Floating Across a Shifting Border : Transnational Subjects in Yi Yi : A One and a Two and Café Lumière

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Transnational Subjects in *Yi Yi*: *A One and a Two* and *Café Lumière*

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Abstract: Taking Edward Yang's *Yi Yi*: *A One and a Two* (2000) and Hou Hsiao-Hsien's *Café Lumière* (2003) as examples, this article addresses the rise of new wave in the age of globalization. In parallel with the Hollywood-led transformation of the film industry on a global scale, Taiwan new wave appeared in the early 1980s as an alternative and post-national cinematic movement, making a break with the old and government-oriented filmmaking. Through a close reading of the reflexive subjects and their cross-cultural flows between landscapes in the films, this article investigates the ways how new wave filmmakers, both at the diegetic and extra-diegetic levels, reflect on the transformation of Taiwan's geopolitical landscape and fluid subjectivity under globalization.

In his provocative book on "new wave" as a critical framework, *The Age of New Waves: Art Cinema and Staging of Globalization*, James Tweedie proposes to situate the rise of new waves in the postwar era within the political economic contexts of globalization. In discussing the limitations of the national cinema framework within the field of film studies, which he argues has failed to see the rise of new waves as a global phenomenon and thus "ignored the most revealing transnational dimensions of these cinematic movements, overlooking the many links and interactions among them," Tweedie illustrates the paradox inherent in new wave cinema; that is, new waves tend to facilitate the pursuit of local authenticity while having a strong kinship with the global market:

> Each appearance of a "new wave" is itself a symptom: it celebrates the persistence of novelty and local specificity in a world of homogenizing culture industries: but it can also ring hollow, like a marketing slogan designed to achieve product differentiation in the increasingly crowded international film festival circuit. The difficult and nearly impossible task is to speak of new wave cinemas in the plural while also recognizing the uniqueness of each particular situation, to recognize specificity while also acknowledging that each of these cinematic new waves is one among many.[1]

What is perhaps significant about Tweedie's formulation of new waves, as once locally authentic and at the same time globalist cinematic movements, is that he aligns the development and proliferation of postwar new waves with the shift from Cold War liberalism to neoliberalism, and with the expansion of capitalism. He notes:

At the end of the twentieth century, skyscrapers rising over freshly cleared ground in Taipei or Shanghai and luminous ads on colossal LED screen seemed to mark the threshold to the future, but these contemporary phenomena were woven into a long historical sequence that dated back to the 1950s, when the hegemony of American-style capitalism expanded across western Europe and into pockets of East Asia. This book is concerned with the films that emerged together with and documented the construction of these situations[.][2]

The "neoliberal turn" in the film industry has long been discussed mainly in the field of film industry studies. Many scholars see the 1980s as a period when, along with the massive wave of deregulation stemming from the Reagan administration in the U.S., the marriage between liberalism and market capitalism was naturalized and justified by the discourse of change, and when the global expansion of Hollywood and technological shift from analog to digital came to be conceived, like death and disaster, as unpredictable and yet inevitable. The term "New Hollywood" was first used by Thomas Schatz to describe the industrial transformation of movie business following the decline of the studio system as the classical, and Fordist, mode of production, and to delineate the transition from "old" Hollywood to "new" Hollywood.[3] Schatz and some scholars in film industry studies – such as Toby Miller, Tino Balio, Jennifer Holt, among others – tend to argue that the film industry was one of the contentious fields in which discourses of deregulation, globalization, and technological innovation were played out. As social theorist Robert McChesney points out, "[t]he centerpiece of neoliberal policies is invariably a call for commercial media and communication markets to be deregulated."[4] In their detailed analysis of Hollywood in the transition from the GATT to WTO trade system, Miller and the other co-authors of *Global Hollywood 2* also point out that "[a]s audiovisual services are absorbed into concepts such as electronic commerce, information and entertainment, the distinction between goods and services begins to blur."[5]

Within these industrial conditions, a series of new waves emerged during the 1980s and 1990s from the margins of the motion picture industry with Hollywood at its center, from Iran, Taiwan, China, and Korea. Taiwan new wave is a symptomatic case of neoliberal new wave, as Tweedie points out, "the development of new cinema paralleled Taiwan's transition to a new stage in its economic modernization as the heavy industrialization of the 1970s gave way to an information-based, high technology, and consumption-oriented economy in the 1980s."[6] Taking Taiwan new wave as a case study, this essay examines how the neoliberal turn in Taiwan and its film industry's incorporation into the global market had an impact on the ways new wave filmmakers develop their filmmaking practices and their unique styles of mise-en scène. Taking Edward Yang's *Yi Yi: A One and a Two* (2000) and Hou Hsiao-Hsien's *Café Lumière* (2003) as examples, I will explores how Yang and Hou, as new wave filmmakers, portray the transnational subjects and their cross-cultural movement between contemporary urban space in their mediations on the transformation of Taiwan's geopolitical landscape and (blurring) national identity under globalization.

