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THIS AND THAT 10

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VOLUME 10

THIS AND THAT
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COLLEGE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION
HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

Each year through the student societies, students from Cultural Studies (CULS) and Professional Communication and English Studies (PENG) form a team to vet and edit student essays and creative work submitted to *This and That*. The Journal celebrates the College of International Education's writing talent. It is headed and produced by lecturers at CIE.

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Foreword

This and That was one of my most memorable experiences with HKBU CIE. Being in the role of Editor-in-Chief, I got the chance to read the impeccable works of my fellow students. This journal is a collection of works from incredible minds, a shining example of their hard work and achievements. I always find myself going back to read them to find inspiration. I hope that in this volume of *This and That* you can experience the same as well. All the best to the editors and contributors of *This and That* vol. 10!

Tayyeba

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TO LOCH HAU NITOLAH

KONG HONG KONG HONG

YouTubers as a Simulacrum of False Reality

Leung Wing Man, Winnie

With the continuous development of media, traditional media has been replaced by new media as the mainstream media in the present day. YouTube is a representative of mainstream media that provides diverse entertainment to us. Due to the growth of K-pop culture, everything about Korea attracts people's attention and becomes the latest trend. Thus, a bunch of Hong Kong YouTubers of different channels living in Korea start to get more attention from more audiences. Their videos usually contain three elements: documenting daily life in Korea, sharing the latest trends in Korea, and publicizing Korean cosmetic products. What they have in common is that they use vlogging as a medium to show their lives. Through their videos, the audience is not only able to keep up with the latest trends, but they can also simulate their own lives in Korea through the cameras of YouTubers. The contents they represented are a hyperreality. The Korea under the camera is not the real or the whole of Korea, it is only a part of Korea. The audience loves to watch the vlog produced by this group of YouTubers as they are unable to live in Korea but they are able to simulate that they are living in Korea, immersing themselves through the videos. Simultaneously, we can see that they all have different ways of building their images and personalities, the audience will choose to follow a YouTuber that they think is more authentic. By using the idea of Jean Baudrillard - when the simulation has become more real than reality itself, people

will consume the representation of reality, rather than reality, as the hyperreality is more compelling, seductive, and pervasive than the real.

Firstly, YouTubers commoditize themselves. When they advertise their products, they also advertise their image. This can be explained through the idea of influencers as a simulacrum. When advertisers advertise on YouTube, they need to find a specific YouTuber whose image and positioning as well as audience needs to match the potential customers targeted by the commodity. YouTubers need to establish a favourable image with their videos in order to attract more people to watch their videos, and when they have the traffic and influence, advertisers will consider partnering with them to promote their products. Simultaneously, YouTubers are able to generate their own images and appearances through their videos. For this group of YouTubers, they will utilize the Q&A function on Instagram to interact with their audience, collecting their curiosity or questions and answering them through the video. The audience often questions about private life or the views on certain things of those YouTubers. YouTubers are able to reflect their generated images and personalities through the questions of their audience indirectly. YouTubers, as a simulacrum, have already been removed from their original selves in their videos. What they represent to the audience is meticulously planned. In their videos, they often use placement marketing to promote the products, which is different from traditional product placement. Their product placement approach is more penetrating and flexible, which is easy to be accepted by the audience. At the same time, they will create various scenarios to highlight the products. Creating different scenarios means that they need to present

different images and representations to advertise the products. They will incorporate the products they market into their daily lives and highlight the effectiveness of the products through real-life tests. Because it is more accessible to the audiences, the YouTuber's placement can naturally run through the entire video without offending the audience, thus presenting a continuous stream of images, representations, and appearances.

Secondly, according to Baudrillard, hyperreality is a stage that is able to be experienced as more real than the real itself (Storey, 2009, 187). When the simulation becomes more appealing than reality, people will consume the simulation more than the real. The audience will consume different representations of YouTubers to suit their own particular preference as they do not get to experience the documented lives of the YouTubers. The YouTuber's life is more attractive to the audience than their own life. We can thus break the audience into two types: 1) those who seek a YouTuber that presents a relatively authentic image and 2) those who seek a YouTuber that presents the life that the audience wants to experience.

The first type of audience, who seek a YouTuber that presents a relatively authentic image, will use two YouTubers of the same type to compare and contrast which one presents a reality that is closer to real life. Such viewers are looking for a YouTuber who can match their ideal persona, which means that the YouTuber is able to apply the image shown in the video in his real life. The way that the audience is able to compare their images between the videos and real life is when

the YouTuber attends offline brand events and meets them in real life. The audiences will assess whether the YouTuber is the same as they are in the videos by their current behavior. It is obvious that the boundary between the representation in the videos and real life is blurred or even disappears altogether, as the audience is unable to distinguish between fiction and reality. They think that the difference between the two is becoming irrelevant. They believe that as long as the YouTuber's behavior in real life is the same as in the video, then it is the real YouTuber. The audience does not question whether the YouTubers are being packaged in the video as they only believe what they see.

The second type of audience, who seek a YouTuber that presents the kind of life the audience wants to experience, want to experience another life through the simulations. Lizzydaily, for instance, is a YouTuber who focuses on presenting a family's daily life. Her audience loves to watch her life in Korea and the growth of her daughter. OyanSAYS is a YouTuber who focuses on challenges and exposure to new things, and her private life. Her audience appreciates her public confessions and her courage to challenge new things. In their channels, the content they film is based on the audience's preferences. The audience will tell the YouTuber what they would like to see through the YouTube comments section or Instagram direct message, or even ask the YouTuber to challenge the latest local trends. It can be seen that the audiences will adopt their own specific preference by asking YouTubers to film specific content. It is similar to Baudrillard's simulation, "To simulate is to feign to have what one doesn't have" (1994). Thus the audience wants to simulate a life they do not have through particular YouTubers' videos.

Thirdly, according to Baudrillard, the world represented through the media is inevitably reconstructed. In other words, every audience will have a different experience through the videos, depending on who you are, where you are, and where the source of information comes from. It will affect the audience's interpretation of reality, especially when the videos are edited and post-produced. Every viewer may get a different message. Every member of the audience is able to construct their own version of "reality". In the process of such construction, since the camera only reflects a portion of the YouTuber, in this incomplete presentation, the viewer will insert their own experience to fulfill the missing portion. Each interpretation of "reality" is different. However, there is no "reality" here as everything is just a manifestation of different perspectives.

To sum up, by using Jean Baudrillard's simulation and simulacra, it can be seen that YouTubers as simulacra produced their own appearances to fulfill the preferences of audiences and the requirements of advertisers. At the same time, the audience seeks the ideal persona of the YouTubers, simulates their own life experience through the videos provided by the YouTubers, and asks the YouTubers to film what they want to see. It is obvious that it is a cycle that contributes to the advertising on YouTube, presenting a continuous stream of images, representations, and appearances.

