

“Chinesenesses” Outside Mainland China: Macao and Taiwan through Post-1997 Hong Kong Cinema

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Abstract

By examining the filmic representation of Macao and Taiwan in Hong Kong films, mostly released after the 1997 sovereignty transfer, this paper will address the notion of Chineseness in its plural form as associated with different Chinese societies. The purpose is to bring attention to the cosmopolitan side of Chineseness in Hong Kong cinema rather than the mere influence from the Mainland (PRC). I will argue that it is this pluralised, composite Chineseness reflected in Hong Kong cinema that has reinforced its very “Hong Kong-ness” against the impact from the “orthodox” Chineseness of the Mainland. Through a combination of textual and contextual analyses of selected Hong Kong diaspora films respectively set in Macao and Taiwan, this paper aims to provide a general understanding of the imbrications of various Chinese societies within Greater China and, most importantly, the changing role and position of Hong Kong (cinema) within this conceptual China as “one country” before and after it became a special part of the PRC.

Keywords : Hong Kong cinema, Macao, Taiwan, Chineseness, China

Introduction

Being Chinese outside China cannot possibly mean the same thing as inside. It varies from place to place, molded by the local circumstances in different parts of the world where people of Chinese ancestry have settled and constructed new ways of living.

“Can One Say No to Chineseness?
Pushing the Limits of the Diasporic Paradigm”
Ien Ang (1998:225)

Since July 1, 1997 Hong Kong has become a Special Administration Region (SAR) of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) under the “one country, two systems” principle. In order to enhance the regional economic integration between Mainland China and Hong Kong, the two has signed the implementation of the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) in July 2003. According to the CEPA, Hong Kong-Mainland co-produced films are treated as the domestic products in the Mainland market exempt from import quota. Therefore, Hong Kong film industry has seen a major trend of the Mainland-oriented co-productions and a comparatively small proportion of local productions emphasizing Hong Kong specificity. Apart from these two categories, there are still a number of Hong Kong films set neither in Mainland China nor Hong Kong, but in the Chinese diasporas. These films, though limited in number, are fairly influential and significant both artistically and socially, if not all of them have been commercial successes. For example, two of Hong Kong’s submissions for the Academy Awards – *Exile* (2005) and *Prince of Tears* (2009) – are set respectively in Macao and Taiwan.

On the one hand, these post-handover diaspora-themed films continue to affirm Hong Kong’s status as “a prolific production center for Chinese diaspora culture” (Lo, 2005: 3). On the other, by being in different Chinese societies, these films have in a sense illustrated the diasporic Chinesenesses that Ien Ang (1998: 225) described as “to be Chinese in his own way” outside mainland China. Moreover, to some extent, they reflected Hong Kong filmmakers’ general outlook on the notion of “China” as “one country” through their specific takes on these varied Chinesenesses.

According to the PRC’s official definition of her “one country, two systems” policy, “one country” refers to the People’s Republic of China, and Hong Kong, Macau, and even Taiwan should all belong to this “one country”. However, rather than following the official definition and the international *de jure* recognition of the PRC as China, this paper will examine Hong Kong cinema against a “China” in a broader sense – the notional concept of “Greater China” (Harding 1993; Uhalley 1994; Callahan 2004). Moving away from the territory of mainland China, the scope of this paper will expand to other Chinese diasporas within the imagined “one country” of Greater China. Due to the word limit, this paper will only focus on Macao and Taiwan, the two peripheral/disputed Chinese societies under the Chinese sovereignty.

By examining the filmic representation of Macao and Taiwan in selected Hong Kong films, most of which made/released in the post-1997 era, I will address the notion of Chineseness in its plural form as associated with different Chinese societies. The purpose is to bring attention to illuminate the cosmopolitan side of Chineseness in Hong Kong cinema rather than the mere influence from the Mainland (PRC). I will argue that it is this pluralised, composite Chineseness reflected in Hong Kong cinema that has reinforced its very “Hong Kong-ness” against the impact from the “orthodox” Chineseness of the Mainland. Through a combination of textual and contextual analyses of selected Hong Kong diaspora films respectively set in Macao and Taiwan, this paper aims to provide a general understanding of the imbrications of various Chinese societies within Greater China and, most importantly, the changing role and position of Hong Kong (cinema) within this conceptual China as “one country” before and after it became a special part of the PRC.

1 How Does the “Chineseness” of Hong Kong Cinema Reinforce its Specificity?

With a border within the PRC to delimit Hong Kong as a Special Administration Region, the uniqueness of Hong Kong – or its specificity – is often emphasised or pursued as a parameter of how different Hong Kong is from the Mainland area in the PRC. From the stereotyped mainlander movie or television characters in the British Hong Kong era to the recent non-co-produced films targeting Hong Kong local market, these media productions are all indications of such attempts to accentuate the Hong Kong specificity in its popular culture. However, with the economic development and further opening-up of the PRC, Hong Kong seems to be less distinct from mainland China than it used to be two or three decades ago. As Hong Kong scholar Kwai-Cheung Lo (2005: 4) rightfully noted, “It would no longer be so easy to declare its so-called uniqueness to be in opposition to the Chineseness of (mainland) China.” In his book *Chinese Face/Off: the Transnational Popular Culture of Hong Kong*, Lo (2005: 4) argued that “If there is such a thing [as Hong Kong specificity], it operates according to the logic of a fantasy that affirms the ideological power of what it means to be Chinese, rather than any determinate local position.” Therefore, instead of arguing for the existence of “Hong Kong specificity,” which is defined by its “otherness” to the Chineseness of the Mainland, Lo (2005) examined the Chineseness of Hong Kong’s transnational culture so as to problematise “the contemporary *meanings* of being Chinese” [my emphasis] (2) through Hong Kong culture.

The use of plurality in the expression “the contemporary *meanings* of being Chinese” [my emphasis] by Lo (2005: 2) echoes what Ien Ang (1998) called a “theoretical axiom that Chineseness is not a category with a fixed content...

whose *meanings* are constantly renegotiated and rearticulated in different sections of the Chinese diaspora” [my emphasis]. As Ang (1998: 225) noted (as in prefatory quote for this paper):

Being Chinese outside China cannot possibly mean the same thing as inside. It varies from place to place, molded by the local circumstances in different parts of the world where people of Chinese ancestry have settled and constructed new ways of living.

In this sense, due to the political division within Greater China, there are multiple versions of “Chineseness” running in parallel in different Chinese societies, such as Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. However, K. C. Lo (2005) did not simply repeat the de-centered pluralisation of Chinesenesses and apply it to Hong Kong culture. Instead, he asserted that “Hong Kong’s Chineseness is not one of the particular Chinesenesses to struggle with the origin [mainland China] by displacing it in its own specific ways” (Lo 2005: 8), but “a site of performative contradictions” which “embodies the fundamental imbalance and inconsistency of the cultural totality of contemporary China” (Ibid: 4). By applying the term “inherent transgression” to Hong Kong’s Chineseness, Lo argued that under the “one country, two systems” arrangement, Hong Kong is:

the singular exception that enables one to formulate the totality as such [domain of Chineseness][Hong Kong’s Chineseness] can refer to an abstract wholeness that is implied by a singular element that is structurally displaced and out of joint. Within a given cultural totality, it is precisely that exceptional element that stands for that culture’s all-encompassing dimension.

