

Transnational Connections in Taiwan Cinema of the 21st Century

Submitted by Yennan Lin to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Film, June 2013

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Abstract

Since the 1980s, growing international recognition for Taiwanese auteurs has placed Taiwan on the map of world cinema. However, in the new millennium popular tastes have gradually become a key concern for Taiwanese filmmakers; in the years since 2008, the dramatic box office success of *Cape No.7* has further boosted their commercial production. Through four case studies, this thesis investigates four major filmmaking strategies among Taiwanese filmmakers, seeking to provide a wide-ranging picture of Taiwan cinema since the turn of the century. These case studies represent different approaches to filmmaking and indicate the different audiences that Taiwanese filmmakers may address. Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* not only demonstrates that Asian films can achieve international box office success but also raises issues of cultural authenticity and cultural translation. Chapter One describes how the global success of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* has promoted transnational co-production in Asia. The Hollywood-funded project *Double Vision* and Taiwanese filmmakers' engagement in intraregional co-production are outlined in Chapter Two, examining the development of pan-Asian co-production in Taiwan cinema. The immense popularity of *Cape No.7* in Taiwan reflects Taiwanese viewers' demand for cultural products with local colour. Chapter Three views this domestically-produced film as a local response to cultural globalisation and revisits the significance of nativist imagination to the production and consumption of contemporary Taiwan cinema. The last chapter examines auteur-oriented filmmaking in this area and underscores the dependence of art cinema in Taiwan on the film festival economy and international niche markets. These case studies highlight the influence of transnational connections on the production, consumption and content of contemporary Taiwan cinema, showing that Taiwan cinema should be understood in a transnational context.

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Note on Chinese Romanisation and Translation

Throughout this thesis, as a general rule, Chinese names and phrases, except for habitual spellings, are given in Hanyu pinyin, and, wherever possible, so are the names of those who come from outside Mainland China. Chinese names are listed surnames first, followed by given names, except for people who rearrange their names in English publications. The translations of Chinese texts are mine, unless stated otherwise.

Introduction

The commercial success in recent years of such domestic films from Taiwan as *Cape No.7* (*Haijiao qihao*, dir. Wei Te-sheng, 2008), *Monga* (*Mengjia*, dir. Doze Niu Chen-zer, 2010), *You Are the Apple of My Eye* (*Naxienian, women yiqi zhui de nühai*, dir. Giddens Ko, 2011) and *Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale* (*Saideke balai*, dir. Wei Te-sheng, 2011, hereafter *Seediq Bale*), has drawn considerable national attention. Locally-made hit films have come into being one after another and Taiwan cinema has become a topic which attracts much interest. More films from Taiwan have achieved impressive results at the box office than did in the 1990s, while the annual share of films from Taiwan in the domestic market went up from 0.44% in 1999 to 18.65% in 2011 (*Taiwan Cinema*, 2012), showing a dramatic change in domestic film consumption in the 21st century. Moreover, the number of domestic films grossing over NT\$10 million at the Taipei box office has been on the increase in the new millennium; between 1996 and 1999, no locally-made film had reached this target, but since the year 2000, there has been at least one film each year, apart from 2001 and 2003, that attracted such big audiences. The total number of domestic films earning more than NT\$10 million at the Taipei box office between 2007 and 2010 was ten and this number increased by a further nine in 2011 alone. It is clear that the Taiwanese film industry in the new millennium seems to have recovered from its collapse in the late 20th century.

This thesis proposes to investigate the development of Taiwan cinema in the 21st century in terms of transnational connections, in order to shed light on the changing face of Taiwan cinema in the current phase of globalisation. Transnational collaboration is not a fresh phenomenon in Taiwan cinema, but in the past two decades it has become more commonplace, notably so in the new millennium. On the one hand, Taiwanese filmmakers try to highlight cultural specificities to attract local viewers. They incorporate local cultural

elements and grassroots subjects; on the other, it seems that transnational connections are deeply embedded in the production, consumption and imagination of Taiwanese filmmakers. Transnational co-production, the international film festival economy, American-run distributors, the overseas market, the representation of complex landscapes constructed by (post)colonial experience and diverse forms of cross-border flows have all exerted great influence on contemporary Taiwan cinema. In other words, Taiwan cinema relies for its survival at present on both cultural localisation and transnational connections. This thesis adopts a transnational perspective to re-examine the concept of national cinema and globalisation discourse in its analysis of the development of contemporary Taiwan cinema. Four particular case studies, namely of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (*Wohu canglong*, dir. Ang Lee, 2000, hereafter *CTHD*), *Double Vision* (*Shuang tong*, dir. Chen Kuo-fu, 2002), *Cape No.7* and Taiwan auteur cinema will be examined, to shed light on the significance of transnational connections in Taiwan cinema since 2000.

Literature on Taiwan Cinema

By examining the transnational connections in this body of work, the thesis aims to contribute to the understanding of the development of the Taiwanese film industry in the age of globalisation. Particular attention will be given to the industrial context and production and consumption of Taiwan cinema so as to give a more detailed report on its development. The following paragraphs review the literature on this topic.

There is currently relatively little scholarship on Taiwan cinema within English-language academia. Apart from articles in the *Journal of Chinese Cinemas* (first published in 2007), there are some essays about Taiwan cinema in anthologies on the Chinese cinemas and Asian cinemas, for example, *Transnational Chinese Cinemas: Identity, Nationhood*,

Gender (Lu, 1997), *Chinese-Language Film: Historiography, Poetics, Politics* (Lu and Yeh, 2005) and *Asian Cinemas: A Reader and Guide* (Eleftheriotis and Needham, 2006). In addition, Taiwan cinema can be understood as a part of Chinese cinemas and can thus be examined in terms of a transnational and regional framework in book-length studies on Chinese cinemas, for example, Yingjin Zhang's *Chinese National Cinema* (2004).

In the new millennium, an increasing number of works from English-language academia have specialised in Taiwan cinema. Both Chris Berry and Feii Lu's *Island on the Edge: Taiwan New Cinema and After* (2005) and Darrell William Davis and Ru-shou Robert Chen's *Cinema Taiwan: Politics, Popularity and State of the Arts* (2007) are anthologies of essays on Taiwan cinema. The former contains articles about auteur films made by two waves of acclaimed filmmakers of Taiwan's New Cinema (hereafter TNC). Whilst some articles attempt to place the films in a wider economic, political and cultural context and offer an institutional reading, the collection primarily covers film canons of the late 20th century alone and does not elaborate upon the relationship between the industrial institution and contextual factors in this field. The latter volume comprises essays with a varied research focus and range of analytical strategies, which might provoke readers to think about Taiwan cinema in lateral terms. Alongside identity politics and cinematic authorship, some of the essays examine popular texts and industrial phenomena of the early 2000s. Nonetheless, due to its earlier publication date, the anthology could not capture the rapid alteration in Taiwan cinema caused by the industrial upturn since 2008 or the increasing influence of transnational connections on the production, consumption and imagination of Taiwan cinema in the past few years.

In addition, some English-language book-length studies on Taiwan cinema have been published since the late 2000s, but more regard has still been paid to authorship. Some academic publications focus on the oeuvre and career trajectories of specific Taiwanese

auteurs, for example, Whitney Crothers Dilley's *The Cinema of Ang Lee: The Other Side of the Screen* (2007) and James Udden's *No Man an Island: The Cinema of Hou Hsiao-hsien* (2009). Both these books are organised chronologically in order to examine these auteurs' works and careers in different periods. Both Dilley and Udden provide narrative analysis of their research objects. Udden also sought to conceptualise Hou's filmmaking and the formation of his film aesthetics as seen from historical, contextual and institutional perspectives and thus drew a rough sketch of the Taiwanese film industry of the late 20th century. Similarly, Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh and Darrell William Davis (2005) combined an auteurist approach with political-economic examination to throw light on the circumstances of contemporary Taiwan cinema by investigating the careers and films of four acclaimed Taiwanese filmmakers, namely Edward Yang, Hou Hsiao-hsien, Ang Lee and Tsai Ming-ling. This "auteur research" pays more regard to textual analysis and authorship, yet some, Udden's and Yeh and Davis' works, in particular, also give a clear historical account of Taiwan cinema of the 20th century and underscore the influence and constraints of the political and economic context on its development.

Furthermore, the changes in the historical context of Taiwan in the second half of the 20th century, such as the emergence of Taiwanese nativism and political democratisation, have created issues over the national identity of the Taiwanese. Hence it is no wonder that the question of national identity takes centre stage in the study of Taiwan cinema. June Yip (2004) revisits the national identity of the Taiwanese from a postcolonial and postmodern perspective by carefully examining Taiwanese novelist Huang Chun-ming's nativist fictions and Hou's film texts. However, the coverage of her volume is confined to TNC films and she treats films as a platform from which to discuss the construction of Taiwanese national imagination; it lacks a close association with industrial practice or economic institutions. In addition to works specialising in auteurs and the TNC movement, Taiwan cinema can be

historicised and presented in chronological order of events. As Guo-juin Hong notes, in the historiography of Taiwan cinema in English-language scholarship, Taiwanese cinema before 1982 was not represented:

The history of Taiwan cinema is therefore written through a double mediation. For one, Taiwan cinema has no history before film historians write about it; for the other, that written history is predicated on a stunning lack of *pre*-history. Taiwan's cinema is thus *written* into the Western historiography of global cinema, but never on its own terms. (Hong, 2011: 2, italics in original)

Hong's *Taiwan Cinema: A Contested Nation on Screen* (2011) is the first treatise that provides a thorough historical account of Taiwan cinema both before and after the rise of TNC within English-language scholarship. However, he pays more attention to images presented by established auteurs than to the industrial circumstances behind the screen, in particular as regards Taiwan cinema after 1982, and offers only a rough description of Taiwan cinema since 2000. These studies scrutinised the negotiation between film texts and a larger historical, political and cultural context, but an investigation is still required of the influence of industrial structure and conditions as shaped by political and economic factors on the filmic activities in Taiwan cinema.

As a rule, most English-language scholarship on Taiwan cinema has treated films and auteurs from Taiwan and the TNC movement as a cultural object apt for narrative and stylistic analysis and has often conceptualised film texts within a historical context to examine the relationship between the history of Taiwan, national allegories and cultural content. Nonetheless, no film can be created outside an industrial context, and cultural production is always shaped in some way by political and economic conditions and industrial structure. In addition to perspectives of film-as-art and cultural studies, film should be analysed in light of the institutional, political and economic context shown by empirical evidence to comprehend the practical filmmaking process. As Tino Balio (1985:193) reminds us, "with so much attention given to the film as art, it is not easy to view the motion picture

business through the eyes of those who saw it as nothing more than a business opportunity—a chance to invest with the promise of high returns.” Film texts may reflect their social and ideological context; but if the focus is kept purely on texts or specific auteurs, the influence of the industrial, political and economic conditions which actually shape the filmmaking process can be disregarded. In film studies research on film production, together with its distribution and consumption, should be given the same weight as textual analysis.

However, Jeroen de Kloet observes that existing studies of Chinese cinema, including Taiwan cinema, are biased towards the cultural, the aesthetic and the auteur, or the type of Chinese cinemas being shown global acceptance. Thus insufficient regard is paid to truly popular cinema (2007: 65-66), that is, the audience’s role in shaping filmic activities, including practice and content, is disregarded. Moreover, the field tends to favour the textual and ignore the production process, the moment of reception and technological developments (ibid.: 66). Robert C. Allen and Douglas Gomery assert that the motivation for nudging film into a higher art form, coupled with a paucity of industrial data, have compelled film scholars to pay more regard in examining the major avenues of film historical research to textual analysis than to the economics of film (1985: 133). Although it was made nearly three decades ago and is based mainly on American cinema studies, their claim seems relevant to English-language studies on today’s Taiwan cinema, although more studies these days treat Taiwan cinema as a political, economic and social institution.

While an increasing number of scholars have taken an economic or political economy approach to studying film, as mentioned previously, textual analysis still occupies a prominent role in scholarship on Taiwan cinema within English-language academia. By contrast, some volumes on the film industry in Pacific Asia have tackled the Taiwanese film industry. John Lent’s chapter-length piece in his 1990 book *The Asian Film Industry* is an early delineation of the industrial context of Taiwan cinema. His study examines the

Taiwanese film industry in terms of historical background, production, distribution, exhibition, regulation and themes, based on in-depth interviews and empirical data; however, the research was done in the late 1980s and needs to be updated. In addition, presented under the umbrella of Chinese cinemas, Yingjin Zhang (2004), instead of focusing on aesthetic features, applies statistical data to his description, providing a historical account of Taiwan cinema in terms of film production and consumption. The instructive study of Michael Curtin (2007) also goes into the industrial emergence of TV as well as the film business in the Chinese-speaking world; this work covers production, distribution, exhibition and consumption and explores the influence of cultural globalisation over their development, on the basis of in-depth interviews and historical material. As regards Darrell William Davis and Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh's book on the East Asian film industries (2008), it attempts to conceptualise these industries in case studies by integrating industrial analysis, a transnational framework and empirical data.

These books illustrate transnational connections in contemporary filmic activities, stress the need to understand nation-state cinemas from a transnational perspective and elucidate the industrial circumstances of regional cinema. As Chris Berry (2010: 122) points out, "some of the recent scholarship in Chinese cinema studies that has not only participated in the shift to the transnational, but also in a shift away from a focus on texts alone to include production and consumption cultures." Among these publications, Curtin's industry interviews allow readers to approach the film business through the eyes of the industry, contrasting sharply with textual studies. Zhang's and Davis and Yeh's books base their descriptions and analyses of production activities and film consumption on statistical evidence, which offers a clear and more convincing account of the cinema as an institution and helps readers grasp the dynamic relationship between filmic activities, the audience and the historical context. This approach

can help researchers present an overall portrait of the cinematic institution and hence is adopted in this thesis.

Nonetheless, these books, because they cover multiple industries in the region, present Taiwan cinema in a less coherent way. Moreover, they were written too soon to catch the dramatic change in Taiwan cinema in the past few years. Accordingly, there is still a lack of research so far on the influence of transnational connections over the production, consumption and imagination of Taiwan cinema of the 21st century in the film scholarship in English.

As for Chinese-language literature, only a few scholarly publications focus on the 21st century influence of transnational flows on the economic aspect of Taiwan cinema, from production to consumption. It may be said that the existing Chinese-language literature related to the present study covers five possible overlapping subjects, namely, Taiwan cinema of the 21st century (historical period), industry research, authorship and historical research (as a research approach) and Chinese-language film study (the concept of the transnational). The following paragraphs will review the literature in Chinese in order to justify the writing of the present study.

In the past few years, some publications about filmic activities of contemporary Taiwanese filmmakers have begun to emerge, but there is still a lack of critical study specialising in transnational connections in Taiwan cinema. Some books are composed of interviews about their 21st century films with Taiwanese filmmakers (Lin and Wang, 2010; Li and SunTV, 2011); some are collections of reviews of films from Taiwan of the first decade of this century (Cheng, 2010a). These works reveal filmmakers' views on filmmaking and industry insiders' observations about the actual industrial environment, helping readers to appreciate the modern conditions for the Taiwanese film industry. However, the information they offer is seldom analytical or systematically organised, so that an overall picture of the

industry cannot be clearly drawn. Compared with the books mentioned above, *Taiwan Cinema 1992-2011* (2013) by the eminent Taiwanese film critic and festival director Wen Tien-hsiang offers a more detailed review of Taiwan cinema in the past two decades. The volume consists of his yearly observations on the performance of Taiwan cinema from 1992 to 2011 and is the only book to provide a chronological account of the development of the Taiwanese film industry in these two decades. The book shows readers the changes in the industry in this period. However, its discussion is rather descriptive, and the significance for contemporary Taiwan cinema of transnational exchanges is not particularly underscored.

In terms of methodology, this project looks more at the economics of film and the industrial conditions of Taiwan cinema. Here, two scholarly publications are particularly relevant: Feii Lu's *Taiwan Cinema: Politics, Economics and Aesthetics, 1949-1994* (1998) can be regarded as one of the most detailed historical accounts of the Taiwanese film industry in the last century. This chronological treatise lays great stress on the policy changes, economic activities and industrial structure related to Taiwan cinema, examining its history from its re-establishment in the late 1940s to the mid-1990s, in terms of contextual and institutional analysis as well as artistic perspective. More importantly, Lu, using extensive statistical evidence including output and box office statistics, investigates the changes in the production, distribution and exhibition sectors of the film industry and the market structure of Taiwan cinema. Lu's research explores the interrelationship between Taiwan cinema and its political, social and economic context more in terms of political economics than of textual analysis. Although the date of this book precludes it from covering the development of Taiwan cinema in the new millennium, my thesis, like Lu's historical research, will use statistical figures to map the circumstance of the industry and market and analyse the change in the industrial sectors and market structure of Taiwan cinema in the past thirteen years in terms of such contextual factors of Taiwan cinema.

In addition, Hsieh Tsai-miao, instead of considering the national context, chose *CTHD* as a case study by which to investigate the globalisation of Chinese-language films. Her 2004 book, *A Case Study of Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: Globalization of Chinese Language Cinemas*, treats film as an economic institution and goes into the practical process of financing, production, distribution and consumption of *CTHD* to outline how the movie was made and how it achieved its global success. Moreover, she applies economist Michael Porter's diamond model to assess the competitiveness of Chinese-language film in the emerging global cinematic system. The title elucidates the critical role of transnational connections in the financing, production, distribution and consumption of this global breakout hit and points up the transnational co-production and globalisation of the Chinese-language film industry in the new millennium. Her research, more importantly, rethinks Taiwan cinema in terms of a transnational, regional and global framework, going beyond the notion of national cinema, which is a commonplace for film scholarship about Taiwan. Hsieh's case study accounts for the emergence of global market-oriented filmmaking in Chinese-language cinema, characterises this filmmaking strategy and illustrates the impact of the film on the film business, which inspired me to probe into the influence of transnational connections on Taiwan cinema and follow her example of using case studies for in the present research.

Despite these critical studies concerning the production, distribution and consumption of Taiwan cinema, a preference for the textual can be observed in the current locally-produced literature. The rise of Taiwan art cinema in the 1980s through the filmmaking of internationally esteemed Taiwanese auteurs, has engaged the interest of domestic scholars; the connotative meanings, film styles and visual rhetoric of their films have become a key focus of film studies in Taiwan. Accordingly, auteur study has a prominent place in existing academic output on Taiwan cinema. In addition to a great many journal articles and masters'

dissertations, several books follow the careers and films of some established TNC auteurs, such as Hou Hsiao-hsien (Lin, Shen and Li, 2000), Edward Yang (Wong, 1995; Wang, A., 1998), Tsai Ming-liang (Wen, 2002) and Ang Lee (Yeh, 2012). Additionally, key figures of pre-TNC Taiwan cinema have received growing attention from domestic researchers, for example, King Hu (Huang, 1999a), Lee Hsing (Huang, 1999b), Li Han-hsiang (Chiao and Ou, 2007) and Hsin Chi (Huang, J., 2005).

Apart from auteurism, Taiwanese researchers have produced fruitful results in historical research on the local film history in the past two decades. Since the late 1990s, a number of scholars have provided an overview of the history of Taiwan cinema before the 21st century. Although Lu's historical treatise recognises cinema as an economic institution, as noted above, most of the locally-produced historical studies focus on the historical political, social and cultural context in which films were made in Taiwan (Li, 1997; Lee, 1998; Huang and Wang, 2004). For example, Li Tian-duo (1997: 19) views film as an institution embedded in the social context. His book-length study revisits the relationship between Taiwan cinema and its historical background from the colonial to the post-authoritarian periods and foregrounds the influence on it of Taiwan's social environment and political institutions. Whilst Li used statistical evidence to help describe the social circumstances and industrial decline of the late 20th century, neither the economic activities in nor the structure of the industry is the focal point of his study. Thus, the influence of the given structure of industrial divisions and economic conditions over film production is not pointed up.

In addition to the general history, some historical events and periods of Taiwan cinema have become popular research subjects. The TNC movement is the darling of Taiwan's film academia, for example, Ru-shou Robert Chen's 1993 book-length study and edited collections of the work of Peggy Chiao (1988a) and Mi zou and Liang Hsin-hua (1991). In addition, the history before TNC has attracted more attention in Taiwanese film academia

since the 1990s, for example, the history of the post-war Taiwan cinema (Yeh, 1995), Grand Motion Pictures during the mid-1960s (Chiao, 1993) and Taiwanese-dialect cinema (Huang, 1994; Yeh, 1999; Liao, 2001). The phenomenon echoes Taiwanese researchers' growing concern for local historical experience that has accompanied the rise of nativism in the country since the 1980s. Moreover, Liu Hsien-cheng's *Taiwanese Cinema, Society and State* (1997) examines how the state interfered in the development of the Taiwanese film industry in the 1960s and delves into the relationship between state apparatus, civil society and film production. This institutional study demonstrates its author's appreciation of the importance of national institutions and state authorities to filmmaking and shows a research approach different from auteur study and textual analysis.

The above paragraphs have reviewed the current literature related to the research object and research approaches of my historical study. As a whole, what there is of Chinese-language literature on Taiwan cinema pays more attention to subjects related to national interests than to the economics of film. These historical studies are more akin to social film history and see cinema as a cultural document which reflects the national, social and political context in which cinema develops. They may refer to transnational exchanges in the history of Taiwan cinema. However, they still tend to be carried out through the lens of national cinema and do not underscore the growing significance of transnational links to Taiwan cinema. For example, Chen (1993) researches the presentation of historical experience, language use, gender issues, and cultural and national identity in TNC films, seeing them as a reflection of the changing social, political and cultural environment of Taiwan and the representation of the national imagination and historical experience of the Taiwanese. Whilst it tackles the influence of foreign films over Taiwan cinema, Chen's research may be said to revolve around the national. The concept of national cinema can be seen as relevant to an understanding of the history of Taiwan cinema in the last century, such as the TNC

movement. However, an increase in various types of cross-border flows, transnational filmic activities and interconnectivity between the film industries of different countries has questioned the status of national cinema today. The transnational nature of Chinese cinemas, which will be elaborated later in this thesis, also makes it necessary to rewrite the history of Taiwan cinema from a transnational perspective.

Nonetheless, the concept of Chinese-language cinema has in recent decades received more attention in Taiwan's film academia, which may indicate that Taiwanese scholars have begun to adopt a perspective different from the national to understand Taiwan cinema and reveal their growing regard for the interconnection between Chinese-speaking regions. The volume edited by William Tay (1995) as well as that by Li (1996) group together academic papers about different Chinese-language cinemas under the name "Chinese-language cinema" (*Huayu dianying*). Tay's edited collection primarily concerns identity issues as tackled in films from Taiwan, Hong Kong and China; Li's anthology separates the contributions into three sections, concerning Taiwan, Hong Kong and Chinese cinema, and gives more consideration to the relationship between film, the social environment and historical experience. Although Liao Gene-fon's contribution (1999) in *Romance of Three Cities: Studies on Chinese Cinemas* (Yeh, Tong and Ho, 1999) provides a general overview of the situation for the production, distribution and exhibition of the Taiwanese film industry in the mid-1990s, the multi-author volume also contains essays which pay limited attention to the economics of film and industrial structure in general in Chinese-language cinema.

However, the appearance of edited volumes on Chinese-language cinema does not confirm that the concept of transnational cinema has come to the attention of Taiwanese scholars. In fact, these publications are better understood as multinational rather than transnational research. The concept of Chinese-language cinema accentuates cultural and linguistic links and can be used to transcend political and geographical boundaries. However,

these selections do not bring out strongly enough the transnational connections embedded in film practice, content and history, although some articles deal with border-crossing experiences such as diasporic identity. Arguably, they treat these Chinese-language cinemas separately and distinctively, and the transnational connections between them in both practice and content do not receive much attention.

Still, the rapid growth of transnational filmic exchanges in the new millennium has engaged the interest of some researchers, notably after the phenomenal success of *CTHD*. Apart from masters' dissertations (Kuo, 2005; Wang, Chuan-tzung, 2005; Tseng, 2006; Liang, 2010), a few scholarly works scrutinise the concept of cinematic transnationalism and transnational connections in contemporary Taiwan cinema. In addition to Hsieh's study, discussed above, two of Wei Ti's articles spotlight the complex impact of economic and cultural globalisation on the local film industry.¹ His 2004 paper analyses different types of response from Taiwanese filmmakers to the globalisation of cinema; the 2006 essay reviews the history of transnational co-production and the debate on its economic, artistic and cultural impact on national cinema. Wei's papers provide a brief theoretical review of transnational co-production and a general depiction of the transnational co-production strategies adopted by Taiwanese filmmakers in the early 2000s, but the deepening and spread of transnational connections in Taiwan cinema in the past decade are not explored and the vacant space in the current literature still needs to be filled.

Even though the significance of transnational connections to cinema has been gradually recognised in Chinese-language scholarship in the past decade, academic studies of transnational cinema and transnational connections in Taiwan cinema are still sparse. The lack of studies on cinematic transnationalism in this literature also compels the present thesis

¹ Wei Ti's 2010 Chinese-language article, *Constructing and Deconstructing the "New Asian Cinema"*, studies transnational co-production within East Asia, but it does not pay particular attention to the Taiwanese film industry. His English-language article *In the Name of "Asia"* (2011) can be viewed as the English translation of this article.

to refer mainly to English-language scholarly writing when discussing transnational connections in Taiwan cinema. Accordingly, this thesis will view the various filmmaking strategies of Taiwanese filmmakers as their responses to the industrial circumstances of the age of globalisation, in order to shed light on the relationship between the industrial structure, film market, film practice and the political, cultural and economic context of Taiwan in the transnational context and in this way begin to fill the relevant gaps in the existing literature in both languages.

Collection and Presentation of Data

With such a subject, numerical data is of central importance to the analysis in the present work. The production and consumption figures referred to are gathered from various sources. The figures of the annual film production and the annual box office earnings in Taiwan are mainly cited from *Taiwan Cinema*, a website launched by the Taiwanese government, containing the official industrial and theatrical statistics; however, figures before 1996 are not provided. The *Taiwan Cinema Yearbook* is another main source from which this study quotes box office numbers for films from Taiwan. These yearbooks are published by the Chinese Taipei Film Archive, a non-profit corporation sponsored and supervised by the government; and they provide figures for the theatrical receipts of Chinese-language films at the Taipei box office from 1988 onwards, except for 1994.² These box office figures are based on data released by the Taipei Film Trade Association, data which are also used to determine the amount of the state subsidies for film marketing and exhibition in Taiwan.

Although both *Taiwan Cinema* and the *Taiwan Cinema Yearbook* could be regarded as more credible sources of the statistics of Taiwan cinema, they sometimes provide inconsistent

² The data for 1993 are also incomplete.

information. For example, the two-part epic *Red Cliff* (*Chibi*, dir. John Woo, 2008/2009) was primarily financed and produced by filmmakers and companies in various Chinese-speaking regions. However, the screening licence for which its film company applied in Taiwan was one for “foreign film” since the project was partly financed by American parties (Wang, C., 2010b: 77). Consequently, in the official statistics shown on the website of *Taiwan cinema*, the film was put in the category of foreign motion pictures (*Waiguo dianyingpian*), not domestically-produced ones (*Guochan dianyingpian*) or domestic motion pictures (*Benguo dianyingpian*), whereas in the statistics presented in the *Taiwan Cinema Yearbook* it is categorised as a Chinese-language film. Such inconsistencies result not only from the differences in their classifications but also from the growth of transnational filmic activities. Today, many countries can recognise an increasing number of films as domestic films, due to transnational co-production and the fact that the production of a domestic film sometimes relies heavily upon efforts beyond national borders. As Berry (2010: 119) claims, “increasing levels of cross-border activities limit how meaningful territory-based output statistics are, but also [the fact] that those statistics obscure and confuse the transnational reality of the contemporary situation.” The mismatch between national statistics and cross-border filmic activities brings into question the relevance of national cinema and highlights the need to understand contemporary cinema in terms of transnational connections.

In addition, the figures about film costs and foreign consumption of films are mainly obtained from the mass media in Taiwan and given countries and some websites, such as *Atmovies* (Taiwan), *Box Office Mojo* and *Internet Movie Database*, apart from the statistical data released by foreign authorities. Among these data, the figures collected from the mass media are often disclosed by filmmakers and film companies, but they are less reliable, inasmuch as they may have been released for marketing purposes. Furthermore, information on the consumption of films from Taiwan in foreign markets is more difficult to gather,

unless they perform so impressively in the given film markets as to get media coverage. Allen and Gomery (1985: 133) and Janet Wasko (2003: 12) assert that the dearth of studies on the film industry can be partly attributed to the difficulty in accessing reliable and relevant data and accurate and consistent figures. This applies also to studies of the Taiwanese film industry. Such numerical information might help the researcher to offer a more credible analysis of the contemporary situation of Taiwan cinema; however, these figures should be taken as indications rather than absolutely accurate evidence

As regards data presentation, whilst the thesis explores the consumption of domestic films in the Taiwanese film market, the figures which it presents about film consumption in Taiwan are only those of box office receipts in Taipei, unless specified otherwise. In many Asian countries, including China and Taiwan, the box office statistics are partial rather than nationwide, on account of the incomplete national computer-based box office statistical system and complex local distribution and exhibition systems. Taipei is the only city in Taiwan to have accurate data regarding ticket sales, because of the installation of computerised sales reporting systems. Due to a lack of data regarding nationwide ticket sales and the complex distribution and exhibition system in Taiwan, the national box office is usually estimated at double the box office figure of Taipei. Steve Kappen, the general manager of Taiwan's Warner Village, contends that industry conventions underestimate film attendance in Taiwan, since they assume that ticket sales outside Taipei are roughly equal to those within (Curtin, 2007: 103). However, according to the Department of Household Registration (http://www.ris.gov.tw/zh_TW/346) the population of Taipei in 2012 accounted for only 11% of the country's population.

As a matter of fact, with the revival of Taiwan's commercial cinema in the past few years, its steady increase of multiplexes and the introduction of computerised sales reporting systems to theatres outside Taipei, the ticket sales of a number of domestically-produced

films particularly popular in the middle and south of Taiwan due to their strong local flavour, were reported to be more than twice their box office grosses in Taipei. For example, the total box office takings of the two-part epic *Seediq Bale* at the Taipei box office came to only NT\$334.4 million, compared with NT\$810 million in total from the whole Taiwanese film market (Wang, C., 2012a: 50; Tsai, 2012). The total gross takings of *David Loman (Dawei luman*, dir. Chiu Li Kwan, 2013) (NT\$413 million) amounted to more than three times the takings for Taipei (NT\$119 million) (Chen, Yu-qiang, 2013; *Atmovies*, 2013).

However, in this thesis the analysis of film consumption is based on the figures shown for the Taipei box office. Although nationwide box office results of some films were released by the filmmakers and distributors and reported in the press or on their own online platforms, such as Facebook, most of these reports can be seen as congratulatory coverage of their success. Nationwide box office grosses of most films from Taiwan are still unavailable, in particular box office flops. By contrast, information on the consumption of all films at the Taipei box office is published in the *Taiwan Cinema Yearbook*; thus their commercial performance can be evaluated, although the state of film consumption in the whole of Taiwan may not be inferred from it. In addition, figures in foreign currency are in the thesis converted into local currency (New Taiwan Dollar) to avoid the confusion caused by fluctuations in exchange rates over the assessment of film investment and consumption and to place the examination in the context of Taiwan. Converted monetary figures in the thesis are based on the approximate exchange rate during the screening period of the films concerned, using *XE Currency Charts* (<http://www.xe.com/currencycharts/>).

Conceptualising Cinema Under Globalisation

To choose “Taiwan cinema” as a research object assumes that cinema can be treated as a historical object framed by cultural and geographical boundaries. This assumption underlines that within national boundaries the state mechanism directly and indirectly influences economic business and cultural production. At the same time, it is linked to the dialectical relationship between the representation/formation of film and cultural discourses on national cinema. In international politics, complex political and historical factors have left the legal status of Taiwan contentious. Nevertheless, regardless of the political controversy, it is undeniable that the fact of the enduring historical separation has “formed quite distinctive national cinemas within each territory [China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan]” (Yeh, 1998). The appearance of Taiwan cinema today is closely related to changes in the political, economic and cultural context of the island; however, the convoluted political, economic and cultural relationships between Taiwan and neighbouring Chinese-speaking areas and the process of globalisation show the insufficiency of a national framework for understanding contemporary Taiwan cinema. Whilst the distinctiveness of Taiwan cinema makes it appear a national cinema, it should be conceptualised through dual theoretical prisms and the dialectics between national cinema and transnational.

National Cinema

National cinema is a concept to be applied to filmic activities in given national states for exploring the relationship between nations, states, economic activities, cultural formation and cinematic artefacts. Nonetheless, “national cinema” is an ambiguous term and its definition varies in different contexts. National cinema is often seen as a descriptive category for systematically organising films in accordance with nationality. Andrew Higson asserts that

national cinema can be defined by “comparing and contrasting one cinema to another, thereby establishing varying degrees of otherness . . . [and] exploring the cinema of a nation in relation to other already existing economies and cultures of that nation state” (1989: 38). Accordingly, national cinema implies a hegemonic process of achieving consensus as well as a means of cultural/economic resistance and the assertion of national autonomy. However, this claim was developed on the questionable premise of stable and coherent national identity, on which the emergence of transnational order in the era of globalisation has cast further doubt.

Moreover, the complexity of cinema as a cultural product enables the concept of national cinema to be understood in various terms, making it hard to offer a universal and precise definition is. The four possible approaches to national cinema proposed by Higson (1989: 36-37)—economic, text-based, exhibition-led/consumption-based and criticism-led—show how complex the idea may be. Stephen Crofts also considers that analyses of nation-state (or “national”) cinemas involve various dimensions, such as production, distribution, discourses and cultural specificity. They can refer to practical cinematic activities, such as production systems and film consumption in nation states. They can also be perceived as discourses critically and ideologically tying together nationalist discourses, national identity, national cultural specificity and specific cinematic artefacts (1998: 386-389). The difference shows that national cinema can be a discursive and multi-faceted notion used to conceptualise many cinematic activities in nation states. Since national cinema is a concept of diverse elements and statuses, Tom O’Regan suggests viewing national cinema as “a film milieu made up of antagonistic, complementary and simply adjacent elements, which are to be made sense of in their own terms” (1996: 4). In this regard, studying Taiwan cinema from the perspective of national cinema would do well to focus on what these elements say about Taiwan rather than what Taiwan cinema is.

In addition to viewing national cinema as a descriptive category for systematically organising films in accordance with nationality, the notion can be perceived at an ideological level. Historically, European countries have employed the concept of national art cinema as a strategy in line with their legislation after WWII to revive the national film industry, cultivate the national culture and resist Hollywood's domination of local markets (Neale, 1981: 29-30; Tudor, 2005: 133). Such a strategy assumes that nation-state cinema can show and define national specificity and speak for/of the nation. In this regard, national cinema can be understood as a process of the territorialisation of the cultural artefact where cinema is, in Susan Hayward's words, a "national bounded cultural artefact" (2000: 91). However, this self-reflexive and self-fulfilling essentialist perspective depends upon the questionable presumption that national culture and identity are fixed, homogenised and distinctive. This formulation, it may be argued, implicitly takes for granted a one-to-one relationship between cultural artefacts, national imagination and cultural identity. It overlooks the diversity and eclecticism in national cultures and risks imputing cultural homogenisation and internal colonialism. Hence, although agreeing that it is still relevant at the level of state policy and international marketing, Higson criticises the concept of national cinema for its incompetence to reflect the impurity and hybridity of cultural formations and the increase of cross-border cultural and capital flows in the globalising world (2000: 67-69).

Globalisation and Cinema

The insufficiency of the concept of national cinema is underscored by the globalisation process. Globalisation is a fashionable and disputable concept used to describe the rapidly increasing interconnectivity and interdependence between different components of every aspects of social life on Earth. Innovations in communication technology and organisational forms, along with capitalist modernisation, which is closely associated with the accelerated

pace of economic processes and social life (Harvey, 1990: 232), have allowed the compression of time to reconfigure geographical space in a post-Fordist economy. This alteration has diminished the significance of spatial barriers and hastened the annihilation of space by time, bringing the sense of a shrinking world. With regard to this changing world order, Anthony Giddens focuses on social relations and defines globalisation as “the intensification of world-wide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (1990: 64). Such ideas evoke the phenomenon of globalisation in social activities and individual experiences, while Roland Robertson’s emphasis on “the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole” (1992: 8) further highlights that a critical feature of modern globalisation is the sense of wholeness. In other words, globalisation is related to the reconstruction of previous temporal-spatial concepts and societal relationships, displaying people’s growing capacity for activities and imagination beyond boundaries, together with the possibility of developing them.

Changes concurrent with the globalisation process, such as deregulation, convergence, consolidation, diversification, digitisation, increasing geographical mobility and the establishment of global penetration of information networks, have facilitated and speeded up cross-border business and information exchange, thereby reconstructing everyday experience and reconfiguring power relationships in the world system. These phenomena have “rendered the boundaries of the nation-state porous and have also weakened the regulatory control of governments, thereby eroding the sense, and indeed the reality, of national autonomy” (Hjort and Petrie, 2007: 8). In these circumstances, national and cultural boundaries are increasingly permeable, for “globalization lifts cultural life off its hitherto close connection with physical locality” (Tomlinson, 1999: 141). Consequently, many societies have felt a degree of de-territorialisation and de-nationalisation.

The rapid circulation of global cultural flows of various kinds, such as capital, information and human beings, reconfigures the global ethnic, cultural and economic landscapes, complicates the formation of cultural hybridity and frees cultural imaginations from national boundaries. Film, despite the asymmetrical national economic and cultural power relationships involved, can be viewed as an artistic form with international legibility, owing to its reliance on visual imagery and the possibility of cross-cultural translation. Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden (2006: 3-4) point out that cultural globalisation has reduced the cultural and national particularity of epistemological and referential frameworks for decoding film content, which encourages the circulation and consumption of cinematic artefacts. Accordingly, it is not surprising that border-crossing of practice and content has gradually become commonplace in contemporary cinema.

Arjun Appadurai (1996: 33-36) has proposed five dimensions of global cultural flows, namely ethnoscaples, technoscapes, financescapes, mediascapes and ideoscapes, to delineate the fluidity and complexity of global cultural landscapes and the disjunctive relationships between them. These flows, in particular ethnoscapes, technoscapes and financescapes, not only show the reconstruction of the relationship between human activities and borders but also explain the emergence of diverse types of transnational connection in today's cinemas, such as transnational production and distribution and the inclusion of diasporic, displaced and border-crossing experiences in films. Films and filmmaking activities may not necessarily reflect national specificity and the economic context of the national film industry; transnational connections also make it difficult to group some films and filmmaking activities within a single national profile. The national model has become less effective in shedding light on contemporary filmmaking practice and film culture today.

Arguably, these international flows have strengthened the links between different cinemas around the world, thereby enhancing the interconnectivity between them and

forming a global cinematic system. However, the globalisation process is associated with uneven development and power inequality; some powerful agents, such as the American film industry, have a pivotal role in relation to others within the global exchange of flows. Since cultural transmission can be perceived as a multidirectional two-way mode, asymmetric power relationships and power struggles are to be seen in global cultural landscapes. As for cinema, post-Fordist economic trends have motivated film agents, in particular Hollywood studios, to exploit what Toby Miller and others call the New International Division of Cultural Labours (NICL), maximising profits by collaborating with foreign parties to gather overseas resources, reduce production costs and penetrate international markets (Miller et al., 2001). Such an approach allows Hollywood to consolidate its global dominance and may lead to Americanisation. It could also, however, be understood as a strategy to revitalise other national film industries. According to Mette Hjort and Duncan Petrie, this phenomenon shows that national film policy, in a shift from a cultural to an economic imperative, is now more inclined to embrace the putative benefits of the NICL by collaborating with American studios than it is to protect local cultural production under threat from Americanisation (2007: 9). This phenomenon also shows the demand to shift the focus from a territory-based national framework to a broader one of scholarship under globalisation, partly driven by market-led capitalism.

Transnational Cinema

The territorial state-based framework depends on the presumption that filmic activities can be clearly distinguished into national categories; however, the present circumstances challenge this assumption. Marsha Kinder claims that the concept of national cinema is increasingly decentred and assimilated into larger transnational systems of entertainment (1993: 440). Contemporary cinema is increasingly de-territorialised, putting nation-bounded assumptions

in an untenable position. Hence the concept of transnational cinema is mooted as a way of conceptualising the relations between cinema and transnational movements in a post-national and global context and filmic activities, in particular production, distribution and exhibition, are the key objects for such an approach to elucidate. A number of scholars, including Kinder (1993), Crofts (1998) and Higson (2000), have suggested adopting transnational concepts to grasp the complex nature of contemporary filmic activities and cultures.

Although the terms “international” and “transnational” are in film studies often interchangeable, Berry considers “international”, literally “between nations”, to be associated with the international political order which revolves around national states and national sovereignty. By contrast, “transnational” occupies another cell of meaning. Derived from the international order, the object’s flexibility and its relative autonomy from the state are at the core of the newly emerging idea of transnational order (2010: 119-121). Agents in the transnational arena could be small units of the world, including individuals, enterprises and movements, rather than nation-states. The prefix “trans-” is used in the sense of “transcending”, “crossing” and “beyond” according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2013). Accordingly, the transnational, it may be claimed, accentuates the participant’s capacity and intention to operate on a scale that transcends national boundaries. In this sense, to use “transnational” to describe cross-border filmic activities may liberate cinema from its bounded territory, stress the relative autonomy of its participants from the state and highlight a structural shift in the world system.

In addition, some scholars attempt to theorise on transnational filmic activities, production in particular, rather than addressing the definition and coverage of transnational cinema. Mette Hjort distinguishes marked transnationality from unmarked transnationality on the basis of content and reception. A case with marked transnationality intentionally makes viewers as they absorb various factors aware of transnational components, such as narrative

matters, locations and editing, and there may be no strong correlation between marked transnationality and transnational filmmaking. By contrast, a film with unmarked transnationality is made through transnational collaboration, but it does not encourage viewers think about transnationality (2010: 13-14). In addition, Hjort (2010) divides cinematic production into nine types of cinematic transnationalism (not necessarily mutually exclusive) according to project orientation and the corresponding production models.³ She offers a proposal to systematically portray and characterise the complicated phenomenon by differentiating between the motivation of one participant and another to engage in transnational activities. Although the classification is somewhat unclear and even confusing, due to the complicated and discursive nature of filmic practice in practice, it underscores the diversity of the production modes, production conditions, concerns and aims of transnational film productions. For example, several types of Hjort's cinematic transnationalism, such as *epiphanic transnationalism*, which stresses regional identities, *affinitive transnationalism*, which is based on the similarity between participants in ethnicity, language and cultures, *cosmopolitan transnationalism*, which can be linked with diasporic filmmakers' flexible citizenship, *globalizing transnationalism*, which refers to high-budget transnational co-production and *auteurist transnationalism*, which is associated with auteur cinema, may shed light on the diverse types and scales of transnational film co-production in Taiwan cinema of the 21st century.

Whilst transnational cinema has become a popular kind of discourse in film studies, the complexity of globalisation complicates the academic use of this concept. According to William Higbee and Song Hwee Lim, the term of "transnational cinema" has been used to analyse three different objects of border-crossing activity in film studies: cinematic activities

³ The nine types of cinematic transnationalism are epiphanic, affinitive, milieu-building, opportunistic, cosmopolitan, globalizing, auteurist, modernizing, and experimental.

across national borders, the growing cinematic connections within a region and the development of accented cinema (2010: 9). In other words, transnational cinema offers a conceptual framework in which to investigate all forms of cross-border activity related to film and cinematic mobility and the relations can be unpacked at both physical and psychological levels between cinema and the various moving experiences of human life. The diversity of focus in this approach not only reflects the researcher's specific concern and background, but also indicates the impurity, eclecticism and hybridity of the cultural forms shaped by diverse forms of cross-border flow.

Although cultural globalisation brings out the significance of a transnational framework for understanding contemporary cinema, this art form has never lacked national elements. According to Berry (2006: 149), "Assumptions that many of us made a few years ago about the waning of the national and the waxing of the transnational are being challenged in three areas . . . : the general political and economic realm, film production and film studies." At the same time, Higbee and Lim propose adopting a critical transnationalism for both moving away from a national/transnational dichotomy and reaffirming the need when examining cross-border filmic activities to take the national into account. The approach aims "not to theorize transnational cinema only in the conceptual-abstract but also to examine its deployment in the concrete-specific so that the power dynamic in each case can be fully explored and exposed" (2010: 10). Moreover, a critical transnationalism "interrogates how these film-making activities negotiate with the national on all levels—from cultural policy to financial sources, from the multiculturalism of difference to how it reconfigures the nation's image of itself" (ibid.: 18). In this regard, the study of Taiwan cinema should focus on both the national and the transnational to shed light on the interaction between cross-border filmic activities and all aspects of the nation.

Transnational Cinema in a Chinese Context

In the case of China, the transnational also offers an analytical prism through which to comprehend different national cinemas with the shared cultural heritage. China has been split into three major political entities: the mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong. The labyrinthine relationship between them not only complicates national/cultural identities but also both separates and entangles the development of their respective cinemas. In this light, their shared linguistic and cultural traits increase the permeability of political borders, which in the past few decades has nurtured the growth of transnational film production and consumption and has fostered the imagination of the Chinese-speaking world. The rise and opening up of China and regionalisation have also provided Chinese-speaking filmmakers with economic incentives to engage in transnational collaboration, thereby weakening the separation between different Chinese-language cinemas. Accordingly, Song Hwee Lim conceives the forms of cinema in the Chinese-speaking region as plural—Chinese cinemas—to “distinguish film-making practices among mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and the Chinese diaspora” (2007a: 3). Meanwhile, Chris Berry and Laikwan Pang remove the “s” and speak of Chinese cinema to stress the interconnectivity and transnational linkages between these cinemas (2008: 4-5). Although they want to accentuate different points, the decision of both sides implies the great significance of the concept of the transnational for understanding cinematic activities within the Chinese-speaking region. In order to stress the distinctiveness of Taiwan cinema and avoid confusion between the terms “Chinese cinema” and “the cinema of the People’s Republic of China”, this thesis will use the plural form, “Chinese cinemas” or “Chinese-language cinemas”, to denote the forms of cinema in the Chinese-speaking region.

The interrelation between Chinese cinemas has motivated scholars to examine them by placing them in a transnational context. Sheldon Hsiao-peng Lu (1997) proposes the idea of “transnational Chinese cinemas” to highlight the transnational nature of “Chinese national

cinema". From his perspective, Chinese *national* cinema should be understood in the plural and in a transnational context, due not only to cultural and economic globalisation but also to national factors, including the historical split, the history of Chinese cinemas and the diversity of Chineseness (ibid.: 3). Similarly, Sheldon Hsiao-peng Lu and Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh suggest using the concept of "Chinese-language cinema" to refer to Chinese-language films made anywhere in the world and cast doubt on the territorial fixity of the nation-state:

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 non-equivalence and asymmetry between language and nation bespeaks [sic] continuity and unity as well as rupture and fragmentation in the body politic and cultural affiliations among ethnic Chinese in the modern world. (Lu and Yeh, 2005: 1-2)

These strategies enable the examination to go beyond political barriers, but they do not liberate these "national" cinemas from hypothetical frameworks, such as the Chinese nation. Lu claims that three separate Chinese cinemas "all attempt to signify a shared object: 'China'" (1997: 12). This presumption groups all these cinemas under the umbrella of "Chinese" and "does not so much displace the nation as reinstate it within a larger framework" (Lim, 2006: 5). Lim (ibid.) claims in addition that Lu and Yeh's approach neglects translingual crossover and minority-language filmmaking in contemporary Chinese cinemas.

However, Shu-mei Shih declines to categorise Chinese (diasporic) cinemas outside China under the umbrella term "Chinese". Deriving the idea of the Francophone, Shih (2007: 4) defines the Sinophone as "a network of places of cultural production outside China and on the margins of China and Chineseness, where a historical process of heterogenizing and localizing of continental Chinese cultural has been taking place for several centuries." By analogy with the Francophone's relation to France, she excludes China from the domain of Sinophone and accentuates the capability of the Sinophone, the periphery, against China, the centre (ibid.: 30). In Shih's view, the Sinophone can be a site for combating China-centrism and "the fulcrum of resistant and transformative identities" (ibid.: 192). Furthermore, the

Sinophone is linked with the languages that people speak rather than a site bound by their nationality and ethnicity. Hence, it is inherently transnational and global (ibid.: 30).

Shih uses the Sinophone to transcend ethnic and political boundaries and connect dispersed Sinophone peoples outside China, underlining transnationality within the Sinophone region. However, the deliberate exclusion of China from the domain of the Sinophone might imply that a variety of transnational connections between China and the so-called Sinophone region were ignored in an age of globalisation. In terms of the practical development of cinemas in the Chinese-speaking world, Shih's binary system cannot effectively map out the increasingly closer interconnection of Chinese cinemas nor explain the considerable influence of the cinema of the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the filmmaking activities within the Chinese-speaking world. For Lu (2008), indeed, the exclusion of China itself from the scope of the Sinophone is "unsound theoretically and inaccurate empirically":

[D]oes transnationality only gather momentum in Hong Kong and Taiwan, and stops [sic] short of crossing the Chinese border? The transnational is by definition border-crossing. China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the Chinese diaspora are mutually imbricated in the globalizing world. The concept of "Sinophone" loses its critical edge in this exclusionary approach to China and the Chinese diaspora. (Lu, 2008)

Despite its flaws, however, Shih's claim, like the ideas suggested by Lu and Yeh, also invokes the notion of the transnational.

On the whole, even in the face of these categorical deficiencies, the concept of transnational cinema challenges the fixity of the relationship between cinema and nation. It also underlines the particularly strong interconnectivity and interdependence between Chinese cinemas resulting from their ethnic, cultural and linguistic affinity and contextual factors and the development of diasporic Chinese cinema. These characteristics cannot be understood by the concepts of national, supranational, regional, world, or global cinemas alone. It is possible to view Taiwan cinema as a national cinema of Taiwan, a part of

“Chinese” national cinema, a component of (transnational) Chinese cinemas, or a participant in Chinese-language cinema; both the national and transnational are critical to its development. Thus, to explore the power dynamics behind transnational filmic activities and interrogate the dialogic relationship between border-crossing, local, national, regional and global cinemas, Taiwan cinema should be treated as a national cinema (of Taiwan) in a transnational context.

A Brief Historical Account of Taiwan Cinema

Although the history of Taiwan cinema, together with those of Hong Kong and China, is closely related to a transnational context, the nation occupied a critical role in its development in the 20th century. Nonetheless, the influence of transnational connections over Taiwan cinema has rapidly increased in the past few decades with the expansion of global capitalism, technological innovation and changes in the national, regional and global context. This section will briefly review the history of Taiwan cinema and bring out the role of the nation and transnational connections in its development to provide a background to the cases discussed in subsequent chapters.

Arguably, the history of post-war Taiwan cinema consists of three stages, namely, the cinema of authority (1949–1982), of authorship (1982–1999) and of markets (2000 to the present); the two shifts between these paradigms are connected with changes in historical circumstances. According to Yeh and Davis, Taiwan cinema in the 20th century can be perceived as a cinema of authority and a cinema of authorship. During the authoritarian period, the development of Taiwan cinema was generally guided by the state, but auteurs as the pivotal players in Taiwanese cinema replaced the authorities after the emergence of Taiwan New Cinema (TNC) in 1982, which represented the shift from authority to authorship

(2005: 6). In the new millennium, it may be claimed that markets have gradually taken over the central position in Taiwan cinema. Responding to the continual decline of the Taiwanese film industry in the late 20th century, Taiwanese filmmakers began to attach more importance to market taste. The progress of market-oriented filmmaking, including both local production and transnational co-production, together with external contextual factors, has led to the recent revival of the Taiwanese film industry. These paradigm shifts, from authority to authorship to markets, reveal the correlation between Taiwan cinema and the dramatic changes in Taiwan during the past few decades, including the political transition, the rise of nativism and economic liberalisation.

Taiwan Cinema as a Cinema of Authority (1949–1982)

While both national elements and transnational connections were important to the development of Taiwan cinema in its early stages, Taiwan cinema to some degree centred on the national and can be regarded as a cinema of authority, inasmuch as the state had at first a dominant position over its development. Although films were introduced into Taiwan during the Japanese colonial period,⁴ the Taiwanese film industry, in particular the production sector, was primarily established when the regime of the Kuomintang (KMT, aka Chinese Nationalist Party), who retreated to Taiwan in 1949, integrated the state-owned cinematic institutions which had migrated from mainland China into the local filmic organisations established by the Japanese during the colonial period (Lu, 1998: 33-43). The historical separation caused by the Chinese Civil War and the KMT regime's subsequent authoritarian rule made Taiwan cinema during the period an authority-guided national cinema.

⁴ Taiwan was ceded to Japan after the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912) suffered a defeat in the first Sino-Japanese War in 1895 and returned to the Republic of China (ROC) in 1945 after World War II. It is believed that Toyojiro Takamatsu's 1907 documentary was the first film produced in Taiwan (Hong, 2011: 19).

As Hong claims, the struggle of the KMT regime was twofold: “claiming sovereignty over the Mainland, while asserting legitimacy and establishing authority on Taiwan” (2011: 38). The troubled conditions caused by the military pressures from the PRC, the Communist rebels on the island and conflicts between the KMT’s army and local residents, such as the February 28 Incident of 1947,⁵ impelled the KMT to declare martial law in 1949 and establish an authoritarian regime to enhance its despotic power, which led to the White Terror in Taiwan (Cheng, 1989; Tien and Chu, 1996).⁶ Moreover, to strengthen its own infrastructural power the KMT created a corporatist structure and patron-client relationship which would penetrate civil society (Wang, 1994; Wang, 1996: 58-61). The power structure the KMT regime created in Taiwan enabled the government to have a profound influence over the restitution and development of Taiwan cinema by means of the state policy and corporatist system.

In this context, cinema was treated as a cultural form of nationalist myth-making with the aim of building and consolidating the sense of “nation” for the sake of the KMT regime. The Republic of China (ROC) government, after its retreat from the mainland, saw Taiwan as the base from which to retake this territory. Consequently, it claimed its legitimate sovereignty over mainland China and attempted to “resinicize” the Taiwanese and construct “spatial and temporal continuity between the island and the continent, consecrating Taiwan as the rightful heir to China’s imperial tradition” (Yip, 2004: 17). In the postcolonial context, cinema became a mass medium to drive the Taiwanese, who had been colonised by Japan for fifty years, to accept the sense of national consciousness articulated by mainland elites and to

⁵ The February 28 Incident was an island-wide rebellion against the KMT regime due to its corruption and monopolistic control over the island’s economy as well as tensions between islanders and mainlanders during the post-war period (Yip, 2004: 105).

⁶ The White Terror in Taiwan refers to the KMT’s suppression of political dissidents under martial law during the authoritarian period (1949-1987). 3,000 to 4,000 people were executed during the period (Udden, 2009: 134). The White Terror is a major collective trauma and scar in Taiwan, as is the February 28 Incident.

construct Chinese nationhood; and the KMT regime's palpable influence over the regulatory body, production institutions such as state-owned studios,⁷ and civil groups, such as the Motion Picture & Drama Association, ROC, drove the production of films serving the state's political interests (Liu, 1997; Lu, 1998: 45-52).

Consequently, cinema in Taiwan served as a tool of the state's nation-building project. Films related to Chinese historical roots and cultural imagination, such as historical costume films (*Guzhuang pian*), were produced in quantity by the Taiwanese film industry and circulated within Taiwan as well as other Chinese-speaking regions to consolidate and proclaim the connection between Taiwan and (cultural) China. Propagandistic and patriotic films meant to enhance national identity and unite the country were extensively produced by state-owned studios, in particular the Central Motion Picture Corporation (CMPC).⁸ Healthy realist films of the 1960s also aimed to provide an encouraging portrayal of Taiwan for both entertainment and propagandistic purposes. Crofts (1998: 389-390) has established a typology of national cinema to differentiate eight varieties of nation-state cinema according to modes of production and the degree of involvement of the state. Drawing on his work, Zhang argues that, according to the typology, Taiwan cinema during the 1960s and 1970s could be understood as totalitarian cinema (2004: 3), but the KMT regime is arguably better understood as an authoritarian than a totalitarian regime (Winckler, 1984: 482; Wang, 1996).

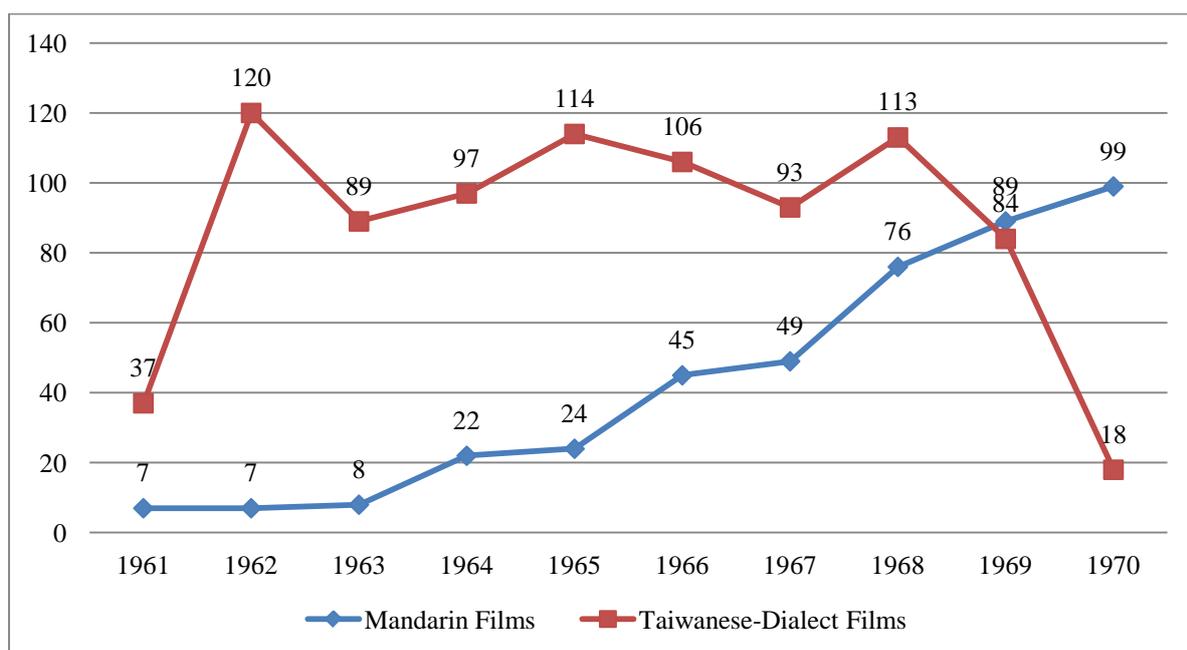
The state's nation-building project also had a structural impact on Taiwan cinema. The government's promotion of mainland culture, Chinese imagination and the suppression of internal contradictions and differences caused the elimination of Taiwanese-dialect cinema.

⁷ During the authoritarian period, the Central Motion Picture Corporation, China Film Studio, and Taiwan Film Studio were Taiwan's three major state-owned film studios.

⁸ For example, the production of *The Descendants of the Yellow Empire* (*Huangdi zisun*, dir. Pai Ko, 1956), a Taiwanese-dialect propagandistic film produced by the state-run Taiwan Film Studio and emphasising the ethnic and cultural links between ethnic Chinese, clearly demonstrates that films were used as the government's nation-builder (Lu, 1998: 70; Hong, 2011: 39-43).

In terms of quantity, before 1970, Taiwanese-dialect films greatly outnumbered films in Mandarin. According to Feii Lu (1998: 449), 1052 Taiwanese-dialect films were produced during the 1950s and 1960s, whereas the number of Mandarin films was 385. Nonetheless, the authorities' promotion of Mandarin and support of Mandarin cinema, together with the social and economic transformation of Taiwan and the industrial defects of Taiwanese-dialect cinema itself, allowed Mandarin cinema to usurp the position of Taiwanese-dialect cinema in the early 1970s (Yeh and Davis, 2005: 24; Lu, 1998: 162-166). Taiwanese-dialect cinema soon petered out thereafter (see Figure 1). In this regard, the authorities' preference for Mandarin cinema to some extent accelerated the marginalisation of dialect cinema in Taiwan, which echoes Higson's claim that "proclamations of national cinema are thus in part one form of 'internal cultural colonialism'" (1989: 44). The development of film policies and the KMT regime's involvement in filmic activities show both the downside of national cinema and the significance of "nation" to the authority-guided Taiwan cinema before the TNC movement.

Figure 1 Quantity of Domestic Film Production (1961–1970) (Source: Lu, 1998: 449)



Moreover, the government's policy of forming a nationalist imagination had greatly influenced domestic commercial filmmaking. The state's strict regulations during the authoritarian period precluded the production of films which critically examined or revealed negative aspects of society and politics. Subsequently, as Yip (2004: 52) maintains, filmmakers set out to produce films of pure escapism so as to avoid controversial political and socio-cultural themes. The production of entertainment-oriented genre films on these lines flourished in Taiwan in the 1960s and 1970s, and thus policy and popular cinemas intermingled. That is, the KMT regime's dominant position in the production sector of Taiwan cinema allowed it to manipulate cinema into creating and promoting whatever nationalist cultural imagination and identity the government desired. Paul Willemsen points out that cinema emerges as an object "in the process of addressing the specific dynamics underpinning and regulating power relations between and within institutional networks . . . [the process] seeks to move in a particular direction, towards an arrangement of power-relations" (2006: 41-42). The process of addressing is never neutral and is affected by the power dynamics of national institutional networks. In this regard, the concept of national cinema is prescriptive rather than descriptive, and the link between national cinema, national identity and national cultural specificity may be artificially and deliberately made. It may be claimed that the gap between a nationalist cultural imagination encouraged by the authorities and local reality in Taiwan was a decisive factor in the rise of a cinema of authorship in the 1980s.

The authorities' interference in the construction of Taiwan cinema not only rendered the concept of national cinema relevant to any analysis of the authority-guided Taiwan cinema, but also enabled transnational connections between Hong Kong and Taiwan cinemas to be deeply imbedded in the industrial and market structures of Taiwan cinema at the time. In order to attract the support of the Hong Kong filmmakers and diminish the influence of

Communist China, Taiwan, as a key overseas market of Hong Kong cinema, had banned the activities of Hong Kong's pro-Communist, or so-called "left wing", filmmakers in Taiwan since the mid-1950s (Huang, J., 2009: 75-76; Liu, 1997: 150-155).⁹ Yet the authorities had provided incentives to encourage the support of the Hong Kong filmmakers as a whole. The declaration of the Regulations Governing the Provision of Guidance of National Motion Picture Industry in 1958 indicated that Hong Kong films, together with domestic films, were defined as examples of "national film" (*Guopian*) in Taiwan and so qualified for Taiwan's film support. Admittedly, the authorities had had a quota system since 1954 to restrict the importing and screening of foreign films in Taiwan, but films from Hong Kong had been exempted (Lu, 1998: 76; Liu, 1997: 70-71). These measures strengthened the ties between Taiwan and Hong Kong cinemas, while the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) in China further strengthened the relationship between these two film industries. That is, transnational connections were treated as a component of the national cinema of the ROC, or Taiwan, during this period. The national and the transnational were sometimes inextricably intertwined in Chinese-language cinema, due to the complex historical background.

Accordingly, whilst Taiwan cinema during the period can be perceived as a nation-building project for the authorities, its development should also be understood in a transnational context. Take, for example, the production sector of the industry. Co-sponsored by Union Film from Taiwan and the Cathay Organisation from Southeast Asia, Li Han-hsiang, an eminent director in Hong Kong's Shaw Brothers Studio, founded Grand Motion Pictures in Taiwan in 1963. Despite its short life (1963-1970), the studio nurtured a number

⁹ In 1956, a group of Hong Kong filmmakers formed The Hong Kong and Kowloon Cinema & Theatrical Enterprise Free General Association Limited (known as the Free Association) in Hong Kong, with the support of the KMT, to oppose the left-wing filmmakers, such as The Great Wall Film Company. The Free Association can be regarded as the gatekeeper to the Taiwanese authorities in Hong Kong, for filmmakers and films from Hong Kong cannot enter Taiwan without registration under it (Huang, J., 2009: 75-76). It also aimed to restrict the distribution of films from the PRC within Hong Kong and South East Asia (*ibid.*). The Shaw Brothers Studio was a key member of the organisation.

of actors, some of whom later became great stars in the Chinese-speaking world, such as Chen Chen. In addition, most of the film crews following Li to Grand were absorbed into the local production sector, including some who later became key filmmakers of Taiwan cinema, such as Sung Tsun-shou.¹⁰ In addition to Grand, many noted Taiwan's films were made by Hong Kong filmmakers. For example, Li's *Hsi Shih: Beauty of Beauties* (*Xishi*, 1965) and King Hu's *wuxia* masterpieces, such as *Dragon Inn* (*Longmen kezhan*, 1967) and *A Touch of Zen* (*Xianü*, 1971).

These filmmakers are also diasporic Chinese, and the representation of cultural China was an implicit motive in their films, which resonated with the nationalist myth-making strategy of the KMT. Moreover, the imported films were strictly censored by the authorities (Liu, 1997: 64-67; Li, 1997: 89-93). Under these constraints, Hong Kong cinema took part in the representation and imaginary construction of the nation in Taiwan. These transnational connections clearly show that the Taiwanese and Hong Kong film industries were interconnected during this period, and that films made by these Hong Kong/diasporic Chinese directors have also influenced their Taiwanese successors. For example, Ang Lee's making of *CTHD* was inspired by Shaw Brothers' Yellow Plum Melody film *The Love Eterne* (*Liang Shanbo yu Zhu Yingtai*, dir. Li Han-hsiang, 1963) and Hu's and the Shaw Brothers' *wuxia* films (Chang, J., 2002: 436-441).¹¹

In addition, thanks partly to the privileges granted by the KMT regime, Hong Kong films had great influence on the structure of the Taiwanese film market in the 20th century. For example, *The Love Eterne* set several exhibition records in Taiwan, such as a theatrical run of 186 days, 930 screenings and 721,929 tickets sold (Zhang, 2004: 137-138).¹²

¹⁰ Sung Tsun-shou was an important director of Taiwan cinema in the 1970s. *At Dawn* (*Poxiao shifen*, 1968) and *Story of a Mother* (*Muqin sanshisui*, 1972) are representative works of his.

¹¹ Yellow Plum Melody (*Huangmeidiao*) is a kind of costume drama musical.

¹² According to Lu (1998: 102), the screening took 162 days.

Consequently, eighty per cent of theatres in Taipei began to screen films in Mandarin, and the number of theatre chains screening Mandarin films in Taipei grew from one to six (Lu, 1998: 138). According to Lu (ibid.: 449), the number of domestic Mandarin films released in Taiwan increased from eight in 1963 to 99 in 1970 (see Figure 1). In this light, he considers *The Love Eterne* a momentous film in boosting Mandarin cinema in Taiwan (ibid.: 114). Nonetheless, the privileged position for Hong Kong films in Taiwan at the time made Hong Kong the primary source of films screened in Taiwan. Between 1970 and 1981 there were twice as many Hong Kong films as domestic films in Taiwan's film market (ibid.: 435); Tsai Kuo-jung (1985, cited in Lu, 1998: 196) also notes that before 1985 around seven of the top ten Chinese-language films at the Taipei box office every year were from Hong Kong. Arguably, the state policy fostered transnational connections between Taiwan and Hong Kong cinemas, which generated a profound impact on the production and consumption of Taiwan cinema. Although authority-guided Taiwan cinema was closely associated with the creation of national consciousness and the authorities' political goals, its development should be understood in a transnational as well as a national context.

Taiwan Cinema as a Cinema of Authorship (1982–1999)

The emergence of Taiwan New Cinema (TNC) in 1982 represented the rise of Taiwan art cinema and the shift from a cinema of authority to a cinema of authorship in the early 1980s. Together with the death of Chiang Kai-shek, the leader of the KMT regime, in 1975, diplomatic setbacks during the 1970s challenged the ROC's legitimacy and weakened the state's authority.¹³ A softer authoritarian rule adopted by the new ROC President Chiang

¹³ During the Cold War between the Western world and the Communist world, the Sino-Soviet split in 1960 made attitudes towards the PRC begin to change (in the early 1970s). Consequently, an increasing number of countries switched their diplomatic recognition of China from the ROC to the PRC. The ROC's withdrawal from the United Nations in 1971 and the severance of diplomatic relations between the ROC and the United States in 1979 were decisive diplomatic setbacks for Taiwan during the period (Lu, 1998: 179-181).

Ching-kuo, son of Chiang Kai-shek, alongside the steady political liberation in Taiwan further relaxed the political atmosphere. In this context, the influence of the state started to wane and, by the late 20th century, film directors had replaced the authorities as the key figures of Taiwan cinema. Whilst the emergence of the TNC movement was encouraged by a “newcomer policy” of the state-owned CMPC, young filmmakers, such as Hou Hsiao-hsien, Edward Yang and Tsai Ming-liang, successively established their own companies rather than working for state-owned studios, enjoying greater creative autonomy from political and industrial intervention. Consequently, the achievements of Taiwan art cinema became a bright spot for Taiwan cinema of the late 20th century, in comparison with the stagnation of the domestic commercial cinema at the time.

In terms of the history of Taiwan cinema, the creation of nation and the development of cinema were mutually constructed. As Hong (2011: 4) claims, “the history of Taiwan cinema . . . is a history of its ever-changing imagination of the ‘nation’ that shapes and is contested by the cinema.” In contrast to the waning of state power during the period, film authors became and still are the key agents directing the representation of the national imagination of Taiwan. The shift from authority to authorship not only reflected the alteration in institutional structure but also echoed the change in the national imagination and identity of Taiwanese society. Following the authorities’ promotion before the 1980s of the imagination of China, as central to Taiwan cinema, its political climate relaxed and with this a nativist literary movement arose to highlight the need for “making Taiwan the centre.” In the 1970s, this brought social consciousness “back to the earth”, thereby contributing to the emergence of a national Taiwanese consciousness and nativism (Yip, 2004: 26-29, 37; Yeh and Davis, 2005: 62-63). Kuan-hsing Chen (2006a: 139) also maintains that the opening up of the political sphere and the incorporation of the national economy into the structure of global capital motivated various cultural forms to go in search of a Taiwanese in place of a

Chinese “lost self”. This “root-land ideology”, or nativism, “both a break with the mainland-oriented proscriptions of KMT as well as an idea reclaimed from the pre-Communist mainland,” allowed TNC directors to “locate their cultural lineage within a specific Taiwan as well as intra-Chinese reference” (Yeh and Davis, 2005: 250-251). The nativist literary movement not only inspired nativism in Taiwan but directly influenced the TNC movement. For example, the omnibus film *The Sandwich Man* (*Erzi de da wanou*, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, Wan Jen and Tseng Chuang-hsiang, 1983), an inaugural project of TNC, was adapted from the works of the nativist writer Huang Chun-ming.

In this context, the national imagination presented by Taiwanese filmmakers has gradually changed. Participants in the TNC movement, born of Taiwanese nativism and local filmmakers, began to investigate Taiwan’s cultural roots, examine their own growing-up experiences and capture the lived experiences of ordinary people. They also dealt with colonial history, political trauma and social transition in modern Taiwan, choosing either realist representation, as Hou Hsiao-hsien did, or modernist exploration, following Edward Yang. Thus, the shift of authority to authorship with the rise of TNC demonstrated a shift in Taiwan cinema from a Sinocentric consciousness to a Taiwan-centred awareness. Whilst Lu views TNC as the representation of auteurs’ personal experiences rather than their inclination towards nativism (1998: 280), the change in the authorities’ attitude and the filmmakers’ concern to refer to their personal experiences during this period was associated with the growing nativist consciousness. Wu Meiling (2005: 77-78) suggests that TNC filmmakers integrated personal experience with historical nostalgia and adopted a realistic and sympathetic approach in order to reconstruct the missing post-war history of Taiwan, which had been taboo. In this regard, TNC films provided Taiwanese people with a platform from which to express the ethos of sadness from historical trauma implanted in the unconscious mind of the Taiwanese people, partly as a result of the KMT’s oppression. Consequently, this

sadness was a distinct feature embedded in TNC films during the 1980s (ibid.). The “nation” built through the cinema of Taiwan has gradually changed from mythical China to nativist Taiwan. That is, the distinction between the cinema of authority and the cinema of authorship finds a parallel in the transnational (Chinese) imagination versus the national (nativist) imagination.

Moreover, the national imagination is a contributing factor to the transnationalism of Taiwan cinema. Since the 1980s, the representation of local reality and historical introspection through film creation and the filmmakers’ innovations in filmic aesthetics have made art films from Taiwan a darling of international film festivals. The international recognition of TNC films can be partly credited to what Chen terms a global nativism: “a nativism predicated upon the commodification of the complicit dialectic between nationalism and transnationalism” (2006a: 138). According to Chen, the present global nativism turns duly exoticised nativist images and national-local historical objects into a selling point for circulating selected nativist projects internationally under the flag of “world cinema” (ibid.: 143). In this regard, Taiwan cinema burst onto the international scene in the late 20th century because the nativist imagination which it presented was in harmony with the trend in global art cinema.

At the same time, however, art films from Taiwan became in the 1990s more ahistorical and de-national. A group of new filmmakers, including Tsai Ming-liang and Ang Lee, rose to prominence at this time, and began to “shift their focuses to explore the pain, transgression, and absurdities of contemporary life in Taiwan, [and] direct the postsadness cinema to the reality-conscious representation of the nonhistorical and unsatisfactory realm of the here and the now” (Wu, 2005: 94). Wu asserts that this second wave of New Cinema, replacing the nostalgic, historical and “sad” approach, focused on the private scope of ambivalent contemporary life and disoriented urbanism (ibid.). Moreover, the cinema of authorship

implies not only the shift in terms of content and industrial features from authority-guided to author-centred cinema but also the move of filmmakers in Taiwan from an authority-guided homogenous identity to heterogeneous identities. Films cannot simply be considered as a means of creating and consolidating national identity and imagination. Rather, an increasing number of films from Taiwan attempted in the 1990s to tackle diverse sorts of identity, such as diaspora and sexuality, for example, *The Wedding Banquet* (Xiyan, dir. Ang Lee, 1993) and many of Tsai's films. In this regard, the shift from authority to authorship represents a process of democratisation and decentralisation for Taiwan cinema in terms of creating identity and imagination, which recalls Lim's claim: "scholarship in Chinese cinemas must also move beyond the paradigm of national cinema and the reading of films primarily as national allegories in order to properly address representations that cannot, and should not, be simply subsumed under the sign of the nation" (2006: 19).

Whilst art films from Taiwan are still associated with a realistic representation of Taiwan and can be categorised in Crofts' typology of national cinema as "art cinema" (1998: 390), the development of Taiwan art cinema depends heavily on international networks. Rosalind Galt and Karl Schoonover assert that art cinema is inherently global and is often regarded as a cross-border cinematic form, due to its high regard for visual legibility and cross-cultural translation, which helps these films to appeal to international audiences (2010: 10). Many rising filmmakers, such as Hou and Tsai, are more concerned with aesthetic innovation and self-expression than entertainment value and the taste of domestic mainstream audiences. Hence, classical narrative in their works was replaced by ambiguous and fragmentary images, connotative meaning and disarrayed structure, which conflicted with mainstream tastes. The main figures of TNC, a number of whom were highly educated and conversant with international film practices and theories, set out to produce films that would provide an alternative to Hollywood commercialism in order to re-establish "cultural self-

determination” (Yip, 2004: 65). They assumed that spectators are actively engaged in the viewing process and therefore gave less weight to film narrative skills in order to present a complex story that would be closer to authentic experience (Berry and Lu, 2005: 6). In this regard, Taiwan art cinema echoes Ezra and Rowden’s argument on transnational cinema: “transnational cinema imagines its audiences as consisting of viewers who have expectations and types of cinematic literacy that go beyond the desire for and mindlessly appreciative consumption of national narratives that audiences can identify as their ‘own’” (2006: 3). From this point of view, Taiwan art cinema is both a national cinema and a transnational cinema.

