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Art of Conformity, Art of the Weak: Law and Order in the *Young and Dangerous* Series

弱者の生存戦略と従順の技術
—映画シリーズ『欲望の街・古惑仔』における法と秩序—

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要旨

本稿は映画シリーズ『欲望の街・古惑仔』のなかで、相互の交渉し合いながら「法秩序」を構成する侠客と警察官の行動、言説及び思考を、ミシェル・ド・セルトーの「弱者の戦術」という観点から考察する。従来の秩序が新たな秩序に組み換えられる過渡期において、社会秩序のあり方は、市民が新たな権力による秩序に関わることができるか否かということがまずもって問題となる。フィルムに表現される侠客と警察官の双方が着地点を求めて折り合うプロセスは、それぞれ市民が持つ二つの側面を代表しながら、イギリスから中国への統治権の移譲の埒外に置かれた香港市民が権力による一方的な秩序のなかに、果たして自らの秩序を見出し得るかという問いかけでもある。

本稿は「法秩序」の構成要素である「『縄張り』の統制」、「情報収集能力」及び「法秩序の進展に基づく侠客側の損得勘定の変化」という3つの観点から、返還直後の香港人が思い描く社会秩序についての投影を分析する。

警察官の管轄能力は「『縄張り』の統制」と「情報収集能力」によって決まる。しかし、法執行者にとって望ましい法と秩序を生じさせるのは、警察官だけではなく、侠客による暗黙理の服従を必要としている。その服従の正体は主人公の価値観にも関わりながらも、決定的要素は服従という行為を支える「損得勘定」である。

物語が進展するにつれ、警察官が行使する法と秩序は社会統制を強めていく。そうしたなか侠客は、これまで通り伝統的なギャングを続ける者と、法的な秩序を全面的に支持するビジネスマンと、アンダーグラウンドの秩序に生きる反抗者に分かれ、警察官の目の届くところでは、法的な言語を用いて合法的なビジネスを行いつつ、法と秩序の管轄の外では、アンダーグラウンドの秩序を維持する。そこには、ミシェル・ド・セルトーの言う「弱者の戦略」の機微が見られる。本映画シリーズは香港返還の直前にブレイクした。「地下」、すなわち、新しい秩序が届かない場所とは、当時の香港人にとっての社会生活の暗喩となっていると考えられる。

Keywords: Hong Kong cinema, law and order, art of the weak, tactics, transition period

I Introduction

In 1984, Sino-British Joint Declaration sealed the fate of Hong Kong: not following its colonizer and not going independent but “returning” to China in the future. Hong Kong, not being considered a sovereignty entity, was excluded by China from the negotiation over its very own survival. Hong Kong was therefore forced into a transition period ⁽¹⁾. During this period, anxiety ran high because of the huge perceived difference in economic development and political ideology, especially for Hong Kong citizens as the spectator in the proximity of Cultural Revolution ⁽²⁾ and later the Tiananmen crackdown. In preparation for the coming sovereignty transfer, significant legal reform

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took place without the majority consensus from Hong Kong residents. As Wan suggested, the 1980s and 1990s were arguably the most legally significant period in Hong Kong modern history, in which the constitutional foundations of the city's postcolonial order were laid by the Chinese and British Government. He suggested the recurrence of legal themes, institutions and agents in films should be regarded as "the city's cultural fascination with the law as an institution, a discourse, and a determinative influence on everyday life" (Wan 2016:162-163). However, as two sovereign powers excluded Hong Kong from making any decision on their survival, this political impotence hastened the birth of "culture of disappearance" (Abbas 1997:7), in which Hong Kong cinema was the main outlet to vent such kind of sentiment. Hong Kong cinema, no matter highly-commercialized popcorn movies or arthouse films, became the site of reflection to this sentiment that Hong Kong culture or current ways of life may disappear suddenly. Contrary to Wan's examples paid much attention to courtroom setting and the justice that due process brought, this article focuses on the enforcers and the enforced, both sides that constituted law and order, on how they imagined and responded to strengthening law enforcement, with the exemplar film series *Young and Dangerous* ⁽³⁾.

Young and Dangerous series was a legend in Hong Kong film history. Despite the freefalling box office revenue in the 1990s, the series became a commercial phenomenon at this critical juncture. The total box office of the first three episodes eventually reached 60 million Hong Kong dollars. Due to its commercial success, the *Young and Dangerous* series was eventually built up to include six sequels, four direct spin-offs depicting the stories of other supporting roles, and other spin-offs roughly based on the same world setting. Nine of these films jumped on the bandwagon, produced and released in 1996 alone.

Reconstruction of biographical and marginal accounts of "Hong Kong history" was a trend visible since the early-1990s, forming a genre called "Big Timers" or *Xiaoxiong Pian* ⁽⁴⁾ (Teo 1997:236). Movies that are based on real people include *To Be Number One* (1991) depicting drug lord Ng Sik-ho; *Lee Rock* (1991) and *Lee Rock II* (1991) on Lui Lok, also known as "The Five-Hundred Million-Dollar Inspector" famous for police corruption; *Powerful Four* (1992) about four Chinese detectives (including Lui Lok) who involved in institutionalized police corruption in the 1960s, as well as *Casino Tycoon* (1992) and *Casino Tycoon II* (1992) about Stanley Ho Hung-sun ⁽⁵⁾ known as Godfather of Gambling whose company held the government-granted monopoly in Macau gambling industry for decades. Riding this trend, *Secret Signs* (1993), by incorporating documentary footages of in-person interviews with allegedly triad members overseas, also attempted to reconstruct "Hong Kong narrative" with fictional characters, who fled to Hong Kong for surviving Cultural Revolution in China in the 1960s. All these movies were the reconstruction of "the past" of Hong Kong between the 1950s and 1980s.

The main episodes of the *Young and Dangerous* series also generally followed the biographical narrative of these Big Timers, building the young protagonist Chan Ho-nam. However, in two senses that the series was quite different from its predecessors. First, the movies mentioned above dealt with some marginal and notorious episodes in Hong Kong history, in which showing the 1990s was drastically different from the past with the eradication of corruption and social unrest. In contrast, the protagonist of the *Young and Dangerous* series was, when considering all the episodes, a contemporary figure that spanned from the past until the recent. Its coming-of-age sequences suggested an ongoing Hong Kong narrative back then. Instead of reconstructing the past to show the contrast with "well-ordered society" in the 1990s, the series created a fairly coherent chronology that the prosperity will last, showing a "certain pragmatic optimism about facing 1997" (Bordwell 2011:18), showing a character in this "well-ordered society". A guy like Chan Ho-nam may seem to survive the transition. Second, in Big Timers movies, those morally dubious heroes held power that can change the whole society as they like, i.e. the heroes who made their times.

Contrarily, Chan Ho-nam was a kid of no name in the first episode, and, a weak hero as the series unfolded. His survival and success cannot be imagined if he does not adjust well along the times, and without help from his brothers, his boss, and later the police, i.e. the heroes who are made by the times. On the individual level, he shows great remorse that he could not protect his gang “father”, his beloved, and his subordinates from being murdered due to multiple gang infightings or turf wars with rivals. Against all odds, he maintains a firm stance in brotherhood, loyalty and righteousness, the values that are comparable with knight-errand or *xiake* ⁽⁶⁾. It is precisely his weakness, his not-larger-than-life narrative, nevertheless his strong will in righteousness makes him a very relatable character, especially for the younger generation back then. His support from all parties become a persuasive narrative justifying karma working well by keeping good people a good life. On the other hand, as a member of Hung Hing, the gang syndicate which also struggles to survive the transition, Chan Ho-nam struck a good balance between these values and a “well-ordered society”. Compared with his rivals in every episode that seek to maximize their benefit by breaking every single law, gangsters with at least some principles were relatively easier partners for collaboration forming a harmonious order that shelter Hong Kong from being disrupted by the chaos brought by the mainland China. Here is where the “law and order” (with the political promise that Hong Kong to remain a capitalist society), as well as the inhibitive logic of counter-progress (Lee 2015:512–513), became the primary aesthetic elements in Hong Kong crime film.

II Literature Review: Representing Law in Hong Kong Crime Cinema

Regarding film studies in Hong Kong, scholars tended to interpret crime cinema with reference to its western counterpart, especially film noir. Leitch suggested that crime films are occupied by “a pair of contradictory narrative projects” that seeks to “valorize the distinction among these three roles [victim, criminal and avenger] in order to affirm the social, moral or institutional order threatened by crime, and to explore the relationship among the three roles in order to mount a critique that challenges that order” (2002:16, explanation added). For example, Hong Kong film scholars like Stephen Teo and Kristof Van Den Troost, by and large, reaffirms the premise by calling Hong Kong crime cinema “black films” (Teo 2014:31) or “Hong Kong film noir” (Troost 2011:13). Their distinction is only confined to the object they ascribe to these ideals or attributes. Van Den Troost ascribes moral values to the characters alone. Teo’s moralistic analysis comes from the relationship between the character and the “path” chosen or assigned to, in other words, between personal moral inclinations and restrictive institutional codes. In brief, the moralistic convention of reading crime cinema remains the stronghold in ascribing black or white, good or evil, legal or illegal, righteous or not to different characters in various films – and then start articulating the changes like mixture, conflicts and incompatibility.

To label this type of interaction in terms of light-versus-dark relations would not be wrong, but it would be simplistic, anachronistic and abstract. Film critic Li Cheuk-to was one of the few people who can spot the importance of law and order. He said, in a brief remark, that the younger generation seeks to “take over the running of the corporation, elevating the status in society and securing law and order” (1997:10). Wan and Hung are the law-and-cinema scholars following the path by introducing the concept of “legal consciousness” to understand the rich filmography of Hong Kong crime cinema (Wan 2015; Hung 2021).