(Lo 2005: 8)

By emphasizing Hong Kong’s “exceptional-ness”, Lo’s argument for the composite/cosmopolitan Chineseness of Hong Kong has interestingly but convincingly reinforced the Hong Kong specificity which he had hedged in the first place. In the case of Hong Kong cinema, the diasporic films are typical examples of Hong Kong specificity embodied in its Chineseness of “an abstract wholeness” (Lo 2005: 8) of China. By taking up the topics like local mafia-fights or casinos in Macao (*The Longest Nite*, *Exiled*, *Poker King*), the anti-communist “white terror” or the democratic presidential election in Taiwan (*Prince of Tears*, *Ballistic*), these diaspora Hong Kong films are Chinese stories set outside Hong Kong itself or mainland China but belong to the conceptual “Greater China.” In this sense, rather than being based on the PRC state, the Chineseness of Hong Kong cinema can be seen as based on the idea of a Greater China. Therefore, instead of undermining its particularity, the cosmopolitan side of Chineseness in Hong Kong cinema has reinforced its Hong Kong-ness as the exception to the PRC polity, although as the nexus of the Greater China.

According to Harding (1993: 660), the essence of Greater China refers to “the rapidly increasing interaction among Chinese societies around the world as the political and administrative barriers to their intercourse fall.” While Harding

(1993: 661) explains the word “greater” as suggesting “a coherent economic and demographic region that spans administrative borders” as in “Greater London,” Uhalley (1994: 280) adds that the word “greater” might also “be seen to encompass and accommodate the reality of separation, whether it is temporary, partial, or permanent.” This paper will interrogate in how the “coherent” yet “separated” Greater China is epitomised in the cosmopolitan Chineseness of Hong Kong cinema through its diasporic films. By introducing the notion of Greater China as a bigger framework for “one country, two systems”, I will examine the different attitudes toward a coherent “one China” within this great entity.

First, with Hong Kong’s cinematic representations and comments, I will demonstrate how the casino city Macao has become the PRC’s role model for Taiwan because of its compliant attitude toward the Central Government, as well as its excellent economic performance since the reunification. Second, through two Hong Kong films respectively set in the Taiwan martial law era and more recent democratic era, I will illustrate Taiwan’s insistence on its different interpretation of China as the Republic of China (ROC) rather than the internationally recognised PRC government. The overall purpose of this paper is to bring awareness to the imbricate concept of “China” reflected in Hong Kong films: from the *de jure* PRC in mainland China to the unrecognised ROC government in Taiwan, which used to be the legitimate representative of China in the United Nations till 1971, and to the abstract notion of “Greater China.”

2 Macao : An “Exemplary” Special Administration Region

The vigor and vitality of the Macao SAR today are a vivid reflection of the strong life-force of the ‘one country, two systems’ principle.

Chief Executive of the Macao SAR Fernando Chui Sai On
at the inauguration Anniversary Celebration Gathering,
Third-Term Government Inauguration Held in Macao December 20, 2009
(as cited in Beijing Review, December 21, 2009)

Two and half years after Hong Kong’s changeover, Macao has become the second Special Administrative Region of the PRC on December 20, 1999. As one of only two SARs under the “one country, two systems” arrangement, Macao has received much less attention than Hong Kong. This is because Macao is much smaller and less developed economically than Hong Kong. However, since 2006, Macao has become the world’s largest gambling city, with its gaming revenue surpassing that of Las Vegas in the U.S., and its per capita gross domestic product (GDP) has for the first time overtaken Hong Kong to rank as second in Asia (Vong 2009; *The Economist* 2010). Moreover, in 2009, Macao has passed a state security law generally known as “Article 23” which, according to BBC News, has proven itself “a more pliable region of China than Hong Kong” (BBC 2009). The political pliability, as well as its strong economic competitiveness, has made Ma-

cao turn from a pre-handover “sin city” to an exemplary showcase of the PRC’s “one country, two systems” policy.

Portuguese Macao in Hong Kong Films

Due to its small size and population, Macao has never had a film industry of its own, nor has it become a targeted market of Hong Kong films like Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia. However, since the 1950s, because of the geographical proximity and its majority Cantonese-speaking population, Macao has emerged as a convenient, if by no means important, locale in Hong Kong films. In the pre-handover Hong Kong cinema, the Macao element often appeared briefly in those crime and gangster films as a lawless haven for the fugitives from Hong Kong. As Hong Kong scholar Vivian P.Y. Lee (2009: 66) noted, “Notwithstanding its geographical and cultural affinity to Hong Kong, and despite its frequent appearance in Hong Kong films, Macau is rarely treated as a subject on its own.” During the first decade since the 1997 handover of Hong Kong, Macao suddenly became a more significant film setting for Hong Kong films. Although the Portuguese administration of Macao ended December 20, 1999, soon after Hong Kong’s changeover, colonial Macao in its final days has frequently re-appeared in post-1997 Hong Kong films. Almost all of the Macao-related Hong Kong films made during the first decade of the post-1997 era have chosen to tell their stories against the background of the Portuguese-administered Macao facing its own handover countdown. In a sense, Portuguese Macao is used as the “doppelganger” of Hong Kong to transpose the nostalgic image of the former British colony, “when the nostalgic is no longer chic in one’s hometown” (V. Lee 2009: 84). Moreover, besides projecting Hong Kong’s own sense of anxiety about the handover onto the Macao setting, in some of the films, as Hong Kong scholar Vivian P.Y. Lee (2009: 64) has noted, “Macau is not Hong Kong’s Other, but has a history of its own that is equally perplexing and *scriptable* (original emphasis).”

Vivian P.Y. Lee (2009) did a comparative case study of two Hong Kong films that “take its (ex-)colonial neighbour seriously as an entity in itself” (p.69) – *Fu Bo* (2003, literally: Cantonese euphemism for “mortuary attendant”) and *Isabella* (2006). The two films are directed respectively by newly emerged young directors of Hong Kong, Ching-Po Wong and Pang Ho-Cheung. The former film, *Fu Bo*, takes up the theme of death through three interconnected stories about an old mortuary attendant, a death row prisoner who had killed an old man’s son, and a Portuguese prison chef who cooks the last supper for the prisoner. The latter, *Isabella*, is about realizing the meaning of life through a story of a teenage daughter reuniting with her father who had never been aware of her existence before she showed up out of nowhere. In both films, the protagonists’ personal experiences and the epiphanies of their life and death are intertwined with the pending social change on the eve of Macao’s handover. Therefore, Vivian P.Y. Lee (2009: 67) argues that the narrative of both films had revealed a certain “existential crisis” and it was this

crisis that had forged “a kind of kinship between Macau and Hong Kong in the two cities’ post-colonial present.” In other words, the post-handover Hong Kong cinema has started to take Macao more seriously as a film subject, rather than as an exotic element, because besides their geo-cultural proximity, the only two Special Administrative Regions of the PRC are now even more closely connected by their sociopolitical similarity brought by their respective “re-unifications” with the PRC. This presumed kinship is based on the two regions’ common marginalised positions and confused post-colonial identities of being simultaneously within and without the homeland after the “reunification.”