In such circumstances, the development of Taiwan art cinema has depended increasingly upon the international film festival circuit, international financing networks and an overseas marketplace, due to unsatisfactory domestic consumption and great difficulties in local financing. Thus the “national” film business versus transnational circulation can be viewed as another parallel in the distinction between authority-guided cinema and authorship-centred cinema. Chen (2006a: 143) maintains that “this transnationalisation [of Taiwan cinema] aimed, firstly, to expand TNC’s market; secondly, to attract foreign investment; and thirdly, to bolster the state’s new nation-state building project.” In other words, the national and the transnational were still bonded to each other, even after Taiwan cinema became author-centred in the early 1980s. In addition, the development of such a transnational mode of filmmaking relies on the commerce of auteurism. Timothy Corrigan points out that the auteur can be treated “as a commercial strategy for organizing audience reception, as a critical concept bound to distribution and marketing aims that identify and address the potential cult status of an auteur” (1991: 103). Therefore, auteurs can be commodified and materialised as a commercial presence, helping the transnational circulation of author-oriented films. This filmmaking mode allowed Taiwanese filmmakers to serve as the link between Taiwan cinema

and the international film festival economy. They occupied the leading role in film practice as well as the representation of the national imagination in late 20th century Taiwan cinema. In this sense, Taiwan cinema during this period can be understood as an author-centred cinema.

Taiwan Cinema as a Cinema of Markets (2000–Present)

The rise of Taiwan art cinema in the early 1980s and the critical acclaim of art films and auteurs from Taiwan in the 1980s and 1990s spotlighted the significance of Taiwan cinema in global film culture. However, the achievement could not stop the local film industry from collapsing. As the century ended, the overall condition of the production and consumption of films from Taiwan continued to deteriorate. The percentage of films from Taiwan released in the local film market declined from 15.9% to 3.4% between 1990 and 1999; the market share of domestic films was 5.78% in 1990, whereas between 1997 and 1999 the number decreased to below 1% (Huang, 2003: 160-161) (see Table 1). Whilst some established Taiwanese auteurs could maintain their filmmaking through international financing and markets, most filmmaking of their Taiwanese counterparts was constrained by the lack of resources in the ailing local industry. The phenomenon had a negative influence on domestic film production and the cultivation of talent, thereby hampering the development of both commercial and art cinemas in Taiwan in the new millennium.

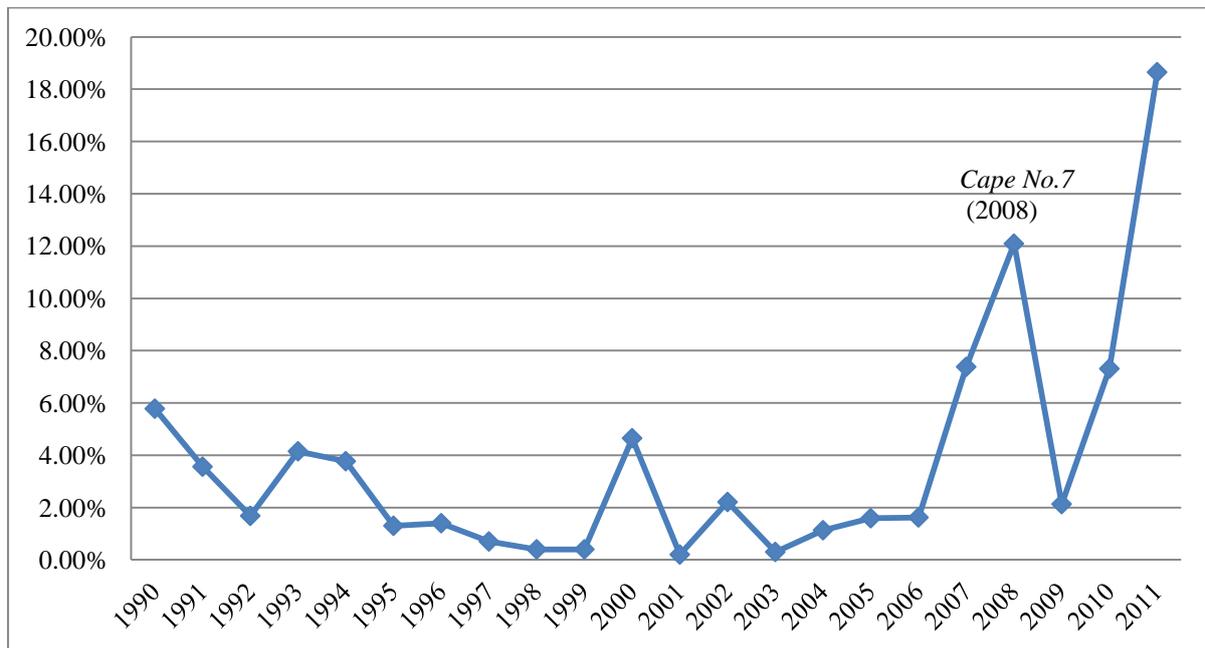
Table 1 Quantity of Domestic Films and the Imported Films during the 1990s
(Source: Huang, 2003: 160)

Origin Year	Taiwan	Hong Kong / China	Foreign-language Films	Total
1990	81 (15.9%)	167 (32.9%)	260 (51.2%)	508
1991	33 (6.5%)	183 (36.1%)	291 (57.4%)	507
1992	40 (7.5%)	200 (37.3%)	296 (55.2%)	536
1993	26 (5.9%)	195 (43.9%)	223 (50.2%)	444

1994	29 (7.7%)	139 (36.7%)	211 (55.6%)	379
1995	28 (6.6%)	136 (31.9%)	265 (61.5%)	427
1996	18 (5.0%)	92 (25.3%)	253 (69.7%)	363
1997	29 (7.4%)	102 (26.2%)	259 (66.3%)	390
1998	23 (5.0%)	99 (22.1%)	322 (72.9%)	454
1999	16 (3.4%)	129 (27.3%)	327 (69.3%)	472

However, there has been an upturn in the Taiwanese film industry since the millennium. An increasing regard for market taste among filmmakers and the revival of domestic popular cinema indicate a shift from authorship to markets. The industrial revival of Taiwan cinema can be illustrated using box office statistics. The market share of domestic films in 1999 was 0.44%, but the figure climbed to 12.1% in 2008 and 17.46% in 2011 (see Figure 2). Additionally, though only one locally-made film reached the NT\$10 million threshold at the Taipei box office between 1995 and 1999, between 2007 and 2011 the number of films taking more than NT\$10 million at the Taipei box office was 21, including six films which took more than NT\$100 million. The contrast shows that, compared to the 1990s, more local spectators have been brought back to domestic films in recent years. Even though the industrial renaissance occurred in the late 2000s, in particular after the huge box office success of *Cape No.7* in 2008, a variety of features have gradually come into view since the success of *CTHD* in 2000. Therefore I suggest considering the year 2000 as a starting point for examining the recent renaissance of Taiwan cinema.

Figure 2 Market Shares of Films from Taiwan (1990-2011)
 (Source: *Taiwan Cinema*, 2012; Huang, 2003: 166)



Apart from the significant growth in the consumption of domestic films, the emergence of a cinema of markets is demonstrated in the development of market-oriented filmmaking approaches from contemporary Taiwanese filmmakers. Taiwanese filmmakers are more willing in their work to take account of audience taste and consumption patterns; this inclination towards market-oriented production is exhibited in the progress of commercially-oriented transnational co-production and the commodification of a national/nativist imagination. Whilst transnational co-production is not an innovative approach for Taiwanese filmmakers, the commercial triumph of *CTHD* brought it to the fore in the early 2000s. Various phenomena, such as cultural globalisation, regionalisation and the rise of China, have made multinational market-oriented transnational co-production a viable and popular way for contemporary Taiwanese filmmakers to raise finance, implement high-quality products and increase profits. According to Wei Ti, four modes of transnational co-production have been developed in contemporary Taiwan cinema: Hollywood-funded global market-oriented co-production, Hollywood-funded regional market-oriented co-production, international auteur-

oriented co-production and pan-Chinese co-production (2006: 131). Apart from art film co-production, the other modes of transnational co-production developed in the new millennium are mainly commercially-oriented. To recoup the ever-growing production and marketing investment, these projects aim to appeal to mainstream audiences, showing the considerable importance of transnational connections over Taiwan cinema so far this century. Hence, although not the only indicator, population size is a vital factor determining “the size of the internal market before the foreign trade factor comes into operation” (Ólafsson, 1998: 9) and “this particular market correlation has clear relevance for film as a high-cost industry”, as Hjort and Petrie (2007: 4) note. Since transnational co-production is regarded as a viable approach to raising finance and entering multinational markets, the size of the market is closely related to both film investment and film consumption. Consequently, the preference for larger national markets is sometimes given precedence during a film co-production. The uneven power relationship caused by the asymmetry in the sizes of national markets has affected the production process, the narrative of film and the production sector of Taiwan cinema, reflecting Higbee and Lim’s suggestion to scrutinise cross-border filmmaking activities in terms of a critical transnationalism (2010).

Transnational connections have also been shown in the development of genre film production. Genre plays a critical role in facilitating cultural translation and cross-border circulation. Some genres, including *wuxia* and horror, have been particularly noteworthy in Taiwan’s case in the past decade, and this is associated with the cultural and concurrent industrial context in Asian cinema. The *wuxia* genre has been a classical and popular cultural form in the Chinese-speaking world for decades, and consequently it has occupied a vital role in pan-Chinese film co-production in the new millennium, affecting the consumption circumstance of Taiwan cinema. As for the horror genre, the production of horror films from Taiwan in the past decade can be associated with the expansion of the Asian horror wave of

the late 1990s and 2000s. In the 2000s, Taiwanese filmmakers produced several horror films, such as *Double Vision* and *Silk* (*Guisi*, dir. Su Chao-bin, 2006). The rise of domestic genre film production reflects the shift in Taiwan cinema from authorship to markets and also the interconnectivity between national cinemas within the region. It suggests that Taiwan cinema should be conceptualised from a transnational perspective and indicates the significance of the concept of region alongside national and global.

Beside the creation of a transnational imagination for transnational consumption, the national/nativist imagination is commodified and incorporated into narrative to cater for local taste. As noted before, since the late 20th century the national imagination presented in films from Taiwan has gradually shifted from mythical China to nativist Taiwan, and the rise of Taiwanese nativism has also raised local people's concern for their native soil. In this context, by incorporating grassroots elements, local linguistic usage and rural landscape into narrative, domestic commercial films present the nativist imagination and generate cultural familiarity to stimulate local consumption. However, like transnational commercial co-production, market taste and consumption occupy a central role in the development of domestic projects. Domestic filmmaking in Taiwan today pays much more attention to dramatic narrative, market taste, entertainment value and marketing campaigns, which is quite unlike the emphasis in the author-centred Taiwan cinema of the late 20th century. The words of a new generation of filmmakers, including Wei Te-sheng (Huang and Tseng, 2010: 103), Chen Yin-jung (Gluck, 2004), Lin Yu-hsien and Chuang Ching-shen (Chen, 2010: 199) exemplify this alteration. Still, the emphasis on the nativist imagination and grassroots representation allows these projects to underscore local specificity, explore existing national cultural traits and enhance national coherence, echoing the idea of national cinema.

A shift from cinema of authorship to cinema of markets is also shown in the alteration in the industrial structure; the rise of new directors and the emergence of the producer system

are two noticeable features of the alteration. New directors have played a critical role in the development of Taiwan commercial cinema in the new millennium. Around ten feature directorial debuts were released each year between 2007 and 2009; moreover, 21 of the 27 films grossing over NT\$10 million at the Taipei box office between 2000 and 2011 were directed by filmmakers who made feature directorial debuts after 1999 (Wei, I., 2008: 180-209, 2009: 148-174; Wang, M., 2010: 140-188). Some of these new directors had served an apprenticeship in the film industry but others were inexperienced in filmmaking. For example, Jay Chou made his feature film debut *Secret (Buneng shuo de, mimi)* in 2007 when he was a well-known pop star in East Asia; in 2011 the Taiwanese novelist Giddens Ko made a crossover from popular literature to film with his feature directorial debut *You Are the Apple of My Eye* (hereafter *YAAME*) in 2011. These new directors generally pay more attention to spectators' taste than did their TNC predecessors and are inclined to adopt dramatic narrative to make films appealing to mainstream viewers. Whilst authorship is still held in high regard, popular taste has become the central concern of contemporary Taiwanese filmmakers. The difference between established Taiwanese auteurs and the new generation of filmmakers in the new millennium highlights the shift from authorship to markets.

The paradigm shift is also manifested in the increasing emphasis on a producer-driven system in this industry in the past few years. In the past, the Taiwanese film industry could generally be considered as an author-centred cinematic institution, in which the film director played the central role in developing the film project. However, with the revival of domestic commercial film production in the past few years, the importance of film producers has gradually been recognised. Today, Taiwanese producers such as Lee Lieh, Yeh Ju-feng, Huang Chih-ming and Angie Chai have become key figures in the film industry, and they may even play a guiding role in the whole filmmaking process to ensure that an original idea can be developed into a profitable cultural commodity. For example, *YAAME* was scripted

and directed by Taiwanese writer Giddens Ko; however, the film producer Angie Chai, a famous TV producer and also Ko's literary agent, took an important role in not only financing the film but also in its production (Li and SunTV, 2011: 122-125). Leading actors in the film, namely Ko Chen-tung and Michelle Chen, also belonged to Chai's talent agency (ibid.: 125-126). Moreover, two producers, Lee Lieh and Yeh Ju-feng, were respectively chosen Outstanding Taiwanese Filmmaker of the Year at the 2010 and 2013 Taipei Golden Horse Awards (Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival Executive Committee, 2013a, 2013b). Lung Ying-tai, the Minister of Culture, also endorsed the producer-driven system (Chiu, Li-ling, 2013). This evidence implies the emergence of a producer-driven system in Taiwan cinema in the past few years.

Alongside the development of the producer system in Taiwan, the film practice of commercial cinema is gradually advancing. For example, *YAAME* moved into production only after its economic viability had been carefully evaluated (Chiu, P., 2011: 122); *Jump Ashin!* (*Fangunba! Axin*, dir. Lin Yu-hsien, 2011), produced by Lee Lieh, recouped more than NT\$10 million, accounting for nearly one-third of the film costs, through product placement and sponsorship, before the principal shooting of the film even started (Lin, 2011: 112). These phenomena may be common elsewhere, but hitherto they have been uncommon in the Taiwanese film industry. Not only have they demonstrated that markets are now a major concern of contemporary Taiwanese filmmakers, but the changes in the industrial structure and filmmaking process reflect the decline of the author-centred cinematic institution in the Taiwanese film industry.

Whilst the authorities' influence on Taiwan cinema is declining, support measures introduced by central and local governments in the new millennium are to some extent helpful in raising film finance and easing restrictions on filmmaking. The development of the film policy of the Taiwanese government in the 21st century is related to economic

globalisation and international politics, as well as to local industrial conditions. The Domestic Film Guidance Fund, the Taiwanese government's film production subsidy and rewards for festival award winners are among the support measures promulgated before 2000. However, the Taiwanese government's exhibition restrictions on foreign films were completely abolished when Taiwan entered the WTO in 2002. Responding to the increasing pressure from imported films, Hollywood films in particular, the government introduced various support measures to subsidise domestic filmmaking in the new millennium, including preferential taxation policies, preferential loans, film subsidies for film marketing and exhibition and reward for box office hits (Chu, 2012: 119). Take, for example, *Cape No.7*. In accordance with the Regulations Governing Reward for Marketing, Exhibition and Box Office Performance of 2008, the production company and director of any film taking in over NT\$50 million at the Taiwan box office can together apply for a reward of 20% of its box office receipts in the following two years, in order to make a new film. Accordingly, Wei Te-sheng and his company received around NT\$106 million from the Government Information Office (GIO) to produce *Seediq Bale* when *Cape No.7* grossed around NT\$530 million in Taiwan's film market (GIO, 2011b).¹⁴

The improved commercial performance of domestic films has influenced the formulation of state policies and the structure of the financial sector of the film industry and vice versa. After the sensational box office success of *Cape No.7*, an increasing number of local authorities have been glad to provide economic incentives, such as rewards, location scouting, and accommodation and production subsidies, to attract filmmakers to make films in their cities. The need for temporary workers in the major shooting period creates jobs for local people and the film crew's expenditure on location can stimulate the local economy.

¹⁴ Government Information Office (GIO) was the regulatory authority of media affairs and government communications in Taiwan until the creation of the Ministry of Culture (MOC) on 20 May 2012.

Furthermore, film can be deemed a means of creating local imagination, for the national and transnational consumption of a film helps to boost local tourism. Hence many local authorities have formed commissions to support filmmaking activities. For example, *Face* (*Visage*, dir. Tsai Ming-liang, 2009) and *Monga* were subsidised by Taipei; *The Wayward Cloud* (*Tianbian yiduo yun*, dir. Tsai Ming-liang, 2005) and *Black & White Episode I: The Dawn of Assault* (*Pizi yingxiong shoubuqu: Quanmian kaizhan*, dir. Tsai Yueh-hsun, 2012) were backed by Kaohsiung; the production of Ang Lee's American film *Life of Pi* (2012) was supported by the Taichung City Government. According to Ryan Pin-hung Cheng (2010b:71), half of the domestic films released in Taiwan in 2009 received help from Taiwan's local authorities, not counting Taipei City Council. These facts show that national cinema, as Higson (2000: 69) asserts, still practises at policy level regardless of the tendency in globalisation towards de-nationalisation.

With these changes of emphasis, on the one hand, the box office success of some domestic films stressing national/nativist imagination has brought about the recent revival of local film industries and an improved industrial structure. On the other, transnational co-production aimed at multinational markets has become a key approach to filmmaking for Taiwanese filmmakers today. Consequently, Taiwan cinema of the 21st century may accentuate national imagination, but its production and consumption are still closely linked to the transnational industrial, cultural, economic and political context. Contemporary Taiwanese filmmakers may imagine their audiences in a global, regional, national or international niche market; transnational connections could be displayed in the production, consumption and content of Taiwan cinema.

Choice of Case Studies and Chapter Outline

As noted previously, with the shift from a cinema of authorship to a cinema of markets, the box office performance of films from Taiwan in the past few years has shown signs that domestic commercial filmmaking is being revitalised. The annual market share in the late 1990s of films from Taiwan at the Taipei box office was less than 1%, whereas they reached double digits in 2008, 2011 and 2012. Possibly the progress, in response to the changing cultural experience and economic activities in the globalisation process, can be attributed to the emergence of filmmaking strategies, developed with international art film co-production in mind or orientation to global, regional or national markets. Although the recent industrial revival was directly led by the emergence of successive domestically-made box office hits from the late 2000s, all these filmmaking strategies affect the filmmaking activities and consumption pattern in Taiwan and the way in which Taiwanese filmmakers think of film today. Furthermore, the development of these strategies demonstrate that transnational connections have become embedded in various aspects of Taiwan cinema, and the interconnection and interdependence between Taiwan and other cinemas have been reinforced. In light of this, a nation-based approach to current Taiwan cinema is inadequate for the purposes of this thesis.

Given these phenomena, this thesis asks how the current phase of globalisation and increasing transnational cultural flows influence contemporary Taiwan cinema and puts the focus of research on Taiwanese filmmakers' responses rather than the state of the whole film industry. Hence, rather than provide a comprehensive overview of the production, distribution and exhibition sectors of the Taiwanese film industry, the thesis chooses case studies as the research method by which to illustrate the emergence and characteristics of Taiwanese filmmakers' different filmmaking strategies in terms of transnational connections

and to underscore the significance to Taiwan cinema of these filmmakers' work. The examination of Taiwan cinema in this thesis will seek to depict the general situation and external context of the Taiwanese film industry as well.

In order to describe the development and influence on Taiwan cinema of these filmmakers' approaches, the primary consideration in choosing case studies is a film's relevance to the development of these strategies, production activities and consumption patterns with regard to Taiwan cinema. Consequently, most of the cases chosen were notable for their high production cost, strong cast and crew, striking box office performance, or particularity of production or distribution mode. These characteristics make these cases exceptional in some ways; however, they have in the past decade allowed these exemplary films to be templates and patterns for later Taiwanese filmmakers to emulate. These films also possess greater influence over the production strategies or consumption pattern of Taiwan cinema than more average films do.¹⁵ This thesis will refer to some of the more average films, but go no further in analysing their content and production. Still, the general condition of the production and consumption of average films from Taiwan will be illustrated through a range of statistical data, such as production output and market statistics. In addition, owing to the fact that primary research on this thesis was conducted between 2009 and 2011, the major focus of the thesis lies with films released in the first decade of this century. At the same time, projects and statistics released after 2010 are mentioned when the recent industrial revival is being examined, despite the lack of further research on these films.

¹⁵ The average film here is a relative concept. It refers to a film whose performance is less remarkable than that of the selected cases, whether in terms of acclaim, box office performance or production process. For example, *Hear Me (Tingshuo)*, dir. Cheng Fen-fen, 2009) was the 2009 box office champion of domestic films, grossing NT\$14.6 million at the Taipei box office (Wang, C., 2010b: 79). Whilst this locally-made film can be viewed as a successful domestic commercial movie, its influence over the domestic industrial sectors and market structure was far less than *Cape No.7* had, not to speak of films which performed less successfully in terms of box office outcome or critical acclaim.

This thesis centres on four case studies of Taiwan cinema in the new millennium, each of which represented a filmmaking strategy, a way of responding to the changing cinematic circumstances of Taiwanese filmmakers in an increasingly globalising world, and a way in which they could identify themselves and imagine their audiences. Through these four case studies the thesis tries to shed light on the development of Taiwan cinema in a transnational context and explore how a feeble national film industry strives to find a new position within a context of localisation, regionalisation and globalisation.

Chapter One will revisit *CTHD* to comprehend the transformation of nationally cultural representation into a global cultural commodity. *CTHD* is a film produced under transnational co-production, targeting global audiences. As a project it is of historical significance for the development in the 21st century not only of Taiwan cinema but also of the Chinese-language cinemas as a whole. In fact, *CTHD* can be viewed as a symbolic object of national pride for the Taiwanese. With the increase in international recognition, Ang Lee had become a noted filmmaker in Taiwan in the 1990s. *CTHD*'s global commercial success and critical acclaim not only further enabled Lee to be hailed as "the Pride of Taiwan" (*Taiwan zhi guang*) but also enhanced the film's consumption and reception in Taiwan. Thus, the case demonstrated both the effect of nationalism on film consumption in Taiwan and the influence of global reception on the film consumption and reception of domestic viewers.

In addition, the global triumph rendered *CTHD* a beacon for East Asian films. The film established a blockbuster model for Asian filmmakers to follow. The project proves that transnational co-production is a viable method by which Chinese-speaking filmmakers can reduce risks, gather resources and assemble talents to create a well-produced film capable of travelling beyond local borders. In addition, its global triumph opened the way for Asian films to enter Western markets and made it possible for them to be in the mainstream films of the global film market. Subsequently, given *CTHD*'s stirring performance, a number of

Chinese-language filmmakers jumped on the bandwagon to make films with the purpose of appealing to a global audience, showing a filmmaking strategy distinct from those which had appeared in the past. It also showed that *wuxia* was a genre which could break out of geographical confines to appeal to viewers of different cultural origins and enter the global mainstream film market. Consequently, a number of Chinese-language films, such as Zhang Yimou's *Hero (Yingxiong, 2002)* and *House of Flying Daggers (Shimian maifu, 2004)*, produced through transnational co-production, were aimed at the global market.

In this regard, *CTHD* can be described as a momentous film building a new model for Chinese-language filmmaking, encouraging the globalisation of Chinese-language films and enabling Chinese-speaking filmmakers to envisage a global audience. *CTHD* may not dramatically have altered the structure of the Taiwanese film industry, yet it promoted transnational co-production over the whole region, thereby significantly affecting the production and consumption of Taiwan cinema thereafter. Furthermore, its production and content relate to the diasporic status of Lee and issues of cultural authenticity and cultural translation. These features question the connection between cinema and the nation and highlight the characteristic of cultural hybridity in a transnational context. This chapter examines the production, consumption and reception of the project to shed light on such issues, as emphasised by the case.

The second chapter examines various types of pan-Asian co-production related to Taiwan cinema in the 21st century. The 2002 film *Double Vision* was the first film from Taiwan directly backed by the Hollywood Majors. Although the engagement of Hollywood studios in the production sector of Taiwan cinema was subsequently quite limited, the production of this film was of consequence to the later development of Taiwan commercial cinema. The high production cost, large scale of production, professional filmmaking process and the Hollywood mode of filmmaking introduced through the project have motivated local

filmmakers, such as Wei Te-sheng, to rethink how commercial films are made, which has contributed to the production of high-budget domestically-made films and the revitalisation of domestic commercial filmmaking after 2000. Furthermore, *Double Vision* was both a regional market-oriented project from Taiwan and a part of the Asian strategy of Sony Pictures Entertainment. Thus, the case study allows Taiwan cinema to be understood in terms of a regional context so as to elucidate the complex relationship between the national, the regional and the global nowadays.

Taiwanese filmmakers' engagement in intraregional co-production is also discussed in this chapter to investigate the interconnections between Taiwan cinema and neighbouring Asian cinemas. These cases comprise several films aimed at multinational film markets in the region and the diverse ways in which Taiwanese filmmakers engage in other Asian cinemas. By researching these intraregional connections, this chapter shows how far the integration of film industries and markets in Asia, accelerated by the rapid increase in cross-border flows, has influenced the production strategies and cinematic activities of Taiwanese filmmakers this century. Today, many filmic activities of Taiwan cinema are being managed on a regional basis and developed beyond national borders. Taiwan cinema, it may be said, cannot be properly understood if it is conceptualised through a national framework alone.

Chapter Three considers the 2008 domestic hit *Cape No.7* as a local response to the dominance of American films in the Taiwanese film market during the current phase of globalisation, and highlights the relevance of transnational connections to the recent revitalisation of domestic market-oriented filmmaking. *Cape No.7* could be regarded as a film of historical significance to the development of Taiwan cinema in the 21st century. Its huge popularity not only highlighted but also stimulated local spectators' demand for films with local colour, thereby accelerating the cinematic shift from authorship to markets, stimulating investment in the film business, changing the consumption pattern of the film market and

influencing the creation of film texts. Although later films from Taiwan were unable to reach the same heights in terms of box office intake and cultural influence, there has been a significant progress in their overall commercial performance in the past few years. In other words, *Cape No.7* is a film which brought hope to local filmmakers who had been struggling on, changed investors' and viewers' attitude towards domestic films and revitalised the domestic production sector in the past few years. It not only satisfied local viewers' demand for films with local flavour but also made room in the local film market for domestically-produced films. In this regard, *Cape No.7* may have played a decisive role in the history of Taiwan cinema of the 21st century.

While *Cape No.7* is a domestically-made project, transnational connections can be found in its content and distribution. In terms of the film text, its story is associated with the colonial history of Taiwan; the film also depicts the changing cultural representations of contemporary Taiwan under the present influence of capitalist and cultural globalisation. Moreover, cross-cultural romance is a key theme of the film. In this regard, *Cape No.7* points out the transnational nature of the locality of Taiwan today and is a representative case presenting Taiwan as a complex postcolonial cultural landscape in the present phase of globalisation.

Furthermore, the success of *Cape No.7* at the Taiwan box office has motivated Hollywood studios to further engage in the distribution of films from Taiwan. Before *Cape No.7*, local outposts of Hollywood studios had played little part in the distribution of domestic commercial films; however, the film's surprising box office success has altered their attitude to the distribution of domestic commercial films. This has naturally contributed to the revival of Taiwan commercial cinema in the past five years and can be associated with the globalisation of Hollywood. On the one hand, *Cape No.7* can be perceived as a kind of local resistance to Hollywood's domination of the domestic film market, but on the other, it is

a case which strengthens the significance of transnational connections to the recent development of the Taiwanese film industry. Thus, this case study also sheds light on the influence of Hollywood-run distributors on contemporary Taiwan cinema.

In summary, *Cape No.7* encouraged domestic commercial filmmaking, affected the market structure and inspired Hollywood companies to engage in the distribution of domestic films. The film occupied a decisive role in the development of Taiwan commercial cinema from the late 2000s, and its stress on grassroots representation has become a critical feature of domestically-made film production in the past few years. Therefore, choosing as the case study *Cape No.7*, rather than other more average films, such as *Formula 17 (Shiqisui de tiankong)*, Chen, Yin-jung, 2004) and *Hear Me (Tingshuo)*, dir. Cheng Fen-fen, 2009), is likely to be more helpful in elucidating the industrial changes that have taken place in Taiwan cinema since the late 2000s.¹⁶ Some popular films after *Cape No.7* will also be referred to in this chapter to reveal more of the recent revitalisation of Taiwan commercial cinema.

The last case study in this thesis will explore the co-production by Taiwanese filmmakers in their transnational art films in order to discuss the significance of transnational connections to contemporary Taiwan art cinema and sound out the deepening of Taiwanese auteurs' engagement in the international cultural economy. In addition to the three commercially-oriented filmmaking strategies mentioned above, Taiwanese filmmakers still continue to produce auteur-oriented films with an international niche appeal. Nevertheless, it could be argued that the achievement of the new generation of Taiwanese filmmakers cannot yet compare with established auteurs, such as Hou Hsiao-hsien and Tsai Ming-liang. Consequently, these new filmmakers are still held in lower regard in the international film

¹⁶ Some recent domestically-produced films have also greatly affected the local film industry. For example, more domestically-made commercial films began to be released in Taiwan's major theatres during the Chinese New Year holidays in the past few years following the impressive box office success of *Monga* in 2010. However, the historical significance of these films to the revitalisation of recent domestic film production is still unable to compare with that of *Cape No.7*.

festival economy and have not so far forged the strong alliance with international cinematic institutions that would maintain their filmmaking. These internationally celebrated auteurs have continuously taken the lead in Taiwan art cinema this century for their film output and critical importance. Hence, the chapter chooses Hou's and Tsai's filmmaking in the 2000s as a set of case studies from which to infer the relevance of transnational connections to the development of contemporary Taiwan art cinema.

In addition, translingual filmmaking is a notable phenomenon to have appeared in Taiwan art cinema in the past decade. In the 2000s, Hou and Tsai have crossed linguistic and cultural barriers to engage in the production of Japanese-language and French-language films. The linguistic and cultural barriers that they have had to surmount seem much higher than those in Ang Lee's crossover, considering Lee's personal background, the linguistic status of the English language and the American neo-colonial presence in Taiwan (Lim, 2011b: 19). The appearance of their translingual filmmaking suggests that Taiwan art cinema has become even more transnational in the new millennium and casts doubt on the use of the Taiwan cinema label. Choosing Hou's and Tsai's foreign-language projects as a case study will demonstrate the loosening of the tie between films and filmmakers' cultural origins in the transnational context and underline the relevance of understanding Taiwan cinema of the 21st century within a transnational framework.

Through these four case studies, this thesis argues that transnational connections have been deeply embedded in all aspects of Taiwan cinema in the 21st century and that Taiwanese filmmakers have developed four major filmmaking strategies in reaction to the changes in cinematic circumstances as cultural globalisation has continued. These strategies also reflect the multiple identities of the Taiwanese, shaped as they are by national, regional and global contextual factors, and the diverse scale of the markets which they could imagine in these circumstances. This suggests that contemporary Taiwan cinema should be situated in a

transnational context in order to grasp the dialectic relationship between the national, the regional and the global.

Chapter One:

Globalising Chinese-Language Films:

A Case Study of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*

Without a doubt, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (*Wohu canglong*, dir. Ang Lee, 2000, hereafter *CTHD*) is one of the most noteworthy films of the beginning of the 21st century, not only in Taiwan cinema but also in Chinese-language cinemas as a whole. Apart from its critical reputation, the film's commercial triumph in the global film market was unprecedented for Chinese-language films. Thus its production process and its content both became the focus of discourses on the film. The film also became, to some extent, a model for the development of Chinese-language cinema in the new millennium. *CTHD* was initially conceptualised by Taiwanese film talents; however, its production was primarily carried out by filmmakers outside of Taiwan. Still, the director Ang Lee's Taiwanese background allows the film to be regarded as an example of Taiwan cinema and treated as a *guopian*, "national film" or domestic film, by the government of Taiwan and Taiwanese spectators, who could take pride in the director and his achievement in the international domain, even though on the practical level the involvement of Taiwanese filmmakers in the project was relatively limited. In Taiwan, both *CTHD* and Ang Lee were regarded as national icons that strengthened national identity, and the international success of the film undeniably contributed to the consumption and reception of *CTHD* in Taiwan.

CTHD can be viewed not only as an object of national honour for Taiwan but also as one of the strategies of film production employed by Taiwanese filmmakers in response to the changing conditions of the globalising world. The film was produced by pooling resources from various countries and achieved commercial success in several major markets. The case showed local filmmakers a possible way of making high-budget, high-quality films

capable of competing with their Hollywood rivals, capitalising on the transnational nature of production and consumption of films. The international success of *CTHD*, a quintessentially Chinese genre movie, is closely related to its production strategy, which was tailored to the taste of international as well as local spectators. Lee, a Taiwanese and diasporic Chinese filmmaker, transformed a local/regional cultural text into a global-friendly, or to be more precise, Western-friendly product, thereby allowing it to circulate more widely. That is, the development of the project reflects the increasing permeability of cultural boundaries and hybridity of cinematic texts. For Taiwan cinema, *CTHD* is a paradigmatic case of international filmmaking collaboration targeting the global market. Its commercial success in the global market makes the film a benchmark of international co-production in Chinese-language cinema and represents not the conventional West-to-East cultural flow but rather the reverse; Ang Lee's *wuxia* film could be understood as an effort by Oriental cultural goods to enter the Western mainstream market and as a cross-cultural dialogue between East and West in the age of globalisation. This chapter asks how far transnational connections are engaged in Ang Lee's 2000 box office earner, in order to shed light on the relationship between Taiwan cinema and global cinema, and the influence of this "national film" on the development of Taiwan cinema in the 21st century.

Diaspora and Diasporic Cinema

In the context of Chinese cinemas, *CTHD* can be seen as a pioneering transnational co-production aimed at Western as well as Chinese-speaking audiences. This is partly a consequence of transnational connections in the career of its director Ang Lee. Lee's complex diasporic status and experiences, it may be claimed, make him adept at making a crossover between Chinese-language and English-language cinemas and between auteur-oriented films

and commercial movies. These conditions enable him to produce global-friendly Chinese-language film texts which appeal to the taste of international mainstream audiences.

The term diaspora was initially used in a capitalised form to in particular refer to the exile and dispersion of the Jews and therefore signifies both “the oppression and moral degradation” (Safran, 1991: 83). Nonetheless, the concept has gradually been employed as “[a metaphoric designation] to describe different categories of people—expatriates, expellees, political refugees, alien residents, immigrants and ethnic and racial minorities *tout court*” (ibid., italics in original) in recent decades. Nevertheless, for William Safran (ibid.: 83-84), the myths of homeland, ethnocommunal consciousness and alienation from the host society could be common features characterising diaspora. Since the idea could be associated with the traumatic dispersal, the displaced experiences and the ethnic, cultural and linguistic minority status, a diaspora is often presumed to be marginalised, victimised, and powerless in terms of a centre-periphery perspective. Consequently, as Aihwa Ong (1999: 13) points out, “the unified moralism attached to subaltern subjects now also clings to diasporan ones, who are invariably assumed to be members of oppressed classes and therefore constitutionally opposed to capitalism and state power.” In this regard, diaspora discourse is implicitly political and critical and is associated with the power structure of the society where the diaspora dwell.

Nevertheless, the term diaspora seems to be used in an increasingly generalised way. According to Kim D. Butler (2001: 192), a scattering with the internal networks between different segments of the ethnic community, some relationship to an actual or imagined homeland, and self-awareness of the group’s identity are three characteristics distinguishing diaspora from other types of migrations. In today’s usage of the term diaspora, the migration of its members is not necessarily compelled or victimised. In fact, it could be voluntary. In addition, the change of the world’s cultural landscape caused by various factors, including the

decline of the state's hegemony and an increase in transnational traffic, in the past few decades has made diaspora a more flexible concept and widened the scholarship body in this field. Some subjects, such as transnational business movement and flexible status of diasporic communities have come to the attention of academia (Cohen, 2008; Ong, 1999). The term diaspora is used in an even broader sense as transnational flows rapid increase in the globalising process:

[T]he term “diaspora” has increasingly lost its paradigmatic association with exile from home and the myth of return, and has become much more widely and unspecifically used to describe the condition and experience of dispersion as such, which does not necessarily involve trauma and marginalization but also may entail empowerment, enrichment, and expansion. (Ien Ang, 2005: 83)

In general, the emphasis of scholarship on diaspora can be described as “on discursive and representational practices, (and) on how an individual or a whole community—be it in a literary text or in the world—feels about itself and ‘represents’ itself to itself and others.” (Tölölyan, 1996: 16) Some issues related to subjective experiences, such as the politics of identity and position, the diasporas' relationship with the homeland and host country, and diasporic consciousness are topics diaspora discourse revolves around.

In terms of the discipline of cinema, diasporic filmmakers' visual representation of a fragmented diasporic identity, migrants' rootlessness, and the experience of dispersal has become a critical concern within academia. Hamid Naficy (2001: 14, 22) considers diasporic cinema a type of “accented cinema” besides exilic cinema and postcolonial ethnic cinema. Those accented filmmakers are the products of the “dual postcolonial displacement and postmodern or late modern scattering” caused by the decolonisation, the religious and ethnic wars, the desire of increased trade and work, or the growth of global economies (ibid.: 10-11). Diasporas are collective, and “the nurturing of a collective memory, often of an idealized homeland, is constitutive of the diasporic identity. This idealization may be state-based, involving love for an existing homeland, or it may be stateless, based on a desire for a

homeland yet to come” (Naficy, 2001: 14). As a result, return narratives are common in diasporic filmmakers’ works, and diasporic minority communities’ alienation, displacement, marginality, loneliness, and the ambivalent emotions attached to the diasporic homeland become recurrent motifs in diasporic films. These films speak for specific ethnic communities rather than mainstream audiences, representing and underlining the specific experiences of these communities, the members of which are usually regarded as the others in host societies. Naficy’s idea conceptualises diasporic filmmaking in terms of a centre-periphery framework. Diasporic filmmaking could be perceived as the self-articulation of the diasporic filmmakers, who are displaced from the periphery to the centre, or the First World, on the fringes of the centre through their capability of accessing the means of representation. Diasporic cinema can be viewed as an alternative form of cinematic practice and is associated with the peripheral position and cultural struggles of diaspora.

On the other hand, the members of diasporic communities could occupy a privileged position as globalisation progresses, due to their flexible and mobile status. The diaspora could possess greater multilingual ability, multicultural familiarity and sensitivity to the surrounding currents owing to their diasporic status and experiences and minority position; these advantages enable them to play a more flexible and favourable role in transnational networks and cross-border activities in the age of globalisation. As Naficy argues, “the power of these border shifters comes from their situationist existence, their familiarity with the cultural and legal codes of interacting cultures, and the way in which they manipulate identity and the asymmetrical power situations in which they find themselves” (2001: 32). In the age of globalisation, diasporas’ multiple and ambiguous identities and transnational dispersal could place them “in a better position to act as a bridge between the particular and the universal” (Cohen, 2008: 148). It could also enable them to act as interlocutor in transnational activities in response to the paradoxical phenomena caused by both the wave of globalisation

and its concomitant counter-tendency towards some features, such as the fragmentation and multiplication of identities and the revitalisation of nationalism (ibid.). Robin Cohen (ibid.: 154-155) maintains that various changes related to the technological, institutional and ideological aspects of globalisation process have “disproportionately advantaged” diasporas in a gradually de-territorialised world, inasmuch as they could more flexibly exploit these burgeoning opportunities to their own economic or cultural advantage with their geographically dispersal, transnational ethnic and economic networks, cross-border abilities and cosmopolitan character.

The flexibility of diaspora is also stressed by Ong. She claims that “flexible citizenship”, referring to “the cultural logics of capitalist accumulation, travel, and displacement that induce subjects to respond fluidly and opportunistically to changing political-economic conditions” (1999: 6), has been developed as a strategy to help diasporic Chinese accumulate transnational capital and power. Flexible citizenship could be viewed as a strategy of transnationalisation, localisation and mobile re-location, facilitating shifters’ positioning, negotiation and cultural acceptance in different sites and marketplaces. The idea indicates that the mobility, dispersal and multilingual capability of diaspora allow these mobile players to flexibly choose and change their advantageous sites for cultural or economic production. The transnational supportive networks they establish and transnational tangible and intangible wealth they amass could strengthen the diaspora’s position in the transnational and regional economic and social systems within the globalisation process. Although diasporic players’ accumulation of transnational capital and the flexibility are to some extent bound by social class and political and economic structure, the idea of flexibility and mobility could help delineate and expound the transnational and translingual filmmaking of the diasporic cultural elite, such as Ang Lee.

Diaspora has become a contentious term, for an increasing number of cases have come under its umbrella. However, its emphasis on the dispersal and relationship between the migrant and the homeland, either actual or imagined, makes this term still relevant to the case study of *CTHD*. Although the text of *CTHD* has nothing to do with traumatic event or migrants' displacement or return journey, Lee's making of *wuxia* film and the transnational co-production process can be linked with diasporic homecoming, transnational network of diasporic Chinese and accumulation of transnational capital. Besides, Lee's Chinese-language filmmaking is always associated with both individual and collective experience of dispersal. Thus, the thesis will see *CTHD* as a film made by a diasporic director rather than simply a migrant director.

Transnational Connections in Ang Lee's Career and His Cultural Translation

As a Chinese immigrant's son born in Taiwan and a Taiwanese national residing in the United States, Ang Lee's diasporic status is manifold. His complex diasporic experiences have not only facilitated his ability to make a crossover between Chinese-language and English-language cinemas but also allowed transnational connections to be embedded in his filmmaking trajectory, film texts and production mode. On the one hand, Lee is regarded as being second-generation of a Chinese diaspora born and raised in Taiwan, since his father emigrated to Taiwan with a flood of refugees as the defeat of the Kuomintang (KMT, aka Nationalist Party) army in the late 1940s. On the island, not only did the KMT regime's "resinicisation" of Taiwan further restore and strengthen the cultural link between Taiwan and Chineseness, but the Taiwanese government's official claim to be the real inheritor and protector of Chinese culture encouraged the promotion of mainland Chinese culture and Chinese identity in Taiwan. In this context, Lee's works are rooted in Chinese cultural heritage, and his concern about the ideological contesting of Confucian doctrines and

patriarchal order can be discerned in his exploration of filial piety and familial relationships of contemporary diasporic Chinese society in his “Father-Knows-Best” trilogy, namely *Pushing Hands* (*Tuishou*, 1991), *The Wedding Banquet* (*Xiyan*, 1993) and *Eat Drink Man Woman* (*Yinshi nannü*, 1994, hereafter *EDMW*).

Besides, Lee’s transnational connection with America has fundamentally contributed to his translingual career and the development of his transnational co-production approach. Lee received his formal theatre and filmmaking education at the University of Illinois and New York University (Chang, J., 2002: 42-47); later basing himself in New York to build his career, forging a strong and long-time partnership with American colleagues, in particular those at Good Machine International (GMI), a New York-based firm good at producing and marketing independent films. Since his directorial debut *Pushing Hands*, Lee has worked closely with James Schamus, an American film producer, screenwriter and co-founder of GMI. In 1990, Lee won not only the top two prizes at the Excellent Film Screenplay Award from Taiwan’s Government Information Office (GIO) for his two screenplays, *Pushing Hands* and *The Wedding Banquet*, but also the support of Hsu Li-kong, the then Vice General Manager of the Central Motion Picture Corporation (CMPC) in Taiwan, for his filmmaking (ibid.: 68-70). After CMPC gave him US\$480,000 to produce *Pushing Hands* (ibid.: 78), Lee collaborated with Schamus and GMI to make the film in New York. The critical and commercial success of the film in Taiwan in 1991 earned him national fame and furthered his career. Instead of portraying nativist themes, *Pushing Hands* and *The Wedding Banquet* are based on his diasporic experience and were filmed in New York; both of them, together with *EDMW*, backed by CMPC, produced through Taiwanese–American co-production and promoted through the international film festival circuit. Hence diasporic status has enabled transnational connections to be embedded in Lee’s film content and filmmaking. The flexibility of diaspora helped Lee develop his mode of transnational co-production, establish

connections with the international cultural economy, and follow a career trajectory distinct from his Taiwanese counterparts.

The “Father-Knows-Best” trilogy offers less local colour and native sentiment in relation to his Taiwanese contemporaries’ films in general, notwithstanding that the trilogy is still to a certain extent related to life experiences of Taiwanese people. Song Hwee Lim (2012: 131) points out that, unlike most Taiwan New Cinema (TNC) directors, Lee deals with diasporic experience outside Taiwan in his early works instead of the society, history and modernity of Taiwan. The “Father-Knows-Best” trilogy could be read as Lee’s representation of the diasporic experiences of contemporary ethnic Chinese and his double displacement, including that from mainland China to Taiwan and from Taiwan to the United States (ibid.: 132). Lee acknowledges that the question of identity has always troubled him:

People like me, second-generation mainlanders from Taiwan, are a rare breed . . . Although in the back of my mind I consider myself a genuine Chinese, I think I still have a problem with identity. But we [Taiwanese from the mainland] are drifting away, and I don’t know who this “identity” belongs to in the end.¹⁷ (Berry, 2005: 331-332)

In this sense, the “Father-Knows-Best” trilogy can be understood as both Lee’s reflection of displacement and alienation of Chinese diaspora in America and Taiwan and his reconsideration of the negotiation between modernity, Western values, tradition, Confucian ethics, and Chinese patriarchy through immigrant themes.

Lee can be regarded as the only Taiwanese auteur most of whose works have succeeded in both local and foreign film markets. Since he takes into account spectators’ taste in the process of film development, his films are relatively easy to digest for viewers, compared to those of his Taiwanese counterparts, such as Hou Hsiao-hsien and Tsai Ming-liang. As for

¹⁷ Apart from Taiwanese aborigines, Han Chinese people constitute nearly 98% of the population of Taiwan according to the Ministry of the Interior (2013b). Taiwan’s Han Chinese people could be roughly divided into three ethnic groups: the Hoklo, the Hakka and mainlanders. Taiwanese Hoklo and Hakka are the so-called native Taiwanese (*bensheng ren*), for their ancestors immigrated to Taiwan before the Japanese colonial period. Mainlander (*waisheng ren*) refers to people moving to Taiwan from the mainland after the mid-1940s and their descendants.

the local film market, although diasporic identity and displacement are not collective experiences for the Taiwanese and not all the critical and commercial performance of films of “Father-Knows-Best” trilogy came up to Lee’s expectations, all of them were among the top five films from Taiwan at the Taipei box office in each year (Chinese Taipei Film Archive, 1993: 152-157; Chen, 1995: 111). Whilst tackling some sensitive themes in ethnic Chinese society, such as homosexuality and patriarchy, in these films, Lee handled them with a more cautious and lighter touch. Lee’s reconsideration of traditional patriarchy is to remind Chinese-speaking viewers that Chinese traditions can be flexible and adaptable rather than fixed and unchanging, and his humorous and dramatic narrative and some untypical and unconventional plots capture their attention. These conditions helped them to entertain mainstream audiences and to interest emerging identity communities in Taiwan in the early 1990s.

Moreover, the popularity of Lee’s Chinese-language films can be attributed to Lee’s flexible filmmaking. Ong (1999: 6) asserts that flexible citizenship allows diaspora to be more capable of responding to changing political and economic conditions and of grasping economic opportunities. Drawing on Ong’s idea, Shu-mei Shih (2007: 59-60) claims that diasporic director Ang Lee adopts in his filmmaking a strategy of flexibility and translatability, so that the local culture is flexibly encoded and translated into a form which can be readily decoded and consumed by Western viewers. On the one hand, the popularity of Lee’s films in Taiwan can be owed to nationalism, apart from factors mentioned above. The commercial success of the “Father-Knows-Best” trilogy in Taiwan partly indicated the desire of the Taiwanese to be accepted by global society. Since the 1980s, the increasing international critical approval of films from Taiwan has transformed Taiwan art cinema into a means of political and cultural self-identification and self-assertion for the Taiwanese. Hence, like other Taiwanese auteurs, Lee’s international prestige is associated with the issue of

national glory and could encourage consumption of his films in Taiwan. Also, Taiwanese spectators' growing interest in queer films since the 1990s could partly reveal their eagerness to be recognised and accepted by the global community, for gay-friendliness is regarded as a marker of advanced western civilisation, thereby increasing the popularity of Lee's works in Taiwan (ibid.: 51).

On the other, Lee's flexible filmmaking enables his Chinese-language projects to be presented in a more Western-friendly way for American audiences through minoritisation. For Shih (2007: 52), some themes, such as nationalist patriarchy and gendered minoritisation, and the stereotypical and exotic representation of Chinese culture in Lee's early Chinese-language works could enable these films to be perceived as ethnic cultural products in the American multicultural context rather than cultural products of another nation. This what she calls "decipherable localism", "the presentation of local national culture with the anticipation of ready decipherability by the nonlocal audience" (ibid.: 60), could increase translatability to assist easy assimilation and consumption of American audiences, but it also implies the process of minoritisation.

Nevertheless, Taiwanese society has been greatly affected by American neo-colonialism since the Cold War, and "knowledge of American culture became a given for the educated Taiwanese to the extent that a national subject from Taiwan can be readily transformed to a minority subject in the United States" (Shih, 2007: 47-48). In this light, the multicultural circumstance and the supremacy of Americanism in Taiwan have made Taiwanese people accustomed to the process of minoritisation of national culture as ethnic culture and exotic others. In this sense, Taiwanese women and Chinese cultural fetishes such as the Chinese food represented in Lee's early films, particularly in *EDMW*, can be perceived as exotica to appeal to local audiences as well as foreign spectators. Thus, Shih articulates that Lee's "Father-Knows-Best" trilogy "embodies the nationalist appeal to the Taiwan audience

through resuscitated patriarchy and the Taiwanese craving for international fame, while embracing the exoticist requirements necessary for the approval of the American audience” (ibid.: 54).

That is, Ang Lee took a diasporic and flexible position to make his “Father-Knows-Best” trilogy more internationally readable and translatable by integrating elements appealing for both local and American viewers into film texts. Although the presentation might provoke exoticism, this flexibility was greatly conducive to global consumption of these films. Nevertheless, Lee’s flexible filmmaking exhibits the process of minoritisation, which implies an asymmetric power distribution in the global cultural economy. Minoritised ethnic Chinese filmmakers may be deliberately presenting a decipherable and digestible local national culture to cater to mainstream American audiences, and its indigenous qualities may be selectively diminished in the encoding process. Thus, Shih views Lee’s early Chinese-language films as “model illustrations of how Sinophone films can be squarely caught within a political economy of culture structured by the unevenness of power along the axes of gender and nation” (2007: 48). The process also demonstrates the imbalanced power relationship in the production process of a hybrid cultural product.

I agree that the characteristics of Lee’s works that Shih identifies may have contributed to Lee’s success. However, Lee is not the only Taiwanese filmmaker to have explored related themes, but no other Taiwanese directors have achieved such critical and commercial success. Thus the significance of Lee’s link of his career with American cinema should be foregrounded. The theatrical and filmmaking training he received in the USA makes him familiar with the conventions of filmmaking, dramatic storytelling and classical narrative in Hollywood cinema, thereby making his film style more similar to Hollywood filmmakers’ than accented style (Lim, 2012: 135). Sheldon Hsiao-peng Lu also believes that Lee “belongs to an international, Hollywood-originated, ‘transcultural poetics’ of cinema” (2005: 226).

This feature helps him make a crossover between popular and art cinemas, between American audiences and Taiwanese spectators who are already accustomed to American narrative films. In fact, *The Wedding Banquet* and *EDMW* were the highest-grossing Asian-language films at the North American box office when they were released in 1993 and 1994 respectively (*Box Office Mojo*, 2013a). This fact is evidence of the relatively high popularity of Lee's Chinese-language films among foreign-language films in the United States.

In addition, Lee's collaboration with US-based independent cinema operator GMI has aided him to efficiently utilise resources to make films and engage in the international cinematic system. Further, the company is able to facilitate Lee in becoming familiar with the American market and grasping the filmmaking conventions in the American film industry. Lee found his niche in Western markets and began to think much more about the taste of the global art film market after *The Wedding Banquet*, which not only won the Golden Bear but was a huge hit in the international market (Chang, J., 2002: 130).¹⁸ Consequently, through the support of Schamus and GMI, Lee developed a two-pronged approach to position, produce and market his Chinese-language films to appeal to Asian mainstream audiences, the Taiwanese in particular, whereas they have spread mainly in art-house circuits in the West (ibid.: 119). Moreover, since *EDMW*, the approach of transnational co-writing has been adopted to prepare the scripts for his Chinese-language films. Transnational connections have, it may be said, fundamentally affected the development of Lee's projects, from financing to reception, and this phenomenon was also exhibited in *CTHD*.

¹⁸ According to Wei Ti (2005: 102), the worldwide box-office revenue of *The Wedding Banquet* amounted to US\$32 million from a budget of US\$750,000. Consequently the film became the most proportionately profitable film worldwide in 1993.

Cultural Hybridisation and the Script Development of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*

Cultural Hybridity

Cultural hybridity is a distinctive characteristic making *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* popular outside of Chinese-speaking regions. The term of hybridity is originally used in biology, referring to the cross-breeding of multiple species in order to generate a new one, and has been employed to delineate phenomena in various fields, such as in racial, linguistic and cultural mixtures. The notion of hybridity has received great attention from diasporic elites and become a popular term used in postcolonial discourse to delineate the formation of trans-cultural forms in a colonial context. Virinder Kalra, Raminder Kaur and John Hutnyk point out that hybridity “appears as a convenient category at ‘the edge’ or contact point of diaspora, describing cultural mixture where the diasporized meets the host in the scene of migration” (2005: 70). In these circumstances, as ethnic elites have gained cultural or political authority within the dominant society, hybridity has been regarded as a new model for “representing the process of cultural interaction, and to demonstrate the negative consequences of insisting upon the denial of the emergent forms of cultural identity” (Papastergiadis, 2000: 3). In this regard, the discourse on hybridity can be perceived to some extent as the crystallisation of the experience of diaspora.

Homi Bhabha is a key figure who employs the term to elucidate the construction of cultural authority in the colonial context. From his point of view, hybridity could represent an ambivalent and contradictory “third space of enunciation” where all cultural statements and systems are constructed (1994: 37). In this sense, cultural formation can be viewed as a process of hybridisation, and cross-cultural exchange is a process of mutual construction. This perspective is developed on the presumption that relations among cultures are fluid, and “cultural forms are called hybrid/syncretic/mixed/creolized because the elements in the mix

derive from different cultural contexts” (Pieterse, 1995: 62). Accordingly, essential cultural purities could just be illusory. The cultural authority is disrupted by the ambivalent hybridity, and the subject–object distinction between the coloniser and colonised is dubious. Bhabha regards hybridity as “a problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonial disavowals, so that other ‘denied’ knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority-its rule of recognition” (1994: 114). In this light, hybridity can be perceived as a strategic tool to alter power relations, reverse the domination, and “(set) up new structure of authority (and) new political initiatives” (Bhabha, 1990: 211). Thus, as Nikos Papastergiadis contends, “hybridity is both the assemblage that occurs whenever two or more elements meet, and the initiation of a process of change” (2000: 170). Cultural hybridity concerns not only the combination and fusion of elements derived from various cultures but also the construction of the subjectivities and the formulation of new cultural forms inspired by cultural clash.

In contrast to Bhabha’s optimistic view, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (2007: 109) remind us that the formulation of hybridity is associated with imbalanced and inequitable power relations it references. The process of cultural hybridisation to some extent reflects the cultural and identity politics to which it is related and is best examined in terms of the context in which it occurs. Jan Nederveen Pieterse’s idea of a continuum of hybridities could highlight the complexity of hybridity: “on one end, an assimilationist hybridity that leans over towards the centre, adopts the canon and mimics the hegemony, and, at the other end, a destabilizing hybridity that blurs the canon, reverses the current, subverts the centre” (1995: 56-57). Despite the complex and ambiguous impact, hybridity has become a critical feature in the cultural production in the age of globalisation. Pieterse (*ibid.*: 64) maintains that the hybridisation perspective can release engagement from different forms of socio-cultural boundaries, and “nowhere can we find more convincing and abundant evidence for the

hybridization of the hybrid than in cultural products, as imitation, borrowing, appropriation, extraction, mutual learning and representation erode all possibilities for cultural authenticity” (Wang and Yeh, 2005: 177). It could be argued that the concept of cultural hybridisation could help us comprehend Ang Lee’s strategy of flexibility for developing the screenplay of *CTHD* and the controversy over the film.

Ang Lee’s Wuxia Dream: A Symbolic Homecoming Journey

Ang Lee’s *CTHD* can be understood as a hybrid imagination of ancient China presented through a duplex ideological lens, both Chinese and American. The international success of Lee’s earlier Chinese-language films opened the door to Hollywood for Lee in the mid-1990s. After finishing three English-language films, namely *Sense and Sensibility* (1995), *The Ice Storm* (1997), and *Ride with the Devil* (1999), Lee returned to Chinese-language filmmaking to fulfil his childhood wish: to make a *wuxia* film (Chang, J., 2002: 269). *CTHD* was based on Wang Du-lu’s *wuxia* epic the *Crane-Iron* Pentology.¹⁹ Wang was famous for his tragic-romantic novel style and hailed as one of the “Five Great Masters of the Northern School” of Chinese *wuxia* novels.²⁰ His works particularly concern human contradiction and emotional struggle, and Ang Lee, similarly, believes that human emotions and moral principles are central to *wuxia* cinema (Chang, J., 2002: 269). It may be claimed that Lee’s decision to adapt Wang’s novels for the screen somewhat indicated that his *wuxia* film would differ from Hong Kong *wuxia* films of the 1990s, which in style and tone accentuate cinematic spectacle and masculinity.

¹⁹ The *Crane-Iron* Pentology comprises: *Crane Frightens Kunlun* (*He Jing Kunlun*), *Precious Sword*, *Golden Hairpin* (*Baojian jincai*), *Sword’s Force*, *Pearl’s Shine* (*Jianqi zhuguang*), *Crouching Tiger*, *Hidden Dragon* (*Wohu canglong*) and *Iron Knight*, *Silver Vase* (*Tieji yinping*). Lee’s film was adapted from *Sword’s Force*, *Pearl’s Shine* and *Crouching Tiger*, *Hidden Dragon* (Ye, 1997: 44).

²⁰ The “Five Great Masters of the Northern School” refers to five representative *wuxia* novelists based in Northern China during the 1930s and 1940s: Huanzhu Louzhu, Bai Yu, Zheng Zheng-yin, Wang Du-lu and Zhu Zhen-mu (ibid.: 34-35).

Cultural hybridisation in the development process of *CTHD*'s screenplay is noteworthy because *wuxia* is one of the oldest and most prominent genres in Chinese-language cinema. Whilst the development of *wuxia* literature can be traced back thousands of years, modern *wuxia* cultural products began to achieve high popularity in the Chinese-speaking world from the early 20th century onwards, with a variety of media forms, including literature, film, television and video games. As to cinema, according to Yingjin Zhang (2004: 14), motion picture has been treated as a business in China since the 1920s, and the immense success of *The Burning of the Red Lotus Temple* series (*Huoshao Hongliansi*, dir. Zhang Shichuan, 1928-1931), adapted from Pingjiang Buxiaosheng's *wuxia* novel *Jianghu qixia zhuan*, not only made martial arts film one of the popular genres in Chinese cinema but also dramatically influenced the structure of the early Chinese film industry.

Stephen Teo views martial arts as a movement instead of a genre, which has appeared in various Asian national cinemas, engendering and affecting a number of genres such as *wuxia* and kung fu (2009: 2). *Wuxia* and kung fu are two genres sometimes interchangeable; however, it could be argued that the design of action and fight scenes plays a more important role in kung fu films in general. By contrast, *wuxia* is a compound term associated with *wu*, denoting martial arts, and *xia*, referring to chivalry and heroism. The *wuxia* story is normally a story about the adventurous journey of a group of martial artists in an imagined *jianghu* world set in ancient China, either in a specific or indefinite historical period, encompassing chivalrous conduct, grudge and revenge, and good-against-evil storylines.²¹ *Wuxia* films with diverse styles have come to existence in succession in the history of Chinese cinemas, for example, the Cantonese Wong Fei-hung films in the 1950s, "new school" *wuxia* films in the 1960s, Hong Kong New Wave filmmakers' *wuxia* films in the late 20th century, and high-

²¹ *Jianghu* refers to the fictional realm in which *wuxia* novels are set. It is a world in its own right, made up of martial artists and their relationships. Individual relationships and codes in *jianghu* are often set up without regard to the law or authority (Sunshine, 2000: 137).

budget pan-Chinese *wuxia* co-productions in the new millennium. Today, *wuxia* still remains one of the most popular film genres in the Chinese-speaking world.

Whilst *wuxia* cinema is often regarded as a national cinematic form, it is in fact essentially transnational. In terms of transnationalism, Teo (2005: 192-197) points out that the development of *wuxia* films, along with kung fu films, in the past century is closely linked with demands of diasporic audiences, the construction of the Southeast Asian distribution network, international film markets, foreign-language film genres and transnational co-production. Not only were *Wuxia* films a popular entertainment form for diasporic Chinese in the early 20th century, but they also provided an “abstract China” to satisfy “the psychic needs of the diasporic Chinese to identify, vicariously or nostalgically, with the motherland and its myths—even though many of the overseas Chinese would not have been born in China” (ibid.: 194). As a whole, *wuxia* cinema is rooted in the cultural and historical contexts of China and can be seen as a crystallisation of Chineseness. It has been regarded as “a ‘national form’ possessing historical and cultural characteristics and attributes of ‘Chineseness’” (Teo, 2005: 198). On the other hand, *wuxia* cinema can be perceived as a sort of diasporic, transnational and de-territorialised Chinese imagination helping interlink Chinese-speaking people scattered around the world and connect them with cultural China. In this sense, *wuxia* films are both national and transnational and function as a critical medium forging the Chinese cultural identity of diasporic Chinese such as Ang Lee.

In this context, to produce a *wuxia* film can be perceived as Lee’s symbolic return to a mythical homeland and effort to trace his cultural roots and his admiration for *wuxia* films made by diasporic Chinese directors of an older generation. In the case of *CTHD*, he tried to pool regional and international resources to represent his imagined *jianghu* and ancient China from his memories of classical Chinese *wuxia* films. The *wuxia* world is an abstract and fictional world which offers him more freedom to express his ideas and emotions (Chang, J.,

2002: 269). For Lee, to make a *wuxia* film is to look for the “old cultural, historical, abstract China—the big dream of China that probably never existed” (Larmer, 2000). Lee’s concept of China is the one imagined by cinema, not the one existing in the real world. He considers the dream of China to be evoked by both the Yellow Plum Melody opera film *The Love Eterne* (*Liang Shanbo yu Zhu Yingtai*, dir. Li Han-hsiang, 1963) and Mandarin *wuxia* films made by King Hu and Hong Kong’s Shaw Studio in the 1960s and 1970s (Chang, J., 2002: 436-440). The fight scene in the bamboo forest between Li Mu Bai (performed by Chow Yun-fat) and Jen (performed by Zhang Ziyi) in *CTHD* is Lee’s homage to King Hu’s *A Touch of Zen* (*Xianü*, 1971). In addition, the casting of Cheng Pei-pei, who starred as the heroine in several classic *wuxia* films such as *Come Drink with Me* (*Dazuixia*, dir. King Hu, 1966), as Jade Fox showed Lee’s attempt to reinvent the classic *wuxia* genre as well as his attempt to pay homage to Hu. David Bordwell also maintains that *CTHD* referenced various elements of predecessors’ works, for example, “the serene self-possession of Li Mu Bai is reminiscent of King Hu’s fighters . . . Yu Shu Lien’s rooftop pursuit of the mysterious thief echoes 1960s’ adventures” (2000a: 20-21). In this regard, Lee’s debt to classic *wuxia* films demonstrates the cultural and cinematic link between *CTHD* and the generic heritage.

The diasporic status of Lee and other major participants allow *CTHD* to be read as a work of diasporic filmmaking. Christina Klein (2004a: 25) argues that Lee tried to “repair some of the ties ruptured by the psychic and material dislocations of diaspora” with a quintessentially Chinese genre. From a diasporic perspective, Lee’s *wuxia* film production can be viewed as a diasporic director’s expression of admiration for cultural China and his return to diasporic homeland and cultural roots. As Klein claims, *CTHD* could be regarded as “the homage of an American-based director to a body of Hong Kong films that expressed their makers’ nostalgic longing for a lost Chinese homeland” (ibid.). Nevertheless, the homeland which Lee wished to return to does not exist in the present, but only in the past, or,

more precisely, in the myth. For Naficy (2001: 33), the imaginary or real homecoming journey is the dominant theme of accented films. Nonetheless, the text of *CTHD*, unlike Lee's "Father-Knows-Best" trilogy, does not tackle the dialectic between himself, his homeland, either China or Taiwan, and his host country, the USA. Rather, it is best understood as a diasporic director's re-exploration of cultural China and nostalgic look back at his predecessors' cinematic construction of a mythical homeland.

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon as a Cultural Hybrid: Transnational Co-Writing of the Screenplay and Generic Reconstruction

In order to make his representation of cultural China appealing to Western tastes, Ang Lee adopted transnational co-writing to develop the hybridised text of *CTHD*. I have mentioned that Lee's flexible encoding enables his film texts to be more easily decoded by both Taiwanese and American spectators. In the case of *CTHD*, transnational co-writing of the film script, as a key feature of Lee's flexible filmmaking, played a vital role in increasing the translatability and encouraging consumption of this *wuxia* film in the West. In fact, transnational co-writing was not new to Lee, for Schamus had participated in the scriptwriting of his two previous Mandarin films, *The Wedding Banquet* and *EDMW*. In the case of *EDMW*, Schamus revised the English translation of a script initially written by the Taiwanese screenwriter Wang Hui-ling and then his English script was re-translated; Lee ensured that the Chinese and American ways of thinking could be integrated in the final script. Lee argues that Schamus, as an American, can "help us think beyond the box by offering an alternative viewpoint and the Western imagination of Taipei" (Chang, J., 2002: 128). Furthermore, Schamus' familiarity with the international film festival circuit and the art-house market enables Lee to produce films more likely to be accepted by them (*ibid.*: 130-131). By virtue of transnational co-writing, all scripts of Lee's Mandarin films, excepting

Pushing Hands, can be viewed as products of the process of cultural hybridisation. Even though *wuxia* is always deemed a quintessential Chinese film genre, transnational collaboration in script writing made Lee's *CTHD* a representative case of cultural hybridity.

Similarly, the script of *CTHD* was developed through a repeated back-and-forth translation process. The screenplay of *CTHD* is also a work co-written by people of different cultural origins, including Tsai Kuo-jung and Wang Hui-ling from Taiwan and Schamus from the US. The Chinese novelist Zhong Acheng was in charge of textual research and amending language usage (ibid.: 292). In the beginning, Schamus began writing his first draft when Lee gave him an English scenario developed from Tsai's draft. Schamus thought that he could craft an exciting, tightly plotted, romantic and swashbuckling script, but there was a wide cultural gap to bridge:

[T]he problem with it was that even though I had been reading a lot of Chinese literature and philosophy in translation, and had seen all the tapes of the films of King Hu, Zhang Che, Tsui Hark and everybody, I just didn't have the cultural sensitivity to understand what's fundamentally at stake in the genre. (Teo, 2001)

Schamus was puzzled about Chinese rhetoric, artistic conceptions, societal structure and behavioural codes in traditional Chinese society as well as by the *jianghu* world in *wuxia* stories, elements ethnic Chinese people take for granted. According to Schamus (Teo, 2001), the original English script had a strong narrative focus and breathless storytelling; however, for Chinese-speaking people it would read like a parody.

The participation of Wang Hui-ling, who had also worked with Ang Lee in *EDMW*, in the scriptwriting process signalled a new start.²² She drastically rewrote Schamus' script after it had been translated into Chinese, which made the film work as a Chinese-language film. Subsequently her draft was translated into English again and Schamus restructured it into a more Western narrative form. The script of *CTHD* was finished through this back-and-forth translation and revision. Once again, Ang Lee acted as the intermediary between the

²² Wang Hui-ling and Schamus also collaborated in screenplay of Ang Lee's film *Lust, Caution* (Se, Jie, 2007).

two worlds and blended everything together. Schamus (2000) thinks that the back-and-forth process can generate a kind of distillation although some things might get lost in translation. The complex linguistic and cultural translation involved in the cumbersome creative process has reconfigured Chinese and generic culture and made *CTHD* emblematic of a hybrid cinematic presence.

The ping-pong process between Taiwanese and American scriptwriters enabled Western cultural elements to be embedded in the characterisation and dialogue of the Chinese-language film script. In this regard, the film can be viewed as a cultural hybridity, and transnational connections manifested in the film text help both Chinese-speaking and Western audiences decode the film readily and flexibly. In terms of characterisation, Schamus regarded the traits of certain characters in Wang's draft as unfavourable in the eyes of Western and modern Chinese-speaking spectators. For example, he considered Yu Shu Lien (acted by Michelle Yeoh) in Wang's early draft as a "conservative diehard". Yu's speech in the draft would, he thought, make her a laughing stock, whereas to Wang and Lee her speech and behaviour were understandable and acceptable (Chang, J., 2002: 292). Consequently, the script was revised to fit the preconceptions of non-Chinese viewers. Moreover, the screenplay of *CTHD* was written through a translingual back-and-forth co-writing process, and the dialogue in *CTHD* reveals the feature of hybridity. Linguistic and cultural difference could hinder the transnational collaboration of screenplay. As Lee (Berry, 2005: 347) said, "it can be difficult, because there are some things in the English script that you know Chinese characters would never say." Still, Lee considers that Western-style dialogues allow characters to bare their hearts more openly compared with the Chinese way of indirect expression, which would be more suitable for not only the film narrative but also modern Chinese-speaking and Western spectators (Chang, J., 2002: 297-231). Hence some dialogues on love between Yu Shu Lien and Li Mu Bai and between Jen and Lo were literally

translated from Schamus' English film script (*ibid.*), and written with the Westernised Chinese syntax, diction and grammar which modern Chinese-language speakers have been used to.

In addition to co-writing the screenplay, Lee's innovation of the *wuxia* film, a typical Chinese genre with established generic conventions, encouraged the circulation of *CTHD* in international film markets. *CTHD* may be understood as a mixture of two dominant genres of Chinese filmmaking, the masculine martial arts adventure and the feminine operatic melodrama (Lyman, 2001). Therefore, Lee has described *CTHD* as "*Sense and Sensibility with martial arts*" ("*Ang Lee and James Schamus*", 2000). Compared with typical *wuxia* films of the past, Lee attached more importance to dramatic factors and the depiction of the protagonists' inner world and emotional conflict in *CTHD*. According to Chris Berry and Mary Farquhar (2006: 72), Lee reconstructed and blended norms of these genres with Western-style psychological realism. Jade Fox's murder of Li Mu Bai's master, Jen's quest for individual freedom, and love affairs in the film are associated with gender and generational conflicts about Confucian codes of conduct, patriarchal social order and masculine authority. Some universal themes, such as the struggle of humanity and the dialect between desire, freedom, obligation and norms, became the major focus of the film. Lee was eager to present a quality *wuxia* film to elevate the genre from the status of a B-movie to an A-grade film, and he believed that such innovation could increase the artistic value of *wuxia* cinema (Lyman, 2001). He transformed a macho genre into a story-driven action fantasy led by women, one capable of shrinking cultural barriers and attracting modern Western audiences (Munoz, 2000). Moreover, primary female characters, such as Jen, Yu and Jade Fox, are ambitious and self-reliant. They have the ability to run their own affairs and possess strong skills to protect themselves. It resonates with the concept of "girl power" and post-

feminist theory, popular in the West since the 1990s, and these characters were able to attract Western viewers, females in particular (Wu and Chan, 2007: 209).

In other words, *CTHD* projects an imagination of cultural China, and Lee's focus on universal themes helped the film cater for both Chinese-speaking and Western audiences, both mainstream and art-house film markets. When examining South Asian diasporic filmmaking, Jigna Desai (2004: 45) observes that "those films most likely to circulate transnationally are those that are more 'Western friendly', adopting familiar genres, narratives, or themes in their hybrid production." Lee's measures to innovate *wuxia* films, including the development of a hybrid film text through transnational collaboration of screenplay and his generic reconstruction, have played a critical role in making the film more easily translatable and friendly to Western spectators. Besides, the narrative logic of *CTHD* was adapted to some degree for Western spectators as well as modern Chinese audiences due to the consideration for worldwide markets ("*Ang Lee and James Schamus*", 2000). For example, the first fight scene was held back until nearly fifteen minutes into the film, thus functioning to help viewers grasp the rules and layout of the alien society and immerse themselves in the *jianghu* world:

By delaying it for so long, Lee gives himself time to establish the diegetic world of Qing dynasty China, to set up the violent back story of the Green Destiny sword, and to introduce the long-simmering emotional tensions between his main characters. (Klein, 2004a: 32)

However, the pacing of the film is a breakaway from traditional *wuxia* films, since the norms of *jianghu* and conventions of *wuxia* genre have almost become common knowledge for Chinese-speaking viewers. In addition to increasing the artistic value and elevating the status of *wuxia* films, it is easy to see that a critical motivation of Lee for innovating the genre was to make the film more easily digestible and translatable for non-Chinese speaking viewers. These characteristics reflect Lee's strategy of flexibility and translatability in filmmaking.

In general, the development of the hybrid script of *CTHD* was ascribed to the growth of global cultural economy and Ang Lee's diasporic status. On the one hand, in terms of the transnational collaboration of the screenplay of *CTHD*, the back-and-forth translation and collaboration process, the adoption of Western-style dialogues and somewhat Westernised plots, the adjustment to characterisation, and the exclusion of some generic conventions demonstrate the negotiation and struggle in the process of cultural hybridisation between Chinese and American cultures. The demanding process allowed *CTHD* to be a quality *wuxia* film capable of both being recognised in the international film festival circuit and appealing to Western audiences as well as Chinese-speaking viewers. In this regard, the transnational co-writing and the renewal of the *wuxia* genre were driven by commercial considerations and benefited from ever-growing global cultural economy even though Lee's intention to elevate the status of the genre also led to this cultural hybridisation process. Nonetheless, Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh and Darrell William Davis point out that Lee's films always "raised issues of exoticism, commodification, and complicity, leading to charges of pandering to Western tastes" (2005: 209). Such disapproval was also shown in the reception of *CTHD*, which will be elaborated upon later in this chapter. On the other hand, the production of the cultural hybrid script of *CTHD* can be understood as the diasporic filmmaker's selective representation and understanding of Chineseness in response to changing cultural contexts in the modern Chinese-speaking world. The transnational connections and social network Lee established through his diasporic experience also contributed to transnational co-writing between American, Taiwanese and Chinese scriptwriters. In this regard, the hybridity of *CTHD* partly reflects Lee's flexible and open interpretation of Chineseness, developed from his diasporic status and experience. In fact, in addition to the creation of a hybrid film text, the significance of diasporic filmmakers to the project was also exhibited by their transnational collaboration in the production process.