Legal consciousness, as an academic subject matter, was widely explored before its introduction to law and cinema. For this article, the most important distinction is the divergent concerns of legal consciousness, namely “law in action” and “living law” (Hertogh 2018:67-69). “Law in action” means interpretation changed while law basically remains the same, i.e. law as an independent variable. For example, knowledge and opinion of law can be categorized as this kind. However, “living law”, rather than dealing with the stated laws and their interpretations, deals with the

“norms for decision” in human behaviour (Nelken 1984:162). In this sense, informal and non-legal norms such as everyday understanding of karma fall into this category. It points to the oblivious practices that law, history and society give rise to. For example, Shapiro, examining in Carl Franklin’s work *Devil in a Blue Dress* (1995), focused on how black characters bear legal embodiment of racialized policing, in which black characters walk in the different parts of urban space with differentiated awareness to threats (2015:97-98). This article deals with various versions of “living law” represented by different characters in the *Young and Dangerous* series, with strengthening law enforcement and increasingly frequent engagements between triad members and law and order. Their behavioural patterns and their modes of speech are the major indicators of legal consciousness in formation.

My paper examines how, with the historical mutation of Hong Kong cinema and the anxiety of adjustment to the coming regime during the transition period, law and order became a politicized aesthetic subject matter, showing the contemporaries various tactics dealing with the new order. During the negotiation of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, expressions relevant to “stability and prosperity” was stated repeatedly by several British high officials regarding the Hong Kong prospect. They were the Governor at that time, Sir Edward Youde; and later the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom back then, Margaret Thatcher (“Acceptance Speech” 1982; “Speech to unofficial members” 1984). Politically impotent Hong Kong people did not have much say over the decision made by the two powers. Disenchanted people joined the emigration boom in the 1980s and early-1990s. For those who stayed, willingly and unwillingly, stability (as felt as law and order in daily life) and prosperity (as economic development in the last days of colonial governance), institutionally promised in a form of “One Country, Two System”, became something to cling on, in a dim hope that it would last.

Contrary to the optimistic remarks made by Bordwell, this article suggests otherwise that scepticism against law and order still lingers, regarding underground order as last resort. The opportunist figure, who is able to strike a balance between local and global, becomes important in the new order. Underground order, regarded as something abject in other Big Timers, was transformed into a haven. This historical background of the transition period contributes to the significance of the film series. Chan Ho-nam, as the one who thrived the game despite his weakness, formed a story of success showing “an art of the weak” ⁽⁷⁾ (de Certeau 1984:37), that responded to the anxiety before and immediately after 1997.

III Methodology: Everyday Tactics and Law and Order

According to Oxford Dictionaries, law and order describes “a situation characterised by respect for and obedience to the rules of the society”. This definition does not convey polemic judgments, as often seen in film studies. Taking away the moralistic presumption will allow us to understand it with social control. I would like to suggest another less-mentioned dimension that, law and order is what Martin Heidegger called world picture or “the world grasped as picture” (2002:67). Law and order is an ideal representation that all citizens are represented as law-conforming subjects – an apparatus of abstraction that turns subjective milieus into a specific mode of human understanding. It is untenable in any practical sense but plays a functional role in legal world-making. However, it has a sociological implication as law and order is “placed before him [the subject]”. To put it anecdotally, for a tourist or a newcomer to a new country, law and order seems to be an unchallengeable and un-penetrable “picture” at the first encounter, therefore following it becomes the least dangerous option to gain legal protection. However, the situation soon changes when he or she obtains more resources (knowledge, connections and suchlike) that enable him or her to regard law and order as processes to make social norms, compromising the ideal imagination mentioned. For police, to create that people obey the rule of the society imposed by a particular

government, they must quash vigilante orders in competition. In other words, except for highly formalized crime cinema, whether police are for justice and triad association for delinquency misses the point, since every person in society possibly commits crimes to benefit himself or herself. It is the competition between different forces that localized their orders that matters.

1. “Law and order” and social control

Weber defined a state as “an institutionally organized political enterprise...[whose] administrative staff can lay claim to a monopoly of legitimate physical forces in the execution of its order” (2019:136). In this sense, law and order refers to a special kind of social order, with not only the goal of subsistence but also in a continuous expansion to reach its monopoly. It is, therefore, in practice always competing with other forms of social orders in terms of efficacy. The competition is often observable in post-disaster relief. Hechter and Horne showed how volunteers in New York City were organized very efficiently immediately after the destruction of the World Trade Centre in 2001, without coordination by state agents (2003:28). Besides, taking the black market in Osaka immediately after WWII as an example, according to Haga’s study, open-air stall owners occupied street corners and barracks for their livelihood. From stall owners’ point of view, the black market allowed them to exploit the shortage and earn a considerable income despite the postwar wreckage. However, to the postwar Japanese government, the market itself disrupted the social order stipulated by the planned economy, that is to ensure better distribution of scarce resources at a reasonable price, despite the widespread shortage of daily necessities. In other words, two orders attempted to prevail. Despite the four attempts of wholesale arrest (with massive police mobilization) carried out in Autumn, 1945, the action was deemed ineffective (芳賀 2017:221-224). Later, *Kaoyaku*, or influential men who were associated with local gangs, stepped in to serve an active role in the negotiation and law enforcement between police and stall owners. In other words, to achieve successful law enforcement, at least three parties were involved to reach the order.

Law and order always involves two sides: the enforcers and the enforced. Every order requires actual social agents to act according to a certain mode of tendencies. It is, therefore, even in total conformity, some procedures made an individual, willingly or unwillingly, conform and therefore allow us to perceive this situation of “law and order”. As de Certeau suggested,

If it is true that the grid of “discipline” is everywhere becoming clearer and more extensive, it is all the more urgent to discover how an entire society resists being reduced to it, what popular procedures (also “miniscule” and quotidian) manipulate the mechanisms of discipline and conform to them only in order to evade them, and finally, what “ways of operating” form the counterpart, on the consumer’s (or “dominee’s”?) side, of the mute processes that organize the establishment of socioeconomic order (1984:xiv).

In de Certeau’s quote, the “grid of discipline” is to be understood as law and order in the making from the enforcers’ side. It is self-evident that territorial control can be founded with the capability of applying brute force, as indicated in terms of numbers of police officers, weapons they deploy and such like; i.e. the factors comparable to those of actual wars. The reason why the capability of applying brute force is more important than absolute force exercised is that law and order has its productive and biopolitical side – that social orders are to make sure they work along with some principles, instead of hurting them that requires extra resources to treat. In other words, an open exhibition of power is a form of territorial control. However, regarding the hide-and-seeking of the Osaka black market, provided the same level of manpower, reinforcement in one area will undoubtedly cause weakness in others. In addition, keeping law and order with frequent presences of law enforcers on territorial control is deemed the least effective, as the economy is to be considered “a domain of naturalness” after the failure of policing commerce (Foucault 2007:326-327). In short, the “grid of discipline” assumed differential level of intervention (including non-

intervention) as well as segmentation of territories, to perform the best law enforcement with limited resources.

Grid of discipline cannot be formed solely by manpower. Information techniques are important in the making of law and order. As Virilio suggested, speed (of reaching and of knowing) enables territorial reorganization of everything (2009:18). To ensure law and order with the absence of watchmen, information techniques, including surveillance and obtaining beneficial information, set in to hold the enforced controllable; on the other hand, to set up a speedy response to crises from afar. Besides, the more accurate the intervention is, the fewer externalities will be spilt over to affect the surrounding environment. In other words, information techniques are set to increase the efficacy of territorial control.

To sum up, on the enforcers' side, law and order is an ideal situation of law enforcement that poses itself as the only prevailing social order. In practice, however, law and order must be compromised by the limited resources and other competing social orders. This law and order require a strategy for law enforcement to maximize its influence. The result of law enforcement will become what the enforced perceive as stratification of (law and) order, in which means (1) selection of the fields that law and order intervenes or refrains from intervention ⁽⁸⁾; (2) selection of means of law enforcement, either by territorial control (policing with presence) and information technique (policing without presence). They are the parameters showing the extent of intervention. Intervention can be as light as persuasion, as covert as background profiling, as violent and immediate as gunning someone down, as permanent as eavesdropping. Different practices of law enforcement and their lasting effect reflected the relative strength of the police and the gangsters. In this sense, law and order never sought to eliminate the evil as moralist reading suggests, but rather a continuous negotiation for the productive social order approaching the ideal.

2. On the economic side of “Law and order”

The above-mentioned law and order presumed that different social orders and law and order do not converge, which means their relationship is of survival of the strongest. However, apart from the social control, law and order is also to be enforced facilitating people to “interact productively – to do things that help rather than hurt others”. This economic function weighed even more in the measurement of efficacy (Hechter and Horne 2003:29). In the *Young and Dangerous* series, the economic side of law and order is observable in two different ways. Firstly, one of the basic principal functions of law and order, especially for the weak state, is to provide a system of conflict resolution, armed with threats of violence to make the order last and to curtail revenge as the outcome of vigilante orders (Belton 2005:11). This system actualizes itself by minimising the cost of different parties using law and order as conflict resolution, and meanwhile maximising the cost of them using vigilante orders or other forms of self-organisation to solve conflicts. In this sense, (3) the expectation of being intervened is to be formed on the side of gang members (the enforced) in the *Young and Dangerous* series. The expectation is different from ideology as it does not make the subject act on moral quality or ontological attributes, but rather insert itself as a part of the decision which the subject act out its freedom under certain limitation.

