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Using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to Analyze the News Media in the Republic of China: Newsreel

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Abstract

China's newsreel was born in the year before the founding of the Republic of China, and developed rapidly during the Republic of China, becoming the mainstream news media at that time. Before the appearance of television, newsreel was the only news media with both audio and video, which had the characteristics of news and movies, was very popular with the audience and was highly valued by the government and personages of all circles. The function of newsreels in the Republic of China is far more than providing news and entertainment. It's more important function is to serve as the propaganda weapon and educational tool of the government. However, the most important reason why newsreels were so popular at that time was that they met the needs of audiences to a greater extent than other news media. This paper uses Maslow's hierarchy of needs and news psychology to study how newsreels in the Republic of China educated audiences, explore the potential relationship between news media and audiences, and analyze how newsreels met the needs of audiences. Studying the influence of newsreels on audiences in the Republic of China can promote the development of current news media.

Keywords: newsreel, news media, audience, education, propaganda, Maslow, Republic of China.

1. Introduction

Throughout the world of history of film, films in every country begin with documentary film, newsreel is a form of short documentary film, which can be said to be the initial form of films. In 1910, French newsreels entered the German newsreel market and then German productions followed the trend. The First World War encouraged the production of newsreels, as film was recognised as an effective and influential medium for presenting military success (Lehnert, 2018: 4). But, The First World War brought the first major test to the newsreel's ability to cover war; however, it did not succeed because of the many restrictions placed upon camera work, editing, and distribution, not least through censorship (Deaville, 2019). However, the function of newsreels aroused great interest from governments and people of all countries. After World War I, newsreels gradually became the mainstream news media and entered the public's field of vision.

Similarly, during the Republic of China, newsreel was one of the most popular news media. It was not only an excellent media to educate people, but also a powerful propaganda tool of the government. However, in the study of news history and journalism in China, few scholars study newsreel, and they don't even regard it as a news medium like newspaper or broadcast. From the perspective of audience, this paper finds that newsreel is easier to meet the needs of the audience

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than other news media in the Republic of China. This is an important reason for the popularity of newsreels in the Republic of China. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is one of the theories of behavioral science, which was put forward by American psychologist Abraham Maslow in his paper *A Theory of Human Motivation* in 1943. In this paper, human needs are divided into five categories from low to high, which are physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs and self-actualization. This paper finds that newsreels in the Republic of China highly meet the psychological needs of the audience in terms of safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs and self-actualization.

2. Materials and methods

The research materials of this paper mainly come from newsreels, documentaries, mass communication, news psychology and other related books, as well as related papers, theses and articles about these studies. This paper mainly uses content analysis and literature analysis to collect and compare the literature, objectively and systematically analyze the newsreels of the Republic of China, and study the psychological needs of the audience at that time.

3. Discussion

The beginning of newsreels (1911-1920)

The first batch of Chinese newsreels were produced during the war in the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China. During the Revolution of 1911, Liankui Zhu, a famous Chinese acrobatic artist, went to the front of the war and filmed several major battles after the uprising of Wuchang New Army, and then edited them and showed the newsreel in Shanghai Moudeli Theatre on December 1 of the same year. This is the earliest newsreel *Wuhan War* in China, and it is also the only film in China that records and celebrates the revolutionary military activities of Wuchang Uprising. It quickly and timely showed Wuchang Uprising, a news event of great historical significance, to the audience with the film as the play media. In 1913, Shanghai Asia Film Company filmed a newsreel called *Shanghai War*, which denounced YuanShin-Kai. It was shown in Shanghai on September 29th, 1913, showing the audience the military action of Shanghai Revolutionary Army besieging Gaochang Temple and Wusong Fort.