In this sense, the role of Hong Kong and Macao’s homeland “China”, both in the strict sense of the PRC on mainland China, and in the broader sense of “Greater China”, is essential in order better to understand the two regions’ “kinship” forged by their common post-handover “existential crisis” (V. Lee. 2009: 67). The two sullen Macao stories, *Fu Bo* and *Isabella*, have chosen to show a philosophical attitude toward this “existential crisis.” However, a series of the Macao triad-themed films made by Hong Kong-based independent film production company *Milkyway Image* have otherwise boldly enunciated more social and political criticism on the 1997 handover through audacious metaphors referring to the interrelationship between Hong Kong, Macao and the Mainland. The almost ubiquitous metaphors in these films have invited various interpretations and made “*Milkyway Image*” a prominent and distinctive brand name in post-1997 Hong Kong cinema (Pang 2002; Pun 2006; Teo 2007).

Co-founded in 1996 by Hong Kong film director and producer Johnnie To Kei-Fung and his frequent co-director Wai Ka-Fai, *Milkyway Image* started at the time when the Hong Kong film industry was in a desperate situation, fearful of losing its overseas markets in Taiwan and Southeast Asia. Moreover, the whole city was very anxious in its anticipation of the 1997 handover. The newly-established *Milkyway Image* had chosen to make small-budget films focusing on the local market and reflecting local concerns. It impressed the Hong Kong film industry with its first production *Too Many Ways to Be Number One* (1997), “a self-consciously nonconformist” and “thematically somewhat heavyhanded” film, as David Bordwell (2000: 269) put it. This somewhat experimental film has adapted a two-scenario structure similar to the German film *Lola Rennt* (a.k.a. *Run Lola Run* 1998, dir. Tom Tykwer). The storyline restarts in each of the scenarios as the protagonist makes a different life-determining choice and therefore receives an alternative ending. *Too Many Ways to Be Number One* begins with a Hong Kong local hooligan being told by a palm-reader that he has to leave Hong Kong to avoid a misfortune. He flees first to mainland China in the first scenario and then, in the second, to Taiwan.

Since the protagonist is first killed in his Mainland China adventure and then crippled in the restart scenario in Taiwan, *Too Many Ways To Be Number One* is generally read as a political allegory to imply that “Hong Kong’s future lies nei-

ther with China nor with Taiwan” (Bordwell 2000: 269). Given the fact that the film was first released in March 1997, less than four months before the Hong Kong handover in July 1, Bordwell’s association of the film and the political changeover of Hong Kong seems well-grounded. However, Hong Kong scholar Laikwan Pang (2002: 329) dismisses this political interpretation and also reasonably argues that “its China/Taiwan choice carries no real meaning...what the film reveals is a philosophical exploration of individuals’ freedom of choice.” This argument holds water when we examine *Too Many Ways To Be Number One* individually as a film with *an experimental touch*. However, when examined together with some other *Milkyway Image* productions, such as *The Longest Nite* (1998), *Election 2* (2006) and *Exiled* (2006), the film *Too Many Ways To Be Number One*, “is implicitly and explicitly concerned with the question of “Greater China” and Hong Kong’s place in this greater entity” as Stephen Teo (2007: 202) pointed out. These films are either set entirely in Macao or move between Hong Kong, Macao and the Mainland to allude to the complicated and sensitive relationships between these regions.

Among these films, *The Longest Nite* (1998) and *Exiled* (2006) are two prominent political allegories set in a disorderly Portuguese Macao on the eve of the regime change. On the one hand, the background of both films is a realistic portrayal of the uncontrolled gang violence since the mid-1990s, and hit its peak in the last two years before the 1999 Macao handover. On the other, the gang wars and conspiracies depicted in these two films are basically fictional stories based on the filmmakers’ political views and attitudes.



Figure 1-2 Movie posters for *The Longest Nite* (1998) and *Exiled* (2006), both Hong Kong-made gangster films set in pre-handover Macao

Violent crime in Macao had become a serious problem during the last few years in the 20th century leading up to its sovereignty transfer. From 1996 to 1999, the number of murders, shootings and even car bombs had surged. The victims ranged from the Portuguese high officials to local civilians and innocent foreign tourists. These crimes were seen as “a deliberate, taunting provocation of the authorities” (Clayton 2009: 69), and were generally assumed to be triad-related. The attempted murder of Antonio Marques Baptista in May 1998 had resulted in the prompt arrest of the alleged head of the largest Macao triad society Wan Kuok-koi (a.k.a. “Broken Tooth Koi”). In fact, Wan’s arrest was only a few days before the May 6, 1998 premier of *Casino* (1998), a Hong Kong gangster film based on his life story and largely financed by Wan himself. The fierce applause that the film received in Hong Kong may not be regarded as an indication of the Hong Kong audience’s admiration of the gangster Broken Tooth personally, nor their desire to “rebel against the vestiges of colonial law and order” as David Bordwell (2000: 37) has stated. However, it has definitely demonstrated the popularity of the gangster story (genre) among the local audience and their interests in the social order issues in Macao.

In such a dramatic context, *Milkyway Image* has made several Macao triad-related films since its founding in 1997. However, instead of the realistic depiction of the real-life gang wars in Macao, *Milkyway Image*, under the leadership of its producer/director Johnnie To Kei-Fung and Wai Ka-Fai, has chosen to convey subtle political criticism through the fictional gangster stories. *The Longest Nite* (*An Hua*, literally: *Dark Flower*, Cantonese slang for “secret bounty of the triad”), unfolds its plot around a rumor about one triad offering a secret bounty to murder the leader of its opposing triad. A corrupt policeman is assigned by the first triad to stop the spreading of the rumor and to prevent the event which could result in absolute mayhem among the triad societies. By the end of the film, the rumor about the assassination turns out to be a conspiracy by a senior triad boss, Mr. Hung, to eradicate the disobedient members of the gang before his scheduled return to Macao after decades of absence. The surname “Hung” of the returning big boss is the homonym of “Red” in Chinese, his image as the insidious puppet master behind the whole gang warfare is generally associated with the Communist Party of China, although Johnnie To personally denied any serious message in the film (Teo 2007: 92). Regardless, the tragic ending of the triad-serving policeman has clearly demonstrated the motif of a dark fatalism which has occurred in many *Milkyway Image* productions (Pang 2002; Pun 2006; Teo 2007). “There is the near-religious devotion to fatalism that marks To’s action films,” as Teo (2007: 92) noted. The frustration of being in a powerless position to accept the power/regime transfer arrangement is revealed through a character in *The Longest Nite* saying, “we are like bouncing balls; it isn’t up to us to choose where to go or when to

stop.”

Eight years later the film *Exiled* (2006) is again set in 1998 Portuguese Macao and is about gang warfare. Movie fans have even matched all the characters in the film with the different political forces in Hong Kong and Macao according to their respective personalities and interrelationships, such as the Hong Kong SAR government, the Macao SAR government, the Hong Kong Pan-democracy camp, etc. The PRC central government, again in this film, is presumably represented by a tyrant-like triad boss. This interesting match-up is in all probability over-interpretation. However, the motif of fatalism and the political allusions are beyond doubt. In *The Longest Nite* the fatalism in the protagonist’s powerlessness was expressed by self-ridicule (depicting himself as a bouncing ball). In *Exiled*, however, the fatalism is conveyed through the disorientation of the protagonists as they repeatedly asked each other “Where to go?”, and constantly decided their actions by flipping a coin. After a *blood-soaked* gang war, the protagonists start their journey of exile driving a red car with an oil leak. The striking car number plate “MF 97-99” clearly indicates that this is a story about the handovers of Hong Kong and Macao and the breakdown of the car seemingly alludes to the economic downturn or even the stalled democratic process in the Hong Kong SAR, as it is not this problem that afflicts the Macao SAR.