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The Hyperreality of Cooking Shows

Mok Pak Tik, Dicky

In the rapidly changing technological society, social media has become our indispensable main channel for information. According to Dollarhide (2023), users of social media can share ideas and information through various technologies. Whether it is social media for interactive sharing on mobile phones or the television programs we usually watch, they are full of various signs and codes. They have become inseparable “sources of truth”. We will be more convinced of what the media shows. Signs replace original meaning with authenticity and credibility. In this society dominated by media images, it becomes a hyperreal world of repetitive simulations, where reality not only disappears but never exists. The entertainment programmes provide the consumers with a sense of authenticity. They even make us believe that the programmes really “mirror” reality. Cooking programmes are undoubtedly the most representative symbol of the society of simulated images when people browse or watch the cooking steps presented by the host on the screen. People will only define their own cooking techniques or eating patterns based on their experience of watching relevant cooking shows rather than our cooking in itself. Audiences prefer passive formats: watching the engaging images associated with viewing using visual cues to stimulate a multi-sensory experience. The focus of cooking shows shifts from education to a form of emphasis on visual enjoyment entertainment. According to Doyle (2021), as cooking and food have become a symbol of entertainment,

it is worth mentioning that cooking has long had a presence in entertainment. But the problem is that the representation of the “real” has effectively replaced reality, causing the media to no longer present any reality. Not only does it construct the audience's view of which form a cooking show should be presented in, they will still be convinced even if it deviates from the original meaning. The audience trusts it as “real”. In reference to simulation and simulacra mentioned by Jean Baudrillard, this essay reveals how the cooking programmes transform into signs.

According to Baudrillard, “Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal.” This statement displays that hyperreality will hide and beautify reality through the process of covering up by reflecting the original things, starting to become similar to reality, transforming into better than reality, and replacing reality with simulation. For instance, in the 1950s and 1960s, television quickly became the main channel of mass entertainment, and cooking programmes also entered the public eye. They were specially designed for stay-at-home spouses to instruct families who watch television broadcasts. Housewives learn specialized knowledge related to cooking and how to use and handle complex utensils and ingredients. “*The French Chef* was taped live. It dominated the televisions of home cooks taught many viewers how to cook like the French do” (Cahn, 2022). The second stage of the cooking show is to continue to blur reality. The show begins to change when celebrities become the focus of the show. Then it becomes a personal brand and image. The host's fame and appearance serve as paradigmatic elements of the show. The chefs Steve Lee Ka-ding (李家鼎) and Helen Tam Yuk Ying (譚玉瑛) of *The*

Ahistoric Grandpa Cooking Show (阿爺廚房) themselves do not have senior cooking experience or outstanding cooking. Back to today's internet generation, Krishna (2023) mentioned that "TikTok creators whose recipes have reached best-seller lists despite little or no professional cooking experience." The audience focuses on their fame and appealing image. The content of the programme begins to deviate from the original teaching purpose. Therefore, after going through the first to the second simulation stage, cooking programmes become entertainment activities of our consumers' culture. Other remarkable examples include *Masterchef* that sells Gordon Ramsey's violent insults, or *Beautiful Cooking* (美女廚房) that sells the humiliation of faux "bimbos".

"It is no longer a question of imitation, nor duplication, nor even parody. It is a question of substituting the signs of the real for the real" (Baudrillard, 1994). Cooking show simulations have become irrelevant to reality. Cooking shows that mask reality use bright colours and visual effects to convey the taste and texture of food. De Backer & Hudders (2016) stated that "People are not merely watching cooking shows to improve their cooking skills but to enjoy the entertaining TV show." In the era of consumerism, food programmes seem to have evolved into simulations with visual experiences that satisfy the audience, replacing the original reality. The food reality show, *Hell's Kitchen*, is another example where simulation masks the absence of reality. The format of the programme is the same cooking competition by elimination at a high-end restaurant. It obviously deviates from the original intention of cooking and evolves into entertainment. Focusing on Gordon Ramsay's hysteria, chefs or hosts do not need special skills in kitchen.

Their behaviors will still be perceived as “real cooking” by the audience, highlighting the disconnection between simulation and reality, where symbols no longer have something original to refer to and symbols become meanings.

Baudrillard (1994) mentioned that “obey the imperative of deterrence: one gives them an object to consume, a culture to devour, an edifice to manipulate.” Diet programmes unwittingly encourage consumerism to control our consumption behaviour. When we watch and consume diet programmes on a daily basis, we are also subconsciously internalising the consumption of specific brands of products. This is because product placements demonstrate the use and effectiveness of products by demonstrating that using the sales brand can change the taste of food and add special effects, completely deviating from the simple demonstration steps of cooking programmes. The audience is unconsciously led by the "truth" of the advertisement to form a concept that they must purchase the programme product. Just like when we buy soup products in the supermarket, we will naturally think of a specific brand of Campbell's canned soup. If we don't buy it, we will feel that we lack necessary supplies. This creates a cycle of repeatedly purchasing the same brand sign rather than the product itself. Signs and codes control and dominate our consumption behaviour.

To sum up the above points, cooking shows gradually lost their original teaching purposes in the process of continuous evolution, which means that people watch cooking shows as entertainment activities and passively receive product placement advertising into our daily habits. In the final stage, we will all live in a hyper-realistic society where symbolic simulation has no reality at all, if we have not reached this stage already.

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SIMULATED AND SIMULATION

DEAL REEL DEAL REEL

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The Differences Between The Story of My Life (1998) and Arrival (2016)

Ahbeera Bibi

Ted Chiang's *The Story of My Life* (1998) and its film adaptation *Arrival* (2016) by Denis Villeneuve talk about an encounter with the outer space aliens which they called "heptapods". The aesthetic of the heptapods designs is worth looking into. A few scenes that Villeneuve added are also particularly interesting.

In the short story *The Story of My Life*, we can see how the heptapods were explained by Dr. Banks. She said, "It looked like a barrel suspended at the intersection of seven limbs. It was radially symmetric, and any of its limbs could serve as an arm or a leg. The one in front of me was walking around on four legs, three non-adjacent arms curled up at its sides" (p. 97). In the film *Arrival*, it was visually presented to the audience. The designer of the heptapods was Carlos Huante. He has not only worked in *Arrival* as a creature designer but also in *Blade Runner 2049* (2017) and other films like *Prometheus* (2012), to name a few. In one of his interviews (Shaw-Williams, 2019), we found out how difficult it was for him to produce the heptapods' design prototypes. They had also stopped the production for a whole year to figure out the right design for the heptapods. He explained how he produced two designs and later when they were not satisfied with any of the designs, he mixed both ideas and produced an idea that was far too "out there" to make it into the movie. Eventually they decided on the one we see in the film. He described it as "a bizarre upper-torso kind of a thing, an

anthropomorphic whale creature with a spider hand creature at the end of an umbilical cord.” He also added that “it is really a bizarre alien. And I can't believe that it made it to the film.” The director added suspense by firstly presenting only the heptapods' lower parts. At the end, we could only glimpse at the entire heptapods for just a few seconds.