At that time, the way for the audience to receive news mainly came from newspapers. As a new news medium, movies didn't attract the attention of the government and capital, because the movie industry was still in the exploratory stage as a whole, and there was no artistic expression at all. It was just treated as a novelty. Even so, these few newsreels still achieved excellent box office. Before the newsreel *Wuhan War* was released, the audience already knew the result of the war, and the ticket price of the film was very expensive, but the audience was still very large when it was released. The newsreel *Shanghai War* was shown for three days in a row. At that time, it was called "the unprecedented activity movie". After the success of these two newsreels, more and more capital is invested in newsreel. For example, newsreels filmed by the Commercial Press: *The Commercial Press gets off work* and *The American Red Cross Parade in Shanghai*; newsreels filmed by China Film Manufacturing Co., Ltd.: *Jizhi Zhang's Style*, *St. John and Nanyang Ball Game* and so on. However, at that time, China's national capital was very weak, and its ability to produce films was very limited. In the book *A History of Chinese Documentary Films*, Wanli Shan mentioned: "There were only over 30 films made in China from 1905 to 1920, except for a few feature films, most of which were newsreel" (Wanli, 2005: 6). In foreign countries, newsreels developed better., "the newsreel was the creation of cinema, coming into existence when cinemas first started to appear, and thriving on the essential regularity of an audience who would come back to see a film show, generally once or twice a week. Each time they did so, the new edition of the newsreel provided a disparate collection of topical stories bound up in one five-minute issue" (Luke, 2018).

Safety needs

Although newsreel was the simplest form of news report at the beginning of its development, it not only lacked any technology and art, but also was far less timely than newspapers, but it still met the safety needs of the audience with great advantages. Physiological needs are the lowest needs, such as food, water, air, sexual desire, health, etc., which are the basic needs of human survival (except sex). When people meet their physiological needs, they will start to seek safety needs, so as to obtain a long-term, stable and safe living environment. Safety needs are also low-level needs, including personal safety, life stability and freedom from pain, threats or diseases.

If people can't grasp the basic situation and changes of their own environment, their safety needs will inevitably be threatened, resulting in bad emotions. "The main reason why audiences need news lies in the fact that news can provide them with the objective existence of a certain space-time environment. This kind of visible, visible and touchable person or thing is the reality of reality, which is different from the reality reflected by literary works that is higher than life. The reality of reality can meet the news audience's cognitive needs for the fact of closeness (or change)" (Jinglin, 2014: 314). Simply put, the audience's desire for survival stimulates their thirst for knowledge and urges them to pay attention to news. But this kind of attention was beyond the reach of newspapers at that time, for the following reasons :

(1) *Literacy rate*

In the social environment of the Republic of China, the educational level of Chinese people was relatively low. Many people couldn't read, so they couldn't get news from newspapers in time. Many times, the information source of the audience was social communication between people, for example, listening to other people's talk when drinking tea in a teahouse or going to a vegetable market, and the information was passed around by many people, so rumors or misinformation easily appeared, because the audience's perception and understanding of news information was limited by their own cognitive world. In the social communication between people, it will inevitably be influenced by other people's evaluation, emotion, attitude, etc. On the other hand, with the influence of communication such as continuity and interactivity, the way of news communication with newspapers as the medium was limited at that time. But newsreel is different, it can be aimed at everyone. Newsreel relies on pictures and sounds to spread. Whether literate or not, you can see the real news scene intuitively. The audience doesn't need to have a certain level of education, and it also avoids the deviation of the spread content caused by the second spread.

(2) *Authenticity*

During the Republic of China, the news reported in newspapers could not be trusted, which was related to the social environment at that time. Gongzhen Ge, a well-known modern Chinese journalist and pioneer of Chinese journalism history, commented on the press at that time: "Except for some magazines, the spirit of newspapers since the Republic of China is far inferior to that of the late Qing Dynasty" (Tingjun, 2008: 306). At the end of the Qing Dynasty, the modern newspaper industry developed rapidly and confusedly, there were more than 100 kinds of official newspapers published nationwide, forming a system of official newspapers from central to local. Only from 1895 to 1898, there were 120 kinds of Chinese newspapers published nationwide. Journalism received full attention from all walks of life and became a tool for political parties to compete. "...as all media outlets will necessarily present a filtered version of complex realities, due to institutional and resource constraints, as well as information gaps and the knowledge of those producing the news content. What is more relevant are instances of politically or economically motivated bias, as when media outlets report on news stories in particular ways because such reporting serves the institutional interests of the owners or managers of a news organisation. An example of such bias would be reporting favourably or unfavourably on particular government policies that could benefit or harm the profitability of a commercial news media business" (Fisher et al., 2020).