The expectation of the enforced was formed as the natural consequence of successful intervention, functioning as risk management to circumvent loss. Intervention will demarcate “a way of behaviour within a more or less open field of possibilities” (Foucault 2000:341), leading the subject to perform accordingly (with various modes of coercion or discipline) to avoid possibilities from being eliminated. Law and order, with the insights from governmentality, can help us to understand carrot-and-stick practices attempt to regulate the conduct of its subjects, i.e. “conduct of conduct” (Foucault 2000:341). David Scott proposed a stronger version that colonial governmentality which attempts social engineering, suggesting:

Within the modern world which has come into being, changes have taken place as the effect of dominant political power by which new possibilities are constructed and old ones destroyed. The changes do not reflect a simple expansion of the range of individual choices, but the creation of conditions in which only new (i.e. modern) choices can be made. The reason for this is that the changes involve the reformation of subjectivities and the re-organization of social spaces in which subjects act and are acted upon. The modern state - imperial, colonial, postcolonial - has been crucial to these processes of construction/destruction. (1995:191)

“Possibility” is the second crucial factor for the productive (economic) side of law and order. The governed must be kept free to create and produce. It concurs Michel Foucault’s view that the economic mode of thinking serves as “the interface of government and the individual” (Foucault 2011:253). People tend to acquire knowledge about the “field of possibility” that creates a new mode of behaviour. Following the history of the black markets in Osaka, in the redevelopment project of *Uehonmachi*, Osaka, the city government pressed forward an eviction policy against illegal occupation before the 1960s. Local citizens, who were also occupants that backlashed the eviction, shifts towards active participation when the redevelopment project was carried out, in a way that the community will not be dispersed (小原 2005). In this sense, local citizens were not social outcasts who were determined to break the law, rather, in shaping their behaviour and restoring law and order as desired, favours, as a possibility for new and favourable social lives, play an important role.

Economic favours seem to be more on the policy side than on law enforcement. However, police officers can offer favours by not intervening in some individuals making self-benefitting local order. This view of law and order would help us to further decouple morality and (colonial) law enforcement. Law, as a “general and permanent prescription” required by social predictability that in turn provide legitimacy to order, became a strategic decision, from invoking it discursively to demonstrate authorities, to offer someone a favour by not pushing forward charges. However, no matter how the law is selectively enacted, this ultimate source of power still justifies law and order – compared with other forms of conflict solution like “giving face to each other”. In this sense, law and police have a similar level of power to change the field of possibility for people’s actions. It is precisely this virtually unlimited self-justifying nature of police power Michel Foucault sought to criticize, saying that police do not model itself on “given rules of justice”, but “the principles of its own rationality” that is comparable to “a permanent coup d’état coming directly from the royal power.” (2007:339-340)

The composite effect of law enforcement and economic favours eventually contributed to a mode of grassroots legal consciousness, that does not rely much on legal knowledge, but an expectation on how people will be treated if they break the law. Without the formation of legal consciousness, law and order cannot be regarded as “in place” since it does not last without intervention.

3. Art of the weak and “Law and Order”

Returning to de Certeau’s quote, his arguments problematize every representation of conformity by redirecting our focus, not to the “order” in any static form extracting from frozen slices of time, but actions, practices, discourses, mechanisms and operations that continuously appropriate the order, or make the order possible and visible (order-making). Different people in the *Young and Dangerous* series underwent a transition from outright disregard of the law to general conformity to law. However, their conformity to law, instead of reading as an unconditional surrender to the might of the police, should be more understood as a tactic that “constantly manipulate events to turn them into ‘opportunity’” to “capitalize on its advantages, prepare its expansions, and secure independence with respect to the circumstances” (de Certeau 1984:xix). By appropriating the order, the ability to distinguish “ways of operating” is the art for the weak. People who want to profit from

a dominant system engage in “a certain play in the machine through a stratification of different and interfering kinds of functioning” (de Certeau 1984:30).

In the Osaka black market mentioned above, the expulsion of stall owners was unsuccessful. Owners did not resist and fled away from the place where the law was enforced. The occupied area was seemed to restore its order desired by the state. However, owners in no time reopened their stall elsewhere without notice (芳賀 2017:229-230). Wholesale arrest implied weak surveillance elsewhere (“opportunity”), with no proper mobile surveillance technology in postwar times. In other words, law and order, despite its appearance of obedience, the enforced always engages in appropriation, concession and negotiation to make profits from the system without being spotted, and meanwhile understand how does stratification of order (or differential application of law enforcement) take place. On the side of the enforced, resistance to such order remains a choice – but from time to time, not the best choice to act based on their judgments to the circumstances.

To recap, this paper explores the “art of the weak”, that is, Chan Ho-nam and his followers’ tactics to deal with strengthening law and order from the transition period to the time immediately before and after 1997. Law and order involves territorial control and information techniques to curb competing social orders from making. It, in turn, generates the expectation and the legal consciousness that Chan Ho-nam, as a weak but righteous character, behave in a way generally tolerated under law and order. His conformity does not necessarily deal with a particular set of ideologies, but instead a general perception of relative strength, cost-benefit evaluations, as well as expectations of being intervened based on the experience of the intervention. Fields of intervention and means of intervention are facing the tactics that gangsters conform to conditions, appropriate the rules, and seek to carry out their job beyond the radar. This harmonious relationship between law and order and protagonists reflects the unique form of submission during the years in great transformation.

IV Law and Order, Territorial Control and Information Techniques

As mentioned, law and order on the enforcers’ side is always a combination of territorial control (by manpower) and information techniques (to ensure the promptness and accuracy of intervention). In the chronology of the *Young and Dangerous* series, law enforcement become apparent that escaping the reach of intervention becomes improbable. Law and order on the enforcers’ side can be said to form properly with authoritative police figures, prompt and comprehensive territorial control; and eventually the multiplicities of information techniques that serve as deterrence against gang members.

Like other commercial film series, the plot of every episode is quite formulaic in the sense that conflict between members within Hung Hing Gang, or between Hung Hing Gang and its rival Tung Sing Gang. These conflicts are narrated as the heroic construction of Chan Ho-nam and Saan Gai: first, there comes a rival. The rival then poses challenges or frames, Chan. What follows is the triumphant revenge or successful exculpation. All episodes usually end with a deadly fight between Chan Ho-nam and rivals only except *Young and Dangerous 5*.

Concerning the periodization of different episodes, *Young and Dangerous 1 and 3* ⁽⁹⁾ represent Hong Kong society in which police do not have full control over the territories. In the last two episodes, police gradually control the territory in Hong Kong.

1. Images of ordinary police officers

The image of police officers cannot be separated from their practices. In earlier episodes, to show realism, every episode includes some random scenes that reflect the daily operation of police officers, which has a minor effect on plot development. These officers are usually played by extras,

having only one to two scenes in that episode. However, their changing outlooks, from nerdy to professional, from coward to assertive, from white-skinned (colonial) senior officers to Chinese (local) ones, indicate the growing authority of law enforcement, in particular from a racial and colonial external forces to local and communal force, with Chinese taking the majority of the population in Hong Kong. Their authoritative images, alongside some important police officer roles, show the power of law enforcement that allows the audience to feel the societal change as the series unfold.

There are no important police presence in *Young and Dangerous 1* – that could change the plot development. All police officers present are played by extras. The reason to highlight “God of Pistol in Wanchai” is precisely his initial position as a low-rank constable. Gangsters’ overall “respect” (even to the lowest members of the hierarchy) changed over time showing the rising status of Hong Kong police.

God of Pistol starts his appearance as an anonymous and uniformed police constable. Contrary to the normal masculine expectation of police officers, he looks weak even in his military uniform. Additionally, he also wears glasses that make him look rather nerdy than smart. He confronts Ugly Kwan ⁽¹⁰⁾ for illegal parking. However, because of the limited authority he attains, he can only give Kwan parking tickets. Kwan responds to the tickets with a thick pile of money, teasing the policeman as the security guard of his car. He then threatens to sue Kwan for obstructing police’s mission. Kwan says that it would be better for him to call for support next time, asking the constable if he wants to have his royal funeral earlier. In other words, as a comical relief of the episode, the constable exerted utterly no influence and threat on Kwan. He did not manage to stop Kwan except in the last scene where he shoots Kwan down. This scene of mild confrontation implies that the constable receives no respect at all even regarding small matters like illegal parking.

In *Young and Dangerous 4*, he earned himself the name “God of Pistol in Wanchai” for shooting Kwan. The fear of triad members indicates the dramatic boost of police authority, as well as his confidence. His plain-cloth wearing and personal pistol ⁽¹¹⁾ imply his promoted status as a detective of Crime Wing. In that scene, Barbarian incites a car race with Chan Ho-nam in Tuen Mun. However, Barbarian crashes his car into that policeman’s car from behind at the red light. Before knowing his real identity, Barbarian threatens to beat that policeman up for compensation. When the policeman reveals his police identity with his pistol, Barbarian immediately changes his attitude, explaining that “it is a misunderstanding”. However, the policeman does not just let them go. He conducts a body search on all the members at the scene. While Barbarian keeps claiming himself as “a decent citizen”, the policeman knocks Barbarian’s head to the roof of the car, scolding that “a decent citizen doesn’t wear golden hair.” This funny conversation between them indicates the changing relative power between police and gangsters since Barbarian shows due respect to that police officer.