Denis Villeneuve's additional scenes are also remarkable. The political and military dimensions were absent in the original short story. A Chinese army general showed up and expressed his gratitude to Dr. Banks for changing his mind on launching an attack on the aliens. At first, she was confused. But she then recalled their conversation on the phone. The conversation that they both were having was in Mandarin, which Dr. Banks did not know she could speak it until the moment she recalled the memory of the conversation.

The content of the Mandarin conversation was not supposed to be important. But we could get the gist of it, that betrayed gross racial stereotypes.

Dr. Banks: *“Jiang Jun, wo zai mei guo ying di.*

(General Shang, I am now in the American camp)

“Jiang Jun, ni fu ren gei wo tuo meng le.

(General your wife has sent a message to me in my dream)

[inaudible]

“Ta shuo ni ying ping jie yong qi lai bang zhao zheng jiu shi jie.

Zhan zheng bu cheng jiu ying xiong. Xi hui liu xia gu er gua mu.

(She said you should be brave enough to help save the world.

War doesn't make heroes but orphans and widows.)”

Then Dr. Banks concluded by saying: “Sorry I didn't put the accents, which would take eternity.”

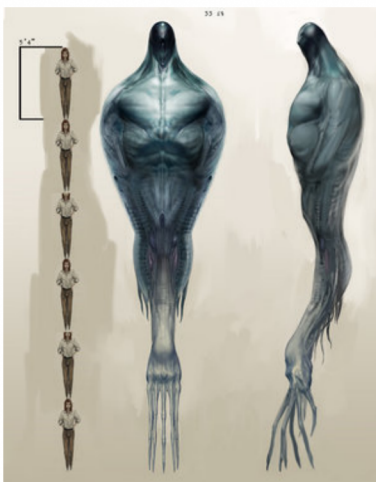
Bringing up his dead wife had built a special bond between them. Although it can be said that the Mandarin was unnecessary, the key was that Mandarin was the way to “click” with General Shang and change his mind. This cultural-political dimension seems to suggest that the Chinese appreciated “a personal touch” above everything else.

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Photos taken from carlos-huante-monstruo.com



The Use of Mise-En-Scène in *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015)

Li Chie Hang, Rachel

Introduction

Mad Max: Fury Road (2015) is the fourth installment in the *Mad Max* franchise that attempts to depict life in a post-apocalyptic dystopian nuclear wasteland. Modern society had collapsed, replaced by a desolate world driven by savage and barbaric humans who vied for survival in the cruel and unforgiving desert landscape. In the cutthroat world of *Mad Max*, “[the] earth is poisoned, resources are scarce, and survival necessitates mobility and speed”, which is exemplified in the film throughout an extended, but thrilling car chase (Bode, 2021, p.152). This essay will discuss the mise-en-scène of *Mad Max: Fury Road* and explore how it excellently contributes to the world-building of an immersive and believable landscape. Firstly, the setting and production design will be analysed. Secondly, characterization portrayed through costume design and makeup will be discussed, followed by a discussion of the film’s visual effects. Lastly, a conclusion will be presented to emphasize the impact of mise-en-scène in the film.

Setting and Production Design

Most of the film is set outdoors in a boundless and monotonous desert, covered by a similarly infinite sky. This section will explore how the desolate landscape setting, the production design, and set dressings are leveraged to intensify the narrative and establish total immersion for the viewer.

The Opening Scene

Firstly, the mise-en-scène of the opening scene is effective in establishing the exposition of the film. Despite its position as the fourth installment of the *Mad Max* franchise, *Fury Road* wastes no time in attempting to revisit plot points of previous installments or verbally retelling the story. Without any dialogue, the visual elements of the introductory scenes are instead used to effectively communicate much of the film's background and portray the setting.

Figure 1



The film opens with a wide shot of a never-ending desert (Figure 1), and slowly pans downward until the shot is dissected into three parts: a lizard rests on a rock in the foreground, a man and his run-down vehicle are placed in the midground, and finally the ominous desert acts as the background. The vast desert in the background construes the notion of an expansive world full of the mystery of the unknown. The uniform shade of orange desert sand represents its monotony and lack of diversity in terrain. There are no trees, no water, and no people, for miles and miles ahead. The desert offers no resources for a human's survival. It is unforgiving and dangerous. Closest to the

the camera is a single lizard, a sign of life that rebels against the unforgiving desert. Due to its placement in the foreground, the viewer is inclined to focus and relate to the innocent lizard, as it represents the resilience of life even in the harshest conditions. However, as soon as the audience empathizes with the perseverance of a tiny lizard against the big and unrelenting desert, the creature immediately runs forward into the midground where it is heartlessly stomped on by the man, instantly killing it as well as its admirable hope for survival.

Figure 2



The camera then zooms into the profile of the man's face, as he unflinchingly picks up the lizard (which most certainly had made full contact with the bottom of his grimy boot) and eats it without hesitation (Figure 2). Especially due to the close-up of the man-eating the lizard, the viewer should feel disgusted, but the man is in contrast unintimidated by this unique delicacy. This demonstrates how he is hardened by the ruthless desert, which has forced him to resort to do anything required for survival, because he simply has no choice. Furthermore, he is noticeably haggard and his hair long and untrimmed. Although a survivor, he is not a warrior; he shields his face without pride and his clothes are dull and unrefined. He has witnessed many hardships in life which

have shaped him into an isolated and hollow shell of a man.

Figure 3

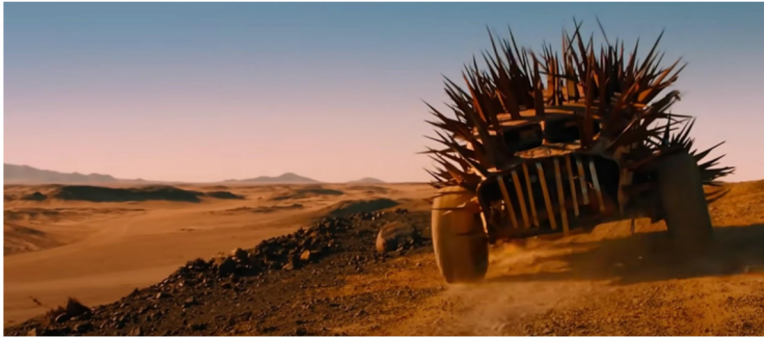


Without dialogue, the mise-en-scène of the initial scenes excels in its aim to establish the setting of the film, the personality of the main character, and provide context about the deadly nature of the world. Regardless of whether the viewer is a long-time fan of *Mad Max*, or a first-time watcher of the franchise, the opening scene succinctly introduces and welcomes all audiences to the exposition of the film.