In 1912, Sun Yat-sen founded the Republic of China, but Yuan Shin-Kai soon stole the fruits of the revolution and became the new president. The journalism in the early Republic of China seemed to be developing rapidly, but in fact it was very chaotic. Within half a year after Wuchang Uprising, the number of newspapers in China increased rapidly from 100 to 500, and more than 90 newspapers registered with the Ministry of Internal Affairs by various parties (Tingjun, 2008: 264). Yuan Shin-Kai's policy of "traitorous to foreign countries and autocratic to domestic countries" caused dissatisfaction and opposition from the people and the Kuomintang. In order to control public opinion, he used various means to destroy journalism. Many journalists lost their journalistic professional ethics under pressure, and many journalists who adhered to their principles were assassinated.. In this case, newspapers, as the government's propaganda tool, have no powerful supervisory power, and the news is bound to have a serious problem-losing its authenticity. At that time, the political parties held the right to speak in the news. It was difficult to determine whether the words in the newspaper were true or false, and the credibility was not high.

Newsreel appeared at that time, and its authenticity was easier for the audience to accept than newspapers. *Wuhan War* and *Shanghai War* won an unprecedented welcome when they were released. As mentioned above, although the audience knew the war situation in advance, they were

still willing to go to the cinema to watch it. Because newsreel had a very important advantage at that time—authenticity. Compared with words and language, there is almost no possibility of falsehood in real moving pictures, and the captured war scenes are authentic and reliable, which can gain the trust of the audience. In addition, newsreel has movie attributes at the same time, its special viewing mode has a sense of ritual and dedicated experience, and the recorded picture of movement can provide the audience with the strongest visual impact, which has a sense of realism like being on the spot. Therefore, as soon as *Wuhan War* and *Shanghai War* were released, the audience immediately realized the superiority of newsreel, and more film companies and government agencies began to invest money to shoot newsreel, and the news film era in China also started. During the period of the Republic of China, with the turbulent situation at home and abroad, people's demand for news and attention to the situation increased, which greatly stimulated their thirst for knowledge, and they all had a desire for in-depth understanding of the inside story, dynamics, speech or activity interviews of certain events or figures. Therefore, the audience's demand for newsreel is getting deeper and deeper.

The development of newsreel (1921–1937)

The Republic of China was from 1912 to 1949, which was a turbulent time. Internationally, it included the First World War and the Second World War (including War of Resistance against Japan), and domestically, it included the warlords' scuffle, the Northern Expedition, the Kuomintang-Communist Civil War and other major battles. During the 38 years from the establishment of the government of the Republic of China in 1912 to the overthrow of the government in 1949, there were 21 people in power. It can be said that during the Republic of China, the country was in an extremely chaotic state of civil war and aggression. Such living environment seriously weakened people's sense of security and self-esteem, and made people need to keep abreast of social information and war trends. "In the traditional conception of the documentary, cinema was understood as a reflection of reality and became a key tool of war propaganda" (Arnau Roselló, 2020). Whether at home or internationally, the war has provided newsreel with too much material. In the 1920s, with the national capital investing in the film industry one after another, Chinese films achieved initial development. During this period, many new film companies were established, most of which focused on shooting newsreel. At the same time, many foreign filmmakers, such as those from the Soviet Union and the United States, also came to China to shoot newsreel. This period is a period of rapid development of newsreel. According to the statistics of *China Film Yearbook* published on January 30, 1927, "there were 179 film companies established around 1925, including 142 in Shanghai, 6 in Hong Kong, 1 in Kowloon and 4 in the United States ... Many companies first filmed newsreel after their establishment. According to incomplete statistics, about 20 film companies filmed more than 100 newsreels in the 1920s" (Wanli, 2005: 16).