Transnational Co-Production and an All-Star Multinational Crew and Cast

Transnational Co-Production and the Accumulation of Cultural Capital

As a transnational co-production targeting global film markets, *CTHD* had an all-star multinational crew and cast. In terms of the credits, the production of *CTHD* can be viewed as the fruit of the collaboration by filmmakers from various countries, a great number of whom are the Chinese diaspora outside the People's Republic of China (PRC). In addition, *CTHD* starred actors from various Chinese-speaking regions, and the four leads are from four different territories, namely Hong Kong (Chow Yun-fat), Malaysia (Michelle Yeoh), Taiwan (Chang Chen) and mainland China (Zhang Ziyi). Most of them have developed their careers along a transnational trajectory and have made a crossover in the late 20th century between various national cinemas. Klein (2004a: 27) argues that Lee's diasporic status helped him assemble Chinese-speaking talents from across the world, pool regional resources and work on the mainland. Mette Hjort (2010: 20-21) also claims that filmmakers' personal transnational networks, multiple belonging linked to ethnicity and trajectories of migration lead to the formation of cosmopolitan transnationalism, a form of cinematic transnationalism. That is, Lee's diasporic background and transnational social network enable him to more easily bring together a magnificent Chinese landscape, an elite group of Hong Kong creative professionals, an extensive below-the-line crew, top diasporic Chinese artists, skilled American production companies, renowned Chinese-speaking stars and worldwide resources via transnational networks. In this light, the flexible citizenship of the diasporic Chinese filmmaker could be seen as advantageous to the transnational co-production of *CTHD*. The credits of *CTHD* did not merely demonstrate the complicated ethnoscape and technoscape of the global configuration, to use Arjun Appadurai's term (1996), but also reflected the ongoing regional integration of film industries. It showed that participants' cultural and

symbolic capital and actors' stardom are critical factors with regard to its transnational collaboration.

Cultural capital is a concept Pierre Bourdieu (1986) proposed to analyse the association between culture and power and scrutinise agents' power struggles and power relations in the social space. Cultural capital acts as "a social relation within a system of exchange that includes the accumulated cultural knowledge that confers power and status" (Barker, 2004: 37). It is one of four fundamental guises of capital articulated by Bourdieu, namely economic capital, social capital, cultural capital and symbolic capital, and can exist in three forms: in the embodied state, in the objectified state, and in the institutionalised state. The accumulation of cultural capital in the embodied state refers to long-lasting cultivated dispositions which are internalised by the investor through the form of culture, cultivation and education, presupposing a process of embodiment and incorporation. This form of cultural capital is a sort of external wealth converted into the individual's integral part and habitus and cannot be directly transmitted to others (Bourdieu, 1986: 244-245). The objectified state of cultural capital is the form of cultural goods, such as pictures and books, and can be transmitted materially. The institutionalised form of cultural capital means that the holders' cultural competence is recognised and guaranteed through legal institutions, for example, academic qualifications. The form also indicates the power of instituting and facilitates the conversion between cultural capital and economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986: 248). Cultural capital can function as symbolic capital, such as prestige and recognition, and it provides the cultural capital holder with secure material and symbolic advantages. Cultural competence is able to derive a scarcity value from its position in the distribution of cultural capital and provide its owner with great profits. Economic capital is the root of cultural capital, and cultural capital can be converted into economic capital under certain conditions

(ibid.: 252). The accumulation of cultural capital, together with other forms of capital, decides the individual's power and position in the social space.

In this sense, filmmakers' and actors' professional ability and celebrity can be perceived as a form of embodied cultural capital and symbolic capital respectively, and the recruitment of multinational crew and cast in *CTHD* is a strategy for accumulating cultural capital and symbolic capital. In terms of the composition of the crew, *CTHD* aggregated a great amount of cultural capital and symbolic capital beyond national borders by assembling filmmakers from Taiwan, the mainland, Hong Kong and America for film production, thereby making the film more economically and culturally competitive. Although the project was initiated by Ang Lee and producer Hsu Li-kong from Taiwan and scripted by Taiwanese screenwriter Wang Hui-ling, the production of the film heavily depended on non-Taiwanese filmmakers' efforts. Around two-thirds of the participators were provided by Chinese studios like the Beijing Film Studio, and the film score was performed by Chinese orchestras (Chang, J., 2002: 375). However, the majority of Chinese filmmakers were below-the-line crew and not responsible for creative works. The core creative work was mainly carried out by American and diasporic Chinese filmmakers, in particular those based in Hong Kong. Some American film professionals, particularly James Schamus, played a critical role in the production of *CTHD*. Schamus, Lee's long-term partner, partook in the scriptwriting and influenced characterisation, narrative and the dialogue writing of the film. He also served as executive producer and helped the establishment of transnational financing and distribution networks of *CTHD*. Moreover, the post-production work was mainly handled by American experts, including Lee's long-time collaborator film editor Tim Squyres.²³

²³ In conjunction with American post-production companies, Hong Kong's Asia Legend Limited was responsible for the special effects of the film, and part of the film score was recorded in Shanghai (Chang, J., 2002: 371).

Furthermore, Hong Kong filmmakers played a central role in the production stage of *CTHD*. Martial arts film is an important genre for Hong Kong cinema historically, and a great number of Hong Kong filmmakers possess large amounts of cultural and symbolic capital in the context of making *wuxia* and kung fu films. In this light, Peter Pau's cinematography and lighting, Timmy Yip's production design, covering sets, property, costumes and makeup, and Yuen Woo-ping's action design enabled Lee, who was unfamiliar with the production practice of *wuxia* film, to construct and represent an imaginary *jianghu* set in the Qing Dynasty (1644–1912). Born in Hong Kong, Pau received high school education in China, studied filmmaking in America, and then returned to Hong Kong to build his career (Huang, B., 2005), whereas Yip began his career in Hong Kong, had based himself in Taiwan for nearly ten years and had partaken in various drama and film productions there (Wang, W., 2010). Like Ang Lee, transnational connections are embedded in the careers of these diasporic filmmakers and offer them a flexibility and mobility to raise cultural and symbolic capitals transnationally. The international social network they have built through their transnational activities also increases their social capital.

In addition, action design is all-important to a *wuxia* film, and Hong Kong action choreographer Yuen Woo-ping played a pivotal role in the production of *CTHD*. For Lee (Chang, J., 2002: 352-360), martial arts is not only an art form but also a way of expressing the character's personality traits and background; the fighting being a dramatic gesture of characters' inner conflict and emotions. Fight choreography on the screen can be understood as a sort of dance and is a mix of imagination and reality, and the operatic style is a distinctive characteristic in Chinese martial arts films, in particular those of King Hu. China-born Yuen Woo-ping is an eminent film director and action choreographer in the Hong Kong film industry, renowned for his ability to integrate wirework, martial arts and opera techniques into action choreography. He rose to international stardom after being responsible

for the action choreography of *The Matrix* (Wachowski Brothers, 1999). Although having some ideas about action choreography in his mind, Ang Lee had insufficient technical knowledge about martial arts filmmaking. Yuen's excellence enabled Lee to create astonishing fighting style, breathtaking fight sequences, and a more realistic and practical approach with "magical characteristics of old-fashioned *wuxia*" (Husband, 2000) to draw viewers' and critics' attention. Thus Klein (2004a: 28) praised Yuen's aesthetic contribution to this work and even considered *CTHD* as Yuen's film almost as much as Lee's in terms of authorship. Yuen helped *CTHD* become a nexus of diasporic Chinese imagination, Ang Lee's intertextual references, cinematic and cultural traditions of *wuxia* genre, and cinematic culture and practice of the Hong Kong action cinema.

In addition, the production and marketing of *CTHD* benefited from the cultural and symbolic capital of internationally esteemed ethnic Chinese maestros, in particular Tan Dun and Yo-Yo Ma. Tan Dun, a China-born, New York-based composer, was responsible for composing the film score, and the cello solos in Tan's score were performed by the internationally revered cellist Yo-Yo Ma. Whilst both of them are based in America, their works exhibit transnational connections and cultural hybridity, reflecting their diasporic status. Tan is a worldwide-recognised composer skilled in using non-traditional instruments in his composition and renowned for his hybrid music style, which integrates native folk song and Chinese elements with Western music (Swed, 2001). The combined use of Western and Chinese instruments is common in his compositions, such as *Marco Polo*. In this regard, his unique style not only echoed the hybridity exhibited in Lee's project but made him a good choice to compose the film score appealing to both Oriental and Western viewers. As for Yo-Yo Ma, the Paris-born Chinese American cellist is today one of the most illustrious cellists in the world and had won thirteen Grammy Awards before 2000 (The Recording Academy, 2009). Ma collaborated with Tan to perform at the celebration of the establishment of the

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 1997 (Tan, 1997). Also, inspired by the historical Afro-Eurasian Silk Road trading routes, he founded the Silk Road Project in 1998 to promote cross-cultural traffic and multicultural collaboration in the field of music (Silk Road Project, 2013). Tan's or Ma's accomplishments may not have a strong link with cinema,²⁴ but their professional expertise, experiences of making a trans-cultural crossover and exploring cultural hybridisation, and international celebrity were rich cultural and symbolic capital for helping Lee present and promote a global-friendly imagination of cultural China.

The cultural capital and international fame of these professionals contributed to the success of *CTHD*, and, in reverse, the critical and commercial performance of the film raised their status in the world's film business and contributed to the accumulation of their wealth, recognition and celebrity. The operation of the film business is related to a cyclic and dynamic process of capital exchange, conversion and accumulation as well as a negotiation between capital holders. It may be claimed that *CTHD* increased their symbolic and cultural capital, which improved conversion rates between their cultural and economic capital. Partly benefiting from *CTHD*'s international triumph, Yuen joined in several Hollywood projects thereafter, in addition to the two other films of *The Matrix trilogy*, for example, Quentin Tarantino's two-part action film *Kill Bill* (2003/2004) and *The Forbidden Kingdom* (Rob Minkoff, 2008). Moreover, the film not only made Pau, Yip and Tan Oscar winners but also advanced their career development. They took part in various high-budget pan-Chinese co-productions in the 2000s, and Pau even stepped into Hollywood. In this regard, *CTHD* encouraged the transnational crossover of Asian filmmakers and the Asianisation of

²⁴ Tan Dun had previously composed music for *Don't Cry, Nanking (Nanjing 1937, dir. Wu Zi-niu, 1995)* before (*IMDB*, 2013c); Yo-Yo Ma had featured on the soundtrack to *Seven Years in Tibet* (Jean-Jacques Annaud, 1997) (*ibid.*, 2013d).

Hollywood.²⁵ *CTHD* also allowed the Chinese American pop star Coco Lee, the performer of its Chinese and English theme songs, to gain worldwide exposure by performing live at the Academy Awards ceremony in 2001.²⁶ Like other noted participants, her cultural capital and stardom may have been advantageous to *CTHD*'s Asian box office revenue, and the success of *CTHD* in turn brought her more international fame.

Reviewing the production process of *CTHD*, it can be seen that the involvement of Taiwan's film industry, where it originated, was relatively low, even though the film's nationality was identified as Taiwanese when it was nominated for various Oscars. Therefore Wei Ti (2006: 131) claims that *CTHD* is a representative case of a Hollywood-invested project made for global viewers, in the production of which the Taiwanese film industry did not actually participate.²⁷ Although he may be underestimating the initiative of Lee's team in the project and mistake the role of the Hollywood studio in *CTHD*, he rightly highlights the significance of Hollywood in this case and the absence of the Taiwanese film industry in the production of this Taiwan film.

²⁵ The phenomenon of Asianisation of Hollywood will be further elaborated in Chapter Two.

²⁶ Coco Lee is also a diasporic Chinese. Lee was born in Hong Kong and moved to the USA when she was ten years old. She began her singing career in Taiwan in 1994 and then became one of the best-selling pop singers in Asia after joining Sony Music Entertainment (Taiwan) later (Yung, 2013). Not only was Coco a Sony Music artist, but also her popularity and ability to sing in both Chinese and English made her the choice to perform both Chinese and English theme songs of *CTHD*.

²⁷ Wei Ti (2006: 131) considers that four models of international film production exists in Taiwan: (a) With low participation of the local film industry, Hollywood film companies invest in specific Taiwanese filmmakers to make films targeting the global market; (b) With more participation of the local film industry, Hollywood film companies invest in specific Taiwanese filmmakers to make films targeting the regional market; (c) Non-Hollywood foreign film companies sponsor local art filmmakers to produce films for the international art film market; and (d) Local filmmakers actively cooperate with the Chinese film industry to produce Mandarin film for the pan-Chinese market.

All-Star Multinational Cast

The discussion above showed that the formation of a multinational crew enabled Ang Lee to assemble cultural capital for filmmaking, and the celebrity of these participants also helped the project engage attention. As for the casting of *CTHD*, it demonstrated that transnational stardom and international box office appeal were critical considerations for high-budget co-productions, apart from factors such as acting prowess and personality traits. The part of the male protagonist Li Mu Bai was taken by Hong Kong star Chow Yun-fat. The initial candidate for the role was Jet Li, but he later turned down the film due to his wife's pregnancy ("*Jet Li Interview Transcript*", 2003). Both Jet Li and Chow are big names in the Chinese-speaking region, and their appearance in Hollywood films had brought them some international fame at that time.²⁸ Although Chow cannot fight like Li, he is an experienced and dedicated actor who can "carry" a film. The female protagonist Yu Shu Lien was played by Malaysian-born actress Michelle Yeoh. Yeoh has been a bankable martial arts heroine in Hong Kong cinema since 1984 and starred in the James Bond film *Tomorrow Never Dies* (Roger Spottiswoode, 1997). Thus Lee considered her the best choice for the role for her box office appeal, as well as her martial arts performance and personality traits (Chang, J., 2002: 315). The choice of these regional stars indicates the significance of actors' box office appeal to the casting strategy of *CTHD* in the regional and even the international markets.

As well as proven box office attractions from Hong Kong, the other two leading actors come from other Chinese-speaking regions. In this regard, the transnational casting enabled the film to create links with disparate film markets within the Chinese-speaking world. The other female lead Jen Yu was performed by the young Chinese actress Zhang Ziyi. The initial choice for the role was the Taiwanese star Shu Qi, but she did not take the role due to a

²⁸ Chow Yun-fat and Jet Li made their respective Hollywood film debut, *The Replacement Killers* (Antoine Fuqua, 1998) and *Lethal Weapon 4* (Richard Donner, 1998), in the late 1990s.

scheduling conflict (Short, 2001). Recommended by Zhang Yimou, Zhang Ziyi was chosen for her latent on-screen charisma, although her personality is unlike that of Jen as portrayed in the original script (Chang, J., 2002: 319). Nonetheless, she rose to international stardom with this role and is now one of the most famous Chinese actresses in the world. The Taiwanese actor Chang Chen starred as the desert bandit Lo. Takeshi Kaneshiro, a Japanese star of half-Taiwanese descent who enjoys great popularity in East Asia was the initial candidate for Lo, but he declined owing to a scheduling conflict (Jiang, 2003). Chang was a young Taiwanese actor who at that time had starred in Edward Yang's and Wong Kar-wai's films.²⁹ Although Chang's and Zhang's box office appeal were low compared to other more established actors and actresses, they were the rising stars of Chinese-language cinema at the time. Casting them in the movie also echoed Lee's reputation for discovering and developing young acting talents, including Toby Maguire, Christina Ricci and Elijah Wood (Berry, 2005: 353-354). Their participation allowed the project's casting to be connected with three major Chinese cinemas, namely Hong Kong, Chinese, and Taiwan cinemas.

In addition to actors from diverse Chinese-speaking areas, two important supporting roles were performed by veteran diasporic actors. The late China-born Taiwanese actor Lung Sihung, famous for his father figures in Ang Lee's "Father-Knows-Best" trilogy, was featured as Sir Te in *CTHD*; and Jade Fox was played by Cheng Pei-pei. Born in Shanghai, Cheng had been acclaimed as the queen of the *wuxia* cinema in Hong Kong during the 1960s for her performance in *wuxia* films such as *Come Drink with Me*. She retired and settled in America in the early 1970s but returned to the silver screen in the 1990s (Chinese Taipei Film Archive, 2013b). Not only did they possess a fair box office appeal for Chinese-speaking viewers, but their participation created an intertextual link between *CTHD* and King Hu's

²⁹ Chang Chen had starred in Edward Yang's *A Brighter Summer Day* (*Gulingjie shaonian sharen shijian*, 1991) and *Mahjong* (*Majiang*, 1996), and in Wong Kar-wai's *Happy Together* (*Chunguang zhaxie*, 1997) before his appearance in *CTHD*. Afterwards, he has been featured in a number of auteur films and popular films in East Asia and is one of the most noted Taiwanese actors in Asia today.

new school *wuxia* films. As a whole, the transnational casting of *CTHD* exhibits the benefit of a regional talent pool to Lee's filmmaking and his intention of appealing to regional, even international, spectators. Also, actors can be perceived as an intermediary between Lee and generic heritage and history. Furthermore, the multinational cast highlights the complex diasporic experience and the diversity in the Chinese-speaking world, which to some degree reflects diversified Chineseness.

Nonetheless, actors' different accents in the film challenged the linguistic unity usually presented in *wuxia* films and questioned the essentialist view of Chineseness. Ang Lee's insistence on using actors' original voices accentuates such divisions within the Chinese world. Among the four principal actors, only Zhang Ziyi can speak Mandarin with a Beijing accent. Chang Chen spoke with a Taiwanese accent and his vocal expression was criticised for awkwardness (Lan, 2001: 21). Chow Yun-fat (Hong Kong) and Michelle Yeoh (Malaysia) were internationally well-known actors and had starred in dozens of Cantonese films in Hong Kong. Nevertheless, Chow, with a Cantonese accent, and Yeoh, with a Malaysian accent, were unable to speak Mandarin fluently and received language training prior to the making of the film (Chang, J., 2002: 304). Yeoh cannot read Chinese and had to memorise the dialogue phonetically before each scene (Sunshine, 2000: 57). Yeh and Davis (2005: 187) point out that dubbing and subtitling have become a prop for Chinese-language cinema and television since the early 1960s because they can increase the flexibility of casting and production. However, Lee insisted on keeping the actors' own voices to maintain the film's linguistic authenticity:

[T]he Mandarin spoken by Chow in the film is better than that of Chen Shui-bian . . . and even Jiang Zemin . . . There are problems though, with Michelle Yeoh's pronunciation and intonation. But I think the quality of the voice capable of carrying

emotions is more touching than listening to dubbed standard Mandarin. (Chang, J., 2002: 305)³⁰

Yeh and Davis (2005: 188) suggest that Lee's rejection of a univocal Chinese-language practice showed an ethnically diversified Chineseness and demonstrated the complexity of Chineseness in the global age. Berry and Farquhar (2006: 69) also agree that the mixed accents and origins in *CTHD* reflect an ethnically diverse China, which can stand for the diasporic Chinese experience. The disjuncture and complexity echo Appadurai's idea of the fluid and irregular shape of ethnoscaapes in the age of globalisation (1996: 33). According to Lee, his diasporic experience in Taiwan and America inspired him to adopt mixed accents in his Chinese-language films in order to reflect the authentic life experience of Chinese ethnicities and the diversified state of Chineseness. The use of language in the film is connected with realism in Lee's eyes, and so he refused to allow dubbing in *CTHD* because it is unconvincing (Chang, J., 2002: 147-148). Lee's decision can also be perceived as his attempt to alter the *wuxia* genre and present a more realistic imagination of cultural China; however, it may have been strange for Chinese-speaking viewers who have been accustomed to standardised accents in *wuxia* films. The influence of Lee's linguistic strategy over film reception will be elaborated on later.

Raising Finance from the World; Selling the Film to the World

Whilst *CTHD* is usually labelled a film from Taiwan in view of Ang Lee's Taiwanese citizenship, the film was financed through a transnational network rather than local sources in order to raise a considerable amount of capital to create a top multinational crew and an all-

³⁰ Chen Shui-bien was the President of the Republic of China (Taiwan) from 2000 to 2008. Jiang Zemin was born in Jiangsu Province and served as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of China from 1989 to 2002, as the President of the People's Republic of China from 1993 to 2003 and as the Chairman of the Central Military Commission from 1989 to 2004. Both of them speak Mandarin with a heavy regional accent.

star multinational cast and to ensure high-quality production. In fact, Pierre Chen, a Taiwanese billionaire, pledged to finance the entire film in the early state of pre-production; however, these funds were later withdrawn due to the Asian economic crisis, according to Wang Yun-yi (2001: 36). Although Lee and another producer, Hsu Li-kong, sought investors in Asia to cover the funding shortage, the poor box office record of Chinese-language films in Taiwan held back local investors (ibid.; Chang, J., 2002: 382). Consequently, it was inevitable that Lee look to the West.

Two kinds of transnational connections were shown in the financing of *CTHD*, including pre-sales of foreign rights and the completion guarantee. *CTHD* raised finance through a complex transnational web of financing commitments established by Good Machine International (GMI) when Chen's offer of funding was pulled back. According to Ang Lee, the film obtained money through debt-financing rather than the direct investment of Hollywood conglomerates (Chang, J., 2002: 381-383).³¹ In the pre-production stage, some of *CTHD*'s distribution rights, or negative pickups, were pre-sold to foreign distributors, in particular Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE). In addition to the Chinese rights, which were retained by Ang Lee, Hsu Li-kong's Zoom Hunt International Productions and William Kong's Edko Films Ltd. (Eller, 2000),³² according to Schamus:

Sony Pictures Classics, the specialized arm of Sony Pictures, helped finance the film for distribution rights in America, Columbia International (also a subsidiary of Sony Pictures) chipped in for rights to Latin America and several Asian territories. Columbia Pictures Asia, which is based in Hong Kong, also contributed and then there was Sony Classical (music), which financed the soundtrack. (Martin, 2000)

³¹ With debt financing, the filmmaker takes out loans to make cash available for the production. In a debt financing arrangement, the lender, such as a bank, gives the borrower money in exchange for a promise to repay the loan on time (Garon, 2009: 106).

³² William Kong is the head of EDKO Film Ltd. in Hong Kong, one of the most powerful film companies in Greater China. EDKO participates in not only film production but also distribution and exhibition. Its Broadway Circuit is currently the biggest distribution system in Hong Kong, and EDKO has been in the Chinese market since 1983 (A-meng, 2010). William Kong is also one of the producers of Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and *Lust, Caution*.

In addition, GMI pre-sold rights to several European distributors, including Bim in Italy, Warner Bros. in France, Kinowelt in Germany, Lauren Films in Spain and Sandrew Metronome in Scandinavia (ibid.). These distributors and Sony Pictures offered producers pre-sales contracts instead of cash. The producers then received a loan from a Paris bank by means of a series of pre-sales contracts when Cinema Completions International (CCI), a completion bond company in Los Angeles, insured the film. The financial risk was primarily borne by Lee, Hsu and Kong. The mechanism of a completion bond is common in the production of American films, whereas it had never been transplanted to the Chinese-language film industries. According to Philip Lee (Hsieh, 2004: 21), the associate producer of *CTHD*, the film was only the second Chinese-language film to adopt this financing method.³³

Thus the financing of *CTHD* depended upon the transnational financing network composed of stakeholders worldwide and financial institutions in various countries, although they did not directly back the film. This process highlights the cross-border flows of capital behind contemporary filmmaking activities and recalls Appadurai's idea of financescapes caused by the difficult disposition of global capital in the age of globalisation (1996: 34). Huaiting Wu and Joseph Man Chan (2007: 205) argue that the collaboration between Sony and Chinese-speaking filmmakers created a "global-local alliance". This was evidence that local companies could translate indigenous cultural resources into global economic capital through "the mobilization of top globalized local talents and international networks" (ibid.). In this regard, as a Chinese cultural product, *CTHD* was developed into global cultural goods based upon not only a hybrid imagination presented by Lee but also the alliance between local agents with a global vision and a global cinematic institution which had adopted the

³³ According to Philip Lee, the first film was Chen Kaige's *The Emperor and the Assassin* (*Jingke ci Qinwang*, 1998) (Hsieh, 2004: 21).

strategy of glocalisation.³⁴ The transnational co-production and global commercial success of the film represent dynamics between local, regional and global forces.

Actually, Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE) engaged in the film production through Columbia Pictures Film Production Asia (CPFPA) besides the distribution, marketing and film financing of *CTHD*. Accordingly, Darrell William Davis and Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh consider *CTHD* a product of the Hollywood–Asia venture among pan-Asian co-production activities. In this cluster, “Hollywood–Asia linkages inject American finance, know-how and marketing into local production to boost standards and regional branding” (2008: 90). *CTHD* can indeed be viewed as a film of the CPFPA and a part of SPE’s Asian project; however, unlike other CPFPA-funded projects, the film was initiated, financed and bonded mainly through the efforts of non-Hollywood and diasporic Chinese filmmakers. The project was led by Ang Lee and his partners, whereas the SPE-funded projects were guided by SPE more strictly. Hence Davis and Yeh (*ibid.*: 26) suggest seeing *CTHD* as a diasporic Chinese director’s film rather than a regional project for Hollywood.

Besides, the PRC film industry sponsored *CTHD* in another way. According to Wu Ke, the then Vice Director of Film Bureau of The State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT),³⁵ *CTHD* belongs in the category of “Joint Production Film” (*Hepai pian*) in the PRC (“*Who Owns Rights*”, 2001). However, Huang Shixian comments that the film should be categorised as a “Coordinated Production Film” (*Xiepai pian*), inasmuch as the film was not funded by any Chinese party (Hsieh, 2004: 205).³⁶ Admittedly, *CTHD* was

³⁴ In the business term, the strategy of glocalisation refers to global conglomerates’ attempt to penetrate the given market though the strategy of localisation. The concept will be elaborated in Chapter Two.

³⁵ The State Administration of Radio, Film and Television is in charge of the administration and supervision of state-owned enterprises engaged in the television, radio and film industries in the PRC.

³⁶ In accordance with the Provisions on the Administration of Sino-Foreign Cooperative Film Production, there are three approaches to producing Chinese-foreign cooperative films: “Joint production” (*Lianhe shezhi*), “Coordinated production” (*Xiezuo shezhi*) and “Production by Appointment” (*Weituo shezhi*). Joint production refers to the fact that “the Chinese and foreign parties jointly invest in and produce the film, and share the

not directly backed by Chinese parties, but Chinese co-production companies obtained the distribution rights in the PRC by providing manpower for filmmaking (ibid.). In accordance with the Provisions on the Administration of Sino-Foreign Cooperative Film Production (MOFCOM, 2004), the purpose of Chinese regulations on transnational co-production is to “prosper the creation and production of films , to safeguard the lawful rights and interests of the producers of Sino-foreign cooperatively-produced films and relevant persons , and to promote Sino-foreign exchanges of films.” Accordingly, the participation of the accredited state-owned studios or Chinese private firms is required for transnational co-production in mainland China, and there are also cast and creative crew requirements for a jointly produced film. Under the circumstances, the involvement of Chinese parties in *CTHD* was inevitable, and the film had to pass SARFT’s censorship review as well. Whilst the development of transnational film collaboration and cinematic transnationalism to some extent question the relevance of the concept of national cinema, the case shows that this idea still matters at the level of policy.

Marketing, Distribution and Exhibition: North America and Taiwan

As mentioned previously, pre-selling the distribution rights was the main approach to raising finance for *CTHD*, and thus in the case of *CTHD* the film’s financing and distribution were bound together. Although the financing approach of *CTHD* indicates that this film could be released in various foreign markets before the camera rolled, its commercial success in the North American market was crucial to transforming *CTHD* from a Chinese-language co-

copyright subsisting in the film and risks and profits from the project . . . Joint productions are regarded as domestic films and can be directly released in Mainland China after it is completed and passes censorship review” (MOFCOM, 2004). Coordinated production means that “the foreign party provides the capital, and the Chinese party provides assistance in regard to equipment, facilities, location, labor, etc. in return for a fee” (ibid.). The importation of coordinated productions is restricted by the import quota. As for production by appointment, it refers to the fact that the foreign party contributes all of the funds and entrusts the Chinese party to produce films on its behalf.

production from Taiwan into a global box office smash. *CTHD* is deemed to be a benchmark for Chinese-language cinema not only because it set a production model for Chinese-speaking filmmakers, but also because this Chinese-language film successfully crossed over from art house to mainstream cinemas in the US, the biggest national film markets worldwide.

The impressive commercial performance in North America can be attributed to the marketing and distribution of Sony Pictures Classics (SPC). Having seen its first rough cut, SPC's two Co-Presidents, Tom Bernard and Michael Barker, considered that *CTHD* could attract mainstream spectators as well as cinephiles. Subsequently, a "grassroots stealth marketing" campaign was organised from March 2000 to transform the film from art house obscurity to breakout film (Lippman, 2001). Through a well-planned multi-pronged marketing campaign, the Hollywood studio promoted Ang Lee's exotic Chinese-language *wuxia* film as one which possessed both artistic and entertainment value to American audiences. The first step of the campaign was to leave *CTHD* in Mandarin instead of dubbing it into English. SPC's Bernard considered that "American audiences don't like it when lips move and the words don't match. Plus, today's youth market grew up with the Internet, and it's their communication device, their telephone. They're used to subtitles" (Roberts, 2001). Next, a cautious, multi-pronged and multi-platform marketing campaign was employed by SPC to promote this foreign lyrical martial arts film to presumed audiences, including the art house crowd, the young, females, action lovers and the popcorn mainstream (Pappas, 2001). The marketer used word-of-mouth marketing to promote *CTHD*, and, following its sneak previews, the film was endorsed by public figures, including a women's leadership institute, the rap group Wu-Tang Clan, influential Wall Street people, female athletes and on-air newscasters. In addition, a teenage Internet prodigy was recruited to design a website to attract teenagers. SPC also collaborated with the Tiger Schulmann Karate Centre chain to build the connection between *CTHD* and Karate enthusiasts (Lippman, 2001).

Furthermore, after its premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in May 2000, the film received critical acclaim on festival circuits. *CTHD* was submitted to a series of international film festivals to increase its visibility, whereas a non-competition screenings strategy was adopted before its commercial release to prevent the film from being categorised as a pure art-house film (ibid.). In this way, the SPC's strategy made *CTHD* an exceptional case and motivated non-martial arts and non-foreign film viewers to attend screenings. Rebecca Lobo, a star of the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), said she "would not normally go to a Chinese-language movie . . . [but *CTHD*] is action-packed, entertaining and shows positive images of strong, feminine women" (ibid.). SPC sold a *wuxia* film to martial arts fans and young people, Ang Lee's auteur status to cinephiles, and a lyrical film with martial arts to ordinary audiences, females in particular. The marketing campaign allowed Ang Lee's *wuxia* film to be regarded as not only a cult or art-house film but also a lyrical popular movie in the American market.

As for the exhibition, *CTHD*, like many prestigious auteur-oriented films, started out as a platform release in North America and was then expanded increasingly due to its box office success.³⁷ The film was screened in only sixteen art house cinemas during the opening week, then widely released across America after receiving more public praise in major cities, which aroused spectators' interests in it (Chang, J., 2002: 402-406). Furthermore, SPC paid Kodak extra maintenance fees to ensure the quality of the film projection when it was sent on general release (Lippman, 2001). In the end, *CTHD* notched a foreign-language film box office record in North America of US\$128 million, replacing the US\$57.5 million box office record set by *Life is Beautiful* (Roberto Benigni, 1997) in 1998 (*Box Office Mojo*, 2013a).

³⁷ According to Mohanbir S. Sawhney and Jehoshua Eliashberg, the platform release strategy is "characterized by a low initial exhibition intensity, which gradually increases over time (capitalizing upon positive word-of-mouth) before eventually declining as demand is saturated. The platform release strategy generally is employed by smaller independent distributors, although it is gaining popularity with major studios for 'sleeper' movies with relatively complex storylines" (1996: 119).

CTHD not only won critical acclaim but also achieved commercial success in the US.

Bernard announced that “everything went according to the plan” (Pappas, 2001). This step-by-step exhibition was vital in helping a non-dubbed Chinese-language film to transcend cultural and linguistic boundaries and gain transnational popularity.

Hollywood connections not only played a critical role in the commercial success of *CTHD* in the American market, they were of critical importance to *CTHD*'s box office triumph in Taiwan, Ang Lee's native land and traditionally the target market of his Chinese-language films. Toby Miller and others (2001: 44) use the term “New International Division of Cultural Labour” (NICL) to illustrate the relationship between the expansion of the Hollywood film industry and the global motion picture business in the present age of globalisation. From their perspective, Hollywood exploits NICL to consolidate its global dominance through the global promotion of deregulation policies, the creation of international production/distribution networks, and the advocacy of global copyright (ibid.: 34-41). In the case of *CTHD*, its high box office receipts in Taiwan can to some extent be owed to the participation of American companies in its distribution and exhibition. Hollywood's involvement in *CTHD* was treated as a key point in the marketing campaign of the film in Taiwan in light of the dominance of Hollywood films over Taiwan's film market, although the film is actually made by Chinese-speaking filmmakers. In this regard, Hollywood's exploitation of NICL created the transnational connection between *CTHD* and Hollywood at the production level; and its engagement in the production of *CTHD* and in the distribution and exhibition sectors of Taiwan cinema further consolidated its dominance over Taiwan's film industry and market. *CTHD* is not only the vanguard of the globalisation of Chinese-language cinema, but represents Hollywood's globalisation trajectory and the transformation of a cultural text from the national/regional to the global.

The distribution of *CTHD* in Taiwan was undertaken by Buena Vista Film Company, the Taiwan branch of Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures in charge of the distribution of both Walt Disney's and Sony's films in Taiwan (Wang, C., 2001: 112). Even though the distribution of *CTHD* in both the US and Taiwan was guided by Columbia TriStar Pictures, their marketing and distribution strategies were quite distinct from each other. In the American market, *CTHD* was considered a film with commercial potential as well as aesthetic value, and SPC's strategies facilitated the Chinese-language *wuxia* film that Lee had produced through a flexible filmmaking strategy to cross a wide cultural distance. By contrast, Taiwanese viewers have always favoured American movies over Chinese-language films. To "Hollywood-ise" a Chinese-language film is a possible way of making it more impressive and increasing its commercial earnings in Taiwan. According to Wang Wen-hua, the then Marketing Manager of Buena Vista Film, the core principle of the marketing campaign was to guide the audience to treat the film as a foreign-language film rather than a Chinese-language martial arts film, since local moviegoers preferred Hollywood films to either Taiwanese or Hong Kong films (Hsieh, 2004: 153-159).³⁸

Ergo, Buena Vista firstly spotlighted the engagement of the Hollywood studio and participators of international standing in the project. It emphasised that the film was produced by Columbia Pictures, featured international stars such as Chow and Yeoh, and included participation from international celebrities such as Yo-Yo Ma, Tan Dun and Coco Lee (ibid.). Furthermore, *CTHD* was marketed as a Hollywood film made by "local hero" Ang Lee to persuade local audiences to enter the cinema by evoking nationalism. Lee's auteur status, Taiwanese citizenship and ethnic background were particularly highlighted. He was treated as a native-born international star auteur and hailed by the media as "the Son of Taiwan"

38 According to the Bureau of Audiovisual and Music Industry Development (BAMID) (*Taiwan Cinema*, 2012), the annual market share of Chinese-language films was lower than 5% in both 1998 and 1999, including less than 1% of films from Taiwan.

(*Taiwan zhi zi*) and “the Pride of the Chinese” (*Huaren zhi guang*). His engagement in the Hollywood project was put under the spotlight and symbolised the elevation of the political status of Taiwan in the international domain. The national consciousness was highlighted in the global context and exploited to stimulate local consumption.

Moreover, the operation of Buena Vista’s guiding principle was embodied in its advertising material and choice of theatrical circuits. The company promoted the film with Chinese-subtitled English trailers made by Columbia Pictures, even though Lee took a dim view of this strategy (Chang, J., 2002: 398). Furthermore, as the biggest film distributor in Taiwan, Buena Vista put pressure on local theatre owners to screen *CTHD* in top cinemas such as Warner Village and Showtime Cinema in Taipei, which usually showed Hollywood films only. These facts reflected both the plight of Chinese-language films in and the dominance of Hollywood cinema over the Taiwanese film market at that time. The transnational connections between *CTHD* and Hollywood in production, distribution and exhibition contributed to the commercial success of Lee’s Chinese-language film in his native land.

Transnational Discrepancies in the Film’s Consumption and Reception

Box Office Performance of Ang Lee’s Wuxia Film in the Western World and the Chinese-Speaking World

CTHD can be regarded as the first Chinese-language film to enjoy global box office success. According to *Box Office Mojo* (2012), the film’s global gross revenue totalled US\$213.5 million, including US\$128 million in North America.³⁹ *CTHD* was screened in America for

³⁹ Since the box office statistics of America usually covers the United States and Canada, in this section, the term American market will be primarily used to denote the North American market as a whole.

32 weeks and occupied a place in the top ten between its third week's screenings and its eighteenth. It was ranked twelfth in the American box office in 2000 and is the highest grossing foreign language film in North America of all time (ibid.). *CTHD* conquered various Western film festivals following its premiere in Cannes. Consequently, its exhibition in America followed a platform release pattern, first giving a limited release in a few metropolises, and then taking account of the reception and expanding. *CTHD* was shown in only sixteen theatres in the opening week and rose to a peak of 2027 theatres in the sixteenth week. Davis and Yeh point out that the occurrence reversed the usual blockbuster pattern in the American market, which is "opening wide in the hope of quickly amortising costs in the large US market, then going on to capitalise on international territories, where local films cannot compete" (2008: 27). The gradual build-up of distribution and exhibition intensity represented the spread of positive word-of-mouth in America. In addition, *CTHD* broke box office records for foreign language films in several Western countries such as Australia and the United Kingdom. Its gross takings in Australia achieved US\$5.6 million; in the UK it was around US\$12.7 million (*Box Office Mojo*, 2012).

Although *CTHD* is a Chinese-language film, the American market provided most of its gross income. In fact, Lee's previous "Father-Knows-Best" trilogy, excluding *Pushing Hands*, also grossed more in the US than in Taiwan; however, *CTHD*'s commercial performance in America was even more stunning. Its box office earnings in America accounted for some 60% of *CTHD*'s worldwide box office revenue, much higher than that of other popular foreign language films and a number of American blockbusters.⁴⁰ The high proportion of its American box office takings in its global gross in relation to other foreign language films'

⁴⁰ For example, the respective proportions of the American earnings of *Life is Beautiful* and *Hero* (*Yingxiong*, dir. Zhang Yimou, 2002), the second and third highest-grossing foreign language films in the US respectively, to their worldwide earnings are 25.1% and 30.3%. In addition, the figure is also higher than a number of Hollywood blockbusters, such as *Mission Impossible II* (39.4) and *What Women Want* (48.9%) (*Box Office Mojo*, 2012).

can be due to its astonishing commercial performance there. The film’s American box office gross of US\$128 million is twice as high as that of the second highest-grossing foreign language film *Life is Beautiful*. These figures not only provide evidence of the commercial success of *CTHD* as a foreign language film in the world’s biggest market, but also reflect the huge size of the American market. The high proportion of *CTHD*’s American box office receipts in its global revenue could also have resulted from the relatively small Chinese film market at the turn of the millennium. Certainly, it was the Western world, in particular North America, rather than the Chinese-speaking region, that constituted the majority of the total gross income of Lee’s film overall.

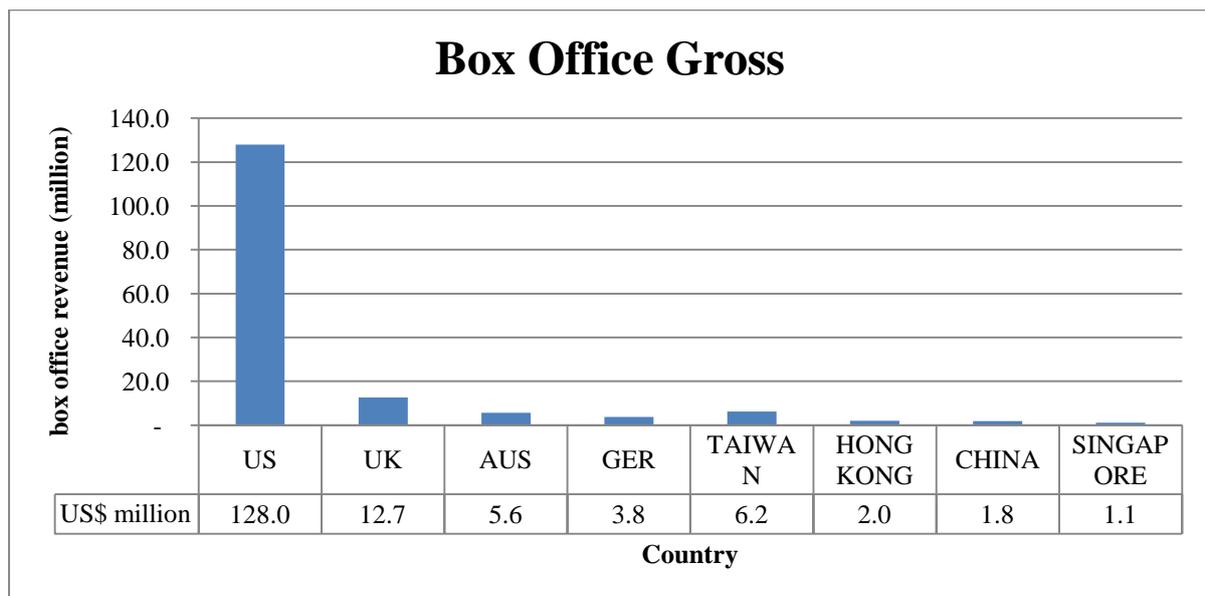


Figure 3 International Box Office Gross of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*
 (Source: *Box Office Mojo*, 2012; Wang, C., 2001: 132; *IMDB*, 2013a; Yang, Z., 2001; Chen, 2000)

By contrast to its amazing box office result in the West, *CTHD* met with mixed success in East Asian film markets, even in Greater China. Although the film did not outclass its native-language and Hollywood rivals, it had topped the weekly box offices in some non-Chinese-speaking Asian countries, including South Korea, Thailand, Malaysia and the

Philippines (“*Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon Hits*,” 2001). As for the Chinese-speaking world, *CTHD*, unlike in Western countries, was deemed to be a highly anticipated high-budget, large-scale popular movie. Its budget was around US\$15 million, which was higher than for most Chinese-language films at the time. This led Ang Lee to say that the film’s budget was “modest compared with American films, but kind of Titanic to Chinese” (Puig, 2000). The film performed respectably in the region as a whole, yet its consumption was uneven. *CTHD* took in around US\$1.1 million and was Singapore’s highest-grossing Chinese-language film in 2000 (Chen, 2000). However, its commercial performance was mediocre in Hong Kong and disappointing in China, even though Lee and another producer, William Kong, had been optimistic about the Chinese market beforehand (A-meng, 2010). The film was ranked ninth among Chinese-language films in Hong Kong in 2000, receiving around US\$2 million in its two releases in 2000 and 2001 (*IMDB*, 2013a). The gross in China was estimated at US\$1.8 million (Yang, Z., 2001), a dismal figure compared to the highest-grossing Chinese-language film of the year, *Final Decision* (*Shengsi jueze*, dir. Yu Benzhen, 2000), which grossed over US\$14 million (Qi and Hua, 2000). Although box office statistics in China were incomplete, it appears that the commercial performance of *CTHD* in China was lower than expected (Chang, J., 2002: 399). According to Wang Zhimin (Hsieh, 2004: 230), the three Chinese film companies participating in the project lost around US\$500,000 in total. In contrast to the unsatisfactory results in Hong Kong and China, *CTHD* was extremely popular in Lee’s home country. *CTHD* took in NT\$101.2 million (approx. US\$3.1 million) at the Taipei box office. The film held the title of highest-grossing film from Taiwan until the release of Lee’s next Chinese-language film, *Lust, Caution* (*Se, Jie*, 2007).

Generic Reconstruction, Cultural Translation and the Contrasting Reception

Overall, *CTHD* can be regarded as one of the most successful Chinese-language films in the 2000s; however, it cannot be denied that Chinese and Western audiences' reactions to the film differed. Lee's work was widely admired in the West. Several elements of *CTHD*, including the cast, costume, story, themes, aesthetics, and fight choreography, received great attention from Western media as well as academics. Paul Tatara of *CNN* described the fight scene in *CTHD* as "breathtaking" and eulogised the film as "a great deal more than a mere kung-fu picture. This sweeping, dream-like fable is a near-masterpiece, replete with marvellously fanciful images and a touching love story" (2000). *Rolling Stone* film critic Peter Travers claimed that "what Ang Lee has done is make poetry out of action. It is an action movie, a love story, an adventure, and it transcends all those and takes them to another level. Most movies follow a formula. *Crouching Tiger* breaks the formula, from its first scene on" (cited in Puig, 2000). The great number of international prizes it has won, including two Golden Globe Awards and four Oscars, reflects the international critical acclaim for *CTHD*.

On the other hand, the reaction to *CTHD* in Hong Kong and the PRC was unsatisfactory, whereas it scored well in some Chinese-speaking areas, in particular Taiwan. The transnational discrepancies in the consumption and reception in the Chinese-speaking world and in the West and of different Chinese-speaking areas could be attributed to Lee's generic reconstruction, the development of the hybrid script, linguistic difference and cultural translation which allowed global viewers to comprehend *wuxia* conventions. *CTHD* is a hybrid cultural product with transnational connections deeply embedded in its content as well as in its production process. As mentioned earlier, Lee had an ambition to make a crossover film appealing to international viewers, and thus elements of the film, such as characterisation and storytelling, were modified to generate flexibility and easy translatability in order to overcome cultural differences. Lee's generic innovation and adoption of western-

friendly narrative made *CTHD* distinct from standard Hong Kong *wuxia* films, in that insufficient knowledge of the *wuxia* genre does not inhibit the viewing experiences of non-Chinese spectators.

In this light, Ang Lee's strategy westernised and modernised the mythical ancient China and reconstituted a specific temporal and spatial context to enable non-Chinese spectators to decode cultural signifiers. He employed a cross-cultural flexible method of filmmaking to modify the dialogue and characterisation of *CTHD* and incorporate feminism and Western narrative into the film text in order to appeal to American and modern Chinese-speaking viewers. Lee's generic reconstruction can be perceived as a query about a static notion of Chineseness. As Ken-fang Lee claims, Lee "cleverly appropriates feminist concerns and supposedly marginalized characters to re-write the wu xia tradition and re-define 'Chineseness'" (2003: 292). Such generic reconstruction "denies the essentialism of a prior given original or ordinary culture" (Bhabha, 1990: 211), displaying the openness to the diversity and hybridity of Chineseness. It is an effort to deconstruct cultural essentialism and hegemony and to highlight the diversity of culture and reconfiguration of Chineseness in a postmodern and global context. The representation of generational conflict and contrast in the film, such as Jade's desire for individual liberty and rebellion against societal and familial notions, the restrained love affair between Li and Yu, and the Western-styled dialogue indicate that *CTHD* is a hybrid text embodying a dialectic between tradition and modernity, Confucian codes and Western individualism. Lee injected new ideas into stable cinematic conventions and revisited Chineseness in a modern and hybrid way.

However, *CTHD* may have appealed to Western audiences with aesthetic aspirations and a taste for Oriental exotica, but it did not fully satisfy Chinese-speaking spectators who are used to the *wuxia* generic conventions. They may have expected to see a stimulating adventure full of a fast-paced or more authentic fighting, not this "gorgeous, slow-paced,

foreigner-friendly drama” (Rennie, 2001). The staggering consumption of *CTHD* in Taiwan could be partly credited to nationalism, which will be elaborated on later. As for the overall reception in Greater China, the film was criticised for its slow narrative tempo, the choreography of the fight scenes, and actors’ performances, their accents in particular. Mark Landler (2001) observed that “the bamboo-forest scene brought people to their feet at the Cannes International Film Festival, where the movie was shown last year. In Hong Kong and Shanghai, it provoked giggles.” A Hong Kong filmmaker commented, “I grew up with this type of film. You can see them every day on TV. It’s nothing new, even the female angle. But *Crouching Tiger* is so slow, it’s a bit like listening to grandma telling stories” (Rose, 2001). Hong Kong film critic Law Kar also articulates that “In Chinese martial arts films you don’t let the action slow down; you just feed them more fights. Ang Lee knows how to weave inner drama with outer drama. That may be the Hollywood way” (Landler, 2001). *CTHD* can be perceived as Lee’s tribute to King Hu and new school *wuxia* films of the 1960s, a number of whom were made in Taiwan, but it could be a challenge to the taste of contemporary Chinese-speaking moviegoers who are accustomed to the fast-paced Hong Kong *wuxia* films of the 1990s.

Furthermore, Lee’s strategy of flexibility provoked controversy about the cultural authenticity of the film. Apart from the modification in characterisation and the adoption of western-friendly narrative, *CTHD* was criticised for pandering to the taste of the West with the exotic visual beauty in choreography, but it failed to convey the “genuine spirit” of *wuxia* in Chinese world. In terms of themes, *CTHD* focuses on characters’ internal struggles and the conflict between humanity, individualism and codes of conduct, which shows characteristics of psychological realism, but classically heroic figures and dialectical clash between good and evil are absent from Lee’s narrative. Hence *CTHD* is not a cultural conveyor of Chinese heroic and chivalrous spirit (*xiayi jingshen*) but an Ang Lee-style melodrama with *wuxia*

elements. Although, as Berry and Farquhar (2006: 72) point out, the restrained and chivalrous love between Li and Yu demonstrates Lee's deliberation of characters' inner struggle with the moral duty and social morality in *jianghu*, which is also a central focus of Wang Du-lu's oeuvre, it is arguable that *CTHD* is more about the examination of Confucian codes rather than the expression of heroic principle, or "genuine spirit" of *wuxia*, common to traditional *wuxia* films. Huang Shixian (Hsieh, 2004: 205-206) also considers *CTHD* a "fake 'Tri-coloured Glaze of the Tang Dynasty' (*Tang sancai*)" and ascribes the film's dismal reception in China to its cultural inauthenticity.⁴¹ A degree of self-reflexivity about the generic conventions is central to the film (Chan, 2008: 79); however, such generic innovation may have provoked controversy, particularly when the global success transmuted *CTHD* into a nationalist cultural representation. In this light, *CTHD* is criticised as "pseudo-Chinese but not Chinese, pseudo-western but not western (*sizhong feizhong, sixi feixi*)" (Huang Yi-jie, 2001, cited in Wu, 2002: 69). Nonetheless, Wu Chia-chi (*ibid.*: 70) points out that such criticism confines *wuxia* cinematic tradition to some established canons and overlooks the fact that the bulk of *wuxia* films are poor quality works. It also presumes that the genre and culture are stable and fixed, denying their other possibility and the influence of transnational connections and exchange of cultural and cinematic flows over their nature and construction (Chan, 2004: 7). This kind of nationalist claims, as Kenneth Chan argues, reveals "a cultural anxiety about identity and Chineseness in a globalized, postcolonial, and postmodern world order" (*ibid.*: 4).

Furthermore, the sense of cultural inauthenticity can be attributed to the style of language and the delivery of the dialogue. As mentioned previously, Lee used Western-style dialogue, some of which was directly translated from its English film script, to more clearly

⁴¹ *Tang sancai* is a kind of classic Chinese coloured pottery popular in Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907).

express characters' emotions in the film. Nevertheless, the method he adopted collides with the generic conventions:

The martial arts genre in film is closely related to the literal genre of martial arts fiction, which is often pseudohistorical but usually classical in terms of diction and syntax, and both forms, ironically, have developed and were preferred in places outside China. (Shih, 2007: 3)

The dialogue in *CTHD* is a hybrid style mixing colloquial Mandarin and literary Mandarin. Thus, Chinese-speaking audiences may have found it unrealistic when these literary Western-style dialogues appeared in a film set in ancient China (Wen, 2001: 69; Wu, 2002: 69), a place which is mainly constructed in contemporary Chinese's imagination by prior *wuxia* cultural products and Chinese classical literature. According to Wu (2002: 69), "some part of the dialogue simply sounds like a literal translation from English, undermining the orthodoxy of the Chinese language." Also, some lines, such as Li Mu Bai's love confession to Yu Shu Lien before his death, violate the supposed way emotions were expressed and the way people spoke at the time (*ibid.*).

Cultural familiarity affects viewers' interpretation of and reaction to the same media text. Sheldon Lu attributed the uneven and asymmetrical reception of transnational co-productions like *CTHD* to "different degrees of cultural proximity among the spectators, namely, discrepancy in levels of audiences' familiarization with Chinese film genres, artistic conventions, and film history" (2005: 226-227). Felicia Chan also asserts that "genres depend on a spectator's familiarity with its conventions, built upon knowledge gained from other films of the same genre. This inherently circular process can sometimes complicate rather than clarify readings of a film" (2008: 78). However, owing to Lee's flexible filmmaking and generic reconstruction, Chinese spectators' familiarity with and cultural knowledge about the language and genre could have a converse effect in this case (*ibid.*: 79). The difference between the cultural context and film history of given regions resulted in transnational discrepancies in the consumption and reception. Lee's strategy of flexibility enabled *CTHD*

to become a hybrid cultural product appealing to Western viewers, which may simultaneously have been contrary to Chinese-speaking spectators' expectation of a *wuxia* film.

Moreover, *CTHD* is in Mandarin Chinese, but Mandarin speakers could be distracted by the question of "authentic Chineseness" owing to greater cultural and linguistic proximity. The actors' pronunciation contributed to the film's uneven reception and the issue of inauthenticity, which is associated with the diversity of Chineseness. As mentioned previously, Lee's rejection of a univocal Chinese-language practice in this project challenged the linguistic unity and represented an ethnically diversified Chineseness. Whilst Lee used Mandarin to present his imagination of cultural China, he rejected the use of standard Mandarin owing to his diasporic experience and convictions of what constitutes realism (Chang, J., 2002: 147-148; 305). Manifold accents appearing in *CTHD* echoes diversified Chineseness in the contemporary Chinese-speaking world and cultural difference within Chinese diaspora. Nevertheless, certain actors' accents deviated from the accents which they were supposed to represent in the film.⁴² Take, for example, Taiwanese actor Chang Chen. Chang performed the role of Lo, a bandit from Xinjiang. However, the character's voice sounds too modern; and Chang's diction and Taiwanese accent contrasts sharply with that which a western desert bandit of the period is supposed to be, which made Chang's performance less convincing (Yeh and Davis, 2005: 187; Lan, 2001: 21).

Furthermore, some of Lee's actors, including Chow and Yeoh, seldom used Mandarin in everyday life and could not speak it fluently. As a result, they could not deliver their lines naturally and hence, the film is criticised as inauthentic. Klein (2004a: 37) argues that Lee "underestimated the depth of the cultural divisions within the diaspora. While globalization

⁴² Li Mu Bai (Chow) is from Jiangnan, an area south of the Yangtze River; Yu Shu Lien (Yeoh) and Jen (Zhang) are from Beijing; Lo (Chang) is from Xinjiang.

may have made it easier for media texts to cross the supposed East–West divide, it has not erased the divisions within the Chinese diaspora itself.” Their pronunciation, accents and unnatural vocal expression were distracting and discordant for many Chinese-speaking viewers worldwide, and consequently their performance became unconvincing. Teo (2005: 203) points out that “to a Western audience, the result does not sound anomalous but it has a jarring effect on Chinese viewers—which may begin to explain why the film fared poorly on the mainland.” In other words, Lee kept actors’ voices to maintain the film’s linguistic authenticity, yet it raised doubt about authenticity in other ways. The presence of diasporic Chinese actors’ diverse accents and the rejection of dubbed standard Mandarin in *CTHD* revealed Lee’s stance on language politics as a diasporic Chinese and his doubts about the legitimacy of essentialist Chineseness; however, he underestimated the influence on its reception of generic conventions at linguistic level.

Additionally, the consumption and reception in Greater China was associated with contextual factors. First, the global dominance of Hollywood films and the decline of Chinese-language films within the region could have caused the unsatisfactory consumption of *CTHD* in Hong Kong. Producer William Kong (Landler, 2001) ascribed *CTHD*’s lukewarm receipts at Hong Kong box office to the nadir of the downturn of the Hong Kong film industry. From his perspective, contemporary Hong Kong viewers preferred Hollywood movies and were tired of Chinese-language films, which may have discouraged local spectators to enter the cinemas. However, his supposition cannot fully explain the viewers’ comments mentioned above. Also, Davis and Yeh (2008: 27) and Henry Chu (2001) claim that *CTHD*’s failure in China resulted from scant government support and rampant piracy. Film release dates in the PRC are heavily affected and indirectly decided by the board of censors. The release of *CTHD* was delayed by the government, and consequently the distributor, Asian Union Film and Entertainment, had too little time to conduct the marketing

campaign. *CTHD* was released in China in October 2000, three months later than its neighbouring areas, by which time pirated video CDs and DVDs of the film could easily have been found everywhere, which had a heavy impact on its box office takings (Hsieh, 2004: 187; Landler, 2001; Chu, 2001).

On the other hand, nationalism is a significant contributing factor to the success of *CTHD* in Taiwan. Although Ang Lee has based and developed his career in America, Taiwan is where he grew up and where most of his family still live. His background and Taiwanese citizenship enable him to be considered as “the Son of Taiwan”, notwithstanding his diasporic status. The feature was also shown in the film’s marketing campaign in Taiwan. Taiwanese people took pride in his achievements and were enthusiastic about supporting his work despite some controversy regarding the generic conventions and diversified Chineseness mentioned previously. That is, like other festival films from Taiwan such as *A City of Sadness* (*Beiqing chengshi*, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1989), *CTHD*, together with Ang Lee, was treated as an object of nationalist sentiment. Moreover, competition for the Academy Awards further connected nationalism with *CTHD*. Lee (Chang, J., 2002: 421) maintained that “to win national honour” motivated him to engage in the long-term promotional campaign for *CTHD*; and the then Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian visited him to offer congratulations on his achievement in becoming the first national of the Republic of China, or Taiwan, to win an Academy Award (Office of the President, 2001). Also, such critical acclaim made a positive contribution to the exhibition and consumption of *CTHD*, helping the film open five times in Taiwan during 2000 and 2001 (Hsieh, 2004: 154).

CTHD’s international triumph also excited ethnic and cultural nationalism in Chinese-speaking countries, notwithstanding the mixed reception there. *CTHD* can be perceived as a lyrical textual conveyance of Oriental aesthetic, Chinese cultural representation and Lee’s inquiry about Confucian doctrines mainly produced through pan-Chinese efforts. Hence its

international critical and commercial success can be understood as the recognition of the filmic tradition of Chinese cinemas and a source of cultural pride for all Chinese people, not only Taiwanese. Timmy Yip and Peter Pau were the first two Hong Kong filmmakers to be nominated for Academy Awards and to have received them. In accepting the Oscar, Pau said, “it’s a great honour to me, to the people of Hong Kong and to Chinese people all over the world” (Chan, 2008: 75). Moreover, video discs of *CTHD* sold for “nearly double the price of other local movies” in Hong Kong as the awards ceremony drew nearer (Chow, 2001). Chan (2008: 75) maintains that the consumption and reception of *CTHD* in the Chinese-speaking world revealed a paradoxical attitude towards the film’s Western success: the mix of cultural chauvinism and deference to Western culture.

On the one hand, people in the region might affirm cultural subjectivity, sometimes narcissistically, to reject a Western-centric cultural framework. The *wuxia* genre can be viewed as a popular and quintessentially Chinese cultural form. *CTHD*’s achievement showed a reverse trajectory of West–East cultural flow, signifying the rise of Chinese cultural power and the changing power dynamics in the global cultural system, which may boost Chinese people’s self-esteem. In addition, they can hope for and pursue praise from the West to seek approval in the meantime. In this sense, the film’s foreign success convinced and assured Chinese spectators that *CTHD* is a quality cultural product worthy of re-examination. On the other, as Shih (2007: 60) asserts, Ang Lee’s translatability is built on flexible encodings through the process of minoritisation. The condemnation of self-Orientalism and self-exoticism caused by Lee’s cultural hybridity partly reflect the inferior East’s cultural anxiety and struggle against the Western-centric cultural discourses in a postcolonial and neo-colonial context. Therefore, Kenneth Chan claims that the critical and commercial triumph of *CTHD* in the West, together with Lee’s cultural translation, stimulated discourses on both nationalism and self-Orientalism:

On the one hand, a kind of cultural nationalism lured Chinese viewers to root for the film to triumph in Hollywood. On the other hand, the film's success evoked suspicions of stereotyping, exoticism, traditionalism, and pandering to a Western gaze, a critique grounded in the methodologies of Edward Said's anti-Orientalism. (Chan, 2004: 3-4)

Such paradoxical complexity not only indicates the ambivalent attitude of people in the region towards the West in the postcolonial context, but also demonstrates the superior position of the West in the global cultural system today.

Conclusion

CTHD, then, is and was a Chinese-language film aimed at not only Taiwanese viewers but also international spectators. *CTHD*, financed by international fundraising and produced by a multinational cast and crew across the world, was sold through an international distribution network. Moreover, Ang Lee's act of cultural translation and transnational co-writing of the script enabled the film to be regarded as a cultural hybridity and, in the producer Schamus' words, "an eastern movie for western audiences and in some ways a more western movie for eastern audiences" ("*Ang Lee and James Schamus (iii)*", 2000). As Georgette Wang and Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh observe, the project manifested two characteristics of current cultural production: the capitalist mechanism in financing, marketing and distribution and the cultural hybridisation strategy for transnational content design (2005: 179). The growing global capital and cultural flows allowed transnational connections to be displayed in the production, distribution, consumption and reception of this "product of cultural hybridisation", and thus the project should be understood from a transnational framework rather than from that of national cinema. The increasing influence of transnational connections on film projects also exhibit the complex and overlapping cultural landscapes, such as the ethnoscaples and financescapes of Appadurai (1996: 33), shaped by different dimensions of global cultural flows today. Although cultural hybridity contributed to the film's transnational discrepancies

in the consumption and reception and provoked controversy over cultural authenticity in the Chinese-speaking region, it allowed *CTHD* to cross over into the international markets that were dominated by Hollywood. The worldwide popularity of the film marks a milestone in the history of Taiwan cinema and the whole of Chinese cinemas and suggests that Chinese-language films can be popularised globally.

Although *CTHD* can be categorised as a film from Taiwan owing to Ang Lee's national status and the critical role some Taiwanese filmmakers occupied in its development, the production of the project in fact relied heavily on foreign efforts and did not link strongly to the domestic industrial context. The striking critical and commercial performance of *CTHD* has rendered it a benchmark in Asian cinema. The discussion in this chapter also demonstrates that the influence of the film has mainly been on the Chinese-language cinema as a whole rather than the local and national cinema of Taiwan. Certainly, the recent tendency towards recovery in the Taiwanese film industry cannot altogether be attributed to the transnational co-production inspired by *CTHD*; however, the achievement of *CTHD*, as a Chinese-language film, has in the past decade encouraged transnational co-production, the exchange of cultural and economic flows, and the administration's growing focus on transnational cooperation in Taiwan. A number of conferences on international collaboration were held in the early 2000s in Taiwan to explore how to revive the ailing Taiwanese film industry by means of transnational collaboration, for example, the "Asian Cinema: Transnational Co-financing and International Promotion Conference" in Kaohsiung in 2001 (Lu, 2002a, 2002b). The mode of transnational co-production and the huge global success of *CTHD* have encouraged the transnational collaboration between Asian filmmakers, in particular those in the Chinese-speaking region, thereby affecting the development of Taiwan cinema, as a Chinese-language cinema, in the 21st century.

The commercial success of *CTHD* enhanced the influence of globalisation and transnationalism over Chinese cinemas, which is manifested in the rehabilitation of the *wuxia* genre, the authorities' increasing regard for the film business, the advancement and innovation in filmmaking practice, the closer relationship between American and Chinese-language cinemas and the blossoming of pan-Asian film collaboration. *CTHD* proves the internationally commercial potential of a quality *wuxia* film and the advantages of transnational film collaboration over the film business, ranging from financing to consumption. Consequently, a number of well-produced high-budget *wuxia* projects were launched in succession in the 21st century by assembling multinational resources and a multinational cast and crew, for example, Zhang Yimou's *Hero* (*Yingxiong*, 2002) and *House of Flying Daggers* (*Shimian maifu*, 2004). The case of *CTHD* also motivated Asian authorities to attach more importance to the film business and offer more support for their national film industries. For example, according to Davis and Yeh (2008: 27-28), the PRC's government adopted strict protection policies to ensure the box office success in the Chinese market of domestic high-budget *wuxia* films, such as *Hero* and *House of Flying Daggers*, by clamping down on piracy, initiating a computerised accounting system for urban theatres and enjoying a near-monopoly exposure, on account of the commercial failure of *CTHD*.

Besides, the staggering global success of *CTHD* opened the door to Chinese-language films in many Western countries, thereby accelerating the industrial reform of Chinese cinemas. The film's Western success shows the possibility of a reverse cultural flow moving from the East to the dominant West (Wu and Chan, 2007: 211). Chinese films are now seen as capable of being widely circulated and consumed within the US, the biggest market in the world. Whilst the film had a mediocre reception in Greater China initially, its growing international acclaim and successive commercial success in Western markets led to a substantial about-turn over its reception in the region. Chan (2008: 75) described this

phenomenon as a “double migration”: from East to West and back to East again, and claimed that Hong Kong filmmakers have tried to emulate the success of *CTHD*, altering their ways of filmmaking to produce films which appeal to foreign viewers as well as local audiences, in order to revitalise the stagnant domestic film industry. The incentive has promoted the disciplining and rationalising processes for professionalising the local film industry in order to produce high-standard films capable of entering international mass markets.

Additionally, the increasing interests of Western filmmakers and filmgoers in Chinese-language cinemas aroused by *CTHD*, in particular the *wuxia* genre, have intensified transnational connections between Chinese-language cinemas and the Hollywood film industry in production, distribution and consumption. As a result, it has encouraged Chinese-speaking filmmakers to engage in transnational collaboration to create well-produced hybrid cultural products that appeal to the taste of Western viewers. The *wuxia* genre has been constantly reconstructed by *wuxia* projects subsequent to *CTHD*. Transnational connections can be embedded in the film script, as with *CTHD*. For example, the scriptwriters of *The Touch* (*Tianmai chuanqi*, 2002), produced by and starring Michelle Yeoh and directed by Peter Pau, were from the US and France, and most of its dialogue was written in English. Additionally, Zhang Yimou admitted that *CTHD* has enlarged the global market of that genre and its success made the financing of his *Hero* easier (Smith, 2004). Like Ang Lee, Zhang kept Western audiences in minds when making *Hero*: “I tried to get across themes that would be understood by a Western audience. There are elements that are purely Chinese, but I made an effort to keep a balance between the two” (ibid.). Besides, his *House of Flying Daggers* puts the emphasis on love rather than “genuine” Chinese chivalrous spirit in order to render the text more easily-digestible for American audiences (ibid.). These cases show that the globalisation of Chinese cinemas has facilitated the reconstruction of genre and cultural hybridisation of the film text in view of economic incentives.

On the other hand, the huge global triumph of *CTHD* motivated Hollywood studios to enthusiastically engage in the production of Chinese-language films, e.g. Sony Pictures' *Double Vision* (*Shuang tong*, dir. Chen Kuo-fu, 2002) and *Kung Fu Hustle* (*Gongfu*, dir. Stephen Chow, 2004). Furthermore, they have attempted not only to distribute Chinese-language films in the region but also to bring them to the American market. Apart from *CTHD*, four Chinese-language films released later in America are still on the top twenty list of highest-grossing foreign-language films in North America so far;⁴³ and all of them are *wuxia* or kung fu films. Among these films, *Hero* and *Fearless* (*Huo Yuanjia*, dir. Ronny Yu, 2006) opened in 2031 and 1806 theatres in America respectively. The wide release strategy to some degree indicates the influence of *CTHD* over American distributors' attitude towards Chinese-language films. Yet only a few of Chinese-language films can achieve global success, and *Red Cliff* (*Chibi*, dir. John Woo, 2008/2009) was the only Chinese-language film to gross over US\$500,000 at the American box office (US\$627,047) between 2008 and 2012 (*Box Office Mojo*, 2013a).⁴⁴ Cultural translation cannot completely cross cultural and linguistic barriers; producing hybrid cultural products still carries the risk of losing both native and foreign audiences.

However, Ang Lee's *CTHD* can be seen as an extraordinary case since the development of the project greatly depended upon the director's cultural capital, multi-crossover ability, diasporic status, and the circumstances at the time. As a Chinese diasporic director, Lee has a better understanding of both Chinese and Western cultures than most filmmakers based in Asia. In addition, his long-term partnership with Schamus helped him produce a hybrid work catering for Asian as well as Western tastes. In addition to flexible citizenship, Lee is an

⁴³ These four films are *Hero*, *Fearless* (*Huo Yuanjia*, dir. Ronny Yu, 2006), *Kung Fu Hustle*, and *Iron Monkey* (*Shaonian Huang Feihong zhi tie houzhi*, aka *Shaonian Huang Feihong zhi tiemaliu*, dir. Yuen Woo Ping, 1993). They were released in the USA in 2004, 2006, 2005 and 2001 respectively (*Box Office Mojo*, 2013a).

⁴⁴ *Red Cliff* was released in two parts in Asia whereas they were combined into a single version when it was released outside of the region (Anderson, 2009). The film was release in America in 2009.

internationally acclaimed director having moved between both popular and auteur cinemas, the Chinese-language and English-language cinemas. His reputation contributed to his ability to garner resources, economic and human, to implement his project. It could be argued that Lee's unique personal characteristics, together with the marketing campaign organised by international distributors, created this box office hit. Therefore, whilst the mode of transnational co-production has become more mature in the region since *CTHD*, Lee's trajectory is still difficult for Taiwanese as well as other Chinese-speaking filmmakers to emulate.

Nonetheless, *CTHD* can be regarded both as a decisive film which encourages Hollywood's engagement in Asian-language film business and as a lesson of transnational co-production to Asian filmmakers. In this light, whilst Chinese-language films might not "go global" successfully, the integration of the regional film business and the rapid development of the region, in particular the ever-expanding Chinese market, have rendered pan-Asian film co-production a beacon of hope to the revitalisation of national film industries in East Asia, including Taiwan. Pan-Asian film co-production has become a critical and popular mode of film production in the region and has had a great influence on the development of Taiwan cinema in the 2000s. This approach will be examined in the next chapter.

Chapter Two:

Taiwan Cinema and Pan-Asian Film Co-Production

In the previous chapter, I examined the transnational connections in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (*Wohu canglong*, dir. Ang Lee, 2000, hereafter *CTHD*) and argued that certain factors, such as Ang Lee's diasporic status, translingual career, strategy of flexible filmmaking, transnational co-production, and the support of the Hollywood studio helped him transform his imagination of cultural China into a global-friendly context and promote it to global spectators. Lee's project has been inspirational to the subsequent development of Asian cinema. Not only does its global success prove that commercial success for Asian films within the global market is attainable, but some features of its production, such as the regional cast and crew, transnational financing, and large-scale big-budget production, are also viewed as promising principles for Asian film production. Accordingly, transnational links between different Asian cinemas have been strengthened in the 21st century.

Nonetheless, the global triumph of Lee's transnational co-production should be partly attributed to his personal background, and his strategy for producing a native-language film catering to global audiences is difficult for Taiwanese and Asian filmmakers to emulate. Consequently, in the past decade, an increasing number of Asian filmmakers have attempted to produce works targeting the regional market on the basis of a regional imagination at cultural and economic levels through pan-Asian collaboration. For example, the annual output of transnational co-productions from Taiwan rose from two in 2005 to twelve in 2011 (GIO, 2011a: 48; BAMID, 2013b: 15). During 2009 and 2011, pan-Asian co-productions accounted for nearly ninety per cent of all transnational co-productions from Taiwan during the period (GIO, 2011a: 48; 2012: 18; BAMID, 2013b: 15). As for Hong Kong cinema, more than a half of Hong Kong films in 2010 were Hong-China co-productions, drawing more than

sixty percent of the total Hong Kong box office takings of the year according to A-mu (2011). Pan-Asian co-production has been a popular approach for the Taiwanese and other Asian film industries to develop their commercial cinemas today.

Although not entirely new, transnational cooperation among East Asian film industries has become more prevalent in the 21st century. The changes of regional circumstances, including economic progress in East Asia, the rise of regionalism, and the development of cultural and capital globalisation/regionalisation, offer favourable conditions for the development of pan-Asian cinema. Compared with the past, contemporary pan-Asian film collaboration is more systematic, and transnational connections feature in almost every part of the project, thereby having a more profound effect on the industrial structure as well as the films themselves. In addition, Hollywood studios have turned their attention to East Asia and engaged in the production and distribution of Asian-language films since the late 20th century. This strategy of glocalisation has not only brought a breath of fresh air to the local film industries but has also encouraged the development of transnational collaboration in the region. In this light, pan-Asian co-production, in particular pan-Chinese co-production, is considered a likely strategy for allowing the stagnant Taiwanese film industry to recuperate. The integration of Asian film industries and markets might provide Taiwanese film professionals with more opportunities and resources to boost their careers and support their filmmaking. Nonetheless, it runs the risk of causing overdependence of Taiwan cinema on foreign film markets and industries, and on commercially- and regionally-oriented film production. As a result, domestic tastes and local concerns could be gradually sidelined in Taiwan cinema.

This chapter will examine Taiwanese film talents' engagement in pan-Asian film collaboration in the new millennium. In the first section, the rise of the Asian imagination and the regionalisation of Asian cultural industries will be examined to elucidate the

circumstances in which pan-Asian film collaborations come to the fore. The second section will investigate Hollywood's offshore production in Asia to explore the significance of the production of Sony Pictures Entertainment's *Double Vision* (*Shuang tong*, dir. Chen Kuo-fu, 2002) to Taiwan cinema in the 21st century. Additionally, the development of Taiwan's intraregional co-production, including pan-Chinese and intra-Asian film co-productions, will be mapped out to shed light on the reaction of Taiwan cinema to the rapidly changing industrial contexts within the region. By examining these topics, the chapter aims to analyse the influence of the development of regional cinema on the local film industry in the globalisation process.

Regionalisation in East Asia and Pan-Asian Film Collaboration

The Rise of Regionalism in Modern History

With the acceleration of globalisation in the past few decades, the reinforcement of interdependency between states within the region has attracted prominent academic interest in studies on contemporary cultural transformation, world politics, and international economic systems. Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1995: 50) highlights the significance of the concept of "region" in the era of globalisation and views globalisation as "the increase in available modes of organization: transnational, international, macro-regional, national, micro-regional, municipal, local" in structural terms. However, what is a region at a global level? Björn Hettne (2005: 544) argues that "there are no 'natural' regions: definitions of a 'region' vary according to the particular problem or question under investigation." The concept could be manipulated politically, economically and socially; and the formation of a region is affected and constructed by various agents who continually interact with one another, including both official institutions and informal parties. For Joseph Nye, an international

region can be defined as “a limited number of states linked together by geographical relationship and by a degree of mutual interdependence” (1968: xii). As to the coherence of the region, Andrew Hurrell stresses the importance of identity and considers regions “imagined communities which rest on mental map whose lines highlight some features whilst ignoring others” (1995: 41). In addition, Berry Bazan (1998: 70-74) believes that shared characteristics, patterned interactions, and shared perception are three criteria by which to define a region in addition to geographical adjacency and contiguity. Manifold definitions exhibit that the concept of “region” is associated not only with physical geographical proximity but also the psychological connections. Besides, the formation of the concept is linked with various observable facts today, including national cultures, international politics, economic activities, and historical development.

