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Abstract

In this research the criteria of the Chinese-language cinema evaluation used by the western cinema critics were analyzed through the value regime and binary opposition theories. It was argued that the criteria are referred with many different aspects in the four value regimes.

By researching the Chinese-language cinema criticisms of the recent ten years’ cinema journal “Senses of Cinema”, it was suggested that the techniques of filmmaking is considered importantly by the critics, the auteur or the filmmaker with the personal artistic style is one of the criteria, the complex plot and creative ending is requested for a good film, the film of Chinese culture is preferred by western critics, and they also have the specific preference for the genres. The critics think the awards, the attendance of international film festivals and the overseas distribution could give the extra value for Chinese cinemas.

Additionally, the research found out that the critics have used different criteria to evaluate the Chinese cinemas and the Classical Hollywood cinemas within the four value regiems.

**Key words:** Chinese-language cinema, criticism, criteria, genre, auteur, Classical Hollywood cinema
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Introduction

With the fast development of economy in China, western countries get more interest about China than before; westerners have the aspiration to know the Chinese history, culture and life style. Besides the television, newspapers, books and internet, Chinese language films also open a window for western countries to get known about China.

From 1980s, the western audiences started knowing and understanding mainland Chinese cinema, because the “reform and opening-up policy” was carried out in the end of 1970s in mainland China, the Chinese government increased the cultural communication with western countries, which gave the chance to Chinese films got the chance of going abroad.

With the growth of the Fifth Generation filmmakers, their films constantly stood out conspicuously on the international stages, which open up a new era for mainland Chinese cinema. In the year of 1985, as the representation of the Fifth Generation filmmaker, Chen Kaige’s film Yellow Earth (1985) got four international awards, which “proved to be the first of a series of spectacular achievements of the New Chinese.” (Zhang , 2002) After that, another Fifth Generation filmmaker Zhang Yimou, who is considered as the most creative and well-known filmmaker of the Fifth Generation, his first film Red Sorghum (1987) got the “Golden Bear” award of the 38th Berlin International Film Festival, and later his another two films Ju Dou (1990) and Raise the Red Lantern (1991) were nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at the 1990 Academy Awards and 1992 Academy Awards respectively.

The Fifth Generation Filmmakers experienced the Cultural Revolution, which made them had the new and deep cognition of the world and the life. On the other hand, they are influenced by the western film theories, based on the western cinema techniques, their filmmaking and film language are totally different from the traditional Chinese film; they are good at employing and using the allegory, symbol and metaphor to construct a new and multi-layered cinematographical language. Their films continually attracted the attention of western film world during the 1990s. (Xv, 2002)

Since the Fifth Generation filmmakers have gotten a great deal of recognition from international film world, the mainland Chinese films accelerate the pace for developing the communication with international film market. Entering into the 21st century, the international cultural structure has made a new change, with the economic globalization and the popularization of internet, the cultural communication between countries is getting closer; as the significant part of the cultural chain, the cinema also gets into the ear of globalization. In 2000, Chinese government carried out the supportive policy for promoting the international development of Chinese cinema, more and more Chinese films appear in the international film festivals and get the awards.
Compared with mainland Chinese cinema, Hong Kong cinema has an earlier development in international market, especially in Asian film market, since Hong Kong became the colony of U.K., then it took up the central place of the Southeast Asian economy, the Hong Kong cinema possessed the advantaged position at the beginning. In 1950s, the Hong Kong film industry has developed the business abroad, the representational company is “Shawbrother”, which has made the global strategy in 1960s, and it cooperated with the film companies of European countries and the United States. Moreover, from 1960s to 1970s, the film star Bruce Lee brought the Hong Kong Kungfu cinema into U.S. and the world, which settled the strong foundation for the development of Chinese Kong Fu cinema, and made a new way for the abroad communication of Hong Kong cinema. (Li, 2010)

After 1990s, there are more Hong Kong filmmakers active in international film world, and some great directors and actors started to develop their careers in Hollywood, such as John Woo, Jackie Chan, and Chow Yun-fat. From 1990s to early 2000s, the Hong Kong cinema has a decreasing tend, the box-office declined almost every year, but after 2000, the condition is becoming better. Hong Kong cinemas join in the international film festivals more frequently, and many directors are recognized by western people, such as Wong Kar-wai, Johnnie To and Stanley Kwan.

Unlike mainland Chinese cinema and Hong Kong cinema, Taiwan cinema’s theme is closely connected with its local culture, and the western people’s attention to Taiwan cinema generally originated from the Taiwan New Film Movement, in this movement, some filmmakers, including Edward Yang, Hou Hsiao-hsien, and Tsai Ming-liang, were recognized by western critics. These filmmakers changed the themes of traditional Taiwan film, they prefer the realism subject, and their themes generally focus on the national identity, nostalgia and Taiwan history. Moreover, the filmmakers’ particular personal style and the artistic aesthetic pursuit got the high evaluation from the western critics and many films have won the international awards. (Sun , 2004)

Moreover, Chinese Language films come into the sights of westerners through different channels, at the same time, which have become the study objects of western film scholars and critics. Western film scholars’ study of Chinese Language film began from 1950s, and after the relationship between China and America was established, some western and American scholars came to China, for example, the American professor Nick Brown and other American cinema scholars were invited to visiting China and giving a lecture, which was the first time that the film scholars from the two countries had the opportunity to communicate the film study. And then, after 1990s, more and more Chinese-language cinemas have been studied and criticized by the scholars and critics, from 1998 to 2008, the number of the articles about Chinese cinema study which have been published in western countries was more than three thousand; and many western cinema journals, such as “Screen”, “Sight and Sound”, “Cinema Journal” and “Senses of Cinema”, have published the Chinese-language cinema criticisms.
When Chinese language films are making effort to occupy a place in international market, it is valuable to study how do western people think about and evaluate Chinese language films, whether the cultural differences would influence their criticism. For this purpose, the analysis is concentrated on the criticisms of Chinese-language cinemas which are written by western critics, and the criteria that they use for evaluating the cinemas. Then the purposes of this research could be summarized as this:

a) Identify the criteria of Chinese-language cinema criticism used by western critics.

b) Analysis of the parts that criticisms place extra emphasis on.

c) Comparison of the criteria used by the criticism of Chinese-language cinema and classical Hollywood cinema.

In order to reach the purposes of this research, the criticisms of Chinese-language cinema have been set as the research samples, and the research choose the cinema journal “Senses of Cinema” as the source of the criticisms, by selecting out all the Chinese-language cinema reviews of the journals from 2001 to 2011.

“Senses of Cinema”: relevance of the research

“Senses of Cinema” is an online journal devoted to the serious and eclectic discussion of cinema.

“Senses of Cinema” is primarily concerned with ideas about particular films or bodies of work, but also with the regimes (ideological, economic and so forth) under which films are produced and viewed, and with the more abstract theoretical and philosophical issues raised by film study. As well, a cinephilic understanding of the moving image provides the necessary basis for a radical critique of other media and of the global “image culture”.

This journal is open to a range of critical approaches (auteurist, formalist, psychoanalytic, humanist…) and encourages contributors to experiment with different forms of writing (personal memoir, academic essay, journalistic report, poetic evocation…). It commissions and accepts articles from academics and journalists, internationally-known authorities and previously unpublished cinephiles alike; its only criteria are that they should shed new light on their subjects, and be informed by a broad knowledge and love of cinema. Likewise, the readership is a genuinely diverse group, bringing together people from a wide range of backgrounds, professions and interests but bound by a single common element: an informed, passionate and serious attitude toward cinema as an art.

The word “art” is generally employed in two senses, first, it means “simply skill”, which could be explained as “art of potter”, “art of dressmaking”, and there is no controversy to say that “the art of the film”. In another sense, it is used for presenting that “the art of music” and “the art of poetry”, and this means more than the technical skill (Lindgren, 1950). For the film, in this sense, people deny the film could be talked as the art at the
beginning time, but with the development of the film, more and more people accept the fact of “the film as an art”, like the poetry and painting. And Vachel Lindsay (1970) thinks that the film art is “a great high art”, and the films are the “great art museums of America”, “the departments of English, of the history of the drama, of the practice of art” and “the critical and literary world generally”. Moreover, Arnheim (1957) believes that “film art…follows the same age-old canons and principle as every other art”. To a large extent, the cinema is recognized as the Seventh Art.

The journal recognizes that an art as ephemeral and ethereal as cinema continues to fascinate, provoke, inspire, turn on, and evolve. Above all, it seeks to facilitate approaches to cinema that present new possibilities for exploring, experiencing and imagining the world we live in.

**Introduction of Research method**

This thesis takes the journal- Senses of Cinema> from 2000-2010 as the research objects, collects all the criticisms of Chinese-language cinemas and the articles about Hollywood cinemas which are written by the critics who also wrote the Chinese-language cinema criticisms.

Then, this research analyzes all the criticisms within the two theories which are used as the basic theory- artistic choices and value regimes scheme (Gielen, 2009) and fundamental semiotic square (Greimas, 1983). Under this theoretical frame, the criticisms can be analyzed systematically and the emphasis which is on the criteria of the Chinese language criticisms that are used by Western critics can be indicated at a rational angle.

The main research questions of this thesis are: What are the criteria for Western critics used in the Chinese-language cinema criticisms? Which parts are the emphases that critics take account of in the criticisms? Is there any difference between the criteria which the Western critics used in Chinese-language cinemas and classical Hollywood cinemas? The research starts with Chapter 1, which analyzes the necessary theoretical material, for making the current research clear and framed. Then Chapter 2 is the specific analysis of the criticisms within each value regime, and Chapter 3 compares the criticisms of Chinese-language cinema and Classical Hollywood cinema. In Chapter 4, the reader will get the suggestions for the international development of Chinese-language cinema.

Through this thesis, the terms cinema, film, movie, motion picture will be used interchangeably.
Chapter 1. Theoretical Approach

1.1 Pascal Gielen: Artistic Choices and Value Regimes scheme

Gielen, P. (2009) has researched the artistic choices through empirical analysis and qualitative research methods; this research focused on the dance arts and visual arts in Flanders. From the former research about the relationship of sociology and art filed, Nathalie Heinich argues that there is an “uncomfortable relationship” between these two disciplines, because of “the difference in orientation within value regimes”. Furthermore, there is another reason for this ‘uncomfortable relation’ between art and sociology, since sociology focuses on the theories of social class; it also concerns the topics of poverty, immigrants, gender etc. However, arts is always associated with upper classes, and it usually functions as status symbol; since several consumption goods have the same social functions as well, it would not make sense to research art world as a specific field.

Bourdieu- Collective regime
French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has discussed the social influences of art world in his several studies; the value of artworks could be derived from the social interaction or transactions between artists, critics, and media and so on. Then according to his sociological point of view, Gielen explains that:

“Artistic artifacts are evaluated within a collective regime of positional games, struggles for power and a search for distinction or symbolic profit and the social arena is bound together by a shared belief in art.”

Heinich- Singular regime
Heinich (1996) studies the singular regime of the art world, which she argues that previously the artistic quality was evaluated through the validated system of a uniform standard with normal art works, and there were the collective rules for determining the position of artist. But after the rise of modernism, this stable system of rules was abandoned, and the artists who made arts abnormally and exceptionally got more respects. The collective rules were not important anymore and breaking the rules meant a new rule, which gave the birth of the singular regime.

The studies of these French scholars clearly define the two notions which are related to two observational choices, and the opposition of these two regimes gives the significant theoretical basis for Gielen’s studies of artistic selections.

These two different sociological opinions of Bourdieu and Heinich interpret that the artistic processes of discussion are indicated both within a collective and singular value regime. In the collective regime, artifact and artist are evaluated by a relational context, but in the singular regime, their distinction and unique of artwork and artist are regarded as important. The value of artifacts and artists should be considered both in the singular regime and collective regime, and these two value regimes depend upon the background
of temporality and spatiality.

**Content and context logic**

With the progression of empirical research, there is another important distinction, which impacts artistic selections, to be interpreted: the distinction between content and context. For the term of content, the work of art itself and the artistic representation is referred; on the other side, for the context, the performance of artist and the method for them to introduce their art works are referred. Moreover, the institutional context of museums, theatres is also seen as context.

Distinction between context and content logic is very significant for understanding the selection and forms of artistic argumentation, and the evaluation of arts also should be proceeded both with content logic (colors, shapes, style and narrative structure, and the relation with other artifacts) and context logic (social position of the artist, institution which organize the exhibitions and performances, the mass media that report or criticize it).

And then, Gielen combines the logic of content and context with the singular and collective regime, what can be drawn up is “an interpretative frame containing the four value regimes with which artistic selections can be analyzed”. And there are at least three differences from each other: (i) “their different focus or referee”, (ii) “the different argumentation forms which are used to legitimize the artistic selection”, and (iii) “the different time dimensions which underpin the argumentation”.

The four value regimes are:

i) **a singular content logic:** with this singular content logic, people pay more attention to the work of art itself, and “the internal consistency of a work from a non-historical point of view”.

ii) **a singular context logic:** in this regime, the artist is the central point or argumentation form, “the consistency of the argumentation is buttressed by the artistic belief or the morals that the artist himself brings to the fore”. And the historical dimension should be considered for the singular context logic, “the artistic biography of the artist can also be very persuasive”.

iii) **a collective content logic:** within this value regime, other works of art are referred to, and the artistic conventions and the history of art are taken account of.

iv) **a collective context logic:** in the collective context logic, social referents are considered more than any other points. “It is not important what someone creates, it is important where he or she presents it”. “Also the position an artist occupies is important”.

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By using this theory, the arguments and viewpoints of cinema critics could be divided into that four value regime, which makes the analysis more clear and systematic. Furthermore, with this theory, it also could be known that which regime is emphasized by the criticism.

### 1.2 A. J. Greimas: Fundamental Semiotic Square

The French linguist and semiotician A. J. Greimas established the theory “structural semantics” as a scientific method to analyse the discourse based on the structure of text and take the semes as the minimal units of signification. According to Greimas (1983), the definition of the concept of structure is “the presence of two terms and the relationship between them”. And then, he also indicated that:

1. “One object-term alone does not carry any signification.”
2. “Signification presupposes the existence of the relationship: it is appearance of the relationship between the terms that is the condition necessary for signification.”

For comparing and distinguishing between two semes, it is necessary to make sure they are comparable, which means “their opposition is located on one and the same axis”, with the same axis, the opposition could present itself as two extreme poles. Greimas calls this axis as “semantic axis”, and it has “the function of subsuming and totalizing the articulations that are inherent in it”.

If we decide to set the semantic axis S as the relationship of content in the semic articulations, there will be two contrary semes at the level of the form of the content, which can be interpreted as S₁ and S₂:

\[
S_1 \sim S_2
\]

and these two semes could “indicate the existence of their contradictory terms” through be taken separately:

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<tr>
<th>Content Logic</th>
<th>Singular Regime</th>
<th>Collective Regime</th>
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<td>Focus:</td>
<td>Focus:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Artefact</td>
<td>Artistic Referents</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Argumentation form:</td>
<td>Argumentation form:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Internal consistency</td>
<td>Artistic conventions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Time dimension:</td>
<td>Time dimension:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Non-historical</td>
<td>History of art</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context Logic</th>
<th>Singular Regime</th>
<th>Collective Regime</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus:</td>
<td>Focus:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Social referents</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Argumentation form:</td>
<td>Argumentation form:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Auto-normativity</td>
<td>Social conventions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Time dimension:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Artistic biography</td>
<td>Positional trajectory</td>
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</tbody>
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To take into account the form of the content and simple semic terms, there is a formulation can be given, “it appears then as the correlation of two categories of opposites, the correlation itself being defined as a relation of homologized contradictions”:

\[
\overline{S}_1 \langle \cdots \rangle \overline{S}_2
\]

This formulation gives a clear expression about “what is first of all the structure permitting an account of mode of existence of the meaning”, and it is a constitutional model of the invested contents (Greimas & Rastier, 1968).