With the improvement of the film industry, newsreel began to be used by governments and political organizations in various countries to promote social modernization. In this process, newsreel have developed specific media concepts. With the popularity of cinemas, watching movies became a part of daily life, which also promoted newsreel to truly become a mainstream media and pushed the level of global communication to a new height. At that time, regarding the wartime newsreel's evaluation, a German officer said: "Those who can compete with the best cameras can win" (Barsam, 2012).

At the beginning of the Second World War, the Nazis forced all existing newsreel productions to join as the central propaganda-instrument *Deutsche Wochenschau* (Lehnert, 2018: 5). In 1930s, almost all governments in developed countries attached great importance to documentary films, and newsreel was used as a tool to enter the political arena. On September 18th, 1931, Japan invaded China and occupied three northeastern provinces. In the following fourteen years, China's biggest political struggle was to fight against Japan, which was also mixed with the internal struggle between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party. In this political environment, a large number of newsreels have appeared, whose content is to reflect the Chinese people's War of Resistance against Japan. The function of newsreel has changed, and they have become tools for the government and progressive intellectuals to publicize and educate. Newsreel was first produced by private film companies.

Since 1930s, the government began to set up government-run film companies to film newsreel. "From 1931 to 1937, more than 20 film companies produced more than 200 newsreels

and documentary films, some of which were larger in length and could be released separately, which was unprecedented" (Weijin, 2013).

Love and belonging needs

Love and belonging needs belong to higher-level needs, such as the needs of friendship, love and affiliation. Esteem needs includes not only personal feelings about achievement or self-worth, but also others' recognition and respect for themselves. Based on the advantages of newsreel mentioned above and the popularity of cinemas, the number of newsreel audiences has been greatly improved. Among all the news media at that time, newsreel can not only meet people's safety needs to the maximum extent, but also meet Love and belonging needs to the maximum extent. The reason is not only the impression that newsreel itself brings to the audience, but also other stimuli caused by the news information in it. "Other stimuli caused by news information mainly refer to interpersonal interaction among audiences around receiving news information. The influence of this interpersonal interaction on the audience psychology is direct, extensive and profound, but it is often not easily perceived by the subject" (Jinglin, 2014: 142).

The psychology of news audience itself is a kind of social psychology, which is produced in social life and the product of mutual influence between people. The audience's discussion of news content during and after watching the movie is a kind of group interaction, which is an act of subconscious strengthening the sense of collective belonging. Especially in the face of other people's aggression and harm to the same race, the audience will inspire the national unity psychology under the direction of the director's lens. Therefore, many scholars at that time strongly urged the Chinese press and film industry to attach importance to the production of newsreel.

The two world wars made newsreel gradually become the mainstream media to spread news and knowledge. Influenced by other countries, the government of the Republic of China became more aware of the importance of newsreels as political propaganda and national education. Newsreels and short public information films were in many respects propaganda; they portrayed how the government wished the population to behave rather than the multiple, varied contradictory responses individuals had towards their circumstances in wartime (Andrews, 2018).

"In the 1920s, the movie coach appeared in Britain, and the newsreel distribution company cooperated with the railway department to build a special mobile cinema for newsreels and short films on trains, which was specially designed for passengers" (Junjian, 2020: 51).

In the United States, "President Wilson personally ordered the establishment of a public information committee to be responsible for the propaganda activities during the war and set up a special shooting department to shoot newsreel. In 1933, shortly after Roosevelt took office, the "Visualized Documents" of the American Film-Photography Alliance and Parr Lawrence's documentary explaining the "New Deal" were supported by the president" (Wanli, 2005: 36). Meanwhile the industry increased efficiency to reduce the time lag between the actual event and its presentation in the local theater. It became customary to ship negatives of footage by air, allowing the newsreel to compete with the print media (Deaville, 2019: 35).