Figure 3-4 Stills from *Exiled* (2006): The fatalistic coin-flipping and the broken-down car with the plate “MF97-99”

In fact, having been economically overshadowed by Hong Kong for decades, Macao has witnessed high speed economic growth in its post-handover era largely because of the preferential policy of the PRC with Macao SAR overtaking Hong Kong in *per capita* GDP in 2006 as mentioned earlier in this paper. Coincidentally, it was also the year when *Isabella* and *Exiled* – the two Hong Kong films specifically set in Portuguese Macao – were released. After these two films, it seems that the dismal, disorderly colonial Macao has disappeared in Hong Kong films. Instead, a post-handover Macao SAR is portrayed as a prosperous, exciting gaming resort of the PRC, as in the light-hearted love stories of *Look for a Star* (2009) and *Poker King* (2010). Both of the casino-themed films were publicly screened in Mainland China with official permission in the year 2009 to commemorate the ten years anniversary of Macao’s reunification.

Macao SAR: the Gaming Resort of the PRC

The gaming industry is usually used as an umbrella term for casino gambling, horse or greyhound racing, and lotteries. However, in the PRC the word “gaming” (*Bo Cai*) is primarily used as a euphemism for gambling (*Du Bo*) when praising the spectacular achievement of the “casino economy” in Macao SAR. As a socialist country, gambling is strictly prohibited in the PRC while in neighboring Hong Kong, casinos are also illegal and the only legal form of gambling is horse racing run by the Jockey Club. Early in the 1980s, the expression “dancing and horse-racing will continue” was frequently quoted from the PRC cadres as a promise to allow Hong Kong people to maintain their capitalist life style under the “one country, two systems.” The casino business in Macao has also been unaffected by the transfer of sovereignty.

Gambling has been legalised in Macao by Portuguese administration since

1847 as a means to compensate the revenue loss in trading caused by the establishment of Hong Kong as a British colony in 1842 (Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau Macao SAR 2011). The Portuguese had built their settlement in Macao as early as the 16th century, but it was not until the late 19th century that Macao had officially become a colony of Portugal. In the wake of the 1842 Nanjing Treaty, which turned Hong Kong into a British colony, Portugal signed the Sino-Portuguese Treaty of Amity and Commerce (a.k.a. Treaty of Peking) with the governing Chinese authority (the Qing Dynasty at the time) in 1887. The sovereignty of Macao was officially ceded to Portugal until the handover on December 20, 1999, again following the precedent of Hong Kong's handover in July 1, 1997. As Hong Kong had become the major trading port between China and Europe since the Opium War (1839-42), Macao had long been overshadowed by Hong Kong's economic status. Also, due to its lack of natural resources, Macao has had to engage in illegal *coolie* trafficking (Yun 2008) as well as legalised gambling activities to support its local economy. Therefore, Macao had become known worldwide as the "Monte Carlo of the East" or, sometimes, the "Casablanca of the East" and as "a decadent 'city of sin'" (Porter 1993).

Surprisingly, Macao's gambling business boomed after it reunited with the PRC. According to the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau Macao SAR (2011), more than 70 per cent of the Macao SAR's total fiscal revenue in 2009 was generated from the gaming tax. This number was approximately 30 per cent for several decades before the handover (W. M. Lam 2010). Generally speaking, there are two major causes that have led to the rapid development of Macao's casino economy – the ending of the monopoly on casino industry in 2002 by Macao SAR, and the implementation of the Individual Visit Scheme since July 2003 by the PRC central government. The *Sociedade de Turismo e Diversões de Macau* (STDM) enjoyed the monopoly rights to all gambling business in Macao since 1962. When the STDM's monopoly license expired, in 2002 the new SAR government granted six new casino operating concessions to other gaming companies, including those world famous companies from Las Vegas such as Wynn, Sands, Galaxy, Venetian and MGM. Since then, the number of casinos in Macao increased from 11 in 2002 to 21 in 2006 (McGowan 2008), and as of May 2011, a total of 33 casinos is in operation according to official statistics (Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau Macao SAR 2011).

Apart from the ending of the monopoly system in the gambling business, the casino economy boom in Macao can largely be attributed to the PRC's introduction of the Individual Visit Scheme in 2003, which allows Mainland residents to travel to Hong Kong and Macao on an individual basis. This scheme is intended to boost the tourism of Hong Kong and Macao which had suffered greatly from the 2003 SARS epidemic. This scheme has provided a steady flow of visitors from mainland China to Macao and thus fueled the rapid expansion of Macao's casino business. By allowing the residents from the socialist Mainland to engage in the

gambling activities in Macao, the Central Government reveals an attitude of *acquiescence* to Macao's status as the special gaming resort of the PRC. More importantly, the relaxed traveling policy demonstrates the Central Government's generous support for Macao's economic prosperity in an effort to build it into a positive showcase of the "one country, two systems" formula.

In the context of the booming casino economy of Macao and the burgeoning film market in the Mainland, the agile Hong Kong filmmakers soon set aside the gloominess about the "existential crisis" or political allusions (as in aforementioned *Isabella* and *Exiled*). They started to make financially rewarding films about Macao specially tailored for the Mainland market. In July 2008, seven months after the opening of MGM Grand Paradise in Macao, Hong Kong Media Asia Films started to shoot its biggest production of that year – *Look for a Star* at this spectacular resort casino. This is a romantic comedy about a young billionaire and a female dancer who works as a part-time dealer at his casino. This modern version Cinderella story is said to be adapted from the real relationship between the Macao's "Casino King" Stanley Ho and his fourth wife. Ho is the founder of STDMM who had monopolised Macao casino business for four decades until 2002 and still the owner of nearly half of the casinos in Macao as of the year 2011.

Released for the movie season of Valentine's Day and the Chinese New Year in 2009, *Look for a Star* was a box-office hit with revenue of 113 million RMB (about US\$17.65 million) on the strength of the budget of less than 40 million RMB (about US\$ 6.25 million). Such a handsome reward should mainly be ascribed to the soaring development of the Mainland film market as a whole. Since the commercialisation reform of the film industry in 2002, the annual box office is increasing at an average rate of about 25 per cent every year. In the year 2009 alone, the increase was 40 percent and the total revenue had reached a new record of 6 billion RMB (about US\$937.5 million).



Figure 5 DVD cover of *Look for a Star* (2009) A modern Cinderella story takes place in a Macao casino

Being a co-produced film catering to the Mainland market, *Look for a Star* succeeded in weakening its casino theme but highlighting the tourist attractions in Macao. In fact, this film was officially supported by the Macao Government Tourist Office and works perfectly as a tourism promotion film for Macao by presenting both the splendid brand new resort casino, MGM Grand, and the historic Portuguese architecture, such as the Old Ladies' House inscribed on the World Heritage List by UNESCO, the Guia Lighthouse and the Coloane village.