NEW WAVE IN THE NEW ECONOMY

According to June Yip, before the rise of Taiwan New Cinema, "[t]he history of filmmaking in Taiwan [had] always been characterized by active government involvement."[7] In 1945, after the surrender of Japan, which was the imperialist occupational force in Taiwan throughout the first half of the twentieth

century, the Taiwan Film Studio was founded so that the Taiwan Provincial Department of Information had perfect control over the film industry. While the migration of filmmakers from mainland China to the island launched studio filmmaking in the newly founded country, as Tony Rayns points out, there was no real film production of any seriousness and any artistic freedom until the mid-1950s. The four studios – the Taiwan Film Studio, the China Movie Studio, the China Educational Film Studio, and the Central Motion Picture Corporation – were all owned by the government to produce films which condemn the crimes of communism.[8] Since the nationalist government, dominated by the Kuomintang party (aka KMT), felt that it was extremely useful to use film as a propaganda tool, the film industry came into being as an arm of the government. The government did make a number of entertainment films, most of which were filled with conservative thoughts, enforcing Confucianism.

During the 1960s and the 1970s, the nationalist government gradually developed a policy of protection and support for the national movie industry. Although the policy did not grow out of a carefully planned, well-conceived design, it evolved according to pressures derived from successive crises in the industry. Many of the films during the decades were financed and produced by Central Motion Picture Corporation (CMPC), the government-owned film studio. CMPC was founded in 1963 and was responsible for many different kinds of activities, commercial and noncommercial. It produced and distributed cultural and educational films to schools and other nonprofit organizations throughout the country. It supported the production of short films and documentary films.

Despite the rather high market share of Taiwanese films, however, the Taiwanese movie industry and the CMPC began to meet serious financial crisis and functional failure in the late 1970s and early 1980s, mainly because of low theater attendance. The dissolution of the film industry drastically affected Taiwanese cinema's ability to operate with economic efficiency in its domestic market and to compete with imported films, whether legal or illegal, mainly from Hong Kong and otherwise from Japan and Hollywood. According to Darrell William Davis and Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh, under the strong influence of globalization, the production of local films kept falling to a historical low, and Taiwanese films, which had over 70 percent of market share in the 1970s, only managed 30 percent of the market in the 1990s. It did not take long before Hollywood films filled the movie market in the country.[9]

Here, it is crucial to see how Taiwanese filmmaking after the industrial crisis was being swallowed by the vortex of globalization and neoliberal policies. Facing the public's call for democratization of post–martial law Taiwan society, CMPC introduced the "newcomer policy" that encouraged less rigid filmmaking for the first time in the history of Taiwan filmmaking and the KMT gradually loosened its censorship, which had long ceased to be effective anyway. To cope with the serious industrial crises, the government took various economic measures which, in retrospect, perfectly fit into the neoliberal mode of governance. It offered tax incentives for movie investment, loosened the protectionist measures, passed some tax incentives, and encouraged partnership with private businesses. It is also interesting to note that international film festivals played an important role for post–martial law Taiwanese filmmaking as well as for many other new waves in Asia such as the fifth- and sixth-generation Chinese filmmaking after the Cultural Revolution, New Korean Cinema since the 1990s and the post-revolutionary new Iranian cinema, all of which rose up almost seemingly in parallel with the wave of neoliberal economic reforms in the developing world and with the globalization of the film market. "In part, the astonishing growth of such events [film festivals] in the 1980s and beyond may be viewed as the logical result of the global economy's need to

produce a large reservoir of other locations in other cities so as to continually rejuvenate the festival circuit through competition and cooperation," says Julian Stringer.[10] The film industries around the globe not only increased the recognition of the importance of already-established film festivals (such as Canne, Venice, and Berlin) but of their local festivals. In 1980, the Taiwanese government reorganized the Golden Horse Awards, the government-led film festival in which government representatives used to judge films and thus failed to achieve success, into the private sector–driven festival, clearly aiming to distribute Taiwanese films through the global circuit of film festivals and to draw attention from foreign fund sources.