The increasing regard for regions in academia is related to the emergence of a variety of phenomena within defined geographical regions which are conceptualised as two waves of regionalism. After the Second World War, a number of regional organisations were built to respond to the new power structure in the Cold War, for example, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO, 1949). Afterwards, the European Economic Community (EEC) was created in 1957 to promote economic integration in Western Europe. This regionalist trend encouraged the proliferation of regional groups across the world in the 1960s and 1970s, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN, 1967) (Fawcett, 1995: 13-14). It is true that the state-led regional integration during the period deepened to some degree the interdependence between states within the region; however, the difficulties these regionalist efforts encountered in the late 1970s and early 1980s, including realistic international political affairs and economic struggles, raised doubts about the relevance of regionalism in realist politics (ibid.: 15-16).

Whilst this first wave of regionalism, or old regionalism, waned, a new wave of regionalism, known as new regionalism, emerged and has become a distinct phenomenon in the contemporary international system since the late 1980s, accompanying economic globalisation and political changes in world politics, such as the end of Cold War and democratisation in many countries (ibid.: 17). One important characteristic of new regionalism is regionalisation. According to Hurrell, regionalisation, or soft regionalism, refers to “the growth of societal integration within a region and to the often undirected processes of social and economic interaction” (1995: 39). Apart from the growing significance of the autonomy and the formation of regional awareness and identity in this regionalist process, regionalisation involves increasing transnational flows of people and ideas, complex cross-border social networks, and the development of the regional civil society (ibid.: 40-41). Thus, regionalisation can be perceived as a more society-driven, bottom-up process in comparison with traditional policy-driven, top-down regionalist integration, and these two movements are often interconnected and mutually reinforcing (Dent, 2008: 7). In this light, the growing interconnection, interdependency and integration between political, economic, societal and cultural activities of different players within the region have become a significant feature of the world in the past few decades.

Admittedly, the development of the new wave of regionalism, including regionalisation, correlates with the progress of globalisation. On the one hand, regionalism can be understood as the demonstration of globalisation on the regional scale. It could be a chapter or component of globalisation (Mittelman, 1996: 189). On the other hand, regionalism can be perceived as the formation of separate blocs in the international system to react to the forces and pressures brought on by globalisation. In this regard, regionalism is a counter movement against the development of globalisation. Accordingly, regionalism and regionalisation are

complex processes involving conflicts, negotiations and collaborations, accompanied by the development of globalisation.

Regionalism and East Asia

As mentioned before, the contour of a region varies according to purposes of the discourse, and economic, political and other kinds of forces can build different kinds of imaginary regions and draw up various kinds of regional maps. This chapter focuses on regional cinematic practice related to Taiwan and defines East Asia as an area encompassing both Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia, ranging from Japan to ASEAN countries. In addition, the term Asia mentioned in this chapter primarily refers to East Asia because East Asia is, arguably, the sub-region where most pan-Asian film collaborations and exchanges are occurring currently. The rise of regionalism in East Asia is closely associated with the economic development in the region. Because of the rapid economic growth in the past few decades, East Asia has become one of the major economic regions of the world. According to Francis Ng and Alexander Yeats (2003: 3), in 2001, East Asia's share of global exports reached nearly 19%, and it became the world's third biggest economic region. Also, two East Asian countries, namely China and Japan, were the second and third biggest economic entities of the world in 2011 measured by gross domestic product (GDP).⁴⁵ In this vein, the rise of Asia has become a pervasive discourse and sentiment, and Asia as a region is regarded as an analytic framework within which to comprehend the regional context.

Although the transnational cultural and economic interaction between East Asian countries has gradually increased over centuries, the development of regional consciousness in East Asia can be owed to the trace of imperialism and new regionalism in the 20th century.

⁴⁵ World Bank, Data, available: <http://data.worldbank.org/>; International Monetary Fund, Data and Statistics, available: <http://www.imf.org/external/data.htm>

Japanese imperialism emerged in the 1880s and peaked between the 1930s and mid-1940s. As Japanese power expanded, the idea of Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, a claim for “an Asian solidarity based in an inherent ‘Asian’ bond that would be able to counter Western evil” (Iwabuchi, 2002: 8), was proposed. In this light, a cultural and racial commonality between Japan and Asian nations was stressed. On the other hand, pan-Asianism was politically manipulated by this non-Western imperial power to rationalise its colonial rule and camouflage its imperial ambitions; its Japanisation policy, the *Kōminka* movement,⁴⁶ was implemented by imperial Japan during wartime to facilitate the construction of a regional entity. Nationalism rose in East Asia during the post-war and postcolonial period, and, meanwhile, the development of intraregional interaction was stagnant. Nonetheless, the rise of new regionalism in international politics, capital and cultural globalisation, and the increase of Asian economic power after the end of the Cold War have gradually encouraged intraregional political and economic activities. The regional mechanisms, such as ASEAN Plus Three (APT),⁴⁷ have also played a more important role in regional political and economic affairs since the 1990s. The degree of integration and interconnectivity between East Asian countries is on the increase.

Nevertheless, the practical progress in strengthening regional integration achieved besides the loose economic regional networks has been limited, and the coherence as a regional unity and the degree of integration in East Asia is still in doubt. Kuan-hsing Chen argues that the dialogue between and integration of Asian nations are both hindered by various contextual factors, including political and economic imbalance in the region and

⁴⁶ *Kōminka* was Japan’s imperialisation and Japanisation policy, which means “the assimilation of ethnic others (such as Ainu, Okinawans, Taiwanese, and Koreans) into Japanese imperial citizenship under the Emperor’s benevolence” (Iwabuchi, 2002: 9). Its final aim was to transform the colonised into the entire Japanese people who are willing to die as Japanese in the name of the Emperor (Ching, 2001: 94).

⁴⁷ ASEAN Plus Three, created in 1997, is an official forum for enhancing cooperation between ASEAN countries and China, Japan and South Korea.

historical conflicts. In addition, some nation states created intraregional links with each other based on self-interest rather than a consensus on the creation of an Asian entity (2010: 213-214). From Christopher Dent's perspective, economic development asymmetry, a mix of political regimes and social-religious traditions, historical animosities between rival nations and strong nationalism pose strong challenges to the formation of regional identity and regional community-building in East Asia (2008: 3). Nonetheless, as a result of cultural proximity, geopolitical connections, increasing cross-border cultural and economic flows caused by capital globalisation, and growing regionalist negotiations, regional coherence has increased during the post-Cold War era. Consequently, the imagination of Asia as a unit and the sentiment of the rise of Asia have both been encouraged, and the concept of "Asian value" has been pushed to the fore by political leaders, such as Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore and Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia, for political, cultural or economic purposes. (East) Asia can be employed as an emotional signifier to contend for the legitimacy of the discourse within a Western-centred world by strengthening regional solidarity, constructing local and regional subjectivity, and lessening the influence of Western-dominated modernised ideologies in the region (Iwabuchi, 2002: 12).

Regional Integration of Asian Cultural Business: Japanese and Korean TV Dramas

In this context, the wide circulation of intraregional commercialised popular cultural flows, such as TV programmes, since the 1990s has contributed to the integration of the entertainment business in Asia, which provides a basis and an incentive for the growth of pan-Asian film co-production. Koichi Iwabuchi (2002: 16) views these cultural products as kinds of glocalised popular cultural forms produced within an Asian context. They are both global and Asian, homogenised and heterogenised; and hence they can display both sameness and difference among diverse local modernities in the region. Examining the emerging

transnational cultural power of Japan, Iwabuchi articulates that globalisation could represent decentralisation from an American viewpoint, even as it testifies to recentralisation for emerging globally-powerful players like Japan. The decentred globalisation transmutes Japan into one of a small number of centres of transnational cultural power outside the USA and into a model of non-Western indigenised modernity within the dispersed configuration of global cultural power (ibid.: 44-45). Hence the region becomes a critical concept that helps us conceptualise contemporary transnational cultural flows in East Asia, going beyond a global-local binary opposition.

In this regard, the regionalisation of popular culture in East Asia could be perceived as the process of Asian nations' mimicking and indigenisation of the modernities of regional cultural centres such as Japan, and cultural proximity between producers and audiences within the region plays a significant role in encouraging the phenomenon. Joseph Straubhaar (1991) asserts that audiences prefer to look for greater cultural relevance or proximity in cultural products, which partly explains the consolidation of the regional cultural market and the growth of intraregional cultural exchange owing to the relatively short cultural distance between nations in a region. Nonetheless, Iwabuchi (2002: 133) suggests viewing the notion of cultural proximity as a dynamic process. Cultural proximity is not given and never neutral; and only selected cultural similarities can be articulated. Additionally, some nations in the region possess stronger capabilities for producing symbolic content which enables the audiences across the region to experience cultural resonance and immediacy, or cultural proximity, thereby forging interconnections between units in the region. Such transnational cultural power allows these nations to emerge as cultural semi-centres in the region and play a leading role in cultural regionalisation. Thus the cultural regionalisation is essentially political, and the regionalisation of Asian popular culture is neither simply a component of globalisation nor purely local players' response to the global forces. The emergence of new

cultural semi-centres in East Asia reflects the power dynamics between agents within the region and the change in the wider regional context in the age of globalisation.

Some countries, such as Japan since the 1990s and South Korea in the new millennium, have become major Asian cultural exporters and critical nodes within the network of Asian cultural economy. The rapidly increasing popularity of cultural commodities from these countries has significantly contributed to the cultural regionalisation in East Asia. In addition to cultural proximity and modernity embedded in cultural commodities, the prevalence of popular cultures from these regional semi-centres is closely related to contextual factors and historical conditions. The wave of deregulation and the progress of information communication technologies in the late 20th century, including cable and satellite TVs, videos and the Internet, have expedited the regional circulation of Asian pop cultural goods, in particular audiovisual commodities.

Take, for example, the regional popularity of Japanese and Korean TV dramas in Taiwan. Japan has occupied a leading position in East Asian television industries since the 1990s. According to Yumiko Hara (2004), the total export hours of Japanese TV programmes increased from 4,600 in 1980 to 42,600 in 2001, and Asian countries were the major export destination. In Taiwan, TV channels mushroomed in the early 1990s with media privatisation and liberalisation. Japanese TV programmes soon became the darling of channel operators in Taiwan after the introduction of Japanese TV dramas by Star Chinese Channel, a satellite TV station based in Hong Kong, when the ban on Japanese audiovisual products was lifted and cable TV was legalised in Taiwan in 1993. Not only are TV stations keen on purchasing Japanese dramas, but also various cable TV channels specialising in Japanese TV programmes were founded in Taiwan in the 1990s. Unlike Taiwanese dramas, which are more family-oriented, Japanese trendy/idol dramas (*dorama*) pay more attention to good-looking actors, fashion, the lives and loves of young people, modern urban settings and

quality production, and thus enjoy high popularity among young people in Taiwan (Iwabuchi, 2002: 142-143). Owing to the high popularity of Japanese popular culture in Taiwan, a Chinese term *hari-zu* is created to denote Taiwanese Japanophiles fascinated by Japanese culture, in particular popular culture. The style of a number of films from Taiwan in the new millennium also manifests the influence of *dorama* on Taiwan cinema, for example, *Blue Gate Crossing* (*Lanse damen*, dir. Yee Chih-yen, 2002) (Martin, 2007: 139; Davis, 2007: 151).

Subsequent to the regional craze for Japanese pop culture, the great popularity of Korean TV dramas, along with Korean pop music, brought about a Korean wave (also known as *Hallyu*) throughout the region in the new millennium. The amount of Korean TV programme exports increased from US\$5.5 million in 1995 to US\$123.5 million in 2005, and East Asian countries, such as Japan, Taiwan and China, were primary importer (Shim, 2008: 27; “*Exports of Broadcasting*”, 2006). In Taiwan, Korean dramas, as a popular but relatively cheap alternative compared with Japanese TV programmes, have been imported in great amounts by TV stations since 2000 (Kim, 2005: 190). Taiwan was the biggest importers of Korean drama in the early 2000s, and 20.1% of the amount of Korean broadcast programmes exported to Asian countries went to Taiwan in 2001 (*ibid.*: 186-187). The above cases demonstrate that as a result of the innovation of media technology, media liberalisation and global capitalism in the past few decades, Asian popular cultural products have been widely circulated across the region. In this way, the production, consumption and imagination of Asian popular cultural products are no more limited by boundaries, and Asian cultural economy is inherently transnational. The growth of the intraregional cultural product consumption, the increase in actors’ regional stardom and growing coherence between Asian cultural industries have strengthened the interconnection between Asian film industries and formed a basis for pan-Asian film collaboration.

Pan-Asian Film Co-Production and Taiwan Cinema

Although cultural regionalisation in East Asia did not make great progress until in recent years, transnational collaboration has been a long-standing approach of making films for East Asian filmmakers. For example, Hong Kong's film studios frequently collaborated with film companies from Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and Philippine during the 1950s and 1960s. According to Law Kar (2000: 114), there were 31 Mandarin films from the Shaw Brothers directed by six Japanese directors from 1966 to 1972. Moreover, Kinnia Yau Shuk-ting highlights the transnational connections between Japanese and Hong Kong action cinemas of the 1960s. Apart from elements of Chinese opera and Hollywood genre films, the emergence of "new school *wuxia* films" in the 1960s can be attributed to the Shaw Brothers' incorporation of fighting styles and themes of Japanese *chanbara* into the traditional *wuxia* genre (2005: 41-43).⁴⁸ Afterwards, the generic innovation also influenced Taiwan's *wuxia* films as some Hong Kong filmmakers such as King Hu moved to Taiwan in the late 1960s. Despite these transnational connections, connections between Asian cinemas were mainly shown in transnational casting and market consolidation during the period. The overall progress of intraregional film collaboration in East Asia was limited in terms of both production quantity and institutional structure in the 20th century.

Nevertheless, different forms of transnational connections, including talent-sharing, cross-border investment, co-production (treaty or equity), and market consolidation, have gradually become prevalent in Asian cinema, thereby dramatically changing the face of East Asian film industries in the new millennium. Although complexity and diversity in the region and constant tension between East Asian countries stunted the progress of intraregional film collaboration (Wei, T., 2011: 189), cultural and economic regionalisation and regionalism

⁴⁸ *Chanbara* refers to Japanese sword-fighting or sword-fighting genre of Japanese cinema, for example, *Yojimbo* (Akira Kurosawa, 1961) and *Zatoichi* series. The co-production of *Zatoichi Meets the One-Armed Swordsman* (*Dubi dao dazhan mang xia*, dir. Kimiyoshi Yasuda and Hsu Tseng-hung, 1971) is a clear example showing the connection between *chanbara* films and *wuxia* films.

encouraged by globalisation, dynamics of international politics and the rise of economic power of East Asian countries have fostered pan-Asian film collaboration and market integration since the late 20th century. The decline of national film industries in Asia has also stimulated their collaboration in the new millennium (Davis and Yeh, 2008: 85). Under these circumstances, creating regional blockbusters through pan-Asian co-production has become a visible way helping Asian filmmakers spread the risk, gather resources, and maximise returns. Subsequently, a number of cinematic institutions for fostering intraregional collaboration have been established in succession. For example, Pusan Promotion Plan (PPP) is both a platform for information exchange and a mechanism for facilitating intraregional collaboration in Asia (Davis and Yeh, 2008: 147-148).⁴⁹ According to Wei Ti (2011: 195), contemporary East Asian film co-production is both “a continuation, deepening and expansion of the previous phases” and the outcome of globalisation and regionalism in Asia. In comparison with the past, contemporary Asian film co-production can be understood as a commercially-oriented film practice for regional viewers on a bigger scale and scope of more systematic and intensive cooperation, involving every part of a film project, from conception to exhibition (ibid.: 194).

Making films through a regional network constructed by multinational agents has become a conspicuous phenomenon in Asian cinema today. Darrell William Davis and Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh (2008: 90) emphasise the significance of agents in this regional network to the development of contemporary pan-Asian film co-production, and divide them into five clusters according to their primary markets, motivations and activities, namely Euro-Asian alliances, intra-Asian co-producers, pan-Chinese co-producers, pan-Asian programme

⁴⁹ Pusan Promotion Plan (PPP), an event of Pusan International Film Festival (PIFF), was an occasion providing Asian directors and producers with opportunities to meet up with co-producers or financiers. In 2011, the festival changed its official name into Busan International Film Festival (BIFF) due to the change of English spelling of the city in 2000. Thereafter PPP was renamed Asian Project Market (APM) in the same year (BIFF, 2011).

packagers, and Hollywood–Asian ventures. From their viewpoint, Euro-Asian alliances are often not-for-profit, pan-Asian programme packagers straddle commercial, cultural and educational functions, and the rest are mainly commercially-oriented. Their typology, arguably, is to a great degree associated with the bases of these participants, and factors such as market sizes and locations also affect the grouping. Consequently, most agents in Greater China are classified as a separate category because their transnational co-productions primarily target a transnational but huge single linguistic market.

However, the growing permeability of cultural boundaries increases the difficulty of conceptualising practical transnational co-production in East Asia. Some projects that pan-Chinese co-producers engage in could aim for Asian markets with different languages whereas some films in which intra-Asian co-producers get involved could mainly target the Chinese-speaking market. Some Asian companies, like Singapore's MediaCorp Raintree Pictures, have participated in both the production of films targeting the Chinese-speaking market and those targeting multi-language markets, for example, Chinese-language co-production *Painted Skin: The Resurrection* (*Huapi II: Zhuansheng shu*, dir. Wu Ershan, 2012) and Australian–Singaporean co-production *The Home Song Stories* (Tony Ayres, 2007). Because of the regionalisation of Asian cinemas, these stakeholders' strategies, motivations and assumed audiences are not fixed and alter according to different circumstances and cases. Davis and Yeh attempt to map out the regional cinematic network by sorting participants of pan-Asian co-production according to the finance base and target market of clusters. However, the distinction between pan-Chinese and intra-Asian co-producers is unclear in terms of practical cinematic activities. The economic inducements and regionalisation complicate filmmaking in Asia and make the linguistic boundaries between East Asian cinemas highly permeable.

The complexity of transnational co-production and the difficulty of creating the typology are also manifested in participants' involvement in the production process. Admittedly, transnational connections could appear in the development of films in various forms; the type and influence of transnational connections in film projects can vary from case to case, and the degree of participation and importance of participants in transnational collaborations are always unequal. A film co-financed and co-produced by members from multiple Asian countries and starring multinational actors could still mainly target a single national or linguistic film market rather than markets with various languages. In this regard, transnational collaboration is deemed to be a complex interaction between participants, reflecting the power dynamics in the regional political, economic and industrial contexts. The difficulty of classifying and the ambiguity in identifying pan-Asian co-productions highlight the complexity of transnational co-production and remind us that analysts should take into consideration the change of the industrial context in the region, the dynamics of filmic agents in the region, and the power relationship between national cinemas within the region when attempting to understand the contemporary cinematic practice in East Asia.

In spite of the difficulty in categorisation, in this chapter I will focus on production activities and roughly divide pan-Asian film co-production into four modes, namely intraregional art film co-production, Hollywood–Asian alliance, pan-Chinese co-production, and intra-Asian co-production, according to financiers, participants and target audiences of these projects in order to map out pan-Asian film co-production in which Taiwanese filmmakers have engaged in the new millennium. Unlike Davis and Yeh's typology, I exclude European-funded art film co-production from my examination since these projects primarily appeal to global niches instead of regional audiences. All the works I examine to some degree stress the concept of region in terms of production, consumption, or imagination.

Here I will elaborate on these modes to facilitate the examination of pan-Asian co-production in Taiwan cinema in this chapter.

Intraregional art film co-production refers to auteur-oriented films that rely on support from Asian companies. Certainly, since the late 20th century, the financing, production, distribution and consumption of auteur-oriented films from various Asian countries have depended highly upon the international film festival circuit and European sponsors. Nevertheless, Japan has also played a critical role in supporting Asian art cinema since the 1990s. For example, all Hou Hsiao-hsien's films in the 1990s were partly backed by Japanese companies.⁵⁰ Moreover, a number of Japanese companies and organisations began to launch programmes under a regional framework from the mid-1990s, for example, Pony Canyon's Y2K project and the NHK Asian Film Festival project. The appearance of these regional projects exhibits the establishment of intraregional financing and distribution network of art cinema in Asia and the development of the institution of regional art cinema. Whilst these films could appeal to international niches, these projects are run under the regional banner and are aimed at fostering intraregional cultural and economic links between Asian cinemas (Besserglik, 2000; NHK, 2010), which indicates the development of a non-European-centred, regional cinematic culture. That is, the emergence of the intraregional art film co-production epitomises the dynamics in global art cinema, the integration of different Asian cinemas and the formation of regional imagination.

The other three trajectories of pan-Asian film co-production are mainly associated with commercially-oriented cinema. The emergence of a Hollywood–Asian alliance is related to Hollywood's engagement in Asian cinemas in the past two decades. In order to enter Asian-language film markets, Hollywood studios have actively collaborated with East Asian film

⁵⁰ Four films comprise *The Puppetmaster* (*Ximeng rensheng*, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1993), *Good Men, Good Women* (*Haonan haonü*, 1995), *Goodbye South, Goodbye* (*Nanguo zaijian, nanguo*, 1996), and *Flowers of Shanghai* (*Haishang hua*, 1998). The latter three were funded by Shochiku Company.

industries to participate in Asian-language film production since the late 1990s. Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE) is a pioneering Hollywood studio developing such an Asian strategy by forming a Hollywood–Asian alliance. It established its Asian production branch, Columbia Pictures Film Production Asia (CPFPA), in Hong Kong and invested in a number of Chinese-language films in the new millennium (Carver, 1998), for example, the regional blockbuster *Kung Fu Hustle* (*Gongfu*, dir. Stephen Chow, 2004). Regardless of the actual outcome, these Hollywood–Asian co-produced projects, it may be claimed, are developed with the purpose of appealing to regional viewers on the basis of an imagination of East Asia or a Chinese-speaking world as a unified cultural market. These projects have intensified the intraregional network of production and distribution and encouraged the collaboration between Asian filmmakers from different Chinese-speaking areas in the new millennium.

The two other modes of pan-Asian co-productions are pan-Chinese and intra-Asian co-productions. As mentioned before, Davis and Yeh (2008: 90) have distinguished pan-Chinese co-producers from intra-Asian co-producers. This chapter likewise distinguishes pan-Chinese co-production from intra-Asian co-production according to target audiences of films and national/cultural identities of leaders of given projects. The former addresses different Chinese-language markets whereas the latter targets multi-language markets in Asia. Nevertheless, these two modes may overlap and operate interchangeably. In general, pan-Chinese film co-production refers to Chinese-language films co-produced by participants from various Chinese-speaking areas and mainly aimed at viewers in various Chinese-speaking areas, whilst non-Chinese speaking film talents could get involved and these projects could be sold to non-Chinese language markets, for example, Korean star Jung Woo-sung in *Reign of Assassins* (*Jianyu*, dir. Su Chao-pin, 2010).

On the other hand, transnational connections between film industries of different languages play a significant role in intra-Asian film co-production, for example, *Silk* (*Guisi*,

dir. Su Chao-bin, 2006). These projects appeal to audiences in different languages and translingual connections are often shown in their content even though the importance of these markets could differ. The ambiguity in the classification shows the increasing hybridity in economic production and cultural content during the globalisation process and throws the analytical framework of national cinema into question. Nevertheless, particularly strong interaction and interconnection between different Chinese cinemas, in particular Chinese, Hong Kong and Taiwan cinemas, resulting from ethnic, geographical, cultural and linguistic factors, remind us that imagined boundaries constructed by elements such as culture and language continue to hold meaning and power. It is therefore still useful to differentiate pan-Chinese co-production from intra-Asian co-production in a dissertation discussing Taiwan cinema.

Apart from intraregional art film co-production, aimed at international niches like Europe-funded art films from Taiwan and will be examined in Chapter Four, the other three modes of pan-Asian film collaboration will be elaborated in this chapter. First, the Hollywood-funded *Double Vision* will be selected as a case study to shed light on the influence of the Hollywood–Asian alliance on Taiwan cinema. *Double Vision* is not only a groundbreaking case of Hollywood–Taiwanese co-production but also an instructive project for the development of Taiwan commercial cinema and transnational film collaboration in Taiwan in the past decade. In addition, this chapter will clarify the regional context in which Taiwan cinema has been situated for decades to expound the development of pan-Chinese and intra-Asian co-productions with regard to Taiwan cinema in the 21st century. Particular attention will be given to the Greater China region and pan-Chinese co-production in view of the actual activities of contemporary Taiwan cinema. In these sections, the chapter will explore diverse forms of transnational connections between Taiwan and other Chinese cinemas, and between Taiwan and other East Asian cinemas in the aspects of production,

consumption and imagination to reconsider the impact of regionalisation on Taiwan cinema in the age of globalisation.

Hollywood–Asian Alliance and Taiwan Cinema: A Case Study of *Double Vision*

Global Hollywood and Asian Cinema

The development of the Hollywood–Asian alliance is related to Hollywood’s increasing reliance on overseas film industries and markets. On the one hand, Hollywood films have dominated the global film markets. The annual share of Hollywood films in the European Union, Hollywood’s major offshore market, was above 70% almost through the entire 1990s (CNC, 2011). Their market share even surpassed 80% in Germany and the United Kingdom during the same period (Jäckel, 2003: 70). Although the figure declined during the 2000s, Hollywood films still drew over 60% of box office receipts of EU’s market (CNC, 2011). In Taiwan, the market share of American films was around 75.6% in 2010, of which 80% was gathered by Hollywood distributors’ local branches (Wang, 2011b: 42-47).

Alongside Hollywood’s global domination, a dependence of Hollywood on international film markets has also been formed. According to Kerry Segrave (1997: 288), Hollywood majors grossed around 50% of their revenue from outside their homeland during the 1960s and 1970s. Although the proportion of overseas box office income in Hollywood’s theatrical takings shrank in the 1980s owing to the rapid growth of the theatrical revenue of Hollywood films in their homeland, their foreign gross have soared since the 1990s. In 2011, the box office revenue in Northern America, including America and Canada, was US\$10.2 billion whereas the offshore box office for the “Big Six” reached US\$13.6 billion (MPAA, 2012: 4;

Segers, 2011).⁵¹ In particular, the importance of the rapidly growing Asian market has increased. Christina Klein (2004b: 363) points out that although trade barriers slowed the expansion of Hollywood cinema within Asia previously, since the 1990s, overall economic growth, trade liberalisation and multiplexing have both enlarged the regional film market and made it more accessible to Hollywood. Today, East Asia has become one of the biggest and fastest-growing regional film markets worldwide, and Japan, China and South Korea ranked as the first, second and ninth biggest national markets respectively outside of North America in 2011 (MPAA, 2012: 5). In this sense, Hollywood's proactive engagement in Asian cinema in the past two decades is unsurprising.

Hollywood–Asian interaction is two-way traffic. Klein (2004b: 363; 369) points out that the transnational link between Asian and Hollywood cinemas can be examined in terms of two dimensions: the Asianisation of Hollywood and Hollywoodisation of Asian film industries. The former refers to Hollywood's attempt to incorporate Asian elements into film production and utilise the resources of Asian film industries to enable American films to target global viewers. There has been a complex and strong link between Hollywood and Asian cinemas for decades. Take, for example, Hong Kong cinema. John Woo points out that “Hollywood began to imitate Hong Kong movies in the late 1980s and 1990s because Hong Kong films (to a certain degree) are imitations of Hollywood films, so Hollywood is imitating Hollywood” (Stokes and Hoover, 1999: 309). David Bordwell considers the production of films such as *Desperado* (Robert Rodriguez, 1995) and *The Replacement Killers* (Antoine Fuqua, 1998) to be a sign of “the Hongkongification of American cinema” (2000b: 19). As Kenneth Chan asserts, “the global cinema industry is a giant network of multiple lines of citation, increasing in its manifold turns and returns, connections and reconnections,

⁵¹ “Big Six” refers to six major Hollywood studios, namely Paramount, Warner Bros., Disney, 20th Century Fox, Sony, and Universal.

particularly as cinematic cultural production intensifies through time” (2009: 10). Different cinematic cultures are interconnected under a global cinematic system, and an intertextual relationship exists between different national cinemas. The ways in which these film industries cite and represent other cinematic cultures vary according to different purposes and distinctive cultural, societal and industrial contexts. In the age of globalisation, hybridity has become a critical characteristic in cinema in terms of both production process and content.

Besides, as production costs of Hollywood features rapidly grow,⁵² the Asianisation of Hollywood becomes a strategy for reducing film costs, strengthening technical capabilities, and helping Hollywood penetrate Asian film markets (Klein, 2004b: 365). A great number of Asian actors, such as Jackie Chan and Jet Li, have appeared in Hollywood films; skilled professionals, such as John Woo and Yuen Woo-ping, have participated in film production in Southern California. It is not only Asian film talents’ professional expertise but also their regional box office appeal that enables them to join the Hollywood industry. Film critic Andy Klein maintains that “It’s not just a matter of seeing great talent. It’s a matter of seeing this talent that comes with a built-in audience which we are highly covetous of. It clearly behoves us to establish relationships with those stars who are going to carry a great deal of weight in that marketplace” (Major, 1997). Additionally, remaking Asian films has become a fashion in Hollywood, and the tendency is also welcomed by Asian filmmakers. For example, academy Award winner *The Departed* (2006) was Martin Scorsese’s remake of Hong Kong’s *Infernal Affairs* trilogy (*Wujian dao*, dir. Andrew Lau and Alan Mak, 2002/2003/2003); Hideo Nakata’s 1998 Japanese horror film *Ring* (*Ringu*) was remade as *The Ring* (Gore Verbinski, 2002) in Hollywood. Nakata’s *Ring 2* (*Ringu 2*, dir. Hideo Nakata, 1999) was also remade into American film *The Ring Two* (Hideo Nakata, 2005) by Nakata himself.

⁵² According to MPAA, the average negative and marketing costs of Hollywood majors’ features were US\$16.8 million and US\$6.5 million respectively in 1985, and the figures rose to US\$36.4 million and US\$17.7 million in 1995 (MPAA, 2002: 14). In 2007, the average negative and marketing costs of Hollywood films reached US\$70.8 million and US\$35.9 million respectively (MPAA, 2008: 6).

However, the phenomenon can be regarded as Hollywood's global expansion in an institutional sense. Inspired by cultural imperialist discourse, Toby Miller and others (2001: 18) claim that "Hollywood reproduces and regulates the NICL [New International Division of Cultural Labour] through its control over cultural labour markets, international co-production, intellectual property, marketing, distribution and exhibition." Hollywood de-localises and re-territorialises the local-historical space to produce global cultural goods through cheaper production costs and foreign resources, thereby consolidating its dominant position in the name of globalisation (ibid.: 55-58). In this vein, Hollywood has expanded into a global network of production and distribution to operate its cinematic practice by means of incorporating external resources or reconstructing the production process through NICL. It shows a seeming tendency for de-centralisation and de-territorialisation, whereas the cinematic practice is in fact located within a Hollywood-centred framework

In this sense, the Asianisation of Hollywood is arguably only a tactical move of global Hollywood. Gary G. Xu describes Hollywood's remaking of East Asian films as "Hollywood's way of outsourcing" (2007: 156). East Asia can be seen as Hollywood's test market, inasmuch as the long-time globalisation of Hollywood has assimilated the pattern of consumption of the East Asian market by an American one. Thus, remaking becomes an efficient and effective way for Hollywood to produce films that appeal to Americans as well as overseas audiences through both remaking the story and changing the ethnic appearance of East Asian hit movies. The Asianisation of Hollywood can be described as a temporary phenomenon caused by Hollywood's profit-oriented strategy and has nothing to do with the long-time development of national cinemas in Asia. Whilst Asian cinemas could benefit from this alliance, such outsourcing might, in the long run, lead to the decrease in originality and creativity in Asian filmmaking. In this regard, East Asia can be viewed as an offshore testing ground and a talent pool of Hollywood.

On the other hand, Hollywood conglomerates have adopted, since the late 20th century, a strategy of glocalisation to develop what I call Hollywood–Asian alliance. Roland Robertson points out that transnational corporations intend to tailor their products to local conditions and need to expand their markets through diversity and heterogeneity (1995: 28-29). This strategy allows Hollywood studios to spread their business tentacles into the Asian film industries and leads to what Klein (2004b: 369) describes as the Hollywoodisation of Asian film industries. For Klein, this strategy is Hollywood studios’ response to the increasing demand for local flavour in Asian film markets since the 1990s. Additionally, it helps Hollywood companies obtain local subsidies and evade import restrictions, create more texts available for global circulation, and dispel anti-American sentiment and anxiety about cultural imperialism (ibid.: 372). According to Klein, “one of the consequences of glocalization is that it no longer makes much sense to think of Hollywood as being separate from and in competition with local Asian film industries” (ibid.: 383). Miller and others also point out that investing in foreign film industries “avoided foreign-exchange drawback rules that prevented the expatriation of profits, simultaneously benefiting from host-state subvention of ‘local’ films” (2001: 56). Therefore, Hollywood conglomerates are keen to engage in the production as well as distribution of Asian films.

A number of cases show the Hollywoodisation of Asian film industries in the 21st century. In addition to Sony Pictures, Warner Bros. produced its first Chinese-language film *Turn Left, Turn Right* (*Xiangzuo zou, xiangyou zou*, dir. To Kei-fung and Wai Ka-fai, 2003) in 2003 (Shackleton, 2002), and formed a joint venture, Warner China Film HG Corporation, with state-owned Chinese Film Group Corporation and the private Hengdian Group from China in 2004 (Groves, 2004). The studio had also invested in the Chinese film exhibition industry since 2002, but it withdrew in 2006 in view of regulatory changes on foreign ownership of the cinema business (Shen, 2006). Walt Disney and 20th Century Fox

International also released their respective first Chinese-language co-productions, *The Secret of the Magic Gourd* (*Feitian xiao hulu*, aka *Baohulu de mimi*, dir. John Chu and Frankie Chung, 2007) and *Hot Summer Days* (*Quancheng relian: Relala*, dir. Tony Chan and Wing Shya, 2010). Besides, Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation acquired a 19.9% stake in China's Bona Film Group in 2012 (Coonan, 2012). The Hollywood–Asian alliance might reinforce the influence of Hollywood in the region, but it could simultaneously strengthen East Asian film industries by offering “a transfer of both capital and technical knowledge” (Klein, 2004b: 368). Hollywood's involvement in Asian filmmaking exhibits the complex relationship between the global, regional, and local cultural and economic forces in Asian cinema today, and the cinematic culture in East Asia is becoming more hybrid and dynamic as a result.

Asian Strategy of Sony Pictures Entertainment: A Case Study of Double Vision

Although Columbia Pictures funded *Double Vision* as a Hollywood–Taiwanese co-production, it should be examined with a regional framework since the film was part of the Asian scheme of Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE). In fact, Columbia Pictures itself, a subsidiary of SPE, is a symbol of economic globalisation. This 1919-founded American studio was acquired by the Tokyo-based Sony Corporation in 1989, which allowed the Japanese electronics manufacturing giant to enter the American-dominated global motion picture business. As with its electronics, Sony has become a major provider in the content industry worldwide. Instead of merely being viewed as a reverse flow of East–West traffic, SPE's Asianisation scheme should be regarded as the execution of Sony's glocalisation policy in Asia and the international conglomerate's response to the rise of the region and the development of cultural globalisation.

Therefore, Hollywood studios' engagement in Asian cinema can be perceived as a part of their global expansion. SPE believes that the market share of national films in most foreign film markets will steadily increase (Carver, 1998). Thus, as Klein (2007: 197) asserts, SPE has developed a two-pronged strategy for globalisation. On the one hand, it concentrates most resources to the production of high-budget English-language films which target mass markets worldwide. On the other hand, by collaborating with local film companies in given countries, the studio allocates limited resources and utilises local creative resources to make local-language films appealing mainly for local audiences while the "limited" resources are substantial to non-Hollywood national film industries. In this context, Columbia Pictures Film Production Asia (CPFPA) was formed in Hong Kong in 1998 owing to the studio's "belief in the long-term vitality of this region" (Harris, 1998). Besides, "By creating a production company in Asia," SPE president and CEO John Calley (*ibid.*) stated, "we increase SPE's global production capacity and take another important step in our overall corporate strategy of producing original-language productions in key markets around the world." Calley's statement clearly shows that SPE's Asian strategy was developed within a global framework and can be understood as a component of global Hollywood.

In this light, CPFPA participated in the production of various Chinese-language films at the turn of the new millennium, and the sensational global success of *CTHD* further affirmed the Asian strategy (Wu, 2001). Accordingly, four Chinese-language films were produced by CPFPA in succession, including Taiwan's *Double Vision*, Hong Kong's *So Close* (*Xiyang tianshi*, dir. Corey Yuen, 2002), and China's *Big Shot's Funeral* (*Dawan*, dir. Feng Xiaogang, 2002) and *Warriors of Heaven and Earth* (*Tiandi yingxiong*, dir. He Ping, 2003) (Goodridge, 2001). All of them were co-produced by CPFPA and Asian film companies and co-starred

actors from different East Asian areas and Hollywood.⁵³ It is arguable that the transnational casting of these projects not only reveals SPE's ambition of targeting the regional market but also indicates the regional imagination under which SPE's Asian projects were developed.

For Taiwan cinema, SPE's *Double Vision* is the archetype of a Hollywood–Asian alliance. Although Ang Lee's *CTHD* was supported and overseen by CPFPA, it was initiated, financed, developed, and carried out due to individual efforts outside Hollywood. Besides, the film was primarily produced outside Taiwan with a multinational crew, and only a few of the above-the-line creative crew were Taiwanese. By contrast, although financed and developed by CPFPA, *Double Vision* was filmed in Taiwan and the majority of below-the-line crew were from Taiwan. Therefore, the development of *Double Vision* could be said to have had a more profound impact on the local industrial structure compared to *CTHD*. Besides, whilst the film cost far less than did concurrent Hollywood A-list films,⁵⁴ CPFPA-backed *Double Vision* was crowned the biggest-ever film from Taiwan at that time, with the exception of *CTHD*,⁵⁵ for its expenditure of around NT\$200 million (nearly US\$6 million) (Li and SunTV, 2011: 82). As for consumption, *Double Vision* received NT\$36.9 million at the Taipei box office and around NT\$80 million in Taiwan in 2002 (Wang, 2003: 57; Wen and Tseng, 2002: 126). It not only topped all Chinese-language films but also surpassed a great number of Hollywood films, including *Red Dragon* (Brett Ratner, 2002), which was screened in Taiwan one week prior to *Double Vision*. Although *Double Vision* could not

⁵³ For example, Hollywood actor Donald Sutherland starred in *Big Shot's Funeral*, and *Warriors of Heaven and Earth* cast Japanese star Kiichi Nakai in the lead. Also, the cast of *So Close* is composed of actors from Hong Kong (Karen Mok), China (Zhao Wei), Taiwan (Shu Qi), Japan (Yasuaki Kurata) and South Korea (Song Seung-heon). *Double Vision* also featured stars from Taiwan, Hong Kong and the USA.

⁵⁴ According to MPAA (2003: 19, 20), the average film cost for Hollywood feature films was around US\$ 89.4 million, including negative cost US\$58.8 million and marketing cost US\$30.6 million, in 2002.

⁵⁵ *CTHD* was made on an around US\$15 million budget (Eller, 2000).

recoup its costs through its domestic box office gross alone, the film is still one of the most popular domestic movies of the past two decades.⁵⁶

Transnational Co-Production of Double Vision

Double Vision was a horror/thriller film made in 2001 and theatrically released in 2002. The term “double vision” (*shuang tong*) in Chinese refers to two pupils in one eye, and it was believed in ancient China that a person with a double pupil was an extraordinary person. The double pupil is used as a lead-in to the story of the film. The occurrence of a serial murder case in Taipei whose victims all died for mysterious reasons compels Taiwanese police to appeal to the FBI for help. Consequently, the FBI specialist Kevin Ritcher (acted by David Morse) and Taiwanese detective Huang Huo-tu (Hong Kong actor Tony Leung Ka-fai) trace a clue and confront a girl with a double pupil, also the ringleader of the secret Taoist cult True Immortal Shrine. *Double Vision* can be considered a fusion of the Hollywood genre and local/regional cultural elements as regards the content. The film incorporated both the Taoist theory of five hells and ingredients of a Hollywood thriller, and therefore the film has been viewed as “Taoist *Se7en* (David Fincher, 1995)” or “Taiwan’s version of *Se7en* plus *The X Files*” (Davis and Yeh, 2008: 61; Chen, 2007: 108). When introducing the film, Hsiang Yi-fei (2002), a journalist and film critic, also suggested seeing *Double Vision* as either a serial killer film like *Se7en* or a film about mind healing like *The Sixth Sense* (M. Night Shyamalan, 1999).

In this light, the production of *Double Vision* represented Taiwanese filmmakers’ effort to localise a Hollywood genre through transnational co-production. The project was initiated by Chen Kuo-fu. Not only is Chen a well-known Taiwanese filmmaker,⁵⁷ but he had also

⁵⁶ *Double Vision* was a top five highest-grossing domestic movie of the 2000s (see Appendix 1).

⁵⁷ Chen Kuo-fu was well-known as a film critic and a key figure of Taiwan New Cinema movement during the 1980s. He made his directorial debut *School Girl* (*Guozhong nüsheng*) in 1989 and had won some fame as a

served as a head of the production unit of CPFPA since 2000. *Double Vision* was a plan he proposed to CPFPA and was chosen as one of its four self-developed and self-made films because its script possessed clear themes and conformed to the conventions of the horror genre (Huang, 2002: 37, 115). Genre is not only a kind of blueprint for narrative and label for marketing from an industrial aspect, but also “specific systems of expectation and hypothesis . . . provide spectators with means of recognition and understanding” during their film selection and viewing processes in terms of the aspect of audiences (Neale, 1990: 46). In this light, the global circulation of films have made genre one of the elements helping this media form transcend the boundaries and increase cross-border consumption. The popularity of Hollywood genre films in Asia and the rise of the Asian horror wave at the turn of the new millennium were conducive to the production of *Double Vision*. Chen integrated Chinese cultural and religious elements with the horror/thriller genre and produced the film with Hollywood-level quality, which enabled the film to possess a universally recognisable generic blueprint, local/regional cultural specificity, and cross-border box office appeal. He created a local text by employing Hollywood resources, and therefore *Double Vision* is both a Hollywood film made by the Taiwanese film industry and a film from Taiwan made by Hollywood.

The production of *Double Vision* in Taiwan offered an exciting opportunity to the stagnant local film industry whereas its production must rely on transnational cooperation, on account of the degeneration of local film production institutions. Chen decided to film *Double Vision* in Taiwan to offer filmmaking opportunities, transfer technical know-how of Hollywood filmmaking, and breathe new life into the declining Taiwanese film industry, potentially leading to the professionalisation of Taiwan cinema (Huang, 2002: 115). Taiwan

director during the 1990s. His *The Personals* (*Zhenghun qishi*, 1998) was awarded Special Jury Prize at Taiwan’s Golden Horse Film Festival and also the top domestic film at the Taipei box office in 1999 (Chinese Taipei Film Archive, 2013a; Wang, 2000a: 67).

cinema has reached the level of international acclaim for its aesthetic achievement; however, not only were local professionals' experiences and knowledge about genre conventions and high-budget, big-scale production insufficient, but their production techniques were backward at that time. To produce a high-budget horror film meeting Hollywood standards seemed daunting for the weakened Taiwanese film industry. An absence of experienced and well qualified local directors for handling such a high-budget, big-scale genre film was also a major reason driving Chen, as a figure of CPFPA, to direct *Double Vision* by himself (Li and SunTV, 2011: 83; Huang, 2002: 115).

The quandary of the film industry was closely related to conditions of Taiwan cinema during the late 1980s and 1990s. The downturn of the film industry had unfavourable effects on the production system as well as leading to a decrease in cash flow and the production output. In terms of commercial cinema, the industrial circumstances, together with an increase in intraregional cultural and capital flows and the emergence of new media technologies, drove the Taiwanese film companies to divert more resources into the Hong Kong film industry or other media business (Lu, 1998: 321-333, 379-387), or produce low-budget and formulaic films in a slipshod way in order to avoid loss on investment and even profit from it (ibid.). The phenomenon not only formed filmmakers' complacent attitude but also reduced local talents' opportunities to make films, thereby hindering the progress of technical expertise in the film industry. Besides, the growing international recognition of Taiwan's art films and the industrial decline motivated young filmmakers to engage in auteur-oriented film production. However, these works are rather different from commercial films in production modes, styles, narratives, and marketing. Consequently, local filmmakers and skilled labours lacked know-how to organise, make and promote quality genre films (Liao, 1997: 31-32; Kuo, 2005: ap2-10, ap27). The shortcomings of the production sector of

Taiwan cinema were manifested in various aspects, including scriptwriting, project development, cinematic techniques, and the acting and the making of stars.

Deficiencies in the film industry obliged Chen to assemble multinational film talents to ensure production quality alongside Hollywood's finance, operating procedure and supervision. For example, Hong Kong cinematographer Arthur Wong Ngok-Tai was recruited since no local cinematographer had thitherto made a film in Panavision (Kuo, 2005: ap2-3). Wong's joining resulted in jobs related to cinematography, like the gaffer and focus puller, being occupied by the Hong Kong film crew he was familiar with. In this sense, the technical department of the project was led by Hong Kong film veterans, including production designer Timmy Yip, stunt coordinator Tony Leung Siu-hung and Wong. Likewise, Australian teams, namely Make-Up Effects Group, Kevin Chisnall, and Phenomena, were in charge of the make-up, muzzle flash, and computer-generated images respectively. While the direction and production departments were taken over by local filmmakers,⁵⁸ the majority of Taiwanese participants were below-the-line crew. The first Hollywood-sponsored domestic film was mainly led by foreign professionals.

In addition, like other CPFPA's film projects, *Double Vision* attempted to enter the regional market using a multinational cast. From an economic perspective, the star is a form of capital able to attract funds and promote consumption, hence to cast stars from different countries, particularly those with transnational appeal, can help films to circulate overseas. Whilst a number of Taiwanese stars, including René Liu, Leon Dai, Lung Sihung and Yang Kuei-mei, joined the cast, the two main protagonists of *Double Vision* were performed by Tony Leung Ka-fai from Hong Kong and Davis Morse from America. Based in Hong Kong, Leung had become a celebrated actor since the 1980s and possessed transnational box office

⁵⁸ Key figures comprise director Chen Kuo-fu, executive director Wei Te-sheng, producer Huang Chih-ming and screenwriter Su Chao-bin.

appeal within the Chinese-speaking world when starring in *Double Vision*. His performance in the French film *The Lover* (*L'Amant*, dir. Jean-Jacques Annaud, 1992) had also brought him some international fame. Leung was cast as Taiwanese police officer in *Double Vision* although his Cantonese accent could highlight the inconsistency between the actor and his character and raise doubts about authenticity during the audiences' viewing process. Casting Leung demonstrated Chen's intention to enter regional, even international, film markets. The other lead role, a FBI specialist, was played by Hollywood star Davis Morse. Whilst Chen ("*Double Vision Creates*", 2002) stated that the character was created before the script was proposed to CPFPA, it is undeniable that casting Hollywood stars in a film is beneficial to the financing, distribution and consumption of the CPFPA project both at home and abroad. The multinational cast evinces that *Double Vision* targeted regional, even international, audiences instead of only Taiwanese spectators through transnational casting and transnational stardom.

The influence of Hollywood connections was also shown in distribution and consumption of *Double Vision*. As for distribution, the marketing expenses of this Hollywood-funded film were NT\$17 million, which even overtook those for a number of Hollywood blockbusters in Taiwan at that time, let alone locally-made films. For example, the marketing cost of *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (Peter Jackson, 2001) in Taiwan was around NT\$15 million (Wen and Tseng, 2002: 126). The high budget of *Double Vision* for marketing proved that Taiwanese filmmakers began to attach greater importance to film marketing. In addition to arousing spectators' curiosity through Internet marketing and well-designed promotion materials, Chen attempted to detach the label of "domestic film" from *Double Vision* throughout the marketing campaign. Marketers promoted the film with English trailers and tried to masquerade it as a Hollywood film (ibid.: 128-129). The strategy brought the film an image different from other domestic films, which further helped Buena Vista Film Company distribute the film (Chan, 2003: 118-120). In fact,

as the first domestic film subcontracted by Hollywood studios, the production of *Double Vision* itself was a key feature attracting media coverage, and its collaboration with Hollywood-owned Buena Vista, also the largest film distributor in Taiwan, greatly furthered its local consumption. It is arguable that these transnational connections allowed the highest-budget project at that time not only to be carried out but also to stand out among competitors in Taiwan's film market.

The connection between Hollywood and *Double Vision* enabled this domestic film to be a box office hit in Taiwan whereas its regional performance did not entice CPFPA to further engage in Taiwan cinema. *Double Vision* performed well at the local box office and earned over NT\$10 million in each of the film markets of Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia (Tsao, 2003). The figure is much bigger than the total box office grosses of all films from Taiwan at the Taipei box office in 2001 (NT\$3.7 million) (*Taiwan Cinema*, 2012). However, the film should not be considered a regional hit movie. For example, *Double Vision* did top the Hong Kong box office in its opening week, but its final box office receipts was HK\$3.4 million (approx. NT\$15 million), much lower than the HK\$13.1 million box office of *Chinese Odyssey 2002* (*Tianxia wushuang*, dir. Jeffrey Lau, 2002), the tenth highest-grossing Chinese-language film in Hong Kong of 2002 ("*Hong Kong Box Office*", 2002; Song, 2007). Afterwards, Sylvia Chang's *20 30 40* (2004), the other SPE-funded film from Taiwan and also the only Taiwan film developed by Hollywood studios after *Double Vision*, performed modestly in the local film market and did not achieve regional commercial success either.⁵⁹ Overall, it seems that these projects failed to persuade CPFPA to further partake in the filmmaking activities of Taiwan cinema. Hollywood studios' involvement in Taiwan's film production is limited and transient.

⁵⁹ *20 30 40* ranked third among films from Taiwan in 2004, grossing NT\$4.5 million at the Taipei box office (Wang, C.: 2005). The film ranked number 31 among Chinese-language films at the Hong Kong box office in 2004 (*Box Office Mojo*, 2013b).

In fact, it is hard to assert that the Hollywood–Asian alliance had a far-reaching effect on the development of Taiwan cinema in the 2000s. As a pioneer of this approach, SPE began to engage in East Asian film production in the late 1990s since it believed that these national films have good commercial prospects (Carver, 1998). After East Asian countries came through the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997 and 1998, Hollywood–Asian film co-production came to the fore at the turn of the new millennium. The approach could be a win-win strategy for Hollywood studios and declining Asian film industries in some way, but its practical achievements seemed limited. Although some films of CPFPA obtained pleasing box office results within the region, such as *CTHD* and Stephen Chow’s films, most of them did not achieve regional popularity. Chen Kuo-fu (Xiao, 2010) asserts that SPE cannot successfully enter the regional market because it was hesitant to actually integrate itself into the local institution. Further, the distribution of CPFPA’s films in respective Asian markets was encumbered with SPE’s inefficient intraregional distribution system, thereby causing difficulty promoting small- to medium-sized projects in the region (Teng, 2009a). Chen’s opinion indicates the difficulty of switching roles between the local, national, regional and global in the development of global cultural economy. Although SPE adopted the strategy of glocalisation, the local/regional particularity in industrial, cultural, economic and political aspects affected external agents’ capability to go into the local institutions and produce and promote local texts.

Still, Hollywood studios did not cease engaging in the Asian film business. As mentioned previously, many Hollywood studios have followed in the footsteps of SPE to establish their footholds in Greater China by funding regional films, launching joint ventures, or investing in local film companies. They try to forge alliances with local companies to gain access to the Chinese-language film market as it has rapidly grown in the past few decades. Nevertheless, most Hollywood studios’ partners in the Chinese-speaking world are from

Hong Kong and the PRC, and the Taiwanese film industry seems to hold a relatively marginal position in the development of such alliance. Arguably, the phenomenon is partly associated with the strengths and weaknesses involved in these Chinese-language film industries, and the circumstances also affect Taiwanese filmmakers' participation in intraregional film collaboration in the 21st century.

Taiwan Cinema and the Regionalisation of Chinese-Language Cinema:

Regional Political and Economic Context and Cultural Imagination

Besides Hollywood studios' participation in local film production and European film companies' backing for specific Taiwanese auteurs, the majority of foreign participants in transnational co-production of contemporary Taiwan cinema are from East Asia, in particular Hong Kong and China. Because of regionalisation in East Asia, the interconnection between Taiwan and other Asian cinemas is fortified. The rise of the Chinese economy and the alteration of cross-strait relationship since the late 20th century have changed the power relationship in the region and fostered the interconnectivity and interdependence between Asian cinemas. Under these circumstances, political restrictions on cross-border flows between these cinemas have gradually eased, which provides the prerequisite for intraregional collaboration. Moreover, some factors such as cultural and linguistic proximity make the cultural boundaries between Taiwan, Hong Kong and China particularly permeable, which not only enhances links between their cinemas but also stimulates the consolidation of film industries and markets in Greater China. In this context, Hong Kong and Chinese cinemas have become two primary Asian cinemas with which Taiwan cinema creates transnational connections, and thus this section will focus mainly on the changing context in Greater China, the sub-region of East Asia.

Taiwan Cinema within the Changing Context of Greater China

The rise of the Chinese economy and the alteration of cross-strait relations have impacted dramatically upon the regional context of Taiwan cinema. The opening up of China in the 1980s has greatly changed the political and economic circumstances in the region and promoted both top-down and bottom-up regionalism in Greater China. The increase of informal cross-strait affairs after the KMT regime's permission for Taiwanese to visit mainland China in 1987 shows the relationship between the PRC and Taiwan thawing steadily. In this context, the progress of cross-strait trade since the 1990s has gradually raised Taiwan's economic reliance on China. A great amount of capital, merchandise and professionals have entered the mainland for economic incentives, and therefore the mutual interdependence grows. According to the statistics of the Bureau of Foreign Trade, the PRC has replaced Japan and America as Taiwan's biggest trading partner since 2005. In 2011, the value of Taiwan's total trade with the PRC reached US\$127.5 billion, 213 and 18 times bigger than the figures in 1991 and 2001 respectively, accounting for 21.6% of its total value of the year.⁶⁰ These figures demonstrate the alteration of regional political and economic contexts and the increasingly close relationship between Taiwan and China in the past two decades.

Responding to the circumstances, Taiwan's film policy has been amended to allow connections between Taiwan and Chinese cinemas to be forged. Because of military confrontation between the KMT regime and the PRC, Taiwan and Chinese cinemas were separate cinematic institutions before the 1980s, when there has simultaneously been a strong linkage between Taiwan and Hong Kong cinemas. In my Introduction, I mentioned that the KMT regime had suppressed the interconnection between Hong Kong and Chinese cinemas

⁶⁰ Trade Statistics, Bureau of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Economic Affairs (BOFT), available: <http://cus93.trade.gov.tw/ENGLISH/FSCE/>

by banning pro-PRC filmmakers' activities in Taiwan since the 1950s.⁶¹ However, with the PRC's economic reform and opening-up since 1979, its increasingly capitalised and economically freer environment enticed Hong Kong and Taiwanese filmmakers into China. Accordingly, Taiwan film policy was amended in the late 1980s in response to the changing regional situations and increasing pressure from filmmakers.

After abolishing martial law and allowing Taiwanese residents to visit their relatives in China in 1987, the Taiwanese government has adopted a more open attitude on cross-strait affairs. From 1989, the authority gradually let Chinese scenery and actors appear in domestic films. The new policy not only permitted domestic films to be partly filmed in China (Wong, 2005: 1015), they inspired Taiwanese investors, such as Long Shong Pictures, to support Hong Kong filmmakers making films on the mainland. Taiwanese companies also financed Taiwanese filmmakers' and the Fifth Generation of Chinese directors' filmmaking activities in mainland China through their branch companies in Hong Kong during the early 1990s. For example, Zhang Yimou's *Raise the Red Lantern* (*Dahong denglong gaogao gua*, 1991) and *To Live* (*Huoazhe*, 1994) were backed by Era International (Hong Kong), owned by Taiwanese media mogul Chiu Fu-sheng, also the investor of Hou Hsiao-hsien's *A City of Sadness* (*Beiqing chengshi*, 1989) and *The Puppetmaster* (*Ximeng rensheng*, 1993). Hou also served as the executive producer of *Raise the Red Lantern*. Moreover, Taiwanese actress/producer Hsu Feng's Tomson Films' Hong Kong branch company funded Taiwanese director Yeh Hung-wei's *Five Girls and A Rope* (*Wuge nüzi he yigen shengzi*, 1991) and Chen Kaige's *Farewell My Concubine* (*Bawang bie ji*, 1993), both of which handled Chinese themes and were filmed in China. The primary method of Taiwanese filmmakers' intraregional co-production during the early 1990s was to integrate finance from Taiwan, creative talents from

⁶¹ For example, Li Han-hsiang entered China to produce films such as *Burning of Imperial Palace* (*Huoshao yuanmingyuan*, 1983), and thus his films were banned in Taiwan (Chiao and Ou, 2007: 170).

Hong Kong, and Chinese landscape and cheap skilled labour to produce commercial films targeting Chinese-speaking audiences, particularly Hong Kong and Taiwanese viewers, and art films appealing to international niches (Li, 1997: 215-218; Lu, 1998: 350-351, 380-385). Taiwanese companies' involvement in pan-Chinese co-production went down in the mid-1990s owing to a drop in consumption of Chinese-language films in Taiwan. However, interconnection and interdependency between Chinese cinemas are being reinforced continually.

The more recent rise of China has brought about another wave of pan-Chinese film collaboration. The reform of the Chinese film industry and the increase of multiplexes since the 1990s have advanced China's industrial institution and expanded its market size (Mao, 2002).⁶² The PRC was the third biggest film market in the world and notched a record of CN¥13.1 billion (approx. NT\$61.6 billion) in 2011 (MPAA, 2012: 5; SARFT, 2012a).⁶³ Its takings for Chinese-language films was CN¥7 billion (approx. NT\$33.3 billion), far exceeding the total of Hong Kong's and Taiwan's annual box office income (See Table 2). Furthermore, the growth rate of box office revenue between 2002 and 2011 was 1424.41% in China, whereas in Hong Kong and Taiwan, the figure was 56.93% and 73.44% respectively (see Table 2). In 2000, there was one Chinese-language film grossing over CN¥100 million at the Chinese box office whereas there have been over fifteen Chinese-language films exceeding this threshold each year since 2010 (Qi and Hua, 2000; Fan, 2011; Chen, Yiyi, 2012, 2013). It is unsurprising that regional filmmakers are eager to step into the Chinese

⁶² Document No.3 of 1993, Some Opinions on Intensifying Institutional Reform of Contemporary Film Industry, and Document No.348 of 1994, Notification of Further Intensifying Institutional Reform of Film Industry, provided local studios with opportunities to break the monopoly of Chinese Film Corporation in the film distribution business, and thereafter Chinese cinema has gradually transformed from planned economy into market economy. Hence the proclamation of them can be regarded as the beginning of the reform of modern Chinese cinema (Mao, 2002: 184), notwithstanding Chinese Film Corporation still occupies a dominant position in the production and distribution sectors of the Chinese film industry.

⁶³ China has overtaken Japan as the second biggest film market worldwide (Sandwell, 2013).

film business to seek more economic opportunities and profits in the past two decades.

China's ever-expanding film market has become significant to Taiwanese and Hong Kong filmmakers since geographical, cultural and linguistic proximity enable them to enter this big market more easily.

Table 2 Market Size of Major Chinese-Language Film Markets (2002/2010/2011)
(Source: Wang, L., 2012: 3; SARFT, 2012a; C&SD, 2013: 168; *Taiwan Cinema*, 2012)

Year Area	2002	2010	2011	Growth Rate (2002-2011)
China	CNY¥860 million (NT\$3.57 billion)	CNY¥10.17 billion (NT\$47.7 billion)	CNY¥13.11 billion (NT\$61.6 billion)	1424.41%
Hong Kong	HK\$908 million (NT\$4 billion)	HK\$1.34 billion (NT\$5.49 billion)	HK\$1.43 billion (NT\$5.41 billion)	56.93%
Taipei ⁶⁴	NT\$2,36 billion	NT\$3.09 billion	NT\$4.09 billion	73.44%

Furthermore, the increase in market size has led to the enlargement of the scale of film production. The sensational commercial and critical performance of *CTHD* and *Hero* (*Yingxiong*, dir. Zhang Yimou, 2002) directed filmmakers' attention to transnational film collaboration and the *wuxia* genre, and started the trend towards the production of "big film" (*dapian*) through pan-Chinese collaboration in the past decade.⁶⁵ The yearly production

⁶⁴ As mentioned in Introduction, Taipei is the only city to have accurate data regarding ticket sales in Taiwan because of the installation of computerised sales reporting systems. Generally, the national box office is usually estimated at two times the box office figure of Taipei, but this convention is increasingly questionable today.

⁶⁵ *Dapian*, literally meaning "big film", can be understood as blockbuster film in China. The term has often been coupled with "America" or "import" in the past (*Meiguo dapian*, *jinko dapian*), but it is also used to describe high-budget domestic production today (*Guochan dapian*). According to Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh and Darrell William Davis (2008: 48), "*Dapian* are entertainment pictures, with astounding attractions and booming consumerism; and they sell stories and ideas inclined strongly toward national glorification, as prescribed by CFG in order to find entry into the marketplace." Chris Berry and Mary Farquhar point out that *Hero* marks the absorption of "giant film" (*jupian*), or epic film, into the blockbuster model in Chinese context, and various features of the contemporary Hollywood blockbuster shown in the case of *Hero* have become characteristics of domestic big film today, including an enormous budget, specialisation in action-centred genre, reliance on visual spectacle, the Hollywood mode of financing and marketing, and a great concern with the prevention of piracy

investment of Chinese films increased from CN¥1.6 billion (approx. NT\$6.4 billion) to CN¥3.1 billion (approx. NT\$14.6 billion) from 2006 to 2010 (Wang, L., 2012: 3). In Taiwan, there were still only a few domestically-made films produced with a cost of over NT\$100 million in the 2000s, whereas there has been at least one film from China produced with a budget of over CN¥100 million (approx. NT\$470 million) each year in the past decade,⁶⁶ most of which were pan-Chinese co-productions. These facts show the steady development of the Chinese film industry and the increase of cash flow in the Chinese film business, which motivates Taiwanese and Hong Kong filmmakers to collaborate with Chinese film companies.

Moreover, the popularity of pan-Chinese co-production could be attributed to the increase in film costs. According to Mette Hjort, the high production costs and inadequate national sources of film finance could lead to “globalizing transnationalism” (2010: 21). These factors could drive filmmakers to transnationally collaborate in filmmaking, and these films could be oriented towards global appeal in order to recoup their high costs from overseas markets. In the case of Chinese-language cinema, the fierce competition from Hollywood blockbusters, usually produced with an ultra-high-budget compared to Chinese-language films, has prompted filmmakers outside of China to engage in China-centred pan-Chinese co-production to make high-budget, well-produced spectacle-driven films to appeal to regional spectators, in particular those in China, to both compete against American rivals and recover the costs. Some film companies, such as Edko Films and Media Asia from Hong Kong, MediaCorp Raintree Pictures from Singapore, and Huayi Brothers and China Film

(2006: 209-212). In general, big-budget and big-scale production and a star-studded cast are common to domestic big film in China. Chinese big film could be related to serious theme and national glory and cohesion in the past whereas entertainment value, arguably, has become a major concern for today's *dapian* with the marketisation of Chinese cinema in the new millennium.

⁶⁶ Nonetheless, two-part epic film *Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale* (*Saideke balai*, dir. Wei Te-sheng, 2011) set a record in the cost of films from Taiwan at NT\$700 million in 2011.

Group Corporation from China,⁶⁷ are key figures engaging in such an approach to production in the 21st century.

Reduction of Policy Barriers

Responding to the change in the regional industrial context, policies to reinforce transnational connections in Greater China have been formulated in related countries in the past decade.

Deregulation of film policy on film collaboration both offered economic incentives and reduced barriers to pan-Chinese film co-production. For example, Taiwanese authority's amendment of the Motion Picture Act in 2004 redefined the standards for determining "domestically-produced motion pictures", "domestic motion pictures", and "foreign motion pictures",⁶⁸ allowing a higher degree of foreign involvement in domestic film production.

Take "domestically-produced motion pictures", for example. In the past, the term referred to Chinese-language films produced, written, directed and performed by companies in and citizens of the Republic of China, or Taiwan. Today, being produced by local film companies with half of the main cast having Taiwanese nationality is one of the conditions for determining a domestically-produced film. The extension of the qualification for domestically-produced films in Taiwan allows subsidised projects to attract a higher degree of foreign involvement. Besides, the restrictions on Chinese filmmakers' and actors' filmic activities in Taiwan were loosened in 2009,⁶⁹ which also encouraged pan-Chinese film

⁶⁷ The stated-owned China Film Group Corporation is the largest film studio in China currently. Besides, Huayi Brothers Media Corporation and Bona Film Group are two major private film studios in China.

⁶⁸ In Taiwan, or the Republic of China, all films can be divided into three categories, namely domestically-produced motion pictures (*Guochan dianyingpian*), domestic motion pictures (*Benguo dianyingpian*), and foreign motion pictures (*Waiguo dianyingpian*), in accordance with the Motion Picture Act.

⁶⁹ In Accordance with the Regulations Governing Permission for Mainland Area Actors to Participate in the Production of Domestically-produced Motion Pictures or Domestic Motion Pictures in Taiwan enforced in 2007 (*Taiwan Cinema*, 2007), two Chinese actors cast in a Domestically-produced Motion Picture (*Guochan dianyingpian*) or a Domestic Motion Picture (*Benguo dianyingpian*) could be allowed to work in Taiwan for six months. However, the promulgation of the Regulations Governing Permission for Mainland Area Film Industry

collaboration in Taiwan cinema. Such changes in policy not only demonstrate that transnational collaboration has become a significant phenomenon in contemporary filmmaking, they show that it is necessary to adopt a transnational perspective in promoting the national film industry.

Furthermore, the signing of economic treaties between Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China has contributed to the integration of film industries and markets within Greater China. The implementation of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) in 2003 has given Hong Kong filmmakers the privilege of looser restraints on the exportation of Hong Kong films to China, Hong Kong companies' investment in the Chinese film industry, and Hong Kong–Chinese co-production. This is not the place to analyse CEPA's impact on Hong Kong and Chinese cinemas; however, the privileges Hong Kong filmmakers enjoy also give Taiwanese filmmakers a launching pad for entering PRC's film market. CEPA enables Taiwanese filmmakers to distribute their films to the PRC by cooperating with Hong Kong companies. For example, by collaborating with Hong Kong's EDKO and Sil-Metropole Organisation, *Secret (Buneng shuo de, mimi)*, dir. Jay Chou, 2007) successfully entered China's market although the film was made in Taiwan, directed and produced by Taiwanese talents, and performed by Taiwanese actors.⁷⁰

Afterwards, the implementation of the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) by the PRC and Taiwan in 2011 enabled the import of films from Taiwan into China,

Professionals to Participate in the Production of Domestically-produced Motion Pictures or Domestic Motion Pictures in Taiwan in 2009 has eased restrictions. According to the new regulation, a film can apply for Taiwanese work permit for its Chinese actors/staff when it meets the below conditions: the number of Chinese actors playing principal roles in a Domestically-produced Motion Picture does not exceed one-third of the total number of the film's main cast or the total number of Taiwanese actors performing the film's major roles. The regulation also stated that, in a Domestic Motion Picture, the number of Chinese actors is not more than one-third of the total number of the film's main cast, and the number of Chinese film crew is not more than one-third of the film's total film crew (*Taiwan Cinema*, 2011).

⁷⁰ *Secret* was all filmed in Taiwan, starred by Taiwanese actors, and mainly financed and produced by Hong Kong's EDKO and Chou's Black & White Keys Productions. However, the participation of China state-owned Hong Kong company Sil-Metropole Organisation played a critical role in helping the film be screened in China.

including transnational co-productions, to be exempt from China's quota system. There were only three films theatrically screened in China with the label of "Taiwan cinema" before 2010 (Tseng, 2010).⁷¹ ECFA increases the possibility of the Taiwanese film industry selling domestic films to China. According to the GIO, five films from Taiwan were released theatrically in China in 2011, generating around NT\$500 million in total. In addition, nine Taiwanese–Chinese co-productions drew NT\$1.8 billion from China's market in 2011 (Lü, 2012). Moreover, not only could co-productions raise finance from the Chinese-speaking world, but the agreement could also attract foreign companies to finance Taiwan's films since they could yield a return from the mainland market owing to the current lower trade barriers between Taiwan and China. That is, Taiwan can serve as a launching pad for entering the Chinese market. The development of a Taiwanese–Chinese–Japanese animation co-production on Sun Yat-sen is an example (Chiu, L., 2011). In short, policy deregulation and the signing of economic treaties enhance the regional coherence and reduce obstacles to cross-border economic activities and cultural exchange in Greater China, which provides a precondition for the development of pan-Chinese co-production and intra-Asian co-production.

Regional Cultural Imagination and Pan-Chinese Film Co-Production

In terms of content, the selected themes of transnational collaboration are often used as common ground between various national cultures in order to appeal to multinational markets. For the Chinese-speaking world, the all-encompassing concept of Chineseness can be used to refer to people's linkage and belonging to China in ethnic, cultural, political or geographical terms. In this regard, Tu Wei-ming proposes the concept of "cultural China" to go beyond

⁷¹ Three films were *Legend of the Sacred Stone* (*Sheng shi chuanshuo*, dir. Chris Huang, 2000), *The Cabbie* (*Yunzhuanshou zhi lian*, dir. Chang hua-kun and Chen Yiwen, 2000), and *Cape No.7*.

ethnic, geographical, political and linguistic barriers and enrich the connotation of Chineseness, emphasising common awareness, cultural roots and identities. He attempts to empower the periphery and contends that the Chinese diaspora might “assume an effective role in creatively constructing a new vision of Chineseness that is more in tune with Chinese history and in sympathetic resonance with Chinese culture” (1994: 34). Whilst Tu’s claim challenges the mainland-centred discourses, it is still implicitly China rooted. Ien Ang criticises the idea as “a move that is driven by a desire for, and motivated by, another kind of centrism, this time along national cultural lines” (2001: 42). That is, the concept is developed on the discourses on Chineseness and unable to conceptualise the complexity of diasporic experiences from a more comprehensive perspective. Nevertheless, Chineseness or cultural China could be perceived as a collective imaginary space beyond political and spatial divisions where Chinese-speaking people with diverse backgrounds can inhabit and gather together. It serves as imagined links connecting Chinese-language film industries and markets together.

In other words, transnational film collaboration between different Chinese film industries could be motivated by economic incentives, and shared cultural imagination and heritage between filmmakers and audiences in the region provide a critical basis for the collaboration. Hjort considers affinitive transnationalism, a type of cinematic transnationalism, is developed from “a concept of ethnic, linguistic and cultural affinity that was believed to make cross-border collaboration particularly smooth and therefore cost-efficient, pleasurable and effective” (2010: 17). The commonality and proximity are essential for the creation of pan-Chinese co-production today, and some genres, such as *wuxia* and historical epic, have become popular genres of high-budget pan-Chinese co-productions after the commercial success of *CTHD* and *Hero*. These are genres that regional filmmakers are skilled at and which spectators have been familiar with for a long period. Besides, these films

can be made in a spectacle-driven and special-effects-heavy way, which enables them to transcend cultural and linguistic barriers. Furthermore, these themes are associated with cultural heritage and historical memories shared by audiences in diverse Chinese-speaking regions. Therefore they could be viewed as a cultural connection between different Chinese-speaking markets and could make the film regionally appealing.

As mentioned in Chapter One, *wuxia* is a quintessentially national genre capable of contributing to the construction of Chinese cultural identity and the imagination of ancient China, *wuxia* stories usually being set in ancient China to “accentuate the qualities of myth and magic” (Liu Tianci, cited in Teo, 2009: 6). Although *wuxia* genre had occupied a critical role in film production of Taiwan cinema in the 1960s and 1970s,⁷² it went into decline thereafter owing to various factors, such as overproduction (Lu, 1998: 236-237), constraints on the production value imposed by smaller production scale (ibid.:137-138) and growing threats from the rapidly growing Hong Kong commercial cinema since the 1970s (ibid.: 202-204). This is not the place to account for the decline of Taiwan *wuxia* cinema, but a lack of production activities may be said to cause the Taiwanese film industry to lose relevant technical expertise regarding *wuxia* film production, which also resulted in Ang Lee’s collaboration with Hong Kong filmmakers in *CTHD*. Due to a shortage of finance, film sets and shooting locations, required know-how and key production resources, such as ancient costumes and props, it has become rather difficult for the Taiwanese film industry to solely develop a *wuxia* project capable of competing with big-scale, spectacle-driven and well-produced *wuxia* films from China and Hong Kong in the marketplace, in particular after the success of high-production-value *wuxia* films like *CTHD* and *Hero* in the early 2000s.

⁷² According to Lu (1998: 452-453), there were 317 Taiwan *wuxia* films produced from 1960 to 1979, second only to melodrama films during the same period.

Reign of Assassins has been the only classical *wuxia* film directed by Taiwanese filmmakers since *CTHD*, and transnational connections occupy a vital role in its development. The film was directed and scripted by Su Chao-pin,⁷³ and John Woo's Hollywood-based Lion Rock Productions was in charge of its production. According to Su (Wang, Y., 2010), the project was also proposed by Lion Rock Productions; the company invited Su to develop an action film starring Michelle Yeoh, and then he transformed it into a *wuxia* genre. The film was backed by companies in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, in particular Beijing Galloping Horse Films (China) and Media Asia Films (HK), and filmed in both China and Taiwan with a cast and crew from Hong Kong, China and Taiwan alongside Korean star Jung Woo-sung and Japanese costume designer Emi Wada. Since the film was set in pre-modern China and Jung was cast as a Chinese-speaking character, it is apparent that Chinese-speaking spectators were its target audience, whilst the appearance of Yeoh and Jung reveals filmmakers' wish to promote the film to other Asian markets. Like a number of *wuxia* films after *CTHD* and *Hero*, the production of *Reign of Assassins* relied heavily on resources from Hong Kong and China, including finance, technical expertise, manpower, stars, breathtaking landscapes and large-scale film studios; and the vast Chinese market is critical for such a high-budget spectacle-driven film to recoup its costs. It is arguable that Hjort's claim—"The integral link between high budgets and the need for maximal reach and appeal makes globalizing transnationalism" (2010: 22)—reflects the strong link between contemporary *wuxia* production and pan-Chinese co-production in the 21st century.⁷⁴

⁷³ Su Chao-bin is also the director and screenwriter of local hit film *Silk* and the screenwriter of a number of films, such as *Double Vision*.

