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Chinese Diaspora in Transnational Cinema:

Image, Cultural Identity, and Gender

大阪大学大学院言語文化研究科

言語文化専攻

李明

Chinese Diaspora in Transnational Cinema:

Image, Cultural Identity, and Gender

By

Ming Li

A Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Language and Culture

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Table of Contents

Introduction
– Diaspora, Cosmopolitanism, and Transnational Cinema –……...1

Part I Migration, the Transcultural Condition, and the American Dream……15
Chapter 1 Social Coercion in Sexuality and Reproduction:
Eat a Bowl of Tea (1989) ……16
1. 1 The Symbol of Chinese Immigration: Chinatown……16
1. 2 Arranged Marriage and Repressed Sexuality……..17
1. 3 Woman's Infidelity……20
Chapter 2 Women in Transnational Space:
Full Moon in New York (1989)……24
2. 1 Representations of Women from Mainland China, Hong Kong,
and Taiwan…….....24
2. 2 The Symbolic Significance of New York……32
2. 3 An Allegory of National Unity……34
Chapter 3 Chinese Patriarchal Culture: Homosexuality and Gender
in *The Wedding Banquet* (1995)…… 38
3. 1 Fake Marriage……37
3. 2 Coming Out of the Closet and Patriarchal Culture……40
3. 3 Gender Roles……..45

Part Ⅱ Identities In Question: Chinese Diaspora in Japan and Japanese
Diaspora in China……..49
Chapter 4 The Experience of Diaspora and Hybrid Identities in
Song of the Exile (1990)…….. 50
4. 1 Ann Hui's Film and Hong Kong New Wave Cinema……50
4. 2 Living in Diaspora……54
4. 3 Identity in Question……..57

Chapter 5 Community, Representation, and Language in *Swallowtail* (1996).....63
5. 1 Acceptance of *Swallowtail*.....64
5. 2 The Cosmopolitan Community.....68
5. 3 Representations of Yentowns.....73
5. 4 Languages and Multiculturalism.....77
Chapter 6 Undocumented Immigrants in *Shinjuku Incident* (2009).....80
6. 1 Diasporic Space.....81
6. 2 Flexibility of Individual Identity.....83

Part Ⅲ From Mainland China to Hong Kong and Taiwan 87
Chapter 7 Taiwanese Identity: *A Time to Live, A Time to Die* (1985).....88
7. 1 Taiwan New Wave Cinema and Hou Hsiao-Hsien.....88
7. 2 Memory, History and Politics.....89
7. 3 Metaphorical "Homes" for Different Generations.....92
Chapter 8 Migration from Mainland to Hong Kong, to New York: *Comrades: Almost a Love Story* (1996).....96
8. 1 Cinematic Symbolic of Teresa Teng.....97
8. 2 The Global Dream.....100
8. 3 Maggie Cheung's Performance in Transnational Chinese Cinema.....102
Chapter 9 Across the Borders of Cultural Identity: *Lust, Caution* (2006).....105
9. 1 Nostalgia for Old Shanghai.....106
9. 2 Between the Individual and the Group.....114

Conclusion.....121

Bibliography.....125

Introduction
– Diaspora, Cosmopolitanism, and Transnational Cinema –

This thesis centers on films about the Chinese diaspora from the period of the late 1980s to the first decade of the twenty-first century. The films made by mainland Fifth Generation directors such as Chen Kaige, Zhang Yimou, Tian Zhuangzhaung, and their classmates in Beijing Cinema College, as well as by their contemporaries in Hong Kong and Taiwan such as Hou Hsiao-Hsien, Ann Hui, Ang Lee, Stanley Kwan, and Wong Kar-wai, Chinese cinema has since the 1980s entered into global visibility. Although many people may see these regions as three entirely separate nations or places, in cultural terms, they share a common legacy of history, culture and language.

It is an important period for "New Chinese Cinema," since its emergence in international film festivals and its institutionalization in western academia in the mid-1980s.[1] Firstly, as Yingjin Zhang argues, " 'New Chinese Cinema' is an appropriate term to link art films from Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan over the last two decades, for during this period all three regions saw the emergence of the 'New Cinema' or 'New Wave' as well as the 'Second Wave'."[2] Secondly, since the 1980s, steady flows of investment capital from Taiwan and Hong Kong have resulted in a large number of coproduction films. Chinese-language films appear firstly in international film festival and art house theaters, then gradually in undergraduate curricula across college campuses in the English-speaking world, and finally in

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[1] Zhang Yingjin supports the term "New Chinese Cinema" for works of the Fifth Generation, their associates, and other prominent directors since 1980. See Yingjin Zhang, *Screening China: Critical Interventions, Cinematic Reconfigurations, and the Transnational Imaginary in Contemporary Chinese Cinema*. (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 2002), 3.

[2] See Zhang Yingjin, *Screening China*, 25.

mainstream Hollywood productions.[3] Thirdly, just as so many filmmakers have multiple migrant experiences, legal and illegal immigrants from Greater China tend to travel because of political or economic hardship or other reasons.

A few English publications can offer us an outline of Chinese film studies over the past three decades. In Chris Berry's *Perspectives on Chinese Cinema* (1985), Chinese cinema had just started to attract attention abroad.[4] In *New Chinese Cinema* (1994), Nick Browne, Paul G, Pickowicz, Vivian Sobchack, and Esther Yau extended the field of Chinese cinema to include Hong Kong cinema and Taiwan cinema and analyze the changes in of filmmaking in the 1980s.[5] Sheldon Lu in *Transnational Chinese Cinemas* (1997) suggested that transnationalism as a new framework goes beyond national cinemas.[6] In this book the essays discuss the national cinema and transnational cinema in Chinese film studies. The authors explore the issues of politics, censorship, global capitalism, gender identity and so on. Yingjin Zhang's *Screening China* (2002) introduces Chinese film criticism in two parts: critical interventions (history, politics, methodology) and cinematic reconfigurations (nation, culture, agency).[7] He advocates a Western reading of Chinese film as well as a reorganization of Chinese academic voices. In *From Tian'anmen to*

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[3] Rey Chow, *Sentimental Fabulations, Contemporary Chinese Films: Attachment in the Age of Global Visibility*. （Berkeley: Columbia University Press, 2007）, 14.

[4] See Chris Berry, ed., *Perspective on Chinese Cinema*. Second and expanded edition. (London: British Film Institute, 1991).

[5] See Nick Browne, Paul G, Pickowicz, Vivian Sobchack, and Esther Yau, ed., *New Chinese Cinemas: Forms, Identities, Politics.* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[6] See Sheldon Hsiao-Peng Lu, ed., *Transnational Chinese Cinemas: Identity, Nationhood, Gender.* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997). Also see Yingjin Zhang, ed., *A Companion to Chinese Cinema*. (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012).

[7] See Yingjin Zhang, *Screening China.*

Times Square, Gina Marchetti explores the issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality on world screens.[8] Marchetti argues that the world has imagined China and the images the Chinese have used to depict themselves have changed dramatically since 1989. The films and other texts included in this book represent a range of work by media artists working within China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, and on transnational co-productions involving those places.[9] In *Sentimental Fabulations, Contemporary Chinese Films* (2007) Rey Chow explores the questions of origins, nostalgia, commodification, biopolitics, migration, and homosexuality through nine contemporary Chinese directors (Chen Kaige, Wong Kar-wai, Zhang Yimou et al.).[10] In contemporary Chinese films, she argues, the sentimental consistently takes the form of compromise, moderation, endurance, and accommodation. By naming these films sentimental fabulations, Chow presents Chinese cinema as an invitation to the pleasures and challenges of critical thinking.

Although there are a large number of studies about Chinese American immigrants, there are few studies about Chinese immigrants in Japan or in Hong Kong and Taiwan. This thesis offers a special angle from three parts to examine different experiences in diaspora conditions, Chinese cultural identity, and gender issues. The films featured in the three parts include both discussable and iconoclastic works by eight directors based in Hong Kong, the United States, Taiwan, and Japan:

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[8] See Gina Marchetti, *From Tian'anmen to Times Square: Transnational China and the Chinese Diaspora on Global Screens*, 1989-1997. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006).
[9] Gina Marchetti, *From Tian'anmen to Times Square*, xi.
[10] See Rey Chow, *Sentimental Fabulations.*

-Wayne Wang
-Stanley Kwan
-Ang Lee
-Ann Hui
-Shunji Iwai
-Derek Yee
-Hou Hsiao-Hsien
-Peter Chan

The films are grouped in three parts: the Chinese diaspora in America, Chinese diaspora in Japan, and migrant from mainland to Hong Kong or Taiwan. All the films presented in this study cross cultural or national boundaries. The films not only show the marks of circulation with international cooperation such as production crews, casts, funding, and distribution, they also cross cultural borders to reflect the diversity contained within Greater China based on linguistic, political, gender and other differences. Considering the Chinese diaspora's complex negotiations with cinematic representation, politics, and gender issues, this thesis aims to examine the issues of migration, exile, and alienation in relation to changing notions of gender, generation, and ethnicity within Greater China.

In order to unfold my analysis, it is necessary to give an outline of the terms of diaspora, cosmopolitanism, gender and identity.

Diaspora

The word "diaspora" has been used in a meaning of the Jewish dispersion, but in late years the term has come to be used in a wide

sense as a word to express not only the Jewish diaspora but also general racial disintegration and dispersion.

Until the mid-1980s, "diaspora" was used in two separate and independent ways: as a name for certain populations living outside a reference territory, and as a specialized concept describing African trading networks. During this period, scholars commonly used the term to refer to four groups of people: Jews, people of African origin, Palestinians, and Chinese.[11] The term "overseas Chinese" qualified as a "diaspora" dates back at least to the end of the 1940s, but its growth in popularity stems from anthropologist Maurice Freedman's work on Chinese family structures in the 1950s and 1960s.[12]

In the introduction to his 1986 book *Modern Diaspora in International Politics*, Gabriel Sheffer points out that, "modern diaspora are ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin – their homelands."[13] Therefore, a "diaspora" must have a number of factors of the migration; settlement in one or several countries; maintenance of identity and community solidarity; and finally, the diaspora itself may become a link between the leaving state and the host state.[14]

In the 1980s, the English "cultural studies" movement focused on the studies of subaltern or postcolonial subcultures (workers, minorities, immigrants, and so on). In that setting, a vision of "diaspora" developed that was radically different from both the open and the categorical

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[11] Stéphane Dufoix, *Diasporas*. Trans. William Rodarmor. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 19.
[12] Maurice Freedman, "Immigrants and Associations: Chinese in Nineteenth-Century Singapore." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 3, no. 1, (October 1960), 25-48.
[13] Gabriel Sheffer, "A New Field of Study: Modern Diaspora in International Politics." *Modern Diaspora in International Politics.* Ed. Gabriel Sheffer. (London: Croom Helm, 1986), 3.
[14] Stéphane Dufoix, *Diasporas*, 21.

definitions. Those definitions give pride of place to paradoxical identity, the noncenter, and hybridity.[15] Three authors played an important role in establishing this vision: Stuart Hall, James Clifford, and Paul Gilroy. Stuart Hall wrote in 1990:

> I use this term metaphorically, not literally: diaspora does not refer us to those scattered tribes whose identity can only be secured in relation to some scared homeland to which they must at all costs return, even if it means pushing other people into the sea. This is the old, imperializing, hegemonizing form of 'ethnicity.'... The diaspora experience as I intend it here is defined not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of "identity" which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*.[16]

In 1991 the American political scientist William Safran made the first attempt to construct a closed conceptual model with multiple criteria. He limits the term "diaspora" to minority expatriate communities whose members shared several of the six following characteristics: their or their ancestors' dispersion from a "center" to at least two peripheral foreign regions; persistence of a collective memory about the homeland; certainty that their acceptance by the host society is impossible; maintenance of an often idealized homeland as a goal of return; belief in a collective duty to engage in the perpetuation, restoration, or security of the country of origin; and maintenance of individual or collective relations with the country of origin.[17]

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[15] Ibid., 24.
[16] Stuart Hall, "Cultural identity and diaspora." *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. Ed. Jonathan Rutherford. (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), 235.
[17] William Safran, "Diaspora in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and

As the first major general study of diasporas written by a single scholar, Robin Cohen in his 1997 *Global Diasporas* use Safran's criteria and he then appends four more: voluntary migration (for business, work, or colonization); an enduring ethnic awareness; the emergence of new creativity; and a feeling of empathy and solidarity with "fellow ethnics" in other countries. As a result, Cohen produces a list of nine "common characteristics of a diaspora" coupled with a typology that distinguishes diasporas according to their primary identity: victim (Jews, Africans, Armenians, and Palestinians), labor (Indians), trade (Chinese), cultural (the Caribbean), and imperial (British, French, Spanish, and Portuguese).[18]

In his analysis of the nature of diasporas, Paul Gilroy echoes the views of a number of leading scholars that diaspora is a new vocabulary that "registers the constitutive potency of space, spatiality, distant, travel and itinerancy in human sciences that has been premised upon time, temporality, fixity, rootedness and the sedentary."[19] In the process of diaspora studies through four phases, the negative characteristics of diasporas such as the loss of homeland have been suppressed, while the positive connotations of diasporas such as supermobility and flexible identities have been elevated.[20]

Aside from occupational difference, Chinese transmigrants from Hong Kong, Taiwan, China and countries in Southeast Asia since the 1960s differ dramatically from the pre-1960s sojourners, in spatial preference, cultural identities and attachments to place. [21]

Return." *Diaspora* 1 no. 1 (Spring 1991), 83.

[18] Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. (New York: Routledge, 2008).

[19] Paul Gilroy, "Diaspora." *Paragraph* 17.3 (1994), 207.

[20] See more in Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, 1.

[21] Laurence J. Ma, "Space, Place, and Transnationalism in the Chinese Diaspora." *The Chinese Diaspora: Space, Place, Mobility, and Identity.* Ed. Laurence J. Ma and Carolyn Lee Cartier. (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield,

"Chineseness" also differs among the Chinese communities such as the experience of Chinese populations in the cosmopolitan cities of Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore and San Francisco. Differences in being Chinese in these cities points to the importance of place in shaping cultural identities and to the complexity of Chineseness.[22]

As Ronald Skeldon's essay has noted, the term "diaspora" has been used so much lately that it has almost displaced the word "migration." He reminds us to focus on the diverse experiences of various Chinese migrant groups and not to be misled by the implicit meaning of uniformity embodied in the term "diaspora." To Skeldon, a Chinese diaspora exists, but it is made up of complex elements of migration.[23]

Also, as Laurence J. Ma argues, multiple identities are not a cluster of personal cultural traits with fixed forms that are permanently moored at any particular place. Instead, they are socially constructed and political attributes. It is not unusual for a diaspora to activate one identity while suppressing others to deal with a particular issue or to achieve at different places.[24]

Stéphane Dufoix suggests that Chinese diaspora represent enormous "ethnoliguistic variety" because of China's complex dialect structure. The existence of many dialects, often mutually incomprehensible, favored the emergence of a corresponding number of migratory networks and patterns. "Diaspora" has rarely been a term as

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2003), 32.

[22] See more in Gungwu Wang, "Chineseness: The Dilemmas of Place and Practice." *Cosmopolitan Capitalists: Hong Kong and the Chinese Diaspora at the End of the Twentieth Century.* Ed. Gary G. Hamilton. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), 118-134.

[23] Ronald Skeldon, "The Chinese Diaspora or the Migration of Chinese Peoples?" *The Chinese Diaspora: Space, Place, Mobility, and Identity.* Ed. Laurence J. Ma and Carolyn Lee Cartier. (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 51.

[24] Laurence J. Ma, "Space, Place, and Transnationalism in the Chinese Diaspora," 32.

dynamic as its etymology suggests. Today, its meaning is approximately the following: "A national, ethic, or religious community living far from its native land – or its place of origin or reference – in several foreign territories," or even "an 'alien' cultural group living in a single country."[25]

Cosmopolitanism

As Paul Rabinow observes, cosmopolitanism should be extended to transnational experiences that are particular rather than universal and that are unprivileged. Cosmopolitanism should be defined, Rabinow writes, as "an ethos of macro-interdependencies, with an acute consciousness (often forced upon people) of the inescapabilities and particularties of places, characters, historical trajectories and fates."[26] Benita Parry agrees that "the 'global flows' of transnational cultural traffic" have produced "an emergent postcolonial cosmopolitanism."[27]

The "very old ideal of the cosmopolitan," in Martha Nussbaum's words, referred to "the person whose allegiance is to the worldwide community of human beings."[28] In this sense the term seemed to offer a clear-cut contrasts to nationalism. Like nations, cosmopolitanisms are now plural and particular. As Bruce Robbins argues, "for better or worse, there is a growing consensus that cosmopolitanism sometimes

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[25] Stéphane Dufoix, *Diasporas*, 54.
[26] Paul Rabinow, "Representations Are Social Facts: Modernity and Post-Modernity in Anthropology." *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Ed. James Clifford and George E. Marcus. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 258.
[27] Benita Parry, "The Contradictions of Cultural Studies." *Transition* 53 (1991), 41.
[28] Martha C. Nussbaum, "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism." *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism.* Ed. Joshua Cohen. (Boston: Beacon, 1996), 4.

works together with nationalism rather than in opposition to it."[29] So he comments that, "Situating cosmopolitanism means taking a risk."[30]

According to Arjun Appadurai in *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*:

> It may be time to rethink monopatriotism, patriotism directed exclusively to the hyphen between nation and state, and to allow the material problems we face – the deficit, the environment, abortion, race, drugs, and jobs – to define those social groups and ideas for which we would be willing to live, and die… Some of us may still want to live-and die-for the United States. But many of these new sovereignties are inherently postnational.[31]

Khachig Tölölyan asks much the same questions about the related term diapora. That concept has been seductive because it could be played off against the nation-state. Tölölyan argues that genuine diaporas are not merely ethnic identities; they are quasi-political units that "act in consistently organized ways to develop an agenda for self-representation in the political or cultural realm, either in the hostland or across national boundaries."[32]

Like diaspora, cosmopolitanism offers something on a series of scales and in an area both within and beyond the nation. We will not perhaps be tempted to offer the final word on the dilemmas above. But it is something merely to expose them in their full multi-voiced

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[29] Bruce Robbins, "Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism." *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation*. Ed. Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 2.
[30] Ibid., 2.
[31] Appadurai Arjun, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 176.
[32] Khachig Tölölyan, "Rethinking Diaspora(s): Stateless Power in the Transnational Moment." *Diaspora 5*, no.1 (1996), 17.

complexity, thereby making it clear at least what justice on a global scale would have to resolve.[33]

Transnational Cinema

This is one reason the study of cinema, like the study of literature and history, has become a means to explore group cultures. I suggest that we should refrain from categorizing of directors and films by geopolitical determinants and particularisms such as "Mainland Chinese," "Hong Kong," " Taiwan," and "Chinese diaspora" cinemas. It is important that the term "Chinese" is not in such ways to represent the People's Republic. To be sure, the populations in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and other diasporic Chinese communities have claimed their autonomy as Chinese in numerous historical and linguistic connections.

In its unique history, the concept "China" and "Chineseness" are changing in the fluidity and tension of the ethnic community. In this dissertation, I use "Greater China" for the cultural aspect. As Sheldon Lu notes in "Chinese Cinemas (1896-1996) and Transnational Film Studies:"

> The identification with China is not a matter of legal or territorial consideration but a matter of cultural affiliation. "Greater China," "Greater China economic zone," "East Asian modernity," and "Cultural China" are notions that stake out a grand role for China at the end of the twentieth century and in the next century. …The idea of Cultural China fully articulates the ambition and reality of a new transnational Chinese culture in the making.[34]

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[33] Bruce Robbins, "Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism," 12.

[34] Sheldon Hsiao-peng Lu, "Chinese Cinemas (1896-1996) and Transnational Film Studies." *Transnational Chinese Cinemas: Identity, Nationhood, Gender.* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997),18, 19.

Particularly after 1989, some Chinese American films deal with Confucian virtues and traditional Chinese social hierarchies based on the model of the dynastic state and patriarchal family. Also, many films use domestic conflicts to explore the tension of women in the Chinese patriarchal culture and women in transnational environments. In these films, filial piety is not simply a matter of respecting one's biological or cultural elders but also an age-old moral apparatus for interrelating individuals into the hierarchy-conscious conduct of identifying with the province, the country, and the ethnic community in a foreign nation as authoritative and thus beyond challenge.[35]

The screen is not a neutral media to provide images. As David Morley and Kevin Robins note in *Spaces of Identity: Global Media, Electronic Landscapes and Cultural Boundaries*:

> The screen is a powerful metaphor for our times: it symbolizes how we now exist in the world, our contradictory condition of engagement and disengagement. Increasingly we confront moral issues through the screen, and the screen confronts us with increasing numbers of moral dilemmas. At the same time, however, it screens us from those dilemmas. It is through the screen that we disavow or deny our human implication in moral realities.[36]

Images on screen, therefore, offer more meaning than actual conditions. In her famous essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," Laura

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[35] See Rey Chow, *Sentimental Fabulations,* 22. She has a special understanding of the term "filial piety."

[36] David Morley and Kevin Robins, *Spaces of Identity: Global Media, Electronic Landscapes and Cultural Boundaries*. (London: Routledge, 1995), 141.

Mulvey turned the question of the cinematic image into a story. Rather that treating the cinematic image as a single entity, Mulvey approached it in a deconstructive move, in which what seems visually obvious and unified is taken apart by the reintroduction of narrative. As Mulvey argues that "woman as image, man as bearer of the look" as follows:

> In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female, the determining male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*.[37]

She charged that masculinist scopophilia underwrote the imperative of gazing, while women were cast, as a result, as passive, fetishized objects, as beautiful images to be looked at.

When we do research, the different cultural or political positions may lead to different directions. I argue that we should not regard globalization as a means of erasing existing borders, therefore, this study engages with transnational filmmaking practice, which view globalization processes as inherently gendered, sexualized, and radicalized, as erecting new borders.

In his landmark essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," Stuart Hall discusses two definitions of cultural identity:

> The first position defines 'cultural identity' in terms of one, shared

[37] Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Visual and Other Pleasure.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 19.