It was from such a historical, economic, and political context that the new wave arose, and both Edward Yang and Hou Hsiao Hsien established themselves as auteurs in the international film market. On the one hand, it is true that the new wave began as a local cinematic movement. As many film historians and critics point out, the watershed came in 1982 when CMPC hired four then-young directors – Jim Tao, Edward Yang, Ke Yizheng, and Zhang Yi – to produce *In Our Time*, an omnibus film which, Chia-chi Wu says, "[departed] from previous mode of filmmaking preoccupied with generic repetition, escapism, or the 'literary tradition' rooted in didacticism and traditional Chinese cultural heritage," and "prefigured a movement devoted to local experiences of growing up, social transformation and history of Taiwan."[11] Hou Hsiao Hsien, unlike his other contemporaries, came out of the traditional studio filmmaking and its apprenticeship system.[12] Hou also made his directorial debut in 1983 with another anthology film made by CMPC, *The Sandwich Man*, which drew a great deal of critical attention.

On the other hand, the movement tended to be more and more less-centered and transnational. While CMPC, as a local center, functioned to give young directors a chance to carry out stylistic, thematic, and methodological innovations, it was mostly outside Taiwan that contemporary filmmakers found their fund resources, audience, and critical acclaim. In the government's shift from the traditional social democratic solutions to the neoliberal ones, the new type of filmmaking was designed to encourage filmmakers and producers to rely less on the state for financial support and to foster productive relationships with the private, and most often, foreign sectors. Taking cue from the huge international success of Hou's *A City of Sadness*, which won the Golden Lion Award at the 1989 Venice Film Festival, "such business practices facilitated the process of Taiwan filmmakers gradually becoming cultural laborers of international art cinema, their works incorporated into the cultural economy of the global art market, eventually causing the almost total detachment of their work from home use."[13]

This cross-cultural and center-less nature of Taiwan New Cinema is worth examining further. While the notion of "new wave" is usually subsumed under the discussion of movement within a single school or location (like the Fifth Generation in China coming from the Beijing Film Academy), film studio (like Shochiku Studio in Japanese New Wave), journal (like French New Wave filmmakers in *Cahiers du Cinema*), genre (like blaxploitation in the 1970s), and film style (like all-anti-Hollywood filmmaking in Danish Dogma95), Taiwan New Cinema and filmmakers do not necessarily fit into any of such unified origins. It is also important to note that, despite the local settings that filmmakers chose and the national allegory in some works, Taiwan New Cinema was totally dismissed by local distributors, exhibitors, and audiences, and grew outside the country.[14]

A look at the career paths of Edward Yang and Hou Hsia-Hsien further highlights the transnational and trans-generic nature of the movement. Yang and Hou, as far as their early career is concerned, seem not to fit into the same category of the Taiwan New Wave filmmakers and are often regarded as opposite

each other in their backgrounds and style. As James Udden points out, "Yang had long been considered the 'Western' or 'modernist' wing of the Taiwan New Cinema, the putative inverse of Hou, who was the 'Eastern' or 'traditional' wing."[15] Yang, due to his educational background in the U.S., is rather strongly influenced by Western filmmaking. Edward Yang attended the School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California to learn filmmaking, but he soon realized that the teaching style there was not the best match to him and he left the school before finishing the program. Yang, who was more influenced by European art films like those of Werner Herzog, almost always featured urban space and materialist culture in the late capitalist Taiwanese society whose economic growth established the nation as one of the so-called "Four Asian Tigers."[16] His distinctive way of screenwriting is worth noting: he wrote his screenplays in English. Wu Nien-Jen, who played NJ in *Yi Yi* and is one of the most prominent New Wave screenwriters, in a teach-in at the 2000 Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF), notes an interesting trans-cultural characteristic taken up by Yang's screen writing.

> This is what Yang usually did when he wrote screen plays, but he wrote his plays in English and had local staffs translate them into Taiwanese. So, when I received the screenplay of *Yi Yi* from him and read it, I felt like reading a Taiwanese translation from an English novel.[17]

Yi Yi, which I will discuss in the next section, was co-funded by Dentsu, Japan's leading ad company, and produced by Japan-based Kawai Shinya and Tsukeda Naoko. With this film, which portrays the story of an urban family in Taipei seen through various perspectives, he won the Best Director Award at the Cannes Film Festival in 2000, which elevated him to the ranks of international auteurs. Despite the film's international success, however, *Yi Yi* was never screened in theaters in Taiwan.[18] As if underlining the de-territorial nature of his works, the film was released on DVD from the Criterion Collection in the U.S. to be circulated around the art-house cinema goers.[19]

