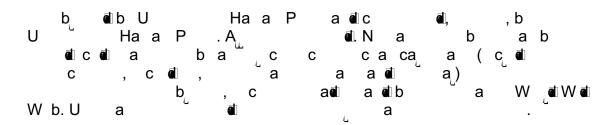
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Sheldon H. Lu and Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh, eds./Chinese-Language Film



identity, and citizenship. There are also transnational Chinese-language films that are not made in and by the Chinese state. Rather, they are funded by a variety of external sources and mainly circulate in international film markets. Thus, Chinese-language cinema is a more comprehensive term that covers all the local, national, regional, transnational, diasporic, and global cinemas relating to the Chinese language. The nonequivalence and asymmetry between language and nation bespeaks continuity and unity as well as rupture and fragmentation in the body politic and cultural affiliations among ethnic Chinese in the modern world.

At this juncture, it is helpful to revisit Benedict Anderson's seminal formulation of the idea of nationhood as an "imagined community." Anderson emphasizes the importance of language in the origin and spread of nationalism. For him, "print-languages laid the bases for national consciousness." If print-languages played a crucial role in the formative period of nationalism historically, the importance of the cinema in the maintenance and reinvention of nationhood cannot be underestimated since the beginning of the twentieth century. Nationhood/nationalism must be perpetually reinvented as time goes by long after its

an artful combination of images, symbols, sound, and performance. The nationstate is thus performed, staged, represented, and narrated afresh in a film each time.

Second, the issue of language or languages in film is particularly significant. Chinese-language users, along with Chinese-language films, cover vast networks, stretching from mainland China to Taiwan, which wavers between a nation-state and a "renegade province," to the special administrative regions (SARs) of postcolonial Hong Kong and Macau, the independent city-state Singapore, large Chinese populations in Southeast Asia (Malaysia and so forth), Asian-American communities in the United States, and Chinese immigrants throughout the entire world.

If language is in part what lends unity to the Chinese nation-state and more broadly to a sense of Chineseness among the diasporic populations, it is also a force fraught with tension and contention. As we know, Mandarin, the Beijing dialect (, , , , or , , , , , , , , , a), has been designated as the official language and dialect by the state (both the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China), but numerous Chinese dialects are spoken by Chinese nationals inside China as well as by immigrants outside China. The different dialects constitute distinct speech genres, as it were, and exist in a state of polyglossia. Sometimes they engage in Bakhtinian dialogic exchanges in a lively, noisy, and yet peaceful atmosphere; but oftentimes they fail to achieve the desired effect of rational, intersubjective, communicative speech acts in a Habermasian fashion. Both past history and contemporary cultural production have continuously testified to the linguistic hierarchy and social discrimination embedded in Chinese cinema and society. Remember the banning of Cantonese-language films under the Nationalist Party (Guomindang) in the Republican era for the sake of national and linguistic unity. Or recall the depiction of reverse discrimination in recent Hong , , 1997) by Kong films, for instance, C_{ij} ade, AI_{ij} , aL_{ij} e S_{ij} , $(T_{ij}a_{ij})$ Peter Chan, where Mandarin speakers are stigmatized in Hong Kong society. Or in Wong Kar-wai's $I = e M_+ d_+$, $L_+ e (H_+ a a_+, L_+ a_-)$, a, 2000), the Shanghainese dialect evokes a warm nostalgia for a close-knit linguistic community consisting of émigrés living in Hong Kong in a bygone era. The use of local dialects (Sichuanese, northern Shaanxi dialect, and so forth) in numerous mainland films, especially the country films, aims at achieving multiple ends: comedic effects of defamiliarization and refamiliarization, regional flavor, and, no less important, the ever-expanding and changing definition of China and the Chinese people. Dialects and accents create both intimacy and distance onscreen for the characters in the film as well as offscreen among the audience. In such a manner, filmic discourse attempts to articulate again and again a national self-definition in relation to the linguistic, dialectal, ethnic, and religious others. The adoption of particular languages, dialects, and idiolects in film belongs to

the procedures of inclusion and exclusion in the imagining of a national community. Hence, Chinese language is at once a centrifugal and centripetal force in the nation-building process. In the least, language helps forge a fluid, deterritorialized, pan-Chinese identity among Chinese speakers across national boundaries.