> culture, a sort of collective 'one true self', hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common.
>
> This second position recognizes that, as well as the many points of similarity, there are also critical points of deep and significant difference which constitute 'what we really are'; or rather- since history has intervened – 'what we have become.'[38]

Just as Hall frames his discussion of the construction of Caribbean identity, I will explore Chinese cultural identity along two vectors: the axis of similarity and continuity and the axis of difference and rupture.

[38] Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." *Identity: Community, culture, difference*. Ed. Jonathan Rutherford. (London: Lawrence And Wishart, 1990), 222, 225.

Part I Migration, the Transcultural Condition, and the American Dream

In Part I, I will explore three films, Wayne Wang's *Eat a Bowl of Tea* (1989), Stanley Kwan's *Full Moon in New York* (1989), and Ang Lee's *The Wedding Banquet* (1995). *Eat a Bowl of Tea* is based upon a novel of the same name by Louis Chu. It tells a story of a westernized son and a patriarchal father in New York's Chinatown around 1949. *Full Moon in New York* is a story of three women from Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong living in New York. *The Wedding Banquet* depicts a gay Taiwanese immigrant man and his boyfriend who live together in New York. To relieve the suspicion of his parents, he decides to marry a Mainland Chinese woman and helps her get a green card.

The three films visualize these immigrants in relation to ethnicity, class, and nationality so that issues of generation, age, sex, and gender become intertwined with shifting notions of the self as characters move to a foreign country.

Also, the films have similar elements in immigration, cultural conflict between East and West, and gender issues. The characters all have American dream. In this part, through the analyses of race issues, cultural gaps, gender roles, sexuality and identity, I explore how the filmmakers present patriarchal practices in different historical situations. Also women's sexuality in diaspora will be focused on.

Chapter 1 Social Coercion in Sexuality and Reproduction: *Eat a Bowl of Tea* (1989)

Eat a Bowl of Tea (Chinese title: He Yi Wan Cha) tells the story of Chinese-American families living in New York City's Chinatown in 1949. The film describes the difficult lives of Chinese-American immigrants in that time. In this chapter, I will firstly examine the historical condition for Chinese community in America in 1950s. Then, I will analyze the sexuality problems under social coercion.

1.1 The Symbol of Chinese Immigration: Chinatown

Because of the Chinese Exclusion Act the first generation of male Chinese-American immigrants were not allowed to live with their wives and families in the United States. After the Chinese anti-immigrant law was passed in the United States in 1882, Chinese immigrants had to obtain certifications for reentry of the United States. The Act made Chinese immigrants permanent aliens by excluding them from U.S. citizenship.[39] After the Act's passage, Chinese men in the U.S. had little chance to reunite with their wives.

In these special historical circumstances, Chinatown became a "bachelor society" at that time. The bachelor society was not formed spontaneously but caused by the history of racism. These Chinese men are isolated from American culture, living with no dignity or dream. Second generation Chinese-American Ben Loy (Russell Wong) is the son of Wah Gay (Victor Wong) and has just finished serving in the U.S. Army during World War II. Due to the War Bride Act in 1945, he is

[39] Kenneth Chew and John Liu, "Hidden in Plain Sight: Global Labor Force Exchange in the Chinese American Population, 1880-1940". *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Mar., 2004), 57-78.

allowed to bring a bride back from China.[40]

The revisions of the law give hope to the fathers in Chinatown. In the film, Wah Gay arranges a marriage for his son Ben Loy. The bride Mei Oi (Cora Miao)'s family is much the same as Ben's. Mei Oi's father lives in New York City, while Mei Oi lives in China with her mother. Mei Oi wants to see her father who immigrated to the States before she was born. As a newly married couple within Chinatown, Ben Loy and Mei Oi face with the expectations of their fathers as well as the entire Chinatown community.

At that time, due to the impact of Chinese anti-immigrant law, bachelor society was on the verge of extinction. At this rate, there is a possibility that the Chinatown would disappear. The marriage of Mei Oi and Ben Loy is not only a personal affair in one family, but also a matter of survival of the Chinatown community. The appearance of Mei Oi from Mainland China gives hope to the community.

Through the control of "The Wang Family," a sort of union, Chinatown has their own systems and determines the reward and punishment of the populations inside. With the appearance of Mei Oi, Wah Gay is considered to be a presence that gets "big face" related to social status and pride of the community. Ben Loy also gets the job of restaurant manager from The Wang Family. In such a community, Ben Loy is not only the son of his father, but also the son of the Chinatown community. In addition, Mei Oi is not only the wife of Ben; for the survival of the community she has to play the gender role of reproduction.

1. 2 Arranged Marriage and Repressed Sexuality

[40] Xiaojian Zhao, *Remaking Chinese America: Immigration, Family, and Community, 1940-1965*. (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 78-84.

The marriage of Mei Oi, a young woman born and raised in Mainland China and Ben Loy, the China-born son of Chinatown "bachelors" can be regarded as a cultural manifestation of Chinese patriarchy. Although Wah Gay has been living in New York for about 20 years, as a first generation immigrant, he still holds Chinese feudal ideas. As Ling Junqi argues in "Reading for Historical Specificities: Gender Negotiations in Louis Chu's *Eat a Bowl of Tea*:"

> Such a male-dominated society, I will argue, is full of inconsistencies and contradictions caused by distortions, partial entrenchment, and fragmentation of Chinese patriarchal values in the process of their troubled transplantation.[41]

In China of the same period, despite the fact that the practice of arranged marriage has become obsolete, in the male-dominated community, Wah Gay thinks that it is his responsibility to negotiate the marriage of his son as a father. Moreover, the woman who can become Ben Loy's wife must be a pure Chinese woman like Ben Loy's mother, who is a traditional woman caring for her family more than 20 years despite the family's separation.

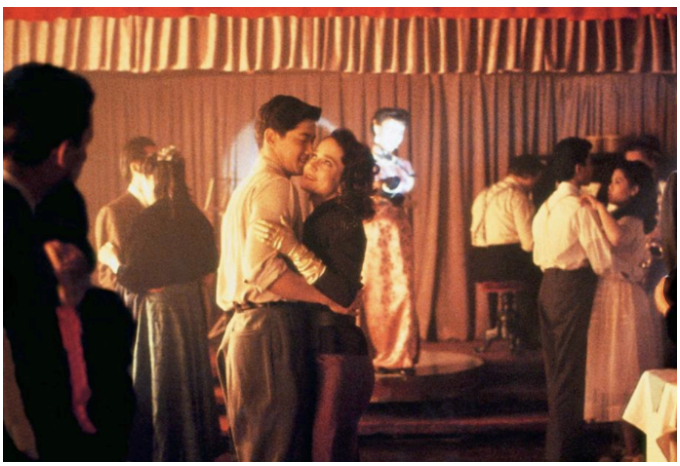


Fig. 1 (0:15:45)

In this respect, in the film, Wayne Wang draws an ironic setting. Before Mei

[41] Junqi Ling, "Reading for Historical Specificities: Gender Negotiations in Louis Chu's Eat a Bowl of Tea." *MELUS* 20-1 (Spring 1995), 36.

Oi appears, men's sex life in Chinatown is introduced. In one scene, Wah Gay goes home after visiting a Chinese prostitute, while other men stand in a queue waiting outside the door. In addition Ben Loy goes out for a date with an American girl (see fig. 1).

Rather than resisting mainstream America society, Ben Loy actively try to become an American. When Ben Loy and his mother discuss his marriage prospects in China, he tells his mother that his idealized wife should be a sexy American woman.

Mother: If you don't like this girl,
you can pick somebody else.
Ben Loy: I pick Rita Hayworth,
but I'll settle for Betty Grable. (0:45:28-0:45:50)

In Chinatown, there is no dearth of sexual potency and sexual activity on the part of the men. In spite of this, given the assurance of pedigree and survival of the community, prostitutes and non-Chinese women are disqualified. Only virgins who come from Mainland China can become the object of marriage.

The marriage of Mei Oi and Ben Loy gets the approval of their fathers, and in China they observe the form of the introduction of a go-between, astrology and a traditional wedding. However, it is not only an arranged marriage by patriarchal fathers. The two individuals got married because they had romantic feelings for each other. In other words, Ben Loy does not follow the authority of the father completely. It is a chance to go back to China to meet his mother. On the other hand, Mei Oi was born and raised in Mainland China; she had never seen her father. By agreeing to a marriage with Ben, she can go to America to meet her father. After Ben Loy went back to Chinatown, he realized that he has responsibility for his newlywed wife, his father, and men in

Chinatown.

Sexual activity and sexual pleasure of the newlywed couple are not private, but noted as part of social connection. The question of whether Mei Oi is pregnant or not becomes the daily topic of what everyone says. Wah Gay admonishes his son: "It's for making babies, not just to have something fun with." After a failed attempt at having a sexual relationship, Ben says to Mei Oi: "I just feel like everyone is watching us." Ben Loy has become impotent. At his doctor's advice, the couple has a trip to Washington, D.C., where Ben becomes temporarily potent again. The impotence of Ben Loy must be considered in the context of the society of Chinatown and sexuality. As Michel Foucault notes the relationship between society and individual in *The History of Sexuality*:

> One must suppose rather that the manifold relationships of force that take shape and come into play in the machinery of production, in families, limited groups, and institutions, are the basis for wide-ranging effects of cleavage that run through the social body as a whole.
>
> If it is true that sexuality is the set of effects produced in bodies, behaviors, and social relations by a certain deployment deriving from a complex political technology, one has to admit that this deployment does not operate in symmetrical fashion with respect to the social classes, and consequently, that it does not produce the same effect in them.[42]

Inside Chinatown, power has been penetrated by elders' "discourse," as they entrenched their own ideas in the world of the

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[42] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*. Vol.I *: An Introduction*. Trans. Robert Hurley. (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), 94, 127.

descendants. In American society outside of Chinatown, there is sexual pleasure and free sexual rights; within Chinatown, sensual gratification is denied. This is because sexuality is monitored by patriarchal power.

1. 3 Woman's Infidelity

Mei Oi proceeds to have an affair with Ah Song (Eric Tsang). Their affair also impacts the reputations of Ben and Mei Oi's fathers in the Chinese community.

On the one hand, Mei Oi as a wife is marginalized from the collision of father and son. With the presence of Mei Oi, the balance of the male population is broken, and the bachelor society becomes to a family society. Mei Oi enters the United States, but she is trapped in a community of immigrants separate from white society. There is no work; there is no choice but to depend on her husband economically. By the reward and punishment system of the community, Ah Song is excluded by all the people in Chinatown.

On the other hand, Mei Oi's infidelity forms a sharp contrast with the mothers who are in Mainland China practicing fidelity and enduring the life of family separation for more than 20 years. Mei Oi is educated; she is not a woman detained by traditional practices. She has the American Dream, and longs for romantic love. Her affair is the biggest challenge to the patriarchy. According to the ideology of the old patriarchy, women who commit adultery will be punished by the clan, or be exiled, or be slaughtered. This is because of the fear that women's sexuality is beyond the control of the patriarch. According to Gerda Lerner's notion of patriarchy:

> But it is not women who are reified and commodified, it is women's sexuality and reproductive capacity which is so treated. …Since

their sexuality, and aspect of their body, was controlled by others, women were not only actually disadvantaged but psychologically restrained in a very special way.[43]

In the case of Mei Oi, her sexuality belongs to her husband, and at the same time, it is managed by the community. Her role is to save face for her father, to provide sex to her husband, to produce progeny for Chinatown. In contrast to the treatment of Ah Song, Mei Oi is not accused or punished. In this respect, it is necessary to consider it in the historical situation of patriarchal culture. As mentioned above, because of the history of racialism, Chinatown at the time was on the verge of extinction. In the film, it is shown that the patriarchal fathers give the first priority to the progeny with Chinese pedigree.

Conclusion

Through the depiction of the young Chinese diaspora, Ben Loy has been oppressed by the patriarchal society of Chinatown, while at the same time has been cut off from the U.S. mainstream society. He cannot establish the identity through practices of traditional patriarchy of China as his father, as a second-generation immigrants, he cannot perform masculinity like white men, although he actively invests in becoming as an American. It is not a simply story of a minority individual's struggle for the sexuality situation and identity in white America but also an man faced with the responsibility and obligation imposed by the ethnicity group.

For Mei Oi, when the affair is discovered, she was pregnant. In the

[43] Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*. Vol. 1. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 291.



Fig. 2 (1:37:25)

original novel, the real father of the child is clearly Ah Song, but in the film, it remains unclear. In any case, there is no doubt that Mei Oi who came from Mainland China is the child's mother. That Mei Oi bears the child is the most important thing in order to keep the pedigree of the Chinese family (see fig. 2). Here, patriarchs do not punish her infidelity, but rather give priority to realistic profit over moral tradition in a special time to guarantee the survival of Chinatown.

Chapter 2 Women in Transnational Space: *Full Moon in New York* (1989)

Full Moon in New York (Chinese title: Ren Zai Niu Yue) is directed by well-known Hong Kong filmmaker Stanley Kwan. He has made so many films about women. *Rouge* (1987), *Full Moon in New York,* and *Centre Stage* (1992) are typical Kwan films. *Lan Yu* (2001) is a gay love story, but in other works, women are the main characters, and men play the support roles. In Kwan's work, a woman's representation is not definitely from a man's gaze, but his feeling about woman includes his own projection of emotion and desire. As Stephen Teo notes, "these were pictures from his 'repressed' period, borrowing the conceit of 'women's pictures' to express his own personality and sexuality."[44]

Kwan came out as a gay man in the documentary film *Yang ± Yin: Gender in Chinese Cinema* (1996) and he looked over the history of Chinese-language film through the aspects of gender roles and sexuality. In *Yang ± Yin*, Kwan's voice-over commentary ponders the reason for his systematic gravitation towards women in his works. *Yang ± Yin* marks a decisive turning point in his career, the transition from women's films to films about gay sexuality.[45] This experience may be one reason that he can express woman's sensitivity particularly. Moreover, he does not merely look at woman objectively, but also he adds thoughts about his own sexuality through representations of women in his works.

As Hong Kong's political status was being debated, the film industry was an arena for the formation of identity and forum for

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[44] See Stephen Teo, "Full Moon in New York," *Senses of Cinema* Issue 12 (February 2001). (http://sensesofcinema.com/2001/cteq/newyork/, accessed in 2014/09/06)

[45] See Mette Hjort, *Stanley Kwan's Center Stage: Exploring Hong Kong Island,* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press), 29.

speculation about Hong Kong's future.[46] In this respect, *Full Moon* can be looked at as a cinematic entry into Kwan's discourse of speculation in gender, ethnicity as well as in political terms.

In this chapter, I will firstly focus on the women's representation from Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan and then figure out the political intention in this film.

2.1 Representations of Women from Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan

The film is a story of three women from Mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong living in New York. Zhao Hong (Siqin Gaowa), who comes from Mainland China, married a businessman. She has not gotten accustomed to her new life in a foreign country that makes her taste a sense of isolation. Huang Xiong-pin (Sylvia Chang) from Tai Wan has lived in New York for 12 years. As an actress, she repeats lessons and auditions. She admired her father. However, when she learns that her father has sexually abused a middle-aged woman from Mainland China, the great father image in her heart is destroyed. She is disillusioned with her father's behavior. Hong Kong woman Li Feng-jiao (Maggie Cheung) is a career woman who runs businesses in restaurant management, stock trading, and real estate investment. However, being without a boyfriend, she is haunted by the rumor of being a lesbian.

Zhao Hong lives in midtown and has a rich life as a housewife. She learns cooking and English as part of her new life in New York. Her husband, Thomas, is a second-generation Chinese emigrant, who calls himself a "banana" man who has completely westernized. Because he was born and raised in America, he prizes western civilization and looks

[46] See Gina Marchetti, *From Tian'anmen to Times Square*, 31.

down on traditional Chinese culture. However, he prefers a woman from Mainland China over a white woman when he considers a marriage object, because he thinks that a traditional Chinese woman will be gentle and docile.

A real gap between the couple is the difference of cultural background. In the film, the culture clash is shown mainly through the understanding of filial piety. Zhao lives a rich life in America, so she wants to invite her mother to live with them, as her mother had a hard time throughout life. She thinks that it is perfectly justifiable to take care of her mother in this way. It is a traditional thinking of filial piety in China. However, no matter how many times she talks with Thomas, there is no good in trying to persuade him. Thomas thinks that parents and children should have respective lives in a western-style family. He does not try to understand Zhao's feeling of filial piety and he even suggests that she talks to a psychiatrist.

In another scene, the couple has a conversation about "the ancestral memorial tablet" when they have a meal with Thomas's parents. Thomas's parents make light of the memorial tablet and say that it may be a curio to sell at a good price. Zhao fells very sad, but she cannot tell her feeling frankly considering her position in the family. Among the three women characters, Zhao is a woman who completely depends on her husband. She maintains her connection with the wider white society only through her husband Thomas. It may be said that she is a sign set in the film as a woman who completely depends on a man financially and lives under the oppression of patriarchy. The culture collision of the East and the West is mainly shown by Zhao's representation.

Although Zhao Hong is a cultural outsider in mainstream society, we cannot see any will on her part to change the unfavorable situation. It is suggested that she gives up her voice to maintain her material life

in America. In “Diasporas Old and New: Women in the Transnational World,” Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak argues the notion of “concept-metaphor” as follows:

> It means, in the words of a social worker, that “they have lost touch with their cultural base”. They no longer compute with it. It is not their software.
>
> The concept-metaphor “language” is here standing in for that word which names the main instrument for the performance of the temporizing that is called life.[47]



Fig. 3 (0:09:32)

This does not mean that the persons involved do not know their aboriginal mother tongue. “Language” means the cultural base, and “lost our language” means the compromise with life, and contact with the base of one’s own culture disappears. In Zhao’s case, the problem is not only Zhao losing the right of to speak in the family but also the culture collision of East/West. In the film, “loss of language” is a metaphor for cutting off connection with the Chinese traditional culture.

Huang Xiong-ping, a woman from Taiwan who has been living in America for 12 years, has nothing to do with “tradition” at all. As a free

[47] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Diasporas Old and New: Women in the Transnational World.” *Class Issues: Pedagogy, Cultural Studies, and the Public Sphere.* Ed. Amitava Kumar. (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 113.

artist, she is not good at cooking and housework and she changes lovers frequently. She seems to live freely. However, she does not realize her ambition in the white world, and has some financial problems. She studied Chinese history in Taiwan, but she gave up her major to repeat auditions for life. In one scene, she receives an audition, and her situation is clearly expressed when she gets down of the floor to play a swift horse (see fig. 3).

In this scene, gender and racism are depicted indirectly. Huang plays a swift horse and in the back one white man lies down on a cart, while there are also two white male judges of the audition sitting in the seats. Here, John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* and Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" offer useful tools for my analysis. Berger's book explores how visual culture keeps capitalism stabilized, and how it can promote national pride. Berger also analyzes the history of female portraiture in Western painting.

Ways of Seeing points out a tradition of representing women as properties that belong to men. Berger concludes that paintings transform actual women into objects, devoid of individual will or subjectivity. This process, whether it occurs in portraiture, advertising, or the cinema, is called objectification. The females represented on the canvas have no control; rather they are on display for the male's enjoyment. Because patriarchal capitalism is still the dominant ideology of the Western world, conceiving of women as objects that can be bought and sold has become a standard practice within the advertising industries. Television commercials and magazine advertisements frequently use beautiful women to entice presumably heterosexual male customers, and in so doing, they often make an implicit comparison between the woman's body and the product being sold. Berger's observation about painting and advertising can be applied to film without much trouble, as cinema functions as another arm of the

mass media that creates idealized visual images of women.[48]

Mulvey's argument drew upon existing psychoanalytic frameworks to examine the specific ways that classical Hollywood cinema manufactures its images of women. As the title of her article makes clear, Mulvey was interested in understanding how mainstream narrative cinema creates pleasure for viewers. She explored how the psychoanalytic concepts of narcissism and voyeurism can be used to explain how visual pleasure is generated. Narcissism, a pleasure of the self, is created when narrative cinema encourages spectators to identity with characters in the film.

With such identification, viewers are able to feel as if they themselves are experiencing great adventures and accomplishing extraordinary deeds. On the other hand, voyeurism is a visual pleasure that arises from looking at others in a sexualized way. Linking shots of people looking and shots of what they are looking at is one of the basic building blocks of classical Hollywood storytelling. Mulvey observes that this simple formal trope of Hollywood editing itself carries and encodes powerful gender dynamics. Chiefly in Hollywood films, male characters is the ones doing the looking while female characters are usually are ones that are being looked at. Throughout mainstream narrative cinema, men are positioned as the ones in control of the gaze while women are positioned as the object of that controlling gaze.[49]

It is true that most of classical Hollywood's glamor industry and cinematographic conventions worked to represent women in the ways described above, but male stars in Hollywood were also being carefully costumed, made up, and photographed in objectifying ways. Indeed, this

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[48] For more on the arguments see Benshoff, Harry M. and Sean Griffin. *America on Film: Representing Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality at the Movies.* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 238-240.

[49] Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Visual and Other Pleasures.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 14-38.

trend has only increased in recent decades as Hollywood has come to recognize that women (and gay men) in the audience might enjoy the spectacle of a man's objectified body. Mulvey's early work did not mention the presence of gay and lesbian spectators for whom the two pleasures of narcissism and voyeurism potentially collapse into one.[50]

Huang's performance in the audition is displayed by the eyes of white men. Three white men are the ones doing the looking while Huang is the one that is being looked at. Western men are positioned as the ones in control of the gaze while eastern women are positioned as the object of that controlling gaze. Moreover, the West and the Orientalist racism are indirectly projected other than the "looking and being looked at" relationship of the man and woman.