Production Design

During the car chase, various vehicles appear, with many unique traits and conveying differing personalities. Each car has a unique purpose, and its usage and abilities can be expressed through its appearance and design. Colin Gibson, the production designer behind *Fury Road*, calls the following vehicle (in Figure 4) ‘The Buzzard’, with many spikes aimed to “attack, to drag down, to destroy, and then to hack” (Potier, 2015). It aims to take down Furiosa’s oil rig by repeatedly making contact with the side of her truck, trying to tear it down piece by piece. At first glance, the purpose and nature of the car are evident. It was constructed for violent close-range attack, which further expresses the war-like nature of the post-apocalyptic world.

Figure 4

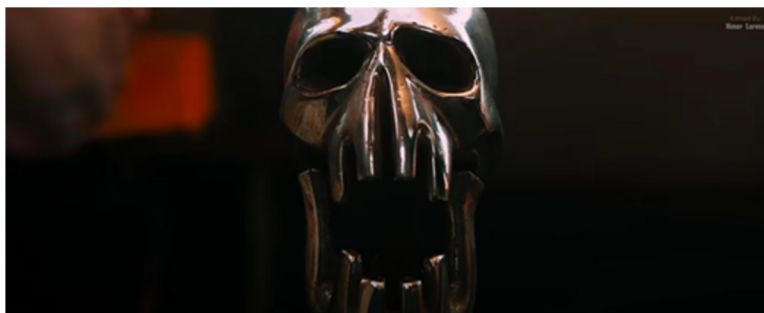


In addition to The Buzzard, there are a variety of different vehicles that join the chase to take down the oil rig. The specialised characterization depicted through the vehicles' appearances can inform the audience more about the world of *Fury Road*, including the numerous clans that inhabit the world.

Furthermore, the personalized design of the war cars and the various close-ups that are used to emphasize details of the cars' customized parts heavily contribute to the storytelling of the narrative. It shows the imperfections, and the damage that have been caused to different parts of the car due to their constant and repeated use. The intentional weathering of the car parts can be appreciated through the director's decision to zoom in on it, so that it is enlarged in the middle of the screen. For example, the stick shift of Immortan Joe's car is a screaming skull (see Figure 5 & 6). The skull is a common representation of death, which appropriately suits Immortan Joe's personality as a warlord. Small scratches can be observed on the skull, along with its tormented screaming expression. Furthermore, the design and aesthetic of the skull are also closely related to rock music culture, which is also a heavy influence in the film through the soundtrack. Overall, it can

be seen that the set dressings and production designs of the vehicles provide further context to the audience through visual means. Additionally, the director's use of close-ups of the cars' components also contributes to the complex storytelling of *Fury Road*.

Figure 5 & Figure 6



Costume Design and Makeup

Immortan Joe

The audience first sees the dictator's weak and diseased body. There are large red pus pockets on his leathery skin, and he takes shaky breaths without the aid of a machine. He has had long exposure to the toxic nuclear environment, with the appearance of his body being extremely unnatural and

disturbing to look at. In an age where many die young due to myriad threats in the post-apocalyptic environment, Joe becomes an outlier in his persistence to cling to life. Furthermore, there is a servant who blows medicinal powder on his back to soothe his irritated skin. This shot not only implies that Joe is so important that he needs people to serve him, but also shows his tenacious vitality despite his old age.

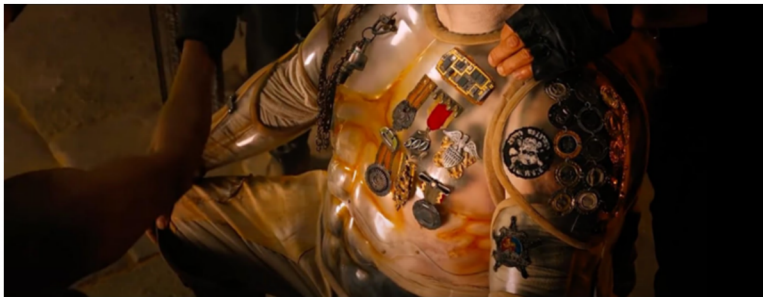
Figure 7



Next, Joe's servants can be seen planting the semi-transparent chest piece on his body, which is adorned with numerous awards and military accolades (Figure 8). A pin depicting an eagle with spread wings, above a symbol with stars and stripes reminiscent of the American flag, may suggest his previous occupational experience before the collapse of the world. He may have held a high position in the American armed forces, with knowledge and experience in leadership and combat. Perhaps he has carried the knowledge acquired in the old world into the post-apocalyptic world, which has allowed him to create and sustain his powerful position as a tyrant. With his legs spread wide and his chest hoisted toward the crowds of people, his pride and ego became apparent as the ruthless dictator of the citadel. Jenny Beavan, the costume designer

behind *Fury Road*, states that the ankle-long fabric of his costume is “like [a] religious robe”, which further constructs his character as the all-powerful and cult-like leader of his people (IGN, 2015). Lastly, perhaps the most noticeable element of Immortan Joe’s chest piece is the artificial abdominal muscles added and highlighted by spray paint. This greatly contrasts the previous image of the weak and diseased old man presented to the audience. This represents Immortan Joe’s attempt to emphasize his power and strength, although his body is becoming fragile due to his old age and the influence of nuclear materials. Considering his position as a dictator, the image he presents to his people must be crafted so he is perceived as an unstoppable and dominant being.

Figure 8



Through the above analysis of Immortan Joe’s physical appearance which is developed through makeup, special effects, and digital effects, his personality and role as a leader is efficiently presented. From the way he stands with pride, to how he brags about his military achievements on his chest, Immortan Joe is a daunting character with great power and even greater influence. He is a man who cannot be underestimated, making him an impressive and captivating main antagonist.

The Wives

The wives are Immortan Joe's breeding stock which he uses in his attempt to make the 'best' offspring, who are genetically predisposed to be powerful warriors and fighters.

Figure 9



The wives are the precious treasures of Immortan Joe (Figures 9 & 10). And to represent their value, they are the only characters wearing all white, which also represents their purity and innocence. Since they are protected creatures, they do not have any battle experience or fighting knowledge. They have been trapped in a cage all their lives which maintains their pristine image. In addition, although water is a precious resource in their world, they are the only beings who use water to bathe, which further highlights their purity and chastity of their bodies (Figure 10). They are Joe's trophy wives who can live a life of luxury compared to the other citizens, helping them to maintain their beauty and unblemished skin.

Furthermore, much of their body is revealed through their costume design, making the audience not only focus on their personalities, but also their feminine physical traits. As brides

of Joe, they do not have physical autonomy; Immortan only views them as breeders who are merely there to deliver his next heir, and so he will have sexual relations with them without their consent. The women are objectified by Joe, and their clothing reflects how they are viewed. Their femininity is also emphasized through their physical appearance. A few of the wives have long hair which is a symbol of beauty even though it may not necessarily be functional for survival.