⁷⁴ Although *Reign of Assassins* aimed to appeal to regional audiences, the film performed unsatisfactory in Asian film market despite receiving some good praise.⁷⁴ It took merely NT\$ 3.2 million at the Taipei box office (Wang, C., 2011a: 62), and its box office performance in China was also disappointing (Yu, 2010). As for the Korean film market, the film drew 312,334 people to the box office, far less than the top Korean film *The Man from Nowhere* (*Ajeossi*, dir. Lee Jeong-beom, 2010), scoring 6.2 million admissions. See Korean Film Council: <http://www.kobis.or.kr/kobis/business/main/main.do>

As for historical epic films, *Empire of Silver* (*Baiyin diguo*, dir. Christina Yao, 2009) could be viewed as a case demonstrating the significance of Chineseness to pan-Chinese co-production. Inspired by historical events, *Empire of Silver* tries to proclaim the spirit and culture of Shanxi merchants through a merchant family's history and his reaction to the radical political and social transformation in China during the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1912).⁷⁵ The project was proposed and backed by Taiwanese tycoon Terry Gou in 2004, a second generation mainlander in Taiwan whose ancestral home is Shanxi; and US-based Taiwanese director Christina Yao and Taiwanese producer Peggy Chiao, both of whose ancestral homes are also Shanxi, were commissioned to make the film (Yu, 2009: 67). That is, diasporic sponsor's and filmmakers' connections with China at ethnic and cultural levels motivated, and assisted them to reinvent an imagination of the turn of the 20th century China to spectators. Like *CTHD*, *Empire of Silver* was created by descendants of Chinese diaspora from Taiwan. Ang Lee exploited his cultural roots to create a fictional *jianghu*, or a romantic, imagined ancient China in *CTHD*. By contrast, the text of *Empire of Silver* is embedded in a historical context and attempted to recreate a historical allegory.

Whilst *Empire of Silver* mainly focuses on familial succession and ideological conflicts, its creation, arguably, implied a diasporic desire for root-seeking. A voice-over in the opening scenes of the film intimated the nostalgia for the homeland: "China, the Middle Kingdom, my home town, where my dreams drift between aches and tenderness." Furthermore, although the film was financed and developed by Taiwanese, it was filmed in China through pan-Chinese co-production. The majority of the creative crew and major cast of the project were from different areas of Greater China, and some filmmakers from outside Greater China, including Japan, Australia, Thailand, America and Europe, were also involved. In addition to

⁷⁵ Shanxi is a province located in Northern China. Shanxi merchants probably rose during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) and had occupied the central position in both internal and external trade of China for centuries. They had also dominated China's money transfer business between the middle 19th century and early 20th century.

commercial incentives, this case demonstrates the influence of ethnic and cultural affinity on the development of pan-Chinese co-production. *Empire of Silver* is a film from Taiwan, a diasporic film made by diasporic Chinese, and a pan-Chinese co-production aiming at Chinese-speaking spectators.⁷⁶

The ethnic and cultural connections Taiwanese filmmakers have with cultural China contribute to not only the production of films related to ancient China, such as *Reign of Assassins* and *Empire of Silver*, but also the development of films associated with modern experiences, for example, *Love (Ai)*, dir. Doze Niu Chen-zer, (2012). *Love* is a high-budget Taiwanese–Chinese co-production depicting diverse types of love affairs in the modern day. The film was co-funded by Doze Niu’s Honto Production and China’s Huayi Brothers and was primarily produced by Honto Production with Taiwanese crew. As for the cast, Zhao Wei, a Chinese actress with regional stardom, co-starred with several Taiwanese actors in this film. Moreover, the film was mostly filmed in Taipei, but one of its storylines is set in Beijing. Certainly, economic factors contributed to the development of this pan-Chinese co-production. Niu admitted that he would never spend NT\$180 million making a romance film merely aimed at the local market (Zheng, 2012). However, Niu’s personal ethnic background, cultural identity, and nostalgia for homeland also motivated him to engage in pan-Chinese co-production. Niu, a Taiwan-born Manchu person, can be viewed as a second generation mainlander in Taiwan, for his father moved from Beijing to Taiwan in 1949. In this sense, his deep feeling for both two cities, Taipei, the city he lived in, and Beijing, the imagined homeland, was a reason prompting this second generation of diaspora to make this film (ibid.).

⁷⁶ However, *Empire of Silver* underperformed in the regional film market as a whole. The film was ranked fifth among Chinese-language films of 2009 at the Taipei box office, taking in NT\$11.9 million (Wang, C., 2010b: 80) whereas its theatrical intake at the Chinese and Hong Kong box offices was depressing, grossing around CN¥22.3 million (approx. NT\$104.8 million) and US\$19,036 (approx. NT\$609,152) respectively (Wu, 2009; *Box Office Mojo*, 2013c).

Although diasporic themes such as displacement and alienation are not tackled in *Love*, the director's diasporic desire for root-seeking is manifested in some plots of this romance movie. In *Love*, two Manchu people, Taiwanese businessman Mark (played by Mark Jau) and Chinese single mother Jin Xiaoye (played by Zhao Wei), begin a cross-strait romance in Beijing due to Mark's root-searching journey. Furthermore, Niu's real relatives in China appeared in the scene about a gathering of the Manchurian Association in Beijing (ibid.). In other words, Mark's journey of home seeking is also the diasporic director's self-projection and homecoming journey, both on screen and in the real life. However, Beijing is a "homeland" to which Niu, as a second generation of diaspora, had never been, and his nostalgia for and imagination of the city were arguably inherited from his father. Accordingly, whilst the script was mainly written by Taiwanese screenwriter Tseng Li Ting and Niu, the participation of Chinese screenwriter Wang Qinan in scriptwriting enabled the film to give a more realistic portrayal of life in Beijing and helped the film enter the alien film market (Lin, 2012). As a whole, *Love* is a successful case of Taiwanese–Chinese co-production in terms of commercial performance. The film grossed NT\$74.7 million and CN¥136.6 million (around NT\$636.3 million) at the Taipei and Chinese box offices respectively, and is one of few films from Taiwan succeeding in both Taiwan's and China's film markets (*Atmovies*, 2012a; SARFT, 2012b).

Intraregional Series Project

Chineseness is also associated with the development of pan-Chinese film series projects. Key figures of Chinese-language cinema, such as Peggy Chiao, Andy Lau and Eric Tsang, have launched film series projects to assemble filmmakers from diverse Chinese-speaking areas under the banner of an imagined Chinese-language region. The strategy is both culturally-oriented and economically-oriented. The imagination of cultural China supports the

development of these pan-Chinese projects, and vice versa. The production scale of projects under these schemes is normally small in relation to transnational commercial projects, and their themes are relatively auteur-oriented, which may foster cinematic culture within the region. Furthermore, these regional projects are composed of different local films, and therefore they may present both local and regional cultures and social features simultaneously. Additionally, they attempt to construct a regional imagination and image by integrating and linking different films together. For example, Peggy Chiao, a noted Taiwanese film producer and critic, collaborated with Pyramide International from France to launch “The Tales of Three Cities” at the turn of the new millennium. The series tried to map out changes in contemporary Chinese societies through six urban stories in three Chinese-speaking areas, including Taiwan, Hong Kong and China (Davis and Yeh, 2008: 100-101).⁷⁷

Economic considerations are also behind the development of these projects. For Davis and Yeh, Peggy Chiao’s model “seeks efficiencies of scale and audience consolidation in the region” (ibid.: 100). The approach underscores the regional flavour and cultural distinctiveness contained in a group of films. Accordingly, the “region” can be employed as a positioning concept of creating the image of these films in the minds of audiences and as a brand name with which to promote all of them in both local and international markets, which could contribute to the development of these projects, ranging from financing to consumption. According to Chiao:

Because we have six products, we can get a cheaper deal for production expenses. This makes it easier to get investment from overseas. If you say you have a package of six movies about the changes in Chinese societies, it’s more appealing to foreign investors. (Yu, 2001)

In addition, this approach could arouse the interest of a viewer who likes one film belonging to the regional film series project in other films belonging to this project. That is, it generates the synergy to encourage overall consumption of the whole project.

⁷⁷ However, only four films were finished eventually.

Moreover, the launch of regional schemes can be an alternative production strategy. Like Taiwan's CMPC's newcomer policy in the early 1980s, these intraregional series projects offer young talents with limited resources to create their own works. For example, "Focus: First Cuts", launched by Andy Lau's Focus Films in 2005, offered HK\$25 million (approx. NT\$105 million) to six young filmmakers from diverse Chinese-speaking areas to make films with HD production equipment (Zu, 2006; Focus Films, 2009). The careers of some filmmakers, such as China's Ning Hao and Taiwan's Lee Yun-chan, have been aided by the scheme. In this sense, pan-Chinese film series projects could represent the dialogue between different cinematic cultures, negotiation between local and regional cinemas, and an examination of a diversified Chineseness. Rather than show a homogeneous regional image, these schemes can be viewed as a mosaic of cinematic cultures under the banner of Chineseness. In this sense, Chineseness could be diversified and polycentric.

Intraregional Co-Production in Taiwan Cinema

Pan-Chinese Co-Production and Taiwan Cinema

It is without a doubt that the rapid growth of the Chinese film market and industry in the past decade has provided a strong incentive for Taiwanese filmmakers, together with other Chinese-language filmmakers, to devote themselves to pan-Chinese co-production. Mainland China is the biggest Chinese-speaking territory worldwide, and the Hong Kong film industry occupied a leading position in Chinese-language filmmaking in the late 20th century. Consequently, it seems natural that cooperative practice between the Hong Kong and Chinese film industries plays a central role in transnational cinematic exchange within Chinese-speaking region as the PRC opened up, in particular after the Hong Kong handover and the implementation of CEPA. Although the Taiwanese film industry plays a relatively minor role

in such activities caused by factors like the ambiguous cross-strait relationship, smaller market size and weaker film production capability of Taiwan cinema, various types of transnational connections have existed between Taiwan cinema and other Chinese cinemas currently in addition to some pan-Chinese co-productions developed by Taiwanese filmmakers mentioned previously. These connections are related to both filmmakers' engagement in other industrial institutions and co-production of film content. They also reflect the power relationship in the current regional cinematic system.

Cosmopolitan Cinematic Elite: Chen Kuo-fu

In the 21st century, some Taiwanese filmmakers have shifted their focus to China, and their filmic activities are directly associated with the Chinese film industry and market. Chen Kuo-fu is a notable example of Taiwanese film elites integrated into the Chinese film industry. As mentioned previously, Chen served as the producer of Columbia Pictures Film Production Asia (CPFPA) in the early 2000s. During the period, not only did he direct Hollywood–Taiwanese co-production, *Double Vision*, and produce another CPFPA's Taiwan film *20 30 40*, he also collaborated with Chinese film directors and companies, including Feng Xiaogang and Huayi Brothers, to make *Big Shot's Funeral* and *Warriors of Heaven and Earth* for CPFPA, which enabled him to establish a connection with the Chinese film industry (Xiao, 2010). Afterwards, Chen participated in several of the Huayi Brothers' box office hits and was employed as an executive producer by Huayi Brothers after 2006.⁷⁸ Between 2006 and 2012, Chen directed one and produced nine Chinese films grossing over CN¥100 million (approx. NT\$ 468.8 million) at the Chinese box office (Yang and Sun, 2013). A number of films he produced set the box office record for Chinese-language films at China's box office,

⁷⁸ Chen Kuo-fu left his job and formed his own company, CKF Pictures, in Beijing in the early 2013 (Yang and Sun, 2013).

for example, *If You Are the One* (*Feicheng wurao*, dir. Feng Xiaogang, 2008), *Aftershock* (*Tangshan dadizhen*, dir. Feng Xiaogang, 2010) and *Painted Skin: The Resurrection* (*Huapi II: Zhuansheng shu*, dir. Wu Ershan, 2012). These facts exhibit Chen's special status in contemporary Chinese cinema.

Thus, Chen can be regarded as a cosmopolitan cinematic elite migrating from Taiwan to China and becoming a key figure in Chinese cinema. As a chief production executive of Huayi Brothers, Chen also showed his influence on the industrial structure. Although Huayi Brothers began to engage in film business in 1998, its filmic activities, like other production companies in China at that time, was more like a director-centred system. However, Chen has driven Huayi Brothers to "move towards Hollywood-style 'collective creativity'" and the producer-driven system (Ma, 2010), and thus he is hailed as "the mastermind behind Huayi Brothers" ("*Chen Kuo-fu, Mastermind*", 2008). Feng Xiaogang, one of the most illustrious directors of Chinese commercial cinema, said that "the position of producer didn't even exist in mainland China's film industry until Chen introduced the concept, but now people are starting to appreciate the advantages of having a producer" (Teng, 2009a). That is, Chen is the pivotal figure not only in making Huayi Brothers one of the biggest private film companies in China but also in contributing to the progress of the cinematic institution of Chinese cinema. In this regard, the rapid development of the Chinese film industry in the past decade can be partly owed to the Taiwanese filmmaker's involvement.

Chen's case exhibits the increasing transnational migratory flows between Chinese-language cultural industries in the globalisation process, and the growth of Chinese cinema has prompted those Taiwanese elites with particular expertise to join its film industry. Currently, apart from capital shifts, intraregional migration and technology transfer are becoming more common between Chinese cinemas. For example, Taiwanese professionals serve as executives in several departments of Huayi Brothers, such as the marketing sector,

according to Chen (Chang, 2009a). The phenomenon shows the industrial integration within Chinese cinemas and echoes Appadurai's idea of ethnoscapas, constituted by moving individuals and groups, and technoscapas, constituted by high-speed transnational transfer of technology in the process of cultural globalisation (1996: 33-34). Moreover, Taiwanese talents' entry into the Chinese film industry could enhance Taiwan cinema in reverse. In the past few years, Chen has assisted Taiwanese filmmakers in engaging in pan-Chinese co-production by virtue of his position. For example, thanks to Chen's support, the budget of Taiwanese director Tom Lin's *Starry Starry Night* (*Xing kong*, 2011) quadrupled to around NT\$100 million because of the investment of China's Huayi Brothers (Cheng, 2011). In this sense, Taiwanese filmmakers' integration into regional cinema could smooth the path for subsequent Taiwanese filmmakers' involvement in intraregional collaboration.

Making Movies for Chinese-Speaking Audiences: Chu Yen-ping

In contrast to Chen's deep integration into the industrial institution of Chinese cinema, Chu Yen-ping maintains his directorial career by producing films aimed at regional spectators, particularly those in China. Although having made films in a variety of genres, Chu is particularly well-known for slapstick comedies with local flavour and broad farcical humour. Chu was a principal director of Taiwan commercial cinema during the 1980s and 1990s. Between 1995 and 1999, six of the seven domestically-produced films grossing over NT\$5 million at the Taipei box office were directed by Chu (Liang, 1996: 70-74; Dan, 1997: 35-39; Wang, C., 1998: 93-100; 1999: 65-69; 2000b: 78-81).⁷⁹ Moreover, during the early 1990s, Chu collaborated with Hong Kong filmmakers and stars to produce films targeting regional audiences. For example, *Island of Fire* (*Huoshao dao*, dir. Chu Yen-ping, 1991) featured a

⁷⁹ Chu Yen-ping's *China Dragon* (*Zhongguo long*, 1995) was the only domestically-produced film earning more than NT\$10 million at the Taipei box office in the second half of the 1990s.

number of Hong Kong stars, including Jackie Chan and Andy Lau. However, Chu gradually lost his local audiences after the mid-1990s partly because they had grown tired of his formulaic films. Chu's *A Marvellous Detective* (*Ren bushi wo shade*, aka *Miaotan shenwei*, 2004) and *One Stone Two Birds* (*Yishi erniao*, 2005) only drew NT\$3,960 and NT\$25,510 respectively at the Taipei box office (Wang, C.: 2005, 2006: 238). However, despite abysmal consumption in Taiwan, *One Stone Two Birds*, Chu's first film released in China, received around NT\$60 million at China's box office according to Chu (Tang, 2005).

Thus, it is understandable that after *One Stone Two Birds*, Chu Yen-ping decided to collaborate with Chinese-speaking professionals to pool regional resources and produce films catering to the taste of Chinese audiences. All Chu's subsequent four films were given the Domestic Film Guidance Fund by the Taiwanese government, but they were also backed by film companies from other Chinese-speaking areas. Most of them were also filmed in both China and Taiwan and produced by multinational crew. In order to encourage regional consumption, Chu cast stars from diverse Chinese-speaking areas in his films, particularly those having great box office appeal in China, for example, Jay Chou (Taiwan), Eric Tsang (Hong Kong), and Zhao Benshan and Xiao Shenyang (China). Although his formulaic comedies have been described as "bad movie" (Ma, 2010; Yu and Yang, 2011), some of them enjoyed decent popularity in the region, in particular in China. Two of them, namely *Just Call Me Nobody* (*Daxiao jianghu*, 2010) and *New Perfect Two* (*Xin tiansheng yidui*, 2012), grossed CN¥153.9 million and CN¥52.6 million at China's box office respectively (SARFT, 2011, 2012b), and most of the theatrical revenue of these films came from China rather than Taiwan (SARFT, 2011, 2012b; Fang, 2009; "Films Released", 2008; Wang, C., 2010b: 79; 2011a: 61; 2012b: 75; *Atmovies*, 2012b). The case of Chu represents a strategy of "made by Taiwanese, recouped from Chinese market" in Taiwan cinema. The reconfiguration of political and economic landscapes in the region has facilitated capital, technologies and

human resources to move across boundaries. Nations still matter, but the filmic activities of such filmmakers are gradually based upon a regional imagination.

Transnational and Transmedial Stardom: Jay Chou

The popularity of Chu Yen-ping's films in the Greater China region depends greatly on the appearance of multinational stars, in particular those with transnational stardom status. The box office appeal of stars in the respective investor's market considerably affects transnational financing and consumption of the given project. Anne Ciecko echoes this idea, that contemporary star-studded Chinese-language blockbusters can consolidate screen talents from diverse Chinese-speaking areas since these pan-Chinese co-productions are in Mandarin and usually set in pre-modern China, thereby allowing them to "inhabit what Gary G. Wu [sic] has called the 'Sinascap', an intersected nexus of transnational production and reception" (2011: 185). That is, transnational stardom could be regarded as an intersection between different national cinemas; and the development of transnational collaboration is encouraged by transnational stardom, and vice versa. Ciecko (ibid.: 186) notes that Hong Kong media celebrities' multi-platform crossover has been common for decades because of the blurred boundaries between different fields of Hong Kong consumer-oriented popular cultural business. A number of popular Hong Kong stars, such as Chow Yun-fat and the "Four Heavenly Kings", have developed multi-media careers, including music, TV and cinema, thereby allowing them to achieve regional stardom with the transnational circulation of cultural goods and to become box office guarantees within the Chinese-speaking world (Ciecko, 2011: 186).⁸⁰

⁸⁰ "Four Heavenly Kings" refers to four top figures of Cantopop in the 1990s, namely Jacky Cheung, Andy Lau, Leon Lai and Aaron Kwok. All of them were popular in various fields of popular culture, including music, television, cinema, and so on, and achieved regional stardom since the early 1990s.

Likewise, a number of Taiwanese stars have established stardom through transmedia crossover. For example, many local stars featured in Chu Yen-ping's films of the 1990s achieved national stardom in Taiwan's music industry, such as Takeshi Kaneshiro. Their crossovers, along with the development of regional film collaboration and regional circulation of cultural products, allowed them to gain both transmedial and transnational stardom within the Chinese-speaking world. The development of transmedial stardom has been made possible by a celebrity culture. As Irving Rein and others claim, the celebrity industry cannot operate without the support and coordination of various sub-industries, including the entertainment and communication industries (2006: 46-47). In this sense, star image itself must be cross-platform and continuously constructed through complicated manipulation. This echoes Richard Dyer's idea, that "star images are always extensive, multimedia, intertextual" (2004: 3). Transnational multisystem stardom contributes to the production and reception of star-studded Chinese-language films in the new millennium, and the participation of these performers in these projects in turn enhances their own regional and multi-platform stardom and star images.

Jay Chou is considered one of the few Taiwanese stars who have regional box office appeal. Beginning his career in 2000, Chou soon established himself as one of the most popular Chinese pop stars and celebrated songwriters and topped the 2012 Forbes China celebrity list (*ForbesChina*, 2012).⁸¹ He made a crossover to cinema with his film debut in Hong Kong hit movie *Initial D* (*Touwenzi D*, dir. Andrew Lau and Alan Mak, 2005). Afterwards, he was cast in the lead in various pan-Chinese co-productions, including *Curse of the Golden Flower* (*Mancheng jindai huangjinjia*, dir. Zhang Yimou, 2006) and several of Chu Yen-ping's pan-Chinese co-productions. In 2011, Chou made his Hollywood debut in

⁸¹ *Forbes China Celebrity 100* surveys the popularity and income of Greater China leaders in movies, sports, media and music every year. The list has consisted of Chinese celebrities born outside mainland China since 2010. Chou ranked second in both 2010 and 2011.

The Green Hornet (Michel Gondry, 2011). In addition, Chou's directorial debut *Secret*, a Taiwanese–Hong Kong co-production, in which he also played the lead, performed well in the regional film market and in 2007 was ranked in the annual top ten list in all three major Chinese-language film markets (Wang, C., 2008: 131; “*Review of Mainland*”, 2007; “*Category Three Movie*”, 2007). Chou's background also influenced the production of these projects. His instrumental music performance is a highlight of *Secret*, and theme songs of all his Chinese-language films were performed or composed by Chou. His music videos also referenced these films. Not only did Chou's cultural capital contribute to the development of these projects by his acting and composing theme music, but his stardom was manipulated to appeal to his fans transmedially and transnationally. On the other hand, these facts also show the development of Chou's multi-platform career and the creation of his transnational transmedial stardom led by regionalisation of Asian popular cultural industries. In this light, transnational transmedial stardom makes stars the nexus through which to network with different cinemas in the region, and makes them the critical element in developing intraregional film collaboration.

Transnational Casting in Chinese-Language Production

Because of the regionalisation of Asian cinemas and the growth of the Chinese film industry, an increasing number of non-Chinese-speaking Asian stars have appeared in Chinese-language films. Owing to the wide circulation of Asian popular cultural goods in the past two decades, many Asian stars have achieved regional stardom. To cast these stars in films can encourage the involvement of foreign funds and talents, and vice versa. As to the characterisation and transnational casting, it is arguable that commercial consideration deconstructs and reconstructs the link between characters and performers in terms of national identity. Wei Ti (2011: 206-207) notes that multinational casts can be employed in the film in

three ways. Firstly, actors' nationality/ethnicity can be retained by incorporating their trans-cultural and trans-ethnic factors into the narrative. Secondly, identity issues can be dodged by setting stories in ambiguous time/space. Thirdly, actors can play roles with nationalities different from their own by the aid of dubbing. All three types can be found in pan-Chinese film co-productions. For example, Korean actress Kim So Yeun acts as a Korean slave in the Hong Kong film *Seven Swords* (*Qi jian*, dir. Tsui Hark, 2005); Hiroyuki Sanada (Japan) co-starred with Jang Dong-gun (South Korea) in the *wuxia*/historical epic *The Promise* (*Wuji*, dir. Chen Kaige, 2005). John Woo's Chinese-language two-part epic *Red Cliff* (*Chibi*, dir. John Woo, 2008/2009), which became the second highest-selling foreign-language film in Japan in 2008 and 2009 respectively (Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan, 2012a; 2012b), featured Takeshi Kaneshiro and Shidou Nakamura. However, as Song Hwee Lim (2011b: 27) points out, "The expectation of linguistic authenticity among East Asian audiences is usually so high that any hint of linguistic impurity is deeply frowned upon." For example, whilst the story of *The Promise* is set in a mythical and ambiguous time and space, Japanese and Korean actors' Mandarin dialogue drew unintended laughter from Chinese-speaking audiences (ibid.: 28). Linguistic translatability is still an unavoidable matter for intra-Asian casting.

Intra-Asian Co-Production in Taiwan

In addition, the popularity of transnational casting is associated with the development of intra-Asian film collaboration. As mentioned before, intra-Asian film co-production has been common in Chinese-speaking cinema since the mid-20th century, and many Hong Kong–Japanese co-productions have been made. With regard to intra-Asian co-production in Taiwan cinema, the development of Taiwan art cinema in the 1990s, particularly Hou Hsiao-hsien's filmmaking, was supported by Japanese film companies; however, intra-Asian

commercial film co-productions from Taiwan were relatively few. According to Li Ya-mei (2002: 34-36), there were over thirty Hong Kong films supported by multinational Asian financiers, cast and crew between 1996 and 2002, excluding pan-Chinese collaboration and Hong Kong film talents' participation in Asian films. By contrast, the number of pan-Asian co-productions from Taiwan was fewer than ten during the same period, and most of them were made by acclaimed auteurs (ibid.: 37). In the new millennium, there have been an increasing number of commercial films from Taiwan produced through intra-Asian collaboration. For example, Japanese actor Yōsuke Eguchi starred in *Silk*; Korean film company Ei21 funded and Korean actress Yoo Ha Na starred in *Exit No.6 (Liu hao chukou, dir. Lin Yu-hsien, 2006)*. *The Fatality (Juehunyin, dir. Kuang Sheng et al., 2008)* was co-funded, co-directed and co-produced by Taiwanese and Thai filmmakers, and starred Taiwanese, Thai and Hong Kong actors. Transnational connections could be found in the financing, casting, production, content, or consumption of these films. The phenomenon reveals not only Taiwanese filmmakers' efforts to revitalise the local film industry but also the development of regionalisation in East Asian cinemas.

Arguably, Wei's first type of transnational casting is more common in intra-Asian film co-productions from Taiwan. Roles of these films may contain multilingual or multinational backgrounds, and stories can be related to transnational experiences. A number of these projects were filmed in various Asian countries, and multiple Asian languages were used. The choice of whether to retain actors' national identities in the narrative is associated with complex practical considerations, such as themes, performers' personality traits, authenticity of performances, sources of film finance, production factors, and audience reception. The decision is linked to the power relationship between stakeholders in the production process. Moreover, the multinational cast reflects the growing intraregional cross-border cultural flows and regionalisation in Asia today. Borrowing from Appadurai's idea of global scapes,

Eva Tsai (2005: 105) proposes the concept of starscape to expound the phenomenon of transnational celebrity in Asia and argues that transnational stardom is associated with multiple transmedial intertextualities and the formation of multiple, flexible and hybrid imaginations in the age of globalisation. On the one hand, the formation of transnational celebrities in Asia demonstrates the integration of popular cultures in the region. On the other, the multinational intertextualities indicate the disjunctive relationship between different cultural contexts in the region. The increase in cross-border trade, travel, information exchange and a variety of activities has complicated the construction of star images and meanings. Besides, transnational casts might be associated with the mutual construction between performers' and characters' images, the interaction between actors of different nationalities, the negotiation between different languages and between different cultures, and the dialogue between multinational casts and various markets. The production, consumption and imagination presented through the text in pan-Asian co-production, in particular intra-Asian co-production, exhibit a composite and heterogeneous picture.

Take, for example, Su Chao-pin's *Silk*. The 2006 intra-Asian co-production was sponsored by Hong Kong and Taiwanese companies, particularly Taiwan's CMC Entertainment, and was the highest-budget film made in Taiwan at that time.⁸² Su admitted that entering the Asian market was a primary reason for the transnational casting of *Silk*, and so a multinational cast and crew were assembled (CMC Entertainment and Unit 9 Pictures, 2006: 58-61). Most of the filming locations of the project were in Taipei, but its crew members came from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, Australia and Malaysia. As for the cast, the film featured Yōsuke Eguchi, a Japanese star renowned in East Asia, as a Japanese scientist; and Chang Chen, a Taiwanese actor enjoying some transnational stardom, as a Taiwanese

⁸² The film was claimed to be the highest-budget film from Taiwan at a cost of NT\$200 million, surpassing *Double Vision* (Huang, Lin and Ai, 2006). However, according to Su (He and Wang, 2010), its film cost was around NT\$150 million, slightly lower than *Double Vision*.

detective. To cast multi-language actors with regional box office appeal was decisive in making the film an intra-Asian film co-production targeting regional film markets. In fact, the protagonist Eguchi played was a Taiwanese scientist in Su's original screenplay (Su, 2005). It can be argued that Su's intention of developing the project into a film catering for Asian viewers affected both content and production of *Silk*.

A multinational cast allowed transnational connections to be embedded in the content of *Silk*; however, transnational connections in cast and text did not help the film achieve regional success. Transnational casting led to the change of both characterisation and story of the film, and the mixed use of various languages became characteristic of the project. Although *Silk* was a film from Taiwan, the Japanese language, together with English, is widely used by most of the protagonists, including both Taiwanese and Japanese characters. Hence translingual and transnational connections are clearly manifested in the content as well as in the production of this intra-Asian co-production, and *Silk* presents an ethnic landscape constructed by multinational and multi-language individuals in the age of globalisation. Regarding its consumption, *Silk* was the highest-grossing domestic film in Taiwan in 2006 whereas its box office takings, NT\$22.4 million at the Taipei box office, were far lower than its production costs (Wang, 2007: 235). *Silk* was also theatrically released in other Chinese-speaking areas like Hong Kong. However, despite Eguchi's participation and the use of the Japanese language in the film, *Silk* has not yet been widely released in Japan, though it has been screened on some occasions, such as in the Taiwan Cinema Collection 2008 (*Cinemart*, 2008). It also has a DVD release in Japan.

Asian Talent Pool and the Taiwanese Film Industry

Furthermore, the development of intra-Asian co-production has strengthened the interconnection between Asian filmmakers and the Taiwanese film industry. This not only

consolidates the regional film industry but also enables transnational connections to be integrated into the local industrial institution. In the 21st century, many foreign film talents, together with actors, have been involved in multiple films from Taiwan. For example, part of the foreign creative talents of *Double Vision*, including Hong Kong cinematographer Arthur Wong and Sydney-based Make-up Effects Group, also participated in *Silk*. Japanese artist Taneda Yohei served as the production designer in both *Silk* and *Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale* (*Saideke balai*, dir. Wei Te-sheng, 2011, hereafter *Seediq Bale*). Korean martial arts director Yang Kil-young, the action choreographer for *Seediq Bale*, had taken part in other films from Taiwan, including *Monga* (*Mengjia*, dir. Doze Niu Chen-zer, 2010) and *Jump Ashin!* (*Fangunba! Axin*, dir. Lin Yu-hsien, 2011). These cases demonstrate the gradual formation of a transnational talent pool in Taiwan cinema, which could denote the reconstruction of the production sector of the Taiwanese film industry.

These Asian talents' engagement in Taiwan cinema is associated with local filmmakers' social networks. Su Chao-pin, the director of *Silk*, was also the scriptwriter of *Double Vision*. Huang Chih-ming served as the producer of *Double Vision*, *Silk*, and *Seediq Bale*, and had participated in the development of *Monga*. Moreover, Lee Lieh was the producer of both *Monga* and *Jump Ashin!* In this way, these films are interrelated in terms of production and exhibit a sort of genealogical relationship in Taiwan cinema. These examples reveal that the domestic production system serves as the nexus of the network enabling transnational connections to extend through Taiwan cinema. With the improvement of the Taiwanese film industry, including the more steady film output and the gradual construction of the producer system, transnational connections could be systematically integrated into the local cinematic institution. Moreover, transnational connections could multiply and proliferate along the international cinematic network and become a tie-up between Taiwan and regional cinemas. For example, Taneda Yohei was enlisted in the production of *Silk* owing to Arthur Wong's

recommendation, for they had collaborated on the Hong Kong–Japanese co-production *Sleepless Town* (*Buye cheng*, dir. Li Chi Ngai, 1998) (CMC Entertainment and Unit 9 Pictures, 2006: 61). In this light, the Taiwanese film industry can be perceived as a sub-system under the regional framework, and the increasing interconnectivity and interdependency between the domestic and other Asian production systems engender the progress of the industrial regionalisation in East Asia.

Genre Transplantation: An Intraregional Connection

In addition, intra-Asian connections are manifested not only in the development of an individual film project but also between different Asian cinemas through various forms, such as genre transplantation in the region, from the institutional perspective. *Wuxia* and horror are two genres popular in Asian film industries in the new millennium. I have mentioned that the *wuxia* genre is a cultural form associated with the imagination of cultural China and Chineseness. However, the genre has been transplanted into neighbouring countries whose cultural and historical backgrounds are related and are akin to pre-modern China. Inspired by *CTHD*, not only has a new wave of *wuxia* films emerged in Greater China in the 21st century, but the production of *wuxia* films in neighbouring Asian countries, such as *Shadowless Sword* (Kim Young-jun, 2005), were partly affected by the revitalisation of the *wuxia* genre in Chinese-language cinema.

As for the horror genre, a series of horror waves in various Asian film industries in the 2000s, including Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, was triggered by Japanese horror films of the late 1990s. Japanese horror film *Ringu* gained extraordinary popularity across the region in 1998. The film earned NT\$50.8 million at the Taipei box office in 1999 (Wang, 2000b: 71), an outstanding box office outcome for a non-Hollywood film at that time. As the *Ringu* phenomenon expanded across East Asia, the chance was

seized upon by Asian filmmakers. A variety of horror films were produced by filmmakers from various Asian countries and circulated across the region, including *The Eye* (Jiangui, dir. Oxide Pang Chun and Danny Pang, 2002, Hong Kong-Thai co-production), *A Tale of Two Sisters* (Ji-woon Kim, 2003, South Korea), and *Shutter* (Banjong Pisonthanakun, 2004, Thailand). In the 2000s, Korean and Thai cinemas have also been famous for their horror film production. As for Taiwan, transnational co-productions, such as *Double Vision* and *Silk*, together with locally-made film *Heirloom* (*Zhai bian*, dir. Leste Chen, 2005), can be regarded as Taiwanese filmmakers' spin-offs of Asian horror waves in the 2000s. Furthermore, the regional wave facilitated and promoted the intra-Asian co-production of genre films, for example, Taiwanese-Thai co-production *The Fatality*.

The development of genre films in East Asia is closely associated with the revival of national film industries in the region, and the regional genre waves, either *wuxia* or horror, can be perceived as Asian filmmakers' efforts to revive their respective sluggish national film industries through regionalisation. According to Huang Chih-ming (Huang, 2002: 38), "The initial goal of making *Double Vision* is to find a way out. If it works, perhaps Taiwan cinema could be saved." The commercial success of *Double Vision* in the local film market encouraged the production of subsequent horror/thriller films in Taiwan. *Double Vision* and *Silk* were the highest-grossing domestic films of 2002 and 2006 respectively, and *Heirloom* ranked as second among domestic films in 2005. Nevertheless, most of these films were not able to recoup their high production costs, and the intake of their overseas distribution and consumption was mediocre. It seems that Taiwanese filmmakers' engagement in regional horror waves did not revive the local film industry. Still, local filmmakers' engagement in this regional trend highlights the move of Taiwan cinema towards mainstream entertainment, cultivates local filmmakers' abilities to handle commercial projects and transnational collaboration, and enhances the connection between Taiwan and other Asian cinemas. As a

whole, genre transplantation in East Asia is related to both intra-Asian co-production and transnational consumption. It demonstrates the interconnectivity between Asian cinemas and indicates the formation of an imagination of Asia behind these intraregional cinematic activities and trends.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined pan-Asian film collaboration in contemporary Taiwan cinema and drawn a rough sketch of the regional industrial context, particularly the Greater China region, from the perspective of Taiwan cinema in the 21st century. The development of globalisation has encouraged both policy-driven top-down regional integration and social-driven bottom-up regionalisation in East Asia. The increase in interdependence and interconnectivity between places in the region and the growing traffic of diverse forms of transnational cultural flows have brought about the integration of Asian film industries and allowed activities of film production, distribution and consumption to go beyond national boundaries. Pan-Asian film collaboration can be roughly divided into four possible overlapping modes, namely intraregional art film co-production, Hollywood-Asian alliance, pan-Chinese co-production, and intra-Asian co-production. While intraregional art film co-production is discussed in Chapter Four, this chapter has examined Taiwanese filmmakers' engagement in the other three modes of pan-Asian co-production. These modes represent the operation of Hollywood's Asian strategy, the integration of Chinese cinemas, and the regionalisation of East Asian cinemas in the 21st century.

Among modes discussed in this chapter, the Hollywood-Asian alliance is related to what Klein (2004b) has called "Asianisation of Hollywood" and "Hollywoodisation of Asian film industries". As the Hollywood studios expand on their dominance globally, not only are

Hollywood films able to be made in Asia, but Asian elements such as talents, styles and scripts are introduced into Hollywood to create films targeting international markets. In these ways, Hollywood has been somewhat Asianised. On the other hand, the mixture of Hollywood studios' attempt to penetrate Asian cinemas and their strategy of glocalisation has driven them to collaborate with Asian partners to produce films catering to the tastes of regional spectators. For Asian cinemas, to cooperate with Hollywood could develop and upgrade the local film industries although it runs the risk of enhancing the dominance of Hollywood over the regional market. Klein (ibid.: 374-378) claims that a Hollywood–Asian alliance might improve the production value of Asian commercial cinema, professionalise the local film industries, encourage regionalisation of Asian cinemas, borrow aesthetic and narrative elements from Hollywood films, and produce local contents with trans-local appeal. From this perspective, the approach seems both a promising way to revive local cinemas and a shrewd and well-disguised strategy to enhance their resistance to Hollywood's dominance. In summary, Hollywood–Asian co-production should be recognised as “a local Asian strategy for survival as much as a global Hollywood strategy for domination” (ibid.: 376).

In this context, Columbia Pictures Film Production Asia (CPFPA)'s *Double Vision* became the first film that Taiwanese filmmakers, especially below-the-line crew, were heavily involved in under the Hollywood administration. However, CPFPA only commissioned the project to Taiwanese filmmakers and did not really engage in the local production sector. For Yang Li-chou, the director of *Double Vision*'s making-of documentary *Beyond the Mirage* (*Guojing*, dir. Yang Li-chou, 2002),⁸³ the Hollywood studio treated the

⁸³ Chen Kuo-fu commissioned renowned Taiwanese documentary director Yang Li-chou to make a making-of documentary to both document the inaugural Hollywood–Taiwanese co-production and function as an electronic press kit to promote the project. However, Yang adopted a critical perspective to examine the production process of the seminal project in *Beyond the Mirage*. In this documentary, Yang presented intercultural miscommunication and the conflict resulting from the cooperation of different industrial systems during the production of *Double Vision*, such as discriminatory pay. Consequently, CPFPA stopped the commercial use of *Beyond the Mirage* since the film was unable to be used as an electronic press kit (Yan, 2002).

Taiwanese film industry as an offshore production centre and exploited local and regional resources to produce films appealing to both local/regional audiences and American video viewers with relatively low costs, although these films should be regarded as high-budget films in the local context. Also, Xu (2007: 156-157) states that Hollywood's collaboration with the Asian film industries is still Hollywood-centred and focuses on short-term benefits. These criticisms echo Miller and others' perspectives on global Hollywood.

Therefore, though Hollywood's participation in *Double Vision* attracted a lot of local attention, some film professionals and academics considered it a one-off (Davis and Yeh, 2008: 62). Although Sylvia Chang's *20 30 40* was backed by CPFPA as well, its overall box office outcome in the region was unsatisfactory; no other Hollywood–Taiwanese film co-production has been made since. *Life of Pi* (Ang Lee, 2012) was partly produced in Taiwan, but the establishment of this Hollywood–Taiwan connection must be totally attributed to Ang Lee's personal effort, not a systematic inter-institutional collaboration. Davis and Yeh described Hollywood–Taiwanese co-productions as “migrating birds for which Taiwan is temporary refuge” (ibid.), and Hollywood has never taken root in the local production sector. *Double Vision*, for Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh and Darrell William Davis (2005: 254), is a case for affirming Hollywood's dominance over Taiwan's film production as well as consumption. Hollywood's move into the production of Taiwan cinema did create more jobs for local film labours temporarily; however, it would be over-optimistic to view the mode as a panacea for the stagnant Taiwanese film industry.

Indeed, *Double Vision* neither immensely improved the local industrial structure nor immediately woke the Taiwanese film industry from its long period of hibernation. Nevertheless, the operation of this high-budget Hollywood–Taiwanese co-production impacted upon production approaches taken for granted in Taiwan cinema to a degree. Chen Kuo-fu considers that the project cannot revitalise Taiwan cinema, but that it could broaden

local filmmakers' experiences and horizons to alter their conservative attitude to filmmaking ("*Double Vision Creates*", 2002). Film production in the 1990s-Taiwanese film industry, whose main activities were low-budget auteur-oriented filmmaking and slipshod market-oriented filmmaking, was poorly organised; and its technical know-how and equipment was outdated. Local filmmakers did not attach importance to the development stage and usually made films in an unsystematic or "seat-of-the-pants" fashion. In order to collaborate with Hollywood backers and complete the high-budget, market-oriented, transnational co-production genre film, professional production process and up-to-date technologies were introduced to Taiwanese filmmakers, thereby facilitating the professionalisation of the local film industry in the new millennium. Further, the importance of the development stage in film production was highlighted, for the erratic style and director-driven mode of production prevalent in Taiwan cinema seemed incapable of dealing with high-budget, big-scale transnational projects. Consequently, the producer system gradually came to the fore in the Taiwanese film industry and has become a contributing factor to the recent revival of Taiwan commercial cinema.

In this regard, *Double Vision* generated an indirect influence over the industrial institution. For example, Wei Te-sheng was a candidate Chen Kuo-fu recommended for the director of *Double Vision*. According to Wei (Huang and Tseng, 2010: 103; Li and SunTV, 2011: 82-84), making *Double Vision* broadened his horizons in filmmaking and emboldened him to make big scale productions, including the highest-grossing domestic film *Cape No.7* (*Haijiao qihao*, dir. Wei Te-sheng, 2008) and the highest-budget blockbuster from Taiwan, *Seediq Bale*. Additionally, Huang Chih-ming had served as the producer in several films before *Double Vision*, including Chen's *The Personals* (*Zhenghun qishi*, 1998) and all Tsai Ming-liang's films of the 1990s, with the exception of *Rebels of the Neon God* (*Qingshaonian Nuozha*, 1992). However, his participation in this Hollywood-Taiwanese co-

production advanced his professional know-how and experience of handling both transnational co-productions and high-budget projects (Huang, 2002: 38-39). Huang has since been involved in the production of several hit movies from Taiwan, including *Silk*, *Secret*, *Cape No.7*, *Monga*, *Seediq Bale* and *Love*.⁸⁴ Today, he is one of the most influential film producers in Taiwan, and his career not only reflects but also contributes to the development of the producer system in Taiwan cinema. Arguably, several Taiwanese above-the-line talents involved in the project, including Chen, Wei, Huang, Su Chao-pin and Leon Dai, have become leading figures in today's Taiwan and Chinese-language commercial cinemas. The fact also demonstrates the significance of *Double Vision* to contemporary Taiwan commercial cinema.

Moreover, *Double Vision* can be perceived as a momentous project leading to the paradigm shift from a cinema of authorship in the late 20th century to a cinema of markets in the new millennium. As Wen Tien-hsiang (2003: 12) and Yeh and Davis (2005: 254) claim, the film proved Taiwanese film industry's capability of making a well-produced, high-budget popular film. Besides, its commercial success showed that high-budget popular films from Taiwan can still lure back local spectators and be potentially lucrative. In this regard, *Double Vision* offered a beacon of hope to local commercial film production in the early 2000s, leading to high-budget films being produced from Taiwan. According to Leon Dai (Sun, 2009), a Taiwanese actor/director playing a supporting role in *Double Vision*, the involvement of Taiwanese filmmakers in *Double Vision*, including Wei Te-sheng, Huang Chih-ming, Su Chao-pin, Lee Yun-Chan and himself, motivated them to take account of audience reception in their later filmmaking. In other words, as Chen expected, *Double Vision* expanded local filmmakers' horizons and inspired them to pay proper regard to commercial filmmaking.

⁸⁴ In fact, Huang Chih-ming had got involved in half of top ten domestic hit movies between 2000 and 2012.

In addition, both pan-Chinese and intra-Asian film co-productions are important modes of intraregional film collaboration to Taiwan cinema in the 21st century. The change of the political and economic context in the region in the late 20th century, such as the decline of various national film industries, the rise of Chinese economy and the thaw in cross-strait tensions, has eased restrictions on intraregional cultural traffic. Besides, transnational film collaboration is viewed as a viable strategy to help filmmakers pool a fair amount of resources to produce high-budget, big-scale films to compete with well-produced Hollywood blockbusters. In this light, intraregional film collaboration has become a popular strategy in East Asia in the new millennium. Straubhaar claims that audiences prefer “nationally or locally produced material that is closer to and more reinforcing of traditional identities, based in regional, ethnic, dialect/language, religious, and other elements” (1991: 51). This tendency to search for greater cultural proximity in cultural products explains the motive behind intraregional film collaboration and sheds light on why pan-Chinese co-production is a particularly important, practicable and common transnational collaborative mode to Taiwanese filmmakers, regardless of the ambivalent relationship between Taiwan and the PRC.

However, the development of intraregional film collaboration indicates an uneven power relationship between national cinemas in the region. Economic factors play a critical role in the development of intraregional co-production. The rapid growth of Chinese economy offers an incentive for film talents from neighbouring film industries to enter its film industry and market. The market expansion also spurred the increase of capital investment in the Chinese film industry. The growing market size and resources have allowed Chinese cinema to occupy an advantageous position in pan-Chinese film collaboration from a regional perspective. Davis and Yeh (2008: 85) argue that the opening up of mainland China accelerated the wave of co-production in East Asia. Wei Ti (2011: 196) also considers that

China has replaced the Hong Kong film industry as the centre of transnational co-production in Asia. As the production costs continually rise, the power of Chinese cinema in Chinese-language cinema expands. Though pan-Chinese film co-productions target various Chinese-speaking markets, particular importance is usually given to the Chinese market. Chinese-speaking filmmakers might be keen to satisfy the PRC's censorship and regulations on joint co-production in order to access to the mainland, whereas local tastes could be disregarded since they might be not adapted to Chinese spectators. That is, Chinese-speaking filmmakers' activities have increasingly depended upon the market and resources of Chinese cinema, and Chinese-speaking audiences outside the mainland could be sidelined with the expansion of the Chinese film market. Hence, the integration of regional cinemas is a double-edged sword which could result in the marginalisation of local cinemas and local cultural specificities.

The production of films aimed at regional viewers and at local spectators is not mutually exclusive in Chinese-language cinema; however, the limited amount of available resources, including finance and talents, are concentrated in high-budget transnational commercial projects in practice. Hence, Davis and Yeh (2008: 104) argue that "for producers, there is incentive to avoid locally specific stories and go for the larger mainland market; for small, local storytellers, the barriers to entry have become higher. In this vein, pan-Asian cinema may sacrifice minority or local taste to the large market." In this sense, the commercial success of some Chinese-language films appealing to tastes of respective local viewers attracts particular attention and inspires self-examination of Chinese-speaking film talents outside of China. In Hong Kong, the mid-budget film *Echoes of the Rainbow* (*Suiyue shentou*, dir. Alex Law Kai-Yui, 2010) looks back on the ordinary life in 1960s Hong Kong and is acclaimed as a film recovering the values of Hong Kong (Yip and Tse, 2010), forming a strong contrast with other Hong Kong filmmakers' high-budget collaborative projects whose primary target market is the mainland region. As for Taiwan cinema, ordinary lives and

grassroots culture are popular themes of domestically-made hit movies, and occupy a vital role in the recent revival of Taiwan commercial cinema, for example, *Cape No.7*, *Monga*, and *Din Tao: Leader of the Parade* (*Zhentou*, dir. Fung Kai, 2012). It is noteworthy that some locally-produced films with strong local flavour also perform well in other Chinese-speaking areas in terms of consumption and reception. The growing attention to domestic themes and local subjectivity in cinema can be perceived as the locals' reaction to powerful Hollywood and regional co-productions, which will be elaborated on in Chapter Three.

Moreover, the rise of other East Asian cinemas, such as those of South Korea, Thailand, and Singapore, has greatly contributed to the development of pan-Asian co-production in the new millennium. Asian filmmakers such as Peter Chan Ho-sun have striven to promote intra-Asian film collaboration. Unlike pan-Chinese co-productions, which are primarily aimed at Chinese-speaking spectators, intra-Asian co-productions have a stronger intention of appealing to Asian audiences of different languages. Arguably, the circulation of regional cultural goods in the past two decades, economic integration and cultural proximity have all provided vital preconditions for this development. However, although some projects have been made, the influence of intra-Asian co-productions over Taiwan cinema still seems limited. Besides the industrial factors like market size and limited budgets, it can be argued that cultural and linguistic barriers still constrain the development of intra-Asian co-production in Taiwan. Nevertheless, the development of regional genre waves, the transplantation of national genres, and the increasing interconnectivity between Asian filmmakers and industries represent the steady progress of the integration of regional cinema in the 21st century.

Chapter Three:

Return to the Local: *Cape No.7* and Contemporary Taiwan Cinema

The revival in domestic films in Taiwan has been a notable phenomenon in Chinese-language cinema in the last few years. The Taiwanese film industry had gone through a difficult time in the past two decades, and the market share of domestic films never surpassed 2% between 1995 and 2006 except for the years 2000 and 2002 (Huang, 2003: 161; *Taiwan Cinema*, 2012). Although the commercial performance of some films, such as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (*Wohu canglong*, dir. Ang Lee, 2000, hereafter *CTHD*) and *Double Vision* (*Shuang tong*, dir. Chen Kuo-fu, 2002), temporarily rekindled local filmmakers' hope of industrial recuperation, the signs of revitalisation did not appear until 2007. Films from Taiwan obtained 7.38% of box office revenue in the domestic market in 2007, the first time the figure surpassed 5% since 1991 (Huang, 2003: 161; *Taiwan Cinema*, 2012). In 2008, the figure soared to an incredible 12.09% (*Taiwan Cinema*, 2012), and four Taiwanese films, namely *Cape No.7* (*Haijiao qihao*, dir. Wei Te-sheng, 2008), *Orz Boyz* (*Jiong nanhai*, dir. Yang Ya-che, 2008), *Kung Fu Dunk* (*Gongfu guanlan*, dir. Chu Yen-ping, 2008), and *1895 in Formosa* (*1895*, dir. Hung Chiu-yu, 2008), broke the NT\$10 million mark at the Taipei box office (Wang, C., 2010a: 108-110). Among these films, the enormous box office grosses of the year's biggest hit, *Cape No.7* set an all-time record for box office takings from Chinese-language films in Taiwan. It offered a beacon of hope to Taiwan commercial cinema and attracted viewers' attention to the presentation of local imagination in domestic films.

Cape No.7 is a commercially-oriented film containing musical, romantic and comic elements, depicting two romances in different times and a journey of pursuing dreams. The incorporation of grassroots culture, ordinary life, local landscape, and colonial history into the film contributes to its immense popularity in the local film market. In terms of production,

Cape No.7 is closely related to the local industrial circumstances. In contrast to local filmmakers' pan-Asian co-production targeting regional viewers or auteur-oriented films appealing to international niches, the film is a locally-financed, domestically-made project primarily aimed at mainstream audiences in Taiwan. Moreover, the film's nativist consciousness reflects the influence of nativisation over Taiwan cinema since the emergence of the Taiwan New Cinema movement (TNC) in the 1980s. In the past few decades, both commercial and art films from Taiwan have, to a degree, represented diverse facets of Taiwan's social and cultural landscape. Both the label of *Guopian* (national film) and the representation of local imagination contributed to the sensational success of *Cape No.7*. This characteristic not only demonstrates the particularity of locally-produced films but also echoes the change of social, cultural and political context in Taiwan.

This chapter will investigate the history of Taiwan cinema to account for the influence of nativism over *Cape No.7*, the film's production strategy, and the condition of the contemporary Taiwanese film industry. The influence of transnational connections on this domestically-produced film will also be highlighted. Moreover, the chapter will analyse the cultural phenomena inspired by the film in order to shed light on the significance of *Cape No.7* for contemporary Taiwan cinema. The chapter will conclude by revisiting the recent revival in the Taiwanese film industry after *Cape No.7*.

The Origins of Cape No.7

Cape No.7 was designed as a commercially-oriented film from its initiation, and Wei Tesheng was motivated to make the film due to his frustration at securing funding for a high-budget epic film, *Seediq Bale* (*Saideke Balai*). Wei had conceived the idea for *Seediq Bale* since 1997. He finished the script and spent more than NT\$2.5 million to make a 5-minute teaser in 2003 in order to attract investment and raise NT\$200 million, the expected budget

for the film (Cheng, 2004: 72). This amount is a huge budget by Taiwan standards and is close to the cost of Columbia Pictures' *Double Vision*. Unsurprisingly, the plan was shelved because Wei could not raise sufficient money. He then decided to make a smaller budget film first on Chen Kuo-fu's advice (Lan, 2008). According to Wei (Liang, 2008), "investors told me that they would not finance *Seediq Bale* because I have never made a feature film. Hence I wanted to make a feature film to prove my ability." As a new and unknown film director in Taiwan, he gambled his career on *Cape No.7*, and hoped that his reputation as a film director would help fulfil his dream of making *Seediq Bale* (Liu, S., 2008: 45). Wei finished the script, raised the investment, and began the production of *Cape No.7* in 2006 and 2007.

Synopsis

In 1945, Japan's colonial occupation of Taiwan ends with its surrender to the Allied forces. Subsequently, a Japanese teacher dispatched to Hengchun, a small town located in the south of Taiwan, is forced to return to Japan and leave behind his lover, a Taiwanese student with a Japanese name, Kojima Tomoko. He writes seven love letters to Tomoko on his return journey, but they are not sent till after his death. After more than sixty years, a resort hotel in Hengchun invites Japanese pop singer Kousuke Atari to present a concert at the beach, but the Chairperson of Township Council Hong Kuo-jung, also the stepfather of the male lead Aga, demands that the warm-up band must be composed of natives. Consequently, a Mandarin-speaking, Taiwan-based Japanese woman Tomoko is assigned to oversee the amateur rock band hastily formed by Aga, a depressed lead vocal of a band in Taipei who recently returned to Hengchun, and several local volunteers. Aga and Tomoko are initially incompatible; however, they begin a relationship unexpectedly although Tomoko plans to return to Japan after the concert. Meanwhile, Aga, who works as a postman, receives a parcel containing the seven undelivered love letters addressed to Kojima Tomoko from Japan.

However, the address, “Cape No.7, Hengchun”, does not now exist. The narrative of *Cape No.7* revolves around three major threads: members’ dreams of performing live, the delivery of the seven love letters written sixty years ago, and the love story between Aga and Tomoko. It climaxes with the successful concert, Kojima Tomoko’s receiving of the letters, and Aga and Tomoko’s embrace.

The Revitalisation of Commercially-Oriented Filmmaking in Taiwan

The shift from author-centred to market-oriented cinema could be regarded as new filmmakers’ reactions against auteur cinema in the late 20th century. A great number of film directors made their directorial debuts in the past decade. For instance, more than ten film directors made their directorial debuts in 2008, some of which were box office hits, e.g. Wei Te-sheng’s *Cape No.7* and Yang Ya-che’s *Orz Boyz*. These new talents, in contrast to predecessors stressing art value, try to re-embrace the market taste. Tsai Ming-liang (Chen, 2009) sees film as a medium for auteurs’ aesthetics and self-expression and declares that the narrative logic could be omitted in order to convey symbolic meanings in an auteur film. By contrast, for Chen Yin-jung, the director of *Formula 17* (*Shiqisui de tiankong*, 2004), the entertainment function of film should receive more weight:

Entertainment is seen as a dirty word by many Taiwanese film-makers. I don’t know why it’s become such a shameful thing, as one of the primary functions of a film is to entertain audiences. Maybe in the past some filmmakers thought “entertainment” was sullied by the aspect of making money, that they can’t get creative satisfaction from entertaining audiences but only from expressing themselves. But I think if you can make a movie that makes people happy, have a good time, or be moved, there’s nothing wrong with that. (Gluck, 2004)

Several new film studios, including Three Dots Entertainment and Flash Forward

Entertainment, also want to re-establish the domestic commercial production to draw local spectators back by producing local genre films (Hsiang, 2006).

Today, Taiwanese filmmakers have become more willing to adopt clear and linear narration, incorporate commercial elements, and take audience taste into consideration when making films in order to appeal to the domestic market. According to Wei Te-sheng (Huang and Tseng, 2008: 103), “contemporary Taiwanese film directors have gradually switched their attention from filmic style to storytelling”, which points out the main distinction between contemporary domestic filmmaking and the two waves of auteur-oriented TNC films. Kuo Li-hsin disparages the idea that current Taiwanese filmmakers prefer romantic, youthful and motivational topics due to commercial consideration, highbrow and serious themes therefore being usually dropped (2009: 56-57). Nevertheless, as Leon Dai claims,⁸⁵ the existence of commercial and genre films is vital for the survival of a film industry, including art cinema (Gu, 2004). Wei (Huang and Tseng, 2008: 103) also contends that “what we shall keep is predecessors’ spirits rather than their narrative styles.” He asserts that the environment is changing and new filmmakers have to develop their own styles (ibid.).

The impressive commercial performance of *Cape No.7* at the domestic box office has highlighted and encouraged this market-oriented filmmaking in Taiwan in the past few years. A conference held by Taiwan’s Academia Sinica in 2009 dubbed these new market-oriented films “post-Taiwan New Cinema” to accentuate both the connection and revision of these films to the filmmaking strategy of New Cinema.⁸⁶ Song Hwee Lim marks the main difference between TNC and post-TNC:

Cape No.7 may be said to have led the way in shifting the self-image of Taiwan cinema from the auteur-centered, film-festival-participating, domestic-audience-alienating TNC period of the 1980s and 1990s, to a post-TNC period in the new millennium marked by a more popular mode of filmmaking that aims to appeal to a wider audience. (Lim, 2013: 158)

⁸⁵ Leon Dai is an award-winning Taiwanese film director, actor and scriptwriter. His representative directorial work is *No Puedo Vivir Sin Ti* (*Buneng meiyou ni*, 2009).

⁸⁶ “Auteurism and Popularity: Post-Taiwan New Cinema in 2008”, Institution of Chinese Literature and Philosophy, Academia Sinica, Taipei, October 29-30, 2009

Guo-juin Hong also points out that TNC “focuses its efforts on the aesthetic exploration of the realistic portrayal of everyday life” whereas post-TNC “revitalizes Taiwan’s film industry by putting forth films that are largely genre driven” (2011: 185). On account of the institutional breakdown in the local film industry, luring the audience back is viewed as an urgent matter for contemporary Taiwanese filmmakers. The alteration reflects a shift from a cinema of authorship to a cinema of markets in Taiwan cinema in the new millennium.

On the other hand, the term “post-Taiwan New Cinema” implies that contemporary Taiwan cinema could be somehow perceived as an heir to author-oriented cinema in Taiwan in the late 20th century. As pre-eminent figures of New Cinema and post-New Cinema respectively, both Hou and Wei participated in films directed by their predecessors through apprenticeship in their early careers. Hou had been an apprentice to film luminaries such as Lee Hsing prior to his directorial debut in 1980. He had worked as a script supervisor, screenwriter and assistant director in melodrama films (Udden, 2009: 44-46; Chinese Taipei Film Archive, 2012), including *Good Morning, Taipei* (*Zao’an, Taipei*, dir. Lee Hsing, 1979), and his first three feature films can also be categorised as commercial melodrama.⁸⁷ In other words, Hou engaged in commercial film production in his early career but has shifted his focus from the popular cinema to art cinema since the emergence of the TNC movement. In this light, Hou’s career echoes a shift from authority to authorship in the early 1980s. Similarly, Wei entered the industry as an apprentice and had partaken in projects of the TNC leading lights, including Edward Yang and Chen Kuo-fu. He had served an apprenticeship in Yang’s studio since 1995 and was soon promoted to a first assistant director from a grip assistant when Yang filmed *Mahjong* (*Majiang*) in 1996. According to Wei, Yang is the most

⁸⁷ These films include *Lovable You* (*Jiushi liuliude ta*, 1980), *Cheerful Wind* (*Fenger titacai*, 1981) and *Green, Green Grass of Home* (*Zai na hepan qingcao qing*, 1982)

influential director for him, and Yang encouraged him to develop his own style rather than follow predecessors' ways blindly during his apprenticeship (Liu, S., 2008: 39-40).

Furthermore, Wei collaborated with Chen Kuo-fu on Columbia Pictures-funded *Double Vision*. Chen was a chief figure of the TNC movement and a signatory of the *1987 Taiwan Cinema Manifesto* (Chan, 1998a: 118), a key statement of the TNC movement. Chen joined Columbia Pictures Film Production Asia in 2000 and engaged in the Chinese-language commercial film business henceforth. That is, Chen's career represents a shift from authorship to market orientation. As for *Double Vision*, Wei held a position as executive producer but managed assistant director's works, including part of storyboarding and departmental coordination (ibid.: 43-44).⁸⁸ The production of *Double Vision* not only provided local filmmakers with practical experience in making high-budget commercially-oriented transnational co-productions but also motivated them to reconsider filmmaking from the spectator's angle. Participation in *Double Vision* broadened Wei's horizons and motivated him to seek more resources and spend more time making a quality film than "muddle it through" (ibid.: 42). Wei had participated in the production of both auteur and commercial films before his directorial debut; the crossover from art cinema to commercial cinema in his career, including apprenticeship and individual filmmaking, reflects the fact that local commercial film production has regained its position in Taiwan cinema in recent years as well as reflecting the shift from authorship to market orientation in Taiwan cinema in the 21st century.

Moreover, the post-TNC filmmakers' nativist concerns revealed in their works indicates their connection with their TNC counterparts. As mentioned in the Introduction, "the main point of [films from Taiwan during the authoritarian period] was to establish that

⁸⁸ Wei was recommended as the film director of *Double Vision* by Chen at the beginning; however, it was not put into effect owing to his insufficient film directing experience. See Chapter Two.

malevolence does not really exist in Taiwan society: villainy, corruption, and violent conflict are banished in these films . . . This delicacy was certainly in stark contrast with realities of life in Taiwan under the KMT” (Yeh and Davis, 2005: 26). However, the emergence of TNC declared a dramatic change in film styles and themes of films from Taiwan, and these films show strong nativist leanings. Nonetheless, new auteurs in the 1990s emphasised self-expression and intended to reject nostalgic and historical themes. They shifted their attention from the re-discovery of historical memories to life experiences in the postmodern Taiwan (Lu, 1998: 346).

In the 21st century, themes like national history, past events and collective memories have been reincorporated into domestic films, e.g. *Cape No.7, Winds of September* (*Jiujiangfeng*, dir. Tom Lin, 2008), and *Seven Days in Heaven* (*Fuhou Qiri*, dir. Wang Yuling and Essay Liu, 2010). Filmmakers of the second wave of TNC, or TNC of the 1990s, pay more attention to the individual’s inner struggle and familial relationships in general, whereas the new generation of filmmakers attempts to delineate the socio-cultural landscape of modern Taiwan by reviewing the growing experience of their contemporaries and the daily life at grass-roots level. On the other hand, Lim claims that contemporary Taiwanese filmmakers have more similarities than differences compared with filmmakers of the second generation of TNC filmmakers in terms of style, and hence “if the shift *within* TNC from the 1980s to the 1990s in terms of thematic concern was marked by a move from a ‘historical’ to a ‘private,’ post-TNC films have embraced both narratorial strategies” (2013: 159, italics in original). In this regard, post-TNC inherits the local consciousness from TNC of the 1980s and some traits of film style from TNC of the 1990s, and exhibits the influence of nativism in postcolonial Taiwan in addition to characteristics of transnational cinema within the global cinematic system.

Although contemporary filmmakers may deal with themes similar to their predecessors', it seems that they avoid giving viewers too strong a sense of nostalgia. Sing Song-yong (2010: 144-145) points out that these new Taiwanese filmmakers attempt to narrate contemporaries' collective memories and historical themes with a light touch so that their films could gradually move beyond the ethos of sadness and the solemn tone. For example, *Cape No.7* touches upon colonial history and nativist sensibility, but Wei gave much more weight to universal subjects such as love, music and dreams and tells the story in an amusing way and with a sense of optimism. New filmmakers integrate local specificity and commercial elements to create their works, and national features can be employed to please local spectators. Contemporary Taiwan cinema, arguably, reflects a postsadness context as did Taiwan art cinema in the 1990s, but it is relatively commercially-oriented and easily-digestible. The shift from a cinema of authority to a cinema of authorship, that is, the emergence of TNC, could be viewed as bringing innovation into the film aesthetics of Taiwan cinema, whereas the shift from a cinema of authorship to a cinema of markets, that is, the emergence of post-TNC, can be perceived as revitalising domestic filmmaking activities, revisiting the consumption pattern of the local market and reforming the industrial structure of Taiwan cinema.

Financing of *Cape No.7*

Cape No.7 has been in the limelight in Taiwan because this box-office record breaker is a "pure" locally-made film. Not only was the film produced by the locals, finances of the film were raised completely from local sources. Executive producer Huang Chih-ming initially set a budget of NT\$15-17 million, but the film budget soared to more than NT\$25 million before the camera started to roll. The final cost of *Cape No.7* surpassed NT\$50 million, whereas in

the 2000s, a domestically-produced film was normally made with a cost of around NT\$20 million (Tang, 2009: 49).⁸⁹ The film was primarily funded through private investment, state grants and bank loans. Its financing was a demanding task for Wei, a filmmaker who had never directed a feature film, to convince investors to back the film. Chief private investors, Arrow Studio and Taipei Postproduction, sponsored the project in kind, through the supply of film and lighting equipment and post-production service respectively. Although the sponsorship they provided was equivalent to around NT\$15 million (Knee Joint, 2008), the film was still almost postponed due to a shortage of funds during the production (Liu, S., 2008: 46-47).

The difficulty of raising private investment for *Cape No.7* underlines the significance of state aid and legislation to the national cinematographic industry in the global era. As touched on in the Introduction, the correlation between cinema and the state is still strong at the level of policy, though the significance of the state has gradually eroded with the globalisation process. As a channel for creating imagination and communication, cinema is a cultural artefact to “offer coherent images of the nation, sustaining the nation at an ideological level, exploring and celebrating what is understood to be the indigenous culture” (Higson, 2000: 69). At the economic level, cinema is a business to encourage overseas investment, develop tourism and service industries, and generate export revenue. In this light, the government continues to legislate to promote and protect the national film industry. Whilst the wave of economic liberalisation and deregulation has lessened the effect of the state’s defensive measures, support measures are still helpful in stimulating local film production, removing hindrances to cinematic activities, and attracting overseas investment. In the case of *Cape*

⁸⁹ Take, for example, two locally made films. Both *Orz Boyz*, the second best-selling locally-made films in 2008, and *Hear Me (Tingshuo)*, dir. Cheng Fen-fen, 2009), the 2009 box office champion of domestic films, both of which spent less than NT\$20 million on film production (Ho, 2009: 103; Chang, T., 2009).

No.7, financing methods, including state grants and bank loan, are closely related to Taiwan's government policy.

In Taiwan, the state support measures, including film grants and preferential loan policy, have been the primary film-funding source for decades. The Domestic Film Guidance Fund, the film subsidies of the Taiwanese government, has played a crucial role in domestic filmmaking since its establishment in 1989. According to the Government Information Office (GIO), the government founded the Domestic Film Guidance Fund to prop up the production of local films with both artistic and commercial values in order to revive the local film industry and promote public diplomacy (Chinese Taipei Film Archive, 1994: 21). The recession of the local film industry and the impressive performance of Taiwan cinema on the film festival circuit motivated the authority to develop this policy. Although the design of system, evaluation process and its actual effects on the industry are always in dispute, it has become an indispensable financing source for Taiwanese filmmakers. A number of celebrated Taiwanese auteurs' films were subsidised through the system, for example, Hou's *The Puppetmaster* (*Ximeng rensheng*, 1993) and Tsai's *The River* (*Heliu*, 1997).

In the case of *Cape No.7*, Wei applied for the Domestic Film Guidance Fund in 2006 and was awarded NT\$5 million in late 2006. In accordance with the GIO 2006 Guidelines for Applying for Domestic Feature Film Guidance Fund, applicants were categorised into three groups, including "flagship project", "general applicant", and "new talent", according to applicants' directorial experience and project budget. At least one film director and most of the cast must be Taiwan citizens, and the project, in particular post-production, should be completed in Taiwan. Applications are examined by a review panel consisting of academics, experts, and GIO representatives. The recommended funding recipient commissions a trust facility to manage the awarded funding, and he/she can receive funding when submitting the trust agreement to the GIO. The funding recipient must then complete the project and obtain

the screening license by the stipulated deadline, otherwise he/she must return the funding and pay an extra 10% of the funding to the GIO. According to the regulation, Wei belonged to the “new talent group”. The maximum amount of funding a recipient of the group could acquire was NT\$8.2 million, and the recipient had to complete the film and obtain screening license in 30 months, including two extensions. In 2006, the annual national budget for film development was around NT\$380 million, including NT\$90 million of the Domestic Feature Film Guidance Fund and NT\$12 million of the Domestic Short Film Guidance Fund (GIO, 2007). Fifteen feature film projects were awarded funding in 2006, including *Cape No.7*, and NT\$5 million, the funding Wei received, was the highest amount the GIO offered to a project from the “new talent group” in 2006 (see Table 3).

Table 3 List of 2006 Domestic Feature Film Guidance Fund⁹⁰

Project	Director	Funding (NT\$M)	Estimated Budget (NT\$M)	Taipei Box Office (NT\$M)
Flagship Group				
<i>Guanlan*</i> <i>Kung Fu Dunk (Gongfu guanlan)</i>	Chu Yen-ping	15	300	15.9 (2008)
<i>The Adventures of Dragon Fruit (Huolongguo damaoxian)</i>	Shih Wun-siang (Animation)	12	NA	NA
<i>Port of Return (Kao an)</i>	Chang Jung-kuei (Animation)	8	60	0.7 (2009)
General Applicant Group				
<i>Colorful Mind (Xin lubinghua: Haizi de tiankong)</i>	Chen Kun-hou	5	NA	0.4 (2009)

⁹⁰ Titles of certain projects have been changed before their releases. The project title marked with an asterisk (*) is the original title; the lower one in the same row is the official film title. Besides, “NA” means that related information has not been obtained. In addition, information about estimated film budget is collected from newspaper reports and *Taiwan Cinema Yearbook*.

<i>Mazu</i> (<i>Hai zhi chuanshuo, Mazu</i>)	Lin Shih-jen (Animation)	5	66	1.1 (2007)
<i>Tanhuangchuang*</i> <i>Mr. Bedman</i> (<i>Tanhuangchuang xiansheng</i>)	Tai Tai-lung	4	NA	0.7 (2011)
New Talent Group				
<i>Chanda*</i> <i>The Drummer (Zhan gu)</i>	Kenneth Bi	4	NA	0.3 (2007)
<i>Winds of September</i> (<i>Jiujiangfeng</i>)	Tom Lin	5	13	4.6 (2008)
<i>Wohenxiangni*</i> <i>Orz Boyz (Jiong nanhai)</i>	Yang Ya-che	5	17	17.3 (2008)
<i>Finding Shangri-La</i> (<i>Zhe er shi Xianggelila</i>)	Ismene Ting	4	20	1.0 (2009)
<i>Cape No.7 (Haijiao qihao)</i>	Wei Te-sheng	5	50	232.3 (2008)
<i>Tiantang de bianyuan</i>	Tsao Jui-yuan	5	NA	NA
<i>Monga (Mengjia)</i>	Doze Niu Chen-zer	4	60	116.3 (2010)
<i>Semang dao*</i> <i>Somewhere I Have Never</i> <i>Travelled (Dai wo qu yuanfang)</i>	Fu Tian-yu	4	17	1.6 (2009)
<i>Parking (Ting che)</i>	Chung Meng-hong	5	NA	1.7 (2008)

As indicated in Table 3, the domestic box office income of several 2006-funded projects was less than the funding they received from the government. It shows that a number of funded films are unable to recoup the production costs from ticket sales, and thus the Domestic Film Guidance Fund is a vital means of reducing risks and buttressing filmmaking for Taiwanese filmmakers. In fact, a high proportion of locally-made films have benefited from the scheme. For example, fifteen out of the twenty-two domestic releases in Taiwan's film market in 2008 were Domestic Feature Film Guidance Fund recipients (*Taiwan Cinema*,

2010). Hence, the huge gap in commercial performances between other films from Taiwan and *Cape No.7*, with the exception of *Monga (Mengjia)*, dir. Doze Niu Chen-zer, 2010), showed in Table 3, highlights the substantial commercial success of *Cape No.7*.

Furthermore, two methods of bank loan, including a preferential loan and a mortgage loan, were used in the project. The former is associated with the state's support policy. In accordance with the Guidelines of Favourable Loans for Motion Picture Industry and Radio and Television Programme Supply Business, filmmakers are allowed to apply for a preferential loan through the Small and Medium Enterprise Credit Guarantee Fund of Taiwan (Taiwan SMEG). Taiwan SMEG is a non-profit organisation supervised by the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA) and is responsible for providing credit guarantees to help qualified small and medium enterprises to secure financing from financial institutions (Small and Medium Enterprise Credit Guarantee Fund of Taiwan, 2006).⁹¹ Therefore, the formulation of the Guidelines of Favourable Loans for Motion Picture Industry and Radio and Television Programme Supply Business, along with schemes such as the Guidelines of Favourable Loans for Digital Content and Cultural Creative Industries, demonstrates the authorities' increasing regard for the integration and development of entertainment, cultural and creative industries in Taiwan. The cooperation between the media regulatory agency and the MOEA allows small film studios and local filmmakers to obtain preferential loans through Taiwan SMEG.

The Credit Guarantee Fund system for the motion picture industry could be divided into three stages (BAMID, 2013a). Firstly, the application has to be reviewed by the authority, the GIO at that time. When the GIO permits the application, the recommendation letter of direct credit guarantee will be issued by the authority to the applicant and the Taiwan SMEG. Next,

⁹¹ Eligibility of the applicant is checked in accordance with the Standards for Identifying Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises.

the project will be examined by the Taiwan SMEG. In the last stage, the applicant is able to ask contracting financial institutions, the third evaluation unit in the application process, for a loan if the applicant received the letter of commitment from the Taiwan SMEG. Wei Te-sheng spent eight months obtaining the letter of commitment; however, no banks granted him a loan regardless of whether he had passed the examination of the GIO and Taiwan SMEG. Because Wei had received the Domestic Feature Film Guidance Fund, he had to start filmmaking in order to meet the submission deadline even though he did not have enough money. The remaining production finance was merely around NT\$500,000 when the film's shooting started in late September of 2007. Filming would have been suspended if a loan totalling around NT\$15 million had not been made at the last minute (Wei T., 2008a: 10-11; Liu, S., 2008: 46-47). Wei and executive producer Huang (Lu, 2009: 96-97, 125-126) point out that Taiwanese bankers and businessmen are unacquainted with the cultural industry and thus adopt an uninterested and reluctant attitude to film financing even though the Credit Guarantee Fund system has been implemented. As a result, not only are they disinclined to invest in film production, the scheme cannot effectively facilitate filmmakers to obtain a loan. The arduous and time-consuming application process could decrease the effect of this policy on local film production.