Another aspect of the scene mentioned above is the relative lack of authority of senior Caucasian police officers regardless of the job grade they are in. They only appear in *Young and Dangerous 1* and 3, drawing cultural reference from the historical nostalgia that white officers are unable to deal with the interracial conflicts in Hong Kong. A team of anonymous police officers, led by a Caucasian supervisor, monitors the funeral of Uncle Bee from afar in *Young and Dangerous 1*. At the entrance, a journalist complains that a triad member intimidates him, saying that “My Boss died, if anyone makes troubles here, I will make him accompany my boss”, one plain-clothed, unnamed supervisor speaking in Cantonese with an obvious English accent, refuses to offer either assistance or intervention. Later in the same funeral scene, a priest, outraged by Kwan’s disrespect to deceased Uncle Bee, kicks him in the face. Another supervisor, said in English, “I didn’t see anything happened here at all.” In the last ten minutes of the film, a team led by the second white-skinned supervisor searches Kwan’s film studio and confiscated cocaine at the scene. He also makes his

prosecution order in English, “inform Lau Charles and issue a warrant for arresting Kwan”. His native command in English, in a film predominated by colloquial Cantonese, shows the external position of the colonial police.

In *Young and Dangerous 3*, Crow and Tiger, the antagonists of the episode, open a pub in Wanchai without notice to Chan Ho-nam. Chan immediately reacts with people demonstrating in the pub. Before a fight broke out, a white-skinned superintendent in his formal suit, introduces himself as Robinson (also an extra that only appears once), saying he merely passed by tonight and did not want to see anything unpleasant, in Cantonese with an accent. Chan Ho-nam burns a glass of liquor and then drops to the ground, causing a small fire, saying “you can have fun tonight, but I don’t guarantee tomorrow”. The declaration of imminent war in front of a superintendent is a very provocative gesture, especially since a superintendent is supposed to hold more power than a constable. Since the fourth episode, white officers are no longer seen.

In *Young and Dangerous 5*, local high officer Superintendent Lee, in his smart casual attire, exerts an assertive stance of law and order. Whether the police image is professional or not, local or not matters in terms of the performative authority they play, as well as the professionalism shown to the audience. As mentioned in the methodology part, the police carry out law and order partly by giving the impression that they can and will take effective actions.

2. Causes of non-intervention in earlier episodes

In *Young and Dangerous 1* and *3*, the reasons for police’s non-intervention are slightly different. In the first episode, the police force does not even know what happened in the underworld. Their total lack of information directly implies their non-intervention, as well as the exteriority of the colonial police. To exemplify; first, the police does not know any criminal cases related to triad members, including the theft of Chan’s car, as well as the death of Bee’s family. Triad members do not look for help from police either. In addition to all these, police officers do not even interrupt all the conflicts within the association, as mentioned in the case of the team of anonymous police officers monitoring Uncle Bee’s funeral. To a certain extent, their mutual non-intervention seems to be an unspoken rule. It allows Chan Ho-nam to carry out a complete wipeout of Kwan’s turf: including the slaughter of his henchmen, as well as the bombing of his parlour. The two occasions of intervention that the police force carries out is the confiscation of cocaine in Kwan’s pornographic movie production house, as well as the nerdy officers’ headshot of Kwan. However, it turns out that all the actions are in Chan’s revenge plan, by blowing the whistle to OCTB⁽¹²⁾ for the drugs, by requesting the nerdy officer to rush to the scene seeing someone holding a gun, as well as handing to Kwan an unloaded gun that triggers the immediate response of the nerdy officer to shoot him down. It is the police, not the gang, acting as a piece on the chessboard. Hong Kong in the first episode is utterly lawless despite the existence of police. It is the gang having the final say.

Young and Dangerous 3, however, explored more extensively the theme of old and new Hong Kong. To start with the brief introduction of the characters, in Hung Hing Gang, Chiang Tin-seng, the lord of the Gang, is a businessman with a triad background. Chan Ho-nam, now the district boss of Causeway Bay, is a loyal subordinate to Chiang. In Tung Sing Gang, Camel, the lord of the Tung Sing Gang, is an indigenous man from a walled village in Hong Kong. His subordinates Crow and Tiger are iconoclasts who feel dissatisfied with Camel’s leadership.

Despite the general distrust of gang members to the police, in terms of speed of intervention and availability of information techniques, the capacity of law enforcement improves significantly. There are two major scenes that the officer-in-charge Ngau Hung that showed police’s nuanced attitude to include triad affairs into the fields of intervention. Apart from urgent law-and-order issues that already drew the public attention, they merely manipulate the information flow to allow

them to confront each other. In other words, they keep their hands clean from direct intervention.

At the fa pau raffle ⁽¹³⁾ on Lord Guan Yu's birthday, different gangs meet each other annually showing the solidarity of the underworld community. The organizer Hung Hing Gang holds an auction to raise funds, selling various auspicious decorations that bring good fortunes. "Long Red", a long red cloth hanging over the stage, symbolizes good luck and prosperity over the year. Crow bid against other Hung Hing Gang members by a very small amount, annoying them to pick up a fight. Immediately after the fight, the police make their first appearance in the episode. The OCTB superintendent Ngau Hung, leading about a dozen officers, first divide and calm the angry crowds of Hung Hing and Tung Sing members, to avoid further chaos. He then warns all the members that "there are two police lorry buses parking at the entrance. You are all famous people in the societies. If you don't sit down and eat your food, I won't be polite." Up to this point, police exerts authority merely to defuse the situation. However, instead of massive detention for deterrence purposes, Ngau Hung only used the warning to restore order. As the post-treatment, he demands Hung Hing Gang diplomat Chan Yiu to have a negotiation with Tung Sing Gang leaders. He says "You'd better come to a truce with Tung Sing. Let our O-team (OCTB) stay away from troubles." Chan Yiu promises to solve it behind the scene. In other words, both do not want to create trouble for the other side. Police will also turn a blind eye as long as it does not reach public concerns. They do not deal with the cause of conflicts. They also merely stop the order from worsening.

This observer-spectator position becomes even more explicit in the final scene of Camel. Camel's funeral ends up with a rough-and-tumble fight involving over a hundred people. Crow and Tiger are killed in the fuss. Despite the murder, Ngau Hung does not intervene as he should. This scene is a *deja vu* of a similar funeral scene in *Young and Dangerous 1*, in which the officers know the incident but decide not to meddle with it. Ngau Hung admits his impotence of making law and order at the funeral scene. Ngau Hung stays at a distance from the entrance of his funeral, with a team of ten officers. One junior officer asks him why they become merely the security guard for the funeral. He answered "It is a private place. Those villagers will not cooperate with the police." No place is supposed to be private when it is related to triad activities, the word "private" here implies more about the fact that the place is beyond the reach of law enforcement.

3. Gangsters in the land of law and order: Intervention in later episodes

In the later episodes, the police force no longer keeps themselves behaving in an observer-spectator position, instead, various occasions of intervention can be seen. To put it differently, it is the time when nominal jurisdiction (as a colonial power has the exclusive claim on sovereignty) turns into practical jurisdiction (with its law being effectively imposed over the territory where the colonial power held the sovereignty claim) ⁽¹⁴⁾. To observe intervention, there are three aspects concerning the efficacy: first, time of intervention that shows law enforcers' efficiency in territorial control when the disorder is about to break out. This territorial control, however, can be preemptive that happen even before any disorder happens, to keep a productive order from being disrupted. Second, is the demonstration of power and authority. Despite the spectacular demonstration of a massive number of police at the scene in need of restoration of order, other forms of demonstrations, like legal authority police represents, also contribute to this demonstration. Third, the lasting duration of an act of enforcement shows the deterrence effect that action generated. To maintain a productive order, however, territorial control enforced by many police officers attending the scene all the time is never a good option.

Since the fourth episode, police seem to have stronger territorial control over public places, i.e. the places that people can freely access, gather and stay. The relative strength of the protagonist Saan Gai (as a foreigner to the new town Tuen Mun) is visibly weaker than the police, as well as his opponent in a competition for new district leader in Tuen Mun, Barbarian (a local supported by a

network of students from the colleges in the new town).

In the fourth episode, despite the absence of important police characters, the existence of law and order significantly affects the plot development. Two scenes indicate the prompt actions taken by police. A female college student was found drugged to death in the billiard parlour. Chiu Pei, who managed the place for Saan Gai, arrives at the scene after the police have already started a preliminary autopsy of the body and her identity. Chiu Pei says he does not know anything about the drugs. A senior officer pokes a finger on him in an aggressive manner, scolding him that “Of course, you don’t know anything! But I know everything! You are called Chiu Pei! Your boss is Saan Gai! Ask him not to play tricks. We are watching.” Chiu Pei is then detained as a murder suspect. On the other hand, Yee, the hitman in brotherhood with Saan Gai, was found dropped dead from a height. Police officers also come earlier than any of the triad members including Chan Ho-nam. It is the first time that the police side has control over the immediate street crisis before triad members come. The short response time to the disorder implies improved information techniques. Compared with the scene of a mass fight in *Young and Dangerous 3*, the implication of “watching” changed drastically, from merely spectating without taking any action to surveillance with potential law enforcement.

Young and Dangerous 5 in many ways redefines the series. Hong Kong becomes a global city. Both Hung Hing Gang and Tung Sing Gang become double-sided, involving both legal businesses including foreign investment projects, as well as local triad business. In this global city, law and order, as well as its enforcement become the major player, both in terms of the plot development and sociological influence. This episode, instead of merely law enforcement, pays more attention to targeting the gang leader to avoid any disorder in advance.

In this episode, police make their earliest appearance throughout the series. In the second scene that is set in Chan Ho-nam’s bar, superintendent Lee Chuk Chun and his colleagues have been sitting there even before the confrontation between Chan and Szeto (the new rival) take place. In other words, in terms of time, Lee even preempted the clash and stop the confrontation from happening. Appearing in a very authoritative gesture, Lee comes in the middle of two crowds of almost forty people, with only two colleagues. Seeing two crowds of people in a standoff, Lee asks if they are “affiliated with triad activities”. As a further warning to two leaders in two societies, Lee says he can “suspect” anyone here as “affiliated with triad activities” or committing “unlawful assembly”, resulting in unconditional detention for 48 hours as stated by law. Responding to the rhetorical question asked by superintendent Lee, both Chan and Szeto immediately back down, pretending that they are not confronting each other. Considering the time to stop a confrontation between two triad leaders, he does not only perform deterrence. He preempted the clash. Superintendent Lee also employs eloquent use of legal discourse to enhance his authority.