In the film, Li Feng-jiao is a typical Hong Konger. Li runs a restaurant called Hunan Garden, which serves Beijing duck. Although she is economically independent, she falls into confusion over her sexual orientation. In *Flexible Citizenship,* Aihwa Ong characterizes the identity of Hong Kongers as follows:

> This is not to say that the Hong Kong Chinese elites do not have patriotic feeling for the Chinese motherland, but rather the investor emigrants are well positioned to engage in self-interested search for citizenship and profits abroad, a strategy that will enhance their economic mobility and yet sidestep the disciplining of particular nation-state.[51]

Li's appearance is dramatic. She demands rent from a young white man in a cold manner as an owner. Also, she takes off her high-heeled

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[50] For more on these arguments, see Benshoff, Harry M. and Sean Griffin. *America on Film,* 254.

[51] Ong, Aihwa. *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*. (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999), 156.

shoes to attack a white man who sexually harassed her. These scenes suggest that as a woman who wants to gain success in the male dominated business world in New York, she must deny her femininity and act like a man. In other words, if Zhao Hong plays a role of a wife from Mainland China, Li Feng-jiao acts the part of a male. She cannot dispel the rumor of her relationship with a lesbian woman.

Here, some part of Kwan's own personality and sexuality are expressed through Li's representation. Because Kwan came out in 1996, it can be regarded that the film was made in his "repressed period." It may be said that Kwan challenges the spectator to reconsider ideas of femininity and sex through his representations of women in the film. In a 1998 interview, Kwan discussed his sensitivity to women due to his transformed sense as a gay man. The director identified his homosexual uncertainty with Li's confusion about her sexual orientation. But there is one problem with his explanation that requires attention. In the interview, he makes the following statement:

> I certainly dealt with women in my previous films. Consciously or unconsciously, I projected the female sensibility onto the films, together with, of course, transformed gay sensibilities.[52]

In the interview, he considers "the female sensibility" to be internally unified and tends to immobilize the conception of sexuality. On the other hand, the director as a gay runs the risk of reducing the diverse senses of gay in the discourse explanation called "gay sensibilities."

2. 2 The Symbolic Significance of New York

[52] "Interview with Stanley Kwan." *Hong Kong Panorama 97-98, 22nd Hong Kong International Film Festival*. (Hong Kong: Provisional Urban Council, 1998), 70.

The climax of the film is a scene where the three women get a little drunk, and walk the New York streets at night, singing the songs that are famous in each region (see fig. 4). This setting shows the release of their repression.



Fig. 4 (0:54:00)

In *Rabelais and His World*, Mikhail Bakhtin offers an exhaustive examination of what he calls the "popular-festive forms" (for example, eating, drinking, and cursing) and "the grotesque images of the body" (such as sex, defecation, pregnancy, birth and death). For Bakhtin:

> Carnival with all its images, indecencies, and curse affirms the people's immortal, indestructible character. In the world of carnival the awareness of the people's immortality is combined with the realization that established authority and truth are relative.[53]

In *Screening China*, Zhang Yingjin applies the carnival theory of Bakhtin to Chinese cinema, and he points out that the switches from personal behaviors to the public place emphasize the mutual relations of all people.[54] Seen from such a point of view, the significance of carnival between women is to integrate three women who have different cultural backgrounds and economic conditions. It emphasizes a sense of

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[53] M. M Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 256.
[54] Yingjin Zhang, *Screening China*, 212.

unity among Chinese emigrant women.

On the other hand, in the progress of the carnival, the action of drinking liquor cannot be ignored. In the same book, Zhang notes that liquor represents a kind of poetic mind in Chinese culture:

> On a less obvious level, wine (or liquor) is a poetic image deeply rooted in Chinese culture. It is, for one, a well-known way for a solitary poet to escape his or her immediate realities. It is also a spirit that inspires a poet's artistic visions.[55]

By drinking liquor, the three women escape from restraint, forget their difficult situations as immigrants, and express desire and self in this way. In the ending of the film, the three women gather once again on a roof and smash glassed decisively after drinking. It seems to show their courage to part from the past, but, in the scene of the end, an empty bottle of liquor stands on the ground. In other words, after three women's carnival, it suggests that they must face the reality. In addition, the carnival of the three women is not completely performed at a public place, but limited to the space of the roof or the corner of a dark town.

When we consider Chinese immigrant films, it is essential to inspect the relations of Chinese emigrants and American society from various sides. At the beginning of the film, white smoke from a chimney is shown as a characteristic of the manufacturing town. Besides, people on the streets are expressionless, and the scene of a big lifeless city is drawn. The filmmaker uses ash and black high-rise buildings of Manhattan and sad music to create a lonely atmosphere. In the film, the place called New York is presented as an existence like an Other.

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[55] Ibid., 213.

On the other hand, New York plays a role to integrate the different spaces of three Chinese women crossing the border. Although they are all Chinese, New York provides a place for them to deepen their understanding of their different cultural traditions. They do not share the same sense of the image of China, but they have a sense of unity in the global space called New York.

2. 3 An Allegory of National Unity

Maggie Cheung (from Hong Kong), Sylvia Chang (from Taiwan) and Siqin Gaowa (from the mainland) play three Chinese women in New York from the "Greater China," who become friends in a foreign country.

As all three characters effectively show the different kinds of Chineseness, the film can be regarded as an allegory about the quest for political unity. Produced in 1989, with Hong Kong and Macao having not yet returned to China, the film shows us an allegory of national unity by three women from the "Great China." To preserve the abstract image of China, they subsume their differences and ignore all personal bitchiness.

Even Kwan says, "I am not one of those people with a strong sense of the destiny of the Chinese people. I don't carry the burden of history on my back."[56] The metaphor of the unification of a race is clear. About ethnicity and culture of the Third World, Fredric Jameson proposed a theory of the racial allegory in his article "World Literature in an Age of Multinational Capitalism:"

> Those texts, even those narratives which are seemingly private and invested with a properly libidinal dynamic, necessarily project

[56] "Stanley Kwan, Carrying the Past Lightly," *Cinemaya* 19 (Spring 1993), 13.

> a political dimension in the form of national allegory: the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public Third World culture and society.[57]

National allegory is the common issue in cultural products of the Third World that is extremely different from the culture forms of the same kind in the First World. Jameson's theory definitely affected literary and film studies of the Third World. Although there is a huge difference between each country of the Third World, this theory is useful for the understanding of the modern Chinese film.

In the film, there is an interesting scene about "Greater China." Li had an argument with Huang in her own restaurant, and Zhao called on them to stop the quarrel for the reason that they are all Chinese. Zhao reminded them of their ethnic identity as Chinese while subsuming a different part, and being reconciled to maintaining an abstract Chinese image. Kwan creates an allegory of China by the story of three women. Besides, this unification can be realized simply because it is a city of the different kind integration with global characteristics called New York.

As Jerome Silbergeld points out in *China into Film: Frames of Reference in Contemporary Chinese Cinema*, China has a long tradition of allegory in literature and art:

> Allegory,...by any name, is a well-conditioned cultural response that no politically sensitive Chinese artist, visual or textual, modern or traditional in period, has needed to think too much

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[57] Fredric Jameson, "World Literature in an Age of Multinational Capitalism." *The Current in Criticism: Essays on the Present and Future of Literary Theory*. Ed. Clayton Koelb and Virgil Llewellyn Lokke. (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1987), 142.

about in order to use.[58]

Certainly it can be regarded that the tradition has had an impact on Chinese language film, including Hong Kong cinema and Taiwan cinema. We can also find some sensitive political issues, particularly involving Hong Kong's relationship to China in the works of Hong Kong directors.

About the Chinese element in Hong Kong cinema, according to Leung Noong-kong, Hong Kong cinema has three stages in the process of its connection with Mainland China. For the first stage, Hong Kong considered iteslf to be an abandoned foreign land before 1966. For the second stage, the movie business, like the reflected image stage Lacan described from 1966 through 1979, completely forgot "the law of the father" in its prosperity with a convincing image. As for the appearance of the third stage, Hong Kong cinema faced pain and mental depression in the early 1980s in face that the Hong Kong recurrence was generated for "a post 1997 awareness stage."[59]

Because *Full Moon* was produced in 1989, just before the Hong Kong recurrence, anxiety about the recurrence is not seen, but, through the film, consciousness of the Hong Kong problem may be expressed to some extent. Moreover, *Full Moon* is wholly about suffering women. As Stephen Teo points out:

> *Full Moon* is not totally a stinker (particularly when compared with the director's latter efforts), and it's probably redeemed by the fact that it is a character study of women – a classic 'women's

[58] Jerome Silbergeld, *China into Film: Frames of Reference in Contemporary Chinese Cinema*. (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), 111.
[59] Noong-kong Leung, "The Long Goodbye to the China Factor." *The China Factor in Hong Kong Cinema.* Ed. Li Zhuotao. *The 14th Hong Kong International Film Festival*, 1997, 72,73.

picture' in short.[60]

In the allegory about China, the representations of women become others united by the Kwan's idealism. In her book *Primitive Passions: Visuality, Sexuality, Ethnography, and Contemporary Chinese Cinema*, Rey Chow observes,

> In sum, "woman" is in a way that parallels the ambivalence and cotemporal, makeup of the visual image, both "nature" and "culture." ...She at other times is the embodiment of processes of cultural oppression, exchange, and commodification.[61]

In the film, the image of the cultural suppression of woman may be taken as a social symbol indicating political intention.

Conclusion

In *Full Moon*, Kwan utilizes the image of the cultural suppression of woman as a social symbol to highlight the political complexity of the Chinese diaspora. In the film, three women encounter diverse personal circumstances with different characters; however, the difficult situation as Chinese woman living a life in America is similar. As Chinese women they cannot overcome the Chinese patriarchal culture even in the emigration experience. Moreover, as a minority in a white man's society, they also encounter issues of race, gender, and identity.

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[60] Stephen Teo, "Full Moon in New York."
[61] Rey Chow, *Primitive Passions: Visuality, Sexuality, Ethnography, and Contemporary Chinese Cinema*. (Berkeley: Columbia University Press, 1995),44, 45.

Chapter 3 Chinese Patriarchal Culture: Homosexuality and Gender in *The Wedding Banquet* (1995)

With his diverse transnational filmography, Ang Lee shows a great interest in the issues of cultural identity. From his early Chinese-language trilogy – *Pushing Hands* (1991), *The Wedding Banquet* (1993), *Eat Drink Man Woman* (1994) – to the greatly debated *Lust, Caution* (2007), his appeal is broad, back and forth between high and low cultures, the East and the West. Lee's works challenge sexual orientation, cultural identity and the relationship between society and individuals, where gender, race, and class intersect.

In *The Wedding Banquet* (Chinese title: Xi Yan), the patriarchal father is eager to see his son get married and have a child so the family line can be continued. However, traditional culture suffers in mainstream white America, and patriarchy does not simply keep to the same old patriarchal ideology. In this chapter, through analyses of race issues, cultural gaps, gender roles, and sexuality, I explore how the filmmaker presents patriarchal practices in the global system.

3. 1 Fake Marriage

In *The Wedding Banquet*, traditional practices are embodied by the parents of the hero (Wai-Tung). This elderly couple has a substantial position in the society of Taiwan. The father immigrated to Taiwan from Mainland China when he was young. The father has a rich life as a secretary in the army, and he belongs to the respected upper class. As he was born into a large feudal family of Mainland China, the most important thing is to continue the family line. The parents repeat the reminder to their only son to get married and they also hope that grandchildren will be born. However, young businessman Wai-Tung is

living together with an American man Simon, in the United States. Wai-Tung does not confide to his parents that he is gay, because patriarchal parents will absolutely not accept that their son is gay. Considering that Wai-Tung's father has heart trouble, his lover Simon proposes a fake marriage in order to reassure the parents. They find a Shanghai-born woman Wei-Wei who wishes to be a painter and wants a green card.

As times have changed, there is no longer old-fashioned arranged marriage for children as in *Eat a Bowl of Tea*, but the parents think that they should arrange a big wedding reception for Wai-Tung, and they decide to go to America. The three young people try to prepare everything in a hurry. The apartment of the gay couple is tailored to the Chinese-style room of newlyweds. Instead of modern Western paintings, calligraphy is displayed to represent Chinese culture.



Fig. 5 (0:24:25)

As a single and illegal female immigrant, Wei-Wei fends for herself in America. To get her green card, she plays a role of a Chinese daughter-in-law. She must transform herself from a free-style artist to a traditional Chinese lady. In the scene where she meets the old couple at the airport, various parts of her body, such as an exquisitely made-up face, hairstyle, and beautiful clothes, are panned by the camera as a standard patriarchal gaze. The parents scan Wei-Wei's body from top to bottom. Furthermore, the father stares at Wei-Wei's pelvis from behind and judges that she can have many children (see fig. 5). Sandra Lee Bartky offers a penetrating argument about patriarchal power:

> In contemporary patriarchal culture, a panoptical male connoisseur resides within the consciousness of most women: They stand perpetually before his gaze and under his judgment. Woman lives her body as seen by another, by an anonymous patriarchal Other.[62]

In the film, the feminine gesture and figure showed by Wei-Wei indicate the power relations between patriarchy and femininity.

3. 2 Coming Out of the Closet and Patriarchal Culture

The wedding banquet is carried out in accordance with the tradition of Taiwan. After the banquet, the bride and the groom have relations unexpectedly, and Wei-Wei gets pregnant. The three young people engage in a quarrel in front of the parents, the father enters the hospital, and Wai-Tung tells the truth to his mother at last.

The reaction of the mother and father are different when they know the truth. The conversation between Wai-Tung and his mother is as follows:

> Wai-Tung: I'm gay, and Simon is my lover.
> We're been living together for 5 years.
> Mother: Simon led you astray? It's not true.
> Wai-Tong: Nobody led me astray.
> I was born this way. (1:02:05-1:02:32)

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[62] Sandra Lee Bartky, *Femininity and Domination: Studies in the Phenomenology of Oppression*. (London: Routledge, 1990), 72.

Wai-Tung's answer is full of the pain in the suppression of homosexuality under the patriarchal culture. Sometimes he was going out with women in college, because everyone had lover, and he did not want to be left out. In American society, he was able to face up to the fact of his homosexuality finally, but he cannot overcome patriarchal culture. There is a scene in the film where the director Ang Lee himself appears as one of the guests of the party, to say, "You have witnessed the results of the sexual repression of 5000 years." He suggests that the cause of sexual repression is Chinese patriarchal culture.

The reaction of the father is unexpected. He gives Simon red packets with cash, and says, "Please take care of my son." It means that Simon is recognized as the partner of Wai-Tung. The father says nothing about homosexuality, and continues to say that, "You are also my son. If I pretend to know nothing, I will see my grandchild."

Wei Ming Dariotis and Eileen Fung argue that the father shows acceptance of the homosexual relationship of Wai-Tung and Simon implicitly[63]. In this respect, the compassion and gentleness of the father are shown. Ang Lee has created a place that tries to fuse Western modernity and Chinese traditions actively. The reaction of father here can be understood as a signal of breaking the official view of homophobia. Indeed, in *The Wedding Banquet*, the father's attitude overcomes the border of East and West, but it cannot be said that the father has approved homosexuality. The father is in recognition of the relationship Wai-Tung and Simon superficially, because Wei-Wei is pregnant, so he can see his grandson immediately. It can be said that he gives priority to the root of patriarchy, rather than that patriarchy has shown flexibility.

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[63] See Wei Ming Dariotis and Eileen Fung, "Breaking the Soy Sauce Jar: Diaspora and Displacement in the Films of Ang Lee." *Transnational Chinese Cinemas: Identity, Nationhood, Gender.* Ed. Sheldon Hsiao-Peng Lu. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), 207.

Lee's early Chinese-language trilogy draws the essence of Chinese culture and family dynamics as well as the conflicts between the eastern and western traditions. His first prize-winning film, *Pushing Hands,* is about a tai chi master Mr. Zhu who immigrates to America to live with his son's family.

At the beginning of the film, there is barely any dialogue in the first seven minutes between the father, Mr. Chu and the daughter-in-law, Martha. The viewer is treated to the sights of two different life styles. As Table 1 shows, Mr. Chu plays tai chi while Martha likes running. Notably there is a scene from the outside of their house where she is in one room typing and he is at another room doing calligraphy all in the same frame. For Martha, Mr. Chu is an outsider who disturbs her American style life, so she feels stressful in his presence and she can't write her novel. When Chinese cultural tradition meets with modern American lifestyle, the juxtaposition of West and East indicates the beginning of conflict.

Table 1

Daily life style	Mr. Chu	Martha
sports	tai chi	running
work or pastime	calligraphy	writing novel by typing
food	Chinese food	Western-style food
mood	relaxed	anxious

After moving from Taiwan to America, Mr. Chu is still trying to find his place living in the home of his son, Alex. However, he is no

longer the authoritative patriarchal father in a big Chinese family. As Alex said in the film, American society is democratic and everybody is equal, even children and parents. However, he has grown up in Taiwan and traditional Chinese culture is rooted in his mind. He thinks that it is his responsibility to take care of his father; but having lived in America for a long time, he has become accustomed to an American lifestyle.

Alex in the film plays the role of mediator between Chinese father and American wife. At first, Alex chooses silence to defuse the contradiction. Then his father goes missing. Alex loses his temper and vents his anger onto his wife. He uses self-destruction to show his powerlessness. The younger generations show themselves incompetent in dealing with the family business.

In the film, there is no direct stinging conflict between Chinese father and American daughter-in-law. When Ang Lee deals with the issues of different cultures, he does not simply choose one or the other. He seems to want to establish a good balance. We can find some details in the film that indicate his appeal. When Martha's book is published she feels very happy. Meanwhile, she feels guilty toward Mr. Chu. Although neither she nor Chu makes any effort to try and communicate with each other, the scenes of cooking spring rolls and using a Chinese tea set to drink tea with her friend Linda show her compromise. Also, after a struggle in a Chinese restaurant there is a scene where many foreign students follow Mr. Chu to learn tai chi. As the title of the film indicates, the relationship between West and East may be compared to the power relationship of pushing hands in tai chi.

The title *Pushing Hands* is a metaphor to imply the power relationship between the West and the East. In the film, there are many scenes showing how tai chi is practiced. For example, Mr. Chu has been fired by restaurant manager and he refuses to leave. By practicing tai

chi, he struggles to reclaim his self-respect. The tai chi scene is presented with a degree of style that is similar to martial arts film to satisfy the western audience. Also, in global capitalism, Chinatown is impacted by hegemonic financial-management-centered culture.

In addition, the scene of pushing hands between Alex and Martha provides a striking key point that when the East meets the West, it is not binary but more complicated. The cultural conflict can achieve a good balance. As Whitney Crothers Dilley observes, "Ang Lee's filmic voice indicates the paradigm of globalization in the contemporary era – that ours is no longer a world of totality – that the world has become more and more fragmentary."[64]

The story has a clear line where the father first moves as an outsider from Taiwan to America, then moves from the white community to Chinatown. The settings of crossing the geographical boundaries unfold the narrative of cultural obstacle, generation gap and nostalgic sensibility. Sheng-Mei Ma comments on immigrant nostalgia in Ang Lee's "father trilogy", that the trilogy reveals an increasing propensity toward exotic travel in search of the Other rather than nostalgic lamentation over the loss of the Self.[65]

Instead of highlighting of the nostalgic as an immigrant, the film presents the father as a teller of the past, and the memory always connects with Mainland China. In *Pushing Hands*, there is a scene where the father is ill and lying in bed talking to his son about the Cultural Revolution. His early life shows that he is an outsider to Mainland China. He expresses complicated feelings toward his ancestral home.

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[64] Whitney Crothers Dilley, *The Cinema of Ang Lee: The Other Side of the Screen*. (London: Wallflower Press, 2007), 50.
[65] Shen-mei Ma, *Immigrant Subjectivities: In Asian American and Asian Diaspora Literatures*. (New York: SUNY Press, 1998), 151.

In an interview with Emily Parker published in the *Wall Street Journal*, Lee discusses his Taiwanese experience:

> I grew up in Taiwan, we always lose ….We are always on the losing side. My parents get beat by the communists they escape to Taiwan, Taiwan's a small island, hardly anybody pays attention.[66]

Ang Lee wants to use the representation of the father to retain the historical connection between Taiwan and Mainland China. In *The Wedding Banquet*, the father was a Chinese mainlander, a member of a pro-Nationalist Party, with high-ranking military background in Taiwan. The relationship also unfolds in Lee's later film, *Lust, Caution,* which focuses on the history between the Communist Party and the Nationalist Party.

As Zhang Yingjin notes, Taiwanese filmmakers like Ang Lee perceive "new Taiwanese identities as conditioned less by an idealized projection of the native soil than by the incessant flow of capital, commodity, desire and traffic, which constantly transgress boundaries of all kinds—spatial, temporal, cultural, ethnic, moral and sexual."[67]

3. 3 Gender Roles

In *The Wedding Banquet*, Wai-Tung is an outsider to his native Taiwan, having spent most of his adult life in the US, and an outsider to America. Also, he is an outsider due to his sexuality, having to keep this alternate life in America hidden from his parents.[68] Here, the father is

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[66] Parker, Emily. "Man without a Country." *Wall Street Journal* Dec 1-2, 2007. (http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB119646651576810027, accessed on 2014/09/03.)

[67] Zhang Yingjin, *Screening China*, 105.

[68] See David Minnihan, "Ang Lee." *Senses of Cinema.* Issue 48 (August, 2008).

seen as a burden on the son, who has to deal with his presence and his wishes. The setting of New York City allows a comparison of homosexuality in contemporary North America and in contemporary Chinese society. Wai-Tung and Simon's relationship as a gay couple are different from the stereotypical portrayals of Asian men and American men. Moreover, the stereotypes are transcended by their occupations; Wai-Tung is a businessman while Simon is a physical therapist. Wei-Wei, despite being a Chinese woman, is not good at household chores and much less feminine in the performance.

The significance of these inversions of Asian and American gay male and heterosexual male and female stereotypes, as Rey Chow notes, becomes the mise-en-scene for the unfolding of another kind of event – in the spirit of today's hegemonic financial – management-centered culture, the redesign of a specific biopolitical investment portfolio.[69] These inversions also constitute the key to Ang Lee's narrative design. The interesting thing is the relationship in modern America society meanwhile indicates the position in an old feudal family with Wei-Wei and Simon as the two potential "daughters-in-law".