In addition, a mortgage loan was adopted to raise finance when *Cape No.7* was made. Although Wei did not mortgage his own home to secure a loan since he had no mortgageable house already ("*Wei Te-sheng: Making Cape No.7*", 2009), Liu Yi-cheng, the then Vice President of Cathy Financial Holdings, not only personally helped Wei raise financial support but also mortgaged his own house to take out a loan for the film (Wei T., 2008a: 11; Hsiang, 2008a). In fact, this approach is common in Taiwan cinema. For instance, Hou mortgaged his house to finance Edward Yang's *Taipei Story* (*Qingmei zhuma*, 1985) (Chinese Taipei Film Archive, 2012); actor Lee Kang-sheng's mother's house was mortgaged to get a loan to

finance Tsai's *The Wayward Cloud* (*Tienbian yiduo yun*, 2005) (Huang, 2010). The popularity of home mortgage loans in Taiwan cinema shows the difficulty in obtaining film financing in Taiwan.

In this context, the Taiwanese government's support measures, including the Domestic Film Guidance Fund and Credit Guarantee Fund system, are critical for the production of domestically-produced films such as *Cape No.7*, but these measures are being criticised for incompetence. The production of *Cape No.7* heavily relied on these measures, yet Wei was dissatisfied with the policy and argued for its revision (Lu, 2009). James Udden criticises the Taiwanese government for refusing to face up to both the actual economics of the scales involved in filmmaking and the necessity of protection for national cinema. Bureaucrats just want to resolve all problems by offering financial aid (2007: 156-157). As mentioned previously, the annual national budget for film development in 2006 was around NT\$380 million; however, the figure is even lower than the budget of Ang Lee's 2000 film *CTHD*. Besides, the government removed protective policy to pander to America during the trade negotiations, including the World Trade Organization (WTO), which makes the local film industry a sacrificial victim. Therefore, Udden claims that it is the state policy instead of limitations of size, population or economic clout that makes Taiwan a small national cinema because it has never received sufficient attention from the government (ibid.: 157). Although the grant system has assisted domestic film production, this only active measure of the state is controversial and ineffective in improving the local market structure. The government is trying to revive the industry through the guidance policy, but the industrial structure cannot be re-established only through the creation of a grant system plus small amounts of money. The defective film production chain affects the output of films as well as the training of professionals. In addition, the development of cultural globalisation and transnational co-

production within the global cinematic system may complicate the process of reviving the Taiwanese film industry in the new millennium.

Production and Distribution of *Cape No.7*

Production and Casting

Cape No.7 is a film which touches on the historical and transnational imagination about Japan–Taiwan relations, but the film was produced almost entirely by the locals. In addition to Wei Te-sheng, experienced executive producer Huang Chih-ming was a key person controlling the ever-increasing cost of the film and assisting Wei in finishing the film (Tang, 2009).⁹² By contrast to the involvement of internationally celebrated filmmakers in transnational co-productions, crew members of *Cape No.7* were local professionals lesser-known to the public. However, local productions can provide jobs for local professionals and foster the development of the local film industry. Take, for example, the post-production of *Cape No.7*. The visual effects of the film were handled by Taiwanese companies such as Taipei Postproduction and Bulky Animation Studio. Not only did the cooperation stimulate the growth of the local post-production industry but the experience may have advanced participants' technical know-how.

Although *Cape No.7* was aimed at the local mainstream spectators, its cast was mainly composed of unknown singers and non-professional actors rather than stars with high profiles. This decision could be based on a lack of local box office draws and filmmakers' cost considerations. In economic terms, a star can be viewed as capital for the film company, a probable guarantee against loss and attract investment, and a marketing tool to organise the

⁹² Huang has served as the film producer in several domestic high-budget hit movies, including *Double Vision*, *Silk* (*Guisi*, dir. Su Chao-bin, 2006) and *Secret* (*Buneng shuo de, mimi*, dir. Jay Chou, 2007).

market (McDonald, 2000: 11). According to Feii Lu (1998: 191), the development of the star system of Taiwan cinema was connected with the development of Taiwanese melodrama in the 1970s. The huge popularity of melodramas from Taiwan, in particular those adapted from Taiwanese novelist Qiong Yao's romance novels, enabled the local film industry to steadily develop and some Taiwanese stars to shoot to regional stardom. However, with the decline of the Taiwanese film industry since the 1980s, the star economy collapsed correspondingly. Subsequently, a number of stars of Taiwan cinema, such as Brigitte Lin, relocated to Hong Kong in the 1980s to continue their careers. The phenomenon shows both the connection between and permeability of different Chinese cinemas at that time resulting from their long-time transnational exchange mentioned in Introduction. Additionally, Taiwan had been the biggest export market for Hong Kong films between 1984 and 1995 (Leung and Chan, 1997: 142). This fact not only indicated the strong link between different Chinese-language cinemas but also reflected the consolidation of film markets in the region. It allowed these stars to more flexibly cross boundaries in the region to develop their careers. Furthermore, their migration, related economic activities and transnational careers demonstrated Arjun Appadurai's concepts (1996: 33-34) such as ethnoscapes, financescapes and mediascapes in the globalisation process, which emphasises flows of people, capital, and information created by the media in the age of globalisation.

Because of the decline of Taiwan cinema, there are only a few Taiwanese actors possessing strong box office appeal in Taiwan today. Currently, most top Chinese-language movie stars are from Hong Kong and China, e.g. Andy Lau, Jackie Chan and Jet Li. By contrast, Taiwanese actors have insufficient box office appeal in the domestic market as well as foreign markets in general. The fame of singers, TV actors and models cannot necessarily convert into box office gross. Besides, although Wei Te-sheng had considered casting superstars in the film, he was unable to afford their high pay (Ho, Chang and Kao, 2008).

Consequently, Wei cast unknown singers in his film instead of choosing celebrated performers. In the following paragraphs, the term star will mainly refer to performers instead of the big names in show business in order to help explain the casting strategy of *Cape No.7*.

Because of insufficient financing and the collapse of the local star system, Wei decided to look for actors based on the script, and several indie and lesser-known musicians experiencing a rough patch in their careers joined the cast, including the male lead Van Fan, playing Aga, and most of band members. Van Fan, a Taiwanese aboriginal singer, released his debut album in 2002 and was nominated as Best Newcomer in the 2003 Golden Melody Awards, Taiwan's major music award, but his career in the subsequent years was mediocre. Hence he felt that his career had stagnated and considered giving up his music career (Huang, Y., 2009). Apart from Fan, most of the band members have worked in the music industry. For example, Ma Nien-hsien (as Malasun) was the lead vocal and guitarist of the band Sticky Rice (*Cape7*, 2008a); Ying Wei-min (as Frog) is the lead vocal of the band The Clippers (*ibid.*); Min Hsiung (as Rauma) released his album in 1999 (*ibid.*). However, their performing careers were winding down at that time. Besides, several veteran TV actors participated in the film. Ma Ju-lung, who was featured as Aga's stepfather, has developed his acting career over forty years and has performed in several local soap operas (Chen, Y., 2008). Pei Hsiao-lan, who played Aga's mother, has starred in several local soap operas such as *Perfect Neighbours* (*Qinqi bujijiao*, FTV, 1999-2006), the second longest-running drama in Taiwan thus far (Liu, 2009). However, their careers were gradually going downhill then. Moreover, non-professional actors like Yang Chiao-an (as Dada) and folk musician Lin Chung-jen (as Old Mao) appeared in the film.

In addition, the story of the film is associated with cross-cultural romances and transnational activities, and the transnational connection can thus be found in the film credits. Two Japanese characters were played by Japanese performers. The female lead needed to be

proficient in both Mandarin and Japanese, and Taiwan-based Japanese model Chie Tanaka got the role. Tanaka had been developing her acting career since 2006 and was ready to move back to Japan owing to poor career prospects in Taiwan when she got an audition for the film (Wei T., 2008b: 24). She had played bit parts in Japanese and Hong Kong films, but she did not achieve fame until the success of *Cape No.7*. Also, Japanese singer Kousuke Atari, who has enjoyed popularity in Taiwan since 2006, was invited to perform as himself.⁹³ Like high-budget transnational co-productions, *Cape No.7* cast foreign actors in the film. However, their overall box office appeal in both the Taiwanese and Japanese film market was limited. Atari had never played in a film and his role was less important in *Cape No.7*. Tanaka played the main protagonist; however, she had never acted in a major role in the past and was an unknown at that time. In other words, the incredible commercial success of the film did not depend on the performers' stardom.

Cape No.7 did not cast big names; however, its success enabled participants to shoot to national stardom. According to Wei Te-sheng (2008b: 24), these actors had diverse life experiences and personality traits which allowed these characters to demonstrate a composite picture of ordinary life in the film. In transnational co-productions mentioned in previous chapters, participants' symbolic capital, together with cultural capital, played a vital role in the development of those projects. However, performers' symbolic capital made an insignificant contribution to the triumph of *Cape No.7*. Rather, the film helped its participants rise to fame, which increased both their symbolic and economic capital. After the film, Fan held his first large concert at the end of 2008 and Tanaka has endorsed several products in Taiwan. The film also benefited veteran actors' careers. Ma had been gradually retiring from show business after acting in the late 1990s, but *Cape No.7* enabled him to make a comeback

⁹³ Atari's album *Na Tsu Ka Sha* topped the Taiwan Yahoo Music Charts and reached number four in Taiwan G-Music Charts in 2006 (EPIC Records, 2008).

(Chen, Y., 2008). He was awarded Best Supporting Actor at the 2008 Golden Horse Film Awards for his role in *Cape No.7* and has since starred in various domestically-produced films.⁹⁴ As Ivy I-chu Chang (2010: 82) notes, the transformation of their lives was even more dramatic than that which their cinematic counterparts had experienced. Also, as with the fulfilment of protagonists' dreams in the film, the astonishing theatrical success Wei's domestically-made movie achieved at the local box office represents the realisation of a dream of local filmmakers.

The success of *Cape No.7* not only revitalised once-celebrated and unknown performers' careers but also enabled non-professional actors to become media darlings and stars. Lin Chung-jen was a traditional music performer and had never performed in a film or TV programme before *Cape No.7* (Cape7, 2008a). However, his performance in *Cape No.7* as Old Mao, a likable, sincere, out-spoken, stubborn and funny old man who loves to be in the limelight, fascinated local viewers and propelled him to national stardom. It established Lin's star image as the typical Taiwanese grandfather, and consequently he starred in various films, TV dramas and TV adverts in Taiwan before his death in 2011. The film also brought Lin's skill in performing the *yueqin* to media and public attention, and thus he performed this traditional string instrument in his later works as well as in the National Day celebration in Taiwan. According to Richard deCordova, the identity of stars encompasses three distinctive levels: "as actor (as a professional manipulator of signs), as picture personality (as a personality extrapolated from films), and as star (as someone with a private life distinct from screen image)" (1990: 146-147). Star images cover both on-screen and off-screen lives and are constructed together by the discourse on acting, performers, mass media, the movie business, related industries and the audience. In Lin's case, the manipulation of the market

⁹⁴ The Golden Horse Film Awards is an annual Chinese-language film competition held in Taiwan and could be regarded as one of the most prestigious film awards within Chinese-speaking world. The event is also considered the "Chinese-language Oscars" ("*Golden Horse Film Awards*", 2012).

and media drew public attention to his private life and personal achievement. Thus, different identities of the star influenced and constructed each other, thereby creating Lin's star images and increasing his stardom.

Lin's case displays a connection between Wei's filmmaking and TNC films. Similarly, casting non-professional actors is also a distinct characteristic of TNC films, and a number of non-professional actors, consequently, entered show business. Li Tien-lu, a late Taiwanese master of glove puppetry, made his film debut in *Dust in the Wind* (*Lianlian fengchen*, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1986) and performed as himself in *The Puppetmaster*, a story based on Li's early life. Tsai Chen-nan, a local musician, also began his acting career with *A City of Sadness* (*Beiqing chengshi*, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1989) and has appeared in around fifty films and TV dramas so far. Moreover, actors' personal achievements, such as Li's exalted status in the development of Taiwanese glove puppetry and the popularity of Tasi's Taiwanese-dialect pop songs, received more attention due to their appearance in films. In addition to financial restrictions, both Wei and TNC filmmakers try to provide a realistic social portrayal, notwithstanding their different artistic and commercial concerns. Hence, it is understandable that they intend to cast non-professional performers in films. For Wei, *Cape No.7* proved that a film can be popular without the appearance of noted stars, which responds to doubts about the viability of Wei casting a non-professional actor as the lead in his next film, *Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale* (*Saideke balai*, dir. Wei Te-sheng, 2011, hereafter *Seediq Bale*), the biggest-budget domestically-produced film ever made in Taiwan (Lan: 2008). Nonetheless, while stars are not indispensable for the success, they can contribute to the production and consumption of a film. Additionally, a film without celebrated and experienced performers can offer exhibitors and spectators less information with which to create expectations of films prior to their release. Stars can be advantageous

when selling a film, and their influence on marketing *Cape No.7* will be elaborated on in the following paragraphs.

Marketing and Distribution

The astounding success of *Cape No.7* can be credited to transnational connections shown in the project in terms of its distribution. The film was produced by Wei's ARS Film Production, marketed by Good Day Films, and distributed by Buena Vista Film Company, Walt Disney Studio Motion Pictures' Taiwan branch. It may be claimed that the Hollywood distributor's engagement was crucial to the commercial performance of *Cape No.7* at Taiwan's box office. Whilst Hollywood studios have been involved with Taiwan's film industry for decades, they had only played the role of distributor to release Hollywood films in Taiwan till the early 1990s. In 1994, Warner Bros. established Warner Asia in Taipei to handle film distribution in the region and began to release local films with artistic and commercial merit (Lui, 1994). For Warner Bros., Taiwan is a place close to Mandarin filmmaking talents and was a possible destination they might gather when the Hong Kong handover was going to occur in 1997 (ibid.). However, regardless of the actual development of Hong Kong cinema later, it seems that the disappointing theatrical performance of films from Taiwan it distributed, including *A Confucian Confusion* (*Duli shidai*, dir. Edward Yang, 1994), *Daughter-in-law* (*Aba de qingren*, dir. Steve Wang, 1995), and *Super Citizen Ko* (*Chaoji da guomin*, dir. Wan Jen, 1995), held back its distribution of domestic films in Taiwan until the second half of the 2000s.

Nevertheless, a collaborative relationship between Hollywood distributors and Taiwanese filmmakers has been gradually forged, and Hollywood distributors' involvement has contributed substantially to the recuperation of domestic cinema in the past few years. The huge popularity of Hollywood films in Taiwan allows Hollywood-run distributors

immense influence over film exhibition and consumption in Taiwan, because they grab the distribution rights of most Hollywood films. Today, Hollywood-run distributors occupy a dominant position in the Taiwanese film market. According to the *Taiwan Cinema Yearbook* (Wang, C., 2010b: 78-83; 2011b: 42-46), the total market share of Hollywood distributors' Taiwan branches, namely Buena Vista, Warner, UIP, and Fox, in Taiwan's film market from 2008 to 2010 was 69.9%.⁹⁵ Hollywood companies' enormous power in local distribution and exhibition drives local filmmakers to seek partnerships with them. The local arms of Hollywood distributors have become more willing to participate in the distribution of native-language films in the new millennium owing to Hollywood's Asian strategy as elaborated on in Chapter Two. Although Hollywood distributors' local arms only distributed fifteen Chinese-language films between 2008 and 2010, accounting for less than 10% of the total number of Chinese-language films released, these films drew 47% of the box office receipts of Chinese-language films in Taiwan during the period (Wang, C., 2010b: 78-83; 2011b: 42-46). Furthermore, fifteen out of the top twenty highest-grossing films from Taiwan at the Taipei box office between 2000 and 2012 were distributed by Hollywood's Taiwan branches (see Appendix 1), and most of them were released following Buena Vista's distribution of *Cape No.7*. The significant role of Hollywood studios in the recent resurgence of Taiwan cinema is evident.

Buena Vista Film's engagement in the project was crucial in making *Cape No.7* a box office drawer. Buena Vista Film has been the largest film distributor in Taiwan since 2006 (Wang, C., 2007: 237; 2008: 132; 2010b: 80-81; 2011b: 44-45). Although the company did not distribute the most number of Chinese-language films in Taiwan between 2006 and 2008, those it released grossed the most in Taiwan's film market (*ibid.*). The fact demonstrates, to

⁹⁵ According to Wang Cheng-hua (2010a: 109; 2011b: 45), *Orz Boyz* and *Monga* were distributed by local distributors. However, both of them were released by Warner Bros.

some degree, Buena Vista's ability to predict a picture's marketability in the Taiwanese film market.⁹⁶ It shows the strong power of Buena Vista within the Taiwanese distribution-exhibition system. According to Chen Li and Ping Ke (2008), Buena Vista decided to distribute *Cape No.7* after its staff saw the rough cut of the film in May 2008. From the viewpoint of Fu Ming-ming, the general manager of Buena Vista, *Cape No.7* was able to cater to all ages and genders and have high commercial potential (ibid.). The number of prints of a domestic film in Taiwan is usually around eight to ten during the premiere week whereas *Cape No.7* was released with forty prints (Chang, J., 2010). Additionally, films released by Hollywood distributors will not normally be taken immediately off the screen if they perform unsatisfactorily at box office at the beginning. Thus Wei's collaboration with Buena Vista provided the film with more opportunities to be screened. Furthermore, Buena Vista is familiar with the film marketing and the local film market, and it was beneficial to the marketing campaign of *Cape No.7*.

Apart from Hollywood studio's distribution, the marketing campaign conducted by local company Good Day Films and supported by Buena Vista contributed to the film's conspicuous commercial success. Li Ya-mei, the head of the company and also associate producer of *Cape No.7*, adopted a multi-platform marketing campaign to use the Internet, word-of-mouth marketing, traditional strategies and mass media to promote the film. In comparison with other locally-made films, *Cape No.7* paid more attention to the marketing campaign and had a more organised strategy ("*Analysis of the Marketing Campaign*", 2008: 55). Unlike other locally-made films, preparation for the marketing campaign occurred simultaneously with the film production in the case of *Cape No.7*, which enabled marketers to obtain sufficient materials about the film production for the marketing campaign (ibid.). The Internet played an important role in introducing the project to viewers. The official blog

⁹⁶ Marketability refers to the ability of a film to attract viewers into cinemas (Kerrigan, 2010: 41).

of the film, *Cape7*, was launched several months before the film's release; frequent information updates, clear and attractive information, and the content manager's active interaction with visitors attracted Internet surfers to the blog and motivated them to follow the development of the film and participate in the discussion (Lin, 2010). The blog *Cape7* served as a mechanism to hook web surfers, create a virtual public sphere, and capture users' imagination before the film release. The blog *Cape7* was nominated the Annual Best Enterprise and Organizational Blog in 2008 Global Chinese-language Blog Awards and has more than 10 million hits thus far (ibid.).⁹⁷

Moreover, word-of-mouth played a central role in the marketing campaign of *Cape No.7*. First, Li conducted sneak previews with the help of Buena Vista. More than eight thousand people in different cities were invited to the screenings, including public figures and opinion leaders in various domains (Chen and Ping, 2008; "*Analysis of the Marketing Campaign*", 2008: 56-57). Their endorsements drew public attention to the film. A number of popular bloggers and opinion leaders in cyberspace such as the moderator of the movie discussion board of PTT BBS (Bulletin Board System), one of the biggest Internet forums in Taiwan, were also invited to attend the sneak previews ("*Analysis of the Marketing Campaign*", 2008: 57; Lin, 2010). Owing to the combination of the Internet and sneak previews, praise for the film spread widely and rapidly through cyberspace, thereby encouraging its consumption and reception.

Furthermore, the marketer combined word-of-mouth marketing with traditional marketing strategies and stars to attract media and public attention. The marketing campaign was conducted from October 2007, and the high cost of the film and transnational cast were the main topics. However, the media did not pay much attention to the film because neither

⁹⁷ According to Misaki Chen, Press Coordinator of *Cape No.7*, the official blog of an average Chinese-language film could have around 100,000 hits (Lin, 2010).

Wei nor Fan nor Tanaka was a media personality. Afterwards, marketers attempted to publicise some interesting events, such as the special appearance of Atari and Taiwanese singer Liang Wen-yin, and the endorsement of celebrities, such as Hou Hsiao-hsien and a variety show host Chang Hsiao-yen, to gain media exposure (“*Analysis of the Marketing Campaign*”, 2008, 2008: 56). In June 2008, *Cape No.7* was selected as the opening film and premiered at the 2008 Taipei Film Festival. The film won the Grand Prize in the film festival and received growing media coverage thereafter (Hsiang, 2009: 58).

With the increasing popularity of *Cape No.7*, the media gave rare attention to this locally-made film. The film gradually became a cultural phenomenon, and related issues such as local tourism, colonial history, the development of Taiwan cinema and nativist ideology were reported by the media. Take, for example, the *United Daily News*, a primary broadsheet in Taiwan. According to Hsiang Yi-fei (2009: 61), more than seven hundred reports on *Cape No.7* were published in the *United Daily News* between the film’s release in late August and the end of 2008. Also, after *Cape No.7* and *Orz Boyz* advertised together on 11 September, a report “*Cape No.7* Hot; New Cinema Takes Off Again” appeared on the front-page of the *United Daily News* the next day (Hsiang, 2008b). It is arguable the growth of the film’s popularity led to the increase of media coverage, and vice versa.

Moreover, stardom helped promote *Cape No.7*, and stars were created during the marketing campaign. Take, for example, the event of nude swimming. In the mid-2008, Ethan Ruan, the male lead of Taiwan’s popular “idol drama” *Fated to Love You* (*Mingzhongzhuding wo ai ni*, SET, 2008), promised to swim naked if the drama’s share of the ratings exceeded 10% (Alexandri, 2008). The news aroused the interest of the media and viewers, and both Ruan and the drama received widespread media coverage. Likewise, Fan promised he would swim naked if *Cape No.7* grossed over NT\$20 million when the film was released. With the growth of the box office intake, Fan’s promise enabled both Fan and the

film to gain more media coverage and allowed his name to be linked with the rising star Ruan. Fan fulfilled his promise when the film grossed around NT\$100 million at the Taiwan box office, and several TV stations dispatched SNG (Satellite news gathering) trucks to Kenting, Hengchun, also the filming location of the film, to broadcast live ("*Cape No.7 Grosses*," 2008). The event has not only made nude swimming a popular way of promoting films and TV programmes in the Taiwanese show business henceforth, it has also helped the creation of stars and film sales in the case of *Cape No.7*. Overall, the marketing campaign and the Hollywood company's distribution helped *Cape No.7* become an exceptional commercial triumph and receive great public attention.

As a whole, the marketing campaign of *Cape No.7* displays Taiwanese filmmakers' increasing regard for film marketing and new communication technologies, which reflects the progress of the domestic industrial institutions and the recovery of the industrial structure. Whilst the film aims to represent rural Taiwan and offer a grassroots imagination, Hollywood-run Buena Vista was critical to its distribution, exhibition and consumption. The fact demonstrates Hollywood distributors' dominant position in the Taiwanese film industry, Hollywood's Asian strategy, and the significance of transnational connections for the revival of Taiwan commercial cinema. It also shows the blurring line between the local and the global today.

National Craze for *Cape No.7*

Contextual Causes of the National Craze

The extraordinary box office performance of *Cape No.7* drew the attention of the press and the public to this locally-produced film as well as to the development of Taiwan cinema. Accordingly, "*Cape No.7 fever*" was kindled, and this national craze brought about a number

of economic, cultural, political and social phenomena, which made *Cape No.7* a far-reaching film for the revitalisation of the Taiwanese film industry in the past few years. The success of *Cape No.7* can be credited to the concurrence of various factors, and contextual factors were a vital precondition for the emergence of the national craze apart from Hollywood's engagement in distribution and a well-organised marketing campaign.

The national craze for *Cape No.7* should be understood in its economic and political context. The global financial crisis and recession from the late 2000s caused economic depression and rising unemployment in Taiwan. Additionally, the opening of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing to some degree signified the rise of China, which may have both restored a sense of pride in the Taiwanese and increased anxiety about China's enormous power owing to complex political, economic and cultural relationships between the two countries. Furthermore, all long-term polarised politics and political dispute and scandals on the island, party switching after the 2008 presidential election, and the unsettled unification–independence dispute increased Taiwanese people's anxieties. Thus, political instability and the fear of unemployment made the lives of the Taiwanese a misery at that time. In this context, *Cape No.7*, a colourful, inspiring and heart-warming comedy with strong local colour and fine production, comforted the depressed Taiwanese. As Wu Nien-jen (Wang, H., 2008) claims, “the high popularity of *Cape No.7* evidences a fact: many Taiwanese had had no emotional outlet in the past half year.” In addition, the triumph of *Cape No.7* could be attributed to a lack of Hollywood blockbusters in the same summer. Rushou Robert Chen (Teng, 2009b: 35) maintains that “*Cape No.7*'s path to box-office success was related to the Hollywood ‘vacuum’” caused by the Hollywood writers' strike in 2007. Contextual factors can therefore be said to be fundamental to the national craze of *Cape No.7*.

National Craze: Consumption

The amazing box office intake enabled *Cape No.7* to set a high benchmark for Taiwan cinema. In the past, only Ang Lee's transnational co-productions, including *CTHD* and *Lust, Caution* (*Se, Jie*, 2007), had taken more than NT\$100 million and ranked in the top 10 at annual Taipei box office (see Table 4). Although *Cape No.7* had a lower budget,⁹⁸ a less famous cast and an internationally unknown film crew in comparison with Lee's films, it achieved an even bigger box office success in Taiwan. The box office performance of *Cape No.7* reversed the usual blockbuster pattern. The film was officially screened on 22 August 2008 and made around NT\$2 million on the opening weekend in Taipei, which was satisfactory for a Chinese-language film. On 30 August, the film received more than NT\$1 million at Taipei box office in one day, and the figure exceeded the total box office of a number of Taiwanese films, including Lee Kang-sheng's *Help Me Eros* (*Bangbang wo aishen*, 2008) (*Cape7*, 2008c; Ho, 2009: 102).⁹⁹ The daily box office of *Cape No.7* between 3 September and 30 October all surpassed NT\$1 million, and the film took in more than NT\$10 million on 20 September, 27 September, 29 September and 4 October respectively (*Cape7*, 2008c). The increase in single-day box office revenues may be said to demonstrate the emergence of "*Cape No.7* fever" occurring in Taiwan since early September in that year.

Table 4 Taiwan's Top10 Grossing Locally-Made Films Between 2000 and 2010
(Source: *Taiwan Cinema Yearbook*)

No	Title	Year	Taipei Box-Office (NT\$M)	Annual Ranking
1	<i>Cape No.7 (Haijiao qihao)</i>	2008	232.32	1

⁹⁸ The cost of *Cape No.7* was around NT\$50 million; costs of *CTHD* and *Lust, Caution* were both around US\$15 million (approx. NT\$500 million).

⁹⁹ The daily box office of *Cape No.7* on 30 August was NT\$1.67 million; the total box office of *Help Me Eros* was NT\$1.44 million at Taipei box office.

2	<i>Lust, Caution (Se, Jie)</i>	2007	137.05	4
3	<i>Monga (Mengjia)</i>	2010	117.01	3
4	<i>Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon (Wohu canglong)</i>	2000	110.15	3
5	<i>Legend of the Sacred Stone (Sheng shi chuanshuo)</i>	2000	41.75	19
6	<i>Double Vision (Shuang tong)</i>	2002	36.92	18
7	<i>Secret (Buneng shuo de, mimi)</i>	2007	26.77	25
8	<i>Silk (Guisi)</i>	2006	22.18	33
9	<i>Seven Days in Heaven (Fuhou qiri)</i>	2010	17.80	44
10	<i>Orz Boyz (Jiong nanhai)</i>	2008	17.27	40

Additionally, the increase in the number of prints from 40 to a maximum of 98 showed not only the strong power of the distributor but also the increasing popularity of *Cape No.7*. The film grossed NT\$232.3 million at the box office in Taipei over 114 days and NT\$530 million in Taiwan (*Cape7*, 2008c; Chang, J., 2010). It topped the annual box office in Taiwan and outstripped Hollywood blockbusters such as *The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor* (Rob Cohen, 2008) and *The Dark Knight* (Christopher Nolan, 2008), both of which took in around NT\$110 million at Taipei box office. The film is the highest-grossing Chinese-language film of all time and was, at the time, the second-highest-grossing film in Taiwan's film market, only second to *Titanic* (James Cameron, 1997). *Cape No.7* constituted more than two thirds of the box office income of Taiwan films that year. Its incredible box office receipts lifted the annual share of box office earnings of films from Taiwan to 12.09% (*Taiwan Cinema*, 2012), which set a box office record for Taiwan's films in the 1990s and 2000s (see Table 5 and Figure 2).

Table 5 Distribution of Films from Taiwan Receiving over NT\$10 Million (Taipei) Between 2000 and 2011 (Source: *Taiwan Cinema Yearbook*; *Taiwan Cinema*, 2012)

Gross Year	Above NT\$200 M	NT\$200 M -NT\$100 M	NT\$100 M -NT\$50 M	NT\$50 M -NT\$20 M	NT\$20 M -NT\$10 M	Market Share
2000	0	1	0	1	0	4.65%
2001	0	0	0	0	0	0.20%
2002	0	0	0	1	0	2.21%
2003	0	0	0	0	0	0.30%
2004	0	0	0	0	1	1.13%
2005	0	0	0	0	1	1.59%
2006	0	0	0	1	0	1.62%
2007	0	1	0	1	0	7.38%
2008	1 (<i>Cape No.7</i>)	0	0	0	3	12.09%
2009	0	0	0	0	2	2.13%
2010	0	1	0	0	3	7.31%
2011	0	3	1	2	3	18.65%

The impressive box office takings, together with the positive reception, pushed *Cape No.7* into the national spotlight in September 2008. The film received considerable public attention, and going to see *Cape No.7* soon became a national craze under the circumstances mentioned previously. Hou Hsiao-hsien endorsed the film and said: “I have been waiting for a Taiwan film like this for a long time” (Hsiang, 2008b). Spectators would not only recommend the film through personal networks but also go to see the film several times. According to Wei (Lan, 2008), a viewer told his/her mother: “Mum, you won’t believe that. I’m going to see a domestic movie!” Afterwards, the mother and her friends went to see the film. Furthermore, a spectator saw the film nine times in twelve days since it was a means of social and interpersonal interaction (ibid.). “Have you seen *Cape No.7*?” became a form of

greeting in Taiwan during the screening period of the film (Lee, 2008: 59). In other words, the film attracted unexpected audiences and, arguably, factors such as a sense of belonging and social identity let the film receive unexpected popularity. Consequently, to see and support *Cape No.7* became a national pastime, and *Cape No.7* gradually became an object of nationalist sentiment.

The stunning commercial performance of *Cape No.7* rekindled hope for the revitalisation of the Taiwanese film industry. The Taiwanese film industry showed signs of improvement in 2007, and *Cape No.7* took a great step further towards it. Two transnational co-productions, *Secret (Buneng shuo de, mimi, dir. Jay Chou, 2007)* and *Lust, Caution*, boosted the revenues of films from Taiwan in 2007 (see Table 5). In the next year, four films from Taiwan took over NT\$10 million at the Taipei box office; this had been the best record in the past two decades. The national craze for *Cape No.7* resulting from the immense popularity of the film helped boost box office takings of domestic films released subsequently, such as *Orz Boyz* and *1895 in Formosa*. In the first half year of 2008, *Kung Fu Dunk* was the only film crossing NT\$10 million mark at the Taipei box office (NT\$15.9 million); and *Winds of September*, the number two film from Taiwan, only drew less than NT\$5 million. By contrast, *Orz Boyz* and *1895 in Formosa* opened after the release of *Cape No.7* in late August and received, respectively, NT\$17.4 million and NT\$13.3 million at the Taipei box office (Wang, C., 2010b: 79).

It is undeniable that other films could have enjoyed less media coverage since the media focus was drawn to *Cape No.7*; however, film critic Wen Tien-hsiang (2008a) disagreed with this argument and pointed out that the Taiwanese media would not have paid much attention to locally-made films without the astonishing success of *Cape No.7*. On the contrary, the audience's pleasure in watching *Cape No.7* motivated them to see *Orz Boyz*. Journalist Hsiang Yi-fei (2009: 61) also claims that there existed a mutual promotional effect between

these films. The co-promotion between these two films on 11 September 2008 allowed both of them to grab headlines (ibid.: 58). Of course, the actual impact of the national craze on subsequent films was hard to evaluate; however, both Yang Ya-che, the director of *Orz Boyz*, and Gene Yao, the manager of its distributor Swallow Wings Films, admitted that the huge success of *Cape No.7* boosted their confidence in box office performance (Ho, Chang and Kao, 2008; Ho, 2009: 104). Furthermore, the re-release of *Winds of September* in September, which had been released in June, can be partly attributed to the success of *Cape No.7* as well (Chen and Chen, 2009: 63). Hence, the success of *Cape No.7* encouraged local spectators to re-enter the cinema to see domestic films. In this regard, one of the most important accomplishments of *Cape No.7* was to break local spectators' stereotypical perception of domestic films: dull, deep and confusing. The craze also rekindled the hope of enthusiasts and filmmakers for the revival of Taiwan cinema. Film directors such as Chen Kun-ho and Lin Cheng-sheng claimed that another wave of TNC would emerge when the *Cape No.7* fever was triggered (Hsiang, 2008b). Celebrities such as writer Shu Kuo-chih (2008) also provided their analysis of the film text or related phenomena on the media.

Thus, the huge commercial success of *Cape No.7* has altered Taiwanese people's attitude towards domestic cinema to some degree and proved high market potential for domestic films in Taiwan. In this context, contemporary Taiwanese filmmakers, like their TNC predecessors, try to incorporate nativist cultural elements, collective memories and daily life experience into their works in order to repeat the triumph of *Cape No.7*; nonetheless, their local imagination is presented with easily-digestible narration and easy-to-follow structures to appeal to the mainstream audience. Some post-TNC films, such as *Monga, You Are the Apple of My Eye* (Naxienian, *women yiqi zhui de nühai*, dir. Giddens Ko, 2011), both two parts of *Seediq Bale*, and *Din Tao: Leader of the Parade* (*Zhentou*, dir. Fung Kai, 2012), exceeded the NT\$100 million mark and ranked in the annual top ten at the Taipei box office.

Their commercial success shows that there is room for domestic films in Taiwan's film market, and local cultural products are still irreplaceable for the local audience. It also proves that films telling local stories can compete with extreme-budget Hollywood blockbusters in the domestic marketplace.

National Craze, Nativism and Nationalism

Whilst contextual factors and distribution strategy were important to the box office outcome of *Cape No.7*, nativist consciousness and the grassroots imagination that film revealed also occupied a central role in the craze for *Cape No.7* in Taiwan. Concurrent with the development of political democratisation and decolonisation process since the lifting of martial law in 1987,¹⁰⁰ nativism and local consciousness were gradually embedded and manifested in various channels such as literature, cinema, civil society and political movement. The popularity of documentary films, such as *Let It Be (Wumile)*, dir. Yen Lan-chuan and Juang Yi-tseng, 2005), which documented old Taiwanese farmers' affection for the land and the impact of the WTO on their livelihood, and *Island Etude (Lianxiqiu)*, dir. En Chen, 2007), which is related to a round-island bike tour and is a "a realistic portrayal of Taiwan in 2006 made for 23 million people on the island" (Chen and Chen, 2010: 25), reflected the surge of nativism in contemporary Taiwan.¹⁰¹ In this vein, Wei tried to represent a multi-ethnic Taiwan and Taiwanese ordinary life through *Cape No.7*. He states: "Since *Cape No.7* is a story set in Taiwan, of course it should be packaged with features of Taiwan to present local value. Local culture should not only be incorporated into the film but also penetrate into the content deeply" (Lan, 2008). The great concern for grassroots features,

¹⁰⁰ According to Kuan-hsing Chen (2010: 9, 55), Taiwan shifted from Japanese colonisation to the internal colonisation of the KMT regime, which was backed by the United States, and America's new imperialism after WWII. The political democratisation can be perceived as the new beginning of decolonisation process.

¹⁰¹ *Let It Be* is a documentary taking number four among domestic films at the Taipei box office of 2005. *Island Etude* ranked number three among locally made films with NT\$8.9 million at the box office in Taipei.

local representation and Taiwan's cultural identity in Wei's filmmaking manifests the considerable influence of nativism over Taiwan cinema since the TNC movement as well as the socio-cultural context of Taiwan in the past few decades.

Besides, the native consciousness of *Cape No.7* is underlined by tackling the dialectical relationship between modernity and nativism, globalisation and local subjectivity, which reflects the impact of global capitalism and modernisation on the local social circumstances and natives' response to and misgivings about this process. At the beginning of *Cape No.7*, Tomoko is headed to Hengchun with a group of foreign models of various ethnicities for a photo shoot. When the minibus pulls up at a narrow ancient city gate of Hengchun, she argues with the driver and tries to force him to drive through the gate, disregarding his advice that the bus would get stuck. At the same time, ignoring the protests from the foreign photographer, Hong, the Chairperson of Township Council, deliberately pushes through the crowd and struts between the camera and models to disturb the photo shoot. These plots could symbolise the conflict between modernisation/globalisation (the bus with foreign models, Tomoko coming from abroad and the photo shoot) and the local surroundings (the narrow ancient gate and the native politician).

Moreover, the "build-operate-transfer" model (BOT) was explicitly incorporated into the diagnosis of *Cape No.7*. The Taiwanese government has advocated BOT since the the enforcement of the Act for Promotion of Private Participation in Infrastructure Projects in 1994 in order to promote the private participation in developing the infrastructure. Consequently, transport infrastructure projects, like Taiwan High Speed Rail, and many tourism development projects were conducted through the BOT model (Tourism Bureau, 2011). However, because of the negative news and controversy about those projects, in Taiwan BOT has somehow become a term linked with the deleterious influence of capitalism and globalisation, with which free-market capitalism is often associated. In *Cape No.7*, when

the hotel manager, also the organiser of Kousuke Atari's beach concert, and Hong, the Chairperson of Township Council, bargain over the selection of the warm-up band for the concert, the dialogue and Hong's insistence on using a local band reveal an anxiety about the impact of global culture and capitalism upon the locals' livelihoods and local cultural subjectivity:

Hong: The hotel is yours, but the sea is ours. You think rich people can make everything BOT?

Hotel Manager: What are you talking about? We have to go global now. It's a global village.

Hong: What global village? You outsiders build up hotels and make money here. The lands BOT; the mountains BOT; now the sea BOT too. What about us natives? Leave hometown for employment? Are we living on the same Earth?

These lines highlight the conflict between global capitalism and local identity as well as the tension between modernity and nativism. BOT is a popular method adopted by the Taiwanese government to encourage private investment in the public infrastructure in the 21st century, yet in the film it is criticised as being a conspiracy to profit capitalists. Hong's complaint implies that local culture and landscape are commoditised as objects for sale to external tourists and consumers under global capitalism, whereas local subjectivity is pushed to the sidelines. Responding to the phenomenon, Hong decides to form a local band to join the event rather than thwart the beach party. On the one hand, the locals are the host in the margin and have to give way to global capitalism. On the other hand, Hong's decision to take part in the transnational occasion enables native musicians to prove themselves and make the local voice heard. The local subjectivity is thus reaffirmed through the negotiation between the local and the global. As Ivy I-chu Chang (2010: 94) argues, "the assembly, rehearsals, and performance of the local band in addition to the Taiwanese-Japanese produced rock concert all demonstrate the paradox of transnational cultures interacting in a post-modern time-space environment." *Cape No.7* exhibits both the conflict and collaboration between the

local and the global. It shows the situation Taiwanese people have encountered and can be perceived as an epitome of contemporary Taiwan under the impact of globalisation.

For Mike Featherstone, although economic and cultural globalisation might cause the destruction of locality due to the high permeability of cultural boundaries, it could also impel nation-states to “reconstitute their collective identities along pluralistic and multicultural lines which take into account regional and ethnic differences and diversity . . . (and) reconstitute a sense of locality” (1995: 95). Transnational connections between Taiwan and Japan were used to link the Taiwanese of different generations together on account of the historical context of Taiwan. Wei Te-sheng (Lan, 2008) considers that Taiwanese people have ambivalent feelings towards their Japanese coloniser. The complex relationship drove him to use seven love letters to express the love, hatred and regret of Taiwanese people at the end of the Japanese colonial period. Additionally, he used another romance between a young cross-cultural couple in the 21st century to make a contrast between couples in different ages and to alleviate the suffering caused by the story of the couple breaking up in 1945 (ibid.).

Ivy I-chu Chang (2010) articulates that *Cape No.7* links the older generation’s nostalgia for Japan and the younger generation’s Japanophilia by means of cultural artefacts. Cultural artefacts, such as the letters, a yellowed photograph and the Japanese version of Schubert’s folk song “Heidenröslein” (The Wild Rose), “calls upon the spirits of times past (the deceased Japanese lover or memories of colonialism) to bring out an ‘anthropological place’ filled with local recollections and historic nostalgia” (ibid.: 87). In this regard, *Cape No.7* recalls the colonial complex of the ex-colonised and attracted an older generation of Taiwanese to see the film. On the other hand, the colonial complex drove some Taiwanese to idealise the colonial experience and consider Japan a symbol of modernisation. Besides, as mentioned in Chapter Two, the rapid transnational circulation of Japanese cultural commodities in the past few decades has cultivated a group of young Japanophiles in Taiwan.

Cape No.7 depicts a Taiwanese–Japanese romance and the Japanese singer’s attendance at the beach concert to conform to the Japanophilic trend in order to appeal to younger spectators. By combining chic Japanophilia, cultural artefacts and the local landscape, the film presents a transnational imagination in order to facilitate Taiwanese young adults’ and Japanophiles’ identification of the multinational characters and plot of the film (ibid.: 93). Hence *Cape No.7* can be viewed a cinematic object linking different generations of the Taiwanese through revisiting historical memories and popular culture, which served as a precondition for the national craze of *Cape No.7*.

Heated Debate, Local Subjectivity and Allegorical Reading

Thus, the huge popularity of *Cape No.7* in Taiwan owes much to the incorporation into its content of grassroots features and cultural artefacts related to colonial memories and the Japanophilia trend. Nonetheless, the historical nostalgia the film reveals stirred up debates about national and cultural identity and colonial complex. *Cape No.7* touches the ambivalent sentiments of Taiwanese people towards Japan partly caused by Taiwan’s colonial history, which leaves room for political and allegorical readings of the film. The Japanese teacher’s undelivered love letters, which are narrated as voiceover throughout the movie, reveal on the surface the longings of the former Japanese coloniser for Taiwan. In fact, they denote the postcolonial nostalgia of the Taiwanese for the colonial regime. Hsu Jie-lin (2008), the director of Japan Research Institute in Taiwan, severely criticises *Cape No.7* for being created in the shadow of colonial culture and for its lack of a broader worldview. The film shows that “the Taiwanese still cannot escape the clutches of Japanese culture.”

On the other hand, seeing the film as a national allegory, Chen I-chung (2008), an associate research fellow at the Academia Sinica, claims that the film indicates Taiwanese people’s sadness originates from the Japanese coloniser’s abandonment of the Taiwanese,

and the reversal of gender roles between the Taiwanese and the Japanese in cross-cultural romances of different times alleviates this sense of sadness. It also reveals a Taiwanese desire to be colonised caused by KMT's authoritarian rule and reflects a lack of subjective consciousness in contemporary Taiwan. Ivy I-chu Chang further points out that "the feminization of the previous colonizer denotes the changing form of 'cultural colonization' in the post-colonial period affected by capitalist globalization" (2010: 95). Hsu's and Chen's arguments imply that a dependency complex and an inferiority complex are embedded in the Taiwanese, and the ghost of colonialism still lingers on. It is therefore necessary to revisit the decolonisation process and analyse the cultural subjectivity of Taiwan.

Hsu's and Chen's Letters to the Editor published respectively in *United Daily News* and *China Times* provoked much criticism from all sides, including fans of the film and people with different political stances, in both cyberspace and the press. The theme of *Cape No.7* is related to politically-sensitive topics in Taiwan, including local subjectivity, national identity and the modern history of Taiwan. Liu Chin-hsin (2008), a former legislator, disparages the idea that Hsu and Chen made their analyses based upon prejudice and that they read too much into the movie. Some researchers also urge for a more rational and open-minded perspective for the examination of the colonial history and national imagination (Ho and Cheng, 2008). These responses, both of which were published in *China Times*, praised the value of local imagination and the tolerant attitude underlined in Wei's film and rejected a national allegorical reading made by analysts like Chen I-chung. Chi Wei-jan, an eminent playwright, also suggests bringing the focus back to the film's content and the development of domestic cinema instead of revolving around national allegory, philosophy and worldview (2008).

The above discussion published in the press still kept the focus on the film itself whereas many verbal attacks on the Internet were emotional and offensive. Chen Ying-ching, a famous blogger and seasoned book editor, condemns the phenomenon thus: "When we refer

to *Cape No.7*, our freedom of speech is suddenly restricted. Since when do we have to fight for the freedom of speech from netizens rather than the ruling class?" (Chen, 2008, cited in Chen and Ping, 2008). His comment not only highlights the negative side of cyberculture but also indicates the connection between nationalism and the craze for *Cape No.7*. A number of people from the general public engaged in the debate via the Internet or the mass media, which partly demonstrates the sensitivity of the themes Wei handles as well as the significant attention the film attracted. The heated debate was a part of the craze, and they, in turn, reinforced the craze itself.

Nativism, Politician Forces and Civil Society

In addition to the staggering commercial performance and heated debate, politicians' engagement in the craze brought further attention to Wei's box office hit. Some politicians exploited the film to gain media exposure and to show their concern for Taiwan cinema and the native soil. As Kuan-hsing Chen argues, with the development of Taiwan's independence movement, effects of de-colonisation, such as nativism, were manipulated by political forces and used as tools of power struggle in the political field (2006b: 173). There has been political polarisation in Taiwan for decades. The "pan-blue" coalition is inclined to maintain the status of no unification, no independence, and no use of force regarding cross-strait relations.¹⁰² On the other hand, the opposition "pan-green" coalition adopts a more hostile attitude towards China and espouses the independence of Taiwan.¹⁰³ Even though these two political coalitions possess diverse political ideologies, both of them emphasise local subjectivity, national sovereignty and nativisation in Taiwan.

¹⁰² The pan-blue coalition is comprised of the KMT, the People First Party and the New Party and is led by the ruling KMT. The KMT was defeated by the Democratic Progress Party (DPP) in 2000 and 2004 Taiwan presidential elections, but it returned to power in 2008.

¹⁰³ The pan-green coalition consists of the Democratic Progress Party (DPP) and the Taiwan Solidarity Union) and is led by the DPP.

Hence it is unsurprising that both camps exploited *Cape No.7*, which emphasises native values and tolerance, for their own purposes, though ironically the political confrontation between them could have contributed to the high popularity of the film, which advocates an attitude of tolerance and accommodation. Both coalitions criticised the Chinese government for the possible ban on *Cape No.7* to show their intentions to preserve national sovereignty even though the news had not yet been confirmed (Chang, S., 2008). Moreover, on the 2008 National Day, celebrated on 10 October, President Ma Ying-jeou publicly referred to *Cape No.7* in his speech and praised Wei Te-sheng for pursuing his dream courageously (Office of the President, 2008). *Cape No.7* was also regarded as a symbol of Taiwan and employed as a diplomatic tool. Chen Yunlin, President of Association for Relations across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS) of the PRC,¹⁰⁴ when visiting Taiwan in November 2008, was invited to watch *Cape No.7* to increase his understanding of Taiwan (Wang and Lan, 2008). This implies that the local representation and grassroots imagination presented in *Cape No.7* were elevated to a national status and recognised as the emblem of Taiwanese cultural subjectivity by the authorities, regardless of the political intention behind these acts.

In addition to politicians, some civil groups such as the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) were keen supporters of *Cape No.7*. According to the statistics of the PCT (2009), the PCT had a membership of 230,112 in 2008 and is the biggest Protestant sect in Taiwan according to Ministry of the Interior (2013a). Besides its large membership, the PCT is well-known for its strong political stance. The PCT espouses the independence of Taiwan and accentuates the creation of local subjectivity (PCT, 2010). Wei Te-sheng is a member of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, and the influence of Christianity penetrated the film; for example, he designed a plot about a worship service in the film, which was filmed in Jiadong Presbyterian Church in Taiwan. Besides, the reverend was played by Huang Hsing-chuan,

¹⁰⁴ ARATS is Chinese official organisation for handling matters with Taiwan.

also the Reverend of Yongkang Presbyterian Church, to which Wei belongs. During the film's promotion period, Wei appeared on a programme on Good TV, a Christian satellite TV station in Taiwan, along with several cast members (*True Love Blog*, 2008). Moreover, some Presbyterians, such as Reverend Huang Chun-sheng, officially recommended the film to their friends and other church members, and even analysed the film in terms of theology (Huang, C., 2008). The support of the PCT could be partly attributed to the PCT's inclination towards nativism. Moreover, according to Pierre Bourdieu (1986: 248), social capital, "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition", is one of the fundamental forms of capital. That is, the institutionalised social networks and relationships could provide members of groups with practical support and symbolic prestige. In this regard, as a member of the PCT, Wei's social capital partly contributed to the consumption of *Cape No.7* in Taiwan.

Cultural Phenomena and After-Effects

I have expounded the national craze for *Cape No.7* in Taiwan in terms of consumption, discourses, the political arena and civil society in previous sections. As for the economic aspect, the cultural phenomena of *Cape No.7* brought product placement and film-induced tourism to the attention of the public. They not only reinforced the craze but also impacted on filmmaking activities in Taiwan. *Cape No.7* adopted product placement with various businesses to obtain resources, including funding, sets and props, for filmmaking. For manufacturers, the combination of joint promotion, product placement, merchandising and tie-ins permits identifiable name brand products to be promoted to a sizable audience in a measurable way (Wasko, 2003: 169). In the case of *Cape No.7*, more than twenty commodities are incorporated into the film ("*Analysis of the Marketing Campaign*", 2008:

57). Ma La Sun millet wine is an example of both product placement and movie-based merchandising. Ma La Sun millet wine is a brand of Taiwanese aboriginal millet wine produced at Wei's request before the filming (Sinyi Township Farmers' Association, 2012). In *Cape No.7*, the wine salesman (acted by Ma Nien-hsien) nicknames himself Malasun to promote Ma La Sun millet wine. Malasun is the bass guitarist of the local band, and viewers can see him holding a bottle of the millet wine to promote the product. The brand name and the slogan are repeated several times throughout the film. The wine entered the market in August to coincide with the release of the film. As a result, the phenomenal success of *Cape No.7* immediately made Ma La Sun millet wine a hot product, the wine even selling out in Sinyi Township, the place of origin (Tseng and Cheng, 2008). In addition, sales of other products "placed" in the film, such as Paiwan lazurite beads and motorbike Wolf 125, also rose during the craze for the film (Chen, Li and Yan, 2008). The case of *Cape No.7* proved the ability of a locally-made film to promote mass consumption, which may have encouraged businesses' investment in film production in Taiwan. The adoption of product placement and movie-based merchandising in *Cape No.7* shows the development of commodification and commercialisation in local filmmaking. It also indicates that post-TNC filmmakers attach more importance to market and profit than their TNC counterparts, seeing film as a cultural commodity more than an artistic form of self-representation.

Moreover, the craze for *Cape No.7* has drawn considerable attention from Taiwan's authorities and filmmakers to movie-induced tourism. John Urry (1990: 1-3) claims that tourism could be linked to people's desire to go away to gaze upon a set of scenes, landscapes or townscapes which separate them from ordinary experience in order to find pleasure; places to visit are chosen partly because of people's anticipation of intense pleasures constructed and sustained through non-tourist practices such as visual cultural products. In this sense, people who seek the sights and sites seen on the silver screen can be seen as movie-induced

tourists. Roger Riley, Dwyne Baker and Carlton S. Van Doren, borrowing the idea from Brent Ritchie's concept of hallmark events,¹⁰⁵ consider the motion picture as "an entertainment ploy where storylines, underlying themes, exciting events, spectacular scenery, and characters create hallmark events. These events create exotic worlds that do not exist in reality but can be recreated through a visit to the location(s) where they were filmed" (1998: 932). On the other hand, Sue Beeton (2004: 9) views film as "more of a promotional vehicle akin to brochure or television advertisement rather than a hallmark event" since it is not a destination-based event in terms of consumption. Regardless of disagreements about definition, the above discourses indicate that film-induced tourism is not only the spin-off of films but also a dynamic network constructed by stakeholders with manifold purposes and interests. It can be used as both a destination-marketing tool for tourism and an approach for gathering resources for filmmakers.

Many cases have demonstrated the influence of film-induced tourism on the tourism industry and economic development. At the macro level, Oxford Economics (2012: 72) estimates that international visitor spending encouraged by UK films at nearly £2.1 billion in the United Kingdom in 2011, which contributed around £1 billion to UK GDP and £230 million to the Exchequer in that year. As for a single film, according to Tourism New Zealand (Barnes and Cieply, 2012), Hobbiton, a site of filming locations of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (Peter Jackson, 2001/2002/2003), has attracted more than 266,000 visitors since its opening, the majority of whom were from abroad. Moreover, six per cent of international visitors to New Zealand in 2004, or roughly 150,000 people, cited the film as a main reason for coming; 11,200 New Zealand visitors saw the trilogy as their only reason. The above statistics show the enormous impact that film-induced tourism can have on national and local

¹⁰⁵ J.R. Brent Ritchie (1984: 2) defines hallmark events as follows: "Major one-time or recurring events of limited duration, developed primarily to enhance the awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination in the short and/or long term. Such events rely for their success on uniqueness, status, or timely significance to create interest and attract attention."

economic development. As for Taiwan, innumerable tourists brought through *A City of Sadness* have transformed the Jiufen area from a mountain town in decline into a popular international tourist spot during the past two decades. Despite the drawbacks of film-induced tourism, such as the destruction of the local cultural landscape (Chang, Y., 2008), the revitalisation of the mountain town must be credited to Hou's film.

Nearly twenty years after Hou's *A City of Sadness*, Wei's *Cape No.7* became another film from Taiwan which inspired a sizeable number of spectators to visit filming locations seen on the silver screen. Hengchun Township, the primary filming location of the film, is a famous tourist resort in Taiwan, and the *Cape No.7* fever made it even more popular. According to Taiwan's Tourism Bureau, the number of tourists to Kenting National Park, Hengchun, went up 19% in 2009 compared to 2008, the year in which the film was released.¹⁰⁶ According to Pan Jian-zhi (2008), many movie fans asked householders to transform houses protagonists in the film lived in into guesthouses, and the sales performance of Château Beach Resort, the main shooting location, increased by 20% after *Cape No.7* was screened. Furthermore, apart from private retailers' tour packages to locations used in *Cape No.7*, the Tourism Bureau collaborated with a local travel agency to launch the "Cape No.7 Bus Tour" to appeal to film lovers (Chen, R., 2008).

This economic and tourism boom is ironic given the township's initial reluctance to facilitate the film's marketing. According to Li Ya-mei, who was in charge of the marketing campaign of *Cape No.7*, local officials dismissed *Cape No.7*'s marketers' suggestion about the coordination between the promotion of *Cape No.7* and local tourism before the film was released, because the officials thought "the movie-induced tourism is unnecessary for the tourism industry in Kenting" (Li, 2009: 42). The benefits *Cape No.7* contributed to local

¹⁰⁶ The number of tourists within Kenting National Park was around 3.8 million, 3.82 million and 4.55 million in 2007, 2008 and 2009 respectively. (Source: Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communications. <http://admin.taiwan.net.tw/english/>)

tourism subsequently motivated local governments to develop policies to give filmmakers incentives to make films in the area. The development of film-induced tourism could not only develop local tourism but also provide future filmmakers with more resources for producing their works.

Conclusion

The commercial performance of *Cape No.7* can be regarded as a confidence booster for local filmmakers. Its sensational success has drawn public attention to the change in Taiwan cinema in the 21st century and boosted Taiwan commercial cinema in recent years. In the past decade, transnational co-production has been considered a viable approach for reviving the Taiwanese film industry. Before the release of *Cape No.7*, four of the top five highest-grossing films from Taiwan in the 21st century were transnational co-productions, including Ang Lee's two Chinese-language hits: *Lust, Caution* and *CTHD*. On the other hand, an increasing number of Taiwanese filmmakers have attempted to take the taste of mainstream audiences into consideration and to make efforts to incorporate various elements such as genre, stars, visual effects and local customs into their films to present an appealing local imagination of Taiwan. This has led to a shift from authorship to markets in Taiwan cinema in the new millennium. This tendency is different to the one shown in the early 1980s, although both of them have been influenced by Taiwanese nativism. To summarise, the development of contemporary Taiwan cinema, or so-called post-TNC, could be considered as Taiwanese filmmakers' reaction to the downturn in the film industry, response to auteur-centred cinema in the late 20th century, inheritance of nativist consciousness in New Cinema, and representation of contemporary Taiwanese socio-cultural landscape.

Cape No.7 is a representative work of contemporary films from Taiwan not only because of its extraordinary box office takings but also for its revitalisation of grassroots Taiwanese imagination and nativist concerns. Before the film's release, no film from Taiwan had drawn over NT\$50 million at the Taipei box office in the new millennium except Lee's works. *Cape No.7* demonstrates that it is possible to draw local spectators back. Moreover, it proves that a domestic film with strong local colour, mainly targeting local viewers, can still earn a high return in Taiwan when competing with Hollywood blockbusters and high-budget pan-Chinese co-productions. As mentioned in the Introduction, transnational co-production can provide potential benefits for filmmaking, for example, pooling multinational capital and labour and having access to partners' markets. Consequently, a great number of pan-Chinese co-productions show more concern for spectacle, special-effects and the participation of multinational stars in order to appeal to viewers in various Chinese-speaking areas, whereas the local taste and local concern are gradually sidelined. In this context, the impressive commercial performance of some locally-made films accentuating local colour and grassroots features in different Chinese-speaking areas in recent years, such as Taiwan's *Cape No.7*, Hong Kong's *Echoes of the Rainbow* (*Suiyue shentou*, dir. Alex Law Kai-Yui, 2010) and China's *Lost in Thailand* (*Ren zai jiongtu zhi tai jiong*, dir. Xu Zheng, 2012), can be perceived as local filmmakers and spectators' response to the phenomenon and re-assertion of local identity.

Therefore, *Cape No.7* could be perceived as a response of national cinema to phenomena caused by the development of the global cinematic system, including transnational cinema and global Hollywood. Contemporary filmmakers' representation of local imagination is to implicitly provide coherent images of the nation, consolidate collective consciousness and celebrate indigenous culture. In this light, the emergence of national craze for *Cape No.7* and the revival of Taiwan cinema are associated with

nationalism as well as nativism. *Cape No.7* fever was reinforced partly because of the establishment of connections between supporting *Cape No.7*, encouraging Taiwan cinema, and loving Taiwan under the circumstances. It links to both the creation of local subjectivity and nationalism. Therefore, hardcore fans were curious about whether the film could succeed in foreign markets. They visited the official blog *Cape7* and foreign Internet movie forums to promote the film and find out information on its overseas consumption and reception (*Cape7*, 2008b). It could be argued that certain Taiwanese attached national pride to *Cape No.7* and wished to seek international endorsement of the local subjectivity through its overseas reception. Cinema is treated as a means of creating and consolidating national identity.

The stunning box office outcome of *Cape No.7* in Taiwan provided the film with more opportunities to enter neighbouring markets. Its fever in Taiwan attracted media attention in other Chinese-speaking areas, which partly reflected the development of cultural regionalisation in East Asia. Hong Kong media, such as *Oriental Daily News* and *The Sun*, reported on *Cape No.7* fever before the film's release in Hong Kong on 20 November 2008.¹⁰⁷ *Cape No.7* was the eleventh highest-grossing Chinese-language film and the 42nd at annual Hong Kong box office of the year, taking in HK\$7.6 million (approx. NT\$32.7 million) (*Cape7*, 2008b; *Box Office Mojo*, 2010). The figure was lower than another Taiwan film *Kung Fu Dunk*, grossing HK\$8.8 million in the same year, but still the fourth highest-grossing film from Taiwan in Hong Kong's film market in the 21st century by then.¹⁰⁸

Although Wei had worried at the beginning that foreign spectators will not enjoy the film owing to its strong local colour, its box office outcome in Hong Kong was satisfactory for

¹⁰⁷ ON.CC, the official website of Oriental Press Group, at <http://home.on.cc/search/index.html?sk=%E6%B5%B7%E8%A7%92%E4%B8%83%E8%99%9F&st=1&tp=12> (accessed: 10 January 2011)

¹⁰⁸ Ang Lee's *Lust, Caution* is the best selling Taiwanese film in Hong Kong so far, followed by *Secret* and *Kung Fu Dunk* successively. *Lust, Caution* was the highest-grossing Chinese-language film in Hong Kong in 2007, receiving HK\$48.4 million and ranking 3rd at the annual Hong Kong box office. However, the film was co-produced by Taiwan, China, Hong Kong and the USA.

him (Yang, C., 2008). Thus Wei (Nicky, 2008) said, “Who says *Cape No.7* cannot succeed outside Taiwan?”

Apart from in Hong Kong, *Cape No.7* was theatrically released in neighbouring countries successively, but its reception was varied. In China, the largest Chinese-language film market, the box office revenue of *Cape No.7* was around CN¥20 million (approx. NT\$100 million), which was below the distributor’s expectations (Lin, K., 2009; He, 2010).¹⁰⁹ The result could be attributed to various factors, including cultural differences, the delayed release, film censorship, and piracy (Lai, 2008; Lin K., 2009). *Cape No.7* was also released in Singapore, Malaysia, Japan and South Korea, but its commercial performance was unimpressive. For example, the total attendance at the film’s screening in South Korea in 2010 was merely 399.¹¹⁰ Also, although the film has not been officially released in the West, Wei can profit from sales of DVD film rights in these areas, such as the United Kingdom (Flynn Entertainment). *Cape No.7* displays that a locally-made film aiming for Taiwanese viewers can also enter foreign markets even though its domestic success was not repeated in other places.

As for its reception, some Hong Kong audiences felt *Cape No.7* was boring and criticised its slow tempo and loose narrative, although others enjoyed the film (Huang, S., 2008). The mixed use of languages, unfamiliar historical background and local context helped *Cape No.7* construct national identity and represent local imagination to local viewers, thereby leading to its domestic commercial triumph; however, these characteristics were strange and confusing to foreign viewers when the film was screened in America

¹⁰⁹ The highest-grossing Chinese-language film in China in 2009 was *The Founding of the Republic (Jianguo daye)*, dir. Han Sanping and Huang Jianxin, (2009), which received around CN¥420 million (“2009 Top10”, 2010). On the other hand, Wei considered the commercial performance is acceptable (Zi, 2009).

¹¹⁰ The figure is far lower than Chinese-Hong Kong co-production *Detective Dee and the Mystery of the Phantom Flame (Tongtian shentan Di Renjie)*, aka *Di Renjie zhi tongtian diguo*, dir. Tsui Hark, (2010), the highest-grossing Chinese-language film released in South Korea in the same year with the attendance of 468,273. See Korean Film Council: <http://www.kobis.or.kr/kobis/business/main/main.do>

(Entertainment News Team and Chang, 2008). The muted reception could be ascribed to the director's insufficient narrative skill to a degree, but it also highlights the difficulty of cultural translation and the complex relationship between national cinema and the global cultural economy.

Following the release of *Cape No.7*, many Taiwan's domestically-made box office earners have also been released in neighbouring film markets; however, most of their performances were mediocre, with the exception of *You Are the Apple of My Eye* (hereafter *YAAME*). *YAAME*, a mid-budget locally-made film depicting the bitter romance of Taiwanese adolescents and with amusing dialogue, has become the biggest ever Chinese-language film at the Hong Kong box office, surpassing all Hong Kong's domestically-made films and Chinese-language co-productions. When examining *Blue Gate Crossing* (*Lanse damen*, dir. Yee Chih-yen, 2002), Fran Martin argues that the film made no reference to local Taiwanese history or politics, and its story could be set in other ordinary East Asian cities (2007: 140). Such "blurred locality" could be a contributory factor in *YAAME*'s offshore box office success.

On the one hand, the dismal commercial performance of domestic hit movies outside Taiwan shows to some extent that cultural distance and difference do affect their reception in foreign markets, even though Chinese-speaking markets are relatively permeable for them due to cultural and linguistic proximity. Further, the result could imply that these films are overrated, and their domestic box office performance is enhanced by emotional factors, such as nationalism and nativism. On the contrary, *YAAME* demonstrates both the significance of cultural proximity and the integration of the regional film market today. It also elucidates that it is possible for native themes to be presented in an easily decipherable form to cater to the tastes of foreign as well as local spectators. To engage in intraregional co-production is not

the only visible way to make profits from overseas markets and revive the Taiwanese film industry.

Cape No.7's triumph has stimulated the development of Taiwan cinema in terms of financing, production, distribution and consumption. In the past few years, several high-budget, big-scale, locally-made projects, including *Monga* and *Seediq Bale*, were produced successively. However, the quantity was relatively small on account of the difficulty in financing and the limited size of the Taiwanese film market. Unless a project produces a striking commercial performance in the local market, it cannot recoup the high cost without profiting from overseas markets. Therefore, most locally-made films during the recent revival were mid-to-low budget melodrama or comedy films. Taiwanese filmmakers are relatively more competent in dealing with such themes vis-à-vis other genres. Besides, these types of films are popular in Taiwan but can be made with a limited budget, which makes the recovery of the investment more possible. In this context, some people "jump on the bandwagon" when promising signs of industrial revival are shown. The production of domestic films has mushroomed in recent years, but their quality is uneven. Arguably, the possible overproduction of films with certain themes and the increase of schlock might remind us of the decline of Taiwan commercial cinema in the late 1970s and 1980s. *Cape No.7* changed local audiences' impressions of domestic films and motivated them to reassess their attitude towards Taiwan's national cinema. Further, the national craze for *Cape No.7* has brought the issue of the revitalisation of national cinema to the fore, which directs the public and media attention to the development of Taiwan cinema. However, the local film industry is still fragile. Local spectators' interest in domestic films could be dampened if the quality of domestic films repeatedly disappoints them. They might turn away from domestic cinema again, and the restoration of the production sector of Taiwan cinema would just be short-lived.

Nevertheless, a bustling market and a vigorous industry are critical to the reconstruction of Taiwan cinema. The increase in the consumption of domestic films can encourage investment in domestic filmmaking and provide jobs for filmmakers. It also benefits the advancement in filmmakers' technical expertise and the improvement of the domestic industrial institution of Taiwan cinema. These factors are vital for the continual development of both commercial and art cinemas in Taiwan. Although having become a bellwether of the contemporary Taiwanese film industry since the huge success of *Cape No.7*, Wei Te-sheng (2011) feels that Taiwan is still not a filmmaker-friendly environment on account of his arduous experience of financing and production of *Seediq Bale*. The revitalisation of the domestic film industry must rely on the successive commercial success of domestic films, the continual production, the establishment of a production system, the advancement of the industrial structure, carefully-designed policy and effective implementation rather than transient enthusiasm fired by nationalism and nativism. As Lee Lieh, the producer of *Monga*, (Liang and Yang, 2013) maintains, steady film output is important to the operation of the film industry since it helps to cultivate new talents and transfer technical knowledge and offers viewers more choices.

Unlike the TNC movement in the late 20th century, the recent revival of Taiwan cinema centres on the improvement of industrial conditions, yet the innovation in film aesthetics is not impressive. However, the shift from author-centred to market-oriented cinema in the 2000s and the revitalisation of domestic commercial film production exhibit an urgent need to improve the local environment for the weak Taiwanese film industry. In the long run, the progress of domestic commercial cinema and a thriving industry will be advantageous for the production of art cinema in Taiwan as well.

Chapter Four:

Taiwan Art Cinema: National Cinema and Its International Trajectory

In addition to three commercial filmmaking strategies delineated in the above chapters, the other primary filmmaking strategy in Taiwan cinema in the 21st century is in auteur-centred filmmaking. Taiwan art cinema, it may be claimed, emerged in the early 1980s and subsequently occupied a central position in Taiwan cinema. Some film directors from Taiwan, including Hou Hsiao-hsien, Edward Yang and Tsai Ming-liang, have been hailed as auteurs and have gained prestige by winning awards at international film festivals in recent decades. The increasing international recognition of these figures has put Taiwan cinema on the map of world cinema, and Taiwan itself has also found a new way to come to international attention. In this sense, Taiwan cinema is linked with nationalism through its transnational connections with global film festival networks. On the other hand, Taiwan art cinema develops by integrating with the global cultural economy. Transcending cultural and national boundaries, Taiwan's art films have been appreciated by foreign viewers regardless of their mediocre domestic commercial performance. The difficulty of financing resulting from the dismal consumption of domestic art films allows transnational co-production to become a critical way of making art films in Taiwan. Subsequently, the production and consumption of Taiwan's auteur-oriented films relies heavily on its connections with international institutions and art film networks. In this regard, Taiwan art cinema is both national and international.

However, the overall performance of Taiwan art cinema is relatively unremarkable in the 2000s vis-à-vis that of the previous two decades. Acclaimed Taiwanese auteurs such as Hou and Tsai remain leading figures in contemporary Taiwan art cinema. However, it seems that the new generation of Taiwanese filmmakers' critical performance in the new century is still unable to compare with their predecessors', as none of them have won major prizes in

top international film festivals in the past decade. This phenomenon also reflects the shift from auteur-centred to market-oriented cinema in the 2000s: the hostile industrial environment and unsatisfactory consumption and reception in the local film market have created difficulties in auteur-oriented filmmaking, and domestic filmmakers have begun to show greater regard for market tastes in order to lure back domestic audiences. In this context, established auteurs' transnational collaborations have still been the highlight of Taiwan art cinema in the new millennium. For example, both Tsai's *What Time Is It There?* (*Ni nabian jidian?*, 2001) and Hou's *Millennium Mambo* (*Qianxi manbo*, 2001) were financed by French film companies. Translingual filmmaking is also a noteworthy phenomenon in the development of Taiwan art cinema in this period. Apart from Ang Lee's translingual career, Hou and Tsai have been invited to produce foreign-language films, namely the Japanese film *Café Lumière* (*Kōhī Jikō*, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, 2003), the French films *Flight of the Red Balloon* (*Le Voyage du Ballon Rouge*, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, 2007) and *Face* (*Visage*, dir. Tsai Ming-liang, 2009). These translingual filmmaking activities can be linked with the complex postcolonial relationship between Taiwan and Japan and perceived as a dialogue between Taiwan and French cinemas respectively. They demonstrate the multi-directional cultural flows within the complex global cultural network in the age of globalisation.

Unlike the revival of Taiwan commercial cinema in the 21st century, contemporary Taiwan art cinema can be perceived, to a great degree, as the continuation of Taiwan art cinema in the previous few decades. In order to map out its development today, this chapter will first trace the emergence of Taiwan art cinema and its link with the international film festival circuit in the historical and institutional context in the past few decades to shed light on the interconnection between Taiwan art cinema and the global film economy. Transnational connections in some Taiwanese filmmakers' filmmaking activities in the 20th century will also be delineated to demonstrate the significance of transnational connections to

the institution of Taiwan art cinema. Moreover, local filmmakers' auteur-oriented filmmaking activities in the 2000s, and Hou Hsiao-hsien's and Tsai Ming-liang's works in particular, will be investigated to highlight the influence of cultural globalisation and transnational connections on contemporary Taiwan art cinema. Lastly, particular attention will be given to Hou's and Tsai's translingual film productions to explore such linguistic crossovers and transnational connections in Taiwan art cinema today. The chapter will not only highlight the current development of the global cinematic economy but also rethink the relationship between art cinema, cultural politics and national cinema in the process of cultural globalisation.

The Emergence of Art Cinema in Taiwan

Art Cinema

Art cinema is a concept different to mainstream commercial cinema. David Bordwell sees art cinema as a unique mode of film practice appealing to norms of *syuzhet* and style, with narrational features distinct from classical narrative cinema.¹¹¹ Centring around authorship, characteristics such as a strong emphasis on visual styles and characters, overt self-consciousness of narration, ambiguous and fragmentary images, connotative meaning and disarranged structure could be found in the film text (2003: 42-43). His argument suggests that art cinema is more author-orientated than spectator-orientated. The emphasis on artistic forms, visual rhetoric, film styles, implicit expression and creators' self-consciousness also highlights the significance of the auteur to art cinema. Therefore, Andrew Tudor (2005: 129-

¹¹¹ The *Syuzhet*, or plot, consists of the architectonics of the film's presentation of the story (Bordwell, 2003: 49).

130) suggests that authorship and a degree of autonomy from commercial pressures are central to art cinema.

Bordwell rightly points out the difference between mainstream and art films from the textual aspect; however, the distinctive institutional space of art cinema is of equal importance. Steve Neale considers art cinema to be an institution which exhibits particularities in “its texts, its sources of finance, its modes and circuits of production, distribution and exhibition, its relationship to the state, the nature of the discourses used to support and promote it, the institutional basis of these discourses, the relations within and across each of these elements and the structure of the international film industry” (1981: 13). Art cinema works as a mechanism to create an economic, ideological and aesthetic division between practices within the cinematic system. It could be perceived as a sector which inhabits an existing cinematic institution, coexisting and interacting with the mainstream commercial film industry.

Moreover, Rosalind Galt and Karl Schoonover (2010: 20) suggest that art cinema can be comprehended when global geopolitics, and industrial and historical contexts and aesthetics are all taken into consideration. From their perspective, art cinema does not merely refer to narrative films “at the margins of mainstream cinema, located somewhere between fully experimental films and overly commercial products” (ibid.: 6). The political significance of art cinema and the engagement between art cinema and globality should not be overlooked. Thus they view art cinema as “both an aesthetic category—involved in broadly constituted debates on realism, modernism, the image, and its implications—and a geopolitical category, bound up in modernity and the traumas of twentieth-century history” (ibid.). Globality is an inherent element embedded in art cinema, and the development of art cinema could reflect the consequence of globalisation.

Furthermore, art cinema is regarded as a cross-border cinematic form against Hollywood's domination. Unlike commercially-oriented films, art films pay more regard to visual legibility and cross-cultural translation rather than locally-defined culture, thereby helping them circulate globally (Galt and Schoonover, 2010: 10). Whilst art cinema is often linked with concepts such as neo-colonialism, internationalism, hegemony and capitalism due to its close link with a Eurocentric structure in terms of its history, practice and aesthetic, it encourages viewers to "watch across cultures and see ourselves through foreign eyes" (ibid.: 11). That is, art cinema is inherently global in terms of form and theme. Neale also asserts that art films are inherently global artefacts:

Art films are produced for international distribution and exhibition as well as for local consumption. Art Cinema is a niche within the international film market, a sector that is not yet completely dominated by Hollywood . . . Art Cinema also, in its cultural and aesthetic aspirations, relies heavily upon an appeal to the "universal" values of culture and art. (1981: 35)

Accordingly, in this chapter, Taiwan art cinema will be treated as an institution affected by global cultural politics and a local context; and its relationship with global art cinema, the local industrial context, and film aesthetics will be explored to illustrate its development in the past few decades and to shed light on the development of contemporary Taiwan art cinema. The examination will start from the formation of discourses on art cinema in Taiwan.