Hou, unlike Yang, was neither educated nor trained as a filmmaker in the Western world, and began his career by working for traditional major studios. He is often said to have a distinct, and non-Western, style of shooting (e.g., long takes, static camera, and few close-ups). His films often feature traditional rural communities of Taiwan, seemingly making a contrast with Yang's obsession with urban space and its youth culture. Also, the exceptionally enormous success (both domestic and international) of *A City of Sadness*, which strategically applied what Yingjin Zhang called "cultural exhibitionism" by dealing with the grand history of post-colonial nation building and universal generic (melodramatic) conventions, established him as a national figure.[20] However, as Udden continues to argue in his comparative analysis of the first two sequences in *Good Men, Good Women* (1995), all these descriptions of Hou and his visual style ignore the stylistic and thematic changes which he has made since 1995.[21] Three of his films in the 2000s –*Millennium Mambo* (2001), *Café Lumière* (2003), *Three Times* (2005), and *The Flight of the Red Balloon* (2008) —all fall into the category of transnational cinema, which "document Hou's ability to work on an international scale, to move fluidly across national boundaries and between languages and to work with an impressive variety of actors."[22] These films tend to feature more and more contemporary urban space, and two of his three recent films were shot in foreign cities (Tokyo in *Café Lumière* and Paris in *The Flight*) with the aid of foreign capital.

Café Lumière, which I will discuss later, is de-territorialized more than any other of his films, and it is

very difficult to find in this Japanese language film a trace of Hou's national identity. The film is a Japanese language film with an all-Japanese cast produced by Shochiku Studio to honor the centenary of Ozu Yasujiro's birth. As Davis and Yeh point out, Hou does not have Taiwan distribution rights and had to accustom himself to the Japanese way of filmmaking and business. However, I do not agree with Davis and Yeh saying that "[f]or all intents and purposes *Café Lumière* is a Japanese film."[23] As many critics have pointed out, what is unique and fascinating about the film is that, at a stylistic and thematic level, it does not at all look like Ozu or even the Japanese films that they know, which inevitably leads us to reflect on Hou's authorship.[24] Rather than simply narrowing the film to the category of Japanese film, it would be beneficial to note that, "despite" all intents and purposes, his distinctive style functions to de-familiarize and de-territorialize what had defined the Japan-ness of Japanese national cinema, making the film something beyond just Japanese.

Given this transnational nature of Taiwan New Cinema, it would be fairly difficult to regard Taiwan New Cinema as merely a national cinema which, Fredric Jameson says, would seem to offer "a mode of resistance to a general absorption of local and national production into the orbit of transnational business, or at least, a way of co-opting and defecting that to your own local and national advantage."[25] It should be more than just a coincidence that the two New Wave filmmakers in focus established their local identity almost at the same time that they gained critical fame in the globalized film market. Under globalization, the production of local difference and the desire for homogeneity are, as Jameson puts, "dialectically related."[26] Edward Said, who is often mistaken for the representative and essentialist defender of "authentic" Palestine culture, clearly points out the limit and the problem of "national" culture; that is, the problem of the idea of difference as resistance.

> The idea that we have to have a representative from X community and Y community. I think at some point it can be useful. It certainly was useful to me. At a certain moment there was a felt need for an authentic Palestinian or an authentic Arab to say things, and then one could say it. But I think one has to always go beyond that, not simply accept the role but constantly challenge the format, challenge the setting, challenge the context, to expand it, to the large issues that lurk behind these.[27]

Thus, the word "transnational" is the key to bridge X and Y for Said, and Taiwan and Japan for my argument. In the next section, my focus will switch from the analysis of New Cinema's industrial characteristics to that of diegetic and visual elements. I will argue how Edward Yang, in *Yi Yi*, and Hou Hsiao Hsien, in *Café Lumière*, represent the de-territorialized condition of Taiwan through their effective ways of showing foreign landscape, and capture the geopolitical tension between Taiwan's local (or national) identity and the homogenizing force of globalization through the portrayal of global flows of the subjects.