This "scenic film" strategy may be seen as from the tradition of eroticizing Macao in Hong Kong films from the 1950's. In 1959, the Cantonese romance *The Missing Cinderella* (1959), remade from the 1953 classic *Roman Holidays* starring Audrey Hepburn, was shot in Macao to tell a love story between a journalist and a young woman who fled from her rich family in Hong Kong. The local landmarks such as The Ruins of St. Paul's Cathedral and San Man Lo (a.k.a. Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro) were featured in the film to represent the Portuguese-administered Macao as a fascinating colonial town, an exotic holiday resort for rich people from Hong Kong. Half a century later, the love story continues to

be repeated in different ways, but only the targeted audience has changed to the mainland residents who have recently been granted rights to travel to Macao on an individual basis.

In terms of film style, *Look for a Star*, though co-produced with the Mainland, is still a continuation of the Hong Kong urban romance from its golden times in the 1980s. However, *Poker King*, another Macao casino-themed Hong Kong film in 2009 is obviously a deviation from the Hong Kong action gambling genre tradition. This genre has become very popular in Hong Kong since the early 1980s. It reached its full bloom by the end of 1980s with the famous *God of Gamblers* (1989), with over ten sequels and spin-offs throughout the 1990s. As the Hong Kong filmmakers started to make films for the Mainland market, the gambling genre has disappeared from the scene for quite a while. Taking advantage of the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Macao's handover, *Poker King*, as a Hong Kong film with a major gambling element, was officially screened in Mainland movie theaters. However, despite the word "poker" in the movie title, the whole movie does not elaborate on the dazzling magic-like gambling skills as it used to do in the 1990s. Instead, it focuses on the robust casino economy of Macao through relatively insignificant commercial wars between several casino runners and their ambitions of building more entertainment facilities in Macao to attract tourists worldwide. While *Look for the Star* promotes itself by claiming to be loosely adapted from "Casino King" Stanley Ho's love story, *Poker King* has even cast the celebrity Josie Ho Chiu-Yi, daughter of Stanley Ho, in the role of a casino CEO.



Figure 6 Still from *Poker King* (2009): actress Josie Ho Chiu-Yi, daughter of Macao casino magnate Stanley Ho



Figure 7-8 Stills from *Poker King* (2009): Planning for New Gambling Resort City

From the dark, violent colonial Macao in *The Longest Nite* (1998) to the vigorously developing Macao SAR in *Poker King* (2009) – about a decade – the evolution of Macao’s image through Hong Kong films has in a way reflected the process of how it has become “a diligent child of China’s socialist capitalism in the twenty-first century” (V. Lee 2009: 72). Moreover, it helps explain the 2009 easy passage of state security law to fulfil Basic Law Article 23 in Macao, while the legislation of the same law has resulted in Hong Kong’s 2003 July 1 protest and has been shelved indefinitely since then. As a Macao legislator pointed out, “When the Portuguese left Macau, people were hoping for a change and saw that change [in] Beijing. In Hong Kong people feared change” (Bezlova 2009: n.pag.).

On the issue of the anti-treason law – Article 23 – Macao has set a role model of prioritizing “one country” (the PRC state) over “two systems” for Hong Kong. Meanwhile, its spectacular economic performance based on the gambling industry, which is officially prohibited in the socialist Mainland, has to certain extent illustrated how the “two systems” practice works. In this sense, to the PRC central government, Macao serves as an exemplary demonstration of the “one country, two systems” arrangement to persuade Taiwan with a case for reunification. How-

ever, Taiwan rejects the proposal not because of the doubt about its feasibility, but on the ground that it, holds that the “one country” in “one country, two systems” should be the Republic of China which was founded in 1912 and retreated to Taiwan in 1949 the founding of the PRC on mainland China.

3 Taiwan: “One China, Different Interpretations”

The expression “One China, Different Interpretations” is also known as “the 1992 Consensus,” although it is more like a mutual understanding in a strict sense as there are still different views about defining “China.” The so-called consensus is used to describe the outcome of a meeting held in Hong Kong in 1992 between two semi-official organisations from both sides of the Strait – the mainland China-based Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS) and the ROC-based Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF). At the meeting, both sides have agreed on the “One China principle” that both mainland China and Taiwan belong to one sovereign country – China as “a historical, geographical, cultural and racial entity” (from *The White Paper: Relations Across the Taiwan Strait published by the ROC government on Taiwan* in 1994, as cited from Cabestan 1996: 1263). However, there is an irreconcilable conflict in the definition of “China” – both the PRC on the Mainland and the ROC on Taiwan claim to be the sole legitimate representative of Chinese sovereignty. This insistence on a “one China principle” and the difference in their respective interpretations of “one China” across the Taiwan Strait have been captured in three post-1997 Hong Kong films on major Taiwan political issues, *Black Gold* (1997), *Ballistic* (2008) and *Prince of Tears* (2009). Moreover, though limited in number, these three films have sufficiently demonstrated Hong Kong’s connection to, and concern with, Taiwan as a Chinese territory, and in a way, revealed Hong Kong’s own stand on the complicated problem of the divided sovereignty of China.

***Prince of Tears*: 1950s “White Terror” in Taiwan under Martial Law**

Produced by Hong Kong film director/producer Fruit Chan and directed by Hong Kong director Yonfan, *Prince of Tears* (2009) tells a tragic story set in 1950s’ Taiwan clouded by anti-communist “white terror.” Because of its sensitive topic, it is impossible for *Prince of Tears* to be screened at the mainland Chinese theatres. Thus, the promotion of this film has adopted a strategy of using the international film festival circuit as its springboard for the international audience as an art house movie. Following the precedent of the Taiwanese movie *A City of Sadness* (1989, dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien) about the Taiwan 2-28 massacre in 1947 and which is the first Chinese-language film to win the Golden Lion award at the Venice Film Festival, *Prince of Tears* premiered in competition at the 66th Venice Film Festival in 2009 as a Hong Kong-Taiwan co-production. Later, it was chosen as

Hong Kong's entry for the foreign-language category of the 82nd Academy Awards, which resulted in the denouncement of the film's status as a Taiwanese domestic film. Therefore, its US\$ 306,000 subsidy from Taiwan's Government Information Office was taken back (Shackleton 2009). Although the film failed to win any prizes at the festivals, it has become prominent as one of the very few films to touch on the politically sensitive topic of Taiwan under martial law.

Taiwan was ceded to Japan in 1895 by the last Chinese feudal dynasty, Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). After fifty years of being a Japanese colony, Taiwan was returned by Japan to the Republic of China in 1945. Four years later in 1949, the ROC under the governing Chinese Nationalist Party, the *Kuomintang* (KMT), withdrew from mainland China to Taiwan after the Chinese civil war. The above-mentioned 2-28 Massacre of 1947, in which thousands were killed or imprisoned, was an outbreak of accumulated tension between the local inhabitants of Taiwan and the newly arrived KMT administration. In the aftermath of the incident, the KMT government declared martial law in Taiwan in 1948 which has remained in effect for four decades until 1987. The award-winning *A City of Sadness* (1989) was the first film to take up the once political taboo of "the 2-28 Massacre" as its subject after martial law was repealed.