Chinese-language film, or "Sinophone film," is yet to be distinguished from varieties of postcolonial cinemas—for instance, Francophone cinema, or Anglophone cinema. The scattering of Chinese-language speakers around the globe is by and large not the result of the historical colonization of indigenous peoples of the Southern hemisphere and the consequent imposition of colonizers' languages on them, as in the case of the former colonies of France. Nor is the Chinese language in the position of a hegemonic language, the lingua franca of international business, world politics, tourism, as in the case of English in contemporary time. To a great extent, Chinese-language cinema is the result of the migration of Chinese-dialect speakers around the world. This is not to say that China was historically exempt from imperialism and colonialism and is currently free from their aftereffects. Part of China proper, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau

alects around the world have been mostly ethnic Chinese rather than indigenous peoples who were forced or inculcated to speak the language of external colonizers. Fissures and dissent often stem from situations related to inter-Chinese linguistic and dialectal priority and hierarchy. Communication frequently breaks down and speech acts turn quarrelsome between different dialectal regions from within mainland China, and, despite a common "mother tongue," one often hears a profusion of sound and fury from the noisy isles of Taiwan and Hong Kong as their citizens strive to maintain a distinct sense of community vis à vis the traditional political hegemony of the mainland.

It appears that the function of language in relation to the nation-state and identity-formation in Sinophone cinema has been manifested in several important ways. In the first type, language, dialects, and accents are coterminous with the realm of the nation-state. They may serve the interests of the nation or be used as critiques of the nation. In either case,

specifically politicized, humanist film. At the same time, the local dialect augments the regional flavor of the setting, serves as a stylistic ornamentation, and builds a sense of rural innocence in a Chinese province.

The second type of films refers to those films in which the use of dialects reaches below and beneath the level of the national, fortifies a strong feeling of regionalism, and articulates an ambivalent relationship with the discourse of the nation-state. Fukienese and Cantonese films and television dramas in Taiwan and Hong Kong often assert a distinct regional identity versus the historical and present domination of Mandarin and the mainland. In the case of Taiwanese-language films, there has been a historical resentment against the past oppression of the Mandarin-speaking Guomindang, and currently there is the fear of a mainland Chinese takeover. In the case of Hong Kong, the century-long British colonial rule coupled with the Cantonese dialect has created a culture that is distinct from the motherland.

G. Sad e. is a supreme example of regionalism and multiple languages in Sinophone cinema. There is a plethora of dialects in the film—Mandarin, Fukienese, Hakka, Shanghainese, and Japanese—each coming out the life-world of specific communities and expressing different cultural identities and political convictions. Most extraordinary of all is Lin Wen-ch'ing (Tony Leung Chiuwai), the deaf-mute photographer. His inability to speak means his refusal to accept any definitive word and official verdict on a series of events in Taiwanese history—Japanese occupation, the Guomindang takeover, the February 28 Incident, and the White Terror that persisted in the following decades. As a photographer, he documents history in his own quietly perceptive manner with the camera's eye.

A third function of language and dialects in cinema is that filmic discourse expands above and beyond the level of the national to create a fluid, deterritorialized, global, pan-Chinese identity. Although the setting may be somewhere in China, the film itself does not engage specifically geopolitical considerations. This is especially true of certain film genres, such as martial arts and action. These films tend to project a generalized abstract sense of Chineseness and make China into a cultural marker that manifests itself in martial arts, swordplay, kung-fu, cuisine, oriental philosophy, and so on. The political allegory of the nation largely disappears, and the values of foreign culture, entertainment, exoticism, and world tourism are high on the silver screen, all heartened to secure a greater share of the regional, as well as global, film market.

Such examples include Ang Lee's C_1 , C_2 , C_3 , C_4 , C_4 , C_4 , C_4 , C_4 , C_4 , C_5 , C_6 , C_6 , C_7

cause they are supposed to portray characters from a particular region of China. Although this appears laughable and improbable for audiences in mainland China and Taiwan, it does not matter for international audiences who watch the film through subtitles. The non-Chinese viewers could enjoy the spectacular scenery, incredible action choreography, and marvelous legends as they spend time learning about a depoliticized "cultural China" set in the past.

The three functions of languages and dialects as outlined above are heuristic guides rather than absolute categories. Sometimes the dominant dialectal function in a given Chinese-language film may change from viewer to viewer, or more than one function may coexist in a viewing experience. For instance, a film such as Wong Kar-wai's $I_{--} e M_{--} d_{--} L_{--} e$ could mean different things for different viewers in a rather personal way. Hong Kong residents, Shanghainese immigrants, Chinese citizens, and international audiences could relate to the themes and experiences of immigration, love, memory, nostalgia, and cultural identity in their own meaningful manners.