Figure 10



Colour, Lighting, and Other Visual Effects

Fury Road consistently employs the usage of blue and orange hues, which make up the main colour palette of the film. The filmmakers sometimes even include the dichotomy of orange and blue hues in the same shot. Since these two colours are complementary, their combination can create stunning visual effects and capture scenes.

Firstly, orange is primarily used to depict the vastness and emptiness of the hot desert (Figure 11). Blue is used to represent the desert nighttime, particularly its mysteriousness (Figure 12). While the morning desert is bright and uses high-key lighting with little shadows, the nighttime desert is dim

with low-key lighting. The daytime is bright and well-illuminated which improves visibility, it allows enemies to accurately observe your position and hunt you down. The nighttime provides cover to hide from your enemies, but it also hinders you from knowing what is ahead of you.

Figure 11 & Figure 12



One of the examples where the two colours are merged in the same shot is exemplified through this scene of Furiosa in her oil rig (Figure 13). There are subtle blue hues in the blue sky which is set behind the orange sand. Additionally, the colour of Furiosa's skin is warmly tuned to reflect the orange hues of the background, portraying how the desert may be her enemy, but it is also a major part of what makes up who she is as an individual.

Furiosa has become hardened by the challenges the desert has brought her, making her a fearful mercenary and fighter. Her skin sharing a similar hue with the ruthless desert may represent how the environment has essentially imprinted on her, affecting her at an integral level, and determining who she must become to survive by its rules.

Furiosa's eyes, on the other hand, are strikingly blue which stands out to the viewers. Her eyes shine with sharpened determination - to escape the desert (by the citadel) and to not forget her roots despite the overwhelming influence of the world. She could have remained as one of Immortan's soldiers, but instead, she remains strong in who she is as an individual. Her steadfast conviction to complete her mission is effectively demonstrated in her striking blue eyes, which shine while being surrounded by the opposing colour.

Figure 13



The continued usage of blue and orange throughout the film not only contributes to the colour palette, but also creates a motif that can cause the audiences to think about the nature of opposites reflected through the lens. In addition, it helps to create a unified aesthetic throughout the narrative.

Conclusion

This essay has discussed how production design, makeup, costumes, and visual effects, all combine to create the captivating and complex world behind *Mad Max: Fury Road*. The intricacies of each character and each object all serve a united purpose to develop an immersive world in which the narrative can reach its full potential. All the elements of mise-en-scene contribute not only to the visual experience, but also the meaning and symbolism of the film. The filmmakers and contributors of *Fury Road* have paid meticulous attention to every visual element that is presented to the audience. Because of its uniqueness and particular sense of aesthetics, *Max Max: Fury Road* is a prime example of how mise-en-scene can profoundly affect the audiences' viewing experience.

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Cross-Cultural Complexities in *M. Butterfly* (1988) and *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960)

Raza Arooj Fatima

Cross-cultural relationships may face problems such as negative societal views, gender stereotypes, and different mindsets of the partners influenced by their culture. Both the play *M. Butterfly* written by David Henry Hwang, and the movie *The World of Suzie Wong* by Richard Quine portray the complexities of cross-cultural relationships. In *M. Butterfly* the protagonist Gallimard is shown how his culture views Asian women, while Song Liling is portrayed to act as the woman in westerner's minds. On the other hand, *The World of Suzie Wong* also depicts the misconceptions of both western and eastern genders through the protagonists Suzie Wong and Robert. This paper aims to explore and compare intercultural relationships through the aspects of status differences, westerner's mentality towards Asian women, and the challenges against gender stereotypes.

Both works showcase how western men view Asian women. They fantasise over the idea of perfect oriental women. Western men hold the stereotypical image of Asian women as being submissive, weak and obedient. In *M. Butterfly* Gallimard said "I wanted to take her in my arms – so delicate, even I could protect her, take her home, pamper her until she smiled." This shows how western men like to have control over powerless women and Song behaved exactly the way that would attract Gallimard. Gallimard's view of Song was of a fragile and a unique creature seeking his guardianship and

care. On the other hand, in *The World of Suzie Wong*, Robert was also charmed over oriental women. He was “very impressed by the beautiful oriental faces.” Apart from that, Robert views Suzie as in need of help as she is weak. Therefore he says “let me take care of you, you don’t know how much I need you”. Other than that, western men are very keen on the features and appearance of Asian women. When Suzie dressed up in a western attire, Robert was very angry and disappointed. He regarded Suzie as a “cheap European streetwalker”, and he also said to her “you don’t need all that tinsel”. This actually meant that her appearance should match with his image of how a real Chinese woman should look like. Both works show that weak Asian women are in need of western men as their protector and how westerners want Asian women to conform to their authentic Asian woman image.

Both works portray social hierarchies and power relations influencing relationships. In *M. Butterfly* Gallimard believes that he is superior to Asian women. “We who are not handsome, nor brave, nor powerful, yet somehow believe, like Pinkerton, that we deserve a Butterfly.” He considers Asian women merely as a prize, using them as symbols of status and tools to practice masculinity. Song continuously feeds his ego by dressing up in Cheung Sam and curling up at his feet, showing submissiveness. “I’ll pour myself for the gentleman”, “gently please, I’ve tried to appear experienced, but I’m not”, “let me keep my clothes on.” All these dialogues said by Song show pure submissiveness and naivety. Being fully dominated by Gallimard would fulfil his criteria of masculinity and power. Moreover, the legitimisation of male domination and violence can be justified by Asian women having the stereotypical image of being obedient, slave-like and existing to fulfil desires of western men. In *The World of Suzie Wong*, there was a scene where Robert was having dinner with Kay’s family and

he was told to “keep your nose clean if you want to be accepted by your people.” This shows the biased mindsets of westerners who believe that they have a higher standing in society than Asian women. Apart from that, Robert shows the orientalist male gaze. It can be seen from the scene where Robert gets Suzie a Chinese empress dress together with a crown to make her his idealised “Chinese princess”. When Suzie wears that dress, Robert gazes at her from the bottom to the top and then Suzie bows submissively for him. This scene can explain how men are so dominant over women and they objectify Asian women as display items for their visual satisfaction. Robert is the dominant viewer who can shape Suzie’s image according to his wants. Therefore, both works show the power dynamics within a relationship and that Asian women experience gender inequality.

Both plays portray characters who challenge gender stereotypes but in different ways. *The World of Suzie Wong* portrays the protagonist Suzie to be a strong individual, challenging some gender stereotypes of Asian women. Although she was a prostitute, she had control over herself in the male dominated environment. She did not play the passive, weak victim but in fact willingly participated and made decisions for herself. Yet, some parts were still stereotypical against Asian women, such as her being the Hong Kong girl from Wan Chai who used her sexuality to make a living. She also portrays how Asian women have the seductive and feminine qualities to seduce western men like Robert. On the other hand, *M. Butterfly* challenges gender stereotypes by showing Song as a woman, who in reality was a man. This challenges our conception of gender whether being fixed or fluid and that the idea of gender not being fixed to only male and female. It also challenges how westerners idealise Asian women and consider them solely as objects of desire and tools

for showing their masculine identity. Song's portrayal as an Asian woman still perpetuates some aspects of gender stereotypes. Asian women are seen as seductive using their femininity, obedience, docility to seduce and manipulate western men.