In the old Chinese marriage and family system, in order to prevent the male line from being severed, the concubine system was indispensable. Regarding the male blood relatives, under the principle of not raising a different surname, if the wife cannot give birth, then the concubines take the responsibility for reproduction.[70] It can be said that Wei-Wei decides to give birth to the child as a concubine to play a role in reproduction.

(http://sensesofcinema.com/2008/great-directors/ang-lee/, accessed on 2014/09/03)

[69] See Rey Chow, *Sentimental Fabulations*, 138.

[70] See more about the Chinese patriarchal family in Noriko Shirouuzu, *Chugoku Josei no 20 Seiki: Kindai KafuChosei Kenkyu* [*Chinese Women's 20th Century: Research on Modern Patriarchy*]. (Akashi Shoten, 2001), 184.

Mr. Gao treats Wei-Wei and Simon as members of the Gao's family. He gives them both red packets filled with cash and expresses gratitude to both. To Simon, he says: "Thanks for taking care of our son;" to Wei Wei, he says: "the Gao family will always be grateful to you." (1:17:20-1:07:23) The meaningful discourse implies the father's patriarchal concept that treats Simon as Wei-Tung's partner, while treating Wei-Wei just as a surrogate who gave birth to the Gao family heir.

The story ends on a relatively happy ending. When Wei-Wei makes the decision to continue the pregnancy, it can be said that she chooses her own way following her will. However, as a result, she surrenders to the patriarchal culture of reproduction. As a minority Third World woman in American society, the representation of We-Wei shows the dilemma between two major different cultural spheres.

Conclusion

Looking back to *Eat a Bowl of Tea* and *The Wedding Banquet*, we can see that each family has a patriarchal father who is eager to see his son get married and have a child so the family line can be continued. However, the two sons feel that their sexuality is tied down by patriarchal power. The woman characters are forced to perform the traditional roles of wife and mother as well. There are many similar elements in the two films. However, with the historical transition, patriarchy does not simply keep to the same old patriarchal ideology.

In my analysis, each character represents a particular situation that ethnic subjects suffer in mainstream white America. At the border crossing of Chinese tradition and mainstream American culture, Chinese Americans are wedged between two major categories. In the two films, Chinese patriarchal culture accommodates flexibility in

mainstream white America. However, the flexibility must be ensured by the precondition of biological reproduction.

Part Ⅱ Identities In Question: Chinese Diaspora in Japan and Japanese Diaspora in China

Part Ⅱ begins with a discussion of Ann Hui's *Song of the Exile* (1990), a semi-autobiographical story about a Japanese woman, Aiko, who immigrated with her older brother to China's Manchuria when she was young. Ann Hui explores Chinese roots and multiple meanings of Chinese identity through the experience in a family. Hui deals with Chinese identity and various Chinese communities around the world. Although the film is about a personal story, the film emphasizes cultural, historical, and political factors. In this part, my approach is to focus on the characters' diasporic experience and their personal and cultural identities.

The next film, Shunji Iwai's film *Swallowtail* (1996) is a story of the stateless sense that permeated the fictional town called "Yentown" populated by immigrants who come to Japan in pursuit of a dream. The film is set at a time when the Japanese yen become the strongest currency in the world. Legal and illegal immigrants work in the city. The immigrants give the city a nickname, "Yentown." The Japanese natives, however, despise such a nickname, and in retribution called the immigrants "Yentowns" (Yen Thieves). *Swallowtail* provides one example of critical consciousness of other/self, center/margin in the globalizing situation. In this part, I will add some considerations about the community of the cosmopolitan, the representation of the undocumented immigrants, and the expression of a mongrel language from a viewpoint of globalization.

The last film in Part Ⅱ, *Shinjuku Incident* (2009), is written and directed by Hong Kong's filmmaker Derek Yee. In this part, I will take the film *Shinjuku Incident* as a case study to consider what kind of unique identity is formed by them while paying attention to problems

such as illegal social position, work, language, cultural differences, and the relationship within the Chinese group in the foreign country. To understand why Chinese leave their mother country for a new land, it is important to know how their identities are changed. The representations of illegal immigrants showed in the film provide the possibility of examination.

In this part, I will focus on the representations of Chinese diaspora in Japan and Japanese diaspora in China, and explore the issues of multiple identities in transnational experiences.

Chapter 4 The Experience of Diaspora and Hybrid Identities in *Song of the Exile* (1990)

4. 1 Ann Hui's film and Hong Kong New Wave cinema

Ann Hui's He Tu Qiu Hen (*Song of the Exile,* 1990) is a semi-autobiographical story about a Japanese woman, Aiko, who immigrated with her older brother to China's Manchuria when she was young. In the closing years of the Second World War she falls in love with a translator Mr. Cheung. The couple from different nations migrates to Macau to live with Cheung's parents. Because of work, Cheung later leaves for Hong Kong, while Aiko and their daughter, Hueyin, remain in Macau. Because Aiko is Japanese and she cannot speak Chinese, Cheung's parents have never treated her in a particularly friendly manner. This has also influenced her daughter's attitude towards her. The mother-daughter relationship has always been distant. After her grandparents move to Guangzhou, Hueyin comes to Hong Kong to live with her mother, who has moved there earlier to rejoin her husband. The relationship between mother and daughter is still tense until they make a journey to Japan. In her mother's native home, Hueyin finally understands the depression that her mother feels as an outsider.

Hueyin's Mainland Chinese origins, Japanese mother, film school education in London, and television career all reflect Ann Hui's life to a certain degree.[71] Ann Hui was born in Anshan, in the province of Liaoning in 1947. She spent her childhood in Macau and moved to Hong Kong to attend high school and university.[72] After she graduated from

[71] Patricia Brett Erens, "Crossing Borders: Time, Memory, and the Construction of Identity in *Song of the Exile*." *Cinema Journal* 39.4 (2000), 43-59.

[72] See more detail about Ann Hui's films in Botang Zhuo and Tong Cheuk Pak.

film school in London, she returned to Hong Kong in 1973 and worked as assistant to the late Taiwanese film director King Hu. Hui later became a director of television dramas and documentaries at Hong Kong's TVB, where she developed other talents of the second New Wave of Hong Kong Cinema. The Hong Kong New Wave was a blanket term applied to a number of young, groundbreaking Hong Kong filmmakers of the late 1970s and 1980s. Born around 1950, most of them graduated from film schools in the United States or the United Kingdom and returned to Hong Kong's television stations and underwent two to three years of training.[73]

In this way, they accumulated practical experience in making dramas and became proficient at the language of film. Then, without prior arrangement, they left the television stations and joined the film industry. This group of young people, like an irresistible force, stirred up a colossal wave when the film industry was at low tide and opened up new vistas. The influx of so much new blood into Hong Kong cinema was unprecedented. The media and the critics dubbed these new directors "The New Wave" of Hong Kong cinema. Among the most notable members are Tsui Hark, Ann Hui, Patrick Tam, Yim Ho, and Allen Fong.[74]

In Ann Hui's films, the experience of diaspora is a significant element. In 1978, she began her first "Vietnam trilogy". *Boy From Vietnam* (1978) focuses on the displacement of Vietnamese refugees in Hong Kong and brought media attention to the plight of the "boat people." *The Secret* (1979) is partially set in the diaspora of Macau. In

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Hong Kong New Wave Cinema: (1978-2000). (London: Intellect Books, 2008), 53-81.

[73] For more on Ann Hui's personal experience and Hong Kong New Wave in Williams, Tony. "Song of the Exile: Border Crossing Melodrama."*Jump Cut* 42 (1998): 94-100.

[74] Botang Zhuo and Tong Cheuk Pak. *Hong Kong New Wave Cinema: (1978-2000)*, 9.

1984, Ann Hui made *Love in a Fallen City*, the year of the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration that sealed the date for the 1997 return of Hong Kong from the British to China. Adapted from Eileen Chang's novel, the film focuses on Hong Kong as a refuge for people from Shanghai and Europe in 1941. In the 1990s and 2000s, the diaspora has become more explicit in Hui's films. *My American Grandson* (1991) shows an overseas-born Chinese boy who visits Shanghai to spend a summer vacation with his grandfather. *Zodiac Killers* (1991), set in Japan, is about overseas Hong Kong students. From small towns like Nande in *Goddess of Mercy* (2003), to the cosmopolitan metropolis of Shanghai and the frontier province of Manchuria in *The Postmodern Life of My Aunt* (2006), China as Hong Kong's diaspora also features strongly.[75]

The film's Chinese title used the title of a popular southern Chinese folksong. The lyrics describe the grief of a young soldier who is separated from his girlfriend. The song was performed by the Cantonese opera actor and singer Bai Jurong during the 1910s and 1920s. It still heard from time to time in contemporary Hong Kong as a nostalgic reminder of the past for older Cantonese-speaking people.[76] As the title shows, exile is the keyword of the film. All the family members feel some sense of exile. However, as the term "exile" specifically refers to the condition of people who have been forcefully removed from the homeland, none of the characters can be strictly classified through the standard definition of exile. I will use the concept of "diaspora" to express on the conditions of displacement in the host land.

As I have noted in the part of introduction, in the last few decades, the concept diaspora are affected by the changing landscapes of

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[75] Audrey Yue, *Ann Hui's Song of the Exile.* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010), 12.

[76] For more detail see http://baike.baidu.com/subview/297832/10453552.htm, accessed on 2014/09/06.

modernity. American anthropologist Arjun Appadurai uses the term "ethnoscapes" to describe "the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guestworkers, and other moving groups and persons [who] constitute an essential feature of the world."[77] Diasporas are the "the exemplary communities of the transnational moment" characterized by cultural displacement, new modes of expression and economies of exchange.[78] Released in 1990, the film's themes of international marriage, generational conflicts and hybrid identities resonated with the handover of Hong Kong in 1997. Its narratives of migration also refer to the displacement of Hong Kongers as they immigrate to other countries to escape Chinese rules.

As the narration shows, Hueyin's life events span the 1950s to 1970s in Portuguese Macao, British Hong Kong, England, Japan, and Mainland China.[79] Also her mother, Aiko lives in Manchuria, Macao, Hong Kong and Japan. The film focuses on Hueyin's difficult relationship with her mother. The struggle between mother and daughter is also a tension between Japanese and Chinese culture.

Song of the Exile explores Chinese roots and multiple meanings of Chinese identity through the experience in a family. Ann Hui deals with Chinese identity and various Chinese communities around the world. Although the film is about a personal story, the film emphasizes cultural, historical, and political factors. In this part, my approach is to focus on the characters' diasporic experience and their personal and cultural identities.

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[77] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 33.
[78] Khachig Tölölyan, "The Nation-State and Its Others: In Lieu of a Preface." *Diasporas* 1, no.1 (1991), 5.
[79] Williams Tony, "Song of the Exile: Border Crossing Melodrama." *Jump Cut*, (1998, 42), 94-100.

4. 2 Living in Diaspora

In *Song of the Exile*, all the characters have experienced multiple journeys of migration. Aiko, the Japanese mother married to a Chinese translator, left Japan to work in Manchuria and moved to Macau, then has resettled in Hong Kong. Hueyin, the eldest daughter, moves between Britain, Hong Kong, Macau and China. Huewei, the younger daughter is about to migrate to Canada. Mr. Cheung, the father, works in Manchuria and Hong Kong. Hueyin's grandparents are refugees in Macau before returning to Guangzhou, a southern city of Mainland China.

In order to emphasize the motif of migration, multiple vehicles, such as bicycles, ferries, rickshaws, boats, buses, and trains, are particularly shown. The film opens with a close-up of a bicycle wheel and turns to a scene where Hueyin rides a bicycle on the streets of London. Also in Macau's scene, little Hueyin looks out of the window as the rickshaw leaves with her parents. Then the camera cuts to the scene of Hueyin's parents on a boat at sea. After that, there is a scene where teenage Hueyin takes a ferry to Hong Kong. When Hueyin and Aiko travel to Japan, the Japanese countryside is shown with a long shot from the window of a moving train. Hueyin and Aiko arrive in Beppu on a bus, and Hueyin explores Beppu on a borrowed bicycle.

In the Britain sequence, although Hueyin is seemingly happy with her English friends, she is an outsider. At the beginning of the film, in London, Hueyin guides her English friends to purchase spring rolls in a Chinese restaurant. Chinese food symbolizes the cultural difference between Britain and colonial Hong Kong. Her English friend has an interview opportunity with the BBC while she was rejected. The experience of institutional racism implies that Hueyin is an outsider as

an East Asian.

There is a scene where Hueyin types her personal information on the resume; the birthplace of Hong Kong indicates her marginal status. She has the right of resident in Britain due to Hong Kong's status as a colony of Britain. However, she faces ethnic discrimination as a naturalized migrant. The scene where Hueyin sits by herself in the nightclub while her girlfriends are surrounded by British men also shows her experience of isolation. Although she desires to apply for a job in Britain, Hueyin returns to home to attend her sister's wedding and confronts her mother Aiko.

In a flashback, when her father returns to Macao to take Hueyin and her mother to Hong Kong, little Hueyin refuses to leave her grandparents. When her grandparents decided to return to Mainland China, the historical condition results Hueyin's exile. After entrancing Hong Kong school, the adolescent Hueyin is isolated by classmates.

In *Song of the Exile*, Ann Hui uses voice-over as a device to link scenes and shots. As Zhuo Botang and Tong Cheuk Pak note in *Hong Kong New Wave Cinema: (1978-2000)*:

> In Hui's features, voice-over functions not solely to (1) narrate the plot and (2) bring to the surface the interior thoughts and feelings of the characters, but also (3) to catalyze the connection between shots. In most cases, voice-over is employed to give oral expression to the interior of thoughts and feelings of the characters.[80]

In *Song of the Exile,* the voice-over is usually a self-narrative of the heroine. As the film is a semi-autobiography, the narrator or the speaker encompasses the double identities of both the heroine and the

[80] Zhuo Botang and Tong Cheuk Pak, *Hong Kong New Wave Cinema: (1978-2000),* 55.

director. In other words, the voice-over presents the director's point of view in looking at herself. In a flashback, Hueyin's grandparents return to Guangzhou, China and Hueyin is sent to Hong Kong, a completely unfamiliar environment, and experiences a sense of abandonment for the first time. The camera gives an image of Hueyin alone on a ship. The voice-over is as follows:

> 1963 was the first time I had the feeling of being abandoned by my family. That summer, my grandfather went back to Guangzhou with my grandmother, because he could not forget his hopes and feelings of China. There, he and my uncle worked for their motherland and people, and I was sent back to Hong Kong, into a totally strange environment, an unfamiliar home. (My translation, 0:28:53-0:29:20)

Here, indescribable loneliness and helplessness are interpreted by the voice-over to express the heroine's interior subjectivity. The adoption of voice-over heightens these emotions that are not easy to represent by images.

In the film, as an expatriate, Aiko is always in a marginal space. When she is living with her husband's family soon after the World War Ⅱ, Aiko understands her situation as a double outsider (as a daughter-in-law in a traditional Chinese family and as a Japanese). She also feels alienated when she returns to Japan in the 1970s. Her trip to visit her family does not turn out as she had imagined. At first, she is pleased to be in her native Japan with family and friends, but later she finds that Japanese food is too cold, her young brother still considers her a traitor, and her former lover has grown old.

Furthermore, Hueyin's grandparents are refugees. They move to Macao because of The Culture Revolution in Mainland China. Although

her grandfather claims to “serve the people,” ironically he once wanted to become a western-style doctor. When Aiko and Hueyin visit Japan, Hueyin’s grandparents deal with their own suffering within their homeland (Mainland China). Despite his efforts to help in the Cultural Revolution, the grandfather himself has been tortured by the Red Guard.

4. 3 Identity in Question

Although Hueyin moved to Hong Kong with her mother and father, she continues to identify with the traditional Chinese life of Macau rather than with the modernized society of Hong Kong. These experiences of discrimination against Asians and cultural misunderstanding in Japan help Hueyin empathize with her mother and break down their tension. In Hong Kong, although Hueyin rejects many of the different customs of her and her mother and sister, she allows herself to be dressed by others. She follows her mother’s wish that she cut her long hair and has a perm and wears a traditional red dress for her younger sister’s wedding.

Within her hybrid identities, Hueyin is half Japanese, which she has rejected up to now. As she lived in Macau in her grandparents’ traditional Chinese household in her childhood, part of her identity has been shaped by events occurring in Macau. Through her memory, Hueyin experiences the former times and spaces to help her to process her identity. The search for her identity requires returning to the past, both geographically and mentally. For Hueyin, it means recalling her year in Macau, where she lived as a child, and in Hong Kong in her teenage years. In addition, by visiting her mother’s hometown (Japan) and Guangzhou, where her grandparents finally reside, her new identity is constructed.

In his article "Who needs 'identity'," Stuart Hall discusses the question of identification as follows:

> If one prefers to stress the process of subjectification to discursive practices, and the politics of exclusion which all such subjectification appears to entail, the question of *identification.*
> In contrast with the 'naturalism' of this definition, the discursive approach sees identification as a construction, a process never completed – always 'in process'.[81]

After being the Other in Japan just as her mother had been the Other in Macau and Hong Kong, Hueyin changes significantly. The experience also leads to a transformation in her own sense of identity. In the wider political context, Hueyin is not actively involved in, but only a spectator of events, such as the Cultural Revolution, anti-corruption activities, demonstrations and protests, the June 4th Incident and so forth. Hueyin refuses to take sides but shows understanding for both as she gradually identifies with the problems of her mother and grandparents.

In *Song of the Exile*, Ann Hui uses three mirror shots to emphasize the process of constructing Hueyin's identity. As Thomas Elsaesser and Malte Hagener summarize the paradigms of the mirror shot in *Film Theory: An Introduction Through the Senses*:

> One can heuristically distinguish three paradigms which belong to the semantic field of the mirror and its metaphoric connotations. First of all, there is the dominant notion – and a common trope in

[81] Stuart Hall, "Who Needs 'identity'?" *Identity: a Reader.* Ed. Paul du Gay and Peter Redman. (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2001), 16.

much of classical cinema – which regards the look into the mirror as a window on the unconscious, referring to a surplus or excess of Self, which the mirror is capable of disclosing. Second, the mirror metaphor in the cinema points to a reflexive doubling of what is being seen or shown…Finally, the mirror in the cinema also refer to the mirror of the other as identified by anthropologists as a component of human identity, agency and intersubjective communication. (63)

In the first mirror shot, Hueyin sits in front of a mirror as she submits to a haircut. The mirror shot leads to a recollection of a similar scene in her childhood when she was forced to cut her hair to Japanese student style by her mother (see fig. 6 and fig. 7). In both scenes, Aiko tried to control Hueyin's looks. It indicates that Aiko tries to give Hueyin an identity same with her. It is interesting that the transformation of Aiko's identity is shown through the juxtaposition of the two mirror shot. The recollection ends with Hueyin looking at herself in the mirror to confirm her own uncertain identity. In third mirror shot, the reflection of both father and daughter is shown when Hueyin's father reveals the truth about Aiko's Japanese identity.



Fig. 6 (0:20:01)

Cinematically, Ann Hui represents this by having Hueyin from the drama move into the mirror space as the camera is positioned behind Hueyin's back. As Hueyin searches for a clue to her identity, these repeated shots

symbolize Hueyin's struggle to work her way through the mirror phase. The task here is to move from the level of recollection to that of reality, which entails recognizing herself as object.

Furthermore, Ann Hui depicts cultural boundaries though food, costume, and language. These issues are also useful to explore the cultural identities of Aiko and Hueyin. When Aiko and Hueyin live with Chueng's family, the grandparents dismiss Aiko's cooking of Japanese food as unacceptably "raw" and "cold." The elders are shown in their own room, cooking southern Chinese foods. Also, they make their granddaughter Hueyin join them in their dinner, while Aiko is ignored outside their door to eat her Japanese style food. The grandparents use their eating habits to mark the cultural border. In the later sequence, the wedding is over, and Aiko brings home the leftovers for making a "hot pot" the same way the grandparents did in Macao. Returning to Japan, Aiko eats the Japanese dishes she misses such as soba with tempura and tofu. However, She has not been accustomed to eat Japanese dishes because it is raw and cold. She prefers Cantonese food, especially the hot homemade soups. Food preference expresses her changing cultural and personal identity.



Fig. 7 (0:19:25)

In the film, interesting clues show that Aiko is confirming her identity. In a flashback, it is an unhappy memory in Macao that Aiko cut Hueyin's hair and attempted to make her wear a Japanese-style cloths. By contrast, in the later sequence, Aiko forces Hueyin to wear a

traditional red dress for the wedding and insists that she cut her long hair and have a perm. In the beginning of the film, we notice that Aiko is a quite typical Chinese figure, who tries to make herself look the same as the people around her. Hueyin and Aiko wear several distinctive costumes indicating the process of cultural identity.

In *Song of the Exile* Cantonese, English, Japanese, and Mandarin are utilized to emphasize the diaspora. The film is set the contrary conditions of Aiko as a Japanese woman in China and Hueyin as a Chinese woman in Japan. It shows Hueyin's experience in the countryside of Japan. Hueyin tries to speak to a farmer in English, but he does not understand. Then, the villagers bring her to the local schoolteacher who can speak English. The scene then turns to a flashback which shows the existence of Aiko as a Japanese woman living in Macao. Unlike Hueyin's grandparents' treatment to Aiko, the country people in Japan are not xenophobic. By contrast, they deal with the cultural and linguistic difference to communication.

Conclusion

In the film, Aiko believed that Japan was her homeland and she could be happy only in Japan. However, when she visits her homeland, she realizes that she has become more Chinese than Japanese. As the film shows, each character physically returns: Hueyin to Hong Kong, Aiko to Japan and the grandparents to China. These physical returns also symbolize the reworking of the roots of their origins in a process of diasporic acculturation.

Chapter 5 Community, Representation, and Language in *Swallowtail* (1996)

Iwai Shunji's Japanese-language film *Swallowtail Butterfly* (*Suwarōteiru*, 1996) is a story of the statelessness sense that permeated the fictional town called "Yentown" where immigrants who come to Japan in pursuit of dream. The film is set in Tokyo at an unknown time when the Japanese yen has become the strongest currency in the world. Legal and illegal immigrants work in the city and they give the city the nickname "Yentown." However, the Japanese people despise the nickname and call the immigrants "Yentowns," meaning Yen thieves. Yentown was shot in Odaiba in the image of Tokyo. The location hunting was carried out in Taiwan, Los Angeles, Shanghai, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, and a location in Hong Kong was planned at first, but set in Tokyo in the end. As a result, the stateless town appears strangely in the background of the high-rise buildings of downtown.