Stylistically, the predominant use of local dialects in contemporary Chinese art cinema has helped create an immediacy and a raw quality in the texture of the films. Here are some examples that have gained visibility an 037.2243 0 TDs in a rthe filmern IT* al audiency 10.1sa

into an important branch of cinema studies. Ironically, just as film studies is defining its geographic borders and theoretical perimeters, the forces of globalization have forced film scholars to reexamine their assumptions and practices. Border crossing and transnationalism have been part of the film medium from the beginning, because film itself is a truly international technology. Nevertheless, these tendencies have intensified in the post–cold war era. The kinds of phenomena that critics of Asian film witness and describe are also evident in other cinematic traditions. Thus, a critic writes about the difficulty of establish-

film genres, forms, and directors. More often than not, these various lines of thought are intricately interlocked with each other, as many of the chapters contained here convincingly demonstrate. Although we have divided the chapters according to the three major categories represented by the parts of the volume, in fact, the individual chapters grouped in one part frequently address issues in the other part of the volume.

Part I: Historiography, Periodization, Trends

films survived and flourished in the remote island of Hong Kong in the years that followed.

With the demise of martial arts film and the death of the symbolic old China, film culture was dictated by the tastes and viewing habits of the modernizing urbanites in metropolises such as Shanghai in the republican era (1911–1949). Film gave rise to a new urban culture, an alternative public sphere based on the sensory-reflexive experiences of modernity, and became a Chinese/Shanghainese version of "vernacular modernism." In the words of Miriam Hansen, "Shanghai cinema of the 1920s and 30s represents a distinct brand of vernacular modernism, one that evolved in a complex relation to American—and other foreign—models while drawing on and transforming Chinese traditions in theater, literature, graphic, and print culture, both modernist and popular. I think this case can be made at several levels: the thematic concerns of the films; their mise-

film and give true expression to Taiwanese history and reality. Yet, in the eyes of a younger generation of Taiwanese directors, it is time to go beyond Hou's idio-syncrasies and mannerisms. Gone are the personal quest for and collective reconstruction of the local/national history of Taiwan, the nostalgia for the idyllic past, and anguished reflection on the fate of an entire people. Wu tackles the film art of Tsai Ming-liang and Lin Cheng-sheng as representative of a new spirit in Taiwanese cinema. Now the camera focuses on the existential absurdities of private individuals and the malaise of urban daily life in contemporary, postmodern cities of Taiwan. The rituals and routines of everyman and everywoman are depicted in painful minute details without being assimilated to some higher national pathos.

The transition between generations of filmmakers in the mainland is not so different from the situation in Taiwan. The mythic grand tales of China as spun by the giants of previous generations have given way to the emergence of new "post-fifth generation directors" (, , d , da da a). Likewise, the disorienting feelings and fragmentary experiences of ordinary folks in the contemporary Chinese city find expression in numerous films. Shuqin Cui tackles the politics of naming and labeling in a controversial area, that of Chinese independent directors in the 1990s. Terms such as "independent," "underground," "experimental," and "nonofficial/nonmainstream" reveal ideological perspectives from which one approaches a corpus of films and a group of directors. Urban space and city life, the personal and subjective, the artist-self, and descriptions of youthful, emerging sexuality all find their way into the work of a new generation of directors. They are distinguished from the so-called fifth generation that emerged in the 1980s.

Sheldon H. Lu dissects a slice of Chinese film culture at the end of the twentieth century by examining the film N. O, e Le, by Zhang Yimou, the most active and visible figure from the fifth generation. This chapter studies the sociology of the Chinese film industry — audiences, box-sales figures, and popular attitudes, as well as the international politics of film festivals. Furthermore, it points to the ways in which the old rural themes in Zhang's previous work stubbornly persist in his new films while numerous Chinese citizens are already enmeshed in the midst of messy, dizzying urban lives and are caught in the throes and exhilarations of global postmodernization. 1

Part II: Poetics, Directors, Styles

Film is an international technology, yet each national cinematic tradition draws on its own artistic legacies for inspiration and innovation. The fruitful tension between the national and the international, between indigenous forces and Euro-American conventions, animates the growth and development of Chinese cinemas. In this section, some chapters provide lucid, synchronic, structural(ist), transhistorical accounts of the poetics and aesthetics of Chinese film as an integral part of world cinema. Still other chapters explore directorial styles in social and historical specificity.