To conclude, the play *M. Butterfly* and the film *The World of Suzie Wong* reflect the complexities within cross-cultural relationships. Both works point out challenges of gender stereotypes and the power dynamics of western men in terms of their perception of Asian women. It also highlighted the stereotypes of western male masculinity and Asian female femininity very distinctively, shedding light onto cultural anticipation affecting relationships.

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Comparison of How Culture Influences Human Beings and the Consequences It Brings in *M. Butterfly* and *Farewell My Concubine*

Tang Man Fei, Macy

How should men and women behave? Do women have to have a lower status than men? Or do men have to show their masculinity by weakening women's status? Our society is influencing our behaviour and choices all the time and therefore leads to many unknown consequences in our unknown future. For *M. Butterfly* (1988), the writer David Henry Hwang portrayed the protagonist Song Liling, a man, who played a female character in Peking opera to please a Western man, Rene Gallimard, based on the female stereotype Western men had of Eastern culture. For *Farewell My Concubine* (1993), the director Cheng Kaige created a love triangle by using protagonists Cheng Dieyi, and Duan Xiaolo as Yu Concubine and the lord Xiang Yu respectively, as well as the courtesan Juxian, Duan's wife. Cheng lost himself and was in love with Duan when acting in Peking opera, while Duan ended up married to Juxian. Both Gallimard and Cheng fell into their own "fantasy" because of their experience and committed suicide after waking from the fantasy. Gallimard killed himself for his fantasy while Cheng committed suicide because of the loss of himself and his love Duan. Also, the character Juxian in *Farewell My Concubine* challenged the stereotype toward Asian women in *M. Butterfly*.

In both plays, Gallimard and Cheng's previous experience trapped them in their "fantasy" and false love. In *M. Butterfly*, the protagonist Gallimard developed his false opinions toward Eastern women in his living society. When Gallimard was still in his young age at school, he was not attracted by the surrounding women. While Gallimard's friend, Marc, got a lot of girls playing in his hand, Gallimard did not meet the male standard set by the masculine society he lived in, and his misconceptions about women began to take hold. From the message conveyed in Gallimard's favourite Peking opera, *Madame Butterfly*, Gallimard started to fit his ideal "Butterfly" on oriental women. Listening to men, and sacrificing themselves to get a man's love were just what Gallimard dreamed about for Eastern women. Thus, the appearance of Song, the ideal butterfly, trapped Gallimard in the fantasy life and finally got the ideal woman to show his masculinity. In *Farewell My Concubine*, Cheng Dieyi had also been trapped in false love because of what he went through. Since young, Cheng's life had been surrounded by "I am naturally a girl, not a boy" because of his feminine appearance and the female role he played in the Peking opera. Cheng was forced to say the line, which symbolised the development of his gender perception afterward. Cheng's views on gender changed somewhat after he was raped by a man as a child. The brotherly love offered by Duan further shaped the formation of Cheng's gender identity, therefore creating the false love toward Duan from Peking opera to reality. Both Gallimard and Cheng were influenced by their living environment from a young age, therefore leading to the event of falling into false love. These "fantasies" might not exist if society did not force Gallimard and Cheng to make changes.

As a woman, Juxian decided her own fate which challenged the "weak oriental woman" given in *M. Butterfly*. Song acted as a submissive, weak oriental woman to seduce Gallimard.

Song purposely acted like this to get what he wanted from Gallimard. Western men, like Gallimard, really thought that they were superior to Eastern people, and got the feeling that Eastern people needed others to dominate them. Juxian had challenged Gallimard's stereotype toward Eastern females. In *Farewell My Concubine*, Juxian, as a courtesan, bravely pursued the life that she wanted. Lin Hsin-chieh (2018) says, "To be with her man Xiaolou, the fashionable courtesan Juxian of the House of Blossoms emptied her savings to buy back her freedom." In those days, women had little control over their own lives. Especially as a prostitute, they did not have much personal freedom, let alone making choices for their own lives, but Juxian determined to take the path she set her mind to. Moreover, Duan betrayed Juxian to the Red Guards and said that Juxian was a prostitute. Juxian got desperate and committed suicide at the end, because she could not imagine what Duan had done to her and his betrayal.

In both works, both Gallimard and Cheng had committed suicide after returning from their fantasy world to reality. At the end of *M. Butterfly*, Gallimard finally realised the woman that he lived with for over twenty years was a man. After seeing Song take off his clothes in the car, Gallimard's fantasy collapsed, the "Butterfly" that he loved for so long had never existed. He killed himself after performing *Madame Butterfly*, the play in which he fell in love with his "Butterfly", in prison. Gallimard's final choice was to stay in his fantasy forever, instead of facing reality. Gallimard inherited the false thoughts towards the ideal female from his society, therefore leading him to develop his false ideas and finish his life with suicide. Cheng in *Farewell My Concubine* also ended his life by killing himself. Cheng's whole life was somewhat a tragedy, abandoned by his mother, forced to develop gender

perceptions and adapt to the society. The scene where Cheng's mother cut his sixth finger, also symbolised that Cheng was meant to be forced to change and adapt to society for his whole life. In the last act, Duan said the line that Cheng always said wrong when he was little, "I'm naturally a boy, not a girl". Cheng seemed to finally wake up from his fantasy after so many years and ended up killing himself. Cheng's death may be sad for himself who had been living his whole life in the Peking opera. At the same time, he wanted to die for his beloved, just as Yu Concubine died for Xiang Yu, although Duan just treated Cheng as his brother.

To sum up, the play *M. Butterfly* and the movie *Farewell My Concubine* show how culture can have a great impact on human beings. These two works reflect on how people are trapped in their illusion world based on the social environment they live in and the consequences afterward. The false ideas Gallimard had toward Eastern women and the masculine social environment led to the tragedy of his ending. Juxian, as a prostitute, in *Farewell My Concubine*, bravely made choices for her fate which women could barely do in that era. It also challenged the "weak women" opinion delivered in *M. Butterfly*. While Cheng had been moulded into a real "Yu Concubine" by his growing environment and lost his true self, thus ending his miserable life with a sword in front of "Xiang Yu", as "Yu Concubine".