In the fifth episode, apart from the demonstration of force, he also proactively incorporates Chan to enforce law and order. Law and order, in this situation, is approaching its ideal state, with legal discourse properly informed the enforced, that turn them into submission. Lee warns Chan for the “You earn a living in your territory (*Dei Tau*), also mean that you earn in my district (*Wan Tau*)”⁽¹⁵⁾. Don’t screw the place up.” The superimposition of law and order on the economic order revealed the determination of total control of law and order within the area.

Urging for Chan’s reciprocity, he has been “invited” twice for voluntary assistance to investigation throughout the episode. The first time is when the newspaper stand owned by Big Head (Chan’s brother who was sentenced for the Gang) was burnt by the rival Tung Sing Gang. Lee passes Chan a mission that “you would be the first one I approach when anything happens in Causeway Bay.” Despite Chan’s unwillingness to be the extended arm of law and order, he is rather inescapable that person-to-person police surveillance shapes him to behave in such a “lawful” way. Besides, he acknowledges his role as a district leader. In their conversation, the bitter tea is to imply harsh surveillance. Lee invites him to drink Chinese tea. He responds to Chan’s comment of bitterness with “you’ll get used to it” – which means this kind of law enforcement will not be a one-off, but a lasting strategy to force a reciprocal relationship with Hung Hing Gang. The second time is after a turf war on minibus business⁽¹⁶⁾. Instead of inviting the leader of the rival gang, Chan was invited again since there is a massive fight broke out on the street.

Only on one occasion, Chan Ho-nam does not conform to superintendent Lee at the beginning. A member of Tung Sing kills Chiu Pei out of the anger of his brother's death. Days after, Chan Ho-nam, together with a hundred brothers, want to burn incense to worship the death in the police station. Superintendent Lee clearly states that triad members are not authorised. He also tells Chan Ho-nam that "your underground order does not work in front of me." Immediate after that declaration, the mise-en-scène becomes a low-angle wide shot of the police station, with only the HKSAR flag on top of the gate. All triad members at the scene become small in scale. This scene is remarkable concerning territorial control. In *Young and Dangerous 1*, 3 and 4, there are places and venues which are inaccessible by police officers. In this sense, the scene symbolised a reversed power relationship, in which Chan cannot do whatever he wants. An outright challenge to law and order, as well as police authority, no longer works in this episode.

Young and Dangerous 5 can be understood as the last hail of the colonial system at the last moment of colonial Hong Kong – in terms of law and order, it is nearly perfect as now all the opposition forces are either absorbed into the establishment or quashed to disappearance. When Chan Ho-nam wins his fight over Szeto on a boxing ring, he boldly declares that 'there is only one Ho-nam in Causeway Bay – it is me, Chan Ho-nam.' The episode concludes with a scene implying the law and order will last in 1998, a new year after handover.

4. Law and order in the land of gangsters: Information techniques

From non-intervention, to prompt response, to preemptive action, the key for the speed and accuracy of intervention is information techniques. The first mention of information techniques is in *Young and Dangerous 3*. However, back then, because of the mutual non-intervention principle, Ngau Hung reached a deal with Saan Gai with a cassette tape that can prove the innocence of Chan Ho-nam. He does not personally involve in the triad activities, but only make use of the information to strike a balance of power between two gangs to create orders.

Information techniques, as part of the grid of discipline, refer to the networks of identifying individuals and groups of people that allow enforcers to retrieve constant flows of information that enable accurate and spot-on law enforcement. In the *Young and Dangerous* series, information techniques consist of two parts: telecommunication that enables speedy enforcement to the point that police can take preemptive action; as well as the registration system and representative system to make sure the constant flows of information that keep police updated with the situation. The formation of an information network constitutes "informatics of domination" (Haraway 1991:161). Various techniques of documentation keep mapping individuals into the information system of the state. In other words, the more Hung Hing Gang is involved in various businesses in global capitalism coordinated by international law and diplomatic relations, the more visible the Gang is to the government.

To understand how different information techniques matter in the later episodes in the series, it has to start with two changes to Hung Hing Gang under the management of first-generation Chiang Tin-seng, as early as in *Young and Dangerous 3*. First of all, the third episode consists of a contrast between urban and rural. Chiang Tin-seng meets his henchmen, previously in an old meeting room that resembles *Tongxianghui* setting, now in the office situated in Time Square, Causeway Bay, one of the most prestigious commercial complexes of shopping mall and offices. On the other hand, Camel meets his henchman in the village, which represents the indigenous root of some triad associations. Secondly, the rural (that symbolizes local Chinese communities in colonies or overseas) no longer provides a fertile ground for the gang to survive. In this episode, Chiang Tin-seng went on a trip to visit other godfathers in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Chiang Tin-seng met several retired godfathers in Amsterdam. These retired godfathers, however, showed him the demise of overseas Chinese gangs. One of these godfathers, enjoying his life in this "welfare state", lamented that "Their [kids who are on their roller skates, accidentally bumped into Chiang] blood is messed up⁽¹⁷⁾. Like them, they cannot speak Chinese. It was better one or two decades ago. Chinese people were in solidarity back then." After Chiang Tin-seng was killed in Amsterdam, his younger brother Chiang Tin-yeung, a Thai Chinese businessman, comes back to Hong Kong and carry on the reform of the Hung Hing gang. The death of Chiang Tin-seng and Camel in this episode symbolizes the passing of good old days for Hong Kong gangs too – and the urgent need to

reposition in the global capitalism, like their counterpart in the Netherlands. The changing socio-economic environment is the prelude to the legalization of the gang in the later episodes.

Information techniques only become a small part of the grid of discipline in the fourth episode, since gangs started their involvement in “legal” businesses. As mentioned above, in the scene when an officer surnamed Chan confronts Chiu Pei at the billiard parlour, Chiu Pei’s name and his boss is mentioned. At this point, at least three types of information are available to the police to carry out prompt action: the personal identity of Chiu Pei, his triad affiliations, as well as the property registered with their names for business. Triad involvement with “legal” business provided a precious tool of information tracking. Licensing system is to make a business visible to the authority, in a sense that countermeasures can be taken to contain their activities. In other words, the more a gang take part in legal businesses, the more a gang is subjected to police control.

In the fifth episode, police extract even more information from different administrative arms of the government. Chan Ho-nam’s new bar is required to fulfil the fire safety requirement of the indoor area. In addition to that, before the bar obtained a liquor license, selling alcoholic beverages are illegal. He received the second warning letter concerning the fire safety requirement. He heard a practice that only when he received the seventh letter, police will act. He said he would wait until the issue of the fifth letter of warning. Despite the grace period, the police force holds the discretion not to shut the bar down immediately.

In the confrontational scene between Chan and Szeto in the fifth episode, Superintendent Lee offers Chan his private cell phone number. Later in the episode, on Chinese New Year’s Eve, Hong Kong people usually have their reunion dinner in seafood restaurants. It is the peak business time for food outlets. However, Szeto Ho-nam and his brothers occupy Chan’s seafood restaurant for prolonged hours. Chan Ho-nam then calls Lee’s private number for police assistance. Chan’s active use of police assistance, on one hand, reconfirms the dominance of law enforcement; on the other hand, shows the improvement of telecommunication gives the police more muscle to extend the reach of law enforcement.

Information technique extends to the individual level. For the first invitation of Chan Ho-nam, two plainclothes police officers intercept him at the airport, instead of anywhere else like the Hung Hing premises or Chan’s home. It suggests that police also have access to his travel records (as well as his companions). In the first closed-door meeting with Chan Ho-nam, Superintendent Lee can already recount some brief but critical facts concerning Chan’s business trip with other Hung Hing district leaders, for example, their destination Kuala Lumpur. By showing police knowledge to these two areas, although these passive tools eventually stop the crimes committed by the triad, active interception of triad activities for non-investigative purposes recreates the effect that is visible in *Young and Dangerous 4*, that is to increase the expected risk of committing wrongdoings by increasing the possibility of being known.

On the contrary, in the social space where information network is absent, it becomes the blind spot of law enforcement. Earlier triad business relies on both small businesses and illicit economy to survive. On the other hand, law and order can do nothing with the illicit economy as they contravene the law, or contravene what people expect a general order. Illicit economy provides livelihood to social outcasts, for instance, refugees, illegal immigrants, two-way permit holders from mainland China, the undereducated, former prisoners, people who cannot communicate well in either Cantonese or English, people who cannot find jobs in ordinary time schedules and so on. Informal economy usually enjoys free entry and flexible working schedule, as they are neither recognized nor protected by law. This part of social order, as Chan Ho-nam called it “underground order”, remains vibrant when law and order seem to reach its record high. He thinks if law and order ultimately aim to achieve harmonious social order, enabling the natural functioning of capitalism, the enduring *de facto* status of these industries must be respected for the greater concern of social order. The optimal order cannot simply dismiss the livelihood of these people. The moralist view of law and order can seldom capture the multiple manifestations of different social orders. Illicit economy is inconsummerable with law and order; in other words, the law should remain unpracticed.

In this sense, although superintendent Lee does not know the illicit economy and small businesses in detail, Chan becomes an important informant and a node in the chain of command of law and order enforcement. The police can command Chan to keep the underground order, he

can be understood as a significant extension of law and order over the area that is previously only controllable with the active deployment of force exercising territorial control.