With the relationship of binary opposition, the deep structure of all texts could be constituted, and to construct a text as an integral structure equals to the reorganization of its constituent pairs of binary opposites (Greimas, 1990). Moreover, what is important is not the existence of binary opposites, but the “relations” already existing within them (Greimas & Rastier, 1968). Moreover,

With this theory, the structure of the texts could be analyzed, and the important contrary semes in the sentences and paragraphs could be found out for getting the points of view that those critics expressed in their articles, which makes out the information about what are the factors for good cinema or bad cinema.
Chapter 2. Analysis of Chinese-language cinema Criticism within the Theory System

According to the Gielen’s Artistic Value Regimes, all the cinema criticisms are analyzed within the four value regimes, the points of these criticisms are classified into different regimes by their features; for example, the visual effects which is referred in a criticism should be analyzed in singular content logic, because it belongs to the content of artwork itself.

2.1 Singular Content Logic

Since within singular content logic, the art work itself is paid more attention, for cinema, the discussion of the cinema itself and all the elements that construct the cinema, such as the image, the editing, the acting, the visual effects and the music, in the criticisms is a very important research objects in this logic. All of these could be concerned with filmmaking techniques, which means in this regime, the technique or tactic of filmmaking is the central theme.

The cinema transmits its theme, information, and thought through the form of moving images and sounds to the audiences, and these are also the basic elements that construct the cinema medium. The cinema provide a technical support for the discovery and gradual perfection of a new art; on the other side, the cinema can be seen as a visual art to a certain extent. The external goal of the cinema is to reproduce a movement in a visual manner in its total period: it does not reproduce the single image which disappears immediately, such as painting or photograph; it integrates it and follows it in the evolution (Dulac, 1925). For many cinema critics, the concept of mise-en-scène is an important point to be paid attention to, and it can reflect the artistic and technical quality of the cinema. The mise-en-scène is also the element of the cinema that makes it distinct from other narrative forms; moreover, it can explicate how the narrative event is generated by images, through the composition, the camera movement, the focus, the colour and the light (Kolker, 2000). The spectators watch and understand the cinema through the mise-en-scène and their own previous knowledge and memory.

The subject, mood and emotion of cinema are the main information for the cinema to transmit, in most cases, they are conveyed by the story and narrative, but the mise-en-scène takes upon part of the tasks. As Leibowitz (1991) explains, the cinema is not only a narrative, but also a pictorial narrative. The story is told by “means of the ordered sequence pictures”, and the mood of the cinema is not only expressed by the narrative line, but is also decided by the pictorialization of the cinema.

A lot of criticisms of Chinese-language cinemas in “Senses of Cinema” have talked about
the diverse techniques that directors use for creating and exaggerating the mood or the emotion, and strengthening the theme of the cinemas.

2.1.1 Discussion of Lighting

Firstly, the utilization of light is discussed by many critics in the critiques, since the light is the fundamental and necessary element for constituting the cinematographic images (Bettetini, 1973), the basic function of lighting is illuminating the subject, but when the cameraman or director control the lighting for achieving the lighting effects for the cinema, the lighting could be given more meanings than that (Lindgren, 1950). The cameraman or the director usually depict and mould the subject, create the impression of spatial depth, express the emotional mood and atmosphere, and reproduce some certain dramatic effects, through using the lights(Lindgren, 1950).

The criticism of the cinema Song of the Exile (Ann Hui, 1990) refers the framing and lighting of the cinema the author Yue thinks that “Space is represented through tight framing and dark lighting, signifying the claustrophobia that reflects the liminality of Hong Kong postcoloniality and the impossibility of a return to an original homeland.” Another cinema of Hou Hsiao-hsien, The Puppetmaster (1993), using the lighting tactic to strengthen the mood of nostalgia; Schumann, who writes its criticism, indicates that “In this film, using dark interior shots with light coming only from the ceiling, Hou creates an abiding mood of nostalgia”. Through the analysis of the criticisms, there is another one involves the theme of nostalgia which expressed by the lighting effects; Jie Li talks about Jiang Wen’s In the Heat of the Sun (1994) in “From Auto-ethnography: Representations of the Past in Contemporary Chinese Cinema” : “The interior shots of the film are often awash in the celestial, dreamy light of the sun streaming in through the windows. It is this light, which gives a brilliant aura to everything, that gave this film the power to awaken nostalgia even in those who had not lived through the Cultural Revolution”. Louise Sheedy also discusses the lighting effect of Tsui Hark’s cinema- Zu: Warriors from the Magic Mountain (1983); for this film, “The complex wirework so central to wuxia body-effects was miraculously kept virtually out of sight by the use of meticulous lighting and set design and without the assistance of wire-removal post-production technology.” Thus it shows that lighting has been seen as a powerful tool for making and changing moods and feelings by some Chinese directors (Grodal, 2005), and this way of disposing the cinematographic images is emphasized by the cinema critics in their articles.

2.1.2 Discussion of Camerawork

Secondly, the technique of the cinema’s shot and camerawork is a point in the criticisms. The shot is the photographic record of the camera, which is made when the film is exposed to light; it is the first element of the two basic building-blocks of the film, then the film is finished by combining the shot and cut in a structure (Kolker, 2000). The
composition of a shot is decided by plentiful factors, Kolker (2000) divides them into three main heads: first, “the form or movement of the subject itself; secondly, the position or movement of the camera in relation to the subject; thirdly, the way in which the subject is lit”. The directors create the images which they want to show to spectators by controlling the subjects and the camera. When they control the camera to achieve their intention of creation, there are two main factors for determining the character of picture in the frame, which are the distance between the camera and the subject and the viewpoint. By changing the distance from camera to subject or the lens length, the pictures or the scenes would give the spectators different senses, and the visual effects of the images also will be changed. Howard Schumann talks about the way in which Hou Hsiao-hsien use the shot in the criticism of *The Puppetmaster* (1993), “The film intersperses Li’s narration with examples of performances and theatre, including Peking Opera, musical skits, puppetry and propaganda plays written for the Japanese. Hou utilizes long static shots to convey the experience of distance, as if the viewer is watching a theatrical performance from the audience. In the words of author Yvonne Ng, ‘It is as if he is reluctant to intrude into the personal space of the characters, preferring to observe their actions as one would in daily interaction with others, from a socially acceptable distance’”. Then Edward Yang’s work *Yi Yi* (2000), which is criticized by George Wu as this: “Keeping the camera at a distance, Yang lets us decide what to focus on. He does not force drama or importance on us and, at the end, we cherish what we’ve seen all the more because we feel that we have actively chosen what to consider.” And another critique of Wong Kar-wai’s film *In the Mood for Love* (2000) written by Carla Marcantonio, also discusses the shot technique, “The camera often remains at a remove from the action, watching from a distance, as if from behind a windowpane. The camera rarely enters into the frame; rather, it remains still, as if hidden behind objects, or tracks back and forth from side to side, as if condemned to remain on the other side of an invisible threshold: that past it can indeed see but not enter.”

Fiona A. Villella, in the criticism of Tsai Ming-Liang’s *The River* (1997), talks about the using of shot, “Almost never shot in close-up, Tsai observes them in mid-shot or wide-shot without cutting the scene, placing his characters at a distance and telescoping their silent, minute actions against the backdrop of a larger environment. It’s a style that exacerbates the sense of being confined and entrapped by one’s environment- a condition that Tsai suggests is specifically a result of modern city life.” Li Jie discusses the using of long shot in Jia Zhangke’s *Platform* (2000) as well, “As in Hou Hsiao-hsien’s historical epics, the long shots in Platform often serve to reduce the potential drama of scene, which forces the audience to pay closer attention to what is happening in the scene”.

The four critical paragraphs all talks about the effect and the function of long shot, which could make the camera out of the frame, show the scene more objectively. Moreover, when the directors aim to assign a particular function to the film, they would use the long shot to provide the spectators amount of information, which could be relevant when they study the relations between the object and its surroundings (Salmon & Snow, 1968).
Except for the utilization of long shot, the criticisms also focus on other techniques of camerawork or cinematography, which could strengthen the expression of the theme, the depiction of character, and the effect of vision. Acquarello talks about the camerawork in the criticism of Fruit Chan’s film *Made in Hong Kong* (1997), “Chan’s audacious and resourceful camerawork exploits the natural, frenetic rhythm of city life to create an atmosphere of disorientation and insignificance that, in turn, reflects the nihilism and despair of the young, disaffected protagonists”. This critique reflects that the effort and refinement of camerawork will bring the special effect and be helpful for the cinema narrative.

In the criticism of the cinema *Beijing Bicycle* (2001), which is directed by Wang Xiaoshuai, Elizabeth Wright points out how Wang unfold one theme of the cinema by using the skillful technique of camerawork: “Wang’s exploration of a city divided between modernity and tradition is effective without offering jarring juxtapositions of old versus new. The camera’s smooth transition between different parts (old and new) of Beijing reflects the city’s interchangeable flavor”.

David Cairns explains the way of cinematography for Tsui Hark used for representing the background of the cinema *Shanghai Blues* (1984): “Tsui abuses the starburst filter and soft-focus at every opportunity, and there are some charming old-school special effects used for war scenes and to create a vision of Shanghai’s past”.

### 2.1.3 Discussion of Visual Effects

In addition to those, the techniques for creating other visual effects are emphasized by the cinema critics when they are processing the analysis of the Chinese-language cinemas on the aesthetic aspect. The use of colour has been mentioned in several critiques, since colour is an important element regarded by directors in the process of shooting and developing. The colour is not the necessary element for constructing the cinema images or completing the cinema narrative; before the emergence of colour cinema, the black and white one is also competent to the responsibility of narrative and expression of the director’s thought. However, if the director wants to get to some special visual effects and make the cinema more splendid or dynamic, the colour will play a significant role in it (Bettetini, 1973).

Louise Sheedy states the function of colour in Tsui Hark’s film *Zu: Warriors from the Magic Mountain* (1983), “colour is an essential component of Zu’s visual narrative and is used in a spectacular calculated and stylized manner to symbolize the conflicts on screen”. This statement shows the critic’s praise to the great design of colour in this film. In the criticism of *Infernal Affairs* (2002), Charles Leary thinks that the using of colour in this film catches a lot of attentions, “The soothing blue-green colour scheme is apparent in such images as the rooftop scenes with a rich blue sky in the background, Ming’s shirts, and even Sam’s mobile phone. These soothing colours are one of the film’s most appealing features, suturing the spectator as effectively as a classical Hollywood
The criticism of *In the Mood for Love* (2000) refers the visual aspects of the film, “Indeed, the texture, color, and composition of the images – more than the narrative of its ill-fated love affair – are what invite multiple viewings of this film”; and Stephen Teo also comments this point of his criticism about this film, “Added to all this is Wong’s dense-looking mise en scène that combines the acting, art direction, cinematography, the colours, the wardrobe, the music, into an aesthetic if also impressionistic blend of chamber drama and miniature soap opera. Wong’s key elements – what older critics might call ‘atmosphere’ and ‘characterizations’ – are thus grounded in abstraction rather than plot, and it’s hard to think of a recent movie that offers just such abstract ingredients that are by themselves sufficient reasons to see the picture”.

Furthermore, the settings and interior space in the mise en scène are commented by Stephen Teo; he talks about that by criticizing King Hu’s film *The Fate of Lee Khan* (1973), “the antics of Wendy and her female associates make up an exhilarating first half of the film. The action is situated entirely in the interior set of the Spring Inn where the girls wait upon customers, a gallery of colourful rogues and clown-like characters. This may well be the best section of *The Fate of Lee Khan*, showing Hu’s mastery of mise en scène and his artful use of interior space (as a true auteur, Hu not only directed his pictures but also acted as production designer, editor and costume designer.)”.

### 2.1.4 Discussion of Music

In the early silent cinema time, the music was used in the filmmaking, which was considered as a very important element in a cinema. In the present days, the filmmakers take the film music more seriously; since the concordant and good music has much functions for the films. In some films or scenes that reflect the particular historical time and spaces, the music can help the audiences recalling the passage of that history, Copland (1949) has identified the functions of music for the films, and the first one is that music has the ability of creating a “more convincing atmosphere of time and place”. Moreover, music has the referential and signifying properties that can locate the films in a specific time and space, and the composer and lecturer David Burnand referred to the time and place of the film, during his speaking in 1998 at the first “School of Sound”, one of the four crucial functions of film music is that it can help the filmmaker evoke a historic period (Butler, 2006). However, in order to make the music work with the recalling function and guide the audiences into the certain atmosphere, the film has to demand a musical code which is familiar for the audiences and create the emotional link in a sufficient number of audiences (Butler, 2006).

In the journals for this research, many cinema critics have talked about the effect of film music in some Chinese Language films, especially the nostalgia or history films. Howard Schumann critiques Hou Hsiao-hsien’s film *The Puppetmaster* (1993), “as *The Puppetmaster* begins, traditional Chinese music is heard and the narration establishes a historical context”. And in another criticism written by Jie Li, “From Auto-ethnography to
Autobiography: Representations of the Past in Contemporary Chinese Cinema”, there is a specialized section for discussing the music and performances in the films. Jie Li indicates the effects that the Chinese music used in the Fifth Generation films and other two films, “while both of the Fifth Generation films use ‘Chinese music’ as their theme songs, the directors of In the Heat of the Sun and Platform have opted for a score that cannot be recognized as ‘sinicized’ in anyway, and as such they are more abstract, conveying less of a message than a mood. According to Jiang Wen, the pastoral score for In the Heat of the Sun, which serves as a leitmotif for the appearance of Xiaojun’s beloved girl Mi Lan (Jing Ning), has its origins in Pietro Mascagni’s opera, Cavalleria Rusticana, and ‘music remembered from the Cultural Revolution’. The theme music in Platform, on the other hand, is much more sad and desolate, contributing to the characters’ litost, ‘which means at once sympathy, grief, remorse and undefinable longing”.

The music is used very frequently in Zhang Yimou’s film To Live (1994), since the story of this film experiences the different historical eras. Jie Li indicates that “as mentioned earlier, each ‘era’ in To Live begins with the most popular music of its time and serves as one item in the multimedia reification of an era”. And in Jia Zhangke’s film Platform (2000), the music also functions as the guide to evoke audiences’ memory of that period. Like the comment of Li, “in this paradoxical, transitional era where paens to Chairman Mao co-existed with Teresa Teng’s syrupy love songs, the values of all the characters in the film undergo major changes, even – or especially – older authority figures such as Minliang’s father and Lao Xu, the pre-privatisation leader of the song-and-dance troupe”. Then Li mentions that the role of “theme music” plays in these films, “in some ways, the song “Platform” has a very similar status in this film as Fugui’s shadow puppet opera in To Live or, for that matter, the Peking Opera after which Farewell My Concubine is named. In all three instances, it is the song through which the film’s protagonists articulate their innermost feelings to a wider audience”.