Newsreels were shown in movie theaters around the world as a key element of the short-subjects reel that accompanied every feature film. Young or old, in Boise or Berlin, every person who went to the movies was shown a newsreel, and the high levels of incidental exposure to public affairs information accounts for the newsreel's importance as a communication medium in the pre-television era. One historian claims that because newsreels were so widely seen, and because they were uniquely positioned as the only moving image news medium in the pre-television era, by the 1930s (Althaus et al, 2018). "Newsreels had joined the newspapers as suppliers of the sum of information and the range of interpretation upon which public opinion formed itself" (Pronay, 1972).

People's understanding and support for the country's fighting is crucial to the influence of the war situation. Qingyu Jin, who established the national defense film system, believes that the route of establishing the national defense film lies in "education for all", which regards people's recognition of the country and basic knowledge of politics and economy as an important guarantee for the victory of the Anti-Japanese War. Only in this way can they have strong faith and indomitable spirit. Newsreel can not only make people know the current situation, but also enable people learn knowledge and technology. Fuli Wen, president of *United Pictorial*, said: "Intelligence and knowledge are the weapons of modern war. In this war, which side is best at using manpower, material resources and financial resources, the victory belongs to that side. But to be good at using manpower and material resources, you must have sufficient knowledge and technology, as well as an understanding of the purpose of fighting, friends and enemies ...Educating Chinese people and

arousing Chinese people in war depends on audio-visual education means including newsreels and slide show movies” (Junjian, 2020: 53).

During the Republic of China, people's life was very bad, and they were invaded by other countries, and their dignity suffered a severe blow. When they were unable to fight against foreign enemies, this self-esteem needed to be maintained by another means in disguise. When people face common enemies, their desire for a sense of group and belonging will be particularly strong. The audience can watch newsreel and vent their emotions or project them on the enemies or soldiers in the film. At that time, newspapers often published the full-house situation of audiences watching newsreels.

The newsreel *Shanghai War*, which was released in 1932, was shown for 12 days. Patriotic overseas Chinese from Nanyang sent special personnel to Shanghai to buy from the film company, and some even specially prepared Cantonese explanations. After the September 18th Incident, newsreel, the theme of the Anti-Japanese War, became the mainstream film, and Chiang Kai-shek's non-resistance policy aroused the indignation of the masses. The masses put forward the advice of "waking up to save the country" to the film studio, demanding to see the anti-Japanese films made by the film company. At that time, *Shadow Play Life* magazine received more than 600 letters from readers, asking the film company to make anti-Japanese newsreels (Wanli, 2005: 61).

The glory of newsreel (1937-1949)

During the period of the Republic of China, the country was in a situation of opposing civil war between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party. On July 7th, 1937, China's comprehensive War of Resistance against Japan broke out, and the Kuomintang and the Communist Party stopped the civil war and United against Japan. After the end of War of Resistance against Japan in 1945, the Communist Party won the battle between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party and founded the People's Republic of China in 1949.

During the period of the Republic of China, the Kuomintang government established four government-run film organizations, and filmed a large number of newsreels, especially *Anti-Japanese War Special Series* and *Movie News Series*, which were welcomed by the vast audience in Chinese mainland, Hongkong and Macau. However, due to the lack of funds, although the Communist Party organized the left-wing cultural movement and sent its members to join private film companies, it was not until 1943 that the Communist Party successfully produced and Released the first newsreel *Combining Production with Combat*. Until the end of the Anti-Japanese War, there were not many newsreels filmed by the Communist Party. In addition, the two political parties also attach great importance to the screening of newsreel, and both have set up grass-roots screening stations to show newsreel to ordinary people. In addition to what was filmed in China, foreign newsreels will also be broadcast. The Kuomintang government was greatly influenced by Britain, America and other countries, and often played American newsreel. The Communist Party was greatly influenced by the Soviet Union, and often played Soviet newsreel.