V Law and Order in the Mind of Gangsters: On the Predictability of Enforcement

With the strengthened law enforcement, especially when gang involved in both legal businesses (as the adaptation to the new socio-economic situation) and illicit economy (as the historical remains as a gang), the necessity to abide by the law is to a certain extent reshape their decision-making, as reflected in the dialogues between different gangsters. Throughout the series, two modes of thinking reflect the behaviour of gangsters, namely politics of visibility and the discourse of “sik nou”⁽¹⁸⁾ (i.e. earning a living with one’s brain). “Sik nou” refers to the gradual acceptance of legal and governmental discourse in everyday gang function. They correspond to law enforcement or/and economic rationality.

1. Politics of visibility

The politics of visibility manifests in *Young and Dangerous 1* and *3* in a negative sense. In *Young and Dangerous 1*, a journalist representing public eyes asks for police assistance at Uncle Bee’s funeral. Police officers who refused to help show the non-intervention stance of law enforcement into triad activities. It means even if gangs are publicly visible, they are not subjected to law. The politics of visibility is slightly different in *Young and Dangerous 3*. Intervention does not take place since Ngau Hung thinks that Camel’s funeral is organized in the rural area in Hong Kong, suggestively the New Territories. The way he regards rural Hong Kong as a “private place” does not only mean villagers “owned” the rural part of Hong Kong but also by “private place”, it is invisible to the general public and beyond the reach despite the nominal jurisdiction (extraterritoriality). The invisibility of rural Hong Kong also implies no disorder perceived in the public eye. It concurs with the phenomenological nature of law and order: disorders that do not attract attention mean situations are in control.

As Goodrich pointed out, alongside the court procedures, law enforcement is primarily concerned with the marking off a jurisdiction. It refers to “the grounding of legality in a visible legitimacy, its symbolic validation and present authority as defined through its staging and enactment” (2009:7). Throughout the *Young and Dangerous* series, the diminishing violent activities, no matter what purposes of violence might be, can indicate the drastic outset of the visible legality. Law and order seems to be in effect even when the police are not physically there. In earlier episodes, eye-catching criminal activities are rampant. The absence of a powerful arbitrator sets all parties into motion to strive for the best interest in the game of lawmaking. Even if they exist, powerful arbitrator leads them to momentary compliance only.

By the similar caution to public attention, starting from *Young and Dangerous 4*, the films end with a “chivalrous” duel between the protagonists and their rivals in some private and enclosed venues. In the fifth episode, no death is seen. Compared with the previous episodes that usually conclude with a turf war or a mass showdown of gang force, it is worth mentioning this significant decline of performative influence in the public eye. Triad associations remain powerful, yet they have to be invisible, which is in line with Tin-yeung’s entrepreneurial dictate of “keeping [triad] community matters low-key”. Chivalrous duels necessarily imply the avoidance of mass casualty as seen in earlier episodes. In *Young and Dangerous 4*, only Lui Yiu-yeung is stabbed to death. In *Young and Dangerous 5*, the duel ends with only two people knocked out unconscious.

The choice of weapon is also influenced by this politics of (in)visibility. In *Young and Dangerous 1* and *3*, the use of slicing chopper is pervasive. Firearms including pistols and grenades can also be seen. In *Young and Dangerous 5*, triad members fight at the minibus stop only with fists and kicks. A similar trend can also be observed in possession of firearms. In the first episode, Chan’s

revenge involves the use of a shotgun. However, in the final episode, no firearms have ever been shown.

The politics of visibility is reconfirmed as a group maxim, rather than only a spontaneous decision through the competition between Barbarian and Saan Gai. Being under police surveillance in *Young and Dangerous 4*, Saan Gai does not have the means to counter-attack, keeping him in a passive position in the competition. In the final debate before the voting for the new district leader, his situation of “being watched” become the soft spot that Barbarian took advantage of. During the private conversation between Saan Gai and Chan Ho-nam, Chan also reminds him “Be careful of the police, the girl died, they will keep an eye on you.” All these incidents show a rather consistent message that: being a smart gangster requires to be cautious to the eyes directed at him or her; especially the eye of the police.

2. The discourse of “sik nou” (earning a living with one’s brain)

The new godfather of Hung Hing Gang, Cheung Tin-yeung is a Thai businessman. Apart from the politics of visibility incorporated as a mode of thinking, Cheung Tin-yeung, following the capitalist path of his murdered elder brother, strengthens the connection with global capitalism. In *Young and Dangerous 4*, he suggested an election campaign for the new leader in Tuen Mun. Based on the rule of the game, the scene of the final debate becomes crucial to understand the discourse of “sik nou”.

In that scene, Barbarian represents the gangsters’ view from the local and informal perspective, in a sense that familiarity and connection with the local community should weigh the most important quality as a district leader. This view precluded the involvement of global capitalism, that street gangs should focus on the street. To Chiang Tin-yeung, Lui Yiu-yeung and Saan Gai, this view of community seems to be outdated and backward, that community business alone can lead to the survival and prosperity of the gang. He asked Saan Gai “Do you know Fat Kee’s boss? The food stall in Yau Oi Estate?” On the other hand, Saan Gai represents a top-down view with direct reference to the urban development plan. He said “Starting from the eighties, the government started to develop this place.”, suggesting community bonds in new towns like Tuen Mun cannot exist if it was never built in the first place. He also mentioned the number of hospitals, secondary schools, police stations, metalwork shops, and most importantly the population. His view expressed a logistical and economic understanding of Tuen Mun, which is ironically close to the governmental view from the perspective of gangsters. He recognises the presence of government in the daily operation of gang business. Based on this judgment, he suggests the full utilisation of state power to help the gang to survive. The shot immediately cut to Cheung Tin-yeung, suggesting he is satisfied with Saan Gai’s view.

At the end of that scene, the collaboration between Fat Lai, Barbarian and Lui Yiu-yeung was revealed. Fat Lai, the major supporter of Barbarian, kills Lui Yui-yeung from Tung Sing to conceal their connection. Chiang responds, saying “all Hung Hing boys are good citizens of Hong Kong. You witness a murder crime. So, you have to be a good citizen to report the crime, right?” He does not shy away from admitting the connection between profit-making and law and order. *Young and Dangerous 4* ends with confirming Saan Gai as the next district leader representing a new leadership, symbolizing both the entrepreneurial shift of Hung Hing Society, as well as the recognition of full-fledged law and order.

The concealed assistance of Lui Yiu-yeung is also worth mentioning. Lui Yiu-yeung is a Tung Sing rival character enjoying killing people with classical music playing at the same time. He, similar to what is described in Saan Gai’s speech, contrasts with Barbarian who symbolizes lower-class communal solidarity. The first scene that Yiu-yeung meets Barbarian is not in Tuen Mun – the hometown of Barbarian, but at Bowan Road at the mid-levels in Wanchai administrative

district with his executive car. At Bowan Road, one can enjoy the spectacularly wide view over the skyscrapers of Hong Kong island. Looking at those skyscrapers at height, Fat Lai asks Barbarian if he knows the way HSBC, China Bank and Standard Charters made money. They are different companies but making money at the same place and same time, which symbolizes, on one hand, the centre-periphery (urban-rural) relationship between Tuen Mun and Wanchai, as well as the importance of the global capitalistic network, that is represented at length in *Young and Dangerous 5*, on Hung Hing Gang's participation in cruise liner business, as well as a development project in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

In *Young and Dangerous 5*, this message becomes even more clear. Chiang actively extends the influence of Hung Hing Gang overseas to southeast Asia regions, especially where massive overseas Chinese live like Malaysia. In the first scene is he talks with Chan Ho-nam before leaving Hong Kong. He says "No matter running a business, running a gang or even negotiating with Beijing officials, you have to 'sik nou'". Immediately after that, he put it clearly on the content of 'sik nou'. He says "there is always a limit on street fight. In the past, you can wear a T-shirt and jeans, but now you are in a tuxedo... Running the gang at low key, running the business at high key".

Legal discourses constitute a very important part of the discourse of "sik nou". Similar to the scene that Chiang Tin-yeung claimed that Hung Hing members are good citizens, in the confrontation scene between Chan and Szeto, Szeto comes to Chan's bar with the attendance of two lawyers, clearly stating that "Paul and Simon are registered lawyers. Which side do you think is wrong?" In addition to the eloquent use of legal discourses by superintendent Lee, it is observed that legal discourses become a shared battlefield of emergent competition. Only in this context of law and order accepted as a new form of conflict resolution among gangsters, physical violence ceased to take place.

In every episode, Chan falls into the trap set up by the opposite gang. In *Young and Dangerous 5*, the trap is also a legal one, instead of traps that invoke sanctions within the gang. In this episode, a Malaysian Datuk named Chan Ka-nam, in a business deal with Chiang Tin-yeung, promised to offer Chan Ho-nam the management of his cruise liner, as well as the development projects in Malaysia. There is a scene that Chan Ho-nam signed a contract with the Datuk. In that scene, Chan, with his ninth-grade English, cannot fully comprehend the contract. He signed the contract without checking the details, saying that "business is about trust." However, in the latter half of the story, it turns out that the contract intended to shift the hidden debts of the development projects that force Chan Ho-nam to declare bankruptcy. Chan Ka-nam says that "I do business in black and white. I wished my partner were a smart guy." In this confrontation, it is clear that Chan Ka-nam played an upper hand for his knowledge in legal discourses and procedures. At the end of the episode, Chan Ho-nam, as a quick learner, does not take revenge in an old, bodily way. He instead leaked the details about the murder and business fraud Chan Ka-nam committed in Malaysia to the Hong Kong police and the Malaysian police via Interpol. Only after this scene, one of Chan's henchmen Pau Pei comically beat him up out of the police's sight.