For Wong Kar-wai’s film In the Mood for Love (2000), Stephen Teo talks about the elements that Wong has used in the film to recall the scenes in 1960s, include the music of the period, “In Wong’s hands, the genre itself and the period of the ’60s is a stage of transfigured time that isn't fixed diachronically. His ’60s happens to coalesce around other synchronic recollections of the memorabilia of earlier periods (such as the ’40s or the ’50s), through the evocations of popular culture as a whole that largely recalls the glories of Shanghai: in music (citing the songs of Zhou Xuan, for example), in fashion (the cheongsam), novels (the martial arts serials that Tony Leung writes with input from Maggie, that recall the methods of the “old school” writers of martial arts fiction in ’30s and ’40s Shanghai), and the cinema (the unstated allusion to Spring in a Small City)”.

Another function of music in the film is that it can enhance the perceptions of the audiences when they watch the films, give them a much better enjoyment on appreciating, and make them have the mood swings. There have been a great many research demonstrated that the attendance of film music has the function of effecting the emotion
perceiving of the film scene (e.g., Boltz, 2001; Krumhansl & Schenck, 1997; Kendall & Lipscomb, 1994; Thayer & Levenson, 1983). For most films, the music usually appears in the important scenes or the climax. Music is played at the same time with a specific part of a film, which can not only make effects on highlighting the significance of the scene, but also stressing the emotional meaning of the represented activities (Boltz, 2001). Music has the ability to convey the mood of a film, a sense of energy, and “the overall perspective or message intended by the director, as related to characters and on-screen events” (Lipscomb & Tolchinsky, 2005). The comfortable relationship between music and film reflects on the accentuating the mood of the music or highlighting the emotional influence of the visual scene. Film music is capable to draw the audiences’ attention to a scene and impact their emotions. In addition, the film music can produce a corollary effect on audiences’ memory, which means that the scenes with music can be remembered more easily than those with no music (Similarly, Boltz, Schulkind, & Kantra, 1991).

In the criticism of Hou Hsiao-hsien’s film *The Boys from Fengkuei* (101), Kevin Lee refers the utilization of classical music in the film, “uncharacteristically for Hou, there’s a liberal use of classical music in this film, which seems clichéd by Western ‘serious movie’ standards but in a Taiwanese context may help distance the viewer from the story in a way that aids Hou’s purpose of contemplating and commemorating the way of life depicted on-screen”. This critique indicates that the music can convey the purpose of the director and cause the audience to think deeply about the scenes. Then David Neo talks about the folk songs of the film *Red Sorghum* (Zhang Yimou, 1987), “The closing images of mud-covered naked bodies and swaying wild sorghum – with folk songs sung as tributes to Jiu’er and the primal beating of the drum – tell us that the characters’ survival and the survival of the Chinese people depend on their ability to shake off the shackles of repression of Chinese culture and return to grass roots”.

Moreover, music in film has the capability of conveying narrative structure and the “messages about where in the frame the audiences should focus on attention” (Lipscomb & Tolchinsky, 2004). As it mentioned before, the film music can make the audiences remember much more deeply, so the music can help the filmmaker to create the foreshadowing in the narrative of films, which make the film narrative more attractive and not quite surprising. Hou Hsiao-hsien has used this function of music in his film *Flowers of Shanghai* (1998), as the critics Colin Burnett referred, “Jasmin makes important appearances in the first and third, the latter of which is particularly interesting because of the presence of (diegetic) opera music on the soundtrack. Earlier in the film, it had been mentioned that Jasmin was fond of opera. Intriguingly, the music of the third banquet seems to echo into the proceeding segment, not aurally but in the form of influencing Master Wang’s erratic behaviour”.

### 2.1.5 Analysis by Greimas’s fundamental semiotic formula

The previous expound of the critical points in the singular content logic have emphasized
on the importance of cinema techniques, such as the lighting, the camerawork, and the visual effect. From the criticisms of the Chinese-language cinemas, the rational use of the techniques in the filmmaking can be considered as the criterion for judging a film, for a good cinema, it is quite important to use the effective techniques, which can help the cinema conveying the idea and emotion. Like the critic Audrey Yue makes the comment on the techniques of Ann Hui’s film 
*Song of the Exile* (1990), “space is represented through tight framing and dark lighting, signifying the claustrophobia that reflects the liminality of Hong Kong postcoloniality and the impossibility of a return to an original homeland.” According to Greimas’s binary opposition theory, within this value regime, the technical effect or quality is the semantic axis, and the two ends of this axis are the effective techniques versus ineffective techniques, corresponding to the good cinemas and bad cinemas, which could be depicted as this,

\[
\begin{array}{c}	ext{Good cinemas} \\ \approx \\ \text{Effective techniques} \\ \text{Bad cinemas} \\ \approx \\ \text{Ineffective techniques}
\end{array}
\]

On the lighting aspect, the effective lighting tactic can highlight the theme, and render the atmosphere and the mood; moreover, it even can make the audiences be infected by the mood and bring them into the world that created by the cinema. For instance, in the criticism of Jiang Wen’s film *In the Heat of the Sun* (1994), the critic Jie Li points out the use of lighting in this film, which could be seen as an effective lighting, “the interior shots of the film are often awash in the celestial, dreamy light of the sun streaming in through the windows. It is this light, which gives a brilliant aura to everything that gave this film the power to awaken nostalgia even in those who had not lived through the Cultural Revolution.” The excellent lighting technique can be seen as a component of a good cinema. However, if the lighting in a cinema does not play the role of this effect, just provide the illumination or shaping the spaces; from this point, this cinema cannot be named a good cinema. Then the criterion for critiquing the cinema could be states on this formula,

\[
\begin{array}{c}	ext{Good cinema} \\ \approx \\ \text{Effective lighting} \\ \text{Bad cinema} \\ \approx \\ \text{Ineffective lighting}
\end{array}
\]

As another important cinema technique, camerawork’s effectiveness also is a criterion for critics to judge a cinema. The good camerawork can help the directors to achieve their purpose or the effect that they want, and it also can ensure the coherence of the narrative also avoid the logic confusion. In the criticisms of Chines Language cinemas, there are many praises of the long shot used by many filmmakers, since the long shot has the function of framing a very objective picture for the realism cinemas. The long shot is just one of the various camerawork skills, no matter what camerawork used in the cinema, it should be logical and corresponded with the theme of the cinema. For example, the camerawork of Edward Yang’s film *Yi Yi* (2000) is seen as a good one for achieving the intention of the director by the critic George Wu, “Keeping the camera at a distance, Yang lets us decide what to focus on. He does not force drama or importance on us and, at the end, we cherish what we’ve seen all the more because we feel that we have actively chosen what to consider.” A good cinema has to possess the high-quality camerawork. On
contrary, the camerawork of the bad cinema, are those useless for narrative, or illogical that make the audiences misunderstand the scenes. With this aspect, the binary opposition formula can be expanded like this,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Good cinema} & \approx \text{Effective techniques} \\
\text{Bad cinema} & \approx \text{Ineffective techniques}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Effective lighting} & \approx \text{Ineffective lighting} \\
\text{High-quality camerawork} & \approx \text{Low-quality camerawork}
\end{align*}
\]

Like the lighting and camerawork, visual effect is a significant technique as well; the refined visual effect can promote the quality of the images, increase the artistic beauty of the cinema, and make the cinema more dynamic. A good cinema has to elaborately design the visual effect to fit its theme and mood. Take the criticism of Hong Kong film *Infernal Affairs* (2000) as the example, Charles Leary explains the remarkable visual effect of this film, that “the soothing blue-green colour scheme is apparent in such images as the rooftop scenes with a rich blue sky in the background, Ming’s shirts, and even Sam’s mobile phone. These soothing colors are one of the film most appealing features, suturing the spectator as effectively as a classical Hollywood narrative.” According to the binary opposition theory, if the visual effect of a cinema is too plain, or go to another extreme – too much or excessive, this cinema cannot be considered as a cinema of superior quality. When the critic Charles Leary comments Tsui Hark’s film *Legend of Zu* in the criticism of *Infernal Affairs* (Wai-keung Lau & Alan Mak, 2002), he indicates, “Recent examples in Hong Kong include the attempt by one of the industry’s most noted director-producers, Tsui Hark, to recapture the magic of his groundbreaking *Zu: Warriors of Magic Mountain* (2001). An intense marketing campaign promoted the film, but at the box-office it proved an utter failure. Essentially shot with actors against a blue-screen, the film contains an overload of special effects that hardly compare with the brilliant wirework of the original, which revitalized and revolutionized the martial arts genre”. The formula then could become like this,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Good cinema} & \approx \text{Effective techniques} \\
\text{Bad cinema} & \approx \text{Ineffective techniques}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Effective lighting} & \approx \text{Ineffective lighting} \\
\text{High-quality camerawork} & \approx \text{Low-quality camerawork}
\end{align*}
\]

In the cinema technique category, the film music should not be neglected, because the music in the film plays an important role in highlighting the mood, expressing the emotion. Some of the critics of the journal think that the music in some Chinese-language cinemas helps to show the historical background of the cinemas, and it may recall the part of the audiences’ memories to that period, and fan the flame of the emotion in audiences. Beyond that, the music can contribute to the cinema’s narrative structure. For instance, the critic Kevin Lee indicates that Hou Hsiao-hsien’s film “uncharacteristically for Hou, there’s liberal use of classical music in this film, which seems clichéd by Western ‘serious movie’ standards but in a Taiwanese context may help distance the viewer from the story in a way that aids Hou’s purpose of contemplating and commemorating the way of life depicted on-screen.” Therefore, the effective music is necessary for a good cinema. On
the contrary, if the music cannot harmony with the cinema or has no conjunction point with the theme, it can be seen as the ineffective film music, and become a redundant accessory that may ruin the total quality of the cinema. Without the good music, the cinema hardly can be considered as the successive one. Thus the former formula develops as this,

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c}
\text{Good cinema} & \text{Effective techniques} & \text{Effective lighting} \\
\text{Bad cinema} & \text{Ineffective techniques} & \text{Ineffective lighting} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c}
\text{High – quality camerawork} & \text{Good visual effect} \\
\text{Low – quality camerawork} & \text{Bad visual effect} \\
\text{Good film music} & \text{Bad film music} \\
\end{array}
\]

### 2.2 Singular Context Logic

In singular context logic, the artist is considered as a criterion for criticizing, the personal style and artistic experiences will influence the critics’ evaluation of art works. Although the cinema is a sort of art work, it is quite distinct with other ones, because it is produced by more than one people; in the early time, there is not a certain answer for the question: who is the real author of a cinema? The French cinema world thought the director was the core of the cinema, but the American cinema world believed that the producer played the most significant role in the cinema.

French cinema director Francois Truffaut presented the “auteur theory” at the earliest time in his article “A certain tendency of French Cinema”, which was published in the January 1954 issue of Cahiers du Cinéma, a major French cinema journal founded in 1951. He attacked the “tradition of quality” in French cinemas, which believed the literate films were the best ones; and he advocated that there should be more alternative cinemas and more personal directors who could write their own scripts as well. He thought that the cinema directors who can insist the consistent features of themes and styles are the authors of the cinemas. (Truffaut, 1954) This theory raised the dispute about who is the author of the cinema in Hollywood, since the producers seized the dominant status in Hollywood, but after the debate, many Hollywood directors got their auteur positions, such as Alfred Hitchcock, Otto Preminger, and Howard Hawks.

Then the American cinema critic Andrew Sarris talked about the auteur theory in 1962, he offers a controversial theoretical framework for the auteur theory, which is summarized as “three concentric circles”: the first circle is the outer circle as technique, which means the technical competence of a director as criterion of value, like Sarris saying, “a great director has to be at least a good director”; the second one is the middle circle, the personal circle, which sets the distinguishable personality of the director as a criterion of value, Sarris believes, “over a group of films, a director must exhibit certain recurring characteristics of style, which serve as his signature”; the third circle is the inner circle, which is the ultimate glory of the cinema as an art, it refers the interior meaning that is extrapolated from the tension between a director’s personality and his material. (Sarris,
In 1970s, the criticism and cultural theory developed more aware of and concerned with issues of ideology, the concept of the author got a change from the romanticism of classic auteurism to a more rigorous and “scientific” consideration of the film text (Grant, 2008). More cinema critics and scholars joined in the discussion of “auteur theory”, such as Jean-Luc Godard, Roland Barthes, John Caughie, Peter Wollen and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith.

Auteurism encourages the filmmakers and directors expressing their own personal idea, in the process of film making, they do not have to merely transfer the work of some else, but can bravely transform the material into the cinemas of their own personality. Behind a film, the director is the authorial personality suggests a concept of structure: “interconnection of visuals from film to film, and hence, interconnection of ideas and feelings” (Flynn, 1970). Moreover, Perkins (1972) believes that “a good film is necessarily an expression of one man's vision, a communication from the director to his audience, only if we can demonstrate a difference in kind and effect between the personal film and the factory movie.”

The theory of auteurism makes people think about the cinema more seriously, do not consider it merely in the entertainment anymore; and the film studies beyond its literary meaning to a consideration of the cinema’s visual qualities. Furthermore, through the auteurism, the critics shifted the focus from story to style, from content to form, and they realized that the form was crucial in shaping content. Additionally, the auteurism helps the critics grouping and evaluating films according to directors, they can put more attention to the individual achievements instead of an unjustifiable anonymity (Grant, 2008). With the auteur theory, the critics have occupied a descriptive and interpretative method for evoking representative qualities (Kites, 1969). And then, the visual style and cinematic devices of a director can be identified, described and analyzed; most directors have a consistency of style from film to film, regardless of whether they are consciously aware of it or not (Flynn, 1971). Therefore, the style of the director, the tactics frequently-used by the director are usually concerned in the cinema criticisms, whether there is any progress or regression in the director’s film could be analyzed by comparing the former works.

In addition to that, the auteur theory normally has a connection with genre films, many directors have a correlation with a certain genre, like Alfred Hitchcock and Suspense Film, John Ford and the Western, Preston Sturges and Comedy, King Hu and the wuxia (martial chivalry) films, which gives the chance to audiences to appreciate the genre films with the guide of directors. The style and mis-en-scène of the director, his understanding and explanation of the genre provide the audiences with a window of opportunity to engage the genre with his/her auteuristic specificity, which points out that the distinct qualities that an auteur passes to genre films. (Teo, 2007)
2.2.1 Hou Hsiao-hsien

Many of the criticisms that are studied for this research analyze the style of the directors, and some directors usually give deep impression to the critics and the audiences because of their unique style and personal way of making films. And with the auteurism theory, the critiques of the Chinese-language cinemas can show the multiplex criterion, not merely the content, the culture and the technique aspects. Hou Hsiao-hsien, the director of Taiwan, has the quite strong personal style on making films, and he is also one of the most famous directors in Taiwan, and the representational director in the Taiwan New Film Movement. He is good at narrating the history by using the cinematic language, with the poetic narration style, and the structure of the narration is uniquely prosaic (Wong, 2008).

Kevin Lee talks about the narrative style of Hou Hsiao-hsien in the criticism of The Boys from Fengkuei (1983), he thinks that “Hou’s manner of storytelling has a disorienting effect for the viewer, if only to reorient them squarely in a way of viewing that prioritises the unmitigated experience of the moment above narrative preoccupations”. Lee criticizes Hou’s storytelling in another critique, The Time to Live and the Time to Die (1986), “his sense of storytelling and rhythm is so off-kilter in its subdued manner that it is hard for us to engage”. Moreover, the montage and the shots that usually used by Hou also are commented by Lee in the critique of The Boys from Fengkue, he thinks that the film “opens with an extended montage of ‘Hou Hsiao-hsien moments’ that unravel like a gentle breeze, yet in their casual accumulation map the film’s rural setting with stunning clarity. A series of affectionately composed establishing shots of the seaside town elides into a shot of an unidentified game being played by children, followed by a long shot of a boy being pushed to the ground by a gang of ruffians”.