THE WORLD SHRINKED

In *Yi Yi*, many characters engage in business activities across national borders. Set in contemporary Taipei, the narrative revolves around the members of the Jia family, and the film visually moves back and forward smoothly and seamlessly between different nations. At the beginning of the story, NJ, the father, is asked by his colleagues to negotiate a shift into games software with the famous Japanese games designer

Mr Ota, coming from Tokyo. In introducing Ota to the narrative, the film first tries to draw a distinction between Taiwan and Japan through binary opposition between copy and original. In the scene in which Ota first appears in the film, he is neither visible nor audible. The audience only hears the voice of an interpreter translating his speech about the techno-utopia vision of the future in which video games will have lives, while the camera shows ultrasound images of an unborn baby of

Figure. 1

A-Di and his new wife (Figure. 1). The shot gives the audience an unsettling feeling because of the overlapping and disjuncture between the ultrasound images, the technologically visualized form of human life, and the emotionless tone of the interpreter's voice speaking about technological life. With this brief but eloquent shot, Yang reveals that our perception of vision and sense of life, whether human or technological, are more and more mediated by technologies in multiple ways.

Also, the composition of props and lighting function to separate Ota, a Japanese game designer, from the Taiwanese characters, particularly NJ, and also from the audience, and signifies him as outsider. After the ultrasound images, the camera switches to a medium shot of Ota sitting at a table and continuing his presentation in Japanese. Here the audience sees Ota for the first time and hears his voice. However, Yang utilizes the mis-en-scene to produce a certain distance between Ota and the Taiwanese businessmen, and between Ota and the audience. While Ota's face is visible, the lighting is dark and the laptop in front of him makes it difficult for the audience to get a whole view of his figure It is interesting to note that, in the first encounter between Ota and NJ, they are never captured in the same frame. Ota is always alone in medium and long shots, while NJ is often framed together with his colleagues. Although NJ finds something attractive in Ota ("I like what Ota said"), they are visually separated from each other. After the presentation is over, the scene switches to a tracking shot in which NJ and his three colleagues walk down a hallway, discussing if they should sign with Ota. One of the colleagues brings up the original/copy opposition and says: "He [Ota] is too expensive. Not worth it. I found a local copy cat of Ota. Calls itself "Ato," close enough?"[28] The scene then switches to an empty shot in which the camera faces NJ's company's office through the window. The colleagues come into this empty shot and move forward to the background, talking about the good way to send Ota back to Tokyo. NJ stops in the foreground to find Ota, captured in a separate long
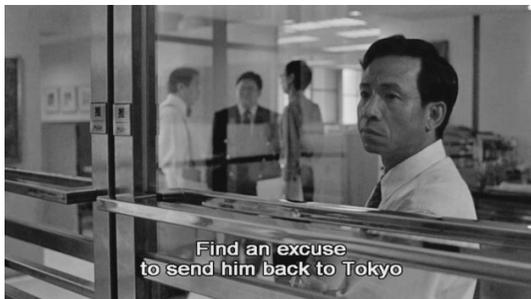
Figure. 2

shot, playing and communicating with a pigeon (Figs. 2 and 3). This composition of the Taiwanese colleagues in the background, NJ in the foreground, and Ota in a separate shot reveals NJ's in-between position. While NJ starts feeling sympathy for Ota and alienation from his colleagues, the glass, through which he sees Ota, functions as a metaphorical boundary, enforcing the Taiwan/Japan opposition and positioning NJ on the Taiwanese side. The visual separation between

Figure. 3

NJ and Ota continues in the dinner scene, as far as they talk as possible business partners. In general, a conversation scene begins with a two shot which shows the two within the frame, at once, in a medium-to-medium close-up shot. The dinner scene, however, lacks two shot and begins with the medium close-up of NJ clumsily explaining his company's decision. Then the camera pans left to capture Ota listening to NJ. While they sit at a small table and face each other, the camera cuts back and forth between the two characters, suggesting that there is still some distance between the two. Calling the post-Cold War neoliberal expansion of market values to our daily lives "Second Coming of Capitalism," David Leiwei Li makes a connection between the film's intricate use of glass with the construction of reflexive subjectivity under globalization:

> For Edward Yang, the challenge for the reflexive subject to constitute itself comes from the optical glare of the heterogeneous social landscapes typical of late capitalism. To supplement the motif of blurring spheres, Yang now makes ingenious use of abundant glass in metropolitan architecture, which, whether in Tokyo or in Taipei, is the transnational space his characters traverse. Unlike masonry walls of solid modernity, glass panes mark postmodern space without total delimitation, suggesting permeability, liquidity, and flexibility – qualities especially valorized in Capital's Second Coming.[29]

The seemingly rigid oppositions between Taiwan and Japan, copy and original, and insider and outsider, which the film sets up at the beginning, come to be undermined as the narrative progresses. It is NJ who first puts them in question and counters such oppositions. While watching Ota playing with the pigeon, the audience hears an altercation between NJ and his colleagues. Having been asked to take Ota to dinner and to pretend to want to sign with him, NJ cannot hide his frustration.