Iwai started out in TV dramas and music videos in 1988. In 1993, He directed TV drama *Fireworks, Should We See It from the Side or the Bottom?* and won the Directors Guild of Japan New Directors Award. In 1995, he started his career in film industry and directed the film *Love Letter*.[82] The film was released in Japan, as well as in Korea and China, and became extremely popular. It is said that the success of *Love Letter* led to the production of *Swallowtail* in the next year. The appeal to the Japanese audience and the Southeastern Asian audience is illustrated in the cast of the film. Because Eguchi Yosuke and Mikami Hiroshi appear in many Japanese TV dramas, they are well known actors not

[82] Inuhiko Yomoda, *Nihon eigano radeikaru na ishi* [*Japanese Cinema's Radical Will*]. (Iwanami Shoten, 1999), 467, 488.

only in Japan but also in other Asian countries. The pop singer of Hong Kong, Andy Hui, as well as foreign television performer Kent Frick, further contribute to an overall sense of *Swallowtail* 's multicultural appeal.

Swallowtail provides one example of critical consciousness of a broader awareness of the cultural and ethnic heterogeneity in contemporary Japan, and other/self, center/margin in a globalizing situation. Particularly, those Japanese-speaking non-Japanese characters have contributed to the gradual destabilization of the ideas of Japanese identity as static and homogeneous. Undocumented immigrants live on the margins of mainstream Japanese society. The group, including Asian, Western and Middle Eastern immigrants, survives by merrily scamming Japanese who are descripted as ignoring the Other. Chinese, English, Japanese and something called "Ryanki-go" (a mix of Japanese, Chinese, and English) are used in the film.

In this part, I will add some considerations about the community of the cosmopolitan, the representation of the undocumented immigrants and the expression of the mongrel language from a viewpoint of globalization that has only been mentioned briefly.

5. 1 Acceptance of *Swallowtail*

Swallowtail won the 10th Takasaki Film Festival Best Directing Award and the 19th Japan Academy Award for most popular film. Moreover, the film gained commercial success, grossing over 1.6 billion yen.[83] However, it has been both applauded and criticized by Japanese

[83] Lori Hitchcock, "Third Culture Kids: A Bakhtinian Analysis of Language and Multiculturalism in Swallowtail Butterfly." *Scope: An Online Journal of Film Studies*. 2004, February. (http://www.academia.edu/2046721/Third_Culture_Kids_An_Analysis_of_Language_and_Multiculturalism_in_Iwai_Shunjis_Swallowtail_Butterfly,

critics. On the one hand, critics such as Higuchi Naofumi appreciate that the film imagines the kind of nationless and cultureless diversity so appealing to young Japanese not as a "dream" but as an "ambience," as something more captured than created.[84] On the other hand, the film critic Yomota Inuhiko criticizes it severely:

> In *Swallowtail*, Chinese illegal laborers and prostitutes build a utopian community, but this is depicted by the film's Japanese performers as a game…through there is a tourist gaze here, there is no sense of the film's intention of approaching the 'other' in a fresh way, because everything takes place within the predetermined parameters of a theme park.[85]

What is the situation of Japanese society in the late 90s that Higuchi pointed out? The production of *Swallowtail* can be considered to relate to the transition of the Japanese society situation and value system in the 1990s. After the collapse of the bubble economy, Japan went into a long-term recession. The Immigration Control Law was revised in 1990, and the increase of the number of immigrant workers coming to Japan comes to be pointed out after this. The residence status of "permanent resident" was founded by this revision and Japanese until the third generation have the right.[86] As a result, the entry of Japanese became easier and people who come to Japan from South/Central American countries such as Brazil and Peru mainly

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accessed on 2014/11/16).

[84] Naohumi Higuchi, "Review: *Swallowtail.*" *Kinema Junpo*. No.1202 (1996.10): 48-49.

[85] See Inuhiko Yomoda, *Nihon eigano radeikaru na ishi* [*Japanese Cinema's Radical Will*], 467, my translation.

[86] See Japan Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's homepage. (http://www.mhlw.go.jp/houdou/2004/07/dl/h0720-1c.pdf, accessed in 2014/10/14).

increased in this way.

For Chinese audiences, they may feel the gap of language and image seeing Chinese characters, such as Ryu Ryan-ki and Fei-hong, being performed by Japanese actors. Chinese audiences may find it hard to sympathize with these Chinese characters because Eguchi Yosuke and Mikami Hiroshi are Japanese actors well known in China. Rather Chinese audiences enjoy their performance and glamour as Japanese actors. It seems that the filmmaker may want to send a message that Yentown and Yentowns are an undivided community which cannot be separated, rather than in opposition with each other. In Chinese articles about this film, there are no such negative viewpoints and Iwai's ability is recognized. The humanity of the characters, the aesthetics structure and the technique of cinematic expression are largely analyzed.[87]

In the user reviews on Chinese online movie information sites, it is hard to find many comments resisting the image of the Chinese theft probably because they may have the sense of incongruity seeing the Chinese images that are performed by Japanese actors. Consider the following user review in douban.com:

> User "Yao Unchained" (2012-07-19):
> After watching it, I just feel nothing, but the idea came up a few days later, are Yentowns actually Japanese or Chinese people? The story is entirely about Chinese stowaways, but for me, some kinds of simple ideals, great efforts, and solidarity are closer to the Japanese images.

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[87] See more in Bin Wang, "Lixiang yu xiangshi de shijie: Pingwei Yanweidie"[The Ideal and Realistic World: *Swallowtail*]. *Shijie Wenhua* 2007.5. And Liu, Aili. "Duozhong secai yuyan shushuo de gushi: Fenxi dianying Yanweidie zhong de secai biaoxiang yishu" [Colorful Language: Color Expression in *Swallowtail*]. *Dianying Wenxue*. 2012.7.

User “Hua-tong” (2011-10-26):

Although these Shanghai rogues speak poor Chinese, they really have unique personalities, and are handsome. Japanese actors playing Shanghai rogues inexplicably let me have a good impression. The language of this confusion, chaos in the background, psychedelic story are really mysterious.

User “Yuan-song” (2007-12-09):

Depressing and confused picture. Wonderful “My Way.” Excluding the national sentiment, it is a very good film. “Swallowtail Butterfly” in a sense is a fairy tale, a fairy tale fable about modern society. In rapid economic development of today, Iwai tries to tell every spectator that money is not the meaning of life.[88]

A multitude of readings exist in this film for its fans, not critics or scholars. The numerous popularity polls and audience awards associated with Iwai’s film and their high ratings on online review sites, strongly suggests that there is something at work within this film that carries a great deal of meaning for its spectators. The polls and ratings in the global movie information net imdb.com, Japanese movie information site movies.yahoo.co.jp, Chinese movie information site movie.douban.com are shown in Table 2.

[88] My translation, (http://movie.douban.com/subject/1307793/, accessed on 2013/11/24).

Table 2: Online evaluation by users

Site	Numbers of posts	Rating (maximum 10)
IMDb	1634	7.5
Yahoo!Movie	107	8.3
Douban	71341	8.6

It is obvious that in China, the degree of attention for *Swallowtail* is much higher than Japan. Iwai loves the world of the girl's manga, and his film is regarded as a substitute of the girl's comic. The Japanese girl's comic was a style of the transition period projected the unstable identity of girls ahead the arrival of the consumer society.[89] One reason for the popularity may be that the fantasy Iwai made encourages Chinese boys and girls who live in "a transition period."

5. 2 The Cosmopolitan Community

In the beginning part of the film, the background of this story is introduced. The margins of Modern Tokyo are shown with the montage of black and white shots with English voice-over and text :

> Once upon a time when the Yen was the most powerful force. In the world city overflowed with immigrants. Gold rush boom town. They came in search of Yen. Snatching up Yen. And the immigrants called the city Yen Town. (0:00:14-0:00:32)

The beginning shows the style of the film of decentering from Japanese in culture and language.

[89] See Ryota Fukushima, "Kodomo no romanshugi to sonokanata [Children's Romanticism and Beyond]." *Yuriika* 44(11) (2012.9), 177.

The film begins with an orphan, young Ageha (Ito Ayumi), the Japan-born daughter of a Chinese prostitute, whose fate is connected with Glico (Chara), another Chinese prostitute who has been in Japan for many years. Glico introduces Ageha to Fei-hong (Mikami Hiroshi), a Chinese immigrant whose dream of earning good money in Japan. His dream is realized when he discovers a tape with magnetic data, with which he generates millions of yen. Fei-hong uses the money to buy a nightclub where he makes Glico a singer. However, Ryu Ryanki (Eguchi Yosuke), the murderous head of the Chinese mafia in Japan, is in search of the tape. Finally, Fei-hong is tortured to death by brutal Japanese police; Glico gives up her career as a singer in Japanese music industry and rejoins Ageha in the utopian of Yentown.

The streets where Yentowns live in are unified with gray. Signboards and neon signs are written in a mixture of language including Chinese, Japanese, and English. Although prostitution, theft, and murder occur routinely, the place is full of vigor and life. For example, when the prostitute Glico walks in the street, some acquaintance will greet her. Images of "poor-but-free" immigrants gathering around a campfire and sharing songs from a vaguely ethnic homeland into a utopian atmosphere are shown. As Matsuda Yukiko states, an "Asian city" is described in *Swallowtail*, and the close relationship of immigrants recalls the nostalgia for Japanese of downtown elements that no longer exist in modern Japanese society. The hairstyles and garments that often appear in Chinese village film accelerate the nostalgic feeling.[90] Foreign men are fascinated by Glico's singing of "South Sea Girl", a famous song by Teresa Deng.[91] The film

[90] Yukiko Matsuda, "Nihon eiga ni okeru 'ajia deki toshi' no hyoushou: *Suwaroteiru/ Inosenshu kara* [The Representation of Asian Cities in Japanese Films: *Swallowtail* and *Innocence*]." *Ritsumeikan Gengobunka Kenkyu.* 21(3) (2010.01), 145.

[91] Teresa Teng (January 29, 1953 – May 8, 1995) was a Taiwanese pop singer.

ends with the same melody but with a different arrangement.

Against the background music of string and drum, extraordinary momentum is shown with full of bright, brave and strong power to bring hope. Iwai seems to use the musical change to indicate the transformation of Glico and Ageha. The second-hand store, "Blue Sky", run by Fei-hong and his friends, is built on vacant land apart from the city. The camera closing up to the signboard of "Blue Sky" twice indicates that it is a metaphor for the narration.

The community of multination and multiculture fulfills the possibility of the community of the cosmopolitan that Kwame Anthony Appiah has suggested:

> The cosmopolitan patriot can entertain the possibility of a world in which *everyone* is rooted cosmopolitan, attached to a home of his or her own, with its own cultural particularities, but taking pleasure from the presence of other, different, places that are home to other, different, people.[92]

In other words, although the individuals who come from various areas have different creeds (political, religious and so on), they build relationships of mutual respect. The community of immigrants is drawn to break the restriction of nation, name, race, occupation, and language. They form one community across the bounds of culture and language while they work as prostitute, killer, or gangster. By focusing on the nationless and nonpolitical community, the realistical representation of

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Teng's voice and songs are instantly recognized throughout East Asia and in areas with large Asian populations. It is often said, "Wherever there are Chinese people, the songs of Teresa Teng can be heard."

[92] Appiah, Kwame Anthony. "Cosmopolitan Patriots." *Critical Inquiry* 23, no. 3 (Spring, 1997), 617.

the opposition between Japanese and non-Japanese is avoided. It becomes easier for the overseas audience to accept this film.

From the setting of the story, the symbiosis of the group is presented. At first, Glico takes Ageha in and asserts that she is her sister. A-rou, a man from Middle East, kills a Japanese gangster by mistake to save Glico and Ageha. Glico and her friends earn millions of yen printing counterfeit bills and move to the city. Glico's boyfriend Fei-hong uses the money to buy a club to realize Glico's dream. The songs of Glico become popular, and she becomes a super star in a moment. At last, Fei-hong negotiates a position for her and receives consolation money. The members of the band fly into a rage at this, and Yen Town Club is driven to close down. Ageha wants to regain the right of the shop and the friendship, so she uses counterfeit bills again. On the other hand, the mafia Mao-fu who knows about the tape, corners Glico obstinately. Glico escapes into "Blue Sky" to start a new life.

Swallowtail has a special "feeling" or "air" that express the idea of chaos. It is expressed not only by Iwai but also by the musical activity of the leading actress, Chara and musical director, Kobayashi Takeshi. Iwai sympathized with Kobayashi and Chara so that he utilizes MTV style to provide the sensitivity of Japanese pop. With a mass of performances by musician, DJs and comedians, the musical genre as a whole, he established a community bond between spectator and screen, as the moviegoer feels a connection to pop music.

In *Swallowtail*, "My Way" is sung for four times to suggest the theme of the film. "My Way" has long been a popular song in the western culture. Adapted from a French song "Comme d'habitude", this song is later characterized as a signature song of Frank Sinatra. And "My Way" is often chosen as a funeral song. The first time the Yentowns sing "My Way" on their way back home, after they bury the dead body of Sudo. In this scene, the song is not only a funeral song for Sudo but also

a new start for Yentowns.[93]

"My Way," which is sung by Glico and the Yen town band in her new club, creates an atmosphere of a musical film. In "*Ethnicities-in-Relation: Toward a Multicultural Reading of American Cinema*" Ella Shohat notes:

> The musical offers a utopian world characterized by abundance, energy, intensity, transparency, and community instead of the everyday social inadequacies of scarcity, exhaustion, dreariness, manipulation, and fragmentation...It is precisely the musical's intrinsic evocation of social harmony, accentuated in music and dance, that makes the genre appropriate for discussing ethnicities-in-relation.[94]

The live show in *Swallowtail* expresses the harmony of symbiosis, collective activity, and communal identity as the lyrics shows: "I traveled each and every highway. And more much more than this I did it my way."

The third time when "My Way" is repeated, it appears as a background song for the torture scene of Fei-hong. Fei-hong refuses to confess to the police and follows his way to live as a Yentown. While Glico and Ageha are making the garlands for Fei-hong after his death, Glico hums "My Way." Looking back at the entire film, the song "My Way" expresses the struggle of Yentowns living in diaspora.

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[93] See more about the sounds in the film in Carissa Liro Hudson, "Rediscovering Sounds in Shunji Iwai's Swallowtail Butterfly," *Cultural Studies Monthly* No. 60 2006.9.25. (http://www.cc.ncu.edu.tw/~csa/journal/60/journal_park457.htm, accesses in 2014/10/18.)

[94] Ella Shohat, "Ethnicities-in-Relation: Toward a Multicultural Reading of American Cinema." *Unspeakable Images: Ethnicity and the American Cinema.* Ed. Lester D. Friedman. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 222.

5. 3 Representations of Yentowns

Iwai Shunji mentions the source of Yentown's story in the interview of the movie magazine *Kinema Jumpo* as follows:

> I look around (Tokyo), and I feel there has been a feeling that might be called a dispirited illness for years. Sometimes I think the city of Tokyo is a perfect hospital. People can live even if they never show any self-defense instinct. When I am feeling suffocated in such a Tokyo and wonder whether there is any other way to break through. People who leave their home countries for the Yen make me feel energetic. I want to make it a story…. I want to show warped figures who make money, obtain it, and turn to Japaneseness.[95]

Japanese representations of "the spiritless illness in many years" in the film are contrastive with the representations of poor people who are going to survive for their family or for hometown even to commit a crime. As Fukushima Ryota notes that it is the admiration to the image of China, in other words, Chinese indecency as a fantasy to spin Japanese subculture.[96]

Ageha and Glico

Ageha was a nameless young girl who is sent from stranger to

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[95] "Interview with Iwai Shunji." *Kinema Junbo* No.1202 (1996.10): 39-53. My translation.

[96] See Ryota Fukushima, "Kodomo No Romansyugi To Sonokanata [Children's Romanlism and Beyond]," 174.

stranger in the Yentowns immigrant community. Finally, Glico, a Chinese prostitute, takes her in and gives her a name: Ageha (Swallowtail). Unlike other women in Yentown, many of whom are prostitutes, she is pure, a heterogeneous existence in the group of illegal immigrants. As a metaphor in the film, she transforms from a caterpillar into a butterfly.

There is a tattoo scene emphasizing that Ageha wishes to have her identity. She decides to tattoo a smaller swallowtail butterfly on her chest that is a similar version of Glico (see fig. 8). The character of Glico is important for Ageha so that she wants to make some visual connection between her and Glico. As underlying themes, the film deals with the erasure of the particular individual as he or she becomes a commodified component of the labor force that supports a booming global economy.[97] In the process of getting a tattoo, Ageha reminded her childhood. In this scene, Ageha resists to be assimilated into Japan ese culture and she actively marks her identity as a member of Yentowns.



Fig. 8 (1:36:44)

After starting a new life, Glico is hired by a Japanese musical company as a singer in Yen Town Club. However, she is forced to conceal her Chinese background and adopt a concocted Japanese

[97] Colleen A. Laird, "Japanese Cinema, The Classroom, and Swallowtail Butterfly," *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media Jump Cut*, No. 52, summer 2010. (http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc52.2010/lairdswallowtail/text.html, accessed on 2014/10/18.)

identity. Finally, Glico leaves the Japanese mainstream society and rejoins Yentowms in the utopian community.

Ryu Ryan-ki

Ryu Ryan-ki is the head of the Chinese mafia in Japan. He is Glico's brother as well. In one scene where he attacks a Chinese restaurant, the color red is effectively used. There are big Chinese characters on the wall and a round table is located in the middle of the room. The Mafia who is targeted is eating Beijing duck. The stereotyped Chinese image emerges there. Although Ryu Ryan-ki is ruthless to Japanese mafia, he shows another side of sympathy and cousinship as well. He takes Ageha to the doctor when Ageha ingests too much of a hard drug. In the doctor's office, he learns that his sister, Glico, is still alive. He looks at her picture and pretends to twist her nose to show his love.

Dave

Dave is a Westerner born in Japan and raised in Japan who is the manager of Yen Town Band. His appearance directly emphasizes the situation of globalization. The camera close to Dave's face and the sustained time for the shot is long, 1 minute and 23 seconds. The potentially intention is to arouse the sympathy of the spectator. Dave, who cannot speak English, tells his background and identity in his mother tongue, Japanese, to Ageha and Fei-hong:

> I'm not a Yentown. Of course, both my parents are Americans, but I was born and raised here in Japan. Thanks to the crappy English-language education system here in Japan, I can't speak

> English at all… am I Japanese or American? Thanks to this face, I'm treated like a foreigner wherever I go. But, make no mistake about it, I was born and raised in this country…this is the only homeland I have. People like you and me, second-generation Yentowns, need a completely different label: "Third Culture Kids." (My translation, 1:02:02-1:03:25)

The problem submitted here is how foreigners born in Japan and raised in Japan such as Dave and Ageha are to regard their identity. The homogeneity of Japanese society is challenged by the borderless nationality and ethnicity.

The label "Third Culture Kids" seems to invoke serious discourses about the "Third World." In "Colonialism, Racism and Representation," Robert Stam and Louise Spence introduce the definition of "Third World:"

> The definition of the 'Third World' flows logically out of this prior definition of colonialism, for the 'Third World' refers to the historical victims of this process-to the colonised, neo-colonised or de-colonised nations of the world whose economic and political structures have been shaped and deformed within the colonial process. The colonial relation has to do with structural domination rather than with crude economic ('the poor'), racial ('the non-white'), cultural ('the backward') or geographical categories.[98]

It may be an exaggeration to say "third culture kids" are victims in the processes of globalization, but as the offspring of a global economy,

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[98] Robert Stam and Louise Spence, "Colonialism, Racism and Representation." *Screen* 24 (2) 1983, 4.

young second-generation immigrants are restricted by economical, racial, cultural elements. The film captures the vigor of young immigrants and presents the problem of the dominant culture. As it is shown in the film, cultureless second-class diasporas are marginalized. In order to integrate into Japanese society, they must erase their ethnicities, cultures and languages. In other words, they must give up their particular specificity in order to adapt to the dominant culture.

As stated previously, Iwai becomes the subject of some criticism for using Japanese actors to play non-Japanese characters. However, Iwai tries to deconstruct the opposition relationship between Self and Other by this combination. For Japanese actors playing others, in a national meaning to become others, the fact of playing others become a metaphor of interaction and hybridity in Japan. It symbolizes the characteristic of ethnic mixture in a multicultural society. This film questions normative identity, and the problem is not irrelevant for the audience. It may be said that the message of the film provided an optimistic atmosphere of the community based in individual self-realization.

5.4. Languages and Multiculturalism

It is unusual for a Japanese film using multi-lingual lines to show immigrants with various hometowns. In understanding how language functions in a Japanese multicultural film, it is necessary for us to consider the symbolic meaning of “language” in the cinematic context.

In the film, Japanese characters stand alone in the multicultural environment through their ignorance of any language other than Japanese. There is a scene that highlights this tendency. It occurs early in the film: Fei-hong and a companion shoot the tire of a car driven by a Japanese salary man. The man is presented like a stereotypic Japanese

salary man wearing glasses and a company jacket. Realizing his tire is flat, the man goes to Fei-hong's store nearby. As the following conversation shows:

> The Japanese man: Ano..ano kuruma ga ne.
> (Um…um, my car.)
> The Japanese man: Mai ka izu panko…ka panko.
> (My car is punctured.)
> Puizu herupu mi. (Please help me.)
> Fei-hong: Ah, this tube is shot. You're gonna need a new one.
> The Japanese man: Eh? Pulizu, no taimu, fasuto, fasuto?
> (Please, no time, fast, fast.)
> Fei-hong: Oh, oh, five minutes. Get yourself a drink… over there. (0:16:50-0:18:35)

At first the Japanese man negotiates with a Middle Eastern immigrant in Japanese. Unable to make himself understood, the Japanese man switches to broken English. This scene reinforces the irony of Japan's superficial globalization by showing the Japanese businessman's ignorance of other cultures and languages. It is not because it lacks consideration about the general national identity and language, but because the unity of the past has been eroded by the increased diversity thrust upon Japan.