Furthermore, the long shot, sequence shot and establishing shot are the symbolic camerawork of Hou, he used them in almost all his films, and they could be offered as the proof that “Hou is indeed a film-author” (Vitali, 2008). The sequence shot theory is a very important cinematic theory of Andre Bazin, he stands that the realism cinemas should give up the montage combination of fragments, and use the long-take and the depth of focus to show the scenes of the simultaneity and continuity in a persistent frame (Henderson, 1971). But Hou is not a realistic director, he carefully makes the world that he has imagined and reacted into a stage, a theatre; and his frames could be seen as a kind of diagram to chart and analyze the forces of society and history “as they compete, clash and fall in and out of the dominating position” (Martin, 2008). Howard Schumann also refers the long shots of Hou in the critique The Puppetmaster, “Hou utilizes long static shots to convey the experience of distance, as if the viewer is watching a theatrical performance from the audience”; and he discusses the aesthetic of Hou’s films, “Hou’s films, like a Chinese painting, are deliberately designed to incorporate the aesthetic of ‘liu-pai’ (opening the mind to what is not shown on screen)”.
2.2.2 Tsai Ming-liang

Another representational director of the Taiwan New Film Movement, Tsai Ming-Liang, is famous by his cult cinema style. His work *The River* is criticized by Fiona A. Villella in the journal, and Villella indicates that “The cornerstone of Tsai's style is minimalism and ellipsis, We observe different characters individually in their surroundings, as they go about their daily duties, and only gradually do we learn the connection between them”. She also refers the aesthetic of Tsai Ming-liang, “what is remarkable about Tsai's aesthetic is his uncluttered, finely honed emphasis on the characters themselves, and the way that almost every frame is dominated by their physical actions or sheer presence, usually carried out in silence”; and the utilization of shots is concerned, “Almost never shot in close-up, Tsai observes them in mid-shot or wide-shot without cutting the scene, placing his characters at a distance and telescoping their silent, minute actions against the backdrop of a larger environment”. Tsai explains his style in an interview, as he says, “This way of thinking also comes from my own observations of life. There are so many things that are happening around us; wherever you look, it's so funny and so absurd. So I think it is a very honest reflection of what life is—a mixture of absurdities and sad things.”

By relating to the consistent style of Tsai, the critics could understand Tsai’s film better and give a deeper critique.

2.2.3 Wong Kar-wai

The Hong Kong cinema director, Wong Kar-wai is also a very unique director who has his own personal aesthetic and style. The criticisms of his films usually cannot avoid using the auteurism to analyze his style. Wong is good at melodrama and he usually makes it with more features of literature and arts.

Stephen Teo praises Wong’s special style of the melodrama genre in the criticism of *In the Mood for Love*, “the elements of nostalgia and melodrama that play on our feelings are Wong’s way of paying tribute to a period and to a genre”, and Teo discusses the meaning of melodrama (known in Chinese as wenyi pian), which “is traditionally more akin to soap opera – a form that assumes classic expression in the ‘60s with the rise of Mandarin pictures from both Hong Kong and Taiwan”, but “the terminology ‘wenyi’ is an abbreviation of wenxue (literature) and yishu (art), thus conferring on the melodrama genre the distinctions of being a literary and civilized form. Wong seizes on the literary or ‘civilized’ antecedence of the genre to water down the soap opera tendencies that were characteristic of ‘60s melodramas”.

In addition to the genre, Teo analyze the visual motif of Wong Kar-wai, the nostalgia and mood evoking visual motifs “are the obvious affirmations of Wong’s style, denoting his preoccupations with time and space; much more significant, all of these visual

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1 Interview with Tsai Ming-liang Shelly Kraicer
configurations is Wong Kar-wai’s predilections for covering his ground with literary references”, and “Wong’s literary sensibility makes him unique among modern-day directors who would probably not have conceived of an ending whose spirit is basically literary in nature, embedded in storytelling and myth”. In another Wong’s film critique 2046: A Matter of Time, A Labour of Love, Teo refers the tactic about genre of Wong again, “Wong’s tactic has always been to appropriate the genres of the mainstream cinema and to subject them to his subjective narrative mode that ultimately subverts genre”. With this consideration, In the Mood of Love and 2046 could be critiqued at another angle, and be seen as not only a normal melodrama, but a romantic story with the poetical mood and emotion.

2.2.4 Fruit Chan

Fruit Chan, a filmmaker from Hong Kong, has made a lot of impressive films with strong personal style. Christoph Huber points out the features of Chan’s filmmaking style, “His films don’t stay with you as a whole, rather what remains are a handful of outrageous images, disorientingly intimate observations and jaw-dropping set-pieces. Attached to these threads is a nebulous, seductive entity, an overwhelming sense of instantly processed reality, as promising, irritating and aimless as reality itself” and “his movies are nervous, edgy, uneasy, polyphonic, but they rarely take the time to show off their creator’s undeniable skill, they’re much too busy registering a world-in-turmoil, constantly pushed forward by their protagonist’s desires”.

Furthermore, the motif that preferred by Fruit Chan is analyzed by Acquarello in the criticism of his film Made in Hong Kong (1997), Acquarello thinks that “The portrait of fractured, dispossessed families also proves to be a recurring motif in Fruit Chan’s subsequent films”, and he gives the examples of his subsequence films, “Little Cheung (Yuet-Ming Yiu) pines for a missing older brother disowned by the family after discovering his involvement with organized crime in Little Cheung (1999). Fan’s (Wai-Fan Mak) family abandons their humble and bucolic life in Shenzhen province in mainland China in order to be united with their father in Hong Kong, eking out a marginal existence as illegal immigrants in search of a better life after the post-colonial handover in Durian Durian (2000). The maternal longing of the morbidly overweight roast pork merchants, the Chu family, metastasizes into a dysfunctional, anthropomorphic affection towards their pampered, prized breeding pig, Mama, in the absurd comic fantasy, Hollywood Hong Kong (2001)”. Fruit Chan’s films are dominated by tragedy, which are quite different from most of the Hong Kong films, and also make him develop his own film world; his films give Hong Kong film a reflective spirit, exploring the tragic feature of Chan’s films could provide the guiding effect on researching Hong Kong tragedy films (Wang, 2006).

Because the dominant status of the director in a cinema has been approved, some “ambitious” directors have the desire to express their personal ideas and emotions in the
films; sometimes they have the freedom to crate their works, without forced to accept the requests of their Hollywood counterpart (Bordwell, 2002). The filmmakers who could be seen as the auteur normally are well known for enjoying artistic control over their own films, such as Eisenstein, Renoir, and Welles. The auteur’s film has very close connection with art cinemas, like Bordwell (2002) writes, “the art cinema foregrounds the author as a structure in the film’s system”, in the art films, the auteur is a formal component, the audiences’ comprehension is organized by the auteur’s overriding intelligence (Bordwell, 2002). The Chinese-language cinema directors, who have been referred above, such as Hou Hsiao-hsien, Wong Kar-wai and Tsai Ming-liang, are famed for their artistic cinematic style, and they are regarded as the art cinema directors by critics and audiences, their film works are always discussed at home and abroad.

However, some Hong Kong commercial cinema directors are equally seen as the “auteur”, such as John Woo, Tsui Hark and Johnnie To; since they have very special ways to create their film works, besides the narration, the audiences can find out that there are the personal artistic devices in the films. They use the art techniques to make popular commercial genre films, like action film, wuxia film and gangster film.

### 2.2.5 Johnnie To

Johnnie To is one of the most famous commercial cinema director in Hong Kong, his gangster films are quite popular in Asia as well as in some western countries, four of his cinemas have been critiqued in the recent ten years’ Senses of Cinema. To has been criticized by David Bordwell (2006) as “the most versatile talent” in Hong Kong commercial film with “the strongest track record since John Woo and Tsui Hark”.

In the criticism of To’s film *Running out of Time* (1999), David Sanjek points out that To’s particular preference on narrative and character shaping, as he writes, “To can wring more interesting variations out of established generic parameters than a Shanghai chef can create virtually innumerable strands of noodles from a single pile of dough. He particularly likes to toy with the doppelganger motif, playing off characters as well as performers for maximum exhilaration”. Then, Stephen Teo indicates To’s creative way of disposing the genre in the critique of the film *The Mission* (1999), “To's approach to genre is innovative, allowing the script elements to develop within the pattern of the genre, but seeking variations within this pattern. This approach allows To to accommodate a certain experimental style in an otherwise commercial form. Teo (2007) has considered To’s films as the “art action film” – “the action genre fused with the art film”, and he thinks that “To’s action films are more like are films in the vein of Jean-Pierre Melville rather than James Cameron”; the art action film makes To as the auteur of action films. Because of such a particular style, To’s films have attracted so many attentions of critics and mass media.
2.2.6 Tsui Hark

Another well-known Hong Kong commercial film director Tsui Hark is also the one with distinct personal style, as Lisa Morton (2001) evaluates, “If Tsui Hark’s career as trendsetting commercial filmmaker has been intriguing, then his work as a personal filmmaker has been positively mind-blowing”. In the critique of Tsui’s film *Time and Tide* (2000), Stephen Teo thinks that “Tsui was always something of a *bête noire*”, and “Hong Kong critics often describe him as possessing a ‘devil's talent’ (*gui cai*)”.

About the style of Tsui’s filmmaking, David Cairns has given some comments in the criticism of the film *Shanghai Blues* (1984), he indicates that “with a mastery of swooping shaky-cam, snappy montages and rapid-fire performances, Tsui’s oeuvre is far from consistent in quality, but his profligate productivity and boundless energy are worthy of awe”. Teo also talks about Tsui’s inclination of film image in the critique of *Time and Tide*, as he writes, Tsui “risks overextending himself and becoming overbearing with his images; he is a provocateur with images, and he treats them in a highly symbolic way”; “Tsui loves cutting it to the bone, but the symbolism is all too evident: birth amidst death, hope amidst destruction, renewal after apocalypse, and so forth. It is utterly audacious, and Tsui carries it off with panache on both levels of absurdity and drama”.

Tsui’s narrative structure is referred in Teo’s comment as well, “his narrative structure, which is always much too complex and too convoluted for synoptic minds and once-only viewers, but admirably rich for formalists and structuralists. His narratives usually lend themselves to rich allegorical readings, and Tsui can be a very skillful allegorist when he wants to be”. For his significantly particular film techniques and personal style, Tsui’s films are very impressive for the audiences and critics domestic and overseas, although most of them are the commercial films.

2.2.7 Analysis by Greimas’s fundamental semiotic formula

Within the singular context logic regime, the principal arguments concentrate in the cinema director or the author of the cinema. The filmmaking device and the personal style of the filmmakers are the emphasized by the critics. According to the previous research to the Chines language cinema criticisms in the journals, the art cinema directors’ films get more favors from the critics, such as Hou Hsiao-hsien and Wong Kar-wai. Then with the Greimas’s binary opposition theory, the contrast of the art cinema director – the Non-art cinema director, generally is less attractive for the western critics. In most cases, the non-art cinema could be seen as the commercial cinema; equally, the non-art cinema director is the commercial cinema director.

The commercial cinemas are quite different from the art cinemas: they have the specific producing mode, and depend on the interesting story, the exaggerated digital effects or the
visual shock to attract audiences. And compare with the director, the actors and actresses in the commercial cinemas are more important; normally the leading roles of the cinemas are acted by the famous actors and actresses, or even the super stars, which has become a very significant factor for the success of the box-office. In the criticism of the Hong Kong high concept cinema *Infernal Affairs*, the critics Charles Leavy does not refer the directors, instead of it, he talks about the actors Tony Leung and Andy Lau, and another Hong Kong film stars within a long paragraph, “The first indication to moviegoers that here is a film guaranteed to give you your money’s worth is the abundance of stars, including one actor probably familiar to Western art-house audiences, Tony Leung of Wong Kar-wai’s *In the Mood for Love* (2000) and Zhang Yimou’s *Hero* (2002)… Andy Lau, undeniably Hong Kong’s biggest male star today, plays Leung’s opposite, a gangster named Ming who is sent to the police academy as a young man and comes to serve as the triad’s best mole. Shawn Yue and Edison Chen, two of Hong Kong’s hottest young male stars, play small roles as the teenage Ming and Yan in the opening flashback. Eric Tsang, star of many of Peter Chan’s films, plays the triad boss Sam. Anthony Wong, an experienced character actor famous for his offbeat roles…Sammi Cheng, Hong Kong’s highest paid female star, has two brief scenes as Ming’s fiancée…Pop star Kelly Chen, Hong Kong’s ‘queen of dance music,’ also stars as Yan’s psychiatrist’. These film stars have more awareness than the two directors, and they have become the reason for some audiences to watch the film.

Furthermore, the commercial cinema director seldom present their own thoughts and emotion, they just use the necessary techniques to achieve the narrative; the audiences can hardly find out their personal style or some unique artistic tactics. There are not so many commercial cinema directors’ works criticized in the journals, just two people: Tsui Hark and Johnnie To. Thus it can be seen that for the Chinese-language cinema, between the art cinema director and the non-art one, the western critics are inclined to the former one. In summarize, it could be depicted with Greimas’s semiotic formula,

\[
\frac{\text{Good cinema}}{\text{Bad cinema}} \approx \frac{\text{Art cinema director}}{\text{Non-art cinema director}}
\]

Besides the “art versus non-art” opposition, the Chinese-language cinema directors who have the personal art style can get more attention from the western critics than those without personal style. In the recent ten years’ “Senses of Cinema”, most of the criticisms are the film works of this kind of directors, even though the commercial cinema directors Tsui Hark and Johnnie To, because of their personal particular style, many of their films are critiqued by the critics, and their artistic style has been referred. However, the director or filmmaker who has no special personal style has little opportunity to make the influence on the critics.

The present Chinese-language cinema directors who have been well known in the western world, almost all because of their unique personal style, and their film works also have been stuck their personal brands, which could easily draw the attention of the critics. Such
as the Hong Kong filmmaker Wong Kar-wai, who is one of the most famous Chinese-language cinema director for western people; the critic Stephen Teo points out the style of Wong, that “the nostalgia and mood evoking visual motifs are the obvious affirmations of Wong’s style, denoting his preoccupations with time and space; much more significant, all of these visual configurations is Wong Kar-wai’s predilections for covering his ground with literary references,” and “Wong’s literary sensibility makes him unique among modern-day directors who would probably not have conceived of an ending whose spirit is basically literary in nature, embedded in storytelling and myth.” On the other hand, the influence of Chinese-language cinemas in the western world cannot compare with the American films, normally it is very difficult for general directors get the concern and reputation from the critics, so they have to own their personal impressive artistic style. Through this analysis, another binary opposition formula can be illustrated within this value regime,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Good cinema} & \approx \text{Art cinema director} \\
\text{Bad cinema} & \approx \text{Non-art cinema director} \\
\text{Director with personal artistic style} & \approx \text{Director without personal artistic style}
\end{align*}
\]

2.3 Collective Content

In collective content regime, the other works of art are considered, and the artistic conventions also would make the impact on the artworks. For the criticism of cinema, the narrative, the artistic style and genre are the factors which would be taken account of by the critics in this regime.