The establishment of the grass-roots screening station has greatly improved people's level of watching newsreel. People's living standard was very low during the Republic of China, especially farmers, and there were no cinemas in rural areas. Grass-roots screening stations can show newsreel to the lowest people free of charge, so as to maximize the scope of influence of anti-Japanese war consciousness. Junjian Liang, an associate professor at the School of Journalism and Communication, Tsinghua University, wrote in his paper that on October 10th, 1943, the Kuomintang government showed the scene of newsreel on the open-air screening platform: "There were more than 9,000 people in the audience that night, and even a lot of girls who didn't go out on weekdays came to watch ... At the end of the screening, it began to rain, but the vast majority of the audience still persisted to the end. Among these newsreels, *Winter Farm* is similar to *American Rural Life*, which is an imported newsreel showing American rural life and agricultural technology. *Desert Victory* comes from Britain, praised the British army's victory over the Axis powers in African colonies. *Beiping Duck* is one of the educational films produced by the Film Department of Jinling University before the Anti-Japanese War, which shows the human geography and products of all parts of the country" (Junjian, 2020: 49-50).

Proletkult (broadly defined) and socialist realism, which became the official vision of art in the late 1920s when Stalin consolidated his power in the Soviet Union, seem to represent conflicting aesthetic visions: one modernist and experimental aimed at an elite intellectual audience and the other realistic and didactic aimed at the masses (Zumoff, 2019). In the book *News Films: The Years we experienced*, Yinxian Wu wrote about the scene when the Yan 'an projection

team was playing newsreel, "Soon after we returned to Yan 'an from behind enemy lines, the projection team of the film group was also set up, and two cameras and a generator were sent by the Soviet Union, and the films were also sent by the Soviet Union, including *Lenin in October*, *Lenin in 1918*, *Chapaev* and so on, because these films were shown too many times, there were no contiguous holes, so the screening of one night was interrupted many times. Moreover, the audience had to walk more than ten miles to see the movie, but they still enjoyed it" (Siji, 2002).

Self-actualization from people to citizens

At the early stage of the development of newsreels, film companies and the government realized the unparalleled role of newsreel in propaganda and education, which was emphasized by the production policies of many film companies. For example, Star Film Co., Ltd. has always adhered to the tenet of "educating society" and the idea of combining films with national cultural traditions, and unified the film production policy of "making up for the deficiency of family education and school education" (Wanli, 2005: 24).

In 1919, the Commercial Press (the oldest publishing institution in China's publishing industry) applied to the government for tax exemption for filming, saying: in view of the fact that foreign films staged in China are "frivolous and treacherous, which is very harmful to people's hearts ..." Therefore, they are going to make films and distribute them to the provinces for screening. "In this way, we can resist foreign films that are indecent and use them to help popular education. On the one hand, we can sell them to foreign countries, commend our culture and slightly reduce the contempt of outsiders" (Wanli, 2005: 12).

An important concept of the international documentary movement is to use movies to promote public interests and social progress, especially to promote people's awareness of social issues. Under the influence of these ideas, the practice of news documentary in wartime China not only needs to go deep into the grass-roots level in screening and be close to the masses in content, but also needs to enhance the citizens' awareness on the basis of popularization. Both the film company and the government hope to use newsreel to spread news and knowledge, improve the cultural level of the audience, enhance the sense of national responsibility and mission of the audience, and make the audience aware of their social value. Jian Yao, the director of the state-owned film studio, published *Newsreels and Documentary Films-Some Inspiration from Film Work in Recent Years* in February 1943, in which he regarded newsreels as "the most powerful national defense propaganda" (Junjian, 2021). Citizens can engage in journalistic practices on their own, or may participate jointly with professional journalists in news-making processes where citizen contributors check facts, correct errors, and update content that professional journalists may have missed (Nah, Yamamoto, 2018).