As David Bordwell's illuminating chapter shows, the cinemas of China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong can be understood in the context of international film style. And this style, as Bordwell suggests, is rooted in three cinematic patterns—continuity editing, planimetric composition, and the long take. In this regard, Chinese filmmaking is perhaps not so diff

en-scène, and milieu. Luk traces the literary inspirations for the film, a 1972 nostalgic novella T, e-B, c, e, $(I_1, e_2, ec_{r_1, r_2})$, a tale by celebrated Hong Kong writer Liu Yichang and S_{r_1, r_2, r_3} , a double-suicide love story by Japanese writer Komatsu Sakyo. Luk argues that the film's sharp departure from the novels indicates Wong's reinvention of memory through anxiety about the future of Hong Kong. The realm of fantasy, desire, love, and psychic repression is ultimately linked to the

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Part III: Politics, Nationhood, Globalization

In the development and fine-tuning of distinct film styles and poetics, imaginary representations of identity, nationality, and citizenship loom large in cinematic discourses. The interpellation, or "hailing," of individuals as subjects for the goal of nation-building and modernization is a constant endeavor among China's policy makers, the intellectual elite, and public opinion throughout the twentieth century (through censorship, state ownership of film studios, and so on). The boundaries of nationhood and citizenship can be more effectively maintained and policed within the Chinese nation-state, be it Republican China or the PRC.

But the problem of identity formation has been complicated by the historical conditions of Taiwan and Hong Kong as ex-Japanese and ex-British colonies, as outlying islands far from the geopolitical center of China, and as places inhabited by people who speak Hokkien (also known as Fukienese), Hakka, and Cantonese, dialects incomprehensible to the ears of Mandarin speakers. As a result,

cinema, Desser confronts issues of nationalism and masculine cultural pride in Hong Kong cinema head-on. Ultimately, the global reception of Chinese cinema cannot be understood without accounting for its emergence from under the tutelage, and condescension, of Western eyes.

The cultural politics of mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong is intensified by global developments after the end of the cold war as well as the return of Hong Kong to mainland China. Large numbers of Hong Kong residents (many of whom are Chinese nationals) find themselves in the traffic of cross-national travel. Sheldon Lu examines Hong Kong diaspora film from the mid-1980s to the handover. He pinpoints a paradigm change in the representation of place, self, and nationality in this film genre. It is a shift from the pathos of the nation-state (the "China syndrome," "exile complex," "persecution complex") to a discourse of flexible citizenship and transnationality. Moreover, he analyzes the emergence of a new type of "transnational TV drama," a joint CBS—Hong Kong coproduction, $Ma_{s,\gamma}$ a $La_{s,\gamma}$. Diaspora as typified by Hong Kong residents and portrayed in Hong Kong films, as well as international collaborations involving Hong Kong film artists, indicates a decentered, deterritorialized, and fluid mechanism of identity formation, a sense of being-in-mobility.

Chu Yiu Wai begins where Sheldon Lu stops, by focusing on Hong Kong films from the posthandover, postcolonial period. He explores the formation of local identity in cinematic representation. Even in those films that purport to reenact Hong Kong's local history, Chu argues that the reconstructed Hong Kong identity remains impure, "inauthentic," unstable, plural, and mixed. The local, the national, and global all meet in the dialogic space of the filmic text.

As an independent, autonomous city-state since 1965, Singapore lies outside the territorial boundary of the Chinese nation, yet the island country's population is predominantly ethnic Chinese. Although English, Mandarin, Malay/ Bahasa, and Tamil are the designated official languages, Singlish (Singaporean English) and a variety of Chinese dialects are spoken by the people on a daily basis: Hokkien, Cantonese, and Shanghainese. Gina Marchetti's chapter examines the Chinese-language and hybrid-language films of the Singaporean director Eric Khoo. While Khoo's films usher in an emergent Singaporean national cinema, at the same time they partake of a nexus of transnational Chinese-language film culture. Marchetti points out a central tension in the political and cultural imaginary of Singapore. On the one hand, Singapore is a postcolonial hybrid culture, a thriving port city that functions as one of the busiest transit points in the transnational flows of ships, capital, commodity, and labor. On the other hand, it is engaged in the earnest business of nation-building and the formation of a Confucian, orderly, clean model state. Such a basic contradiction in Singapore's politics is manifested in filmic discourse.

In regard to Khoo's films, as well as Ang Lee's C_{j} , C_{j} ,

Cannes. Hong Kong director Wong Kar-wai's film $I_1 \ldots e M_1 d_2 \ldots L_1 e$ was voted the number one film in the $V_1 H_1 e V_2 ce$ poll, and Tony Leung Chiu-wai, the lead actor in the film, received the best actor award at the Cannes Film Festival. As a classic example of transnational as well as global cinema, $C_1 \ldots C_1 \ldots$

Ang Lee's example prompted his friend and competitor Zhang Yimou to cre-

relationship between cinema and nation, to observe the imaging and imaginary formation of the nation-state, nationality, and nationalism on screen, and to reexamine the construction as well as deconstruction of national identity in filmic discourse.²² The existence of Chinese-language cinema outside the boundaries of the Chinese nation-state once more calls into question the old paradigm of "national cinema." On a lighter note, after a full century of evolution and innovation, Chinese-language films have given more than enough guilty and legitimate pleasures to a variety of film fans from around the world. Furthermore, they have presented and will continue to present plenty of opportunities for film scholars to challenge their critical assumptions and expand their intellectual horizons.