VI Art of the Weak and the Relationship with Law and Order

Taking a character-centric perspective, some scholars tend to understate and dismiss the series, particularly the portrayal of gangs and police as "flimsy and irresolute" (e.g. Pang 2002:330). Nevertheless, the series consists of polyphonic responses to changing world order to global capitalism. They are traditionalists (Camel and Barbarian), businessmen who support the full-fledged transformation to global capitalism and law and order (Chiang Tin-yeung and to a certain extent, Saan Gai) and Chan Ho-nam, who adopted "art of the weak", that seeks to walk on a middle way between the former two.

Traditionalists tend to deeply root in the local community. They tend to maintain the business as if law and order does not reshape the local community. It somehow resembles the earlier understanding of law and order as (colonial) exteriority. Strictly speaking, this worldview does not have underground order, but parallel orders in which none of them holds control over the territory as a whole. However, as mentioned before, the imposition of law and order is equal to the wider coverage of practical jurisdiction. In *Young and Dangerous 4*, this worldview is untenable in the sense that practical jurisdiction has already covered the nominal jurisdiction (the territory of Hong Kong). What Barbarian imagines can be nothing but an illusion resisting changes.

The true difference is between the “businessman” approach and the “art of the weak” approach. These two approaches share a common understanding that taking law and order into consideration of gang activities is somehow inevitable. They are different in terms of responses. Chiang Tin-yeung, as the new boss who is also an outright businessman, repeatedly tells Chan Ho-nam to survive by “sik nou”. His view shows unreserved support to law and order, to exchange for the favours that may benefit him in the game of global capitalism and minimize the legal troubles that may harm the legal side of gang business.

Contrary to his boss Chiang Tin-yeung, who is an outright businessman, Chan Ho-nam, as the new representative of the local front of the gang, presents a slightly nuanced view when he persuaded Big Head to return to the gang. He referred to the ban of “special” industries⁽¹⁹⁾ including informal industries like saunas, game centres and nightclubs by Taipei Mayor Chen Shui-bian at that time. He said “these are not illegal, just illicit, but still he does not allow them to run their business. You say, how can their social order be harmonious? In every place, there are two modes of order: one is law and order, one is underground order that belongs to us.” The self-awareness of oneself situating in law and order, one on hand, self-evidently prove law and order⁽²⁰⁾ (as manifested in the practical jurisdiction) has total control of the “above-ground”, as a (those which is visible to the police; on the other hand, however, law and order is to be put on equal terms with underground order. This view on the relationship between gangs and police is certainly hierarchical (instead of topological in the earlier episodes), but foundational for the survival of the Hung Hing gang. His assertive stance on “underground order” that rely on the local community shows his reservation that Hung Hing Gang is to be reduced as merely the extended arm of law and order in the new game of global capitalism.

His view indicates “the art of weak” with a balanced view between Barbarian and Saan Gai. As de Certeau suggested, art of the weak, or tactics is related to “trickery” and “legerdemain” (37). Art of the weak, or a tactic is a relative concept. Its opposite is strategy, which means “a spatial or institutional localization” (de Certeau 1984:xix), that is relevant with jurisdiction. Within the localized area, the space of a tactic is always “the space of the other” or “within the enemy’s field of vision.” (de Certeau, 1984:37). To put it frankly, Chan Ho-nam (and Hung Hing Gang) is surely not as weak as those individuals who can barely make their ends meet in the illicit economy. They hold a certain level of power to localize, however, their power to localize is also subjected to police force, in a sense that police hold more power to localize a larger territory. It is also why Chan called it “underground order”. In this sense, all the elements countering the police can be considered as “art of the weak”, including active use of politics of invisibility, gradual acceptance of legal discourses, as well as the continued involvement in the illicit economy. To be selected as the extended arm of law and order, Hung Hing Gang must prove themselves the worth of being invited. In other words, their bargaining chips for police’s favour above-ground is partially determined by their power underground. “The underground” is the place they can truly act beyond the radar of law and order, that is to preserve the power and hide from law and order as the bargaining power and the last resort against the police. Despite the establishment of law and order, the scepticism of not surrendering oneself totally to the formal order shows a conservative political stance but with a

nuanced sense of withdrawal.

VII Conclusion

The *Young and Dangerous* series is one of the landmarks serving the ways out to be a weak hero in the new order. Law and order, as a form of legality justified by visibility, is to be enforced to its optimum when people cannot feel it at all and therefore no conflicts are visible, i.e. a hypothetical situation of total submission or perfect synchronicity between various modes of social orders and law and order. To ordinary citizens, if self-subsistence and self-benefit are what they are concerned, it means that conforming to law and order and resisting such an order weigh equally as options to make a living. The only thing that matters here is their cost-and-benefit evaluation based on the individual experience of law and order. In this sense, police (as the pole towards law and order) and gangsters (as the pole of resistance) represent the possible directions of conformity/non-conformity. In this sense, films work in the realm of the possibilities of self-actualisation, which reflects people's ordinary life. The *Young and Dangerous* series reflects on the successful consolidation of law and order with strengthening territorial control and effective information techniques. Meanwhile, the enforced, as symbolized by Chan Ho-nam, seems to be able to work double-sided as an extended arm of law and order; and remain an influential man of the underground order. Without a doubt, he and his brothers concede to law and order as reflected by their discourse of "sik nou", accepting it as a means for conflict resolution. However, it remains a positive story for those who were underprivileged to make their living in the new order.

Pang compared the series with *Too Many Ways to be Number One* (1997), another crime film covering the gang members who end up sacrificing much in their way to be at the top of the ladder in the underground society. That film ended up with just over 3 million Hong Kong dollar box office, only one-seventh of the first episode of the *Young and Dangerous* series. *Too Many Ways to be Number One*, a story divided into two parts that, based on the decision that Ah Kau decided to flee to China and Taiwan after failing a mission, he is either killed by the Chinese Army or earned himself the position of godfather with his limbs permanently handicapped. Pang suggested the film showed a strong sense of anxiety showing masculinity in crisis facing the new socioeconomic order. She was right to say that "the film [the *Young and Dangerous* series] offer them a way out of the existing socio-political despair" (2002:331). *Young and Dangerous* series found its middle way, on one hand, acknowledges the established law and order and on the other hand, upholds some moral values with the maintenance of underground order. In my opinion, what the *Young and Dangerous* series establishes is a fantastic figure of an opportunistic man⁽²¹⁾ – that can be found so many similar character development in Stephen Chow Sing-chi's films and the *God of Gambler* series in the 1990s. However, these popcorn movies, for Hong Kong people facing anxiety, draws a line of psychological defence, as much as a fantasy, ability to retreat to underground order that is deeply local and private, and meanwhile extract benefit from global capitalism on the surface. This kind of split "underground" and depoliticised identity only become problematized again in the *Infernal Affairs* series, in a philosophical way (see Law 2006).

The influence of the figure of an opportunistic man is profound and predictable as prescribed by the "One Country, Two Systems" experiment. It is closely related to a constitutional debate over "residual power" in postcolonial Hong Kong, on those rights not stated in the Basic Law, who, Hong Kong or China, has the final say over them. Before the imposition of Hong Kong national security law, despite the multiple times interpretations from the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPCSC) over the Basic Law, the promise of a high level of autonomy seemed to keep the residual power on the Hong Kong side. However, in Zhang and Meng's article in 2010, this fantasy is refuted from a constitutional point of view. In the article, they said that "residual powers" does not exist anyhow. Instead, these rights undefined are to be and can only be defined

and endorsed by the Chinese Government, with the use of “remaining original power”⁽²²⁾ (2010:7). In this sense, I would suppose that the figure of opportunistic man, who can wisely transverse between two modes of order as an art of the weak, only ceased to exist after the 2010s.

The combination of opportunistic man alongside the strengthening law and order can also be traced back to the changing conceptualisation of *jianghu* after it was revitalized by new *wuxia* novel writers like Jin Yong and Gu Long in the 1960s and 1970s. The transformation can be traced back to Jin Yong’s last genre-breaking *wuxia* novel, *The Deer and the Cauldron*⁽²³⁾. The novel can be read as one of the earlier works that explored the interaction between *jianghu* orders and imperial order in a collision, with an opportunistic hero manoeuvring himself as a double spy. *The Deer and the Cauldron*, rather than other *wuxia* classics, paved the way for *jianghu* to transplant itself into the urban context of Hong Kong (with efficient legal enforcement in effect), as represented in various crime films during the transition period. This novel and the *Young and Dangerous* series can be thought of as the forerunner of showing a new *jianghu*, in a world when swords meet guns, moral negotiations meet legal dictation. The centrality of law and order in postcolonial Hong Kong cinema should be put under greater scrutiny.

In this article, the relationship between transnational networks and territorially confined underground order is understated. Returning to *The Deer and the Cauldron*, the diasporic quality of Wei Xiaobao⁽²⁴⁾, whose mother is a prostitute and father unknown, further complicates *jianghu* constituted by the parallel of the communal (sometimes underground) network of overseas Chinese or *Huaqiao*; with law and order in the host country and home country. In *Young and Dangerous 2*, Saan Gai fled to Taiwan for survival. It provides another trajectory for readers to understand the relationship between mobility and territoriality in both Taiwan and Hong Kong, as well as other areas in which a considerable number of overseas Chinese resides.