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Deja Disparu: Nostalgia and Uncertainty in Stanley Kwan's *Rouge* (胭脂扣, 1987)

Yim Ying Wai, Yuri

Rouge (胭脂扣, 1987) is a Hong Kong supernatural romantic film directed by Stanley Kwan. The story is about Chan Chen Pang, a playboy from a wealthy family who fell in love with a girl named Fleur, who was one of the most famous girls in Hong Kong's teahouses. However, their romance was not accepted by Chan's family. They wanted Chan to marry another daughter of a wealthy family. Then, they decided to commit suicide together with opium and use "3811" to remember each other. This essay will discuss Fleur as a symbol of the complex emotions experienced by Hong Kong citizens when the reversion to China was decided in 1984. The setting of this film shows *deja disparu* in the confusing time-space compression, which reveals nostalgia and uncertainty about the future.

At the very outset, Fleur is one of the special characters in Hong Kong. She is metaphorically a citizen of Hong Kong in 1984, when the British government agreed to transfer the sovereignty of Hong Kong back to the People's Republic of China. According to Ackbar Abbas, this triggers *deja disparu*: "the feeling of what is new and unique about the situation is always already gone, and we are holding a handful of clichés or clusters of memories of what has never been" (1997). When she returned to reality after death, she was confused by everything: a well-known theater had been replaced by a 7-Eleven; the teahouse had been replaced by a kindergarten, etc. When you noticed what was going on, it was already gone.

Fleur said that she was afraid to cross the road because in the 1930s the streets did not have that many cars on the road. Faced with rapidly changing times, she sought information from fifty years ago in order to comprehend what occurred in 1938 and chase after Chan. She was nostalgic about the things which were already gone, just like a Hong Kong citizen - knowing that the day of the handover of sovereignty in 1984 was coming.

The ghost Fleur was not meant to be scary. She is a metaphor to reveal anachronism. "The film downplays the supernatural, which emphasizes through linking the figure of the ghost with women and cinema itself, the even more contradictory dimensions of cultural space in contemporary Hong Kong" (Abbas, 1997, 22). Fleur became an unexpected presence in the modern world. She was a mismatch between time and the wrong object appearing at the wrong time and place. In the story, Fleur was supposedly dead. However, Fleur could go back to the real world, which was not the right place, and her appearance and clothes were still from the 1930s, which did not match the modern world. Fleur looked like a normal person, just that she was dressed differently. When Fleur finally found Chan in the crew, Chan showed regret for betraying Fleur. However, it was time they parted ways again. This shows the concept of time-space compression: the disappearance of the "fifty years" was attributed to fragmentation and dislocation. Two different timelines collapsed into each other.

Fleur and Chan in the 1930s, and Yuan and Chor in the 1980s reveal different views of love, time and space: everlasting love and transient eroticism. Fleur saw Chan as destined and inseparable. However, Chan was a playboy. "Twelfth Master

is more modern in a superficial sense, since he refuses to be trapped by conventionally stable love” (Fong, 2014). He loved opera and learned it, but he did not finish studying opera academically. Although he loved Fleur, he would not die with her. Yuen and Chor were not inseparable: "the fast-paced world of today is slow in its affective responses. The purposefulness and busy-ness go together with another kind of decadence: a form of emotional inertia” (Abbas, 1997). After making love, Chor asked Yuan, "Would you be willing to commit suicide for me like Fleur and Chan?" They both said they would not sacrifice their lives for love. The two different times and people show different values of love, which highlighted Fleur's obsession and nostalgia. Before she passed away, she was willing to die with Chan and make sure they could meet in the next life. After she passed away, she was willing to sacrifice the life of the next life to find Chan just to part with him. Fleur personifies Hong Kong's nostalgia about the past before 1984.

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The Reinvention of Chinese Folktale: Green Snake (青蛇傳, 1993)

Yong Ziyi, Hazel

Most of Tsui Hark's themes are related to Chinese folk tales and myths, such as the *New Dragon Gate Inn* (新龍門客棧, 1992) and *A Chinese Ghost Story* (倩女幽魂, 1987). Among them, *Green Snake* (青蛇傳, 1993), directed by Tsui Hark and written by Lilian Lee, was based on *The Legend of the White Snake* (白蛇傳), one of the four major folk legends. Folktales function as a form of cultural heritage in contemporary society. Most of the concepts conveyed by the story are borne of the patriarchal society system (Wang, 2020). It tells the love story between humans and snake queens - *Xiao Qing* and *Bai Su Zhen*, and it is also a family epic. Comparing demonic nature with human nature, Tsui Hark discussed "human nature" dialectically. The feminine narrative is integrated into the folk tale, questioning the gender discourse defined by heterosexual patriarchal family structures, presenting modern femininity. Based on the theory of feminism, this paper will discuss the adaptation and recreation of female characters in mythological stories through the analysis of the film *Green Snake*, focusing on the awakening and growth of female characters' self-consciousness.

Xiaoqing first came to the world to create the image of a female explorer who has not been disciplined by society, and her continuous questions and introspection about Bai Su Zhen's opinion: "what is good about being a man", reflect the

protagonist's inner autonomy and growth. The director is creative about the worldview and the setting of the characters. In the film, the green snake and the white snake were suddenly enlightened by the influence of the Buddha beads and came to this world in human form. The shaky shots, the alternating use of multiple colors, transport the viewer to a kind of fantasy dreamland. The use of mythological settings allows the story to be created in a semi-fictional history, subverting the dilemmas of a real-life patriarchal society. Foucault proposed the concept of "heterotopia", that is to provide people, and in this case, women, with a discursive space for resistance and confrontation. Xiaoqing was a woman who explored the unknown world as a "demon", and the audience embarks on an adventure in "human space" from her first-person perspective. The film weakens the emotional entanglement, further emphasizing Xiaoqing's challenge to the ethical order of human beings and the personal growth achieved through learning and imitating. The White Snake is a considerate, gentle image of a wife and a mother, in line with the ideal type of traditional Chinese women. The transformation of the White Snake from a monster to the embodiment of female virtue in the Qing Dynasty also highlights Bai Su Zhen's unfamiliar identity with human society, but she adhered to the view of "being a good person", and the difference between the two has been reflected from the beginning. Bai Su Zhen's personality had the contradictions of modern women, who are independent and take the initiative to pursue love, but are spiritually full of fantasies and dependence on men. Xuxian was a simple and mediocre image of an honest person, with human weaknesses, inner contradictions, and cowardly character, but at the same time human "emotions". The two were happy with each other.

The conflict between Xiaoqing and Bai Su Zhen intensified to

the point where the two broke up. Fahai was a monk who thought that he would subdue and eliminate demons. Under Tsui Hark's adaptation, he became an observer of the whole film. Tsui Hark depicts Xiaoqing's lust in detail, and at the same time, it is an expression that encourages women to explore their own needs. Xiaoqing's feminine consciousness was reflected in her opposition and confrontation against unequal gender relations, in her courage to fight against Fahai, and in the end, she took Bai Su Zhen's children away and raised them alone in the wild, away from the human world. Although Xiaoqing was imitating the rules of human beings, she still retained a primitive animal nature, which was different from the contradictions and cowardice of human nature. She believed that she should improve her abilities instead of relying on cowardly and incompetent men. Finally she proved herself with her intelligence to defeat the supreme Fahai.