NJ: Why me?
Colleague: You look honest!
NJ: So? Am I pretending?
Colleague: What's wrong with a little acting?
NJ: So honesty is an act? And friendship? Business? Is anything real left?

The visual separation between the two ends when they leave the restaurant after having dinner and get in NJ's BMW. Here, for the first time throughout the narrative, the two characters are captured in the same frame, visually signifying the lift of the symbolic boundary lying between them.[30] In this scene, in the car which functions as an intimate sphere for them, through the film's effective use of music, Ota turns out to be a humane music-loving person and NJ, who also loves music, comes to make friends with him more and more.

The blurring national boundary can be also seen in the way the film represents the foreign landscape. Let us examine the scene in which NJ has a quasi-romantic encounter with Sherry, his ex-girlfriend now living in Chicago, in Tokyo. To sign with Ota, the company, rather suddenly, decides to send NJ to Tokyo. NJ happens to receive an international call from Sherry and tells her that he will be in Tokyo tomorrow. After showing NJ in his apartment telling his daughter

Figure. 4

about his business trip, the scene cuts into a tracking shot of buildings with window glasses brightly lit from the inside in an urban space, which the audience will later learn is Tokyo (Fig. 4). This long and extremely beautiful tracking shot might be unusual when seen from the classical Hollywood norm because the shot does not offer any markers of particularity, of difference.[31] It is true, of course, that, in general, tracking often signifies a character's "traveling" from one place to another. But, I argue, the buildings in the shot are so characterless that the audience cannot tell if it is Taipei or Tokyo. The anonymity of the landscape and the too seamless spatial transition, thus, function to minimize the geographical difference between the two metropolitan cities and visually reveal the fact that, under the condition of globalization, the world is shrinking.

In his 2003 *Café Lumière*, Hou Hsiao-Hsien takes a different approach to the foreign urban sphere and its Other-ness. On the urban iconography of Tokyo, Shigehiko Hasumi points out that the film "includes none of the bustle of government and business in the downtown areas, none of the city's skyscrapers, and none of the neon signs of the entertainment districts. Hou's view of the city is characterised, rather, by the fact that his camera ignores completely the expressways that have been the image of cities of the future ever since Andrei Tarkovsky's *Solaris* (1972)."[32] While in his 2001 *Millennium Mambo* Japan functions as the "land of escape" for the film's Taiwanese heroine, Vicky, running away from her daily life in Taipei, *Café Lumière* approaches Japan not as a cultural Other but as a site of hybrid identity.

As many scholars pointed out, it is not difficult to find multiple layers of transnationality both on the diegetic and extra-diegetic levels. Yoko is played by Hitoto Yo who has a Taiwanese background, enforcing the film's trans-ethnic nature of the film from outside the narrative. In the story, Yoko is an independent writer researching the life of the composer Jiang Wenye. Born in 1910 in Taiwan under Japanese occupation, Jiang moved to Japan in 1923 to study music. After working in Tokyo with his Japanese name, Kō Bunya, and marrying a Japanese woman, he moved to mainland China in 1938 where he taught music in Beijing.

Ian Johnston sees the film's introduction of Jiang Wenye into the narrative as Hou's auteurist intervention in the national framework of Japanese cinema, saying "Obviously, this Taiwanese connection is the means by which Hou and his scriptwriter Chu Tien-wen can enter into the contemporary world of *Café Lumière* — Hou's first foreign-language film, in a language he doesn't understand. At times, there's definitely an outsider's perspective operating."[33] As the narrative progresses, the audience gets to know that she often goes back and forth between Taiwan and Japan because of her Taiwanese boyfriend with whom she is pregnant. The boyfriend, Yoko explains, went to the United States after graduating from the

American School in Taiwan, but now he is in Amoy to manage the factory with his sister. Through the figure of Yoko following the transnational career path of Jian, the film introduces a more complex historical and postcolonial perspective on the transnational relationship between East Asian countries while subtly yet eloquently exposing the multicultural conditions of their societies.[34]

Yoko's excavation of the temporal layers of transnationality embedded in the Japanese society is closely associated with her wandering through physical urban landscapes within contemporary Tokyo. Retracing the steps Jian took in the pre-war period, Yoko crisscrosses the city on trains, and moves through the spaces of modernity such as stations, bookstores, and old-style Japanese cafes called *kissaten*. Trains, prevalent throughout the film, are the technology not only to allow Yoko to investigate and reflect from a postcolonial perspective on the forgotten paths of Jian and his experience of Japanese modernity, but to offer a platform where various temporalities overlap, intersect, and are interwoven within the politics of transnational history and memory.[35] The sense of histories in parallel lines is clearly articulated in the scene early in the film where Yoko, in the first car of the train to Ochanomizu, takes out a watch she bought in Taiwan that commemorates the 116th anniversary of the railway opening in the country, and compares it, through the window glass, to the watch placed in the driver's cab of the train.