The Rise of Art Cinema in Taiwan and the Taiwan New Cinema Movement

The development of Taiwan art cinema could be traced to the origination of discourses promoting art cinema in Taiwan in the mid-1960s. The magazine *Theatre (Juchang)*, published between 1965 and 1967, introduced not only Western avant-garde theatre but also foreign auteur cinema to Taiwan. Special features on auteurs, such as that for Michelangelo Antonioni, and the Chinese translation of film scripts, such as *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (Alain Resnais, 1959), were published. The last issue of the magazine on auteurism also exhibited

editors' concern for auteur cinema (Chi, 1988: 41; Li, 2001). Later, another magazine *Influence (Yingxiang)*, first published in 1971, also introduced author theory to Taiwan but paid more attention to Chinese-language films compared to *Theatre*.¹¹² Special features on certain Chinese film directors such as King Hu were published besides Western film auteurs, such as Luis Buñuel and Alfred Hitchcock. Film critic Wu Zhen-ming even tried to classify 68 Chinese-language film directors into four tiers based upon Andrew Sarris' author theory (Chi, 1988: 42). That is to say, the dissemination of Western auteur theory in Taiwanese cultural communities from the 1960s could be attributed to the impact of a series of new wave film movements occurring in the West and the popularity of Western modernism in Taiwan.

Moreover, the emergence of discourses on art cinema in Taiwan was associated with the local context at that time. The production of a large number of slipshod and crude locally-made genre films and propaganda films dismayed intellectuals and resulted in "college students' rejection of domestic films" (*Daxuesheng bukan guopian*) (Chiao, 1988b: 15). Events such as the "Selection of Top Ten Worst Domestic Movies" also revealed the need for an alternative domestic cinema (*ibid.*).¹¹³ Simultaneously, the establishment of the Chinese Taipei Film Archive, the creation of the Taipei Golden Horse International Film Festival, and the emergence of new generation auteurist critics in the late 1970s and early 1980s, such as Peggy Chiao Hsiung-ping, Chen Kuo-fu and Edmond Wong, cultivated a group of cinephiles and influenced the taste of cultural elites in Taiwan. They not only introduced foreign art films and film theories but also paid great attention to films made by local new blood, later known as Taiwan New Cinema (TNC), and highlighted the artistic value in their films. They

¹¹² The Chinese title of the magazine *Yingxiang* could refer to the influence. It could also be understood as a compound in Chinese. *Ying* indicates motion picture; *Xiang* means sounds.

¹¹³ "Selection of Top Ten Worst Domestic Movies" was published in *Influence* in 1978, and the feature provoked fierce controversy at that time.

not only offered information but also influenced the development of the cinematic institution in Taiwan, for example, the “apple-peeling incident”.¹¹⁴

The emergence of new film criticism and the support of cultural elites reflected the change in the social, cultural and political contexts of Taiwan. Economic growth and modernisation resulted in the rise of the middle class in Taiwan, which helped the development of art cinema. Liu Hsien-cheng (1995: 77) even argues that TNC is a self-representation of cultural elites, intellectuals and the middle class, a means by which they could discover their own self-identity through New Cinema. The “apple-peeling incident” also reflected the political relaxation in Taiwan to some degree. Consequently, film critics, together with young intellectuals and filmmakers, became core figures of the TNC movement in the 1980s. Their support and advocacy for art cinema were shown in the development of TNC and the declaration of the *1987 Taiwan Cinema Manifesto*, which called on the authority, mass media, and film critics to support an “Alternative Cinema”, which, for them, in fact meant art cinema (Chan, 1988a).

In this context, a group of young Taiwanese filmmakers advocated innovation in filmmaking and attempted to make a new type of auteur-oriented films contrasting with the preceding domestic films made during the mid-1980s. It is commonly accepted that the movement started with the portmanteau film *In Our Time* (*Guangyin de gushi*, dir. Jim Tao, Edward Yang, Ko Yi-cheng and Chang Yi, 1982); some viewed the publication of the *1987 Taiwan Cinema Manifesto* as marking the end of the movement, even though auteur-oriented films from the 1990s can be seen as the second wave of TNC films (Berry and Lu, 2005:

¹¹⁴ Wan Jen’s *The Taste of Apples* (*Pingguo de ziwei*) is a part of the anthology film *The Sandwich Man* (*Erzi de da wanou*, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, Wan Jen and Tseng Chuang-hsiang, 1983). Because the film touched upon sensitive issues related to neocolonialism and national identity, the state-owned CMPC, the production studio of the film, intended to self-censor the film. Nevertheless, film critics criticised the authorities and the CMPC through two major broadsheets, and, subsequently, the film was shown in full.

6).¹¹⁵ The emergence of TNC should be ascribed to the timing and atmosphere in the 1980s. In addition to the influence of Taiwanese nativism mentioned in Chapter Three, changes in the political and industrial contexts stimulated cinematic innovation and a shift from authority-guided to auteur-centred cinema in Taiwan. In the past, filmmaking activities in Taiwan were strictly administered by the government. As June Yip points out, “films of the 1970s stagnated at two extremes: anticommunist and anti-Japanese propaganda films on the one hand and, on the other, films of pure escapism that avoided politics and contemporary sociocultural problems altogether” (2004: 52). However, in view of “the increasing impact of the Hong Kong commercial films [which were revived by the Hong Kong New Wave movement]; the lack of young, educated, and professional audiences for Taiwan films; and the failure to win a single prize at the 1982 Asia-Pacific Film Festival” (Yeh and Davis, 2005: 57-58), the state-owned Central Motion Picture Company (CMPC) adopted a more flexible production strategy in the early 1980s called “low capital, high production” (*xiao chengben, jing zhizuo*) and the “newcomer policy” to recruit new film talents to make films. The strategy encouraged CMPC’s co-production with Hong Kong studios as well as with local independent film companies. Furthermore, a number of inexperienced US-trained filmmakers, such as Wan Jen and Edward Yang, and young filmmakers trained through local apprenticeship, like Hou Hsiao-hsien and Wang Tong, gained the opportunity to put their ideas into practice. Consequently, the TNC movement was born and Taiwan art cinema came in to existence.

As a reaction to and innovative cinema movement against preceding authority-guided Taiwan cinema, Taiwan New Cinema possessed diverse features in comparison with

¹¹⁵ Chi Lung-zin (1991: 5-8) asserts that the publication of the *1987 Taiwan Cinema Manifesto* represented the self-examination of core figures of the TNC movement. It meant the end of the movement and the start of the creation of another institution of cinema outside the mainstream. Besides, according to Fei Lu (1998: 277, 279), 58 films produced during the period can be categorized as TNC films, including 32 films made by core figures of the movement, including Hou Hsiao-hsien, Edward Yang, Wang Tong, Chen Kun-hou, Ko Yi-cheng, Wan Jen, Tseng Chuang-hsiang and Chang Yi.

mainstream films in Taiwan at that time. First, TNC dealt with different themes. When talking about *In Our Time*, Yang considered it “the first film which we consciously trace the past of Taiwan and ask questions on our history, our ancestor, our political situation, our relationship with mainland China and so on” (Chen, 1993: 47-48). Unlike the tendency towards patriotism or escapism of preceding Taiwan cinema, these new filmmakers were inclined to tackle historical roots, collective memories, social reality, rural topics and taboo subjects. Besides, literary adaptations, such as *A Flower in the Rainy Night* (*Kanhai de rizi*, dir. Wang Tong, 1983), and the semi-autobiographical form, such as *The Time to Live and the Time to Die* (*Tongnian wangshi*, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1986), were common in TNC films.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, TNC filmmakers showed great regard for self-consciousness and aesthetic innovation. Berry and Lu (2005: 6) argue that TNC filmmakers believed that spectators can engage in the viewing process actively, thereby preferring complex and discursive narration as well as ignoring dramatic plots, so that the narration is closer to authentic life experience. Two main cinematic ideologies, including observational realism and modernist expressionism, were pursued by TNC filmmakers, which echo the two aesthetic paradigms of art cinema proposed by Galt and Schoonover (2010: 15-17), namely realism and modernism. As a whole, long take, long shot, deep focus and static camera, all cinematic features of realism, were notable directorial signatures in a number of TNC films. A short-lived film magazine in Taiwan was named *Long Take Film-Video* (*Chang jingtou*) (1987-1988), which signified the high regard for these techniques in Taiwan art cinema. Moreover, TNC directors preferred new means of production. For example, directors like Hou often recruited non-professional actors rather than popular stars in films. In general, the characterisation, casting, selection of film locations and themes of TNC exhibited

¹¹⁶ *A Flower in the Rainy Night* was adapted from Taiwanese nativist writer Huang Chun-ming's novel, *A Flower in the Rainy Night*; *The Time to Live and the Time to Die* is Hou's semi-autobiographical film scripted by Chu Tien-wen and Hou himself.

characteristics of Italian neorealism. In this light, it seems that TNC conforms to Bordwell's three principles of art cinema narration, including realism, authorial expressivity and ambiguous expressions (2008: 152-156).

In addition to the textual dimension, the industrial characteristics of TNC demonstrate that Taiwan art cinema can be understood as a distinctive cinematic institution. Owing to the rise of domestic filmmakers' artistic autonomy and the increasing demand for a space with less industrial pressure, film directors in Taiwan attempted to take charge of the financing, production and distribution of their own film projects. The structural change reflects the fact that Taiwan art cinema can be viewed as an institution centred round film directors, which is different to studio-centred domestic commercial cinema in the past. From the early 1980s, some TNC filmmakers, such as Hou, Wan Jen and Ko Yi-cheng, started to form their own film production houses rather than working under private or state-owned studios (Lu, 1998: 285). It is undeniable that CMPC was a crucial birthplace of the TNC movement; however, a great number of CMPC's TNC films were co-produced with other studios or small independent film companies run by directors in order to reduce risk and save money (Yeh and Davis, 2005: 59).¹¹⁷ Although independent production houses could ensure directors more creative autonomy, they had scant resources in comparison with established film studios. When Edward Yang was making *Taipei Story* (*Qingmei zhuma*, dir. Edward Yang, 1985), Hou Hsiao-hsien even mortgaged his own house to finance the production (Chinese Taipei Film Archive, 2012). The case shows not only the connection between TNC filmmakers but also the difficulty in financing the production of TNC films, which was related to the situation of their domestic consumption.

¹¹⁷ For example, Edward Yang's *That Day, on the Beach* (*Haibian de yitian*, 1983) was co-produced by CMPC and Hong Kong's Cinema City Company. As for independent film company, Evergreen company, set up by TNC figures, namely Chen Kun-hou, Hou Hsiao-hsien, Chang Hua-kun and Hsu Shu-chen, in 1983, was a major independent production house making TNC films at that time and had involved in the production of several important TNC films such as *Growing Up* (*Xiaobi de gushi*, dir. Chen Kun-hou, 1983) and *Taipei Story*.

Whilst art cinema can be perceived as an alternative cinematic institution to mainstream commercial cinema, the TNC movement emerged from a mainstream institution (CMPC) as a new strategy of making profits for studios and investors. For example, *In Our Time* was defined as “the first publicly presented *art film* in Taiwan in the past two decades” and “an *art film* in the commercial film system” when CMPC considered its market position (Liu, 1995: 66, 74; my emphasis). That is, the term “art cinema” was used as a label to market this new type of film, and artistic value was treated as a selling point for them. It also implies that the concept of art cinema had taken root in Taiwan. Nonetheless, local investors did not recognise the specificity of art cinema in form and practice and the emergence of an auteur-centred cinematic institution in Taiwan. Like healthy realist films in the 1960s and 1970s, TNC films were just treated as a new genre by major film companies in Taiwan at that time. Consequently, the dismal commercial performance of TNC films at the local box office hindered their financing and caused the TNC movement to fade away in the late 1980s.

Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that the rise and fall of the TNC movement were closely related to the commercial performance of TNC films. Released at the beginning of 1983, *Growing Up* (*Xiaobi de gushi*, dir. Chen Kun-hou, 1983) gained both critical and commercial success in Taiwan. Not only was it crowned the Best Film at the 1983 Golden Horse Awards, it also ranked 5th and 12th at the box office among domestic films and Chinese-language films respectively in 1983 (see Table 6). Later that year, *The Sandwich Man* (*Erzi de da wanou*, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, Wan Jen and Tseng Chuang-hsiang, 1983) and *A Flower in the Rainy Night* and *Papa, Can You Hear Me Sing?* (*Da cuo che*, dir. Yu Kan-ping, 1983) also ranked among the annual top ten Chinese-language films and drew much attention. Therefore, Berry and Lu (2005: 6) argue: “*In Our Time* introduced new filmmakers; the new face of Taiwan cinema, *Growing Up*, opened the path for Taiwan New Cinema; and *The Sandwich Man* confirmed its arrival.” Because of their commercial success, a number of

local film studios and filmmakers began to produce literary adaptations, for example Montage Films's *The Ox-Cart for Dowry* (*Jiazhuang yi niuche*, dir. Chang Mei-chun, 1984). TNC films mainly targeted the educated middle class and college students, but they could be seen detached and distant for mainstream audiences. Additionally, private companies began to jump on the TNC bandwagon, but many films they produced were deficient in quality. Consequently, viewers began to turn their back on these films (Lu, 1998: 276-277).

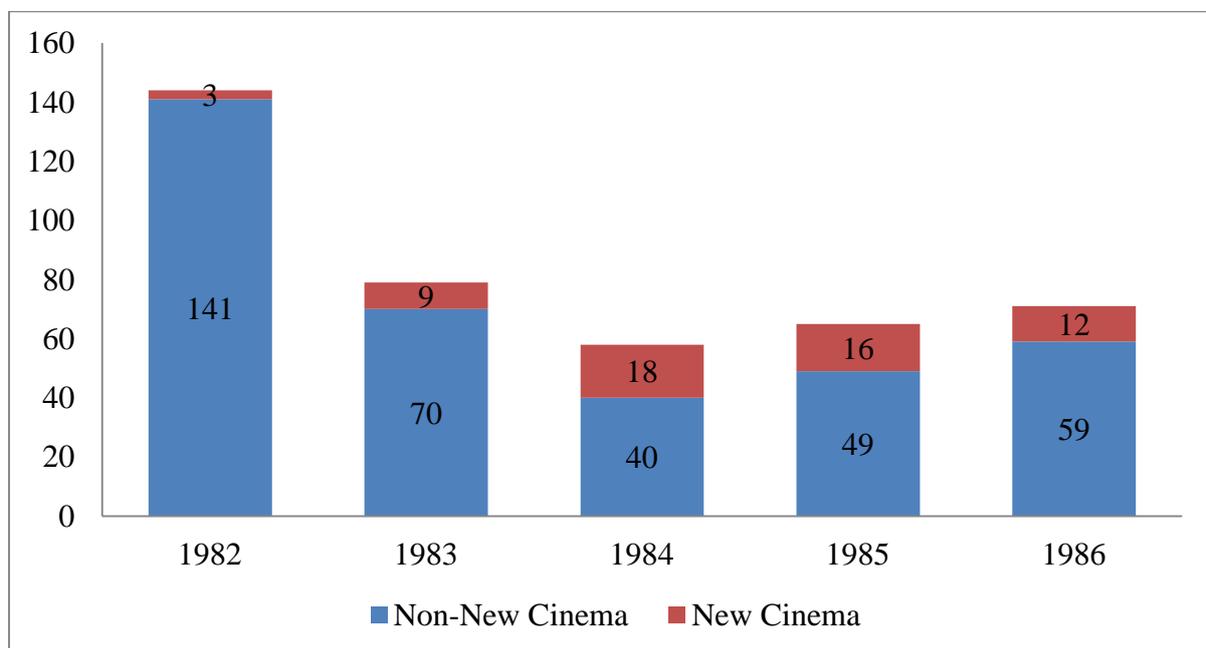
Table 6 Top Five Highest-Grossing Taiwan New Cinema Films of 1983
(Source: *The Database of Taiwan Cinema, 2000*)

Annual Ranking of Admissions (Taiwan/Chinese-language/Overall)	Title	Admissions	Box Office Gross (NT\$)
1/1/8	<i>Papa, Can You Hear Me Sing?</i> (<i>Da cuo che</i> , dir. Yu Kan-ping)	285,340	17,857,450
2/3/14	<i>A Flower in the Rainy Night</i> (<i>Kanhai de rizi</i> , dir. Wang Tong)	198,531	13,169,635
4/10/41	<i>The Sandwich Man</i> (<i>Erzi de da wanou</i> , dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, Wan Jen and Tseng Chuang-hsiang)	104,448	6,832,263
5/12/44	<i>Growing Up</i> (<i>Xiaobi de gushi</i> , dir. Chen Kun-hou)	101,227	6,309,066
12/25/104	<i>That Day, on the Beach</i> (<i>Haibian de yitian</i> , dir. Edward Yang)	64,609	4,822,340

Overall, the popularity of New Cinema films and TNC-style literary adaptations was actually ephemeral. Only two TNC film entered the annual top ten box office from 1984 to

1986 (Huang, 1985: 22, 1986: 70; Ye, 1987: 97).¹¹⁸ The box office results of TNC films were mediocre in general even as they received growing critical acclaim. As a result, the production of TNC films began to decrease. According to Lu (1998: 279), less than fourteen per cent of films from Taiwan from 1982 to 1986 can be categorised as TNC films (see Figure 4). Besides, Chan Hung-chi (1988b: 34) used the movie release schedule during Chinese New Year of 1984 as an example to argue that old cinematic forces still occupied the dominant position in Taiwan's film industry. In other words, TNC had never occupied the mainstream position in the industrial structure in terms of production quantity as well as consumption pattern, although it is commonly regarded as synonymous with Taiwan national cinema.

Figure 4 Production Quantity of Taiwan New Cinema Films (1982-1986)
(Source: Lu, 1998: 470)



¹¹⁸ These films were *Second Spring of Mr. Muo* (*Laomo de dierge chuntian*, dir. Lee You-ning, 1984) and *Kuei-mei, A Woman* (*Wo zheyang guole yisheng*, dir. Chang Yi, 1985).

The unsatisfactory performance of TNC films at the box office also pushed the ideological conflict in the discursive field of Taiwan cinema to the fore. Tudor (2005: 129, 133) points out that the rise of European art cinema is associated with the advocacy for national cinema after the Second World War and the inherited view of film-as-art in Europe. However, Taiwan cinema before the TNC movement can be perceived as a national cinema composed of both highly commercial and state-sponsored cinemas in terms of mode of address. In this context, the emergence of domestic art cinema and related discourses represented not only the introduction of a new cinematic ideology and the innovation in film aesthetics but also the power struggle between avant-garde forces, including auteurist critics and core figures of TNC, and conservative forces, including old-school film critics, the older generation of filmmakers and studios, distributors and exhibitors (Chi, 1988). The conflict was related to practical interests. For example, “Movie Forum”, a column of film criticism in *United Daily News* written by auteurist critics like Peggy Chiao, was forced to terminate in 1982 due to film companies’ complaints about auteurist critics’ severe criticism of their films (Lu, 1998: 310). Besides, such conflict was related to the struggle of discursive power between these two forces. The confrontation was exhibited in sites such as the Golden Horse Awards, and the discourse was then manipulated into the ideological confrontation between commercial and art cinemas (ibid.: 310-314).

In this context, Taiwan art cinema was asked to bear responsibility for the collapse of the industry when TNC films failed at the local box office, notwithstanding the fact that TNC was at the margins of the mainstream industry, possessing relatively small production scales and targeting a niche market compared to the mainstream domestic cinema (see Figure 4). TNC had no control over the distribution and exhibition system, and consequently TNC films were marginalised in the local film market. For instance, *Taipei Story* was forced to pull out from cinemas in Taipei after only three days of screening (Chang, S., 2002: 32). It seems that

insufficient opportunity for exhibition contributed to the dismal commercial performance of TNC, and vice versa, thus becoming a vicious circle. The publication of the *1987 Taiwan Cinema Manifesto* should be understood as TNC leading proponents' lament for their powerlessness more than as advocacy of art cinema.¹¹⁹ The proclamation indicated the setback TNC encountered when the institution of Taiwan art cinema developed under restraints imposed by the existing mainstream institution in which conservative, commercial and political forces occupied the dominant position.

Thereafter the collective movement gradually faded away, and Taiwan art cinema has since been led by individual artists, including TNC auteurs such as Hou and Yang, and the so-called second wave of TNC directors such as Tsai Ming-liang. The lack of support from the local market and industry and the state policy compelled them to maintain their filmmaking by linking themselves with the global art film circuit. Henceforth, international niche markets and the film festival circuit have become vital factors in the survival of Taiwan art cinema at the same time as these films are increasingly turning away from local spectators and the film industry. Although established filmmakers could continue their filmmaking activities through their transnational connections, a healthy industrial environment is still critical to nurture potential auteurs and young bloods. The decline of the domestic film industry has had a negative impact on the overall cinematic environment of Taiwan cinema, which to some extent caused a lack of promising new talents in Taiwan art cinema in the 2000s.

¹¹⁹ The shift of discursive power and scant support from the industry and the authority motivated New Cinema protagonist, including artists, intellectuals and critics, to publish *1987 Taiwan Cinema Manifesto* to call on the authorities, mass media, and film criticism circle to support an "Alternative Cinema", or art cinema in fact (Chan, 1988a).

Taiwan Art Cinema and International Film Festivals

International Film Festival

Whilst the local industrial circumstances posed challenges to the development of Taiwan art cinema, the connection between Taiwan art cinema and the international film festival economy offered a new path for survival to Taiwan art cinema. Art cinema accentuates authorship and cross-cultural legibility rather than the taste of the mainstream and domestic culture, and thus the assumed audiences of art films are often international niches. Timothy Corrigan claims that the practices of auteurism should be conceptualised in terms of the material as well as in cultural contexts, and the auteur “can be described according to the conditions of a cultural and commercial *intersubjectivity*, a social interaction distinct from an intentional causality or textual transcendence” (1991: 104, italics in original). The filmmaker is not only the producer of the text but is also a subject for organising the transnational marketing, distribution, consumption and reception of auteur films. International film festivals are critical to such auteur-centred commerce. The international film festival could be an accreditation system, a site of value-addition, a showcase, and a trade fair for auteur-oriented films worldwide. Marijke de Valck (2007: 37) points out that the international film festival, in addition to a trade fair allowing stakeholders and filmmakers to assemble, is a site capable of offering symbolic value and cultural capital to award-winners through canon formation. The process of value-addition enhances auteurism and helps auteurs occupy the pivotal position within the institution of global art cinema. Thus festivals have enormous influence over the distribution, marketing, consumption and reception of art films.

The international film festival circuit is a key institution bringing Taiwan art cinema to the world, and can be seen as a series of regular mechanisms for helping auteur-oriented films circulate beyond national boundaries. As Neale (1981: 35) argues, “international film

festivals [are] where international distribution is sought for [art] films, and where their status as 'Art' is confirmed and re-stated through the existence of prizes and awards, themselves neatly balancing the criteria of artistic merit and commercial potential." Therefore, the film festival is a domain for judging the artistic value of art films and building cinematic canons, and artists' survival can be decided by their peers, including festival jury and programmers, rather than the public (Elsaesser, 2005: 99). Film auteurs, new waves, and new national cinemas could be discovered through this mechanism, and therefore Thomas Elsaesser attributes the existence of all the European new waves to international film festivals (ibid.: 90).

However, it may be claimed that the development of global art cinema and canon formation are implicitly political. Whether and when a national cinema can be internationally recognised is correlated to geopolitics, uneven development and postcolonial power in the world. Julian Stringer (2001: 135) points out that "non-Western cinemas do not count historically until they have been recognized by the apex of international media power, the center of which is located, by implication, at Western film festivals." This highlights the significance of international film festivals to contemporary national cinemas and indicates the uneven power relationship within the Eurocentric global cultural system. As Jonathan Rosenbaum argues, canon formation is "an active process of selection rather than a passive reportage" (2004: viii). Film festival directors and programmers are able to manipulate public attention and influence the reading of films by strategically clustering specific films in thematic program selections (De Valck, 2007: 175). The international film festival should be perceived as a political domain with complex power dynamics rather than a pure and neutral rite of passage for international art films.

Therefore, the relationship between global cultural politics, national cinemas and film festival circuit is complex. Film festivals set out to discover new waves fitting into the

Western value system and political orientation, and the inclination may affect both the strategy of film selection and local filmmaking. Undeniably, Western film festivals, together with Western spectators, occupy the central position in the international cinematic system, and the canonisation of art films is strongly associated with the Western view. De Valck points out that the structure of the international film festival circuit is hierarchically organised. Some film festivals hold a higher position than others, thereby adding more cultural value to their accredited films (2007: 38). The “big three”, namely Cannes, Berlin and Venice, are commonly viewed as the highest ranking and most influential on the international film festival circuit. In the Taiwanese government’s system of rewards for Taiwanese filmmakers’ participation in international film festivals, the “big three”, together with the Academy Awards, are also categorised as the highest level of film festival. In this context, global art cinema is implicitly Eurocentric to some extent. However, according to Yingjin Zhang (2002: 30), “No longer in pursuit of the ‘authentic and real’ in a given local culture, Western festival-goers are now satisfied with ‘mutually orchestrated’ cultural plays so as to guess what their native informants have guessed they want to see in the first place.” The discovery of new waves is thus a repeated process of “making the transformative discovery of neorealism. The structure is ahistorical, in the sense that each new cinema is a repetition of the ever-same fantasy, and any new national cinema can become the vehicle for this fantasy” (Galt and Schoonover, 2010: 13). Consequently, the “authenticity and reality” of local cultures discovered by the international film festival circuit could be planned, calculated and packaged reproductions in order to cater to what Western viewers and critics expect to see. On the other hand, the local perspectives might be unable to be “discovered” through the mechanism, for they may collide with Western value system and traditions of European art cinema.

In addition, the canonisation of a national cinema can be associated with geopolitical context. The geopolitical change and the opening-up of China have aroused the interest of western people, together with Taiwan, since the early 1980s. Azadeh Farahmand (2010: 266) asserts that “festivals typically pay special attention to films that have escaped local censorship—thereby enhancing the perceived festival images as the forum to display the authentic local reality otherwise filtered by government censorship.” The emergence of Taiwan art cinema during the 1980s partly demonstrated the political transformation of Taiwan and lifted the veil of the society and history of Taiwan for Western outsiders. Consequently, Taiwan art cinema became a fresh cinematic treasure for film festivals during the 1980s and 1990s.

Such inclination for film selection has had a decisive influence on the operation of global art cinema in relation to the production of text, the creation of discourses, and distribution, consumption and reception of films. De Valck (2007: 177) points out that the emergence of new waves of the 1980s was affected by both the globalised European art films and the development of international film festival circuit. They not only echoed the Western political stance but also revealed the influence of European cinemas over them. The “discovery” of national cinemas at film festivals exhibits the increasing influence of cultural globalisation. In this sense, although a Eurocentric eye might be implicit in the judgement, Hou Hsiao-hsien, for example, is constructed as an auteur of Taiwan national cinema due to his representation of “authentic” life experiences (Vitali, 2008: 283-284). However, the discovery of films and auteurs could be “merely a predisposed selection by Western outsiders” (De Valck, 2007: 177), and the “national cinema” might not reflect the actual situation of production, consumption and reception of domestic films in those countries. The industrial plight of Taiwan cinema and the dismal consumption of domestic art films in the local market are one example.

Links Between Taiwan Cinema and the International Film Festival Circuit

Modern Taiwan cinema has been established since the post-war period, but Taiwan cinema was not put on the map of world cinema until Western festivals began to look at it. Although the development of its industry peaked in the 1960s and 1970s, and certain filmmakers such as King Hu gained some international recognition before TNC,¹²⁰ Taiwan cinema did not receive further attention until New Cinema was recognised as a new wave in international film festivals in the 1980s.¹²¹ In terms of historical context, the discovery of Taiwan cinema in the West was closely related to the emergence of Chinese cinemas fever and a series of Chinese-language cinema movements in the early 1980s. According to Yingjin Zhang (2002: 51-52), the West has shown a rising interests in Chinese cinema since the early 1980s, which was evident in the increasing number of publications on Chinese cinema and film festivals on Chinese films held in the West. For example, *Ombre elettriche* (Electric Shadows), a groundbreaking retrospective of Chinese films, was organised in Turin, Milan and Rome in 1982 to exhibit 135 Chinese films made between the 1930s and 1970s (Hungerford, 2010).

Simultaneously, the occurrence of three successive new waves in the Chinese-speaking world from 1979, namely Hong Kong New Wave, Taiwan New Cinema, and the fifth generation of Chinese directors, engaged the attention of Western film festivals, film critics and academics in the 1980s. These events aroused Western audiences' interests in Chinese-language films, providing Taiwan art films with more opportunities to enter the international arena (Zhang, 2002: 17).

Under these circumstances, US-trained film critic Peggy Chiao acted as an intermediary between Taiwan art cinema and foreign film professionals. She positioned herself as a

¹²⁰ For example, Hu's *A Touch of Zen* (*Xianü*, 1971) was nominated for the Golden Palm and eventually won Technical Grand Prize at Cannes in 1975.

¹²¹ Western scholars' higher interest in Taiwan cinema from TNC onwards has also led to the historiographical absence of Taiwan cinema before 1982 in English-language scholarship (Hong, 2011: 2).

“cultural informant” to provide information on Chinese cinemas, including Taiwan New Cinema, to festival programmers as well as Western spectators, to increase the international visibility of Taiwan art cinema (Wu, 2007: 78). Moreover, she deployed concepts of national cinema, new wave and auteurism to situate Taiwan cinema within the arena of world cinema (ibid.). Consequently, an increasing number of film specialists based in non-Chinese regions, such as Chris Berry, Olivier Assayas and Marco Müller, helped to introduce Chinese-language films to the West, including TNC, which was advantageous to Taiwan art cinema’s engagement in international film festivals and the international distribution of films from Taiwan (Wu, 2007: 78; Chang, S., 2002: 30-31).

The incorporation of Taiwan art cinema into the global economy of art cinema is mutually beneficial for both film festivals and Taiwanese filmmakers. Taiwan art cinema could be viewed as a new trend for the international film festival audience. On the other hand, Taiwan art cinema integrates itself with the international film festival economy in view of advantages film festivals can offer. From Chang Shih-lun’s perspective, the newly-discovered Taiwan cinema can be seen as occupying the margins of global art cinema, and the big three festivals can be perceived as being at the centre of the hierarchical structure of the international film festival circuit (2002: 31). Besides, Elsaesser considers that smaller festivals, such as Rotterdam, are important sites for providing long-term commitment to nurturing auteurs (2005: 99). In the early 1980s, Taiwanese filmmakers began to establish their global reputation by actively joining smaller festivals, such as the Three Continents Festival at Nantes and the Locarno International Film Festival, in order to move on to the big three festivals. The recognition of Taiwan’s art films in these intermediate festivals enabled filmmakers to enter major European film festivals from the late 1980s onwards. Some film professionals also suggested partaking in film festivals strategically (Chang, 1985: 34-37).

This step-by-step trajectory of “entering the centre from the margins” helped Taiwanese filmmakers forge transnational links with the system of global art cinema.

The participation of Taiwan’s art films in international film festivals dramatically altered the institution of Taiwan art cinema and made it inseparable from the system of global art cinema. According to the *Independence Evening Post* (Chang, S., 2002: 31-32), between 1982 and 1987, eight of Hou’s films participated in 113 international film festivals. During the same period, four of Yang’s films had been screened at 56 festivals worldwide. The strategy aided filmmakers not only in developing an international reputation but also in recouping production costs. International film festivals are sites of both value addition and trade fairs. Attending festivals and winning prizes can increase the cultural value of their projects, and can help filmmakers obtain symbolic capital and build transnational connections with foreign film professionals. Furthermore, festivals’ accreditation could encourage the international distribution and consumption of films, bring about international cooperation to further the development of filmmakers’ subsequent projects, and help them to be incorporated into the global cultural economy (Wu, 2007: 78). For instance, *The Boys from Fengkuei* (*Fenggui laide ren*, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1983) and *Taipei Story* would not have turned a profit without sales of overseas distribution rights (see Table 7).

Table 7 Domestic and Global Theatrical Revenue of *The Boys from Fengkuei* and *Taipei Story* (Source: Chang, S., 2002: 32)

Year	Title	Costs (NT\$M)	Revenue (NT\$M)		Balance (NT\$M)
			Taiwan	Overseas	
1983	<i>The Boys from Fengkuei</i>	6	3.3	7.4	4.7
1985	<i>Taipei Story</i>	6	1.5	5	0.5

The Impact of A City of Sadness on Taiwan Art Cinema

Hou's masterpiece *A City of Sadness* (*Beiqing chengshi*, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1989, hereafter *A City*) occupies a critical role in accelerating the integration of Taiwan art cinema into the global cultural economy. The film can be regarded as a watershed moment in the history of Taiwan art cinema. In terms of content, the historical significance of the film could be attributed to Hou's examination of the February 28 Incident of 1947, a massacre that was to become a collective trauma and national scar for the Taiwanese people. Martial law was lifted in Taiwan in 1987, and *A City* was the first film to directly touch upon the taboo subject. Consequently, the film became a phenomenon on the island, and "A City of Sadness" was even used as a campaign slogan during the legislative election in that year (Wen, 2008b: 223). The success of the film inspired Taiwanese filmmakers to revisit historical trauma, and political taboo and historical memory became common themes in Taiwan cinema in the 1990s. Wen Tien-hsiang maintains that "the film activated the beginning of the retrospection and introspection of the Taiwan cinema circle towards Taiwanese history, especially concerning the issue of 'white terror'" (ibid.: 224). In this regard, it may be claimed that *A City* contributed to the development of Taiwanese nativism and the reconstruction of national identity in Taiwan.

Additionally, the critical success of *A City* encouraged the incorporation of Taiwan art cinema into the global cultural economy in the last two decades. By winning the Golden Lion at Venice in 1989, the film was the first film from Taiwan to have won the top award in the three most prestigious international film festivals. Its success at Venice represented that Taiwanese filmmakers can be recognised as auteurs and the status of artistic excellence of Taiwan art cinema has been confirmed. At home, the sensitive theme and the international reputation also put *A City* in the public eye, and the national craze brought in considerable economic benefits. Despite its art cinema orientation, the film broke the box office record of

domestic films with NT\$66 million (Han, 1991: 380).¹²² Chang Shih-lun (2002: 33-34) argues that the immense commercial success and international reception of *A City*, along with the formation of the state subsidy policy, have encouraged the transnational co-production of Taiwan's art films since the 1990s. Engaging in the film festival economy has since become a way out for Taiwan art cinema, and the dependence of Taiwan art cinema on the international cinematic system has been enhanced.

The Role of the State in the Development of Taiwan Art Cinema

Furthermore, the participation of Taiwan art cinema in the international film festival circuit can be attributed partly to Taiwan's film policy. The government has paid attention to art cinema since the early 1980s. James Soong Chu-yu, the then Minister of the Government Information Office (GIO), adopted a more flexible policy to rebuild the sluggish Taiwanese film industry at that time, and the creation of the Taipei Golden Horse International Film Festival in 1980 encouraged the development of art cinema in Taiwan (Yip, 2004: 53). Besides, the dismal performance of Taiwan cinema at the 1982 Asia-Pacific Festival motivated the GIO to award cash prizes to films winning awards or nominations at the following year's Asia-Pacific Festival (Yeh and Davis, 2005: 59). Taiwan suffered diplomatic setbacks in the 1970s, and Soong believed that films possess an enormous potential for propaganda function and therefore called on film professionals to join international film festivals to both win glory and demonstrate their cinematic ability (Yin, 2007: 57). The international film festival can be perceived as a diplomatic mechanism to achieve global distinction, and the participation of Taiwan's films in international film

¹²² According to *The Database of Taiwan Cinema*, launched by Feii Lu, the takings of *A City of Sadness* at Taipei box office was NT\$34.9 million.

festivals can increase the visibility as well as assert the status of the nation of Taiwan (Wu, 2007: 80).

Although the government became more conscious of the cultural value and diplomatic function of Taiwan art cinema, it lacked constructive measures to promote art cinema until the establishment of the Domestic Film Guidance Fund in 1989. The Domestic Film Guidance Fund was founded to encourage filmmakers to honour Taiwan with their participation in international film festivals, as well as make quality films with both cultural value and attractiveness in order to revive the local film industry and promote cultural diplomacy (Chinese Taipei Film Archive, 1994: 21). Although the subsidy was created partly for political purposes, it has gradually become an indispensable finance source to Taiwan art cinema. According to the statistics of the *Taiwan Cinema Yearbook*, during the 1990s, 32 of 43 international film festival winners from Taiwan had been subsidised by the scheme. The high percentage (74.4%) implied that the Domestic Film Guidance Fund could function, to some extent, as a mechanism for assessing the potential artistic value of projects and the status of directors. Therefore, winning the Domestic Film Guidance Fund can help filmmakers to persuade investors to finance their projects. On the other hand, the high correlation indicated that the state subsidy became one of the few available financing sources for Taiwanese filmmakers during the period. As James Udden (2009: 133) claims, the Domestic Film Guidance Fund has become a crucial funding source of Taiwan art cinema, regardless of its inability to improve the fundamental structure of local film industry, including financing, distribution and exhibition.

Moreover, the formation of the policy encouraging the participation in international film competitions in the early 1990s has contributed to the integration of Taiwan art cinema into the global cultural economy. The critical success of films from Taiwan at international film festivals in the 1980s, in particular *A City*, further highlighted the political function and

significance of Taiwan art cinema. Wu Chia-chi points out that Taiwan cinema exhibits “powerful allegorical functions as cultural expressions of would-be national legitimacy” (2007: 75). Its involvement in international film festivals could transform the international film festival circuit into an arena for challenging the claim of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) to exclusive political legitimacy and advancing the global status of Taiwan. In this light, the government formulated the Enforcement Directions Governing the Provision of Incentives and Guidance to the Motion Picture Industry and Industry Professionals Participating in International Film Festivals in 1992. The act divides 71 international film festivals into four tiers (see Appendix 2). The group in which the given festival is categorised and the competition outcome of the film then decide the amount of cash to be awarded to the project. For example, *The Wayward Cloud* (*Tianbian yiduo yun*, dir. Tsai Ming-liang, 2005) was awarded NT\$1 million after the film won the Silver Bear for an outstanding single achievement at the 2005 Berlin International Film Festival (Wang, B.: 2005). The policy offers incentives for local film directors not only to take part in international film festivals but also to produce festival films. Accordingly, the state policy enhances the transnational connection between Taiwanese film directors and the international festival circuit and has furthered the dependence of Taiwan art cinema on the global cultural economy over the past two decades.

The success of *A City* and the state policies have encouraged Taiwanese filmmakers to engage in the international film festival circuit since the 1990s; however, none of them can reach the heights of *A City* in terms of commercial performance. Forty-three of 323 films from Taiwan released during the 1990s have received film awards abroad, and four of them had received major prizes at the “big three”, namely *The Wedding Banquet* (*Xiyan*, dir. Ang Lee, 1993; Golden Bear at the 1993 Berlin), *The Puppetmaster* (*Ximeng rensheng*, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1993; Jury Prize at the 1993 Cannes), *Vive L’Amour* (*Aiqing wansui*, dir. Tsai

Ming-liang, 1994; Golden Lion at the 1994 Venice), and *The River* (*Heliu*, dir. Tsai Ming-liang, 1997; Silver Bear Special Jury Prize at the 1997 Berlin). Nevertheless, their international critical achievement did not lure a great number of local viewers back to cinemas. During the 1990s, only two international festival award winners from Taiwan were on the annual top ten list of Chinese-language films at the Taipei box office; both of them were directed by Ang Lee, namely *Wedding Banquet* and *Eat Drink Man Woman* (*Yinshi nannü*, 1994). According to Yin Chia-lien's statistics, *A City* grossed 4.5% of the total box office takings of 1989. While Ang Lee's *The Wedding Banquet* gained 2.53% of total box office grosses in 1993, a number of award-winning films, including *The River*, obtained less than 0.1% of the total annual box office gross (2007: 68). Pierre Bourdieu (1986: 53-54) claims that it is possible for different types of capital to be converted into economic capital. However, although Taiwan art films obtained increasing cultural capital from the international film festival circuit, it seems that they are unable to transform it into economic capital at home.

Taiwan art cinema started taking off from the rise of TNC in the 1980s, and its transnational connections with the system of global art cinema sustained its development in the following decades. Nonetheless, it seems that Taiwan art cinema has become less vigorous in the 21st century. Contemporary Taiwan art cinema continues to participate in international film festivals. According to *Taiwan Cinema* (2013b), films from Taiwan have been selected for competition in various international film festivals 923 times during the 2000s, which shows that Taiwanese filmmakers still actively engage in the global art cinematic system. Among these, thirteen films have been nominated in the competition of Group A festivals (see Table 8). However, most of them were directed by auteurs already canonised before the new millennium, including Hou Hsiao-hsien, Edward Yang, Ang Lee and Tsai Ming-liang. Their films are routinely invited to participate in the “big three”, and

these auteurs, arguably, have become fixtures on the international film festival circuit regardless of the country of origin of their films, for example, *Brokeback Mountain* (Ang Lee, 2005; Golden Lion at the 2005 Venice). Besides, two films were made by rising directors in the second half of the 1990s, namely Lin Cheng-sheng and Chang Tso-chi, yet it seems that currently no directors of the new generation can reach the heights of these acknowledged masters, which reflects the slowdown in the development of Taiwan art cinema in the new century.

As for the commercial performance of these films, whilst some films were box office hits, most of them performed unsatisfactorily in the local film market. Among films that competed in Group A festivals, Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (*Wohu canglong*, 2000) and *Lust, Caution* (*Se, Jie*, 2007) were box-office record breakers; Tsai's controversial work *The Wayward Cloud* also ranked first among films from Taiwan of the year, taking more than NT\$10 million at the Taipei box office in 2005. Nonetheless, many auteur-oriented films drew less than NT\$1 million at the Taipei box office (see Table 8).

Table 8 Films from Taiwan Selected for Competition at Group A Festivals in the 21st Century (Cannes, Venice, Berlin, Academy Awards) (Source: *Taiwan Cinema Yearbook*)

Title	Domestic Box Office Grosses (NT\$)
	Competition Result
Hou Hsiao-hsien	
<i>Millennium Mambo</i> (<i>Qianxi manbo</i> , 2001)	551,410 2001 Cannes: Technical Grand Prize
<i>Café Lumière</i> (<i>Kōhī Jikō</i> , 2003)	580,960 2004 Venice: In-Competition
<i>Three Times</i> (<i>Zuihao de shiguang</i> , 2005)	2,279,730 2005 Cannes: In-Competition
Edward Yang	
<i>Yi Yi: A One and a Two</i> (<i>Yi Yi</i> , 2000)	NA

	2000 Cannes: Best Director
Ang Lee	
<i>Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon</i> (<i>Wohu canglong</i> , 2000)	101,155,665
	2001 Academy Awards: Best Foreign Language Film
<i>Lust, Caution</i> (<i>Se, Jie</i> , 2007)	137,050,890
	2007 Venice: Golden Lion
Tsai Ming-liang	
<i>What Time Is It There?</i> (<i>Ni nabian jidian?</i> , 2001)	1,243,830
	2001 Cannes: In-Competition
<i>Goodbye, Dragon Inn</i> (<i>Bu san</i> , 2003)	1,010,070
	2003 Venice: In-Competition
<i>The Wayward Cloud</i> (<i>Tienbian yiduo yun</i> , 2005)	10,153,360
	2005 Berlin: Silver Bear for an Outstanding Single Achievement
<i>I Don't Want to Sleep Alone</i> (<i>Hei yanquan</i> , 2006)	976,216
	2006 Venice: In-Competition
<i>Face</i> (<i>Visage</i> , 2009)	2,184,004
	2009 Cannes: In-Competition
Lin Cheng-sheng	
<i>Betelnut Beauty</i> (<i>Aini aiwo</i> , 2001)	885,025
	2001 Berlin: Silver Bear for Best Director
Chang Tso-chi	
<i>The Best of Times</i> (<i>Meili shiguang</i> , 2002)	2,162,850
	2002 Venice: In-Competition

Transnational Co-Production in Taiwan Art Cinema

Despite its ineffectiveness in stimulating the local film industry, participation in international film festivals has led to the transnational co-production of art films in Taiwan. Corrigan points out that “Placed before, after, and outside a film text and in effect usurping the work of

that text and its reception, today's auteurs are agents who, whether they wish it or not, are always on the verge of being self-consumed by their status as stars" (1991: 106). In this sense, auteurs can be viewed as promotional stars with transnational stardom. With the increasing international reputation of art films from Taiwan, foreign film companies' interest in investing in Taiwanese auteurs' filmmaking has increased since the late 1980s. Filmmaking of already canonised Taiwanese auteurs began to be backed by foreign film companies, in particular those from France and Japan, through pre-sales of film rights in accordance with auteurs' prestige and commercial appeal in given markets. Hence transnational collaboration has become a crucial feature in the institution of Taiwan art cinema since the 1990s and has been a vital approach to sustaining the development of Taiwan art cinema in the past two decades.

Japanese–Taiwanese Connections in Transnational Art Film Co-Productions

Japanese–Taiwanese art film co-production was crucial to the survival of Taiwan art cinema during the 1990s. Hou Hsiao-hsien is the main Taiwanese filmmaker with whom Japanese film companies have cooperated, and transnational connections played an important role in the production of his magnum opus, *A City of Sadness*. Japanese cinephiles have become aware of Hou since the mid-1980s. According to Emilie Yueh-Yu Yeh (2005: 170), Japanese film critics such as Shigehiko Hasumi paid attention to Hou as early as in 1984, before he was widely recognised at European film festivals.¹²³ In fact, *The Time to Live and the Time to Die* was the first of Hou's feature films to be theatrically released in Japan, yet the film was screened in Japan in December of 1988, which was after *A City* received the financial backing from its Japanese investor (Liao, 1991: 31). Therefore, it would seem that the support of Japanese companies for Hou's 1989 historical masterpiece, such as PR, Shibata

¹²³ Gary Needham (2006: 369) asserts that English-language world did not take a more serious interest in Hou and his Taiwanese contemporaries until the critical success of *A City of Sadness*.

Organization Inc. and Fun House, could be attributed to Hou's established international reputation as well as the postcolonial subject matter of *A City*. Also, it exhibits that Hou's authorship had been recognised in Japan by that time.

Japanese film companies played a critical role in the financing and production of *A City*. In terms of film financing, *A City* could be the first art film from Taiwan to have investment from foreign companies. In the past, foreign distributors had purchased the exhibition rights of Hou's or Yang's films after their completion, but *A City* was financed through the pre-sales of film rights. Before its shooting began in November 1988, its exhibition rights in Japan had been sold for around NT\$5 million (US\$190,000), equivalent to one-third of its original budget (Chang, 2011: 118, 139).¹²⁴ Besides, part of the post-production of the film, such as audio mixing and printing, were handled by Japanese film professionals owing to Taiwanese film companies' inadequacy in terms of techniques and technologies (ibid.: 112, 114). Moreover, the film score was composed by Japanese composer Naoki Tachikawa, together with Taiwanese composer Chang Hung-Yi, and performed by Japanese instrumental group S.E.N.S.

This Taiwanese–Japanese co-production won plaudits from Japanese critics and had an impressive commercial performance at the Japanese box office, thereby allowing Hou's auteur status to be recognised in Japan and contributing to the exhibition and consumption of Hou's previous works in Japan. Hou's winning of the Golden Lion in 1989 enabled him to come to the fore in Japan, and the selection of his *Dust in the Wind* (*Lianlian fengchen*, 1986) and *The Time to Live and the Time to Die* as the eleventh and fifteenth best foreign-language films respectively by influential film magazine *Kinema Junpo* demonstrated that Hou's works

¹²⁴ Chan Hung-chi, the film's executive producer, mentioned that the original budget of *A City of Sadness* was NT\$14.6 million (Chang, 2011: 139); however, the eventual cost was much more than NT\$17 million due to publicity and post-production according to the film producer Chiu Fu-sheng (ibid.: 116). According to Liao Jingu (1991: 31), there were few locally-made films with a budget of over NT\$10 million at that time.

gained the growing respect among Japanese film critics (Kuroi, 1990: 21).¹²⁵ *A City* was released in Japan in April 1990, and the film and Hou were chosen as “Best Foreign Film of 1990” and “Best Foreign Film Director of 1990” respectively by *Kinema Junpo* (IMDB, 2013b). As far as consumption is concerned, according to Abe Markus Nornes and Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh (1994), “the theatrical releases [of *A City of Sadness*] included long runs in Tokyo’s finest theaters, where one often found standing-room only crowds day and night.”

The success of *A City* in Venice and in the Japanese film market allowed all of Hou’s previous films to be screened in Japan during the 1990s (Kakijima, 1993: 50-55), including his earlier melodramas, *Lovable You* (*Jiushi liuliude ta*, 1980) and *Green, Green Grass of Home* (*Zai na hepan qingcao qing*, 1982). Hou’s influence also extended beyond cinema. For example, in 1991, the largest advertising agency in Japan, Dentsu, commissioned Hou to make a commercial in Taiwan to promote the corporate image of a chemical company Nippon Shokubai (Yeh, 2005: 170).¹²⁶ Furthermore, a travel agency organised a four-day package tour named “Journey to the places in Hou Hsiao-hsien’s films” to take Japanese tourists to visit the sites of Hou’s films (ibid.: 171). These events not only proved Hou’s increasing fame in Japan but also prompted Japanese film companies to finance Hou’s successive films. In fact, all of Hou’s feature films made in the 1990s, namely *The Puppetmaster*, *Good Men, Good Women* (*Haonan haonü*, 1995), *Goodbye South, Goodbye* (*Nanguo zaijian, nanguo*, 1996), and *Flowers of Shanghai* (*Haishang hua*, 1998), were invested in by Japanese film companies, and the latter three films were sponsored by Shochiku Company, a Japanese film studio established in 1895 which had been the employer

¹²⁵ *The Time to Live and the Time to Die* and *Dust in the Wind* were theatrically released in Japan on 24 December 1988 and 11 November 1989. (available: <http://www.kinejun.jp/people/id/55541>)

¹²⁶ The television commercial, namely *The Sentimental Heaven and Earth*, was filmed at Shihfen railway station, also a film location of *Dust in the Wind*; and played by Lim Giong and Annie Yi, both of whom featured in a number of Hou’s films later. The advertisement replicated the atmosphere demonstrated in Hou’s autobiographical films, such as *Dust in the Wind* and *The Time to Live and the Time to Die*.

of many Japanese auteurs such as Yasujiro Ozu, Kenji Mizoguchi and Akira Kurosawa. Hou's first foreign language film, *Café Lumière*, was commissioned by Shochiku as well. The support from Japan had an enormous effect on Hou's filmmaking activities. For example, Shochiku invested NT\$100 million in *Flowers of Shanghai*, which was much more than the usual budget for films from Taiwan (Wei, 2004: 80).

The critical and commercial success of *A City* also contributed to Japanese companies' investment in Taiwan art cinema. As one of the earliest internationally-recognised auteurs from Taiwan, Yang's filmmaking activities were backed by Japanese film companies as well. Take, for example, *A Brighter Summer Day* (*Gulingjie shaonian sharen shijian*, dir. Edward Yang, 1991, hereafter *BSD*). According to Chan Hung-chi, the executive producer of the film (Chang, 2011: 146), *BSD* could not have been finished without Japanese financing. The production of the film was wildly over budget, and consequently the film's completion was postponed due to insufficient funds. Fortunately, a Japanese distributor paid out over NT\$32 million (US\$1.2 million) for the distribution rights for *BSD* in Japan (*ibid.*: 152), much more than the distribution right of *A City*. In addition, its global distribution rights, excluding Japan and Taiwan, were purchased by Japan's Nihon Hoso Kyokai (NHK, aka Japan Broadcasting Corporation) and Jane Balfour Films from the UK. As a result, although Yang spent around NT\$27 million making *BSD*, nearly twice the original budget, the film recouped its cost before its theatrical release (*ibid.*).

Apart from individual film studios' support for certain auteurs' projects, some Japanese institutions began to launch art film co-production under the regional banner in the late 1990s. Edward Yang's *Yi Yi: A One and a Two* (*Yi Yi*, 2000, hereafter *Yi Yi*) is a film from Taiwan belonging to the Japan-sponsored Y2K project. In 1997, three Asian directors, namely Yang (Taiwan), Stanley Kwan (Hong Kong) and Shunji Iwai (Japan), agreed to make three separate films in the year 2000 under the banner of the Y2K project, proposed and mainly invested in

by the Japanese Pony Canyon Inc., Omega Project, and other Japanese film companies (Besserglik, 2000).¹²⁷ The project aimed to promote transnational collaboration and build a new model for filmmaking in Asia by assembling and exchanging regional resources. Pony Canyon's Shinya Kawa declared, "We looked at the increasing dominance of Hollywood and decided we had to change, to do something different . . . We hope this sets new standards and provides a model for the future" (Watts, 1998). For Yang, the appearance of the transnational plan rightly reflected the inevitable tendency of regional collaboration in Asia as a result of the integration of the regional market (Besserglik, 2000). As Davis and Yeh (2008: 91) point out, the pan-Asian co-production enables filmmakers to seek investment more easily as well as to secure international distribution and marketing in advance. The Y2K project could be viewed as an attempt at cross-border and cross-cultural exchange of production expertise, which would contribute to the integration of film industries in East Asia.

Furthermore, transnational connections are exhibited in the content and cast of *Yi Yi*. The story is set in both Taipei and Tokyo. The protagonist NJ (acted by Wu Nien-jen) is sent to Japan by his firm to negotiate a deal, and Japanese actor Issey Ogata was cast as the Japanese businessman with whom NJ negotiated and made friends. Tokyo is also the city where NJ and his ex-girlfriend Sherry (acted by Ko Su-yun), who flew in from the USA, meet and briefly rekindle their old romance. NJ's Japanese trip could be understood as a travel back in time, which, from Yang's perspective, echoes the relationship between Taipei and Japan (Wong, 2001: 28-31). The link between Japan and Taipei in the film came from Yang's personal experience. Taipei is a city with many Japanese-style buildings built during the Japanese colonial period, and hence Yang had a sense of nostalgia when making his first visit to Japan. Consequently, he applied the idea of "return to the past" to the film (Chang,

¹²⁷ The three films are Yang's *Yi Yi*, Kwan's *The Island Tales* (*Youshi tiaowu*, 2000), and Iwai's *All About Lily Chou-Chou* (*Rirī Shushu no subete*, 2001)

2001: 85). That is, transnational connections in *Yi Yi* not only resulted from co-production and market integration but were also related to the postcolonial experience of the Taiwanese in relation to Japan.

The transnational co-production of *Yi Yi* highlights the complex relationship between the nation state and cinematic products within the global cinematic system. *Yi Yi* is a film depicting a contemporary Taiwanese family despite its transnational connections and Japanese financial backing. Nevertheless, the film rights did not belong to Yang, and the film, ironically, had never been released theatrically in Taiwan (Berry, 2005: 288). Transnational connections also confuse the national identity of the film. According to Yang (ibid.: 289), the GIO rejected a travel subsidy for Yang when *Yi Yi* was nominated for competition at Cannes because the GIO did not consider *Yi Yi* a film from Taiwan due to its Japanese financial backing. This incident not only highlighted the rigid bureaucracy in Taiwan's regulatory agency but also raised questions about the relevance of the concept of national cinema to filmmaking activities under increasing cultural globalisation.

Apart from Yang, some younger Taiwanese directors have been financed by such intra-Asian schemes. For example, NHK invested in *Sweet Degeneration* (*Fang lang*, dir. Lin Cheng-sheng, 1997), *The Best of Times* (*Meili shiguang*, dir. Chang Tso-chi, 2002) and *Pinoy Sunday* (*Taipei xingqitian*, dir. Wi Ding Ho, 2010) in 1997, 2001 and 2009 respectively. NHK Asian Film Festival was established in 1995 and aimed at supporting and fostering up-and-coming Asian film directors through international cooperation (NHK, 2010). Besides financing film production, NHK offers opportunities to showcase these productions and other Asian films, for example, Taiwanese director Yang Ya-che's *Orz Boyz* (*Jiong nanhai*, 2008). The launch of such a project indicates the emergence of regional consciousness and the formation of regional imagination. It also highlights the development of an Asian-centred cinematic culture and the institutionalisation of Asian art cinema in recent decades. Arguably,

transnational co-production enables investors to discover new talents worldwide and partake in the institution of global art cinema. On the other hand, it provides newcomers having no powerful backers the opportunity to mature and engage in the film festival economy. For instance, *Sweet Degeneration* and *The Best of Times*, both of which are Taiwanese–NHK co-productions, entered the competition for the Golden Bear at Berlin in 1998 and the Golden Lion at Venice in 2002 respectively. Such exposure can raise the cultural status and symbolic capital of NHK Asian Film Festival, while, at the same time, the transnational cooperation provided resources and symbolic capital for filmmakers.

French–Taiwanese Connections in Transnational Art Film Co-Productions

Despite its later involvement, French film companies have replaced Japanese film companies as the principal collaborators in Taiwanese auteur-oriented filmmaking in the 21st century. Hou Hsiao-hsien and Tsai Ming-liang are major Taiwanese directors with whom French companies have cooperated. Japanese film companies had been the primary investors of Hou's films in the 1990s, but French institutions have replaced them, becoming the main foreign investors of Hou in the new millennium. Although Shochiku Company started to finance some of Hou's films in the 1990s, it seems that Japanese spectators favoured Hou's earlier films. Hou admitted that his films were not as popular in Japan after *Good Men, Good Women*, and this might be because Japanese viewers still prefer the nostalgic themes in his earlier films rather than the contemporary issues that Hou tried to tackle in his more recent films (Lee, 1999). According to Yeh (2005: 170-171), Japanese film critics consider Hou's films as genuine, authentic, antiquated and sentimental, and it is possible they satisfy Japanese viewers with diverse yearnings:

For [Japan,] a society that seems to be desperately seeking a lost history, Hou provides a (better-than-real) replica, as in the case of the package tour and the quaint locale in *Son's Big Doll*. For critics who idealize cinema as pure art, Hou satisfies that consummation with his uncompromisingly self-contained style. For historians who

search for residues of Japanese imperialism, Hou answers with his Taiwan Trilogy.¹²⁸ (Yeh, 2005: 171-172)

That is, the popularity of Hou's films in Japan can be partly credited to Japanese colonial legacy and neo-colonial nostalgia. When Hou shifted his attention away from the past in his later films, he failed to draw more fans in from Japan. Nonetheless, Hou's lyrical and realistic style and distinctive film aesthetics constantly appeal to cinephiles. For instance, *Flowers of Shanghai* was screened in Saint-Andre-des-Arts, a famous art film cinema in Paris, for more than one month in 1999 (ibid.: 172). Thus, it is unsurprising that French film companies are beginning to engage in Hou's filmmaking in the 21st century.

Both of Hou's Chinese-language films in the 2000s, namely *Millennium Mambo* and *Three Times* (*Zuihao de shiguang*, 2005), were backed by French film companies. *Millennium Mambo*, initially called *The Name of the Rose*, was an instalment of Hou's six-part *Millennium Mambo* project. Hou wanted to depict the life of youths in contemporary Taipei by combining the project with a new website he launched at the turn of the 21st century (Berry, 2005: 263). However, the plan was not fully carried out; *The Name of the Rose* was the only film completed and renamed *Millennium Mambo*. While the film was shot in Taiwan and Japan and its content is unrelated to France, it was sponsored by French companies, including Paradis Films and Orly Films. As for *Three Times*, the film was originally an omnibus project with *The Best of Our Times*, proposed to be directed by Hou, along with three young film directors, namely Chung Meng-hong, Huang Wen-ying and Wayne Peng. The plan won the Pusan Award under the Pusan Promotion Plan (PPP) in 2002 and was awarded NT\$9 million from Taiwan's Domestic Feature Guidance Fund in 2003 (Frater, 2002; *Taiwan Cinema*, 2010). However, the project was almost abandoned due to insufficient finance (Liu, 2005). Because they had to compensate the GIO for the extra one-

¹²⁸ *Son's Big Doll* (*Erzi de da wanou*) is a part of the anthology film *The Sandwich Man*, directed by Hou Hsiao-hsien.

tenth of the total funding as well as returning the funding if the film was not finished, Hou revised the script and directed the film alone rather than involve other film directors, for he found it easier to attract foreign investment on his own. The fact affirms the significance of the commerce of auteurism. Like *Millennium Mambo*, *Three Times* was financed by Paradis Films and Orly Films even though the film's narrative has nothing to do with France at all.

Tsai Ming-liang is the Taiwanese auteur who has the most films backed by French institutions. Tsai began to be noticed in the international film festival circuit with his directorial debut, *Rebels of the Neon God (Qingshaonian Nuozha, 1992)*, and his auteur status was further recognised when he won the Golden Lion with his subsequent film, *Vive L'Amour*. His filmmaking has been financed by French film companies since his fourth feature film, *The Hole (Dong, 1998)*. The film was co-produced by Taiwanese and French companies, including Arc Light Films, CMPC and China Television Company from Taiwan, together with Haut et Court and La Sept-Arte from France. In fact, *The Hole* is also part of a French TV project "2000 vu par" (2000 as seen by...). French TV station La Sept-Arte and production firm Haut et Court launched the project in 1995 to invite international filmmakers to make films for the subject of the new millennium (Appert and Gire, 2002). Tsai was the only Asian director commissioned by them, and then the TV film was also developed into a feature film format.

Thereafter, most of Tsai's feature films were financed by French investors apart from *Goodbye, Dragon Inn (Bu san, 2003)*.¹²⁹ Tsai's 2001 film *What Time Is It There?* was mainly invested in by French firms, in particular Arena Films; Italian companies, such as Alia Film and Telepiù, were also involved in its production. *The Wayward Cloud* was funded by French companies as well. For example, Arena Films invested around NT\$28 million in the film

¹²⁹ According to Lee Kang-sheng ("Lee Kang-sheng", 2005), *Goodbye, Dragon Inn* and *The Missing (Bu jian, dir. Lee Kang-sheng, 2003)* were financed by Tsai, the film producer Liang Hung-chih and himself.

(Tsao, 2005a). Moreover, *I Don't Want to Sleep Alone* (*Hei yanquan*, 2006) was one of the films commissioned as part of the New Crowned Hope Festival in Vienna to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in 2006. The film was filmed in Malaysia, and a number of companies and organisations with different national origins were involved, including Taiwan, Malaysia, Austria, the UK, France and the Netherlands. Additionally, not only were Tsai's feature films produced through transnational co-production, but his short film *The Skywalk is Gone* (*Tianqiao bujianle*, 2002) and documentary *A Conversation with God* (2001) were also backed by French and South Korean film companies respectively.

The transnational connections between Tsai and French cinema are also manifested in his narratives. For example, Tsai paid tribute to French New Wave auteur François Truffaut's masterpiece *The 400 Blows* (*Les Quatre Cents Coups*, 1959) in *What Time Is It There?* (hereafter *What Time*). According to Tsai, "the cinema of Truffaut had a determining influence on me when I was a young spectator . . . *The 400 Blows* were a revelation, notably for its liberté d'écriture and its autobiographical resonances" (Ciment and Tobin, 2001, cited in Bloom, 2005: 318). In this vein, *What Time* could be regarded as Tsai's homage to both *The 400 Blows* and his cinematic father, Truffaut (Lim, 2007b: 233). The intertextual relationship in Tsai's tribute film is complex, and here I will only briefly examine the visual intertextuality in the film. In *What Time*, Hsiao-kang's (performed by Lee Kang-sheng) interest in Shiang-chyi (performed by Chen Shiang-chyi) becomes a sort of obsession with Paris, the city to which Shiang-chyi has travelled and with which he is unfamiliar. Two sequences of the film show Hsiao-kang watching *The 400 Blows* to minimise the difference between here (Taipei) and there (Paris), Hsiao-kang and Shiang-chyi. The second citation is particularly noteworthy. The image of *The 400 Blows* occupies the whole screen and is directly presented to viewers without seeing Hsiao-kang and the TV frame. Thus Michelle

Bloom (2005: 320) describes it as “a citation without quotation mark,” which could be regarded as “Tsai ‘consuming’ Truffaut’s film in his own” (ibid.: 321). It resituates the production-consumption relationship in the film text and provides a possible reading in terms of the relationship between auteurism and cinephilia (Bloom, 2005: 321; Lim, 2007b: 234-235). Besides visual intertextuality, the brief appearance of Jean-Pierre Léaud, the main lead of *The 400 Blows*, in Tsai’s film also shows Tsai’s homage to Truffaut.¹³⁰ Furthermore, *What Time* was originally named *7 to 400 Blows*. Seven refers to seven hours, the time gap between Taipei and Paris (Yang, N., 2001), and it clearly manifests the influence of French cinema on Tsai.

Although Hou’s and Tsai’s film texts are still connected with Taiwan’s socio-cultural contexts, today their filmmaking activities largely depended on transnational art film co-production. In the case of Tsai, French art films crossed the cultural border to influence the Taiwan-based Chinese-Malaysian filmmaker, and then he in reverse produces art films for international viewers, including the French, by collaborating with French film companies. Hou’s two films were developed from projects proposed by him, whereas a number of Tsai’s French-funded films were part of projects conceived in Europe. The transnational and trans-cultural links between Tsai and these European cultural schemes shows that the global circulation of European cinematic culture has formed a cinephilic cycle between European and non-European cinemas. In this regard, Taiwan art cinema can be perceived as a localised variation of European art cinema, which is capable of giving new energy to its European origins.

The capitalist expansion and the ideologies of cosmopolitanism during the post-war period has enhanced cultural globalisation and facilitated the construction of a fantasy of art

¹³⁰ Tsai believes Léaud’s debut in *The 400 Blows* had a great impact on him, and therefore he cast Léaud as Antonie, also the name of the role Léaud acted in *The 400 Blows*, in his later French film *Face* (Wang and Lin, 2010: 165).

cinema as a universal language, notwithstanding the implicit uneven power relationship behind its operation. Consequently, the growth of the system of transnational production and distribution of art cinema and the auteur-centred film festival economy strengthens the creation of both national and global imaginations for the international audience. Art films from Taiwan have become a cinematic form of cultural negotiation between the local and the global at the level of both narrative and production. However, the cross-border transnationality weakens the connection between Hou and Tsai and the local industrial context and market simultaneously. The commerce of auteurism allows directors to have more creative autonomy since they are backed by foreign investors. As a result, Taiwanese auteurs' filmmaking could gradually break away from the domestic cinematic institution.

American–Taiwanese Connections in Transnational Art Film Co-productions

Whilst art cinema, along with national cinema, partly emerged as a European strategy against Hollywood dominance and is commonly regarded as the Other of mainstream Hollywood cinema, Hollywood companies have also created connections with Taiwan art cinema. The transaction of film distribution rights in the given country or region during the pre-production or production stage is a common cooperation model between Taiwanese and Japanese as well as French institutions. However, Hollywood studios have not financed the production of auteur-oriented films from Taiwan through this model. Rather, they undertake the distribution of selected art films and promote them to Taiwanese viewers instead of foreign audiences.

As a whole, American companies' participation in Taiwan art cinema is relatively insignificant vis-à-vis Japanese and French institutions. Although Warner Bros. released three auteur-oriented films from Taiwan in the mid-1990s, the company halted the distribution of domestic films until the mid-2000s partly due to their dismal performance at the box office. In 2005, the Taiwanese branch of Twentieth Century Fox undertook the distribution of both

Tsai's *The Wayward Cloud* and Hou's *Three Times*. The domestic intake of Tsai's earlier films was unimpressive, but *The Wayward Cloud* became the highest-grossing film from Taiwan in 2005, taking in more than NT\$10 million at the Taipei box office.¹³¹ Its astonishing box office result could be partly attributed to its sensational theme. Erotic scenes and the appearance of a real-life Japanese porn actress in the film prompted the Taiwanese media to throw a spotlight on the film (Lawa and Chang, 2005), thereby driving curious viewers to cinemas as well as provoking public controversy over issues of pornography and erotica (Tsao, 2005b; Ke, 2005). *Three Times*, by contrast, only received NT\$2.2 million at the Taipei box office although it was distributed by the same company. Its result was better than that for *Millennium Mambo*, but it did not exceed the performance of Hou's previous films such as *Flowers of Shanghai* and *Goodbye South, Goodbye*.¹³²

Regardless of the success or failure of marketing campaigns in these cases, the difference in their box office receipts shows that the commercial success of *The Wayward Cloud* is an extraordinary case. It would be over-optimistic and a mistake to contend that the creation of the connection between Taiwanese auteur-oriented filmmakers and Hollywood distributors can dramatically improve the consumption of Taiwan art cinema overnight. Furthermore, the number of Taiwan's auteur-oriented films which Hollywood distributors have handled is small, and most of these films were directed by internationally-recognised auteurs. Therefore, this development should be understood in terms of the implementation of Hollywood studios' strategy of glocalisation more than their active engagement in Taiwan art cinema. It is an extension of Hollywood's involvement in the distribution of native-language films in Taiwan over the past decade.

¹³¹ The usual box office receipts of Tsai's films at the Taipei box office in the 2000s was around NT\$1 million (see Table 8).

¹³² The box office results of *Millennium Mambo* (2001), *Flowers of Shanghai* (1998) and *Goodbye South, Goodbye* (1996) were NT\$551,410, NT\$2.7 million, and NT\$2.4 million respectively.

Nevertheless, Hollywood's participation can enhance the link between Taiwan's art films and the domestic industrial context. Since the Taiwanese film market is dominated by Hollywood distributors, the participation of Hollywood distributors could contribute to the distribution, exhibition and consumption of these films in Taiwan, thereby restoring the bond between Taiwan art cinema and domestic spectators. Some auteurs, such as Hou and Tsai, are integrated into the global cultural economy and their activities need not rely on domestic industrial institutions and market; however, the support of local viewers could still be significant to the development of filmic activities of unrecognised filmmakers and new talents. In this sense, support from the distribution system could possess more influence over the long-term development of domestic art cinema and the institutional structure of the Taiwanese film industry.

Translingual Co-Production of Foreign-Language Films

Besides transnational co-production of Taiwan's art films, Taiwanese auteurs have crossed cultural and linguistic barriers to direct foreign-language films in the new millennium. Although the transnational collaboration of native-language films also involves cross-cultural communication, it seems that auteurs entering alien countries to make a translingual film must bridge a larger cultural and linguistic gap. In fact, Taiwanese auteurs began translingual filmmaking as early as the mid-1990s. Ang Lee, a US-trained, US-based Taiwanese auteur, made his English-language feature film debut with *Sense and Sensibility* in 1995. However, the film, together with his subsequent English-language films, was financed by American and UK companies, which echoes what Galt and Schoonover (2010: 8) argue was the emergence of an "artsier" version of Hollywood films in the 1990s. The phenomenon reflects both the change in the institution of global art cinema in the past few decades and the complex

ambivalent relationship between art and popular cinemas. However, Lee's translingual filmmaking could be linked more closely with the Hollywood system than with European art cinema. As Song Hwee Lim argues, Lee's career began "as diasporic and luminal, but have, via strategies of flexibility, gained full citizenship in mainstream filmmaking" (2012: 140). Today, he has established himself as an established Hollywood director as well as an auteur.

Moreover, Taiwanese auteurs' translingual filmmaking extended from English, commonly regarded as a global lingua franca, to Japanese and French in the 21st century. Both Hou and Tsai have been commissioned to create Japanese or French feature films in the past decade, and, unlike Lee's English-language projects, Hou's and Tsai's foreign-language films were partly scripted by themselves. Lim (2011b: 19) suggests that the linguistic barrier for East Asian directors making English-language films is relatively low because countries such as Taiwan have been under the American neo-colonial influence. In this regard, French–Taiwanese and Japanese–Taiwanese translingual collaborations further demonstrate that an integrated global cinematic system is in process.

Café Lumière (2003, Japan)

Café Lumière is Hou's inaugural non-Chinese-language film. In order to commemorate the centenary of the birth of Japanese auteur Yasujiro Ozu's on 12 December 2003, Shochiku Company, Ozu's home studio, proposed making an omnibus film comprising six 20-minute short films directed by international auteurs, including Wim Wenders, Abbas Kiarostami and Hou. However, owing to budget constraints, the project became a feature film directed solely by Hou (Chang, C., 2008: 401).¹³³ Certain similarities in film aesthetics, such as fixed camera and long shot, drove Western critics, such as Vincent Canby, Alan Stanbrook and Godfrey Cheshire, to describe Hou as an Ozu-like director early in Hou's career (Canby, 1988;

¹³³ Sponsored by NHK, Kiarostami also dedicated a documentary film *Five to Ozu* in 2003.

Stanbrook, 1990), even though Hou had never seen an Ozu film until the completion of *The Time to Live and the Time to Die* (Chang, C., 2008: 402).

Café Lumière was filmed in Japan and performed by Japanese actors, but most of its creative crew members are Hou's long-time Taiwanese collaborators. As regards casting, all the actors are Japanese. The male protagonist Hajime Takeuchi is played by Tadanobu Asano, a well-known Japanese star who has performed in over thirty films; however, *Café Lumière* is the female lead Yo Hitoto's feature film debut. Hitoto, a popular singer in Japan, was cast in the role of Yoko because her temperament is similar to Hou's friend Kosaka, the basis of the character Yoko (Chang, C., 2008: 403-405). Also, Hitoto's father is Taiwanese, and she lived in Taiwan until his death when she was ten years old, and her Taiwanese background became a contributing factor in casting (ibid.: 405). Moreover, veteran Japanese actors Kimiko Yo (as Yoko's stepmother) and Nenji Kobayashi (as Yoko's father) starred in the film. Interestingly, both the actresses, Hitoto and Yo, are of mixed Taiwanese and Japanese descent. Although the coincidence was irrelevant to the story, it enhanced the connection between Japan and Taiwan in *Café Lumière*, a Japanese film directed by a Taiwanese auteur.

Café Lumière is Hou's observation of the changing social structure and familial relationships in Japan in the past half a century as well as his homage to the Japanese auteur. However, he added cultural factors about Taiwan into the narrative of his Japanese film, which connects the film with postcolonial themes. *Café Lumière* can be regarded as "a *Tokyo Story* for the 21st century" (Shochiku, 2011).¹³⁴ Hou regards a common plot in Ozu's films as the daughter's marriage, and thus he chose the subject as the main storyline in his film to pay homage to Ozu (Mon, 2010: 74-74). However, compared to Ozu's films, the daughter in Hou's film is a more independent female who always makes her own decision. The contrast shows Hou's update on Ozu's depiction of Japanese family and society.

¹³⁴ *Tokyo Story* (*Tokyo monogatari*, 1953) is one of Ozu's representative works.

Even though *Café Lumière* is a Japanese film mainly depicting modern Japanese society, Taiwan is a term that frequently appears in the film. Yoko is a Japanese freelance writer who had previously taught Japanese in Taiwan and has been impregnated by her Taiwanese boyfriend (who never appears in the film). Furthermore, her research object, Taiwanese composer Jiang Wenye, can be regarded as an epitome of the colonial and postcolonial experiences of Taiwanese people. Born in Taiwan, Jiang moved to Xiamen (China) during his childhood. Then he received an education as well as music training and achieved fame in Japan in his youth. Afterwards, he taught music in Beijing from 1938 and lived out the rest of his life there (Yu, 1992: 29-55). However, he suffered in China during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) due to his Japanese/Taiwanese background and experiences during the Japanese colonial period. Therefore, for Lim, Hou's Japanese film demonstrates that "the triangulated relations between China, Taiwan, and Japan throughout the twentieth century up until today are as complex as Jiang Wenye's multiple identities and transnational career" (2011b: 20).

Apart from transnational connections in narrative, Jiang's compositions such as *Formosan Dance*, along with his Japanese wife and daughter, were featured in Hou's translingual co-production.¹³⁵ These arrangements manifest Hou's intention to link his Japanese film with Taiwan as well as with its colonial past. *Café Lumière* is both Hou's response to Japanese cinematic culture and his representation of Taiwan–Japan relationship from a (post)colonial perspective. Moreover, the experiences of Jiang and Yoko reflect the developing hybrid and cross-border cultural landscape in the modern world, and the involvement of Hou in this salute to Ozu, together with his collaborators, further highlights the development of global cultural industry today. Whilst *Café Lumière* can be regarded as a

¹³⁵ Jiang had two families. The other of his families is in China.