Perhaps the strongest example criticizing attitudes about multiculturalism of Japan is at the end of the film. It is a scene when the Japanese police interrogate Fei-hong on suspicion of counterfeiting 10,000-yen notes. The object of the police is his assumed boss, Ryu Ryan-ki. Because Fei-hong cannot speak or understand Japanese, his answers to their questions are conveyed by a sympathetic Chinese police interpreter. The police beat Fei-hong as he knows nothing. The

Japanese language symbolizes his failure to assimilate to Japanese society. Fei-hong brutally realized his otherness as a Yentown. Eventually, Fei-hong insists in Mandarin, “Stop saying ‘Yentown, Yentown’. Yentown is your hometown, isn’t it?” (2:11:34-2:13:47) The young interpreter interprets the protest of Fei-hong and says by his own words in Japanese. “Ientaun wa omaetachi no furusato no namae daro?” The discourse about “Yentown” of this scene obviously copes with the narration of the beginning part and the ending part that “Yentown is the name of the town and the immigrants.”

Conclusion

In *Swallowtail*, Iwai shows his great concern in the representation of marginalized immigrants to criticize the xenophobic violence of Japanese society in the 1990s. The film still troubles the myth of consistent normative identity. The message that the film conveys is not a specific topic. Rather the representation of the illegal immigrant and the expression of the mongrel language suggest the power relations of center/margin in Japanese society. Although internal hegemony power is reinforced, the challenges from the outside to hegemony continue. The tendency is illustrated that the dichotomy of center/margin is destroyed in progress of globalization. The film offers the optimistic possibility of the construction of community based on individual self-realization, cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism.

Chapter 6 Undocumented Immigrants in *Shinjuku Incident* (2009)

Shinjuku Incident (Chinese title: Xin Shu Shi Jian, 2009) is written and directed by Hong Kong filmmaker Derek Yee. The film was prepared for almost 10 years. Yee's works mainly focus on the common people to express social reality. Star as well as producer, Jackie Chan plays a destitute Chinese peasant called "Steelhead" who stows away to Japan with other illegal immigrants in the early 1990s. According to an interview with Yee, he decided make this film because he read a special feature about the Seiryutou case (a struggle of Chinese Mafia) in the Kabukicho area of Shinjuku in *Asia Weekly* in 1994 and it gave him a great shock.[99] The film sets the stage in Kabukicho to picture the figures of Chinese men who stow away to Japan living in the backstreet. Illegal immigrants borrow the power of the gang to rise from the bottom layer of Japanese society to become the greatest Chinese immigrant group. They acquire legal social position and survival space; however, they lose self-identity in the interval of finance, power and greed.

As Laurence J. C. Ma notes in *The Chinese Diaspora: Space, Place, Mobolity, and Identity*,

> In an age of increasing globalization, greater spatial mobility has engendered a host of new migration phenomena across global space, including new settlement patterns and increased levels of spatial interaction between homeland and hostland.[100]

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[99] "Jackie Chan Cultivates New State? An Exclusive Interview with Derek Yee." *Kinema Junpo* 5/1 2009, 50.

[100] Laurence J. Ma, "Space, Place, and Transnationalism in the Chinese Diaspora." 4.

Emigrants across the geographical border face problems such as language, social culture, and finance. In such situations, identity is affected by the encounter with heterogeneous thing and sociocultural change. Not a unified national identity, various, flexible personal identity becomes problematical. In this part, I will take the film *Shinjuku Incident* as a case study to consider what kind of unique identity is formed while paying attention to problems such as illegal social position, work, language, cultural difference, and the relationships within the Chinese group in a foreign country. To understand why Chinese leave the mother country for the new land, it is important to know how their identities are changed as time passes. The representations of illegal immigrants showed in the film provide an opportunity to exam the phenomenon.

6. 1 Diasporic Space

Diaspora comes from the Greek verb *speiro* (to sow) and the preposition *dia* (over), and the ancient Greeks used the word to mean essentially migration and colonization.[101] From this perspective, it is clear that the word diaspora represents a process of population dispersion in space and a process full of emotional connotations.[102] Also the meaning of diaspora refers to groups of people.

In *Shinjuku Incident*, for the immigrants, the diasporic space is Kabukicho, Shinjuku. Kabukicho in the early 90s is described as the place not only for the rendezvous of Japanese gangs but also Asian and South American Mafia organizations. Chinese immigrants form diverse social networks based on geographic factors (*diyuan*). Social networks

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[101] Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas*, xiv.
[102] Laurence J. Ma, "Space, Place, and Transnationalism in the Chinese Diaspora," 7.

are largely place-based and place-nourished, including networks formed through consanguineous causes (*xueyuan*), which continue to remain strong in contemporary China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and overseas Chinese communities.[103]

Dufoix uses the term "ethnolinguistic variety" to describe the situations like the one in this film, where people from Taiwan, Fujian, Guangdong, Hong Kong, Shanghai form their own groups.[104] Because Chinese people are used to speaking a dialect even when they leave the hometown and stay in a foreign country, they reject the people who do not know the same dialect. It is easily to understand that the people from the same hometown will form a group more naturally. Therefore, it may be said that a sense of unity with an area having the same dialect and cultural tradition is stronger than the connection with the same mother country for Chinese diaspora.

In the beginning of the film, Steelhead (Jackie Chan), a tractor mechanic, illegally emigrates to in search of his girlfriend, Xiu-Xiu (Xu Jinglei). He is welcomed by his "brother" Jie (Daniel Wu) who works in Shinjuku. Jie shows Steelhead how to make a living by doing illegally work. Also Jie gathers fellow villagers to live in a small house. As for the formation of the groups, besides the local element that I analyzed earlier, the groups are divided by other factors such as social position, power, the period of the emigration and so on. As the people in Steelhead's group come to Japan for a short period, they still live poor life at the bottom of Japanese society. In addition to the control of Japanese police, they are driven to the fringe by the pressure of Japanese gangs and Chinese Mafia.

Laurence J. C. Ma proposes that diasporas are best viewed geographically as complex and interrelated sets of places and spatial

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[103] Ibid., 10.
[104] Stéphane Dufoix, *Diasporas*, 54.

processes, created as a consequence of varied forms of transmigration and transnational economic activity.[105] Because the illegal immigrants live in an isolated space from Japanese mainstream society, the mental sense of belonging to their group is relatively strong. In addition, assimilation to different cultures is less likely happen in spatial isolation. In the film, there is a scene of celebrating the lunar New Year, and according to the Chinese northeast manners and customs, spring festival scrolls are hung on the wall and people eat dumplings together to celebrate the traditional Chinese festival.

6. 2 Flexibility of Individual Identity

The film *Shinjuku Incident* was not released on mainland screens due to its violence and a lurid story line about Chinese illegal immigrants. This decision was made by Jackie Chan and his backers, not by censors.[106] Chan's character, a gangster named Steelhead, allies himself with a Japanese police officer in order to clean up Shinjuku, by thrashing rival gangsters from Taiwan. The film was quite favorably reviewed in Hong Kong and Taiwan, and Chan was praised for his effort in a serious dramatic role. Though initially registered as a Hong Kong-Mainland coproduction, and listed in the repertoire of the China Film Co-production Company website, this movie had ended up reaching the mainland audiences only through pirated copies.[107]

Derek Yee explained that he decided not release the movie in

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[105] Laurence J. Ma, "Space, Place, and Transnationalism in the Chinese Diaspora," 5.
[106] Darrell William Davis, "Market and Marketization in The China Film Business." *Cinema Journal* 49.3 (2010), 121. (http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.cmstudies.org/resource/resmgr/in_focus_archive/in_focus_49.3.pdf, accessed on 2014/10/20.)
[107] Hilary Hongjin He, "One Movie, Two Versions": Post-1997 Hong Kong Cinema in Mainland China." *Global Media Journal-Australian Edition* 4.2 (2010). (http://lewi.hkbu.edu.hk/WPS/103%20He.pdf, accessed on 2014/10/20.)

Mainland China because China does not have a movie rating system while cutting the violence would hurt the integrity of the movie.[108] However, a cut version about 19 minutes shorter was released in Singapore and Malaysia, both places well known as conservative in their film censorship policies. In addressing the issue, Mainland film critics pointed out that apart from the concerns of the violence and film rating, the real obstructions for *Shinjuku Incident* to enter the Mainland are the sensitive topic of illegal Chinese immigrants in Japan, and the strident theme of "Chinese don't fight Chinese" spoken out openly in the film, both "inviting suspicion of insulting the Chinese people."[109]

In *Shinjuku Incident*, Steelhead and Jie's individual identities are transformed in diaspora. "Flexible citizenship" can be found among many diasporic Chinese. It is defined by Aihwa Ong as "strategies and effects of mobile managers, technocrats, and professional seeking to both circumvent and benefit from different nation-state regimes by selecting different sites for investment, work, and family relocation." Flexible citizenship also refers to "the cultural logics of capitalist accumulation, travel, and displacement that induce subjects to respond fluidly and opportunistically to changing political-economic conditions."[110] The notions of flexibility and fluidity proposed by Ong can be used to dissect and understand the complex issues of diasporic experience.

Originally Steelhead worked as a tractor driver in his hometown. He came to Japan to do the dirty and low salary work while looking for his fiancée Xiu-Xiu. An acquaintance asks him to do illegal work, but he

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[108] Min Lee, "Director: Jackie Chan Film Too Violent For China." *USA Today* February 16, 2009.

[109] Ran Ma, "Xin Su Shi Jian zao jin liyou" [The Banning of *Shinjuku Incident*]. *Nando Yule Zhoukan* 2009.No .11.

[110] Ong, Aihwa. *Flexible Citizenship*, 136.

refuses it because he may not be able to meet Xiu-Xiu if he is sent back home. However, when he finds out that Xiu-Xiu has become the wife of a gang leader, he loses all his hope. But he cannot return to his hometown. In a flashback, it is shown that when Steelhead escaped from the border of China, he killed a guard person. In other words, he has no way but to live in Japan and get a legal ID card. He makes up his mind to earn money and get a better social position because he hates living in the shadows throughout life. He lends the power of Japanese gangs to get the right of permanent residence.

It is not unusual for Steelhead to activate one identity while suppressing others to achieve a specific goal, and he has different identities. Steelhead does not want to continue a life of crime, and so he leaves Kabuki Cho and begins to conduct a business selling tractors. Engaging in the business related to the work he loved in the past suggests the regression of his personal identity. Steelhead's transformation shows the flexibility of his personal identity.

On the other hand, coming from the same village, Jie activates another identity. Steelhead and his Chinese friends go on an aggressive money laundering operation, but leave Jie out of it due to his kind-hearted nature. Jie's dream is to have a small business running a sweet chestnut stand, so the members of the group buy a stand for him. Unfortunately, a Taiwanese triad leader, Gao (Jack Kao), discovers one of his pachinko machines has been tampered with and vows to punish the culprit. Jie gets caught playing the tampered pachinko machine and is taken to a dark alleyway where Gao slices Jie's face and cuts off his right hand while trying to get information. Losing his right hand, Jie cannot run his small business anymore and his personality changes suddenly. Jie becomes ferocious and comes to be involved in drug trafficking. Also, he leaves the immigrant group to become the head of young Japanese yakuza.

From Jie's exaggerated clothes and makeup, it is shown that he has assimilated into Japanese subculture. In the case of Jie, he loses his former identity and turns to a performance that is completely opposed to the past. When he meets the woman he liked before he uses violence on her lover. From an attacked person to a person attacking on other people, his character makes an about-face.

Conclusion

The film *Shinjuku Incident* shows the underworld where a common person rose for the violence that is not readily mentioned to the audience. But we must not mistake the intention that director paid attention to Chinese illegal immigrants residing in Japan. The main characters of illegal immigrants may be the minority within the Chinese diaspora residing in Japan, but the film expresses the characteristic of the spatial disintegration of Chinese immigrants scattered around the world. Besides, the problem of personal identity is drawn carefully by the illegal social position, the environmental change and the mutual relations of the group.

Part Ⅲ From Mainland China to Hong Kong and Taiwan

Part Ⅲ opens with Hou Hsiao-Hsien's autobiographical film *A Time to Live, A Time to Die* (Chinese title: Tong Nian Wang Shi, 1985), dealing with the director's own childhood. The film is about a Mainland Chinese family's coming to terms with its new environment in Taiwan and confronting the hardships of sickness, death, and the pains of growing up from the late 1940s to the early 1960s. The film presents a political articulation of Taiwanese identity with nostalgic motion.

The next film, Peter Chan's *Comrades, Almost a Love Story* (Chinese title: Tian Mi Mi, 1996), is about a ten-year romance between two characters from Mainland China who first meet in Hong Kong in 1986. Underlying this turbulent romance are the history, economics and personal circumstances that drew many Chinese into Hong Kong under the British and then, in the face of impending Chinese Communist rule, sent them on to North America.[111] By unfolding the little tales of ordinary people, the film offers some hints of the cultural and national identity of the protagonists.

The last film in Part Ⅲ, adapted from Eileen Chang's short story, Ang Lee's *Lust, Caution* (Chinese title: Se Jie, 2007) is about a historically Chinese topic.

By concentrating on three of the best-known Taiwan and Hong Kong directors, this part emphasizes the complicated migration in the "Great China."

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[111] Lawarence Van Gelder, "Film in Review." *The New York Times*, February 20, 1998.

Chapter 7 Taiwanese Identity: *A Time to Live, A Time to Die* (1985)

7.1 Taiwan New Wave Cinema and Hou Hsiao-Hsien

In the 1980s, the Taiwanese cinema industry underwent a transformation and the Central Motion Picture Corporation (CMPC) started a project to support new Taiwanese directors. This began the rejuvenation of Taiwanese cinema known as the New Wave. New Wave films were known for their realistic depiction of personal life, which was a contrast to the melodramas or kung-fu actions.[112] A series of films now exist worthy of international attention and several world-class directors have emerged including Hou Hsiao-Hsien, Edward Yang, and Ang Lee.[113]

New Wave films focused on the portrayal of daily life and examined many of the important issues facing Taiwan society at that time. For instance, Hou Hsiao-Hsien's *A City of Sadness* (1989) is about the conflicts between the local Taiwanese and Chinese Nationalist government after their arrival from mainland. Edward Yang's *Taipei Story* (1985) portrays the confusion of traditional values and modern consumerism among the youth in Taipei. Chen Kunhou's film *Growing Up* (1983) is located in a specific place and time. Through the experience of a young boy, the film touches upon issues between Mainlanders and Native Taiwanese. Therefore, the New Wave Cinema films reflect

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[112] See more in Anya Kordecki, "Defining Cultural Identity: Taiwanese New Wave Cinema." *The Culture Trip Online Website.* (http://theculturetrip.com/asia/taiwan/articles/defining-cultural-identity-taiwanese-new-wave-cinema/, accessed on 2014/10/21.)

[113] Douglas Kellner, "New Taiwan Cinema in the 80s." *Jump Cut*, (no. 42, December 1998), 101-115. (http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/onlinessays/JC42folder/80sTaiwanCinema.html, accessed on 2014/11/08.)

Taiwan's social and political transformation in that time.

New Wave filmmakers received expanded freedom to make films and explore cinematic style and social themes. As a result, they produced a new type of political cinema distinctly focused on Taiwanese problems and identity.[114]

Beginning with the film *Lovable You* (1980), Hou Hsiao-Hsien produced a series of historical films in 1980s. Such as *The Sandwich Man* (1983), *The Boys From Fengkuei* (1983), *A Summer at Grandpa's* (1984), *A Time to Live, A Time to Die* (1985), *Dust in The Wind* (1986), *Daughter of the Nile* (1987), and *A City of Sadness* (1989), his works explore the personal histories and provide useful materials for a national cinema and his characters represent Taiwan's turbulent history and social conflicts. Hou's cinematic style is generally very simple, using long takes with minimal camera movement and focusing on dramatic events in history and their effects on the lives of small groups of characters.[115]

New Wave Cinema deserves to be studied as many high aesthetic quality films have attracted the attention of world cinema. In particular, the films helped create a new Taiwanese public sphere, providing a cultural material to discuss national issues. In this part, I will explore Hou Hsiao-hsien's *A Time to Live, A Time to Die* as a case study. The film is a good example of a second-generation mainlander who wants to articulate his place in Taiwanese history and to affirm his identification with the island.

7. 2 Memory, History and Politics

[114] Douglas Kellner, "New Taiwan Cinema in The 80s," 101-115.
[115] Anya Kordecki, "Defining Cultural Identity: Taiwanese New Wave Cinema." *The Culture Trip Online Website.*

A Time to Live is Hou Hsiao-hsien's autobiograpgical film, dealing with the director's own childhood. The Mandarin title is Tong Nian Wang Shi, literally translated as "the past things of youth," a title better suited to a film about memory. Born in Mainland China in 1947 in the Hakka community[116] of Guangdong, which speaks a unique dialect and has its own distinct traditions, Hou immigrated at an early age with his family to Taiwan, where his father became a government official. Since Hou's family immigrated to Taiwan during the late 1940s, he shares an ambiguous identity with a great number of "mainlanders" (*waisheng ren*). "*Waishengren*" means "outsiders to the (Taiwan) province," although these outsiders have resided in Taiwan for more than half a century. Originally, both mainlanders and the Taiwanese (*bensheng ren*) were from China, the only difference is their arrival date, either before or after the Japanese occupation.[117]

The film explores a small town family's coming to terms with its environment and dealing with the hardships of sickness, death, and the pains of growing up. The everyday life of the family seems to be interrupted by many deaths. The narrator, Aha, mentions four memorable deaths. First, his cousin dies as a war hero while Aha is in elementary school. Then his father dies of tuberculosis when he enters middle school. Later his mother dies of throat cancer and his grandmother of old age when Aha is in high school. As each member of the older generation of mainlanders dies, their memories of the Mainland disappear with them.[118]

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[116] The Hakka are Han Chinese who speak Hakka Chinese and have links to the provincial areas of Guangdong, Jiangxi, Guangxi, Sichuan, Hunan and Fujian in China. Although the vast majority of the Hakka live in Guangdong, they have a separate identity that distinguishes themselves from the Cantonese people.

[117] Tonglin Lu, *Confronting Modernity in the Cinemas of Taiwan and Mainland China*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 95.

[118] Hsiu-Chuang Deppman, *Adapted for the Screen: The Cultural Politics of*

In 1949, Jiang Kai-shek (the leader of the Nationalist Party) and his followers fled to Taiwan, after being defeated by the Communists. The Nationalist government closed off communications and transportation between Taiwan and the Mainland. As June Yip notes in *Envisioning Taiwan: Fiction, Cinema, and The Nation in The Cultural Imaginary:*

> To a large extent, the Nationalist government's official myth of "recapturing the mainland" – a slogan only recently abandoned – deepened the sense of dislocation and alienation experienced by these exiles; by keeping alive the dream of an eventual return to the motherland, the government allowed the mainlanders to avoid facing the realities of life in Taiwan.[119]

In *A Time to Live,* the political situation is indicated by using broadcasting, newspapers and conversations. As the following content of the radio report:

> Our station news, our brave air force today shot down five MiG-17 aircrafts of the enemy and injured two aircraft of the same type in Matsu Strait. The brilliant victory tributes to our countrymen as the best present of Double Tenth National Day. (My translation, 0:18:01-0:18:25)

Adaptation in Modern Chinese Fiction and Film. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010), 152.

[119] June Yip, *Envisioning Taiwan: Fiction, Cinema, and the Nation in The Cultural Imaginary*. (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2004), 76.

The radio report refers to the political relationship between Mainland China and Taiwan. The radio indicates the dominant powers of Chinese Nationalist Kuomintang in Taiwan.

In the film, the father explains to the children about the political events mentioned on the radio, but the children don't really care. In one scene, the radio announces a famous Nationalist general's death and broadcasts a memorial. An old Nationalist soldier requests Aha and his friends to stop playing billiards. When Aha insults the old Nationalist, a fight breaks out. Obviously, the younger generation shows no interest in the history or politics. In contrast to the older generation, who wants t o return to Mainland China, The young people live in the present and regard Taiwan as their homeland.

7. 3 Metaphorical "Homes" for Different Generations

The story focuses on a young man Aha and his relations with his big family and Taiwanese friends. At the beginning of the film, the voice-over tells the relationship between the boy and his family. Two boys play in a room with Japanese *tatami* flooring and *shoji* screens (see fig. 9). The scene establishes the main focus of the film as the home and the family but it also reveal that the family lives in the historical shift from Japanese to Chinese occupation.



Fig. 9 (0:01:12)

The grandmother especially dotes on the boy because a fortune-teller told her he would grow up to be high-ranking official. The sister is bitter because although she studied hard and did very well on a

difficult high school entrance exam, she must attend a preparatory school for teaching college because of limited family resources. (In contrast, her younger brother prepares to go to high school and university. Obviously, the male child has more privilege. The film expresses the subordination of women in a patriarchal Chinese family.

In *A Time to Live*, Grandmother speaks of her desire to return to Mainland China clearly. Her current Taiwan lius filled by her effort to return to her past in China and to prepare for her future in the underworld. She makes paper silver dollars all day long for her life in the underworld. Moreover, in the film, the juxtaposition of the children's popular games with grandmother's back to China obsession constitutes a visual metaphor, where the motion of a spinning top symbolizes grandmother's circular movement between past and future.

Grandmother wants Aha to accompany her on a journey back to the old family village to "pray to the ancestors" to instill a sense of his origins in the boy. There is an interesting scene where she asked the owner of a snake shop how to go to MeiKong Bridge, a landmark in her native village. The shop owner, who can only speak Taiwanese, doesn't understand Grandmother's Hakka dialect. Grandmother's experience also indicates the minority status of Hakka dialect among the Taiwanese.