In different times, filmmakers give new meanings to folklores and myths. Tsui Hark's film *Green Snake* is adapted from Li Bihua's novel of the same name. At the same time, it weakens the critique of men to a certain extent and looks at human nature from a more macro perspective. The nature of using the rules of the human world to bind demons is the status quo of women in traditional society. At the same time, "lust" is set as a key step in the cultivation of adulthood, creating a more localized feminist film.

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SIMULATIONS AND SIMULATION

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Yiqi of the Hong Kong Underworld

Lee Yuk Yi, Lia

A Better Tomorrow (英雄本色, 1986) is a Hong Kong crime and gangster film. It has been recognised as a landmark in the cinema of Hong Kong. The major theme is gangster's *yiqi*. The story is about three characters, Sung Tse Ho, Sung Tse Kit and Mark Lee. Ho and Mark were business partners and gangsters, whereas Kit was a police officer. Ho wanted to do the last gig and retire, but was betrayed. Mark sacrificed himself to avenge Ho and reconcile Ho and Kit at the end. This essay seeks to explain the dynamic of *yiqi* in the filmic underworld.

Yiqi is a strong sense of allegiance, faithfulness, or devotion to a person, group, cause, or organisation. Shing sold out Ho to a Taiwanese gang. Ho voluntarily surrendered himself to the police so that Mark could escape. Ho would rather be in prison for three years alone than drag Mark in. *Yiqi* is about building trust and making friendships with others “in alien surroundings through acts of reciprocity” (Law, 2008). The rapidly changing illegal dealings made them feel that they only have each other and forge some kind of brotherhood.

The nature of “revenge” is an obligation one owes to one’s gang brother. The nature of revenge is a punishment for people who have done something that offends or hurts others. Shing betrayed Ho when Ho was attacked by the Taiwan triad, resulting in Ho being sent to jail. Mark was very angry when

he found out, so he killed all the members of the Taiwanese gang in the iconic “gun-fu” in the equally iconic *Fung Lam Court* restaurant. Mark was not only a business partner but also Ho’s brother. If they had to go through hell, they would not rest until their enemy was also in hell. An “eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,” seems the only choice they have to survive. Only through “revenge” do they show power over others, and deter reprisals. It then often ended up in a downward spiral of bloodbaths.

People in *jianghu* never put personal success over brotherhood. Shing betrayed Ho so he successfully became the gang leader. “The gangster’s whole life is an effort to assert himself as an individual, to draw himself out of the crowd, and he always does because he is an individual; the final bullet thrusts him back, makes him, after all, a failure (Warshow, 1948, 585). Shing’s success was established on a personal superior position which could dominate others. But he lacks *yiqi*, which easily aroused hatred from others. Being the “gang leader” ran the risk of drawing himself out of the crowd and becoming vulnerable.

People in *jianghu* cannot rely on individual power. For example, Mark avenged the Taiwanese triad for Ho because of *yiqi*. Evidence of being loyal to others builds trust. In the final gun battle, Shing shot Mark and Ho shot Shing in revenge. Ho reconciled with Kit by letting Kit take him to justice. Mark sacrificed himself to achieve Ho and Kit. People in *jianghu* always put brotherhood over personal success.

Yiqi is a key element of Woo’s film. Woo often uses *yiqi* to depict the deep emotional bonds of his characters. Hong Kong’s underworld is full of violence, betrayal, brotherhood’s *yiqi* - a microcosm of a distinctive survival strategy.

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Eternity and the Time Finitude in 2046 (2004)

Lu Chong Yi, Audrey

The film *2046* (2004) tells the story of Chow Mo Wan who could not let go of his previous romance, so he wrote the novel *2046*, a science fiction fantasy, and regarded the woman who lived in Room 2046 as a substitute for his lost love Su Li-zhen. In the film, 2046 is a room number and a train that can connect the past and the future. More importantly, 2046 is a metaphor for the year when Hong Kong's "no change for fifty years" expires. This essay will mainly discuss the phenomenon of the late 1960s and people's mood of the times. It also alludes to the psychological dilemma of some people today who are obsessed with the past.

The theme of this movie is about searching, finding a lost love, a lost memory, a lost past, and an answer. The protagonists in the film all like to dwell on the past, brooding over the missed past experiences and refusing to move on. Based on the concept of *deja disparu*, people miss the past too much even though it is already gone (Abbas, 1997). Obsession with the past will make them unable to accept the current situation, causing a huge separation between themselves and society, thus leading to a deepened generation gap. For Chow Mo Wan, his fetish is a woman named Su Li-zhen. He had always regretted not asking to be with her. For Bai Ling, her fetish is the banknotes in the box under the bed because they meant her desire and feelings for Chow Mo Wan. It can be seen that everyone yearns for eternal feelings and hopes that

memories can remain unchanged. They were all *Chungking Express*'s Wu Chi Mo (Takeshi Kaneshiro) who kept canned pineapples. However, the cruel thing was that even canned pineapple would expire some day. People change. Fate is fleeting and elusive. Relationships have expiry dates. The past will always become history.

Time is the carrier of memories, emotions and history. *2046* carried Chow Mo Wan's emotional experience, and also symbolizes the end of an era in Hong Kong. The reason why Chow Mo Wan indulged in past memories was that he could not accept the passing of a relationship. The psychological state of each character reflected the struggle of Hong Kong citizens before the "no change for fifty years" policy. Hong Kong is a city affected by globalization and capitalism, and the 1960s was a period of social instability (Chan, 2013). Under colonialism, Hong Kong integrated Chinese and Western cultures. It practiced Western capitalism but also had the conservatism and nostalgia in Chinese culture. The thoughts and subconscious of Hong Kong people have been westernized, penetrating all aspects of life, such as culture, economy and social atmosphere. After Hong Kong enjoyed economic and cultural breakthroughs, it also suffered a backlash from capitalism. *2046* is the expiry date when Hong Kong's original system remained unchanged. It also marked the end of an era. People felt anxious and confused in the face of uncertainty, even though knowing full well that nothing lasts in Hong Kong. In *2046*, we can see people's inner world and emotions of the times in the context of the 1960s.

Some who do not have an informed understanding of *2046* may think that Wong Kar Wai simply told a story about vulgar love. It seems to me that Wong Kar Wai wanted to inspire the audiences to think about time and eternity. According to Abbas, “[I]f hallucination is seeing what is not there, then reversed hallucination is not seeing what is there” (1997). For Chow Mo Wan, his hallucination is the fetishism of the past. His reversed hallucination is that he was blind to reality by the excessive remembrance of the past. Just like Chow Mo Wan’s novel, the past and real life are intertwined. Fate is elusive and it reveals itself only at the right time and the right place. Only by seizing the present can we see reality clearly and seize more opportunities. It is in human nature that there is a longing for eternity, but finding breakthroughs that exist only in change is what we need to learn.

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