Japanese film in terms of theme and financing, its production and content demonstrate the necessity of examining contemporary cinema in terms of transnational connections.

Flight of the Red Balloon (2007, France)

Just like *Café Lumière*, *Flight of the Red Balloon* originated from an omnibus project. To celebrate its 20th anniversary, the Musée d'Orsay in Paris commissioned Jim Jarmusch, Raúl Ruiz, Oliver Assayas, and Hou to make a series of 30-minute short films in 2006 (Mon, 2010: 73; “*Build a City*”, 2008). However, only Assayas’s *Summer Hours (L’Heure d’été, 2008)* and *Flight of the Red Balloon* were eventually finished, and both of them are feature-length films rather than short films. In addition to the change of the type of film, the role of the Musée d'Orsay was changed from a sponsor to a partner, providing its museum as filming location instead of directly financing the film. Eventually, Hou’s film was financed and co-produced by Hou’s company and various French film companies, such as Margo Films, with assistance offered by the Musée d'Orsay (Mon, 2010: 72-74).

Although *Flight of the Red Balloon* is a French film depicting Parisian life, Hou deliberately put transnational connections into both its production and content. First, the French-language film has a multi-national cast. Juliette Binoche was cast as the female protagonist, single mother Suzanne, because of her personality traits (ibid.: 76).¹³⁶ Binoche is a renowned French actress and her participation had the potential to increase the commercial appeal as well as the quality of the film. *Flight of the Red Balloon*, like Hou’s TNC films, also recruited a number of non-professional actors. The other lead roles were performed by Simon Iteanu (as Simon) and Song Fang (as Song) respectively, neither of whom had ever performed on screen before. In fact, both Iteanu and Louise Margolin (as Simon’s sister Louise) are Hou’s working partners’ children (ibid.: 77). The role of Song, a Chinese

¹³⁶ Binoche also starred in Assayas’s *Summer Hours*.

exchange student studying film in Paris and also Simon's new nanny, was played by Song Fang, a real-life Chinese film student having served as a nanny in Paris and having studied film in Brussels (ibid.: 80). Song's participation both showed the use of non-professional actors in the film and indicated the transnational dimension in the composition of cast.

As far as the composition of the crew is concerned, like Hou's Japanese film, his long-time Taiwanese collaborators, including cinematographer Lee Ping-bin and editor Liao Ching-song, were involved in Hou's French project. However, French film-workers also occupied important positions, for example, producer and art directors. As for the film script, *Flight of the Red Balloon* is the only Hou film without Taiwanese novelist Chu Tien-wen's script since *The Boys from Fengkuei* in 1983.¹³⁷ Although Chu helped Hou prepare the screenplay, the script was actually written by Hou himself and Margolin, also a producer of the film (Yang, J., 2008: 67). In other words, the text of *Flight of the Red Balloon* was finished through transnational co-writing, and it seems reasonable to assume this process helped Hou, a foreign auteur, to transcend cultural and linguistic barriers to present a more authentic Paris. Additionally, transnational connection is shown in its theme song. Based on a Chinese-language song "The Forgotten Time" ("*Bei yiwang de shiguang*"),¹³⁸ French singer Camille Dalmais rendered its French version, "Tchin Tchin", by writing the French lyrics and rearranging the song for the film (Wu, 2008). Thus "Tchin Tchin" could be regarded a symbol of cultural hybridisation. It not only reflects a two-way cultural traffic but also implants the director's Taiwanese background into the French film.

¹³⁷ As Hou's long-time friend and creative partner, Chu not only helps him develop his personal cinematic aesthetics but writing scripts for his films. Chinese novelist Zhong Acheng (2008: 5) praised Chu: "I ensure that no one can serve as Hou Hsiao-hsien's scriptwriter except for Chu Tien-wen."

¹³⁸ "The Forgotten Time" is a Chinese-language pop song performed by Taiwanese singer Tsai Chin. The song is also featured in Hong Kong box office hit *Infernal Affairs* (*Wujian dao*, dir. Wai-keung Lau and Alan Mak, 2002).

In addition, Hou's Japanese film and French film have certain similarities in terms of their content. Both of them pay homage to another film produced by the filmmaker of the host country, and Taiwanese elements are incorporated. *Flight of the Red Balloon* can be regarded as not only a commission from the Musée d'Orsay but also Hou's homage to well-known French fantasy short film *The Red Balloon* (*Le Ballon rouge*, dir. Albert Lamorisse, 1956). In this 34-minute short film, Lamorisse adopted a fantastic and humorous way to describe the warm and sincere friendship between a curiously sentient red balloon and a lonely child. However, while *The Red Balloon* focuses on the friendship between the balloon and the boy, the floating balloon in Hou's 2008 film never really features in Simon's life nor interacts deeply with him even if it roams around Simon at times. Hou's balloon acts as an onlooker contemplating the family relationship and social relation in contemporary Paris through Simon's daily life, which also echoes the position of Song Fang in the story, a foreign participant and observer of the Parisian family, and Hou, an outsider and a guest filmmaker.

Moreover, the appearance of Chinese/Taiwanese glove puppetry in the film is a noticeable transnational cultural connection in the text of *Flight of the Red Balloon*. Suzanne is a theatre teacher, dramatist and a voice actress in a puppet theatre troupe. The troupe introduces Chinese/Taiwanese glove puppetry into France, and the play the troupe rehearses in the film is translated and adapted from the Chinese Yuan dynasty drama *Scholar Zhang Boils the Sea* (*Zhangsheng zhu hai*). The theatrical culture of Taiwan and traditional Chinese literature are integrated with French puppet theatre, and consequently a new "French glove puppetry" is generated, which reflects the phenomenon of cultural hybridisation in the age of globalisation. Furthermore, Suzanne acts as a cross-cultural intermediary between France and Chinese/Taiwanese culture as she invites Taiwanese puppeteer Master Ah-Zhong to demonstrate glove puppetry to her French students. The role of Master Ah-Zhong is played

by the late Taiwanese puppeteer Li Chuang-tsain, the second son of the late Taiwanese legendary puppeteer Li Tien-lu, who had performed in Hou's *The Puppetmaster*, an autobiographical film describing Li's early life. In this regard, the incorporation of glove puppetry into the story and Master Ah-Zhong's appearance in *Flight of the Red Balloon* enable spectators to associate *Flight of the Red Balloon* with Hou's 1993 masterpiece, *The Puppetmaster*.

Face (2009, France)

Tsai Ming-liang's *Face* is the other French film directed by a Taiwanese auteur in the 2000s. Just as *Flight of the Red Balloon* was commissioned by the Musée d'Orsay, *Face* was commissioned by another internationally renowned Parisian museum, the Musée du Louvre. According to Catherine Derosier-Pouchous, the head of the Louvre's audiovisual program, "Traditional financing in France is drying up for these talented auteurs. We want to support their work. We're selecting three filmmakers who will rethink the meaning of cinema in the 21st century" (Robertson, 2006). She added: "We wanted to create a collection open to contemporary artists by inviting international directors with a singular artistic vision from Asia, America and Europe" (Dupont, 2008). In 2005, the Louvre chose Tsai from over two hundred candidates to produce the inaugural film (Wang and Lin, 2010: 165). As such, the film was created outside the commercial institution, and the Louvre's project could represent the idea of pure art cinema which accentuates artists' creative autonomy.

As a film commissioned in France, transnational connections are demonstrated in various dimensions of Tsai's film, including production, cast and text. *Face* was filmed in both Paris and Taipei, and both Taiwanese and French filmmakers and actors participated in its production. The film was co-produced by Tsai's Homegreen Films and French companies. The film was co-financed by Taiwanese, French, Dutch and Belgian film companies. The

Musée du Louvre was one of principal funders and supplied €775,000 (about NT\$33 million), accounting for twenty per cent of the entire budget (Dupont, 2008).¹³⁹ Taiwan's GIO also granted NT\$25 million to the project ("*Ang Lee's*", 2009).

Furthermore, *Face* featured both Taiwanese and French actors. According to Tsai Ming-liang, the film was inspired by the faces of Lee Kang-sheng and Jean-Pierre Léaud as these two faces had influenced his whole creative career (Chang, J., 2009b). Accordingly, his perennial muse Lee Kang-sheng plays the protagonist Hsiao-Kang, a Taiwanese director making a film about *Salomé* in Paris, and can be perceived as the surrogate of Tsai. In addition, most of the Taiwanese actors who have starred in Tsai's previous films appeared in *Face* except for the late Miao Tien.¹⁴⁰ As for French actors, Laetitia Casta, a French model and actress, was cast as the female lead role after the initial candidate, Hong Kong star Maggie Cheung, turned down the offer (ibid.). Also, Léaud and three actresses who have previously starred in Truffaut's films, namely Fanny Ardant, Jeanne Moreau and Nathalie Baye, appear in *Face*. The cast of *Face* not only shows transnational connection in the project but manifests Tsai's link to Truffaut.

At the same time, transcultural and translingual connections are embedded in the film's content, showing the cross-cultural intertextuality and cultural hybridity. With regard to conceptualisation, Tsai incorporated Oriental philosophy into his French film. According to Tsai, the Buddhist concept of "flowers in a mirror and moon on the water", which means that every object in the world is unreal and intangible, is a motif of the film (Wang and Lin, 2010: 173). For example, the scene of Casta's dance in the mirror-decorated Gardens of the Tuileries represents both the inner world and the dream of Antoine (performed by Jean-Pierre Léaud) (ibid.). Moreover, the theme song of Hou's *The Flight of the Red Balloon* is the

¹³⁹ However, according to Lin Bao-ling (2009), the entire budget should be around NT\$200 million.

¹⁴⁰ Miao Tien had played the role of the father in most of Tsai's films. He passed away in 2005.

French version of a Chinese-language song, whereas two Chinese-language popular songs of the 1940s are directly cited in *Face*. Tsai made Casta perform Zhang Lu's "You Are So Pretty" ("Ni zhen meili") in the form of the musical with lip-synching. Besides, Bai Guang's "Wonderful Tonight" ("Jinxi hexi"), which Casta performed in the sewer, echoes Salomé's desire for John the Baptist. According to Bloom, in the scene of Casta's dance, "Tsai combines the symbol of 'Frenchness', embodied in a Caucasian French actress, with lyrics and attire evoking 'Chineseness'" (2011: 117). The French actress wore a lacy white strapless dress and a furry hood with legible French word "GUERRE" (war), which inscribes French culture and history. On the other hand, Casta's costume exposes her legs and covers her shoulders, which could make reference to *qipao*, which Zhang Lu wore in her performance (ibid.). Furthermore, Bloom points out that "Tsai and Casta are playing with us, as she is not singing at all: appearances are not what they seem to be" (ibid.). In this regard, it could be argued that Casta's lip-synching echoes the Buddhist concept mentioned above. Hence transnational connections in *Face* are associated with both the integration of Oriental philosophical ideas with European cinematic culture and transcultural, translingual and transmedial intertextual references.

In addition, *Face* references both Tsai's films and Truffaut's works, and the intertextuality creates the connection between French and Taiwan art cinemas. In the sequence of the meeting room in the Napoleon III Apartments in the Louvre, three actresses, namely Moreau, Baye and Ardant, are waiting for a strange host. All of them have starred in Truffaut's masterpieces, for example, Moreau in *Jules and Jim* (*Jules et Jim*, 1962); Baye in *Day for Night* (*La nuit américaine*, 1973); Ardant in *The Woman Next Door* (*La Femme d'à côté*, 1981). That is to say, three important females in Truffaut's films are gathered together in Tsai's film. The sequence could be perceived as the toast Tsai proposes to Truffaut, the absent host of the party.

This translingual co-production shows the multi-directional traffic in the system of global art cinema. Regardless of the uneven power distribution within the system, art cinema could be a cross-cultural and translingual artistic form. Therefore, in *Face*, when finding Truffaut's picture in a book belonging to Hsiao-kang in Taipei, Ardant murmurs: "You too are here, François." Truffaut could be in Taipei, Tsai could be in Paris, and art films could travel anywhere, transcending geographical, cultural and linguistic boundaries.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the development of Taiwan art cinema in terms of transnational connections. Concurrent with the introduction of Western modernism, author theory and European art films were introduced into Taiwan in the mid-1960s, which provided a basis for the promotion of art cinema. The emergence of Taiwan art cinema is closely related to the historical context. Factors such as the industrial decline of the film industry, the rise of nativism, the change of political and cultural atmosphere, and pressure of increased competition contributed to the emergence of the Taiwan New Cinema movement led by a new generation of directors in the early 1980s. Simultaneously, the growing interest in Chinese cinemas in the West and film festivals' discovery of new talents helped TNC to gain global attention. Ever since then Taiwan art cinema has gradually entered into the centre from the margins, and the hostile domestic industrial environment and dismal local consumption further enhanced the dependence of Taiwan art cinema on the global festival economy, as well as contributing to the incorporation of Taiwan art cinema into the system of global art cinema since the 1990s. In this vein, transnational co-production has become a critical model for the development of Taiwan art cinema, and foreign film companies have begun to form partnerships with Taiwanese filmmakers over the past two decades. Several Taiwanese

directors have not only become darlings of the international film festival circuit but also started translingual filmmaking activities in the new millennium. By referencing auteurs and films in the host countries, Hou's and Tsai's foreign-language films could be regarded as a sort of cultural hybrid, which reflects the characteristic of transnationalism and globalisation.

The development of Taiwan art cinema in the past three decades can be understood as a process from the national to the global, from national cinema to transnational cinema. In the 1980s, the rise of the TNC movement, which concerns Taiwanese nativism and local experiences and manifests strong allegorical functions as cultural and political expressions, put Taiwan on the map of world cinema. Thereafter, Taiwan art cinema has been viewed as the synonym of national cinema of Taiwan. Indeed, the concept of national cinema is often associated with art cinema. As Elsaesser (2005: 90, 99) argues, cinemas of smaller countries could be put in the spotlight via the promotion of film festivals, and the discovery of new waves of national cinema has become a duty of international film festivals. His argument accurately reflects the "discovery" of Taiwan cinema in the 1980s. In fact, titles of new waves, such as Italian neo-realism, French New Wave and Taiwan New Cinema, clearly indicate the close relationship between cinema movements and nation states. Art cinema originated from European countries' strategy to revive national film industries, cultivate national cultures, and resist Hollywood's domination of local markets (Neal, 1981: 29-30; Tudor, 2005: 133). It echoes the concept of national cinema, which is always treated as "a strategy of cultural (and economic) resistance: a means of asserting national autonomy in the face of (usually) Hollywood's international domination" (Higson, 1989: 37). Some scholars such as John Hill and Paul Willemen believe that national cinema is able to maintain cultural specificity, consolidate cultural identity and enhance cultural life (Hill, 1992: 16; Willemen, 1994: 210). In this light, art cinema can be considered an ideal representation of the ideology of national cinema.

Nonetheless, the tie between cinema, culture and the nation state is weakening in the globalisation process, and art cinema is getting more “impure” in terms of its content and production. John Tomlinson (1999: 128) rightly points out that globalisation could weaken the link between geographical territories and cultural practices, thereby leading to deterritorialisation and cultural hybridisation. Hence, Ezra and Rowden consider that although “each film requires a particular epistemological and referential framework in order to be ‘fully’ readable, increasingly these frameworks are losing the national and cultural particularity they once had” (2006: 4). The concept of national cinema implies a homogenised cultural identity; however, it overlooks the fact that culture is always impure, and so are cultural commodities such as films. Furthermore, an art film could be of multiple origins within the system of global art cinema, and this is manifested at the level of state policy and historiographic writing.

With regard to Taiwan art cinema, a great number of art films from Taiwan have been produced through transnational co-production, and Taiwanese auteurs have begun to transcend cultural and linguistic barriers to undertake foreign-language projects and create hybrid films in the 21st century. For example, *Face* is a French-language film directed by Tsai, a descendent of a Chinese diaspora born and bred in Malaysia but trained and based in Taiwan, and the film is mainly performed by French actors and shot in Paris and Taiwan. The film has been categorised as a French film at film festivals and international film markets; however, the Taiwanese government also sees *Face* as a film from Taiwan, and therefore granted the film a subsidy and became a main sponsor of the French-language film. On the other hand, Ang Lee’s *Lust, Caution* was withdrawn as Taiwan’s entry for the best foreign film category at the Academy Awards due to “an insufficient number of Taiwanese participating in the production of the film” (Lee, 2007). Transnational co-production

invariably makes art films an impure and hybrid cultural product, and the nationality of a co-production is far from clear-cut.

In the case of Taiwan art cinema, although it has emerged as a national cinema, its development has gradually centred round international film festivals and transnational film industries. Three primary factors, arguably, contribute to the process, namely the nature of art cinema, the local industrial context, and the influence of the global film circuit. First, art cinema can be seen as an intrinsically transnational and transcultural practice from the textual and institutional perspectives. As mentioned before, art films pay more attention to visual legibility and cross-cultural translation than the expression of locally defined culture. Hence art films usually possess a certain degree of cross-cultural legibility in their content. In addition, art films target niche rather than mainstream markets since artistic value exceeds commercial profit. Therefore, attracting investment and earning income not only at home but also abroad could be beneficial to the development of art cinema from an industrial perspective, in particular in the case of Taiwan, whose film industry is in decline and whose market is dominated by Hollywood cinema. In this light, both textual and institutional features of art cinema encourage art cinema to go global.

Furthermore, both the local industrial context and the development of the global cultural system contribute to the integration of Taiwan art cinema into global art cinema. The dismal commercial performance of domestic films in the local film market discourages local investors from financing domestic films, in particular auteur-oriented films. The hostile industrial environment compelled Taiwanese filmmakers to seek support abroad. In particular, international film festivals play the role of intermediary between art films and the system of global art cinema and incorporate filmmakers, art films and national cinemas worldwide into the system. International film festivals are both sites of value-addition and trade fair. It helps filmmakers “find that doors open towards the commercial system” (Elsaesser, 2005: 106) and

makes “a film transition from local economies to the global market” (Farahmand, 2010: 267). The involvement of Taiwan art cinema in international film festivals not only enhances its prestige but encourages the global circulation of Taiwan’s art films. Thus, the local film industry pushes Taiwan art cinema towards the system of global art cinema, and the global system pulls Taiwan art cinema away from the local industrial context. The dynamics of push-pull has led to the globalisation of Taiwan art cinema in the past few decades, and Taiwan art cinema has forged a dependent relationship with the international film festival economy. Considering the influence of European cinematic cultures on Taiwan art cinema, Taiwan art cinema can be perceived as a node of an international network of multiple flows.

On the whole, the history of Taiwan art cinema reflects problems that the concept of national cinema encounters in the progress of cultural globalisation, as well as the development of the global art cinematic system. Its transnational trajectory shows that contemporary art cinema should be analysed from a cross-border perspective. Higson (2000: 73) considers that “it is inappropriate to assume that cinema and film culture are bound by the limits of the nation state.” Scholars such as Crofts, Higson, Ezra and Rowden also assert that the academic paradigm should be shifted from national cinema to transnational cinema (Crofts, 1998; Higson, 2000; Ezra and Rowden, 2006). Moreover, some Taiwanese filmmakers have begun to depict lives of minor linguistic groups and migrant workers in Taiwan in the past few years, for example, *Detours to Paradise (Qilu Tiantang)*, dir. Rich Lee, (2009) and *Pinoy Sunday*. The phenomenon not only indicates the complex configuration of cultural, ethnic and linguistic scenes of today’s world but also casts doubt on the relevance of a national frame to today’s cinematic activities. In this light, Lim suggests moving away from national cinema model and lingua-centric model to construct a minor Chinese film historiography to account for growing translingual filmmaking activities today:

[Translingual productions] do not take the centrality of Chinese language and dialects as a given or privilege the nation in their narratives. Rather, they seek to give voice to

the multilingual polyphony that contemporary subjects increasingly inhabit and to expose the fissures and “impurities” within the national body politic. They resist participation in the myth of nationalism and push the concept of Chinese cinema to its extremities and limits. Finally, while they may be open to myriad forms of identification, they also reveal themselves first and foremost as artifice made possible by a certain conjunction of economy and capital. (Lim, 2011a: 41)

Thus translingual filmmaking activities challenge the privileging position of nationalism in the representational network and the myth of a homogenous cultural and national identity. Simultaneously, they can be linked with the complex cultural landscapes formed by diverse multi-directional streams moving across national boundaries. The concept of national cinema is inadequate for shedding light on this structural change. In the case of Taiwan, various factors, such as the nature of art cinema, the change in both local and global historical/industrial contexts, geopolitics and cultural globalisation, have affected the development of its art cinema. Moreover, owing to the development of the commerce of authorship, auteurs have served as agents who establish a link between different cinematic traditions. The phenomenon exhibits characteristics of networking, decentralisation and two-way cultural flows in the process of globalisation. Mike Featherstone (1990: 10-11) points out that “there is little prospect of a unified global culture, rather there are global cultures in the plural,” and “[that] increasingly dense web of cosmopolitan-local encounters and interdependencies can give rise to third cultures.” Cultural globalisation may bring about diverse cultural phenomena, such as hybridisation, homogenisation and heterogenisation simultaneously, instead of a singular culture. The development of global art cinema, similarly, does not represent that the local and national distinctiveness will be discarded. To achieve a balance between individuality and globality would be essential for the international circulation of art films.

Conclusion:

Taiwan Cinema After *Cape No.7*

This thesis has investigated four filmmaking strategies adopted by Taiwanese filmmakers in the 21st century to elucidate the significance of transnational connections to contemporary Taiwan cinema, presenting a picture of the Taiwanese film industry and expounding Taiwanese filmmakers' response to the development of the global cultural economy. In the era of globalisation, the national and cultural boundaries are gradually porous, and interconnectivity between different parts of the world is on the increase. In this light, cinematic activities are not bound by national boundaries, and Taiwanese filmmakers can make films aimed at global, regional, national or international niche markets by means of transnational collaboration or domestic production. *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (*Wohu canglong*, dir. Ang Lee, 2000, hereafter *CTHD*) is a film catering to global spectators. This project not only established a blockbuster model for Chinese-language cinemas but also facilitated later Chinese-language films to enter Western mainstream markets. *Double Vision* (*Shuang tong*, dir. Chen Kuo-fu, 2002) and other examples reviewed in Chapter Two delineated the development of regional co-production and Taiwanese filmmakers' different ways of engaging in regional cinema. *Cape No.7* (*Haijiao qihao*, dir. Wei Te-sheng, 2008) can be read as a local response to cultural globalisation and self-affirmation of national/local cultural subjectivity. This domestically-produced film's box office triumph has encouraged Taiwanese filmmakers to make films to appeal to domestic mainstream spectators, which highlights a shift from a cinema of authority to a cinema of markets in the new millennium. As for Taiwan art cinema, international film festival economy has still played a vital role in Taiwanese auteurs' filmic activities in the 2000s, and the development of their translingual

filmmaking further underlines the increasing permeability between national and cultural boundaries today.

These four strategies represent Taiwanese filmmakers' different possibilities for understanding Taiwan cinema; however, global market-oriented filmmaking and auteur-oriented filmmaking strategies, arguably, are unlikely to achieve substantial progress and occupy a central position in Taiwan cinema in the near future, considering the practical industrial environment of Taiwan cinema and the development of global cultural economy. Whilst *CTHD* has become a beacon for Chinese-language films aimed at making a global blockbuster, its success greatly relied on Ang Lee's connection with the American film industry, familiarity with conventions of Hollywood film practice, transnational experiences and flexibility in filmmaking. Indeed, it seems no other Taiwanese directors are capable of following Lee's trajectory to make global market-oriented projects at the present time. As for Lee's filmmaking, the connection between his works in the 2000s and the production sector of Taiwan cinema was weak. So far, *Lust, Caution* (*Se, Jie*, 2007) is the only Chinese-language film Lee has made after *CTHD*, but, like *CTHD*, the film's production and content are not closely associated with Taiwan. The fact demonstrates the transnational nature of Chinese-speaking regions and their cinemas. On the other hand, it shows that the tie between Lee's filmmaking and Taiwan was weak in the 2000s, while he incorporated the Taiwanese film industry into the production of American film *Life of Pi* (Ang Lee, 2012).

With regard to art cinema, Taiwanese filmmakers continually produce auteur-oriented films for international niches in the new millennium by engaging in international film festival economy; however, Taiwan art cinema seems to have lost its momentum in the 21st century. In the 2000s, Hou Hsiao-hsien and Tsai Ming-liang not only produced Chinese-language auteur-oriented films but also made a linguistic crossover to produce foreign-language films. However, Edward Yang passed away in 2007, and Ang Lee's filmmaking is gradually

detached from the domestic context. As for younger second wave of TNC directors, such as Lin Cheng-sheng and Chang Tso-chi, and the new generation of filmmakers, so far they have yet to be able to approach the heights of their TNC predecessors. In terms of the industrial perspective, the long-time decline of the film industry could pose difficulties for the financing and production of these newer filmmakers' projects, even though established auteurs can sustain their activities through overseas investments. Consequently, the overall performance of Taiwan art cinema in the new millennium cannot be considered on a par with the preceding decade.

By contrast, regional market-oriented production (often transnational co-production) and local market-oriented production (often domestic filmmaking) have played a central role in contemporary Taiwan cinema. Because of factors such as regionalisation, the rise of China, the decline of individual film industries, and the emergence of institutions supporting intraregional financing and collaboration, pan-Asian co-production has proliferated in East Asia in the 21st century. Among four modes of pan-Asian co-production, namely intraregional art film co-production, Hollywood–Asian alliance, pan-Chinese co-production, and intra-Asian co-production, pan-Chinese co-production may be the mode to which contemporary Taiwanese filmmakers pay the most attention, owing to cultural proximity and the rapid growth of the Chinese economy in recent decades. In the past few years, several pan-Chinese co-productions had been developed by Taiwanese filmmakers, and some of them performed well in other Chinese-speaking markets, for example, *Love (Ai)*, dir. Doze Niu Chen-zer, 2012), whereas a number of them had a dismal box office intake in domestic as well as foreign markets. However, the overall development of pan-Asian co-production is related to the uneven power relationship between national cinemas, and thus the issue of the preservation of cultural identity and local subjectivity gradually comes to the fore.

Among the four filmmaking strategies, domestic film production aimed at local spectators can be viewed as the most important strategy in Taiwan cinema after *Cape No.7*. The national craze for *Cape No.7* has facilitated the renaissance of commercial film production in Taiwan and brought about what some scholars described as “post-Taiwan New Cinema” (hereafter post-TNC). As mentioned in Chapter Three, the so-called post-TNC can be regarded as both the heir and response to author-centred Taiwan cinema of the late 20th century, or two waves of TNC. On the one hand, similarities are manifested in their nativist and realist concerns. On the other hand, contemporary filmmakers attach more importance to the taste of the domestic mainstream, films’ box office performance and the improvement of the local industrial environment compared with their TNC counterparts. Consequently, grassroots representation, dramatic narrative and entertainment elements are integrated into their film texts to appeal to domestic viewers. Simultaneously, Taiwanese filmmakers began to place much more emphasis on marketing and invest more resources in films’ marketing campaign to attract domestic audiences to the cinemas, and their collaboration with Hollywood-owned distributors has further contributed to the box office success of several post-TNC films in the past few years, showing the significance of transnational connections to contemporary Taiwan cinema.

The commercial success of an increasing number of post-TNC films in the past few years demonstrates that the domestic market-oriented filmmaking strategy could fulfil the need of domestic viewers, but whether this strategy is the best way to revitalise the Taiwanese film industry remains in doubt. On the one hand, the controversy can be partly attributed to the distinction of ideologies with which domestic market-centred filmmaking and regional market-centred filmmaking are associated respectively, including inward-looking versus outward-looking, national versus transnational/regional, and Taiwan-centred

versus China-centred. On the other hand, the argument against the approach is related to the current situation of domestic film production.

The controversy about domestic market-oriented filmmaking can be demonstrated by revisiting the recent debate revolving around *David Loman* (*Dawei luman*, dir. Chiu Li Kwan, 2013). *David Loman* is a locally-made slapstick comedy with a large local cast, including a popular local variety show host Chu Ko-liang and several young idols. As for content, the film blends exaggerated body language, broad humour, comic plots, and nativist cultural elements, such as Taiwanese Hoklo filthy language and colloquial dialogue, to tell a story of ordinary folk. The film took in over NT\$400 million in Taiwan in early 2013 (*Atmovies*, 2013), far surpassing Hollywood blockbusters released concurrently, such as *Les Misérables* (Tom Hooper, 2012) and *A Good Day to Die Hard* (John Moore, 2013), and at Taiwan's box office, has become one of the top five highest-grossing films from Taiwan of all time (until May 2013). The film drew a particularly high proportion of its theatrical receipts from the middle and south of Taiwan, which is often regarded as a relatively rural part of the island. This phenomenon indicates the significance of a sense of locality and grassroots sentiments to film consumption in Taiwan today.

The huge popularity of *David Loman* drew great public attention in Taiwan; however, the film's heavy emphasis on local cultural elements and grassroots sentiments decreases its translatability, making the film apparently domestic spectator-oriented and inward-looking. Considering these characteristics, in an interview in Taiwan's *Business Today*, Chen Kuo-fu, as a pioneer of Taiwan's regional cinema and a key figure of China's Huayi Brothers Media, articulates that it would be short-sighted for Taiwanese filmmakers just to ride the wave to make mid- to low-budget films with strong local colour to pander to the taste of local audiences (Cheng, C., 2013: 60). Satisfaction with such production and status quo would limit filmmakers' horizons and allow them to hesitate to pursue breakthroughs in filmmaking.

“Such way is okay,” Chen declares, “but [a high quality film comparable with] *Life of Pi* will never come to existence for good” (ibid.). In his opinion, Taiwanese filmmakers should pay more regard to the progress of their technical knowledge and the improvement of production quality to enable themselves to respond to the rapidly-changing market; developing high-budget, large-scale quality films is a viable way to achieve these aims, and the production of such projects depends on a larger market (ibid.). Chen’s proposition underlines not only the significance of transnational co-production but also the limitations of domestic market-oriented filmmaking resulting from the smaller market size. Further, his suggestion implies that Taiwanese filmmakers should take the film market of the PRC into account when making films. In other words, the regional film market, in particular China, is critical to the long-time development of the Taiwanese film industry, and Taiwanese filmmakers should adopt an outward-looking attitude to shift their focus to pan-Chinese co-production.

Whilst Chen’s contention focused on the necessity of developing multinational market-oriented projects for Taiwan cinema, it provoked a debate over *David Loman* and a local market-centred filmmaking strategy. Chu Yen-ping, the producer of *David Loman*, contends that the film is not a sloppy work and criticises Chen for underestimating the value and required efforts of this project (Chang and Huang, 2013). However, the focal points of Chen’s discourse are market size and technical advancement, and it seems that Chu did not understand Chen’s point. Moreover, Chiu Li Kwan (2013), the film’s director, stresses the importance of telling local stories and points out that local specificity and the demand of local audiences could be sidelined in multinational market-oriented projects. Arguably, people engaged in this debate to a certain degree talked past each other, but their arguments spotlight the controversy about these filmmaking strategies in Taiwan cinema today.

The above controversy is associated with the contrast between ideologies related to these strategies, the traits of strategies, the current situation of their development and the local

context. As mentioned earlier, regional and domestic market-oriented filmmaking can be linked with the regional/transnational/outward-looking and the local/national/inward-looking respectively. The former partly implies that smaller national cinemas have to increase production values of films by obtaining greater resources from a larger market in order to face the tougher competition in a globalising world. It reflects the neo-liberal economic globalisation will enhance small national cinemas' dependence on external markets. On the other hand, as Hjort and Petrie point out, "many small nations have emerged out of twentieth-century processes of decolonisation and liberation struggles and consequently have a strong vested interest in nation-building and the maintenance of a strong sense of national identity relevant both internally and externally to the nation" (2007: 15). In this respect, the controversy reveals the conflict between the global and local forces.

Besides, in terms of film practice, domestic market-centred filmmaking from Taiwan in recent years has revolved around mid-to-low budget projects which specialise in non-spectacle-driven genres, on account of the industrial conditions. As Christina Klein (2004b: 376) describes, "Most Asian film industries other than Hong Kong have historically produced films exclusively for their domestic markets, and the small size of these markets has kept budgets and production values low." Although domestic cinema has come to the fore in Taiwan since the success of *Cape No.7*, capital for local film practice is still insufficient. Due to inadequate film investment, unfamiliarity with offshore markets, and a shortage of technical expertise and local box office guarantees in Taiwan cinema, it is difficult for Taiwanese filmmakers on their own to produce a costly, large-scale, spectacle-driven movie targeting the regional market. Domestic filmmakers' inexperience in commercial film production caused by a long-term industrial downturn has also rendered them incompetent at making quality commercial films with strong transnational competitiveness. In addition, the small market size of Chinese-speaking films in Taiwan also renders making a high-budget

film that appeals only to Taiwanese spectators highly commercially risky. These factors prompt Taiwanese filmmakers to adopt a relatively inward-looking mindset and a low-risk plan, to produce easy-to-digest film texts accentuating cultural affinity with a mid- or low-budget to appeal to spectators on the island.

Under these circumstances, post-TNC films are centred on specific themes. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the commercial success of *Cape No.7* can be partly credited to its representation of domestic life experience and grassroots cultural imagination. These features satisfy local spectators' desire for cultural proximity and distinguish these films from foreign-language blockbusters and pan-Chinese co-productions. Accordingly, domestic filmmakers are keen to mix popular subjects into the narrative, like romance and coming-of-age stories, and the portrayal of everyday life and collective memory of Taiwanese people, and present the story in a humorous and enjoyable way. This method of filmmaking allows Taiwanese filmmakers to produce cultural products at a lower cost compared with effects-heavy films, and cultural specificity manifested in these films also helps them find their niches in the domestic film market. Besides, the production of such films relies on dramatic narrative, entertaining plots and cultural representation more than cinematic spectacle, which is relatively easy for Taiwanese filmmakers who have insufficient technical knowledge and experience. Therefore, domestic film production's concern for national memories, local cultural imagination and specific themes can to some degree be attributed to the limited industrial scale and market size of Taiwan cinema and technical incapability. When examining the history of film production during the silent era, Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell point out that filmmakers from small producing countries "frequently sought to differentiate their low-budget films from the more polished imported works by using national literature and history as sources for their stories" (2003: 78). It may be claimed that the traits

of domestic market-oriented production in contemporary Taiwan cinema to some degree echoes their observation.

The prominent position of the local market-oriented filmmaking in contemporary Taiwan cinema can be illustrated in terms of the consumption of domestically-made films from the *Cape No.7* fever in 2008. Between 2008 and 2012, more than half of the top five highest-grossing Chinese-language films at the Taipei box office were domestically produced; all the highest-grossing Chinese-language films during this period can be viewed as domestic market-oriented films except in the year 2009. Their high popularity has also enabled films from Taiwan to be scheduled for release in Taiwan's major cinemas during Chinese New Year holidays (Spring Festival), a prime playing time for major films in Taiwan, since 2010. Thenceforth, there has been one domestic festival film with strong local colour grossing over NT\$100 million at the Taiwan box office each year, namely *Monga* (*Mengjia*, dir. Doze Niu Chen-zer, 2010), *Night Market Hero* (*Jipai yingxiong*, dir. Yeh Tien-lun, 2011), *Din Tao: Leader of the Parade* (*Zhentou*, dir. Fung Kai, 2012) and *David Loman* (2013), not counting pan-Chinese co-productions from Taiwan.

The success of some domestically-made films has revitalised commercially-oriented filmmaking in Taiwan; however, doubts about the exploitation of specific themes in contemporary Taiwan cinema are raised simultaneously. In the past few years, the consumption and reception of domestic films have proved that a blend of certain elements like an evocation of youth, comic plots and characters, the realistic portrayal of ordinary life and grassroots sentiments can make films appealing to local mainstream audiences. Stimulation of successful cases and the lower technical and capital requirement of such film practice have encouraged many people to jump on the bandwagon to reap a profit on the current momentum. Subsequently, the number of poorly-made films and the risk of exploitation of certain themes are increasing. The above features have become commonplace

in domestically-made projects, which somehow implies that some people just follow suit and copy others' success, indicating a conservative but opportunistic attitude. This phenomenon seems to follow a similar trajectory of the industrial decline caused by mass production of the genre schlock in Taiwan cinema of the early 1980s.

Moreover, although the production of some projects is decisive for Taiwan cinema, for example, the biggest-ever domestically-made project *Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale* (*Saideke balai*, dir. Wei Te-sheng, 2011, hereafter *Seediq Bale*), the overall production quality and narration of post-TNC films is unimpressive despite the growing production output of domestic films. The recent revival of the Taiwanese film industry might be partly attributed to the nationalist sentiments and national enthusiasm for domestic films rekindled by the craze for *Cape No.7*. However, its further development should depend on the continuance of output of quality production, and this should be based on the overall progress of the industry, including increasing investment in production, updates on cinematic equipment and techniques of production and marketing, and professionalisation and institutionalisation of the industry, rather than people's ephemeral enthusiasm.

Since local representation, grassroots cultural traits and nativist consciousness contributed to the vast triumph of *Cape No.7*, a number of domestically-made projects began to follow suit, thereby causing worry about the commodification of locality. Apart from local scenes and indigenous instruments, distinctive local cultural and linguistic elements could be used as selling points of the film to please Taiwanese spectators by integrating them with entertainment elements. Physical humour, vulgar jokes and filthy language are employed in some domestic films, such as *David Loman*, to both provide a more realistic depiction of ordinary experiences and arouse local spectators' excitement. According to film critic Ryan Pin-hung Cheng:

Locality and *grassroots* are even treated as the only safe bet for several domestically-made films released in Chinese New Year slot of the year of 2013. Collective memories

are widely used to appeal to middle-aged and elderly people, who are infrequent filmgoers in Taiwan. Ethnic stereotype and mistranslation between languages are commonly used in slapstick comedy films to provoke laughter. (Cheng, R., 2013, italics in original)

The reception of these films relies upon lowbrow entertainment, cultural/linguistic affinity and national sentiments more than the quality of film production and narration. Hence Kuo Li-hsin (Cheng, C., 2013: 60) describes the phenomenon as the commodification of nativist culture and custom. This strategy could reflect the market and profit orientation of Taiwan cinema in the past few years; however, the great reliance of domestic filmmaking on these distinctive cultural traits could motivate Taiwanese filmmakers to disregard the importance of the improvement of production value and storytelling skills.

Despite these flaws, a boom in domestic filmmaking is advantageous to the development of Taiwan cinema as a whole. It has not only brought hope to domestic filmmakers but also made it possible to improve and modify the structure of the ailing industry. The growth of domestic film production and high popularity of domestic films have drawn public and media attention, rekindled filmmakers' hope for and filmgoers' interest in Taiwan cinema, stimulated investment in domestic filmic activities, provided more jobs for filmmakers, bringing in new blood, and compelled the authorities to devote resources to encourage the industry, all of which are intertwined and crucial to turning the industry around. According to film producer Lee Lieh, a shortage of highly competent, skilled and experienced professionals caused by the scarcity of filmmaking activities during the past decades is the major problem for domestic film production in Taiwan; and increasing production output is the most effective way to cultivate film talents (Liang and Yang, 2013). Chiu Li Kwan also maintains that creating opportunities for filmmaking is essential for the survival of Taiwan cinema, inasmuch as it allows beginners to learn lessons from veterans, and then the industry can be built up (Chiu, 2013). Both their suggestions affirm the significance of thriving filmic activities to the progression and survival of the industry. It is natural that the number of

schlock films increases with the revitalisation of domestic cinema, yet they will be eliminated from competition sooner or later. Improving the industrial environment and cultivating talent to enable quality works to be continually produced is the most urgent task for domestic cinema today.

On the other hand, a great number of regional market-oriented projects have been produced in the 21st century. For proponents of pan-Asian co-production, the vast regional film market, in particular the People's Republic of China (PRC), can support Taiwanese filmmakers in developing large-cast high-budget productions, thereby enlarging the production scale, diversifying themes and styles of films, advancing their technical know-how, cultivating transnational stars, professionalising and institutionalising domestic financing, production and marketing, improving the industrial structure and opening up foreign markets. Increasing budgets by targeting regional markets and adopting pan-Asian co-production could help Taiwan cinema transcend its industrial and market limitations. In this regard, developing multinational spectators-oriented projects is advantageous to the real revival of the Taiwanese film industry.

As mentioned previously, pan-Asian co-production can be divided into different modes according to participants' nationality and the film's assumed markets. Although some films from Taiwan aimed at multi-language markets in Asia were produced in the 21st century, for example, *Silk* (*Guisi*, dir. Su Chao-bin, 2006) and *Exit No.6* (*Liu hao chukou*, dir. Lin Yu-hsien, 2006), the inter-institutional collaboration between Taiwanese filmmakers and non-Chinese-speaking Asian parties was limited as a whole. By contrast, because Chinese-speaking regions, in particular China, are offshore markets more open to films from Taiwan owing to cultural proximity and the rapid growth of Chinese economy, it seems that pan-Asian co-production is being gradually reconfigured to pan-Chinese co-production for Taiwanese filmmakers. Therefore, the proposition of regional co-production made by

advocates like Chen Kuo-fu is, to a certain extent, China-centred. This preference also echoes Taiwanese entrepreneurs' westward strategy for moving to China since the late 1980s and the cultural regionalisation occurring in Asia for decades. In the new millennium, different Chinese-language entertainment businesses have been more integrated and interconnected. Take, for example, the PRC's variety show "I Am a Singer". Whilst the first season of this singing competition programme was merely broadcasted in China, not only were the majority of its finalists veteran Taiwanese singers, but many Taiwan-produced songs were also sung by Chinese performers. Consequently, the show aroused the interest of the Taiwanese, and its finale was even broadcast live on Taiwan's news channels. This case demonstrates both the soft power of Taiwan and strong transnational links between cultural industries and markets of different Chinese-speaking territories today. The regionalisation of popular culture provides a basis for developing regional cinema and creates more opportunities to develop filmic activities for Taiwanese filmmakers. It has also allowed an increasing number of Taiwanese actors to rise to regional stardom in the past few years.

Nonetheless, whether or not regional spectators-oriented filmmaking is a viable approach to revitalising Taiwan cinema is controversial. In terms of consumption, several high-budget pan-Asian co-productions from Taiwan have shown that such production cannot guarantee the box office appeal of these films in Taiwan's film market. For example, *Reign of Assassins* (*Jianyu*, dir. Su Chao-pin, 2010) received only NT\$3.18 million at the Taipei box office; Taiwan-China co-production *Ripples of Desire* (*Hua yang*, dir. Zero Chou, 2012) merely took in around NT\$2.8 million at the Taipei box office with a budget of NT\$150 million. Although *Empire of Silver* (*Baiyin diguo*, dir. Christina Yao, 2009) grossed NT\$11.9 million at the Taipei box office, its theatrical intake was far less than its production budget of over NT\$300 million. These projects were produced with high spending and regional efforts, but their box office performance was no better than that of locally-produced films. As a result,

filmmakers who engage in transnational commercial co-production could consider Taiwan a fringe market, inasmuch as its film market is relatively small but difficult to grasp. The dismal consumption not only leaves Taiwanese filmmakers in an inferior position in regional film collaboration, it decreases the willingness of Taiwanese filmmakers and investors to engage in regional co-production. Pan-Asian co-production may sacrifice minority taste in order to enter the larger market. With the marginalisation of pan-Asian films in the local market, the reliance of Taiwanese filmmakers' pan-Asian co-productions on the mainland market becomes even heavier, which could gradually detach pan-Asian co-production from Taiwan's cultural and industrial roots.

On the other hand, the unsatisfactory reception of these pan-Asian co-productions foregrounds the distinctiveness of local taste. Various factors and the complexity involved notwithstanding, the film consumption and reception are associated with viewers' freedom of choice as well as options offered in the market. Although shedding light on associations between market size, production and technical progress, and manifesting a transnational thinking, Chen's analysis neglects the link between the national socio-cultural context and film content and practice. The production of films to some extent reflects audience preferences. Chiu owed *David Loman*'s enormous popularity in the middle and south of Taiwan to the satisfaction of spectators whose demand and preferences have been disregarded for a long time, in particular those in the more rural areas of Taiwan (Chiu, 2013). In this regard, the triumph of domestic films encompassing grassroots sentiments at the domestic box office demonstrates Taiwanese spectators' response to the author-centred, elite-guided and urban-centric Taiwan cinema of past decades. It exhibits that post-TNC cinema is both the heir and the reaction to author-centred Taiwan cinema of the late 20th century, representing the emergence of a cinema of markets in the new millennium.

Additionally, it may be claimed that to deliberately make films with the aim of reconciling tastes of multiple markets risks losing cultural subjectivity and specificity. The appeal for films with distinctive local colour in Hong Kong and Taiwan in recent years can be perceived as the locals' reaction to the uneven allocation of resources caused by the rapid development of China-centred co-production and their concern over the threat of the integration of Chinese-language film industries to local cultural identity. As mentioned previously, whilst domestic market-oriented filmmaking and regional market-oriented filmmaking should not be considered mutually exclusive, the limited amount of available resources could be concentrated in China-centred co-production in the light of the vast market and capital of China. Accordingly, locally-specific cultural elements could be evaded in order to increase the transnationality and translatability of films, thereby appealing to Chinese audiences. In addition to contextual factors, including the fierce competition from Hollywood cinema, political transition, the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997 and 1998, structural defects in the industry, and the loss of overseas markets like Taiwan, Hong Kong filmmakers' disregard for local specificity caused by their overemphasis on the mainland market is viewed as a factor contributing to the decline of Hong Kong cinema since the mid-1990s, even though, in fact, their engagement in pan-Chinese co-production is partly stimulated by the decline itself. Consequently, the case of Hong Kong cinema is considered a salutary lesson to Taiwanese filmmakers, raising doubts about the impact of pan-Chinese co-production on Taiwan cinema. Rather than as an objection to transnational co-production, these misgivings had better be seen as the affirmation of the pre-eminence of locality and national cultural subjectivity. They reveal the tension between local/national and regional/global in the globalisation process, showing that nation-state cinema should be conceptualised from both national and transnational perspectives.

Moreover, the complex relationship between Taiwan and China motivates the Taiwanese to have a dubious and ambivalent attitude towards pan-Chinese co-production. During the authoritarian period, the KMT regime viewed the PRC as the imaginary enemy. Afterwards, the rise of Taiwanese consciousness and political democratisation changed the political climate and accelerated the nativisation of the KMT during the 1990s. Consequently, anti-communist and anti-PRC sentiments have been transformed into anti-China sentiments during the past two decades, and China and the mainland Chinese are defined as the “Other” and the imaginary enemy to excite Taiwanese nationalism (Chen, 2010: 57). Despite the increase of cross-strait economic and cultural activities, there are misgivings about pan-Chinese co-production, inasmuch as this strategy could increase the Taiwanese film industry’s reliance on the PRC’s capital and market and even make it an affiliate of Chinese cinema. Simultaneously, the strict censorship and ideological control of the PRC and rampant piracy increase the uncertainties of the PRC’s movie business. Hence, an overdependence of the survival of the Taiwanese film industry upon the Chinese market could be risky, and China should not be seen as the only offshore market of films from Taiwan. Furthermore, the move of Taiwanese performers to the Chinese entertainment industry reflects the changing relationship between Asian countries in terms of soft power. The growing popularity of Chinese cultural products in Taiwan and the rapid progress of the PRC’s entertainment industry have raised concerns over the growing cultural influence of China. These factors complicate the development of pan-Chinese co-production in Taiwan cinema.

Take, for example, the dispute over Taiwanese–Chinese co-production *Ripples of Desire*. *Ripples of Desire* is a historical costume film with a regional cast (Taiwan/Hong Kong/China), mainly backed by its Taiwanese director Zero Chou, Taiwan’s TC-1 Culture Fund and the Taiwanese government. The film was also funded by Chinese private companies through pre-sales of distribution rights with CNY9 million (approx. NT\$42 million)

(Chang and Chen, 2013). Nonetheless, Taiwan's *Next Magazine* and some politicians suspected the deal is unfair, as the Taiwanese parties can get a bonus only if the movie grosses over CN¥50 million at the Chinese box office (approx. NT\$233 million) (ibid.). However, such misleading allegation was based on critics' unfamiliarity with the film business and the consumption of Taiwan films in China. Whilst the implementation of ECFA in 2011 aided the distribution of films from Taiwan in China, only a few of them have generated satisfactory box office performance so far. Thus the distribution deal guaranteed a basic return for Taiwanese participants and is in fact advantageous to them. Not only does this dispute reflect critics' preconceived notions and media chaos, but it also indicates a China-phobic sentiment in Taiwan today, which has a negative effect on the development of pan-Chinese co-production in Taiwan cinema.

Notwithstanding the misgivings mentioned above, transnational commercial co-production, in particular pan-Chinese co-production, has become an indispensable way of filmmaking for Taiwanese filmmakers in the new millennium. Due to factors such as the rapid technological progress in cinema, the expansion of global Hollywood, and economic liberalisation and deregulation, the production and marketing costs could be ever-increasing. Hence making films targeting multinational markets seems critical to the development of the Taiwanese film industry in the long run. Accordingly, Taiwanese filmmakers could attempt to integrate regional resources with cinematic factors about Taiwan, including actors, stories, landscape and cultural elements, to represent a film with both universal appeal and cultural specificity. Unlike China-centred co-production, in which Taiwanese viewers can be sidelined, and domestic market-oriented projects, whose strong local colour might impede the transnational reception, blurred locality or themes with universal or regional appeal can be underlined in Taiwan-centred transnational co-production. This strategy does not forsake the

representation of locality but recognises the importance of external markets and resources, including those of China.

It is undeniable that the tastes of Chinese-speaking audiences outside the mainland could be marginalised in pan-Chinese co-production. However, the PRC's film market is extremely large compared with Taiwan's, and the box office receipts of a film with a moderate degree of success in China would be an incredible figure in Taiwan's context. Therefore, Taiwanese filmmakers are possible to enlarge the production scale by attracting a "limited" amount of capital from other Chinese-speaking regions without greatly sacrificing creative autonomy, for example, Huayi Brothers' investment in *Starry Starry Night* (*Xing kong*, dir. Tom Lin, 2011), although the amount would not be small at all for the Taiwanese film industry. The circulation of cultural goods, such as TV drama, within the region has allowed Taiwanese actors and stories to be acceptable and appealing in the Chinese-speaking world. Also, the implementation of ECFA in 2011 has eased restrictions on the importation of films from Taiwan into China, thereby increasing Chinese companies' intention to finance Taiwan films. According to Huang Ya-chi, the number of Taiwanese–Chinese co-productions in the first half of 2012 was fourteen, the same as the total number of Taiwanese–Chinese co-productions between 2007 and 2011 (2012: 60). Perhaps the Taiwanese film industry can be a site where Chinese investors seek mid- and low-budget projects with which it is possible to achieve moderate success on the mainland; Taiwanese filmmakers could make transnational co-productions with light local flavour and some Taiwanese actors popular in both Taiwan and China to both mainstream spectators in Taiwan and offshore markets. Films like *Starry Starry Night*, *Love, Black & White Episode I: The Dawn of Assault* (*Pizi yingxiong shoubuqu: Quanmian kaizhan*, dir. Tsai Yueh-hsun, 2012), and *Ripples of Desire* show Taiwanese filmmakers' efforts to strike a balance between foreign capital/market and local stories, even though they might not succeed at box offices. The difficulty Taiwanese filmmakers have

encountered in the process of co-production also exhibits the conflict between different cinematic cultures and between the local/national and the regional/transnational.

The staggering commercial success of *Cape No.7* had a profound impact on Taiwan cinema in the 21st century. Because of the commercial triumph of some post-TNC films in the past few years, the structure of the production sector of Taiwan cinema and the consumption pattern of the local film market are changing. The market share of films from Taiwan exceeded 10% in 2008 and 2011 (*Taiwan Cinema*, 2012), showing hopeful signs in the late 20th century. The good reception of some post-TNC films, such as *You Are the Apple of My Eye* (*Naxienian, women yiqi zhui de nühai*, dir. Giddens Ko, 2011) and *Seediq Bale*, in neighbouring territories also indicates the increasing competitiveness of films from Taiwan in the regional market. The rise of Taiwan commercial cinema in the past few years has received great attention not only at home but also from other Chinese-speaking regions, which can both encourage domestic filmmaking activities and strengthen transnational connections between Taiwan and other Asian cinemas. The recent industrial revival is associated with both pan-Asian co-production and domestic market-oriented filmmaking. Pan-Asian co-production could enlarge the production scale, encourage the improvement in production quality and increase the theatrical revenue; domestic production reinforces cultural subjectivity, reflects local context and satisfies domestic viewers' demand for cultural proximity. Taiwanese filmmakers should attach equal importance to both of these strategies and develop films with local cultural elements and transnational appeal to ensure the specificity of Taiwan cinema and its long-term development.

Not only can the increase in film production and the development of commercial cinema ensure the survival of Taiwan cinema, but they can support new talents' filmmaking activities and the production of domestic auteur-oriented films. That is to say, the development of domestic commercial cinema could not only revitalise Taiwan art cinema but also provide a

basis for its renaissance. Nonetheless, the improvement of the industrial structure, such as the development of the producer system, is still in the early stages. Some defects in contemporary Taiwan cinema mentioned previously also suggest that it could be too early and opportunistic to confirm the renaissance of Taiwan cinema. The development of Taiwan cinema post *Cape No.7* has brought Taiwanese filmmakers hope for a brighter future; however, whether or not Taiwan cinema is enjoying a true revival remains to be seen.

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Echoes of the Rainbow / Suiyue shentou / 歲月神偷 / Director: Alex Law Kai-Yui, 2010

Empire of Silver / Baiyin diguo / 白銀帝國 / Director: Christina Yao, 2009

The Emperor and the Assassin / Jingke ci Qinwang / 荊軻刺秦王 / Director: Chen Kaige,

1998

Exit No.6 / Liuhao chukou / 六號出口 / Director: Lin Yu-hsien, 2006

The Eye / Jianguai / 見鬼 / Director: Oxide Pang Chun and Danny Pang, 2002

Face / Visage / lian / 臉 / Director: Tsai Ming-liang, 2009

The Fatality / Juehunyin / 絕魂印 / Director: Kuang Sheng, Lin Tzu-liang, Liang Hung-chih

and Tiwa Moeithaisong, 2008

Farewell My Concubine / Bawang bie ji / 霸王別姬 / Director: Chen Kaige, 1993

Fearless / Huo Yuanjia / 霍元甲 / Director: Ronny Yu, 2006

The Fierce Wife Final Episode / Xili renqi zuizhonghui: Singfu nan, bunan / 犀利人妻最終

回：幸福男・不難 / Director: Wang Pei-hua and Joseph Wang, 2012

Final Decision / Shengsi jueze / 生死抉擇 / Director: Yu Benzhen, 2000

Finding Shangri-La / Zhe er shi Xianggelila / 這兒是香格里拉 / Director: Ismene Ting, 2009

Five / Director: Abbas Kiarostami, 2003

Five Girls and A Rope / Wuge nüzi he yigen shengzi / 五個女子和一根繩子 / Director: Yeh Hung-wei, 1991

Flight of the Red Balloon / Le Voyage du Ballon Rouge / Director: Hou Hsiao-hsien, 2007

A Flower in the Rainy Night / Kanhai de rizi / 看海的日子 / Director: Wang Tong, 1983

Flowers of Shanghai / Haishang hua / 海上花 / Director: Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1998

The Forbidden Kingdom / Director: Rob Minkoff, 2008

Formula 17 / Shiqisui de tiankong / 十七歲的天空 / Director: Chen Yin-jung, 2004

The Founding of the Republic / Jianguo daye / 建國大業 / Director: Han Sanping and Huang Jianxin, 2009

*GF*BF / Nü pengyou, nan pengyou / 女朋友。男朋友* / Director: Yang Ya-che, 2012

A Good Day to Die Hard / Director: John Moore, 2013

Good Men, Good Women / Haonan haonü / 好男好女 / Director: Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1995

Good Morning, Taipei / Zao'an, Taipei / 早安台北 / Director: Lee Hsing, 1979

Goodbye, Dragon Inn / Bu san / 不散 / Director: Tsai Ming-liang, 2003

Goodbye South, Goodbye / Nanguo zaijian, nanguo / 南國再見，南國 / Director: Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1996

Green, Green Grass of Home / Zai na hepan qingcao qing / 在那河畔青草青 / Director: Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1982

The Green Hornet / Director: Michel Gondry, 2011

Growing Up / Xiaobi de gushi / 小畢的故事 / Director: Chen Kun-hou, 1983

Happy Together / Chunguang zhaxie / 春光乍洩 / Director: Wong Kar-wai, 1997

Hear Me / Tingshuo / 聽說 / Director: Cheng Fen-fen, 2009

Heirloom / Zhai bian / 宅變 / Director: Leste Chen, 2005

Help Me Eros / Bangbang wo aishen / 幫幫我愛神 / Director: Lee Kang-sheng, 2008

Hero / Yingxiong / 英雄 / Director: Zhang Yimou, 2002

Hiroshima Mon Amour / Director: Alain Resnais, 1959

Hsi Shih: Beauty of Beauties / Xishi / 西施 / Director: Li Han-hsiang, 1965

The Hole / Dong / 洞 / Director: Tsai Ming-liang, 1998

The Home Song Stories / Director: Tony Ayres, 2007

Hot Summer Days / Quancheng relian: Relala / 全城熱戀：熱辣辣 / Director: Tony Chan and Wing Shya, 2010

House of Flying Daggers / Shimian maifu / 十面埋伏 / Director: Zhang Yimou, 2004

I Don't Want to Sleep Alone / Hei yanquan / 黑眼圈 / Director: Tsai Ming-liang, 2006

The Ice Storm / Director: Ang Lee, 1997

If You Are the One / Feicheng wurao / 非誠勿擾 / Director: Feng Xiaogang, 2008

In Our Time / Guangyin de gushi / 光陰的故事 / Director: Jim Tao, Edward Yang, Ko Yicheng and Chang Yi, 1982

Infernal Affairs / Wujian dao / 無間道 / Director: Andrew Lau and Alan Mak, 2002

Infernal Affairs II / Wujian dao II / 無間道 II / Director: Andrew Lau and Alan Mak, 2003

Infernal Affairs III / Wujian dao III: Zhongji wujian / 無間道 III：終極無間 / Director: Andrew Lau and Alan Mak, 2003

Initial D / Touwenzi D / 頭文字 D / Director: Andrew Lau and Alan Mak, 2005

Iron Monkey (Shaonian Huang Feihong zhi tie houzhi / 少年黃飛鴻之鐵猴子 / Director:

Yuen Woo Ping, 1993

Island Etude / Lianxiqu / 練習曲 / Director: En Chen, 2007

Island of Fire / Huoshao dao / 火燒島 / Director: Chu Yen-ping, 1991

The Island Tales / Youshi tiaowu / 有時跳舞 / Director: Stanley Kwan, 2000

Jules and Jim / Jules et Jim / Director: François Truffaut, 1962

Jump Ashin! / Fangunba! Axin / 翻滾吧！阿信 / Director: Lin Yu-hsien, 2011

Just Call Me Nobody / Daxiao jianghu / 大笑江湖 / Director: Chu Yen-ping, 2010

Kill Bill: Volume 1 / Director: Quentin Tarantino, 2003

Kill Bill: Volume 2 / Director: Quentin Tarantino, 2004

Kuei-mei, A Woman / Wo zheyang guole yisheng / 我這樣過了一生 / Director: Chang Yi,

1985

Kung Fu Dunk / Gongfu guanlan / 功夫灌籃 / Director: Chu Yen-ping, 2008

Kung Fu Hustle / Gongfu / 功夫 / Director: Stephen Chow, 2004

Legend of the Sacred Stone / Sheng shi chuanshuo / 聖石傳說 / Director: Chris Huang, 2000

Les Misérables / Director: Tom Hooper, 2012

Lethal Weapon 4 / Director: Richard Donner, 1998

Let It Be / Wumile / 無米樂 / Director: Yen Lan-chuan and Juang Yi-tseng, 2005

Life is Beautiful / Director: Roberto Benigni, 1997

Life of Pi / Director: Ang Lee, 2012

The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring / Director: Peter Jackson, 2001

The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers / Director: Peter Jackson, 2002

The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King / Director: Peter Jackson, 2003

Lost in Thailand / Ren zai jiongtu zhi tai jiong / 人在囧途之泰囧 / Director: Xu Zheng, 2012

Lovable You / Jiushi liuliude ta / 就是溜溜的她 / Director: Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1980

Love / Ai / 愛 / Director: Doze Niu Chen-zer, 2012

The Love Eterne / Liang Shanbo yu Zhu Yingtai / 梁山伯與祝英台 / Director: Li Han-hsiang,
1963

The Lover / L'Amant / Director: Jean-Jacques Annaud, 1992

Lust, Caution / Se, Jie / 色，戒 / Director: Ang Lee, 2007

Mahjong / Majiang / 麻將 / Director: Edward Yang, 1996

The Man from Nowhere / Ajeossi / Director: Lee Jeong-beom, 2010

A Marvellous Detective / Ren bushi wo shade / 人不是我殺的 / Director: Chu Yen-ping,
2004

The Matrix / Director: Wachowski Brothers, 1999

The Matrix Reloaded / Director: Wachowski Brothers, 2003

The Matrix Revolutions / Director: Wachowski Brothers, 2003

Mazu / Hai zhi chuanshuo, Mazu / 海之傳說—媽祖 / Director: Lin Shih-jen, 2007

Millennium Mambo / Qianxi manbo / 千禧曼波 / Director: Hou Hsiao-hsien, 2001

The Missing / Bu jian / 不見 / Director: Lee Kang-sheng, 2003

Mission Impossible II / Director: John Woo, 2000

Monga / Mengjia / 艋舺 / Director: Doze Niu Chen-zer, 2010

Mr. Bedman / Tanhuangchuang xiansheng / 彈簧床先生 / Director: Tai Tai-lung, 2011

The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor / Director: Rob Cohen, 2008

New Perfect Two / Xin tiansheng yidui / 新天生一對 / Director: Chu Yen-ping, 2012

Night Market Hero / Jipai yingxiong / 雞排英雄 / Director: Yeh Tien-lun, 2011

No Puedo Vivir Sin Ti / Buneng meiyou ni / 不能沒有你 / Director: Leon Dai, 2009

One Stone Two Birds / Yishi erniao / 一石二鳥 / Director: Chu Yen-ping, 2005

Orz Boyz / Jiong nanhai / 囧男孩 / Director: Yang Ya-che, 2008

The Ox-Cart for Dowry / Jiazhuang yi niuche / 嫁妝一牛車 / Director: Chang Mei-chun,
1984

Painted Skin: The Resurrection / Huapi II: Zhuansheng shu / 畫皮 II：轉生術 / Director:
Wu Ershan, 2012

Papa, Can You Hear Me Sing? / Da cuo che / 搭錯車 / Director: Yu Kan-ping, 1983

Parking / Ting che / 停車 / Director: Chung Meng-hong, 2008

The Personals / Zhenghun qishi / 徵婚啟事 / Director: Chen Kuo-fu, 1998

Pinoy Sunday / Taipei xingqitian / 台北星期天 / Director: Wi Ding Ho, 2010

Port of Return / Kao an / 靠岸 / Director: Chang Jung-kuei, 2010

The Promise / Wuji / 無極 / Director: Chen Kaige, 2005

The Puppetmaster / Ximeng rensheng / 戲夢人生 / Director: Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1993

Pushing Hands / Tuishou / 推手 / Director: Ang Lee, 1991

Raise the Red Lantern / Dahong denglong gaogao gua / 大紅燈籠高高掛 / Director: Zhang
Yimou, 1991

Rebels of the Neon God / Qingshaonian Nuozha / 青少年哪吒 / Director: Tsai Ming-liang,
1992

The Red Balloon / Le Ballon rouge / Director: Albert Lamorisse, 1956

Red Cliff / Chibi / 赤壁 / Director: John Woo, 2008

Red Cliff II / Chibi: Juezhan tianxia / 赤壁：決戰天下 / Director: John Woo, 2009

Red Dragon / Director: Brett Ratner, 2002

Reign of Assassins / Jianyu / 劍雨 / Director: Su Chao-pin, 2010

The Replacement Killers / Director: Antoine Fuqua, 1998

Ride with the Devil / Director: Ang Lee, 1999

Ring / Ringu / Director: Hideo Nakata, 1998

The Ring / Director: Gore Verbinski, 2002

Ring 2 / Ringu 2 / Director: Hideo Nakata, 1999

The Ring Two / Director: Hideo Nakata, 2005

Ripples of Desire / Hua yang / 花漾 / Director: Zero Chou, 2012

The River / Heliu / 河流 / Director: Tsai Ming-liang, 1997

The Sandwich Man / Erzi de da wanou / 兒子的大玩偶 / Director: Hou Hsiao-hsien, Wan Jen and Tseng Chuang-hsiang, 1983

School Girl / Guozhong nüsheng / 國中女生 / Director: Chen Kuo-fu, 1989

Se7en / Director: David Fincher, 1995

Second Spring of Mr. Muo / Laomo de dierge chuntian / 老莫的第二個春天 / Director: Lee You-ning, 1984

Secret / Buneng shuo de, mimi / 不能說的・秘密 / Director: Jay Chou, 2007

The Secret of the Magic Gourd / Feitian xiao hulu / 飛天小葫蘆 / Director: John Chu and Frankie Chung, 2007

Sense and Sensibility / Director: Ang Lee, 1995

Seven Days in Heaven / Fuhou Qiri / 父後七日 / Director: Wang Yu-ling and Essay Liu, 2010

Seven Swords / Qi jian / 七劍 / Director: Tsui Hark, 2005

Seven Years in Tibet / Director: Jean-Jacques Annaud, 1997

Shadowless Sword / Muyeonggeom / Director: Kim Young-jun, 2005

Shutter / Director: Banjong Pisonthanakun, 2004

Silent Code / BBS Xiangmin de zhengyi / BBS 鄉民的正義 / Director: Lin Shih-Yung, 2012

Silk / Guisi / 詭絲 / Director: Su Chao-bin, 2006

The Sixth Sense / Director: M. Night Shyamalan, 1999

The Skywalk is Gone / Tianqiao bujianle / 天橋不見了 / Director: Tsai Ming-liang, 2002

Sleepless Town / Buye cheng / 不夜城 / Director: Li Chi Ngai, 1998

So Close / Xiyang tianshi / 夕陽天使 / Director: Corey Yuen, 2002

Somewhere I Have Never Travelled / Dai wo qu yuanyang / 帶我去遠方 / Director: Fu Tian-yu, 2009

Starry Starry Night / Xing kong / 星空 / Director: Tom Lin, 2011

Story of a Mother / Muqin sanshisui / 母親三十歲 / Director: Sung Tsun-shou, 1972

Summer Hours / L'Heure d'été / Director: Olivier Assayas, 2008

Super Citizen Ko / Chaoji da guomin / 超級大國民 / Director: Wan Jen, 1995

Sweet Degeneration / Fang lang / 放浪 / Director: Lin Cheng-sheng, 1997

Taipei Story / Qingmei zhuma / 青梅竹馬 / Director: Edward Yang, 1985

A Tale of Two Sisters / Janghwa, hongryeon / Director: Ji-woon Kim, 2003

That Day, on the Beach / Haibian de yitian / 海邊的一天 / Director: Edward Yang, 1983

The Time to Live and the Time to Die / Tongnian wangshi / 童年往事 / Director: Hou Hsiao-hsien, 1986

The Touch / Tianmai chuanqi / 天脈傳奇 / Director: Peter Pau, 2002

Touch of the Light / Ni guang feixiang / 逆光飛翔 / Director: Chang Rong-ji, 2012

A Touch of Zen / Xianü / 俠女 / Director: King Hu, 1971

Three Times / Zuihao de shiguang / 最好的時光 / Director: Hou Hsiao-hsien, 2005

Titanic / Director: James Cameron, 1997

Tokyo Story / Tōkyō monogatari / Director: Yasujiro Ozu, 1953

To Live / Huozhe / 活著 / Director: Zhang Yimou, 1994

Tomorrow Never Dies / Director: Roger Spottiswoode, 1997

Turn Left, Turn Right / Xiangzuo zou, xiangyou zou / 向左走 • 向右走 / Director: To Kei-fung and Wai Ka-fai, 2003

Vive L'Amour / Ai qing wan sui / 愛情萬歲 / Director: Tsai Ming-liang, 1994

Warriors of Heaven and Earth / Tiandi yingxiong / 天地英雄 / Director: He Ping, 2003

Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale Part 1 / Saideke balai: Taiyang qi / 賽德克 • 巴萊 : 太陽旗 / Director: Wei Te-sheng, 2011

Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale Part 2 / Saideke balai: Caihong qiao / 賽德克 • 巴萊 : 彩虹橋 / Director: Wei Te-sheng, 2011

The Wayward Cloud / Tianbian yiduo yun / 天邊一朵雲 / Director: Tsai Ming-liang, 2005

The Wedding Banquet / Xiyan / 囍宴 / Director: Ang Lee, 1993

What Time Is It There? / Ni naban jidian? / 你那邊幾點? / Director: Tsai Ming-liang, 2001

What Women Want / Director: Nancy Meyers, 2000

Winds of September / Jiujiangfeng / 九降風 / Director: Tom Lin, 2008

The Woman Next Door / La Femme d'à côté / Director: François Truffaut, 1981

Yi Yi: A One and a Two / Yi Yi / 一一 / Director: Edward Yang, 2000

Yojimbo / Yōjinbō / Director: Akira Kurosawa, 1961

You Are the Apple of My Eye / Naxienian, women yiqi zhui de nühai / 那些年，我們一起追的女孩 / Director: Giddens Ko, 2011

Zatoichi Meets the One-Armed Swordsman / Dubi dao dazhan mang xia / 獨臂刀大戰盲俠 / Director: Kimiyoshi Yasuda and Hsu Tseng-hung, 1971

Appendix 1:

Top 20 Film from Taiwan at the Taipei Box Office (2000-2012)

* Local Arms of Hollywood Distributors in Taiwan

Rank	Title	Year	Distributor	Taipei Box Office (NT\$)
1	<i>Cape No.7 (Haijiao qihao)</i> Director: Wei Te-sheng	2008	Buena Vista*	232.32 M
2	<i>Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale Part 1 (Saideke balai: Taiyang qi)</i> Director: Wei Te-sheng	2011	Vie Vision	198.60 M
3	<i>You Are the Apple of My Eye (Naxienian, women yiqi zhui de nühai)</i> Director: Giddens Ko	2011	20th Century Fox*	181.60 M
4	<i>Lust, Caution (Se, Jie)</i> Director: Ang Lee	2007	Buena Vista*	137.05 M
5	<i>Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale Part 2 (Saideke balai: Caihong qiao)</i> Director: Wei Te-sheng	2011	Vie Vision	135.79 M
6	<i>Monga (Mengjia)</i> Director: Doze Niu Chen-zer	2010	Warner Bros.*	117.01 M
7	<i>Din Tao: Leader of the Parade (Zhentou)</i> Director: Fung Kai, 2012	2012	20th Century Fox*	105.91 M
8	<i>Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon (Wohu canglong)</i> Director: Ang Lee	2000	Buena Vista*	101.16 M
9	<i>Love (Ai)</i> Director: Doze Niu Chen-zer	2012	Warner Bros.*	74.75 M
10	<i>Night Market Hero (Jipai yingxiong)</i> Director: Yeh Tien-lun	2011	20th Century Fox*	51.81 M

* Local Arms of Hollywood Distributors

Rank	Title	Year	Distributor	Taipei Box Office (NT\$)
11	<i>The Fierce Wife Final Episode</i> (<i>Xili renqi zuizhonghui: Singfu nan, bunan</i>) Director: Wang Pei-hua and Joseph Wang	2012	Buena Vista*	50.87 M
12	<i>Legend of the Sacred Stone</i> (<i>Sheng shi chuanshuo</i>) Director: Chris Huang	2000	Spring International	41.75 M
13	<i>Jump Ashin! (Fangunba! Axin)</i> Director: Lin Yu-hsien	2011	Warner Bros.*	37.84 M
14	<i>Black & White Episode I: The Dawn of Assault</i> (<i>Pizi yingxiong shoubuqu: Quanmian kaizhan</i>) Director: Tsai Yueh-hsun	2012	Warner Bros.*	37.64 M
15	<i>Double Vision (Shuang tong)</i> Director: Chen Kuo-fu	2002	Buena Vista*	36.92 M
16	<i>Secret (Buneng shuo de, mimi)</i> Director: Jay Chou	2007	Buena Vista*	26.77 M
17	<i>GF*BF (Ni pengyou, nan pengyou)</i> Director: Yang Ya-che	2012	Atom/ Central Pictures Corporation	26.13 M
18	<i>Touch of the Light (Ni guang feixiang)</i> Director: Chang Rong-ji	2012	Warner Bros.*	25.43 M
19	<i>Silk (Guisi)</i> Director: Su Chao-bin	2006	CMC Entertainment	22.18 M
20	<i>Silent Code (BBS Xiangmin de zhengyi)</i> Director: Lin Shih-Yung	2012	20th Century Fox*	21.69 M

(Source: *Taiwan Cinema Yearbook, Atmovies*)

Appendix 2:

The Four Groups of International Film Festivals Categorised by the Government Information Office, R.O.C./the Ministry of Culture, R.O.C.

Group	List of International Film Festivals
A	Cannes International Film Festival, Venice International Film Festival, Berlin International Film Festival, Academy Awards
B	New York Film Festival, Sundance Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, International Film Festival Rotterdam, International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, Locarno International Film Festival, San Sebastian International Film Festival, Tokyo International Film Festival, Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, Pusan International Film Festival, Annecy International Animated Film Festival, Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, Moscow International Film Festival, Sao Paulo International Film Festival, International Rome Film Festival, Thessaloniki International Film Festival, SIGGRAPH, Tribeca Film Festival
C	San Francisco International Film Festival, Sydney Film Festival, Melbourne International Film Festival, Vancouver International Film Festival, Edinburgh International Film Festival, Torino Film Festival, Montreal World Film Festival, BFI London Film Festival, International Film Festival of India, Göteborg International Film Festival, Shanghai International Film Festival, International Film Festival Mannheim-Heidelberg, Nantes Festival of the Three Continents, Chicago International Film Festival, Singapore International Film Festival, Flanders International Film Festival Ghent, Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival, Haifa International Film Festival, Asian Film Awards, Hong Kong International Film Festival

Group	List of International Film Festivals
D	<p>Focus on Asia Fukuoka International Film Festival, Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival, Seattle International Film Festival, Hawaii International Film Festival, San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, Festival International du Film Indépendant, Filmfest Hamburg, Fribourg International Film Festival, Creeial Internaional Festival of Women's Film Festival, Vienna International Film Festival, Asia Pacific Film Festival, Chonju International Film Festival, American Film Institute Film Festival, International Documentary Film Festival of Marseille, Durban International Film Festival, Bangkok International Film Festival, Buenos Aires International Film Festival, Visions du Reel, Phuket Film Festival, Jerusalem Film Festival, The Tel-Aviv International Documentary Film Festival, Adelaide Film Festival, The Brussels International Fantastic Film Festival, Titanic International Film Festival, International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film, Films from the South Festival, The International Film Festival of the Art of Cinematography Plus Camerimage, Silverdocs: AFI/Discovery Channel Documentary Festival, Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival</p>

(Source: *Taiwan Cinema*, 2013a)