2.3.1 Discussion of Cinema Narrative

Although the early cinema appeared as a kind of performative spectacle, which is called “cinema of attractions” by Gunning (1995), and he suggests that this cinema was the main film form during the first decade (1895-1906) of the new medium, the narrative cinema dominates the current mainstream cinema market. The narrative cinema developed in the end of 19th century, some producers made the multishot narrative cinemas with the subjects of a fire rescue of the Spanish-American war (Cook, 1996). And the narrative cinema got a rapid development with the film works produced by French filmmaker George Méliès, who was the first narrative artist for cinema. He made hundreds of narrative films and created many important cinema techniques for producing narrative cinemas, such as the fade-in, the fade-out, the overlapping, dissolves and stop-motion photography (Cook, 1996). Méliès exploited the potential fascination of cinema on narrative, and gave the storytelling one more medium, and in fact, the film has a close connection with drama, which is suggested by Armes (1994): “film is a form of drama”. Therefore, how to narrate the story attractively in the cinema, what devices should be used during making the cinema are the questions for filmmakers to figure out; and then the discussion of cinema narration becomes a part of cinema criticisms.
In several criticisms of Chinese-language cinemas, the critics referred the form of narrative and the plot which construct the story in a certain temporal order and with specific spatial reference (Rowe, 1999). In the critique of *Time and Tide* (Tsui Hark, 2000), the author Stephen Teo (2001) talks about the narrative of this film, which is “too complex and too convoluted for synoptic minds and once-only viewers, but admirably rich for formalists and structuralists”; another cinema critical article about Tsui’s film – *Once Upon a Time in China* by Gonzalez (2010) indicates that the key themes of this film are expressed by the complexity of its multi-layered plot.

The plot of cinema offers the logic for narrative, and arranges the narrative components, like the events of story and the states of affairs on a basis of the particular principles (Bordwell, 1985). Furthermore, there are all the specific strategies for intriguing the interest of spectators in the plot; and the plot is the unique and permanent enactment of stories, which also composes one of the direct sources of aesthetic enjoyment in a cinema (Armes, 1994). The tasks of plot which are providing information, implicating hypotheses, and so on, have to be performed by a series of film techniques, and the stylistic system is controlled by the plot system, which means that the plot system takes up the dominant position.

There are quite a lot of different types of cinema plot, and the effects they make are various, generally the normal commercial cinemas take the simple way to make plot and with a close end, which could be anticipate by spectators. These films take the visual effects as the importance, and pursue giving the audiences the sensory stimulation, rather than arracting them by plot. However, the measure for a great many narrative cinemas to win their spectators’ favor is the meticulous plan of plot. The two critiques of Tsui Hark’s films from “Senses of Cinema” point out that the complex plot or narrative structure makes the special effect for the cinemas. Teo thinks that the narrative of Tsui’s film - *Time and Tide* (2000) contains a plentiful allegorical readings, except the major story of the cinema, there is another meaning concealed in the plot, which is a metaphor in the story. In the article *Once Upon Time in China* Gonzalez argues that the complex and multi-layered plot of this cinema makes spectators and critics have more points for discussing the significant themes of it; for this cinema, the entertainment function exists simultaneously with the cultural and historical satire.

The themes of cinemas normally unfold through the narrative and plot, as Peter Brooks (Peter, 1984) refires in his book, “the design and intention of narrative, what shapes a story and gives it a certain direction or intent of meaning”, with the narrative, spectators would construct their own understanding about the story or the meaning of the cinmeas. What kind of the design of narrative is good for transmitting the intention of narrator or director accurately? As the criticisms of Tsui Hark’s films, the complex plot or multi-layered plot is helpful for expressing more than one theme of the cinema.
2.3.2 Analysis by Greimas’s semiotic formula

For a narrative cinema, the former analysis has shown that the complex narrative plot has more attraction for the cinema critics, which can be seen as a significant requirement for a good cinema. According to the binary opposition theory, the simple plot does not have enough ability to draw the interest of the critics, since the information that the simple plot provides is so limited that can hardly get the audiences to think. By contrast, the complex plot often expresses more than one theme, which could make the audiences spend more time to conjecture the director’s intention, meanwhile give them a very deep impression for the cinema. Therefore, the plot can be used as a criterion for judging a narrative cinema, and an outstanding cinema normally needs a complex and high-quality plot of narrative. At this point, this relation can be illustrated by the Greimas’s semiotic formula like this,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Good cinema} & \approx \text{Complex plot} \\
\text{Bad cinema} & \approx \text{Simple plot}
\end{align*}
\]

2.3.3 Discussion of Ending

The story, despite in the literature or the cinema, contains three main parts: the beginning, the development and the end, which construct the whole text. For the narrative cinema, ending a text is a crucial part of building a narrative as well as the opening one (Neupert, 1995). And there is another function for the end in the narrative, which gives the chance for the narrative system be elaborated (Vernet, 1988). Sometimes, the end and the way of ending influenced the entire quality of the cinema, an elaborated end could perfect the cinema; on the other side, a weak end will ruin the whole cinema.

The ends of the cinema are quite different, and Neupert (1995) classified it to four sorts of end, they are closed text film, open story film, open discourse film and open text film. The closed text films have the resolved stories, and the narrative modes originate from classical traditions; this kind of film is the mainstream style in the market, and has been proved as the commercially successful ones. The open story films contain a finished narrative discourse as the closed text films, but the stories of them are partially unresolved and incomplete. The open story films try to break the conventional fictional films, and to establish a new and more vibrant relation with real experience. The third one— the open discourse films have the resolved stories but an open narrative discourse. There is no codified closure strategies used in the films, and no narrative termination effect is established. Then the fourth one—the open text films involve the unsolved stories and the incomplete closure of the narrative discourse. The open text films demand more cinema and literary strategies to achieve the goal, and the films have to consider the relations between the story and narrative discourse, as Neupert (1995) indicates, “Within open text films, therefore, the story line is less resolved and the narrative discourse is more contradictory and heterogeneous”. 
Some of the criticisms of the Chinese-language cinemas take account of the cinema ending as the critical content, Stephen Teo talks about the ending of The Mission (1999), which is directed by Hong Kong director, Johnnie To. “According to To, he had not told the actors what the ending would be, and this allowed the actors to throw themselves into the scene and brought out the details, and this no doubt contributed to the success of the final twist in the script, which retains an element of surprise right down to the last minute.” This description of the criticism praises To’s ending technique in The Mission, this way of dealing with the end of the cinema is so creative that make the audiences feel astonished and give the script an almost perfect annotation.

2.3.4 Analysis by Greimas’s semiotic formula

What could be explained by Greimas’s binary opposition theory, the opposite of the creative or open ending which has gotten the critics’ approbation is the prosaic or close ending. The quality of the cinema’s narrative can be impacted by its ending, a creative ending will put a perfect end for the cinema, but the poor ending will give the audiences the feeling of disappointment. The criticism of Infernal Affairs (2002) written by Charles Leary has referred the ending of the cinema, the author thinks that the ending of Infernal Affairs is too mediocre —“by the time you make it through the back-and-forth plot twists, you’re thankful for the entertainment but feel a bit empty, not really knowing where you’ve been, especially with the rather business-as-usual ending”. For Leary, this ending is not brilliant, although there are the plot twists in the cinema, the “business-as-usual” and uncreative ending makes audiences “feel a bit empty”. The cinema ending as one of the criteria for judging cinemas under this analysis could be depicted within the Greimas’s semiotic formula like this,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Good cinema} & \approx \text{Complex plot} \approx \text{Creative or open ending} \\
\text{Bad cinema} & \approx \text{Simple plot} \approx \text{Prosaic or close ending}
\end{align*}
\]

2.3.5 Discussion of the Theme

The value of cinema not only presents at the art and technology, its cultural value, its influence of spectators’ value and world view of cinema are also one of the functions of the cinema. The cinema is a kind of product in the cultural market; on the other hand, as other art forms, the cinema is the vehicle of ideology. The filmmakers express their own understanding of world signification through the creation of cinemas, and make the spectators identify with some shared values. Although the ideology can use the imaginary scenes to replace the reality, the ideology has the effect of constructing the value. By dynamically reappearing the scenes, the art works can impact the people’s opinions subtly; but the direct propagandizing and inculcate only will deprive the imaginary relations of reality, and ruin the taste of art.

Most of the cinema criticisms criticize and analyze the central motif of the cinema, the
social and cultural phenomenon that the cinema reflects and its ideological function, which is the cultural study of cinema. Chinese cinemas, for western audiences and critics, have the unique eastern elements and many differences on culture. In the critiques which are written by the western critics, their preference and emphasis could be seen, what subject is of their interest, what cultural phenomenon is criticized most by them could be found out as well. There are a lot of themes of Chinese cinemas have been referred in the samples of this research.

**Nostalgia Cinema**

In the early modern period, the idea of nostalgia was closely connected with homesickness, since the European Industrial Revolution initiated a large-scale migration and colonial expansion, and nostalgia was seen as a main emotional state of melancholy rapidly pervaded the boom cities and colonists (Jiang, 2010). Nowadays, the idea of nostalgia is very different from that in the early time of modernity. In that time, nostalgia is taken account for yearning for a physical home, which could be considered as the movement from one geographical location to another; while for today, it does not concern the space, the aspect of time has been paid attention, which means longing for the past (Jiang, 2010). The nostalgia was studied in the cultural critiques from the rise of postmodern cultural pluralism and mass culture, and it was the leading motif of classical sociology and Frankfort School (Stauth & Turner, 1988). At present, nostalgia is utilized as a subject or an emotional clue in many art forms, such as the literature, the film and the music.

As one of the very important parts of the popular culture, the cinema acts as the quite useful medium for the creators to express their nostalgic motif or emotion. Jameson thinks that in the nostalgia cinemas, the return of past forms represent especially apparently, the definition of nostalgia in the dictionary is “longing for experiences, things, or acquaintanceships belonging to the past” (Dika, 2003). However, for Jameson, instead of a representation of a specific historical period, nostalgia in postmodern film is a recreation of its cultural artifacts (Jameson, 1998). Pam Cook (2005) explains there is an effect of the nostalgia cinema, which is to shorten the distance between spectators and the past, and make the audience be the witness to reconstruct events, which is a sort of second-hand evidence. These histories in the postmodern time create memories which have an influential emotional affect by relying on empathy and identification. Nostalgia is not a strategy for art or literature, or a private style either, but a cultural experience which is on the basis of public consciousness. (Jiang, 2000) Because it has to be acknowledged that the past has gone perpetually, there will be a quite powerful sense of loss in nostalgia meetings; nostalgia makes a work on a gap between symbols of the past and the real past circumstances, and the desire of filling up the gap and regaining the lost things and senses (Cook, 2005).

In many times, the nostalgia cinema is probably considered as the imitation of the past pictures, which shows the appearances of old days. People’s past life has been imitated by the cinema, and the cinema also reactive their collective memories of the past by a visual...
form (Jiang, 2000). And Cook (2005) also indicates the ability of nostalgia cinema on reanimating the spectators’ recollection, “The nostalgic film, even in its most apparently innocent manifestations, has the potential to reflect upon its own mechanisms, and to encourage reflection in audiences”.

In the 1980s, China started to enter the age of market economy, and because of the policy of reformation and opening, the Western culture continually influences Chinese culture. The postmodernity, which originated from western countries, permeates the Chinese culture. In the end of the 1980s, with the development of commercial economy and the advance of the science and technology, the department of the cultural producing was beginning to commercialization, and the intellectual products become the commodities into the market as the material products. The image culture shows the more powerful influence and competitiveness than the literate culture, and because it is restricted by the advertising effectiveness, the cinema and television, as the main part of image culture, has a much closer connection with commercial profit. In addition to that, during the transition of the ten years’ historic period, the Chinese intellectuals have got some misgivings about the empty humanitarianism ideal and the naïve sense of historic mission, and their view of life and conviction both have the apparent changes; the unfailing political passion of Chinese masses, beginning from the 20th century, finally ebbs away, they do not neither try to identify the world which they are in from the cultural products, nor to share their common political dream or political unconsciousness. (Ying, 1994) Chinese cinemas become more commercialization and entertainment, and there are less and less main theme movies which serve for politics distributed in the market; the directors are getting more inclined to express themselves. At this time, the nostalgia cinema begins to be an important motif in Chinese cinema. The Chinese nostalgia cinemas often are connected with some certain historic events or periods, which have made a long and deep impact for some Chinese people.

The Chinese nostalgia cinemas substantially advent in the early period of 1990s, and during the twenty years, there are two waves of Chinese nostalgia films. The first one happened in the early 1990s, and some films directed by some fifth generation directors are the representations of the nostalgia cinemas, like Chen Kaige’s *Farewell My Concubine* (1993), *Blue Kite* (Tian Zhuangzhuang, 1994), and Zhang Yimou’s *To Live*, (1994). Then the second wave emerged in the early 21st century, and the sixth generation directors become the main force to create the nostalgia films, their works have gotten many attentions both in China and in western countries, such as *Shanghai Dreams* (Wang Xiaoshuai, 2005), Zhang Yang’s *Sunflower* (2005), Gu Changwei’s *Peacock* (2004), and Zhang Jiarui’s *The Road* (2006). Moreover, the cinema critics have discussed some Chinese nostalgia cinemas in the journal “Senses of Cinema”. Jie Li talks about four Chinese nostalgia films in his article “From Auto-ethnography to Autobiography: Representations of the Past in Contemporary Chinese Cinema”, two of the films represent the fifth generation directors, and others are the works of sixth generation directors. He refers Zhang Yimou’s work *To Live* (1994), which tells the story of a family’s “changing (mis)fortunes from the 1940s to the 1970s. Li indicates that “The scenes that follow,
however, could be readily identified by audiences somewhat familiar with Chinese history as the Great Leap Forward of 1958 and the Cultural Revolution of 1966. In other words, the spans of entire historical decades are here reduced to single dramatic, spectacular moments”; in addition, he make an emphasis on talking about how Zhang Yimou deal with the Cultural Revolution in the film, “Zhang Yimou has added to Yu Hua’s original novel a wedding ceremony that incorporates all the “excessive and absurd rituals and customs” of that era: a pile of wedding presents consisting entirely of Mao’s Portraits and Collected Works, the green army uniform with Mao badges as wedding clothes, singing revolutionary songs as celebration and pledging revolutionary loyalty as marriage vows. The wedding culminates in the taking of a family photograph with four people holding little red books in their loyalty pose in a cardboard ship with Mao as the Great Helmsman.” For another fifth generation director’s work, Farewell My Concubine, Li explains the differences way of representing the past time between it and To Live, “Compared to To Live, Farewell My Concubine is much more self-conscious and philosophical about its treatment of historical time”, and “It is not until the end of the film, when we return to the opening, that we find out the historical time of this scene: 1977. The film can be read – or deliberately poses itself – as a revolt of private temporalities against historical time”.

The Culture Revolution element also is used in Jiang Wen’s film In the Heat of the Sun, this film sets the Culture Revolution period as the narrative time background. “Chairman Mao was no longer holding parades and the Red Guards had already been sent down to the countryside. The boys featured in the film, offspring of PLA cadres, are too young to have been Red Guards and have thus never acted on the centre-stage of “revolutionary history.” Furthermore, Li quotes Yomi Braester’s analysis of the film, “these youngsters ‘readily rehash phrases, tunes, gestures, and icons from the Cultural Revolution. MaoSpeak, having once made tragic history, reappears as farce, and as much gains a critical edge.’” The other one- Platform (Jia Zhangke, 2000), the story of which begins in 1979 when the policy of reformation and opening was just carried out, and Li analyzes the normal but also special youngsters in the film, “the film is set in Jia Zhangke’s hometown, Fenyang, a county town in Shanxi Province, a place so marginal that the twenty-year-olds of the itinerant song-and-dance troupe had never even seen a train, much less ride in one. They could only imagine what a train looks and sounds like from watching movies, and in the darkness of a night bus, they form a chorus in imitation of a train’s wheels, engine, and whistle. ‘The train is especially significant for us who live in landlocked isolated places,’ said Zhangke in an interview with Stephen Teo. ‘We can’t see the sea and we are ignorant about the outside world. [...] The train stands for hope and the future.’ The train in the song ‘Train Heading for Shaoshan’ had also once stood for hope and the future, but in 1979 that dream was already fraying at the edges, if not dissolved altogether.”