In that sense, unlike *Yi Yi*, the transnationality of *Café Lumière* is defined less by spatial deterritorialization and temporal simultaneity than by historical modulations and temporal multiplicity. Despite the characters' trans-ethnic and trans-cultural situations, what is remarkable about the film is the absence of external space. The film does not show Yoko's visit to Taiwan or her past experience there as a flashback. Her boyfriend is completely invisible throughout the narrative. Yet, of course, this does not mean that Hou's understanding of contemporary Tokyo is reduced to an ethnically closed and homogeneous sphere that is opposed and contrasted to the external world, Taiwan in the case of the film. Rather, in Hou's first Japanese language film, the distinction between inside and outside, and center and margin, which Edward Yang in *Yi Yi* strategically brings up and counters, is carefully abolished from the very beginning of the narrative. In such a condition, for Yoko, Tokyo becomes the quasi-archaeological site for assembling pieces of transnational histories abound alongside the networks of railways. The practice of assembling historical ruptures is also highlighted by Hajime, a friend of Yoko who runs a bookstore and supports her research, and his strange hobby of recording sounds of trains in Tokyo. In a scene, he adds a historical context to his personal archive, saying: "Some day an incident happens on site, this might be useful."

The dissolution, or, I would call, the inseparable coexistence of inside and outside vibrates with the theme of Yoko's pregnancy. Rather than serving as the catalyst of melodramatic happenings, the multicultural condition in Tokyo, I argue, is already the status quo for the characters in the film. While seemingly borrowing the generic conventions of the traditional Japanese *shomin geki* genre, which is often said to have been ethnically "purified" by excluding foreign elements, Hou adds ethnic diversity to the genre and successfully de-nationalizes it. In this sense, I would conclude, though through totally different methodologies, that both Yang and Hou in their works reveal the multicultural condition of postmodern (Asian) cities as part of everyday life.[36] Actually, this condition, as I demonstrated in this essay, is what they live(d) with as transnational Asian filmmakers.

NOTES

1 James Tweedie, *The Age of New Waves: Art Cinema and the Staging of Globalization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 6.

2 Ibd., 2.

3 Thomas Schatz, "New Hollywood," in Jim Collins et al, eds., *Film Theory Goes to the Movies* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 8-36.

4 Robert McChesney, "Global Media, Neoliberalism, and Imperialism," *Monthly Review* 52:10 (2001), 2.

5 Toby Miller et al., *Global Hollywood 2* (London: British Film Institute, 2008).

6 Tweedie, 31.

7 June Yip, *Envisioning Taiwan: Fiction, Cinema, and the Nation in the Cultural Imaginary* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 51.

8 Ibd., 52.

9 Darrell William Davis and Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh, *East Asian Screen Industries* (London: British Film Institute, 2008), 60.

10 Julian Stringer, "Global Cities and the International Film Festival Economy" in *Cinema and the City: Film and Urban Societies in a Global Context*, eds. Mark Shiel and Tony Fitzmaurice (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2001), 134-144, quotation on 138.

11 Chia-Chi Wu, "Festivals, criticism and international reputation of Taiwan New Cinema," in *Cinema Taiwan: Politics, Popularity and Sate of the Arts*, eds. Darrell William Davis and Ru-Shou Robert Chen (London: Routledge, 2007), 76.

12 Yip, *Envisioning Taiwan*, 54.

13 Wu, "Festivals, criticism and international reputation of Taiwan New Cinema," 78.

14 Ibd., 76-9.

15 James Udden, ""This Time He Moves!": The deeper significance of radical break in *Good Men, Good Women*," in Davis and Yeh, *Cinema Taiwan*, 193.

16 This differentiates Yang from Ang Lee who is also a representative figure of Taiwan New Cinema. Like Yang, Lee has a similar educational background in the U.S., but he made a variety of genre films which feature different locations and different time settings.

17 "In Memory of Edward Yang," accessed December 3, 2009, http://www.cinema.janjan.jp/0710/0710290784/1.php.