In the film, the older generation generally remains focused on China and prevents to touch with the life on Taiwan. After her mother's death, the daughter reads her father's autobiographical diary her siblings. The father wanted to settle in Taiwan only briefly, expecting to return to China. He bought inexpensive furnishings that could be easily thrown away when the time came to return to the Mainland. In his lifetime, the father never directly expressed his longing for the Mainland. He closely followed Nationalist politics and never really identified with Taiwan.

The mother spends much of her time indoors, cooking and caring for her children and sickly husband. She alienates herself from the life of the village. She continually tells her children about the family's life on the Mainland. Speaking in Hakka dialect, she narrates her past in vivid details that construct a sense of identity. One day, after the sister has been engaged, she and her mother sit together in the living room while the rain comes down outside. The mother tells the daughter how hard her life has been.

The film primarily focuses on Aha's growth and coming to maturity. As a child, Aha has never understood the longing for the Mainland shared by the older generation. When his grandmother asks him to accompany her to go the Mainland, he asks: "What are we going to do back on the Mainland?" Aha and his siblings can speak three dialects: Hakka at home, Taiwanese in the village with their friends, and Mandarin in their schools. The young generations' unconscious use of the different dialects shows the condition of the polyglot and multicultural nature of contemporary Taiwanese society. In particular, the narrative choice to have the character Aha speak the Taiwanese dialect indicates the boy's identification with Taiwanese culture and indifference to Mainland Chinese culture. He often sings native Taiwanese songs and has no interest in Chinese Nationalist politics. He symbolizes the younger generation's integration into politics and culture as Taiwanese.



Fig. 10 (2:15:16)

Conclusion

The film ends with the scene of the four brothers silently staring at the dead grandmother. The powerful image symbolizes the transition of the Taiwanese of Hou's generation to a new era (see fig. 10).

In *A Time to Live*, Taiwanese culture is represented by many different cultures from Mainland China, Japanese, America or European countries. Also, through the description of different emotions of old generation and young generation to Mainland China and Taiwan, the film indicates that it is difficult to reform a national identity out of competing traditions.

Chapter 8 Migration from Mainland to Hong Kong, to New York: *Comrades: Almost a Love Story* (1996)

Comrades, Almost a Love Story (Chinese title: Tian Mi Mi, 1996) is about a love story of two Chinese mainlanders. The film commemorates events in the period from 1986 to 1996: for instance, the sudden crash of the Hong Kong stock market in 1987, the death of popular singer Teresa Teng in 1995 and Hong Kong's emigration wave before the handover. The film is presented from the point of view of two outsiders. Leon Lai plays a naive Northerner, Li Xiaojun, and Maggie Cheung plays an opportunist from Guangzhou speaking Cantonese, Li Qiao, who takes advantage of mainlanders like herself for financial gain.

The film has won numerous awards. It took nine prizes at the 1997 Hong Kong Film Awards, including best film, best director, best actress (Maggie Cheung), best supporting actor (Eric Tsang), and best script. The film contains plenty of information about migration. It is closely related to Peter Chan's personal experience. Peter Chan was born in Hong Kong then moved to Thailand to spend his childhood, and he also lived in Mainland China for several years. His higher education was undertaken in America, but he dropped out of UCLA at 21, and started his career in film back to Hong Kong.[120]

Although the film is about a passionate love affair of two young people from Mainland China, director Peter Chan and screenwriter Ivy Ho also have made a subtly political film about migrations from Mainland Chinese struggling to live the Hong Kong dream of riches and success. Both themes play with the anxiety surrounding 1997 when

[120] Mengyang Cui, *Hong Kong Cinema and the 1997 Return of the Colony to Mainland China: The Tensions and the Consequences*. (Boca Raton: Universal-Publishers, 2007), 32.

Hong Kong may be "overrun" by mainland migrations, immigration to America the only resort for the survival of the Hong Kong middle class. Just as a minor character says in the film: "Hong Kong is a mainlander's dream, Hong Kongers look elsewhere."

Comrades begins with the male character Xiaojun's arrival at the Hong Kong train station in 1986. As a native from Tianjin, a northern city of China, Hong Kong is an entirely unfamiliar world to him. Xiaojun's aunt helps him to find a food delivery job in a restaurant. His dream is to save enough money to bring his fiancée Xiaoting to Hong Kong. Xiaojun meets Li Qiao in a McDonald's restaurant, where Li Qiao works as a waitress. Li Qiao comes from Guangzhou. Due to her ability to speak Cantonese, she at first appears to be an indigenous Hong Konger. The film details the ten-year life of a man and a woman. By unfolding the little tales of ordinary people, the film offers some hints of the cultural and national identity in "Great China."

8. 1 Cinematic Symbolic of Teresa Teng

The Chinese title of the film, Tian Mi Mi (Sweetness), is a popular song by the female Taiwanese vocalist Teresa Teng. Teng was extremely popular in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, and Southeast Asia during the 1970s and 1980s. Teng's songs swept through Taiwan and Hong Kong during the 1970s, but their influence subsided in the 1980s. However, thanks to Mainland China's version of a market economy, a new market was found for her in Mainland China. As this time lag in the reception of the same cultural products among Pan-Chinese, mainlanders' choices and tastes easily reveal their different local identities. So as the film presents, Teresa Teng's songs that became favorites of the mainlanders

in the mid-1980s were already somewhat passé to Hong Kongers.[121] Hoping to make a profit from the fact that Hong Kong is filled with mainlanders, Li Qiao opens a booth to sell Teng's recordings during the New Year holidays. But the idea proves to be a mistake. For Hong Kong residents to confess their favorite of Teresa Teng is to reveal their lowly mainland origins.

In an interview with Michael Berry, Peter Chan notes that:

> Teresa Teng…is such an icon for all three Chinas, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the mainland. She is really the one who pulled everyone together. If you were from China in 1985, there was nobody else but Teresa Teng. And she herself also represents that through her own diasporic background. She herself is the incarnation of the rootless Chinese.[122]

Teresa Teng, as a Taiwanese singer adored by people in the Mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan, suggests the unified essence of these three places. Teng's song first appears when Xiaojun is giving a bicycle ride to Li Qian in the busy streets of Hong Kong. Li Qiao, sitting on the bike, overwhelmed by the reminder of home and hums Teng's "Tian Mi Mi," thereby reveals her mainlander origin to Xiaojun. Also, the song is repeated twice more. When Li Qiao has lost all her money in properties and shares, Xiaojun sings to her in bed. Teresa's song marks the development of the two protagonists' relationship. At the very end of the film, in a flashback to ten years before, when the two protagonists were sitting next to each other on the same train to Hong Kong, " Tian Mi Mi" is played again.

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[121]Rey Chow, *Sentimental Fabulations,* 110.
[122] Michael Berry, *Speaking in Images: Interviews with Contemporary Chinese Filmmakers*. (Berkeley: Columbia University Press, 2005), 499.

Moreover, in the film, two bicycle scenes function as marks of mainland identity. One bicycle scene is after English class. Xiaojun offers Li Qiao a ride on a bicycle (see fig. 11). The conversation between the two is as follows:

Xiaojun: Are you in a hurry?

Li Qiao: Yes, very much.

Xiaojun: Do you want a ride?

Li Qiao: Do you drive? Well, let's go then. Hurry up.

Li Qiao: Do you know, in Hong Kong, people here don't offer a ride on a bicycle.

Xiaojun: I feel like I'm back in Wusih. (0:16:48-0:17:21)



Fig. 11 (0:17:48)

As Li Qiao points out to Xiaojun, when people in Hong Kong say they can give you a lift, they mean a car and not as they do in the mainland, a bicycle. The bicycle represents the anachronistic mainland lifestyle. And the bike scene suggests a growing intimacy and emotional bond between the protagonists. Another bicycle-ride scene shows Xiaojun delivering foods for a Chinese restaurant in the busy streets of New York (see fig. 12). The scene suggests that the rootless Chinese are not totally lost in a host country since there is always a nationalized or ethnicized way for them to tread just like Xiaojun rides a bicycle (symbolize Chinese life style) all over the world.

When Li Qiao and Xiaojun meet again in 1990 and discover that they are still in love with each other, Teresa Teng turns up again. In a

sequence, they drive in the street, one of Teng's songs "Goodbye My Love" comes on the car radio, and Teng the singer actually happens to be on the street surrounded by fans. Xiaojun jumps out of the car and obtains an autograph from her. As the song's title shows, the two lovers end up with a feeling of attachment.

Another famous Teresa Teng's song, "The Moon Represents My Heart," can be heard over the television broadcast of the singer's death.



Fig. 12 (1:32:48)

At the end of the film, Xiaojun and Li Qiao accident met again in front of an electronics store on a street of New York. Then are both attracted by a TV reporting the death of Teresa Teng. As the television presenter in the film suggests, "Wherever there are Chinese around the world one would hear Teresa Teng's songs." This suggests that Teng's song can leap over the bounds of time, space and imagination to signify Chineseness.

In the discussion of Shunji Iwai's *Swallowtail* in Chapter 5, I referred another Teresa Teng's song "Nan Hai Gu Niang" (South Sea Girl). As she is also popular in Japan, the song arouses some nostalgia sentiment for Japanese as well.

8. 2 The Global Dream

Li Qiao and Xiaojun have different dreams. Li Qiao's dream is to earn a lot of money and build a big house in her hometown for her mother. She believes that the harder people work in Hong Kong, the

richer they surely will be in the future. In contrast, Xiaojun wants to earn enough money to marry his fiancée Xiaoting. For both of them, Hong Kong stands as an opportunity for economic advancement. Although Hong Kong people mostly speak Chinese (mainly Cantonese), the hybrid of multi-culture in Hong Kong embodies Chinese, British, and American.

Li Qiao's Hong Kong dream is marked by the automatic teller machine (ATM). In one scene, she checks her account balance at the ATM with anticipation and excitement. In another scene, after she checks her account, she is disappointed. The process from excitement to disappointment provides Li Qiao's life trajectory. As Rey Chow notes the function of the ATM:

> The ATM as mirror thus stands as an important thematic and narrative connection in this first part of the story, underscoring a process of subjectivization that occurs not through romance but through a rationalization of wage labor, frugality, and the steady accumulation of personal wealth.[123]

Li Qiao's image presents a stereotypical poor immigrant with a dream of assimilation in capitalist Hong Kong society.

To represent Hong Kong people's attached to British culture, the film presents the case of Xiaojun's aunt, Rosie. She is a former bar girl, and now helps run a bordello. Rosie tells Xiaojun the story of meeting William Holden[124] while he was in Hong Kong shooting *Love is a Many-Splendored Thing* (1955). She falls Holden for her entire life, and

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[123] Rey Chow, *Sentimental Fabulations,* 106.

[124] William Holden (April 17, 1918 – November 12, 1981) was an American actor. One of the most popular movie stars of all time, Holden was one of the biggest box office draws of the 1950s. Holden won the Academy Award for Best Actor in 1953.

waited for him to come back again. In the film, some people think Rosie is mad and is only making up the stories about Holden. However, after she dies, Xiaojun collects her belongings and finds pictures of her and William Holden and the dining utensils they used at the Peninsula Hotel. The hotel as a Hong Kong colonial landmark signifies Hong Kong's sentimental attachment to British culture. Also, Hollywood's image of William Holden indicates Rosie's American dream.

Comrades offers a picture of Hong Kong formed from American commodities: McDonald's restaurants, Mickey Mouse, and English classes.[125] These show the Hong Kong people's worship of American culture. It also hints the absence of Hong Kong local mainstream culture.

The two protagonists' story mainly develops in Hong Kong and America. Also, it brings in the cultural background of the characters in Mainland China and Hong Kong's status in Britain. The four places, Hong Kong, Mainland China, America, and Britain are interwoven in a vast landscape for the narrative to develop. Hong Kong is the central place in the whole film. However, Hong Kong disappoints Xiaojun and Li Qiao at last. Li Qiao's failure in stocks represents the failure of her capitalist dream. When she finally succeeds in real estate and can build a house for her mother, her mother has passed away.

8. 3 Maggie Cheung's Performance in Transnational Chinese Cinema

Full Moon in New York (1989), *Song of the Exile* (1990), and *Comrades, Almost a Love Story* (1996): Maggie Cheung plays the main character in all three films. In *Full Moon in New York*, Cheung portrays

[125] Gina Marchetti, *From Tian'anmen to Times Square*, 59.

an immigrant in New York City, a successful restaurateur from Hong Kong, who plays as a closeted lesbian. The character works as a "performer" who constructs a mask to survive. In *Song of the Exile*, Maggie Cheung plays a series of roles: dutiful granddaughter, rebellious daughter, and foreigner in Japan, student in London. In *Comrades, Almost a Love Story*, although she plays a woman from the Mainland, as a Guangdong native she speaks Cantonese instead of Mandarin, watches Hong Kong television and drinks Vitasoy, a soymilk produced in Hong Kong.

Born in Hong Kong in 1964 and educated in Britain, Maggie Cheung has applied her own experience to perform a variety of roles across linguistic and cultural borders. As an actress, she brings an awareness of her "performance" as a Chinese, a British colonial, as a cosmopolitan and as an icon of the contemporary Hong Kong woman. Cheung began to appear regularly in films in 1984, the same year that China and British agreed on the change of Hong Kong from British to Chinese sovereignty.[126] As Cheung's career developed from 1984, she became linked with changeover times of Hong Kong as a performer.

As Gina Marchetti notes about Hong Kong's New Wave women in "The Hong Kong New Wave:"

> Hong Kong's New Wave women represent the changing roles a younger generation of women must adopt in order to survive the economic, political, and social vicissitudes of the postwar world. Engaging in fashioning their own identities while remaining subject to lingering patriarchal privileges, these women represent the emergence of a "new wave" of feminist sentiment, an awaking of female sexual energy, and a very modern sense of femininity

[126] See more in Gina Marchetti, "The Hong Kong New Wave." *A Companion to Chinese Cinema.* Ed. Zhang Yingjin. (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 102.

divorced from domesticity and subject to the spectacle of the consumer marketplace.[127]

As an image on screen, Maggie Cheung playing the characters of Li Feng-jiao, Hueyin, and Li Qiao functions as both a desirable cinematic commodity and as a challenge to traditional notions of gender.

Conclusion

When the film was released in 1996, Hong Kong was faced with the issues of "handover" and "return." The film reflected Hong Kong's peculiar status in the combination of multiculture. As the film indicated at the end, Mainland China has changed quickly in economic and society. By 1995, Li Qiao has received her green card, works as a tour guide in New York and often takes tourists to the Statue of Liberty. Among the tourists are wealthy ladies from Mainland China, who want Li Qiao to guide them to buy Gucci bags. They tell her, "people always wanted to leave back in the 80s. Now, they all go back. Many Hong Kong people work in the Mainland now."

The film has no grand discourse of national unity or Chinese sovereignty at the time of the handover of Hong Kong. The melodrama seems to suggest a largely vision of ethnic Chinese and their roots. For the Chinese diaspora, they feel Chinese in terms of emotional or cultural attachment, just like the songs of Teresa Teng.

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[127] Ibid.,102-103.

Chapter 9 Across the Borders of Cultural Identity: *Lust, Caution* (2006)

As Lee describes himself in his oral autobiography, "in the real world, I have been an outsider all my life."[128] He is an outsider to his native Taiwan, having spent most of his adult life in the US, and an outsider to America, being foreign-born and raised in a far different culture.[129] Within a diasporic Chinese position, "the outsider" seems to be a leitmotif of Lee's entire works. Looking back to Lee's work, we can also find some characters as outsiders in his films.[130] Furthermore, the characters are always set to cross some visible geographical borders or invisible cultural borders. As outsiders, they suffer cultural and ethical burdens that they have internalized for a long time.

Adapted from Eileen Chang's a short story, *Lust, Caution* is about a historically Chinese topic. The story is set in Hong Kong and in Shanghai from 1938 to 1942, when Shanghai was occupied by Japanese Army and ruled Wang Jingwei government. Both the time and the place are clearly out of joint, a shady chapter in the "master narrative" of modern Chinese history that has seldom been explored by Chinese historians. [131] Therefore, the film presupposes a fairly advanced understanding of the conflicts and divided loyalties within China during

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[128] Liangbei Zhang, *Shinian yijiao dianyingmeng: Li An Zhuan* [*Ten Years for Film Dream: Ang Lee*]. (Bei Jing: Renmin Daxue), 298. My translation.

[129] David Minnihan, "Ang Lee." Online Journal: *Senses of Cinema*. August 2008. (http://sensesofcinema.com/2008/great-directors/ang-lee/, accessed on 2014/11/09).

[130] Examples include the father figure in *Pushing Hands*, who is a Chinese *tai qi* master retiring to suburban New York to live with his son, grandson and American daughter-in-law. He finds himself as an outsider to American society. In *The Wedding Banquet*, a gay man, Wei-Tong Gao is made an outsider by means of his sexuality.

[131] Leo Ou-fan Lee, "Ang Lee's Lust, Caution and Its Reception." *Boundary 2* 35.3 (2008), 227.

World War Two. Given the Chinese Nationalist Party's (KMT) policy of non-engagement with the Japanese before the Xi'an Incident in 1936 and the loss of Nanjing and Shanghai in 1937, the split within Chinese politics complicates any picture of resistance to the Japanese during that period.

This part will first examine the ideological and cinematic implications of Lee's attempt to construct the interplay between the tradition and the modern, as well as the Chinese and western in the image of old Shanghai from the postmodern perspective. It will then read the larger issues of cultural identity as a group of Chinese and the politics in pan-Chinese territories of Mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong that the narrative and characters seem to suggest. These two approaches will be useful for understanding Lee's cinematic exploration of the characters' individual identity within a historical context of displacement and social change.

9. 1 Nostalgia for Old Shanghai

As Fredric Jameson's investigations of the postmodern have revealed, postmodernist aesthetics and cultural production are implicated and shaped by the global forces of late capitalist logic. Furthermore, he states that, "faced with these ultimate objects – our social, historical, and existential present, and the past as 'referent' – the incompatibility of a postmodernist 'nostalgia' art language with genuine historicity becomes dramatically apparent."[132] *Lust, Caution* is exactly the juxtaposition of the tradition and the modern, the Chinese and western as well as the oblivious history and present.

Lee makes great effort to re-create the authentic setting of old

[132] Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism: Or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1991), 19.

Shanghai to the last detail. Interestingly, as has become typical of films about past eras, the recreation of the China of 1930s and 1940s had to be made partly in different locales. Besides Shanghai and Hong Kong, major scenes were shot on location of Malaysia, where reconstruction had occurred more slowly and pubic architecture, shop fronts, and street ambience resembling the Chinese ones of several decades before were still to be found. From the production process, it is reported that Lee took pains to re-create precise historical details of the film's setting, down to the type of desk and stationery likely to be used by a man like Mr. Yee at his office, the type of tree growing in the appropriate neighborhood in Shanghai, and the measurements of the license plates.[133] The effort of achieving accurate historical reproduction evokes the nostalgia for old Shanghai.

In her book on "sentimental fabulations" in Chinese film, Rey Chow points out that:

> Nostalgia, in other words, can be found everywhere in contemporary Chinese cinema, but the object of nostalgia – that which is remembered and longed for – is, arguably, often in the form of a concrete place, time, and event.[134]

Lust, Caution gives all the form of an assassination in Shanghai and Hong Kong from 1938 to 1942. The film tells the story of Wang Jiazhi (Tang Wei), a student from Shanghai who, while attending the University of Hong Kong, becomes interested in drama performances and is lured into joining a group of young patriotic students who form an amateur spy ring. Upon returning to Shanghai, she is engaged in a

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[133] See more in Yingtai Long, "Wo kan Se, Jie [I see Lust, Caution]." *Mingpao Daily* 27 Sept. 2007, No.Amer.ed.: D12.
[134] Rey Chow, *Sentimental Fabulations*, 52.

plot to endear herself in the household of Mr. Yee (Tony Leung), who is collaborating with the Japanese, and goes undercover to entrap him. To snare powerful Mr. Yee, Wang pretends to be the married Mrs. Mai, entering into the world of the Yee family circle. As Whitney Crothers Dilley argues, although it is centered on a historical topic, the film also references the pervasive influence of globalization on traditional Chinese culture. It is significant that the connotation of status involves the interplay of tradition and modernity, as well as the Chinese and the western.[135] Tang Wei, who performs the roles of Wang Jiazhi (as a college student) and Mrs. Mai (as the border-crossing and trade-seeking wife of a Hong Kong businessman) switches between the traditional and the modern.

In the earlier scenes in Hong Kong, Wang, as a student, wears a simple, blue cheongsam (*qipao*), which is similar with other female students. She looks young and innocent. Later, in the scenes at the Keissling Café, waiting to entrap Mr. Yee, she dresses like a classic spy, with beautiful makeup, trench coat, and a black hat. The westernized elements emphasize the modernity of old Shanghai and make her a feeling of otherness. In *Screening China,* Zhang Yingjin notes that in the cultural imagination of modern China, the old Shanghai is usually westernized, strange, exotic, erotic, female, sexually unfaithful, morally questionable. [136] In *Lust, Caution*, the nostalgic atmosphere is expressed by women's fashion style, languages and cultural icons.

The short story by Eileen Chang begins at the mahjong table. In the first paragraph, Chang draws the reader's attention to diamonds and Wang's fashion style:

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[135]Whitney Crothers Dilley, "Globalization and Cultural Identity in the Films of Ang Lee." *Style* 43.1 (2009), 56, 57.
[136] Yingjin Zhang, *Screening China,* 328.

> Though it was still daylight, the hot lamp was shining full-beam over the mahjong table. Diamond rings flashed under its glare as their wearers clacked and reshuffles their tiles. ... Her sleeveless cheongsam of electric blue moiré satin reached to the knees, its shallow, rounded collar standing only half an inch tall, in the Western style.[137]

Chang tends to use words to describe sizes, shapes, colors and patterns. Chang's writing is known for its focus on the clothing, accouterments, furnishings and curtains, ornaments and decorations to detail. As a member of the wealthy class in Shanghai of the period, Chang has highly-attuned sense of fashion and taste.[138] By focusing on the domestic interior, she emphasizes the loss of human autonomy in capitalist materiality.