Then Li talks about the differences of themes in those nostalgia films, “while Jiang tries to make a film about a young man’s coming of age, Jia grapples with the theme of home, homesickness, and the return to origins: ‘I feel that going home is only one process in
human behaviour. In following the process of growing up and coming of age, human spirituality returns to the starting point.' Both seek to make films in a more general humanist tradition and not so much in the “spectacular China” mode of Fifth Generation films.” And he gives the point of the two sixth generation directors about their nostalgic emotion, “both directors, in fact, are motivated by nostalgia for the lost world of their adolescence to re-create in their films the world and history they themselves have lived through, and both have reiterated in interviews that they had put much emotion into these films”.

Besides the mainland Chinese nostalgia cinemas, the Hong Kong and Taiwan nostalgia films are discussed by the critics as well. But the criticisms mainly focus on two directors’ works, the Hong Kong director Wong Kar-wai and the Taiwan director Hou Haisien. The nostalgia cinema of Hong Kong boomed in the late 1980s, within a short period, it rapidly became a quite popular genre in filmmaking and film marketing; it also turned out to be the one of the major postmodern culture forms of 1980s and 1990s Hong Kong. Wong Kar-wai’s work In the Mood for Love (2000) is a significant cinema for the nostalgia cinema of Hong Kong. In the recent ten years’ “Senses of Cinema”, the cinema critics Stephen Teo and Carla Marcantonio both make the criticisms for this cinema. In Teo’s opinion, what does Wong Kar-wai do in the cinema, is “to butter up his audience for two or three levels of mood play: a mood for love, to begin with; but even more substantially, a mood for nostalgia, and a mood for melodrama.” And Teo indicates that Wong’s preference to 1960s, “Wong's interest in the genre is not so much narrative as associative. For instance, he equates the melodrama with the '60s, a period that for the director, yields manifold allusions to memory, time, and place. ‘I was born in Shanghai and moved to Hong Kong the year I was five (i.e. around 1963). For me it was a very memorable time. In those days, the housing problems were such that you'd have two or three families living under the same roof, and they'd have to share the kitchen and toilets, even their privacy. I wanted to make a film about those days and I wanted to go back to that period.’ Wong says.”

Moreover, Teo analyzes how the film influences the audiences’ memories, “In watching the film unfold, the audience itself is partaking in a ritual in transfigured time, and each member of the audience, depending on their ages, could in theory go as far back in time as they wish to the moment that holds the most formative nostalgic significance for them.” Meanwhile, Marcantonio also refers the topic of memory of this film, “Mistiming is, for Wong, also at the heart of history, and this film, unlike his others, takes up the topic of memory, of how history is remembered and recalled. 1962, the date for the beginning of this narrative, coincides with the year that Wong arrived in Hong Kong as a child from Shanghai. In the Mood for Love is thus both a work of memory and about memory – about the ways in which memory can hold the past in perfect stillness, like a photograph that might blur around the edges or a picture that can be composed and re-composed, at times painstakingly embellished, over time.”

In 1980s, there was cinema movement which was called “Taiwan New Wave” happened
in Taiwan, and the world well known directors Hou Hiao-hsien and Edward Young are the predominantly representations. Hou Hiao-hsien’s works are also the representations of nostalgia cinema of Taiwan, according to Kaldis (2005), Hou is good at turning the “literature of nostalgia” into a cinematic form, and he can do it in any narrative content, transfer the reference to external context, and “recycle barely distinguishable scenes, setting, and characters”. Hou’s nostalgia films are also discussed frequently in the ten year’s “Senses of Cinema”.

In the criticism of Puppetmaster (1993), Howard Schumann introduces the main content of this film, which “recounts the life of puppeteer Li Tien-lu from the time of his birth to his adult years, a life span roughly paralleling the years of Japanese occupation”. And Schumann points out the meaning of the film for the people who have experienced that time and the traditional culture which has lost, “presented as a series of personal events rather than as historical tableaux, the film dramatises both the fate of the Taiwanese people and the personal hardships of the characters, capturing the traditions that have been lost as a result of the Japanese occupation and the impact of Western values. In an interview Hou has stated that in this film he is ‘exploring the values of traditional culture which we have lost…. We have distanced ourselves from nature and man has become like a puppet – he has lost his power to be his own master. The Puppetmaster….represents the lament which I feel for the loss of our culture.’”

Another cinema of Hou Hiao-hsien, The Boys from Fengkuei (1983), is seen as a special nostalgia film, because the context of the narration is the contemporary Taiwan. Kevin Lee gives his opinion about it in the criticism, “looking at his films set in contemporary Taiwan, the opposite effect seems to occur: there’s a sense of experiencing the present as if filtered through contemplative memory. A look at The Boys from Fengkuei presents an opportunity to explain the uniqueness in which he historicises the present.” For Lee, some images of this film build an atmosphere of memory or nostalgia, in the criticism, he suggests, “there are so many beautiful visuals here that burn into the memory: a man sitting placidly on a front porch with an enormous dent in his forehead; the boys doing an impromptu dance in front of waves crashing majestically against a breakwater; a close-up of a pen drawing zigzag lines around a bug that’s been pressed into the pages of a notebook”, and “these images all have a self-contained clarity to them, where the profundness of the image in and of itself precedes its function in advancing the narrative. It resembles the uncanny qualities of childhood memory”. Lee explains the nostalgic function of Hou Hsiao-hsien’s films in the criticism of The Time to Live and the Time to Die (1986), “to watch a Hou movie is to be confronted with one’s abilities to bear witness to one’s memories, not merely as a distant object to be contemplated or commemorated, but as a past life relived with present day immediacy”; and he uses his own experience to states the influence of this film for memory, he watched the movie with his mother, when the end scenes show up, his mother sighs and says that his uncle was just like that, then he finds that the movie becomes real to him at that moment. He realizes, “at last, one is left with the feeling of what it’s like to stand in their family’s house years later, awash in so many years of memories, and realise that those moments and the people who inhabited
them, whether alive or dead, are gone forever, save in one’s memory. All of this may amount to more of the same “personal issues” that detract from a truly objective cinematic appreciation of this film, but the fact remains that for me, this movie was then, and is now, not just cinema as living memory, but memory as living cinema. It is my hope that it will live for you too.”

**Analysis by Greimas’s semiotic formula**
The previous research has indicated that a lot of the Chinese-language cinemas which are criticized by the western critics have a layer of nostalgia theme, whether the mainland Chinese cinemas, Hong Kong cinemas or Taiwan cinemas. Some particular historical periods have the special meaning for Chinese audiences; they have the nostalgia complex about the past time, they can review that period of time by watching films. Then the western audiences and the critics will get the information about Chinese history, society and culture. For Chinese-language cinema filmmakers, the “nostalgia” is a theme that is familiar to them, and many filmmakers have the nostalgia complex in themselves, and they have much inspiration and ideas to produce the cinemas. Therefore, the Chinese nostalgia cinema is the kind that is not difficult for western critics to give high evaluation. The cinema shows the future world, which is the opposite of the nostalgia cinema, has not been involved in Chinese-language cinema world very much and there is even not a representation for this theme. Although in the recent years, Chinese film companies distributed several cinemas with the future theme, such as *Future X-cops* (Wong Jing, 2010) and *Metallic Attraction: Kungfu Cyborg* (Jeffrey Lau, 2009), the evaluations from public are quite low, since the score of the two films from IMDb are 3.82 and 4.63 respectively. For the future theme, Chinese-language cinema has not achieved the level of the Hollywood cinema whether on creation or techniques. Hence it is quite difficult for the Chinese-language cinema with the theme of future would be followed with interest by the western cinema critics. Under this circumstance, a pair of binary opposition could be shown as this,

$$\frac{\text{Good cinema}}{\text{Bad cinema}} \approx \frac{\text{Complex plot}}{\text{Simple plot}} \approx \frac{\text{Creative or open ending}}{\text{Prosaic or close ending}} \approx \frac{\text{Nostalgia theme}}{\text{Future world theme}}$$

**The cinemas with Chinese culture**
The cinema can be seen as a medium to an extent, which transmits the information, the culture and the ideology by the stories, images and sounds. Chinese language films usually spread the Chinese culture and traditions, which are quite different from the western culture, to the western audiences; and as the most popular cultural form, the cinema is a very good way to make foreigners know about Chinese culture. Although the culture globalization is promoted by the economic globalization, the Hollywood cinemas have been influencing the audiences all over the world, there are still a lot of Chinese-language cinemas are making effort to show the Chinese particular culture. Many criticisms in the journal “Senses of Cinema” focus on the cinemas with the Chinese

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culture, which would give the western audiences the opportunities to understand another type of culture, and get known about the attitudes of the Chinese-language cinema directors to some Chinese culture and traditions.

**Confucian Culture**

When talking about Chinese culture, Confucius cannot be neglected, who is the first moral philosopher and whose thought has been deeply influencing the Chinese culture for an enormously long time. In all of the Confucianism, the family occupies the central position, which is a microcosm of the society; the family operates with the same hierarchy, the male head of the family has the power of make decision, and his goal and obligation are maintaining the complete family. On the contrary, female has an extremely low status, and in the old society, the duty of a woman is serving her husband and showing no bias and jealousy on other concubines and children; after the death of the husband, she has to constrain herself not getting married again. In the Confucianism family, people’s marriage is decided by the parents, they have no rights to choose their spouse, and the process of marriage seems like a transaction. Furthermore, the women are restricted in the domestic sphere; they are not permitted to take part in the social activities. (Cornelius & Smith, 2002)

However, with the advance of the society and the development of economy, the Chinese intellectuals see the advancement of the Western culture; meanwhile they find out the decayed parts of Chinese culture. In the 1980s, the Fifth Generation directors questioned the origins of Chinese culture like those intellectuals; their films criticized some of the nation’s political and social dynamic, especially the aspects of restricting the freedom of individuals and generating the suffering. The cinemas of the Fifth Generation directors show the inadequateness of both Confucianism and Mao’s brand of socialism for the harmonious achievement of the society, and “depict the price paid for conforming to ideology in terms of human suffering”. (Cornelius & Smith, 2002)

The film of the Fifth Generation director Zhang Yimou-- *Raise the Red Lantern* is critiqued by David Neo in the journal “Senses of Cinema” as a work “deeply critical of Confucianism and Chinese culture”. This cinema shows a typical Confucianism family and narrates the destinies of the four concubines in the family, then criticizes the oppression and the unfair treatment of the females in the Confucian culture. In the criticism, Neo refers “the Confucian/feminist ‘matrix’ employed by Zhang poignantly highlights the ineffectualness and oppressiveness of the Chinese Confucian system”, and he points out that Zhang Yimou has extended the critique to the whole circumstance of Chinese people: “the Confucian/feminist ‘matrix’ is effectively employed by Zhang to illustrate the oppression of the Chinese people, who are choked by their ineffectual ‘confusion ethics’” Moreover, Neo thinks “the film highlights that Chinese traditions and rituals are in dire need of re-evaluation; there is no investigation of knowledge or cultivation of characters advocated by Confucius- merely an oppressive system”, and the women in the film “represents symbols of oppression in the film; used ritualistically to augment a barbaric system of class and gender exploitation that defines Zhang’s view of
Confucianism”.

The other Zhang Yimou’s film *Red Sorghum*, which is critiqued by David Neo in the journal, also shows the critique and satire of the director to the decayed hierarchy and family tradition of Chinese culture. The female protagonist Jiu’er is married with the host of a wine workshop on the enforcement of her father, for getting a mule, and the host is an old man with a sort of illness. The beginning of the story shows the male chauvinism in the Confucianism, and the women are traded as the commodities, since they have no right to decide their own marriage. However, then the scene that Jiu’er and the protagonist Yu have the sexual relationship in the sorghum fields is seen as the revolt against the repressive tradition and the celebration to the natural humanity by Neo, he indicates that “the film blatantly critics the ineffectual and repressive feudal and patriarchal system of China, boldly awakening and beckoning us to the real and genuine realities of our feelings and primal instincts”. Moreover, Neo states that the praise of masculinity is also an expression of anti-tradition, “the raw masculinity portrayed in *Red Sorghum* is a sharp contrast to the traditional (even effeminate) Chinese image of the refined, cultivated and intellectual man that is very much associated with the imperial Examinations of the feudal system of China”. In addition to those, Neo refers the meaning of searching for roots, and the exploration and expression of Chinese folk culture, he believes that “*Red Sorghum* can be aptly described as a film involved in a deep questioning and searching for roots, and the film’s focus on folk culture repudiates or questions the redefined and sophisticated notions of Chinese culture; awakening us to more primal instincts”.

2.3.6 Discussion of Genres

*Kong Fu Cinema and Wuxia Cinema - Martial Arts*

The western countries’ globalization of culture, especially for the U.S., is prevailing all over the world, but the non-Western countries never stop the foot on exploring the output of culture; and for the cinema products, they try every means to cater the taste of Western audiences. For Western audiences, the non-Western cultural products may be too unique and exotic, so the local producers have to try to enable the Western audiences to step over the “cultural psychic distance”. The producers can make this through selecting subjects, performers, genres, dramatic element and manners of expression. (Wu & Chan, 2007)

As one of the representational cinema genre of martial arts cinema, Chinese Kong Fu cinema is popular with Western audiences, because normally the culture of this genre is not very difficult for people to understand, and it is full of apparent exotic oriental characteristics and the splendid action scenes can bring the exciting visual effects. The Kong Fu cinema is prevalent in Hong Kong from 1970s because of Bruce Lee, and when Lee’s films were sold to the U.S., this cinema genre has suggested a wave of watching Kong Fu cinemas. Bruce Lee is the pioneer and the most important representation of Kong Fu cinema, and he is also the first people who introduced the Chinese Kong Fu
cinema to Western audiences, he rewrote the history of Chinese action cinema in Hong Kong and the U.S.

After Lee’s death, Jackie Chan’s Kong Fu cinemas also raised another wave in 1980s; his Kong Fu cinema is quite different from Bruce Lee, because he gives the comedy elements into the cinemas, which is significant popular with Chinese audiences, as well as Foreign audiences. Besides Jackie Chan, Jet Lee is another successful actor for Kong Fu cinema, and also has developed his career in Hollywood. He is a mainland Chinese actor, after the success of his first cinema The Shaolin Temple, starting his career in Hong Kong, and got the same respect as Jackie Chan. The film Once upon a Time in China directed by Tsui Hark and acted by Jet Lee is criticized by Gonzalez in “Senses of Cinema”, this film is the classic work of Kong Fu cinema, and it uses the actions of Kong Fu to strength the theme of the cinema, Gonzalez thinks “the dominant theme of Once upon a time in China concerns the rapid changes that China underwent in the 19th century, with Tsui’s script highlighting some of the cultural changes that modern technology brought to China”. And as a martial arts film, Gonzalez indicates that this film “explores the graceful possibilities of the martial arts of a former age”.