18 Yang, in his interview with Min Sheng Bao, a Taiwanese magazine, countered the report that he did not open the film in Taiwan because the film was not geared for the Taiwanese market. Yang said that, while it was all up to the Japanese producers, he hoped to get a chance to show the film in Taiwan. Wu Nien-Jen, in the teach-in, made a guess that it might have been due to the high copyright fee that the film was not screened in Taiwan.

19 Wu, in the teach-in, recalled that he did not get a chance to watch *Yi Yi* until his friend in the U.S. sent him a DVD. He also said that 2000 TIFF was the first time for him to watch the film in theater.

20 Yingjin Zhang, *Chinese National Cinema* (London: Routledge, 2004), 96.

21 In terms of ASL (average shot length) and camera movement, Udden sees *Good Men, Good Women* as a critical turning point in Hou's stylistic innovations. Udden pays attention to the fact that the camera

in Hou's post-1995 films became less static and the percentage of shots with camera movement radically increased. While Hou had been described as "master of the long take" and "master of the stationary camera," Hou in 1995 "unwittingly removed one of the more concrete angles by which the significance of his work could be apprehended" (192) In *Good Men*, Hou uses the stationary camera in the opening sequence to highlight the contrast between (static) rural and (moving) urban space. As I will argue, however, in *Millennium Mambo* (2001), the camera tended to be less and less static even when he shoots rural space.

22   Flannery Wilson. *New Taiwanese Cinema in Focus: Moving Within and Beyond the Frame* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 89.

23   Davis and Yeh, *East Asian Screen Industries*, 61.

24   Hou did not have any intention to imitate Ozu's distinctive style in the film and also throughout his career. As he says in his interview: "Ozu came out with his own fixed style. It's the system of movie studio at that time and under that condition which was difficult but the most effective way. It's not the same as ours."

25   Fredric Jameson, "Notes on Globalization as a Philosophical Issue," in *The Cultures of Globalization*. eds. Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 54-77, quotation on 70.

26   Ibd., 57. The sociologist Manuel Castell takes a more critical and even pessimistic view of the possibility of local differences. Saying that "[t]he globalization of power flows and the tribalization of local communities are part of the same fundamental process of historical restructuring," Castell points out that the empowerment efforts of local communities in the information age are "easily prone to a fundamentalist affirmation of their identity." (Manuel Castells, *The Informational City: Economic Restructuring and Urban Development* [Oxford: Blackwell, 1989], quotation on 350.)

27   Edward Said, *The Pen and the Sword: Conversations with David Barsamian* (AK Press, 1994), 170.

28   In terms of gender power relations, it is interesting that the copycat whom NJ's partners find later is a woman who later becomes the mistress of their boss, while Ota, signifying "original," is a man who is an independent game designer and has no boss.

29   David Leiwei Li, *Economy, Emotion, and Ethics in Chinese Cinema: Globalization on Speed* (London: Routledge, 2006), 152.

30   Also, interestingly, this is the first shot in which Ota is framed with someone else, not alone.

31   In this tracking shot, some viewers might find Tokyo Tower, one of the most famous landmark in the city. However, the image of the tower is fairly vague and almost hidden in the dark of night.

32   Hasumi Shigehiko, " *Café Lumière*," *Rouge* 6 (2005), http://www.rouge.com.au/6/cafe_lumiere.html.

33   Ian Johnston, "Train to Somewhere: Hou Hsiao-hsien Pays Sweet Homage to Ozu in *Café Lumière*." *Bright Lights Film Journal*, April 30, 2005, http://brightlightsfilm.com/train-to-somewhere-hou-hsiao-hsien-pays-sweet-homage-to-ozu-in-cafe-lumiere/#.V1u4u8c2Oi4.

34   For a thorough reading of the postcolonial aspects imbued in the film, see Shota Ogawa, "Hou Hsiao-hsien in Japan: From Taiwan Trilogy to Café Lumiere," in Jean-Pierre Gimenez ed., Asian Connection (Lyon, France: Asiexpo Edition, 2009), 150-161.

35   On the thematic role trains play in the film and Hou's oeuvre, see Hasumi, "The Eloquence of the Taciturn: An Essay on Hou Hsia-Hsien," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 9, no.2 (2008): 184-194.

36 *Shomin geki* genre, which many of Ozu's films fall into, is a genre of film which tells stories of ordinary middle class life in urban settings. Shochiku studio, for which Hou worked in the production of *Café Lumière*, gained a reputation for its production of shomin geki films, such as those of Ozu and Naruse Mikio. My point is that, rather than paying homage to Ozu, the master of the genre, Hou in *Café Lumière* aims to dismantle the generic conventions.