While *A City of Sadness* recalls the traumatic memory of the local inhabitants of Taiwan under the KMT government, *Prince of Tears* represents the life of the KMT military officers during the first several years after retreating to Taiwan. The plot unfolds through the eyes of an eight-year-old girl whose happy family is torn apart when her father, a KMT Air Force officer, is prosecuted and then executed for communist espionage. The story is set in 1954 in a KMT military dependents' village (*juan cun*) – the provisional housing for KMT soldiers and their dependents from mainland China. In fact, a great many Taiwanese celebrities have grown up in these military dependents' villages, including the leading Taiwanese filmmakers Ang Lee, Hou Hsiao-hsien and Edward Yang De-chang. These supposedly temporary villages have actually ended up as permanent settlements, as the KMT had never realised its goal of resuming its governance on Chinese mainland. In the film, the old KMT General refused to have his garden tended in the hope of returning to the Mainland within a couple of years. However, the frustration of this unrealised hope is illustrated through a sorrowful scene later in the film when the General orders his soldiers to clean up the desolate garden, saying "It seems we are not going back soon."

Moreover, in contrast to the Taiwan-made *A City of Sadness*, which has focused on the national identity confusion of the Taiwanese local inhabitants during the years of Taiwan's transfer from fifty years of colonisation by Japan to the authoritarian governing of the KMT-led ROC government, the Hong Kong-made *Prince of Tears* has brought the attention to the plight of the exiled ROC government. In order to create an authentic feeling of the 1950s' Taiwan, the prologue of *Prince of Tears* employed the standard government propaganda newsreel from

that particular era. This film clip features the 1950s ROC government radio propaganda about the progress of construction in Taiwan and the political *slogan of “counter-attack and regaining control over Chinese mainland” (fan gong da lu)*. The most conspicuous image is a black-and-white map of China marked with the four Chinese characters “*Zhong Hua Ming Guo*”, (the Republic of China) with a subtitle consisting of lyrics from the National Anthem of the ROC. The territory of a “unified China” includes not only Taiwan and mainland China, but also Mongolia, which used to be ruled by China during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), and then the ROC founded in 1911. However, Mongolia had unilaterally declared secession from the ROC in 1924 under the influence of the former Soviet Union. The independence of Mongolia has been recognised by the newly founded communist PRC since 1949, “presumably under pressure from the Soviet Union” (Harding 1993: 679) but never by the ROC regime. However, the ROC government in the 1950s, though having retreated to Taiwan, insisted on its own conception of China which included Taiwan, Mainland China and all of Siberia and much of Soviet Central Asia, as the map from the film clip shows. In fact, such maps of “the Republic of China” were printed in high school textbooks in 1950s Taiwan (Harding 1993), demonstrating the ROC government’s commitment to the territorial integrity of China, though this was slightly different from the PRC government’s version.



Figure 9: Still from *Prince of Tears* (2009): A map of the Republic of China Shown in the Newsreels of 1950s' Taiwan

However, since the ROC lost its United Nation seat of “China” to the PRC in 1971, the major concern of the KMT administration of the ROC is no longer to regain control of the Mainland, but how to retain its alternative interpretation of

China under pressure from both the PRC's reunification under "one country, two systems" proposal, and the local Democratic Progress Party's (DPP) "Taiwan independence" movement. During the 1990s, the ruling KMT party was facing severe criticism with political corruption and gangster involvement (known as "black gold", *Hei Jin*). This has led to a split of factions within the KMT and then resulted in the KMT's defeat by the pro-independence DPP in the three-way presidential election in 2000, marking the end of the KMT's one-party ruling of the ROC (Taiwan). In the 2004 election, the reunited KMT was defeated by the DPP again by a very narrow margin after the "3-19 Shooting Incident", an attempted assassination of Chen Shuibian – the DPP leader, Taiwan President (in office 2000-2008) – the day before the election, which was widely suspected to be staged as a strategic maneuver to support the DPP's campaign. However, during his second term of presidency, Chen Shui-bian of the DPP was involved in a series of scandals, which led to an anti-Chen Shuibian campaign in 2006. Soon after his presidency ended in 2008 and the KMT took office again, Chen was eventually convicted and imprisoned for bribery and corruption. Since the democratisation of Taiwan, the dramatic political evolution of Taiwan over the last two decades is condensed in two post-1997 Hong Kong films, *Black Gold* (1997) and *Ballistic* (2008). Through the two films, Hong Kong filmmakers have demonstrated their deep concern for Taiwan as an entity within what could be termed "Greater China."

***Black Gold* and *Ballistic*: Political Corruption and the 2004 Election Farce in Democratic Taiwan**

Strictly speaking, *Black Gold* (alternative English title: *Island of Greed* 1997) is not a post-1997 Hong Kong film. Although it was released in December 1997 after the handover, the production of *Black Gold* had started in 1996, the year when cross-strait tension mounted after Beijing conducted a missile test near Taiwan's coastline before Taiwan's first direct presidential election – "the 1995-96 Taiwan Strait Crisis" (Bush 2005: 210). The story is set in 1995 as an actual Taiwanese television news report on Beijing negotiator Tang Shubei's visit to Taiwan, which is used at the beginning of the film to provide the background to the story. As indicated in the film title, the story is the disclosure of Taiwan's "black gold politics" in the mid-1990's as the Taiwanese mafia – "black gangs" (*Hei Bang*) – infiltrated the political domain, while the corrupt politicians accumulated money through their connections to the gangsters. The main plot follows a government agent in the Ministry of Justice investigating a gang-leader-turned-politician over the course of the Taipei legislative election campaign.

As a Taiwan-themed political thriller from the perspective of Hong Kong filmmakers, *Black Gold* is not a story of intrigue behind a struggle for political power, but is filled with spectacular Hong Kong-styled action scenes, gun-battles, etc. Based on the stereotyped characterisation of the upright inspector and the unscrupulous gang leader (both played by Hong Kong film stars), the film revealed

an obvious anti-Taiwan-independence political leaning. It explicitly compares the corrupt antagonist in the film to the pro-independence Taiwan president Lee Teng-hui (in office 1988-2000) by candidly displaying Lee's picture along with the gang leader's wife proudly commenting on how much her husband and the President look alike. On the other hand, the brief appearance of the Minister of Justice is obviously based on the real figure of Ma Ying-jeou (the present Taiwan President since 2008), who had launched an effective anti-corruption campaign and major gang-sweep operations while he was in the post of the Minister of Justice from 1993 to 1996 (when the film is set). Unlike the Taiwan-born Lee Teng-hui, who is an advocate for the Taiwanese Localisation movement, Hong Kong-born Ma Ying-jeou, whose father had moved from mainland China to Taiwan in 1949 as a high-ranked KMT officer, is a supporter of "One China, Different interpretations." Taiwan President, Ma Ying-jeou has called for the terms "the mainland" or "the other side of the strait" to refer to the PRC, rather than using "China", as he believes, according to the ROC Constitution, that mainland China is also part of ROC territory (W. Fu 2011).

In fact, while condemning the political corruption in Taiwan, *Black Gold* expresses genuine concerns about the ROC under the KMT administration. Through the words of the protagonist:

Corruption had caused our defeat in the civil war and we were forced to retreat to Taiwan. Now they are again messing up this beautiful island. If they collapsed Taiwan, where else can we retreat to? One step behind is only the ocean.