Another martial art cinema genre is Chinese wuxia cinema, which is the genre with most Chinese characteristics. Wuxia cinema often shows the Chinese historical cultural features, martial arts and the Chinese traditional ideas and culture. Wuxia films are deeply rooted in Chinese literature and folk culture, and the characters of films dress the ancient Chinese costumes and act the swordplay; different characters have different martial arts skills in the films. The essence of Wuxia culture is the thought of “Xià” (knight-errant) and the concept of “Jianghu” (literally ‘rivers and lakes’). Additionally, Wuxia films have the close connections with Chinese history, and they have become the showcase of Chinese history to an extent. (Teo, 2009) The filmmakers construct the ancient China and wuxia world in the wuxia films, and then create the sense of cultural authenticity. Wuxia culture primarily originates from popular imagination, and its abstract nature makes the producers have plenty of spaces to plan their imaginations, feelings and emotions. (Wu & Chan, 2007) Chan (2004) also points out the historical and cultural aspect of wuxia cinema, the Chinese history and tradition can be efficiently embodied by a kind of cinematic cultural gravitas which is offered by the wuxia genre.

For the wuxia cinemas, the Hong Kong filmmaker King Hu is a very significant people, whose films are quite different from other ones; he blended the arts and aesthetics in the wuxia films, but did not neglect the popular elements which were liked by many audiences. In the cinema journal Senses of Cinema, his two films, The Fate of Lee Khan and The Valiant Ones, are critiqued by Stephen Teo. In the criticism, Teo discusses the brilliant features of King Hu’s creation of wuxia films, he thinks “Hu presented plenty of action and exuberant humor in both films but having already pioneered the prototype of the ‘new school’ wuxia movie in such films as Come Drink with Me (1966), Dragon Inn (1967), and A Touch of Zen (1971), the director took the opportunity to further expound on the ideal of chivalry and valour upheld by knights-errant, and to expand on the
principle of violence as a means to an end (the end in both cases being a broad nationalistic cause, either to restore Han rule or to repel foreign invaders from China”). The criticism points out that King Hu was “conscious of how the wuxia genre had changed as a result of the rise of Kong Fu”, and for The valiant ones, it is “the more significant film in regard to the question of how Hu readapted the standard swordplay format of the wuxia picture by incorporating styles of unarmed combat”.

Another famous Hong Kong wuxia cinema director, Tsui Hark, has cooperated with King Hu for many times and his many films are influenced by King Hu’s style. One of his wuxia cinema, Zu: warriors from the magic mountain, is critiqued by Louise Sheedy, he thinks this film is “Tsui Hark’s explosive fantasy epic, was made and released during an equally dynamic period of Hong Kong history. This dynamism also defines its complex and sometimes baffling narrative. Clashes of opposites characterize this high-powered reworking of the wuxia genre as Tsui plays with many of ideas encompassed by Deng Xiaoping’s ‘One country, two systems’ vision of reunified China in the early 1980s; an ethos of reunification which would see Hong Kong and mainland China coexist peacefully whilst governed by two very different economic and political systems”.

In addition to Hong Kong wuxia films, the Chinese mainland filmmakers also start to make wuxia genre films in recent years. In 2002, the wuxia film Hero directed by Zhang Yimou, opened the prelude for mainland Chinese wuxia film, after that, another director He Ping’s wuxia film Warriors of Heaven and Earth was on screen in 2003. In the ten years, there are many wuxia cinemas directed by mainland Chinese filmmakers, such as The Banquet (Feng Xiaogang, 2006), Sacrifice (Chen Kaige, 2010), and House of flying daggers (Zhang Yimou, 2004). Hwanhee Lee gives some comments on Zhang Yimou’s second wuxia film, House of flying daggers, as a wuxia film, “the film does feature some fantastic action sequences, but what is also surprising is that it barely contains more than three characters of significance; this is not a large-scaled film, but an uncharacteristically intimate one, as martial arts films go”.

**Gangster Movie**

The Hong Kong cinemas play a very important role in Chinese-language cinemas, and the Hong Kong cinema companies produce and distribute a great many cinemas every year. Most of those cinemas are shown in Hong Kong, mainland China, Taiwan and some foreign countries. For the genres of Hong Kong cinema, the gangster cinema and action cinema are the most significant ones, which are the distinguish feature and the representation of Hong Kong cinemas; the Hong Kong gangster picture, in the eyes of the world, is quintessentially Hong Kong, with the feature of tough, fast-moving, full of action, and much more, it is an attitude on action. (Teo, 2001) The gangster cinema and action cinema are quite popular with Chinese audiences; moreover, the Hong Kong gangster cinemas also attract a lot of foreign audiences, The Departed (2006) which is directed by Martin Scorsese is the remake of the Hong Kong cinema - Infernal Affairs (2002), and another Hong Kong gangster cinema, which is the work of Johnnie To, Breaking News (2004), was also recopied by the Russian cinema producers in the year of
2009.

Hong Kong gangster films developed quite fast after 1980s, especially after John Woo’s film *A Better Tomorrow* shown in 1986, the gangster film set off a wave in the cinema market, and made the gangster cinema become the mainstream of Hong Kong cinema. Although the gangster cinema originated from Hollywood, in Hong Kong, it is quite different. The Hong Kong gangster cinemas have the regional characteristic of Hong Kong and Chinese culture. Hong Kong gangster cinemas blend the Taoist influences on Hong Kong culture into them, and they bring the ancient principles of balance and honor into the fragmented and pragmatic modern world, which change the international situation of the gangster cinematic genre (Nochimson, 2007).

In the directors of gangster cinema of Hong Kong, John Woo and Johnnie To are the most famous ones, and in the recent years, Johnnie To has got a lot of attentions at home and abroad, in the journal “Senses of Cinema”, there are four criticisms of To’s films. Stephen Teo talks about the central concept of To’s cinemas in the critique of *The Mission* (1999), “To does refer to the central concept of yi – the code of brotherhood among underworld figures that I have cited as an element in wuxia pictures – which acts as an organic feature of gangland dramas”. And *The Mission* has showed this central concept very well, the narrative of this film centres on “a disparate group of underworld killers hired to protect a Triad godfather, the target of an assassination conspiracy”, and “the purpose of the movie is to show how they become a coherent group, operating on unspoken principles of coordination and solidarity”. Teo praises the way that To deal with the gangster genre in this film, he thinks, “To’s approach to genre is innovative, allowing the script elements to develop within the pattern of the genre, but seeking variations within this pattern”. Another gangster film of Johnnie To, *Exiled* (2006) is criticized by David Sanjek, also with the central idea of brotherhood, and Sanjek indicates the difference between the tactic for To to make this film and another two gangster films - *Election* and *Election 2*, “the film’s interjections of humour, and its intentionally over-the-top physical action, do not communicate the lingering sense of entropy and emptiness that marks Election and Election 2. Here, To plays with the parameters of genre like a masterful technician, but seems disinclined on this occasion to dissect that behavior”. David Sanjek critiqued another film of Johnnie To, *Running out of Time* (1999), which is a gangster cinema as well, but it reflects another feature of To’s Hong Kong gangster film, as Sanjek’s explanation, “To can wring more interesting variations out of established generic parameters than a Shanghai chef can create virtually innumerable strands of noodles from a single pile of dough. He particularly likes to toy with the doppelganger motif, playing off characters as well as performers for maximum exhilaration”.

In addition to Johnnie To’s gangster films, the series of *Infernal Affairs* directed by Wai-keung Lau and Alan Mak, are critiqued by the cinema critic Charles Leary. These series films are defined as “high concept cinema” by Leary, and the directors bring the Buddhist idea into the films, to make a horror film effect for the box office returns, as Leary explaining, the film “not ignoring the value of that market, hints at the macabre in
its Chinese title, referring to the Buddhist conception of the most horrific level of hell reserved for those who commit the most unforgivable sins, in which one can no longer tell the difference between good and evil”.

**Analysis by Greimas’s semiotic formula**
The previous research has shown that the Kong Fu, Wuxia and gangster genres of Chinese-language cinema are much appreciated by critics, they have more chances to be evaluated as the good film, but it is difficult to find out the contrary of these genres on the binary opposition; it does not mean that the good cinema cannot be found within other genres, only because the probability of it is less than the mainstream genres.

### 2.4 Collective Context Logic

In this regime, the social references are considered as the most important factors, the content and the quality of the art work are the neglected aspect, the place where the art works exhibiting and the position of the artist will influence the choose of critics and decision makers. The films are like other cultural products, the artistic and economic features simultaneously exist in them; this dual nature points out that the performance of the film cannot be judged through a single parameter of reference, the box office success, the awards, the creative capacity and the quality of the cultural matters all should be considered as the standard of assessment (Usai, Delmestri, & Montanari, 2001). In the cinema world, where is the film shown, what film rewards have the film gotten, which international film festival has the film participated, they are all the considering aspects for critics and mass media to evaluate the film.

In the ten years’ cinema journal “Sense of Cinema”, quite a lot of criticisms have criticized the films in this value regime; many critics take these factors as the criterion for evaluating the films. They can be categorized as two parts: the rewards and the overseas distribution.

#### 2.4.1 Discussion of Awards

In the recent ten years’ “Senses of Cinema”, some criticisms of the Chinese-language cinemas have referred the awards that the cinemas have gotten or be nominated, most of the rewards are international well known ones, such as the Golden Bear Award, the Academy Awards, the Golden Lion Award, the Golden Palm Award and the Hong Kong Film Awards. These awards all have the authority and they represent the opinions of a certain number of professional people or experts. The cinema awards have the powerful persuasion, and to an extent they can prove the high quality of the cinemas.

**International Influential Awards**

*a) The Academy Awards*
The Academy Awards of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences was founded in 1927, which is the oldest cinema academy in the world, and has the most international influences. The nomination and selection of the Academy Awards are based on peer evaluation, and the judging panel is constructed by hundreds of experts in many different areas of cinematic attainment and creativity, which ensure the high quality and the value of the awards.

At the beginning of the establishment of the Academy Awards, the thirty-six founders formulated the original by-laws to reach several goals, one of which was to “encourage the improvement and advancement of the arts and science of the profession by the interchange of constructive ideas and by awards of merit for distinctive achievements” (Levy, 2003)

For most people, The Academy Award is “The Academy”, not the “American Academy”, which shows its status as the most famous cinema organization in the world. Besides its international status, it is also the most prestigious film industry award all over the world currently. A great many cinema enthusiasts consider the Academy Awards as the primary significance for proving the artistic merit and excellence in filmmaking (Robbe, 2006). Furthermore, the Academy Awards are universally accepted as the symbols of accomplishment in international entertainment.

There are several main reasons for this preeminence of the Academy Awards; the first and foremost one is the longevity of this award, which has the tradition of eighty-four years making a respectable symbol with historical heritage. Secondly, the academy status gives the prestige to the award, since the academy has close connection with elitist, and the Academy’s selection procedures are considerably democratic. And then, this award is evaluated by peers, not by public. For cinema artists, as well as other professional, the most important recognition is from their peers, who are considered as the only experts with the essential knowledge to make the object and professional evaluation of their film works. Moreover, the prestige of the Academy Awards can be attributed to the scarcity of awards, due to the data in 2003, in the whole Academy history, just 608 players have been nominated for, and 188 won. Every year, in four categories, only twenty players are nominated, and only four win. The Academy Awards also give the opportunity to foreign film artists, one fourth of the nominees are from foreign countries, and they design a specific category to honor foreign achievements – the Best Foreign-Language Picture. (Levy, 2003)

The nomination of the Academy Awards is also very significant for the film artists, since being nominated means getting the recognition, a new and bright break of the career can be made out with the recognition, and the first Academy Awards nomination usually predicts a successful future.

In the history of the Academy Awards, only one Chinese language film has wined the Best Foreign-Language Picture, the film of Ang Lee – *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*; but six films have been nominated for the Best Foreign-Language Picture, they are *Ju
Dou (Zhang Yimou, 1990), Raise the Red Lantern (Zhang Yimou, 1991), Farewell My Concubine (Chen Kaige, 1993), The Wedding Banquet (Ang Lee, 1993), Eat Drink Man Woman (Ang Lee, 1994), and Hero (Zhang Yimou, 2002). Because of these nominees, the filmmakers Zhang Yimou, Ang Lee and Chen Kaige are known well by western audiences and critics. In the recent ten years’ journals “Senses of Cinema”, some critics have referred the awards that the Chinese-language cinemas wined. In the criticism of Red Sorghum (1987), David Neo talks about the films of Zhang Yimou that have been nominated for the Best Foreign-Language Picture of the Academy Awards, “Ju Dou (1990) was the first Chinese film to be nominated for Best Foreign Language Film, at the 1990 Academy Awards. Zhang’s third film, Raise the Red Lantern (1991) was also nominated for Best Foreign Film at the 1992 Academy Awards.”

b) National Society of Film Critics Awards
In addition to the Academy Awards, the National Society of Film Critics also plays a very important role in the cinema world. It was established in 1968, and the majority of its members are the American leading cinema critics. The Society is seen as a “highbrow” organization, whose tastes can be at the same level with the Academy’s. For the National Society, one of its main goals was “to annually recognize the best films without distinction of nationality”. Compared to another film critics circles, either the New York or the Los Angeles circles, the National Society of Film Critics enjoys much greater prestige, because of its small scale, elitist team, and it represents critics are from all over the nation. Furthermore, the critics of the Society generally evaluate the films with more dispassionate and matter-of-fact standards than the Academy ones or large public, and they also take the responsibility as tastemakers and guides for the public. Therefore, the awards of the Society take up several significant positions in the film world, and many critics admit the prestigious status of the winning films and artists.

The first Chinese language film that wined the award of the National Society of Film Critics is Zhang Yimou’s film Raise the Red Lantern (1991), which got the Best Foreign Language Film in 1992, then Zhang’s another two films - The Story of Qiu Ju (1992) and House of Flying Daggers (2004) wined the Best Foreign Language Film in 1993 and the Cinematography award in 2004 respectively, and Zhang also got the Director award in 2004 because of House of Flying Daggers (2004) and Hero (2002). The Taiwan director Edward Yang’s film Yi Yi (2000) wined the Best Picture award in 2000, the 2001 Best Foreign Language Film award and the Cinematography award have been awarded to Hong Kong director Wong Kar-wai’s film In the Mood for Love (2000), and Wong’s another film 2046 (2004) wined the Cinematography award in 2005. The awards of the National Society of Film Critics have given the prestige to these Chinese-language cinemas and directors in the global film world.

c) International Film Festival and the relevant awards
Except for the Academy Awards, the best way for the Chinese language films be recognized by western people is attending the international film festivals. The
international film festivals provide a very broad platform for Asian films to show themselves to the world, and give them a good opportunity to communicate with the film artists from different countries. The high profile international film festivals such as Cannes, Venice, Berlin and Toronto take up a significant state in national and international film culture, and the local and foreign films can get the concentrated attention from the mass media, film industry and the public through the film festivals (Czach, 2004).

Although currently there are a great many international film festivals in the world, the most important and premier ones are the Cannes International Film Festival, Venice International Film Festival and Berlin International Film Festival. These three film festivals are also considered as “A-festivals” in the cinema world. Moreover, The International Federation of Film Producers Associations (FIAPF)\(^5\) accredited the three festivals as the first International Competitive Feature Film Festivals – Venice and Cannes in 1951 and Berlin in 1956 (Mezias, Pedersen, & Mazza, 2008).

