we find that

when narrating the loser theme, the Chinese have more tolerance for the word than in western films. The expansion of the word in its connotation and denotation determines its symbolic significance in the context of post-modern visual culture. The word “Diors” or “loser” connotes the negative meaning but is developed into a relatively good connotation. A lot of people, especially the young, even usurp the role of Diors, which means capable and striving. Here is the review from the net media Sohu:

Since Diors Men series set online in 2012, it has been firmly occupying the king’s leadership among the network dramas, constantly creating the new record of homemade dramas, and continues to transcend all network plays on the film heat and the topic of major social list, becoming the first phenomenal super IP [Intellectual Property]. (Qtd in Yule. Sohu 2015, trans. by the author.)<sup>3</sup>

In narrative aspect, the western loser series in the 1990s were mainly sorrowful, thrilling, and depressive, then became witty, humorous, and even spoof after 2000. This shift in the treatment of the loser in western movies or TV series shows people’s attitude towards the “loser image” in their inner heart. While in China, the loser film or series after 2010 basically keeps the same pace with the western ones in the post-modern visual culture. By contrast, the westerners show less tolerance for the loser in the context of post-modern visual culture. A loser is opposed to a winner, the loser’s image in literature is the symbol of failure at many levels. But more and more people also call themselves a loser.

## Conclusion

As a part of post-modern culture, “Diors or loser culture” embodies ethical judgement, ethical thinking and ethical emotions of people. It has impacted the present mainstream social ethics. The Chinese scholar Maoguo Wu thinks that what matters is not how to express the ethical issues in the narrative but how to organize the “accident” and make the accidental order. Because if we always judge and think according to abstract concepts of good or evil, we will never be able to understand where the value lies and what the most valuable experience is. Only in the narrative “by chance” or in the “details”, can we find the ethical rules in the perceptual world.

Post-modern visual culture is a mass and commercial culture, it pays more attention to the feelings of the viewers or audiences and to the box office, with

<sup>3</sup> <http://yule.sohu.com/20150728/n417656231.shtml?qq-pf-to=pcqq.c2c>

the aesthetic of the general public as the main value orientation. Meanwhile, the negative attitude of post-modernism towards the value of truth and progress had led to a value relativism, skepticism and value nihilism, so as to make people understand the relativity and diversity of value. Because post-modernist literature negates historical discourse and the grand narrative, namely no longer believing in the greatness of the historical themes and heroes, it does not expect to find the path of grand narrative, thus it infinitely extends the game feature of discourse and text, which in turn makes post-modernity lack the integrity, and ability to express the concept of world processing, which led to the “crisis of presentation” in post-modern culture, and thus was accompanied with the “new language reality” which is a far cry from contemporary society. It dramatically changed the original communication function of the graphic symbols to form a kind of post-modern culture in which traditional criticism fails. Liotta thinks that post-modern narrative is the suspicion of meta-narration. In his view, it is the small narrative that really creates lively, diverse and different discourses. “Diors or Loser Image” and the composition of each plot in “Diors or loser culture” are full of subversion and deconstruction of the grand narrative tradition with typical post-modern narrative characteristics.

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