To some extent, this criticism did soon come true. As noted earlier, about two years after *Black Gold* was released, the KMT party was defeated by the DPP in the 2000 Taiwan presidential election and again in 2004, marking the end of its five decades of one-party dominance in Taiwan. With the change of administration from the KMT to the DPP, Taiwan has also experienced great changes which reflect the conflict between the camps of Taiwan independence and "One China."

In the film *Black Gold*, there is a long shot of the ROC national flag raising ceremony in front of the Memorial Hall, followed by the close-up of the inscription *Da Zhong Zhi Zheng* on the main gate of the National Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Park. Unexpectedly, these scenes have become a precious record of Taiwanese history, as the inscription has since been removed and replaced in 2007 during the DPP administration (2000-2008) as part of the "de-Chiang-ification" effort to contain the influence of the KMT.



Figure 10 Still from *Black Gold* (1997): the ROC national flag raising ceremony in front of the National Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall



Figure 11 Still from *Black Gold* (1997): Close-up of the inscription Da Zhong Zhi Zheng (“Great, Central, Perfect, Upright”)

During the “de-*Chiang*-ification” campaign, in the name of eliminating the cult of the personal worship about Chiang Kai-shek, the former ROC president and KMT party leader, his picture was removed from the new Taiwan currency in 2000. Moreover, the Chiang Kai-shek International Airport, opened in 1970s, was renamed Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport. Most of the streets, buildings, schools, and organisations named “Chungcheng” (an alternative name of Chiang Kai-shek) were also renamed. The National Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall was changed into “National Taiwan Democracy Memorial Hall”, while the inscription

Da Zhong Zhi Zheng (meaning “Great, Central, Perfect, Upright”, the ancient Chinese phrase from which Chiang Kai-shek’s other name originated) was replaced with *Zi You Guang Chang*, (“Liberty Square”) from 2007.

Although after Ma Ying-jeou of the KMT was elected to the presidency in 2008, the name “National Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall” was restored soon after. However, the new inscription “Liberty Square” was retained. Beside its appearance in the above-mentioned film *Black Gold* (1997), the last time the original “*Da Zhong Zhi Zheng*” plaque appeared in a Hong Kong film is in *Ballistic* (2008), a political thriller based on the controversial “3-19 Shooting Incident” before the 2004 Taiwan presidential election.



Figure 12 Still from *Ballistic* (2008): People rallied near the Da Zhong Zhi Zheng Gate in 2004 demanding the truth about the “3-19 Shooting Incident” of Taiwan presidential election

The “3-19 Shooting Incident”, also known as the “3-19 Presidential Assassination Attempt”, took place on March 19, 2004, one day before Taiwan’s presidential election. The DPP candidate Chen Shui-bian, who was running for his second term of the presidency, survived a gunshot wound to his abdomen while he was campaigning in Tainan, a southern city of Taiwan, with his vice president. The shooting incident won Chen Shui-bian decisive sympathy in the election and the next day he was re-elected as President by very narrow margin. Rallies and protests continued for weeks challenging the election result and demanding the truth about the so-called “assassination attempt.” Although the official investigation on the shooting was closed in 2005 without a convincing conclusion, there continued to be suspicions about the incident being staged and faked.

The Hong Kong film *Ballistic* simulates the 3-19 Shooting Incident based on speculation about Chen Shui-bian faking of the incident. Starting with the police investigation on a seemingly irrelevant case on the illegal *possession of firearms*, *Ballistic* simulates the “3-19 Shooting Incident” without using real names. It boldly depicts a political fraud about a presidential candidate masterminding an assassination attempt of his vice-president in order to blame his opponent, and then faking a gun wound on the candidate himself when the vice-president survived the assassination due to a half-filled bullet. The film ends in an anti-corruption demonstration two years after the election, which is based on the real event of the “Besiege the Presidential Office” demonstration – the climax of the 2006 “Million Voices against Corruption, President Chen Must Go” campaign (Parfitt 2007: 201). The campaign has in a way led to Chen Shui-bian’s charges and conviction of bribery and corruption immediately after his presidential term finished in 2008.

Since in real life the investigation of the “3-19 Shooting Incident” has been inconclusive, the supposition in *Ballistic* therefore is taken as a probable explanation of the “cold case.” More important than disclosing the truth, this Hong Kong film actually is a demonstration of an anti-DPP posture, which to some extent, is equivalent to anti-Taiwan independence. This political standing is consistent with the PRC’s uncompromising position on the Taiwan issue, and thus has gained the film access to the Mainland.

Ballistic was released in Hong Kong in November 2008, six months after Chen Shui-bian stepped down and Ma Ying-jeou of the KMT was sworn into office as President in May 2008. Later in January 2009, it was screened in a limited number of cities in Taiwan, under an alternative Chinese title *Jiang Hu Qing* (literally: *Affection of the Grassroots Community*) to reduce its political sensitivity. However, it was not until April 2010 that *Ballistic* was released on the Mainland, more than one year after its scheduled release date, due to censorship regulations. While the film was indeed unsuccessful in terms of its box office revenue in Hong Kong and Taiwan, it was generally received positively in the Mainland because of the rarity of the political thriller genre there.

Considering the sensitive subject of the film, *Ballistics* was finally accepted by the Mainland censors presumably under the influence of two events. First, the aforementioned conviction of Chen Shui-bian; in September 2009, Chen Shui-bian received a life sentence (later reduced to twenty years) for embezzlement, money-laundering and bribery. The legal results of Chen’s corruption have made *Ballistic* appear to be less politically biased than otherwise would be the case. Second and more importantly, is the unprecedented development of cross-strait relationships during the Ma Ying-jeou administration in Taiwan since 2008. *Ballistics* was screened on the Mainland while Taiwan and the PRC were in the final stage of negotiation of an epoch-breaking bilateral trade agreement – the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (“ECFA”) – following similar examples of the PRC’s agreements with Hong Kong and Macao, (the Closer Economic Part-

nership Arrangement or “CEPA” signed in 2003). EFCA was signed in June 2010 and took effect in September that year.

Although Taiwan disapproves of the “one country, two systems” model practised in the Hong Kong and Macao SARs on the ground of the asymmetric central-SAR power configuration, it did not reject the economic integration as part of “Greater China” under “One China, Different Integrations.” As for Hong Kong, despite the local debate about whether the priority of “one country” has undermined “two systems” and Hong Kong’s high degree of autonomy, it shares the PRC’s anti-Taiwan independence stance. This is not only because of the fear that Taiwan independence would threaten the security of the Taiwan Straits, but more because of Hong Kong people’s residual affection towards the ROC. Historically speaking, the ROC is the first Republic regime of China after the 1911 Revolution ended the 4,000 years monarchy. Although it had lost control of mainland China since 1949 the founding of the communist PRC, as aforementioned, the ROC has been the legitimate representation of China at the United Nations till 1971. In fact, many Hong Kong residents or their parents have moved out of the Mainland to avoid the Communist rule. Even until the 1990s, to some of these Hong Kong people, the ROC is the more legitimate representation of China, rather than the PRC.