The film, however, opens with a series of shots of male guards outside to emphasize the historical circumstance. Cutting to the interior of Yee's house in the second scene, Lee shows that Mrs. Yee and her guests are getting ready for another round of Mahjong (0:00:55-0:01:31). Using four cameras, the mahjong scene is filmed from multi-angles. A close-up of several delicate hands on the table symbolizes their obsession with gems and their status. Lee precisely reconstructs the mahjong scene to complicate the power structures in interpersonal relationships. Mahjong is not only a game being played, but also a material and hierarchical competition among the wealthy madams. According to the contrast between the first two scenes in the film is

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[137] Chang, Eileen. "Lust, Caution." *Lust, Caution and Other Stories*. Trans. Julia Lovell. (London: Penguin, 2007), 3.

[138] See more in Whitney Crothers Dilley, "The 'Really' Wang Jiazhi: Taboo, Transgression, and Truth in *Lust/Caution*." *From Eileen Chang to Ang Lee: Lust/Caution*. Ed. Peng Hsiao-yen and Whitney Crothers Dilley. (New York: Routledge, 2014), 127.

immediate, not only because of the differences in color and lighting (grayish blue outdoors vs. homey soft yellow indoors) but also due to the visible gender and class difference (male guards vs. female socialites).[139] This reconstruction of historical reality, with contextual hints appeals to a global audience. Also, the different openings of the novel and the film show Eileen Chang and Ang Lee's distinct visions of individuals and their environments. Chang's narrative focuses on high-class women indoors. Lee shows both inside and outside to indicate how the private world gets smaller and more repressive because of the political climate. As the outfits and accessories point out their class and status, Wang Jiazhi's lack of a diamond ring makes her stand out as an outsider.



Fig. 13 (0:45:49)

The *qipao*, as a fetish object, defines certain roles for its wearers, constricts their gestures, and calls attention to their performances. Wang's transformation can be seen in her dating with Mr. Yee. Mr. Yee and Wang arrange their first date at a Hong Kong tailor shop. She gives Mr. Yee advice on the style of his suit like his life. (see fig. 13). He says to Wang "I'm in your hands" with a double meaning. Wang tries a new blue *qipao* and Yee tells her to keep the outfit, which accentuates her figure as Mrs. Mai (0:45:46-0:47:38). They have dressed each other for their new roles as lovers. The influence of western styles of clothing also

[139] Hsiu-Chuang Deppman, "Seduction of a Filmic Romance." *Eileen Chang: Romancing Languages, Cultures and Genres*. Ed. Kam Louie. Vol. 1. (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2012), 163.

plays a significant role in the film. The costumes not only contribute to the film's visual style of nostalgic Shanghai, they also highlight the fact they are all playing their roles and in different power relationship.

In order to display the atmosphere of westernized Shanghai, the setting of mise-en-scene, the languages used in the film are elaborately designed. The film is made in six languages – Mandarin, Japanese, English, Hindi, Shanghainese and Cantonese – and depicts Shanghai as a multicultural and multilingual city.

Table 3

Language	Discourse	Mise-en-scene
English	Wang and coffee shop's waiter Wang and Indian	Coffee shop Jeweler shop
Shanghainese	Wang and Ms. Yee Ms. Yee and servant Wang and driver	Yee's house Yee's house In Mr. Yee's car
Japanese	Japanese officer and geisha	Japanese restaurant
Cantonese	Wang and Kuang Yumin Kuang Yumin and Lao Cao	Call in Coffee shop In a restaurant
Hindi	Indian owner and Indian clerk	Jeweler shop

As Table 3 illustrates, interesting clues can be found here. Every language is set in the film's mise-en-scene as a code. The using of English, Japanese and Hindi shows the historical times and social situation. English, as a luxury language, is used by Wang Jiazhi to conduct all of her business. English is also the language used at the Keissling Café in Shanghai where Wang Jiazhi sets the trap for Mr. Yee. She uses English to address the waiter and to ask to use the phone in the restaurant. Speaking English can be seen as having sophistication and high class. And Wang's British English suggests the historical condition of colonial Hong Kong. Shanghainese is be used in some conversation between Wang and Ms. Yee. The use of Shanghainese

helps Mrs. Yee to remind the cordial feeling to Wang as two people from the same hometown. Japanese speaking impresses the image of stereotyped Japanese military officer. Cantonese is used in the scene where Wang calls Kuang Yumin (Leehom Wang) to ask about the next action. As Cantonese is not familiar to most people in Shanghai, it is a good way to protect the action from being exposed. These multilingual abilities highlight Wang Jiazhi's sophistication and capability as a spy.



Fig. 14 (2:22:16)

In the novel as well as the film, Wang Jiazhi creates herself through the cinema, and Ang Lee takes full of advantage of this to enrich the film's depth as well as Wang's performance. In the film, Wang is depicted as an avid movie fan and Shanghai cinema as an important institution for its characters. It is significant that Wang is influenced by western film culture, especially film noir. *Intermezzo: A Love Story* (1939), the Hollywood film Wang watches in Hong Kong, is a romantic melodrama about a love affair between a married man (Leslie Howard) and his young daughter's piano teacher (Ingrid Bergman). The victimized daughter is caught between the heartbreak of the betrayed mother and her own devotion to the adulterous father.[140] Wang Jiazhi's face is covered with tears because it evokes such deep emotion. It reveals Wang's own fate to the loss of her father (who has just remarried and neglected to provide a passage for her to follow his new family to the UK). It has a function that Wang sees herself in the

[140] Whitney Crothers Dilley, "Globalization and Cultural Identity in the Films of Ang Lee." 60, 61.

Hollywood film. These tragic heroines awaken her to her identity from her role as Mrs. Mai.

Wang continues to go to movies in Shanghai after the first failed attempt on Mr. Yee's life in Hong Kong. She is interrupted by a Japanese propaganda reel, when *Penny Serenade* (1941) is screened. In this film, a couple, Roger (Cary Grant) and Julie Adams (Irene Dunne), suffer a tragedy when she miscarries in the Great Kanto Earthquake during their stay in Japan in 1923. In "Eileen Chang and Ang Lee at the movies," Gina Marchetti notes that the Asian reference in the movies, establishes an imaginative commonality linking an awareness of spectatorship and the emotional vicissitudes of identification with the actors and actresses on screen.[141] The fact that American films continued to screen after the occupation of the foreign settlements adds more facticity to contribute to the nostalgic feeling by translating the narrative across languages and media.

At the end of the film, Ang Lee does not forget to show the postmodern Shanghai after the climax where Wang Jiazhi reveals her true emotion in the jewelry store and is left spent and empty. Wang goes window-shopping to check the latest Shanghai fashions. The mannequins in the windows are all dressed in high-society blouses, wraps, and gowns, the styles of fashion icons of the West (2:21:32-2:22:30). Furthermore, the mannequins in the shop window are overlaid by the image of the anonymous shoppers in the street (see fig.14). The scene may also suggest a parallel between the mannequins in the window, taking up the postures of the elegant Shanghai, and Wang's carefully construction of her identity with high fashion.

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[141] Gina Marchetti, "Eileen Chang and Ang Lee at the Movies: The Cinematic Politics of *Lust, Caution*." *Eileen Chang: Romancing Languages, Cultures and Genres*. Ed. Kam Louie. (Hong Kong: Hong Kong UP, 2012), 139, 140.

9. 2 Between the Individual and the Group

As mentioned above, *Lust, Caution* is a story about a split in the KMT. As Poshek Fu points out in a study of Chinese cinema in Japanese-occupied Shanghai, the line between traitor and patriot is unclear:

> The occupation cinema in China represented an ambiguous space in which boundaries between heroic and villainous, political and apolitical, private and public were rarely clear and constantly transgressed.[142]

In Eileen Chang's *Lust, Caution*, this line is more delicate. And Fu's observation of occupation cinema in some points parallels with the film's political sensitivities. The "traitors", like Mr. Yee, and the "patriots", like Lao Wu (Tou Chung-Hua), do not seem all that different in the film. In the Japanese restaurant scene, Wang begins to sing the famous song "The Wandering Songstress" from the Chinese film *Street Angel* (1937). It depicts two sisters who come to Shanghai to flee the Japanese incursions in the north China. One becomes a street singer and the other a prostitute. It is regarded as a leftwing film as the director, Yuan Muzhi, joined the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1940. Note the following lyrics:

> From the end of the earth... to the farthest sea... I search and search for my heart's companion. A young girl sings... while he accompanies her.

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[142] Poshek Fu, "The Ambiguity of Entertainment: Chinese Cinema in Japanese-occupied Shanghai, 1941 to 1945." *Cinema Journal* 37.1 (1997), 80.

Looking north from my mountain nest...my tears fall and wet my blouse.
Missing him, I will not rest.
Only love that lasts through hard times is true.
In life, who does not...cherish the springtime of youth?
A young girl to her man is like **thread** to its **needle**.
We're like a **threaded needle**, never to be separated.
(2:04:10-2:06:35)

The word "north" suggests Japanese-occupied Manchuria, and the reference to the singer's search for a heart's companion suggests political sentiments. Also, for Ang Lee, "north" can also mean Mainland, which is the "north" viewed from the direction of Taiwan, as he describes himself on the "loser" side. Though born in Taiwan, Ang Lee is from a so-called "Mainlander" family; Lee's own father is a Nationalist refugee who became a school principal in southern Taiwan. In an interview with Emily Parker in the *Wall Street Journal*, he talks about his Taiwanese experience: "I grew up in Taiwan, we always lose. [...] We are always on the losing side. My parents get beat by the communists, they escape to Taiwan, Taiwan's a small island, hardly anybody pays attention."[143]

The political message may be ambiguous, but the song completely transforms the relationship of Mr. Yee and Wang. Metaphorically, thread and needle imply the physical connection of the two. Furthermore, some crucial evidence can be found in their conversation:

Mr. Yee: They sing like they're crying. Like dogs howling for

[143] Emily Parker, "Man without a Country." *Wall Street Journal* Dec 1-2, 2007.

their dead masters. These Japanese devils kill people like flies, but deep down they're scared as hell. Yet here we are with our pained faces, listening to their off-tune songs.

Wang: I know why you brought me here. You want me to be your whore.

Mr. Yee: It is I who brought you here…so I know better than you how to be a whore. (2:02:36-2:03:40)

The scene seems to provide the true emotion. Mr. Yee and Wang may feel some same deep anti-Japanese emotion that their circumstance forces them to deny. The words "I know better than you how to be a whore" express Mr. Yee's position. The awareness of their shared victimization is what binds them together in a brief escape into sentimentality. From the setting of this sequence, the film seems to reproduce the romantic ideology of love over politics, individual passion over social responsibility, and universal humanism over nationalism.

Lee chose the topic to challenge the distinction of traitor and patriot. He has paid much attention to the minor characters Lao Wu, the real leader of Chongqing's spy ring. When Wang Jiazhi describes in detail to Lao Wu about the sex with Mr. Yee. She mentions the effect on her feelings and body, and the uncertainty provokes her. However, Lao Wu doesn't try to understand it, and exclaims: "That's enough"! Just as Mr. Yee uses her for his erotic pleasure,



Fig. 15 (1:07:11)

the patriots use Wang Jiazhi with little regard for her personal safety or feeling.

Wang Jiazhi joins the assassination plot partly out of personal feelings toward Kuang Yumin. When the assassination plot in Hong Kong fails because the Yees have to move back to Shanghai, Ang Lee adds to the film a grisly scene in which the group of college students kill Mr. Yee's attendant Lao Cao (Chin Kar-lok). Rather than validating their heroism, the film portrays these students as terrified and incompetent. Especially the leader, Kuang Yumin is in a total panic. He repeatedly stabs the gangster and finally breaks his neck (1:06:40-1:09:54). When the murder happens, Wang Jiazhi is standing outside the balcony, watching all this through the glass, the murder is observed from her point of view (see fig. 15). Visually, Lee exposes the students' gratuitous violence and savagery. The killing makes both Wang and the viewer suspect that patriotism is simply a lofty slogan and a pretense of a dangerous game.

Kuang Yumin's characterization in the film is reminiscent of the unimpeachable Party hero of many post-1949 Mainland films.[144] He desires Wang but he has to sacrifice her to the cause. The film provides an interesting suggestion that the ideal young student is asexual. He has the bearing of the typical revolutionary Party hero, whose sexual appeal is both enhanced and deflected by the higher claims of political destiny.[145] The murder sequence helps to establish the central message of the absence of heroic behavior in its supposed heroes.

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[144] Stephanie Hemelryk Donald, "Tang Wei: Sex, the City and the Scape Goat in *Lust, Caution*." *Theory Culture Society* 27 (2010), 54.

[145] For instance, Stephanie Hemelryk Donald notes that the character thus evokes a tradition that runs from "Xiao Chen" in *Street Angel* (Yuan Muzhi, 1937), to Chen Qiang's role as the Soldier in *Red Detachment of Women* (Xie Jin, 1961) and Wang Xueqi's ironic reprise of the type in *Yellow Earth* (Chen Kaige, 1984). (54)

The politics of *Lust, Caution* and the background of the Japanese occupation of Shanghai can be easily overshadowed by the image of Hong Kong star Tony Leung and the debatable sex scenes. Wang Jiazhi's function as femme fatale has five sex scenes. Two are between Wang and Liang Junsheng (Lawrence Ko), who is the only student who has had any sexual experience, and three between Wang and Mr. Yee. The student sex is a form of "training" for her performance as a married woman. The second scene with the student shows the male student is beginning to enjoy his physical pleasure in his role. It emphasizes that a woman loses her virginity to a man she does not desire. Although Wang is forced to have sex with Yee, however, finally it is an individual mature lust and deep attraction. It can be regarded as fantasies of control over each other. The relationship between Wang and Mr. Yee allows both characters to deny their responsibility and engagement in the affairs of the war. Their lovemaking appears to both from their terribly politicized lives.

Lee and his scriptwriters have given a complete flashback sequence to the heroine's student background in Hong Kong, which is barely touched in the story of *Lust, Caution*.[146] However, Shanghai and Hong Kong as important nostalgia representations constantly appear in Eileen Chang's works. In *Lust, Caution*, the remove from Shanghai to Hong Kong then return to Shanghai underscore the resemblance in personal background between Wang Jiazhi and Chang herself. Chang was once a college student at the University of Hong Kong in 1939-1941. These added scenes serve to enrich somewhat the emotional content of Wang Jiazhi's characterization. The crucial part of the flashback

[146] In Chang's novel, the patriotic play is mentioned, "while at college in Canton she'd starred in a string of rousingly patriotic play. Before the city fell to the Japanese, her university had relocated to Hong Kong, where the drama troupe had given one last public performance." (13)

sequence is her participation in the patriotic play, in which the young student actors display genuine emotion on stage and their complicit audience (0:20:11-0:23:18). In this sequence the patriotic emotions are extended. For the present-day audience in Hong Kong, the patriotic play sequence looks indeed staged, even ironic. Moreover, Lee apparently has given it much significance and weight by placing it near the film's end. The doomed heroine's mind returns to it, as if in a flash of insight (2:24:35-2:24:44). Why this repeated reference to her acting background as a student? It is a metaphor that the students request Wang to back to the reality and add in an actual action. She stops performing and allows herself to be true to her actual emotion. Wang Jiazhi acts out the roles chosen for her from the stage performance as a soldier's sister in the patriotic drama played at the University of Hong Kong to her final "role" as martyr facing the execution. When she decides to save Mr. Yee at the film's climax, it can be considered as her own mind.

Conclusion

In my analysis, Ang Lee's *Lust, Caution* adds the debate of nationalism and cultural identities that are differ from Eileen Chang's portrayal of personal experiences. In *Lust, Caution*, The CCP, Japan, and America are ignored. As I have explored above, the CCP is represented by the leftwing film *Street Angel*, Japanese appear mainly in the bordello, and the American presence is depicted through Hollywood movies. By deconstructing patriotism, Ang Lee neither criticizes traitors strictly nor compliments patriotic students simply. In addition to highlighting the loss of individual control in the political circumstance, Ang Lee's ambiguous treatment of patriotism embodies the dilemma of history and emotion that he as an outsider has no state to love.

Lee describes the evolution of his screenplay as coming from his dramatic and social background. “My dramatic background taught me how to create a situation so all the issues and circumstances collide. You throw people into a situation in which they are not in harmony, but in conflict. […] Through these processes you examine humanity and our human situation.”[147] Therefore, in Lee’s film, he sets geographical borders or invisible cultural boundaries to examine the complicated situations.

[147] Liangbei Zhang, *Shinian yijiao dianyingmeng: Li An Zhuan* [*Ten Years for Film Dream: Ang Lee*], 89. My translation.

Conclusion

This dissertation has looked at how transnational cinemas have shaped various images of Chinese diaspora, conceptions of cultural identity, and gender issues from the 1980s to the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Chinese American films represent questions of double identity, generation gaps, and gender issues such as in Wayne Wang's *Eat a Bowl of Tea* and Ang Lee's *The Wedding Banquet*. Each character represents a particular situation that ethnic subjects suffer in mainstream white America. At the border crossing of Chinese tradition and mainstream American culture, Chinese Americans are wedged between two major categories. Among the oversea Chinese directors, Ang Lee is undoubtedly best-known. He deals with the themes of the Chinese diaspora, migration and cultural identity in cross-cultural, transnational settings. People may ask: Are Ang Lee and his films Taiwanese? Chinese? American? *The Wedding Banquet* has been defined as a gay film or a Chinese American film or a Taiwanese film by different audiences. The lack of a clear answer to such questions indicates the essence of transnational cinema.

Shunji Iwai's *Swallowtail* and Derek Yee's *Shinjuku Incident* focus on similar themes of illegal/legal immigrants and gangsters. In the two films, Chinese diaspora in Japan are represented as gangster, thief, prostitute, and so forth, living on the margins of mainstream Japanese society. In *Shinjuku Incident*, Jackie Chan plays the major role. As in his other famous films, there is also a subtle assertion of his Chineseness. [148] Unlike *Shinjuku Incident* focusing on Chinese

[148] In Jackie Chan's films, there is never a mistake about his Chinese identity. He is positioned as a Chinese kung-fu hero who always wins in the end.

immigrants, *Swallowtail* establishes the imaginary community of cosmopolitan. Immigrants are drawn to break the restriction of nation, name, race, occupation, and language. In the two films, guan xi is emphasized in the immigrant community. Guan xi creates ties that bind people together for reasons other than material ambition or economic necessity. In *Flexible Citizenship*, Aihwa Ong summaries the transnational nature of guan xi as follows:

> The guan xi institution, as invokes and practiced, is a mix of instrumentalism (fostering flexibility and the mobility of capital and personnel across political borders) and humanism ("helping out" relatives and hometown folk in the mainland).[149]

Relationships based in class, kinship, economic ties, linguistic, sexual identities and so on, provide the foundation for what appears on the screen.

As the leaders of Taiwan New Wave cinema, Ang Lee does not explore Taiwanese history in the way Hou Hsiao-hsien did in *A Time to Live, A Time to Die*. However, Ang Lee still has an attempt to figure a unique Taiwanese experience. Especially in his film *Lust, Caution,* as a second-generation mainlander he wants to articulate his place in Taiwanese history and to affirm his identification with the island. Their films develop new ways for the expression of cultural identity in transnational conditions.

In my examination, *Full Moon in New York*, *Song of the Exile*, *Comrades: Almost a Love Story* come before the handover of Hong Kong. These Hong Kong directors, Stanley Kwan, Peter Chan, and Ann Hui, screen self-images of Hong Kong and Hong Kong as a hybrid

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[149] Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*, 117.

cosmopolitan space to provide a discussion of global film culture. They pay attention to the theme of diaspora, because the directors themselves have diasporic experiences. In *At Full Speed: Hong Kong Cinema in a Borderless World*, Esther Yau notes a particular "androgynous" associated with films made in Hong Kong in anticipation of 1997:

> Instead of holding on to a single identity tied to a small territory or replaying the norms of a bounded culture, the "culturally androgynous" film cites diverse idioms, repackages codes, and combines genres that are thought to be culturally, aesthetically, or cinematically incompatible.[150]

As mentioned above, in *Full Moon in New York*, *Song of the Exile*, and *Comrades: Almost a Love Story*, Hong Kong's cultural identity seen through its cinema appears at once to identify with and distance itself from the Mainland.

In this dissertation, I also focus on gender issues in transnational cinema. The construction of nationhood has been intimately bound to gender formation since early Chinese cinema. As Sheldon Lu states: "Woman in Chinese cinematic expression is the trope for the modern Chinese nation."[151] A careful examination of gender formation in filmic discourse reveals to us the strategies of cultural and political purpose in Chinese cinemas.

In my study, many films use generational conflicts to explore the tension women experience between traditional requirement for women

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[150] Esther C. M. Yau, "Introduction: Hong Kong Cinema in a Borderless World." *At Full Speed: Hong Kong Cinema in a Borderless World*. Ed. Esther C. M. Yau. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 7.
[151] Sheldon Hsiao-peng Lu, "Chinese Cinemas (1896-1996) and Transnational Film Studies," 23.

under the Chinese patriarchal culture and the demands in transnational environment (such as Mei Oi in *Eat in a Bowl of Tea*, Hueyin in *Song of the Exile*). Since the 1980s, Chinese imperial eunuchs, transvestite, transsexual, and a variety of other gender-bending characters have appeared on world screens.[152] Films began to treat Chinese gay men, lesbians, and queer issues openly for the first time. Moreover, some films use homosexual characters as political allegory. For example, a gay man, Wai Tung, in *The Wedding Banquet* seems to function an allegory of Taiwan's troubled identity in relation to Mainland China as well as the West; a lesbian, Li Feng-jiao, in *Full Moon in New York* indicates Hong Kong's identity crisis.

In the end, when we try to fix the position of Chinese film in the world cinema, we should perhaps pay more attention to the tension and relations among distinct Chinese communities: the Mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and overseas Chinese communities. By my analysis on the issues of representations in diaspora, cultural identity, and gender, we can have a further cognition about transnational Chinese film.

[152] Gina Marchetti, *From Tian'anmen to Times Square*, 20.

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