From the audience's point of view, becoming a citizen with social and national responsibilities means the realization of self-worth in a sense. Self-actualization is the highest level demand, including the demand for truth, goodness and beauty to the highest realm of life. The first four demands can be met, and the highest level demand can be generated one after another. It is a derivative demand, such as self-realization, exertion of potential and so on. "What kind of person a man can be, he must be. This need we can call Self-actualization" (Maslow, 1943).

War has destroyed people's living environment and self-esteem. When personal needs are threatened, people often have a strong desire for such needs. The authors of the book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, regards the nation as "a kind of political community-and it is imagined as a community that is limited in nature and also enjoys sovereignty." In his book, he discussed the role of media technology in shaping national identity, and believed that novels and newspapers in the 18th century provided technical means for "reshaping the imaginary community of nations" (Anderson, 2006). If a person needs to activate a specific self, he or she can use media content to do so. This need may be momentary, as with a person who wishes to activate a given self-concept in a given situation. Alternatively, this need may also be habitual, driven by one's chronically accessible self-concept (Dvir-Gvirsman, 2018). In the 20th century, with the development of film technology, newsreel has become a means and medium to shape national identity. After the government's conscious publicity and education, combined with its current environment, the audience is inevitably inspired to fight against foreign enemies and restore equality and independence. This kind of personal values converge into collective values and national values, forming a powerful force.

4. Results

The reason why newsreels in the Republic of China can become the favorite news media and meet the needs of the audience to the greatest extent is due to the environment at that time.

(1) The Republic of China has been in a state of war. This state has greatly improved people's thirst for knowledge of the outside world, and greatly endangered people's sense of security, resulting in their greater demand for news. At that time, the credibility of newspapers was in crisis, and the audience couldn't judge whether the news was true or false through words. However, newsreels were different. It was the only news media with both visual and auditory features at that time, and the real audio-visual language made news films more convincing.

(2) In the Republic of China, people's education level was too low, and teachers were weak. At that time, the whole country was in a very poor state. People who could receive education were often rich people with better family economy. For a larger number of poor people, they could not read, so they could not get information from newspapers. Compared with the traditional teaching mode, newsreel is more suitable as a tool of "education for all". It can be accepted by people with any education level, and it can also greatly reduce the cost of teachers.

(3) Compared with other news media, the artistry of newsreels can greatly enhance the audience's empathy. Newsreels not only have the characteristics of news, but also have the characteristics of movies, which makes newsreels more appealing. In the war-torn Republic of China, people's national self-esteem and sense of value were frustrated, and the unique charm of newsreels can better help audiences communicate with each other, vent their emotions and awaken themselves.

To sum up, it can be seen that newsreels can become the news media to meet the psychological needs of the audience to the greatest extent during the Republic of China, which is the special background of the Republic of China that gives it its greatest advantage. It was the only audio-visual news media at that time. It was the most convenient tool for the government to promote education and politics, and it was the easiest way for the audience to receive knowledge and news. With the development of the times, when television and internet became more and more popular, people's education level became higher and higher, and newsreels gradually lost their advantages, so they gradually disappeared.

5. Conclusion

Newsreel developed rapidly and had far-reaching influence in the Republic of China, which is very rare in the history of Chinese news films. During the war, newsreel not only played an unparalleled role in propaganda and education, but also superimposed the expectation of improving the modernization level of the country and national identity on the basis of persuading the public to support the war. Although newsreel has strong news features, it has formed its own unique artistic charm in the process of development, which is gradually different from ordinary news reports, and undertakes the functions of spreading and recording people's social practices and meeting people's psychological needs. Although the function of newsreel is not so magical, from the result point of view, newsreel is undoubtedly successful in meeting the psychological needs of the audience. The success of newsreel in the Republic of China still has a strong reference significance for today's media. We can also learn that Maslow's hierarchy of needs is an effective method to analyze the psychological needs of the audience in a specific social environment, so as to make communication content.

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