Notes

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1. Benedict Anderson, I = a_{j,i} edC_{j,i,j} e: Re_{j,i,i} eC_{j,i,i} = eC_{j,i,i} = a_{j}dS_{j} ead_{j}
Na_{j,i,i} = a_{j}i, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 44.
atios. aNd(N)&(ri2tidAxisobdihav)%(e1780:,)-19(Pc)15rcegramm(e,)-76(MN)3(y,)-1[(te,)-76((R)24(nalit)-42(y)]TJ/F61Tf)24220390TD
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evrslite Nosambaridges and Mark Milities of the C 174);;e

9. Chris Berry, ed., Pe_j , $ec_j \mid e_{j+1} \mid C_j \mid e \mid e \mid G_j \mid e \mid a$ (London: British Film Institute, 1991).

10. Nick Browne, Paul G. Pickowicz, Vivian Sobchack, Esther Yau, eds, $Ne_i C_j e$ e $C_j e$ $a:F_j$, $J_i de_j$, e, $P_i J_j c$ (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). For a review and critique of this book, see Yeh Yueh-yu, "Defining 'Chinese,'" J_i C_i 42 (1998): 73–76.

11. Sheldon H. Lu, ed., $T_i a_i = a_i C_{ij} = e_i C_{i$

12. See John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson, eds., $T e Q = d G_1 d e_1 = F_1 i_2 S_2 d_3 e_4$ (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). The section on world cinema is later reprinted as a separate volume, also edited by Hill and Gibson, titled $W_1 = d C_1 = a$: $C_1 = a$: $C_2 = a$: $C_3 = a$: $C_4 = a$:

14. Ginette Vincendeau, "Issues in European Cinema," in John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson, eds., W, if C_i , e a: C_i , ca iA . , ac e (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 58-59.

15. For previous studies of indigenous Chinese traditions in English, see Wai-fong Loh, "From Romantic Love to Class Struggle: Reflections on the Film L_{j} , Sa_{j} , e," in Bonnie McDougall, ed., P_{j} , A_{j} , C_{j} , e, e, C_{j} , e, e, A_{j} , e, A_{j} , A_{j} ,

 $C_{j,i}$ a, 1949. 1979 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 165–176; Gina Marchetti, " $T_{j,i}$ S_i g_i e S_j , e_j .: The Blossoming of a Revolutionary Aesthetic," in Lu, ed., T_i a_j , a_j

17. Miriam Bratu Hansen, "Fallen Women, Rising Stars, New Horizons: Shanghai Silent Film as Vernacular Modernism," *F. J. Q. a. e. J.* 54.1 (2000): 13.

18. Zhang Yuan has been regarded as one of the most prominent directors from the post–fifth generation. For critical studies of his work, see Chris Berry, "Staging Gay Life in China: Ea, Pance, We, Pance," J. C. 42 (1998): 84–89; Zhang Zhen, "Zhang Yuan," in Yvonne Tasker, ed., F, C., e, a, F, I, a, e, (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 418–429. Jenny Kwok Wah Lau offers a useful broad discussion of this new generation of filmmakers in "Globalization and Youthful Subculture: The Chinese Sixth-Generation Films at the Dawn of the New Century," in Jenny Kwok Wah Lau, ed., M, F, EM, de, J, e, C, e, a, a, de, a, de, a, a (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 13–27.

19. For a comprehensive mapping of the cultural landscape of China in the late-twentieth century, as well as discussions of the interrelations of postmodernism and visual culture, see Sheldon H. Lu, C_{11} , a_1 , C_{12} , a_2 , a_3 , a_4 ,

21. We owe Stanley Rosen at the University of Southern California for the information and insight expressed in this paragraph. See his unpublished essay "Hollywood, Globalization and Film Markets in Asia: Lessons for China?"

22. Some informative studies of the interrelations of film and nation from global perspectives have been published recently. See, for example, Mette Hjort and Scott MacKenzie, eds., C_{j} , e a a d Na_{j+1} (London: Routledge, 2000); Alan Williams, ed., F_{j} , i a d Na_{j+1} a d. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2002).