In fact, Hong Kong’s affection towards the unrecognised ROC and its neutral stand towards the “two Chinas” can be perfectly illustrated in the 1990 Hong Kong comedy *Her Fatal Way*. The film tells a story about a female Mainland police officer on a mission in Hong Kong. In this film, the Mainland communist was portrayed as the uncouth alien while the KMT veteran of the ROC was introduced as the father of a Royal Hong Kong police officer. In a breakfast table scene at the Hong Kong police officer’s home, the triangular relationship among Hong Kong and the “two Chinas” is shown as the Mainland communist and the veteran KMT are both in their respective military uniforms to challenge each other, while the Hong Kong police officer, in his own uniform, sits between them trying to mediate. As the two are arguing about using the chopsticks with left or right hand (a metaphor for the leftist and rightist ideologies), the Hong Kong policeman takes up knife and fork in each hand and says “I am adept with both hands.” A noteworthy detail in this scene is that in the background, the portraits of all four presidents of the KMT party (also the ROC) are hanging on the wall of the Royal Hong Kong police officer’s home.



Figure 13 Still from *Her Fatal Way* (1990) the breakfast table scene: the Hong Kong police officer (middle), his father – a veteran KMT military officer (left), and the communist cadre from Mainland China (right).

Historically speaking, Hong Kong films have been enjoying preferential access to the Taiwan market as domestic products since the 1950s despite Hong Kong's status as a British colony and a SAR of the PRC. Since the 2004 implementation of the CEPA, the PRC has also granted domestic status to Hong Kong-Mainland co-productions and waived the import quota on non-co-produced Hong Kong films. In this sense, Hong Kong films are technically being treated as domestic products in both Mainland China and Taiwan, as both the PRC and the ROC government hold to the "one China" principle and Hong Kong as part of China. Therefore, regarding the Taiwan issue, Hong Kong may not be a supporter of "reunification" which, to a certain extent, means Taiwan's capitulation to the PRC. However, Hong Kong has demonstrated a clear posture against Taiwan independence through its films. Unlike the political implication of the PRC's "reunification", Hong Kong's anti-secession stance is more out of belief in ethnic Chinese kinship. Made up of the Chinese cultural and "blood tie", this kinship transcends the political discrepancies and territorial delimitations across the Taiwan Strait and serves the basis of the national "Greater China."

Conclusion

This paper is about Hong Kong's filmic representation of Macao and Taiwan, the two other Chinese societies outside Mainland China. Instead of simply equating "China" with the nation-state of the PRC as defined in the "one country, two systems" policy, I have drawn on the abstract concept of "Greater China" to redefine the Chineseness of Hong Kong cinema. In his book *Contingent States: Greater China and Transnational Relations*, Callahan (2004: xxi) argued that "Greater China is the product of a contingent network of relations in local, national, regional, global, and transnational space" and suggests a way of seeing Greater China as a set of "heterotopias" which are "not the clean or pure norms of the social constructivists, they are multiple, and thus involved in struggle and politics" (22). If the ultimate goal of "one country, two systems" policy – a politically unified China under the regime of the PRC – may sound like a utopia/dystopia, Callahan's heuristic use of the Foucaudian term "heterotopias" is helpful in understanding the complexity and contingency of Greater China. With the increased economic integrations among Mainland China and other Chinese societies such as Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, these multiple "heterotopias" of Greater China are actually visualised through the images of the Chinese diasporas in Hong Kong films: from the dark, disorderly colonial Macao to prosperous and pliant Macao SAR; from the anti-Communist Taiwan under martial law to the democratised Taiwan holding up an alternative interpretation of "one China". By examining the various Chinesenesses outside mainland China through the post-1997 Hong Kong films, I argue that Hong Kong's uniqueness lies in its composite/cosmopolitan Chineseness. At the nexus of the separated Chinese diasporic communities, Hong Kong cinema is actually demonstrating a broader concern for an abstract "China" transcending the political national boundary of the PRC.

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Filmography

English Title	Year	Pinyin Title	Chinese Title	Director
2000 AD	2000	<i>Gong Yuan 2000</i>	公元 2000	Gordon Chan Kar-Seung
A City of Sadness	1989	<i>Bei Qing Cheng Shi</i>	悲情城市	Hou Hsiao-hsien
After This Our Exile	2006	<i>Fu Zi</i>	父子	Patrick Tam Kar Ming
At the end of Daybreak	2009	<i>Xin Mo</i>	心魔	<i>Ho Yuhang</i>
Ballistic	2008	<i>Dan Dao</i>	弹道	Lawrence Ah Mon (a.k.a. Lawrence Lau Kwok Cheong)
Black Gold (a.k.a. Island of Greed)	1997	<i>Hei Jin</i>	黑金	Michael Mak Dong-kit
Casino	1998	<i>Hao Jiang Feng Yun</i>	濠江风云	Billy Tang Hin-Shing
Curse of the Golden Flowers	2006	<i>Man Cheng Jin Dai Huang Jin Jia,</i>	满城尽带黄金甲	Zhang Yimou
Election 2: Value Peace Most	2006	<i>Hei She Hui 2: Yi He Wei Gui</i>	黑社会 2: 以和为贵	Johnnie To Kei-fung
Exiled	2006	<i>Fang Zhu</i>	放逐	Johnnie To Kei-fung
Fu Bo	2003	<i>Fu Bo</i>	福伯	Wong Ching-Po
God of Gamblers	1989	<i>Du Sheng</i>	赌神	Wong Jing,
Her Fatal Ways	1990	<i>Biao Jie Ni Hao Ye</i>	表姐你好嘢	Alfred Cheung Kin Ting
Isabella	2006	<i>Yi Sha Bei La</i>	伊莎贝拉	Edmond Pang Ho-Cheung
Lola Rennt (Run Lora Run)	1998	<i>Luo La Kuai Pao</i>	罗拉快跑	Tom Tykwer
Look for a Star	2009	<i>You Long Xi Feng</i>	游龙戏凤	Andrew Lau Wai-Keung
Painted Skin	2008	<i>Hua Pi</i>	画皮	Gordon Chan Kar-Seung
Poker King	2009	<i>Pu Ke Wang</i>	扑克王	Chan Hing-Kai & Janet Chun
Prince of Tears	2009	<i>Lei Wang Zi</i>	泪王子	Yon Fan
Protégé	2007	<i>Men Tu</i>	门徒	Derek Yee Tung-Shing
Rain Dogs	2006	<i>Tai Yang Yu</i>	太阳雨	Ho Yu-Hang
Roman Holidays	1953	<i>Luo Ma Jia Ri</i>	罗马假日	William Wyler
The Banquet	2006	<i>Ye Yan</i>	夜宴	Feng Xiaogang
The Eye	2002	<i>Jian Gui</i>	见鬼	Oxide Pang Chun & Danny Pang
The Longest Nite	1998	<i>An Hua</i>	暗花	Johnnie To Kei-fung & Wai Ka-Fai
The Missing Cinderella	1959	<i>Jin Zhi Yu Ye</i>	金枝玉叶	Ng Wui
The Truth About Jane and Sam	1999	<i>Zhen Xin Hua</i>	真心话	Derek Yee Tung-Sing
Too Many Ways to Be Number One	1997	<i>Yi Ge Zi Tou De Dan Sheng</i>	一个字头的诞生	Wai Ka-Fai