The Balkans area, as an opposite example to the place in which law and order can formally be established, could serve as a resource for us to explore deeper into law and order and informality in general. The unbroken series of consecutive crises spanned over the 1990s in the Balkan region. In Darque’s work, several points are worth mentioning. Firstly, the crisis became a semi-permanent system, leading to the people’s distrust and “‘withdrawal’ from official politico-territorial arena” (2019:186). Secondly, national heroes with troubled personal backgrounds are more perceived as banditry, rather than criminality (189), in which law and order cannot establish its moral authority in competition with these heroes. Weak states absorbed alternative codes of conduct instead that led to the loss of transgressing dimension for criminality. Thirdly, contrary to the territorial control within the nation-state in common conception, “territorial perimeters” were set according to the “political authority on the hierarchy of violence.” (190). The relationship between law and order and *jianghu* can reflect on the matters of banditry, crisis and strictly geographical sense of territorial control, contributing to the sociological and geographical reading of the formation of legal consciousness in literary and cinematic works in the future.

Notes:

- (1) Wan called the years between 1984 and 1997 “the period of decolonization” (2015:162). It is a debatable periodization term. This paper will stick to a more neutral term “transition period” to better express the changes without appealing to any notions of political liberation and emancipation.
- (2) The way that Hong Kong people experience Cultural Revolution requires extra description. On 7th May 1967, the official newspaper *People's Daily* or *Renmin Ribao* 人民日報 called for resistance against the colonial government, under the name of “anti-British and anti-violence” (*fanying kangbao* 反英抗暴), within the Hong Kong territory. This call brewed as the riot in 1968 (see Cheung 2010). Apart from direct influences, the experience of seeing floating corpses who were the mainlanders desperately fled to Hong Kong but unfortunately drowned in exhaustion taking the sea (see 李 2018). My father, who fled to Hong Kong by swimming across the Shenzhen River next to Lingding Channel 伶仃洋, had a sister who fled to Hong Kong in the 1950s. Based on the immigration policy back then, my aunt held the identity card issued by the colonial government that adopted inclusionary practices for those who had arrived in Hong Kong (see Ku 2004). The majority of Hong Kong Chinese migrants, who were refugees, had a family connection in China also had first-hand experience on how Cultural Revolution unfolded and was perceived in Hong Kong.
- (3) The series was adapted from *Teddy Boy*, or in transliteration *Goowakzai* 古惑仔. It is a local comic magazine which has been published every Monday and Thursday since 1992. However, except for the first episode, which adheres closely to the original comic plot, the rest of the episodes in the series are only loosely based on the same world.
- (4) 梟雄片 in Chinese, or accomplished villains in English. It relates to another theme that is closely related to law and order and the reconfiguration of *jianghu* 江湖 in Hong Kong cinema after the late 1980s. It will be discussed in future.
- (5) Stanley Ho Hung-sun is commonly regarded as a legend in Macau. However, he was born in Hong Kong in 1921. The movie remade his legend that he fled to Macau after the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong in 1941.
- (6) 俠客 in Chinese.
- (7) Contrary to previous Big Timers, weak heroes were supposed to be understood by their similarity with protagonists in other popcorn movies like Stephen Chow Sing-chi's comedies or the God of Gamblers series, in which protagonists were at the beginning an underdog. The movies were then considered as a self-made legend of the characters.
- (8) By using the word “intervention”, it is intended to avoid the implications of moral sentiments or just laws.
- (9) *Young and Dangerous 2* is a story about Saan Gai taking refuge in San Luen Group in Taiwan. Although there are some local scenes of Hong Kong, this article excludes the second episode for brevity and clarity.
- (10) Ugly Kwan is the antagonist who competes for the next chairman in Hung Hing Gang. He ruthlessly kills Uncle Bee, who loyally supported the incumbent chairman Chiang Tin-seng. He also set Chan Ho-nam up, which led to his expulsion by tricking Chan into having intercourse with Saan Gai's girlfriend by feeding him aphrodisiac – considered as a major breach of gang code.
- (11) All crime officers can register for their personal pistol, rather than taking it from the gun distribution every day they report duty. To a certain extent, it is a prestige for police officers to hold personal firearms.
- (12) OCTB refers to Organized Crime and Triad Bureau.
- (13) 花炮會 in Chinese. Historically fa pau means bundles of firecrackers. After multiple riots in the 1960s, especially using gunpowder in firecrackers to make improvised explosive devices, fireworks and firecrackers were banned ever since. The fa pau raffle is still organized in some festivals in Hong Kong, like 天后誕 Mazu Festival, without firecrackers. For gangsters, fa pau

raffles became auction banquets praying for prosperity, as well as community building in Hong Kong.

- (14) Their distinctions and conflicts can also be understood with “universal jurisdiction” (Orford 2009), in which the nominal jurisdiction covers the world as a whole, but practical jurisdiction was limited to the nation-state. Orford stated that in the Holy Roman Empire, the jurisdiction by definition covered the world provided by divine right. In modern times, remarkably Spanish law still uphold universal jurisdiction to a certain extent. For war crimes, universal jurisdiction (both in nominal and practical sense) also earns general agreements under the coordination of the United Nations. Besides, the recent National Security Law proposed by the Chinese government over Hong Kong was also said to be exercising universal jurisdiction.
- (15) 地頭 and 環頭 in Cantonese. The distinction between the two words and their actual references have a close cultural relationship with Hong Kong history. Superintendent Lee used “Dei Tau (地頭)” and “Wan Tau (環頭)” to signify their overlapping locale in control. He deliberately uses two words to signify the same locale in two different senses. The former one entails two meanings: on one hand, it refers to the edge of the field. It is a unit of tax measurement of agricultural land dated back to the Tang Dynasty. On the other hand, its derivative colloquial expressions, like “Dei Tau Chong (地頭蟲, bugs in Dei Tau)” or “Dei Dam (地膽, guts in Dei Tau)”, also indicate the adjectival meaning as “connecting with the local community”. “Wan (環, literally ring)” refers to the early colonial administrative district division of the City of Victoria. City of Victoria was *de facto* the capital of Hong Kong before the sovereignty handover. Although this name had not been officially scrapped under colonial governance, it was not frequently mentioned in daily lives, as well as official documents. It was situated in the northern part of Hong Kong Island, including Kennedy Town, Sheung Wan, Central and part of Wanchai – that is based on the geography of early colonial Hong Kong when reclamation projects were still not the major way to make new lands. The entire City administratively comprised nine Yeuks in four Wans (四環九約). The past meaning of “Wai Tau” (literally the head of wan) only describes those police stations in four Wans, i.e. the downtown area. Police stations in all other districts are described as “Wan Mei” (literally as the tail of wan) (see 黃棟才 2012). Wan retains its colloquial use although it has been replaced by other new patterns of administrative divisions, e.g. the current system of the 18 administrative districts that is in effect nowadays. “Wan Tau” is still a very popular jargon among the police force. It can mean either “police stations” or “police districts”. Due to the popularity of gangster and police genre films, it is also known by the general public.
- (16) Wanchai district is arguably one of the most lucrative areas for gangs. Lockhart Road 駱克道 is a famous red-light district despite the heavy restriction on soliciting sex services. It is also an unofficial terminal for unregulated red minibuses on Hong Kong island. Gangs are well-known to collect a large sum of protection rackets from minibus drivers. Red minibuses are usually running at small hours when other transportations were unavailable. They usually run on long-distance routes, with no fixed bus stops, at fluctuating rates, providing flexible and convenient means of travel for those who are willing to pay more.
- (17) He used a Cantonese phrase 打亂種. It is an old and derogative term to describe mixed-race, second-generation Chinese.
- (18) 食腦 in Cantonese. It literally means “eating brain”. It is a colloquial slang used in Hong Kong, referring to the means of living not relying on physical strength, but thinking in general.
- (19) 特種行業 in Chinese, also known as 偏門行業. Pin-mun (偏門) literally means door at the sides of a building. It is synonymous with Pong-mun (旁門). The metaphor of door is widely used in Chinese colloquial to represent the access to various kinds of business, mastery of skills, or general ways of living, like Shi-mun 師門, i.e. getting into the door of a master and being his disciple. Pin-mun refers to improper and defiled ways of living. Its precise meaning is highly dependent on different feudal traditions and media discourses. This customary discrimination is not “modernised”. For example, in Japan, families with *Burakumin* (部落民) ancestry have

been excluded since feudal eras. Despite modernisation, their employment and marriage are restricted. The de-stigmatization is still ongoing. It is, therefore, their survival depended on some unpopular businesses, for example, slaughterhouses. Their lives also depended considerably on the Japanese counterpart of the so-called underground society, *Gokudou* (極道).

In China, similar customary discrimination is based more on their occupations. The widely known means to categorise various occupations and their corresponding social status is called “Nine streams”(九流). Their composition is also called *jianghu* (江湖). There are three levels of streams. The upper streams (上三流) is the official stream. People earning a living in the middle streams can also be regarded as decent. The lower streams (下三流) is less respected occupations. It is worth mentioning that there is no agreement on which jobs belong to which stream (see 金老佛 1990). However, despite modernisation, several occupations related to sex, gambling and entertainment are still generally regarded as morally inferior. The interaction between colonial governance and local moral laws are not discussed in this article. However, moral laws are usually the major friction for colonial policies to implement.

(20) Law and order, to put it more clearly in this sentence, means the legal consciousness that law enforcement is inevitable in everyday gang function.

(21) My use of “opportunistic man” entails no derogative evaluation. Instead, it is used to avoid terms like “hero” or “anti-hero”, that carry no analytic significance in defining its distinction.

(22) This article followed the translation in the article quoted. Their original Chinese words are residual powers 剩餘權力; and remaining original power 保留性的本源權力, respectively.

(23) 鹿鼎記 in Chinese. It is interesting to mention that Wong Jing, a film director and producer famous for its commercialism and slickness; and Stephen Chow Shing-chi, the most famous comedian actor back in the 1990s and early 2000s, adapted the novel into the *Royal Tramp* series (comprising two episodes released in 1992).

(24) 韋小寶 in Chinese.

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