The oldest international film festival is Venice, which was first held in 1932 and an initiative from the International Art Exhibition of Venice “La Biennale”, its annual jury is made up of international film professionals and the top prize of Vince International Film Festival is the “Golden Lion Prize” for the best picture. In the year of 1951, the International Federation of Film Producers (IFAFP) gave the status of “A-film festival”. Since 1996, the festival has made effort to construct a flexible structure for increasing the number of films shown in Venice, even if not in the sections of competition. There are about sixty films are presented and around 20 films are in the completion each year, and most of them are European or world premieres.

The Cannes International Film Festival is the most famous film festival in all the international film festivals. It started in September 1946 and was authorized as the “A-film festival” by the International Federation of Film Producers (IFAFP) in 1951. Cannes is also the biggest film festival; each year, hundreds of films are screened, which are both in and outside the official program. In addition to the screening part, Cannes also is a film market for the sellers and buyers from different countries to do the film trades. The Cannes has formed a professional film commercial event for many years, and a great many celebs from all over the world have attended actively. The highest prize of Cannes International Film Festival is the Palme d’Or (Golden Palm), and the winner is the best film from twenty-two works that are selected into the official competition. Besides the best picture, the festival also gives the awards to juried achievements in directing, acting and the artistic contribution, such as cinematography. Nowadays, there are increasingly more international film festivals established, in this circumstance, Cannes still maintain its uniqueness and premier status.

The Berlin Film Festival, which is founded in 1951, is the youngest one in the three “A-festivals”. Berlin film festival was conceived in the background of the special

\(^5\) FIAPF was founded in 1933 (http://www.fiapf.org)
geo-political situation in the post-war Europe, and because of this, it gained much official support. In 1956, Berlin film festival was acknowledged as the “A-festival” by International Federation of Film Producers (FIAPF), and the festival set up the top prizes are the Golden and Silver Bear Awards. Every year, there are about 350 films screened to the public in the festival, and majority of them are the premieres in the world or in Europe. Berlin International Film Festival is not so commercial as both Venice and Cannes, in contrary, it emphasizes on the exhibition of the documentaries and independent films, and it gives more chances to the films from all over the world.

Except for the three “A-festival”, the New York Film Festival is also a prestigious forum. It is founded in 1963, under the auspices of the Lincoln Center Film Society. Before the Sundance Film Festival was taken under the wing of Robert Redford in 1985, the New York festival was the most important film festival in the United States.

For most of the non-Hollywood films, attending the international film festivals is the most effective way to expand the overseas cinema market, especially when they win the award at a festival, they will get a higher number of audience as well as the high income of box office, meanwhile the possibility of the future nominations can be enhanced too (Mezias, Pederson, Svejenova, and Mazza, 2008). Since the films that have the qualification to participate in the festivals and get the awards are selected and evaluated by a very strict standard and procedure. Therefore, the films can acquire the relevant prestige of the festivals, and one of the significant functions of the film festivals is the ability of adding value. During the process of selection for entries, awards and mediation befall, all kinds of films and filmmakers could attain the value adding in the global market, in spite of targeting for the mainstream or the niche audiences.

Chinese Language films participated in the international film festivals since 1950s, in 1959, Chinese Language films first participated in the competition of the international film festival – the Taiwan director Shen Tien’s film Tang Fu Yu Sheng Nu made the first attempt to compete with the foreign films. In 1975, Hong Kong film A Touch of Zen (King Hu, 1969) won the Technical Grand Prize of Cannes, and it is the first Chinese language film that got the Cannes prize. Then there are more and more Chinese language films got up on the International Film Festivals’ stage, mainland Chinese films began the overseas film trip in 1980s, and in 1988, Chinese famous director Zhang Yimou’s first film Red Sorghum (1987) won the Golden Bear, the top prize of Berlin International Film Festival, and this was the first time that Chinese language film got the Golden Bear prize. After this year, in 1989, Taiwan director Hou Hsiao-hsien’s film A City of Sadness (1989) got the Golden Lion prize, which is the first Chinese Language film won the Venice festival award. Until the year of 2010, Chinese language films have gotten 14 awards in Venice International Film Festivals, 10 awards in Cannes festivals and 36 awards in Berlin festivals. Except for the most significant international film festivals, a great many Chinese language films have won the awards in many different international film festivals, such as the Toronto Film Festivals, the Chicago International Film Festivals, and the Tokyo International Film Festivals.
So many awards that the Chinese-language cinemas got in the international film festivals make more and more western people and cinema artists and critics pay much attention on the Chinese language films, and these awards have added the value on the films to a large extent. Many critics have referred the awards of film festivals in their criticisms in the journals “Senses of Cinema”, they make it as one of their criterion for critiquing the films. In the criticism of Zhang Yimou’s film Red Sorghum (1987), David Neo indicates that Zhang’s second film Ju Dou (1990) “won numerous prestigious international awards such as the 1990 Golden Bear Award at the Berlin Film Festival, the Golden Hugo Award at the Chicago International Film Festival and Best Film at the 1990 New York Film Festival”, and he also refers “Zhang’s third film, Raise the Red Lantern (1991) won five prizes at the 1991 Venice Film Festival”. Acquarello refers the award in the criticism of The City of Sadness (1989), “winning the Golden Lion at the 46th annual Venice International Film Festival on September 15, 1989”. In the beginning of the criticism of Stanley Kwan’s film Centre Stage, Tony Williams has talked about the awards that this film got, “Winner of many awards at national and international film festivals and the subject of several articles and one monograph – by Mette Hjort – in Hong Kong University Press’ New Hong Kong Cinema Series, Yuen Ling-yuk/Centre Stage has justifiably earned its reputation as a classic of the Hong Kong New Wave Elizabeth Wright mentions the award that Beijing Bicycle (Wang xiaoshuai, 2001) got in the criticism of this film, “Wang’s Beijing Bicycle, which was winner of the Berlin Film Festival Silver Bears Award, is also a component of producers Peggy Chiao and Hsu Hsaio-ning’s ‘Tales of Three Cities’ series. Consisting of six films set in mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, the series is designed to offer glimpses into the different urban Chinese social and political environments.” In the critique “a Yi Yi: Both a One and a Two”, George Wu points out the award that the director Edward Yang got through the film Yi Yi, “Yi Yi brought Yang the Best Director award at the 2000 Cannes Film Festival, and the film has been celebrated equally by mainstream critics and more stringent highbrow critics. The National Society of Film Critics awarded it Best Picture, and a Village Voice poll of 54 critics placed Yi Yi in second place after Beau Travail (Claire Denis, 2000) among the films of last year”. David Sanjek also talks about the award-wining of Johnnie To’s film Running out of Time (1999), “The commercial and critical success of Running out of Time - a Best Actor award for Lau at the 2000 Hong Kong Film Awards and Best Asian film at the 2000 Fant-Asia Film Festival – led to the inevitable To-directed sequel in 2001”.

2.4.2 Overseas Distribution

Due to the cultural differences between China and the Western, the overseas distributions of the Chinese-language cinemas have to confront a lot of difficulties. Normally, in order

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6 Centre Stage won awards for Best Actress, Best Cinematographer, Best Production Design, Best Original Score, and Best Original Film Song at the 1992 Hong Kong Film Festival; Best Hong Kong Film, Best Cinematography, and Best Actress Award at Taiwan’s 28th Golden Horse Awards in 1981. It also gained Maggie Cheung the Silver Bear Best Actress Award at the 42nd Berlin International Film Festival in 1992, and Best Director and Best Actress Awards at the 1992 Chicago International Film Festival.
to enter the foreign markets, the films are obliged to undergo many tests from the foreign cinema firms, western cinema critics and the audiences. If a film could be showed on the foreign screens, to a certain extent it shows that the film has gained the Westerners’ approval on both the artistic and cultural value and the commercial and economic value. The number of mainland Chinese cinemas that distributed overseas is increasing from 1990s; especially after the year of 2000, it grows up quite fast, from 2005 to 2009, the number of the overseas distributed cinemas rose from 69 to 185, and the box-office receipts, from 550 million RMB increased to 2.75 billion RMB (Li, 2010). The reasons for the increase are the Chinese Language films and film artists’ frequent attendance to international film festivals and the positive policy formulated by the Chinese government. The Chinese Language films that can be watched by foreign audiences in their local cinema theatres generally represent the much higher level and good quality of Chinese films.

Two critics refer the oversea screening of Chinese-language cinemas in their critiques in the journal, when Charles Leary comment on the Hong Kong film *Infernal Affairs* (Wai-keung Lau & Alan Mak, 2002), he indicates that in the last sentence, “the screening of Infernal Affairs in New York then is yet another sign of things to come and the need to ponder an international history of ‘post-classical’ cinema”. In the criticism of Edward Yang’s film *Yi Yi*, George Wu emphasizes on the success of this film in the United States, “Despite high acclaim for Yang’s previous pictures, *Yi Yi* is shockingly the first of Yang’s seven films to get a commercial run in the United States, and tiny distributor Winstar is barely up to the task”.

### 2.4.3 Analysis by Greimas’s Fundamental Semiotic Formula

For the critics, the cinema which gets the international awards, or attends the important international festivals has a more special value than the cinema without the awards, the awards could be considered as the praise from most of the western people for a cinema. For example, the mainland Chinese filmmaker Zhang Yimou, who is recognized by western people in the 38th Berlin International Film Festival, is almost the most famous mainland Chinese director. The critic Daivd Neo introduces that Zhang’s films have been nominated for the Best Foreign-Language Picture of Academy Awards more than once, “*Ju Dou*’ (1990) was the first Chinese film to be nominated for Best Foreign Film, at the 1991 Academy Awards. Zhang’s third film, ‘*Raise the Red Lantern*’ (1991) was also nominated for Best Foreign Film at the 1992 Academy Awards.” The critics generally appreciate the cinemas with awards, and the cinemas which are active for the international activities. On the other hand, the Chinese-language cinema which has no international awards, or seldom take part in the international film festival, can hardly be appreciated by the western critics, because it has no international impact. The formula could be set as this,
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Appreciated Cinema} & \quad \approx \quad \text{Cineam with International Awards} \\
\text{Unappreciated Cinema} & \quad \approx \quad \text{Cinema without International Awards} \\
\text{Cinema Attending International Film Festival} & \quad \approx \quad \text{Cinema not Attending International Film Festival} \\
\text{Cinema with Overseas Distribution} & \quad \approx \quad \text{Cinema without Overseas Distribution}
\end{align*}
\]
Chapter 3. Comparison between the criteria that the Western critics use in Chinese-language cinemas and classical Hollywood cinemas

For this section, the research still be proceeded in the four value regimes, which means that the criteria used by the critics criticizing both the Chinese-language cinemas and Hollywood cinemas would be analyzed in each value regime.

3.1 In the Singular Content Logic

Within the singular content logic, the criticisms of classical Hollywood cinemas also focus on the technical aspects, and generally it is quite close to those of the Chinese-language cinemas. But there are still many differences in detail, and the emphases of the criticisms are not the same either, they are based on the cultural background of the criticisms and the way and degree of their understanding of the Chinese Language culture.

3.1.1 The camerawork

The analysis of the criteria of the Chinese-language cinema criticisms has discussed the camerawork as a part of criteria for evaluating the cinemas’ technique, and for the classical Hollywood cinema, it is also seen as an important aspect to judge the technique of the cinema. David Sanjek comments the shots of Allan Dwan’s film *Abroad with Two Yanks* (1944), “Dwan employs skill cross-cutting and deploys a number of elegantly inserted crane shots in order to avoid the kind of monotonous master-shots that often sink the efforts of other knockabout comedies of the period, such as many if not most of the Abbott and Costello vehicles or the even more budget-conscious Poverty Row programmers.”

And for Samuel Fuller’s film *Forty Guns* which was produced in 1957, the critic Tony Williams makes some notes on its camerawork, “the five minute sequence involving Jessica, Griff and Ned Logan (Dean Jagger), which leads to Logan’s suicide announced by the sound of his feet against the wall immediately following Griff’s kiss of Jessica, is one of the most brilliant sequences in American cinema. It also employs subtle camera movement as well as an avant-garde employment of Griff’s disappearance from one part of the frame before he surprisingly appears in another part without Fuller giving the audience any hint of this destabilising movement”; and then refers that Fuller uses other directors’ camerawork for reference to create the special scenes, “Like Godard, Fuller
employs his own version of those long take and mobile camera movements earlier used by Welles and Ophuls and also uses a judicious editing technique to add resonance to a particular scene”.

Tony Williams also gives the high appraise to the camerawork of Orson Welles’s cinema *Macbeth* (1948), “Before the porter scene, Welles has a shot evoking the future technique of 3-D. His bloodstained hands move towards the camera in soft focus while his body and background appear in sharp focus aptly complementing Shakespeare’s line, ‘multitudinous seas incarnadine’”. To the films, the shot is the fundamental element for constructing the scenes, and in most cases, the quality of the camerawork decides the degree of the scenes’ excellence. Hence the critics set this technique as the evaluating standard for both the Chinese-language cinemas and the classical Hollywood films.

### 3.1.2 Visual effect

The visual effect as a criterion used by the Western critics for evaluating a Chinese-language cinema in the singular content logic has been discussed yet before, and for the classical Hollywood cinema criticisms, it is also a significant one used by the critics. David Cairns praises the visual effect of Fritz Lang’s film *House by the River* (1950) in the criticism “Felicitous Rooms: Fritz Lang’s House by the River”, “Despite the low budget and quickie schedule, *House by the River* is often visually arresting, displaying Lang’s genius for composition and cutting”. Then the criticism of Frank Capra’s cinema *The Bitter Tea of General Yen* (1932) talks about it as well, “One can only wonder what kind of career Capra would have had if this film had been a hit, because in both its style and treatment of cultural and sexual clashes, the film stands arguably as Capra’s most complex film. Visually the film is stunning, thanks largely to Capra’s longstanding cameraman, the unsung Joseph Walker, who achieves remarkable effects in the glinting, filigreed manner of Sternberg’s films from the same era”.

Although both of the criticisms of Chinese-language cinema and Hollywood cinema use the visual effect for judging the cinema technique, what is different is the color of the film image is almost not discussed by criticisms of the classical Hollywood cinemas. Since at the early time, most of the classical Hollywood cinemas were made with black and white images, the color film is not so prevalent. It is not quite applicable to using as the criterion for evaluating the classical Hollywood cinemas.

Furthermore, the screen composition and some cinema devices are considered by the critics when they evaluate the classical Hollywood cinemas. Tony Williams indicates the smart way that the film *Forty Guns* (Samuel Fuller, 1957) composes the scenes through a detailed description in its criticism, “after Griff and Wes see Chico off on the stagecoach, so he will not become a ‘freak’ by following his brother’s ‘gladiator’ path by becoming a gunfighter, the camera follows Wes to the gunshop in the background where he obtains a rifle to back up Griff moving in the foreground of the image who is being unknowingly
set-up for assassination. The sequence ends as Griff approaches the deadly alley where Charley Savage waits in an upstairs room. Following a number of edited shots, the sequence ends with Chico now beyond redemption after shooting Griff’s assassin in the back. It is a masterly use of screen composition containing significant relationships of meaningful elements within the scene”.

And then, for the criticism of Welles’s film *Macbeth*, Tony Williams discusses its composition of vision and voice, “despite its low status among Welles enthusiasts, Macbeth creatively uses sound and vision. Like Welles’ Harlem production, the witches dominate the action and appear at the end to pronounce, ‘The charm’s wound up’. Their power affects not just Macbeth but also Banquo’s heirs. After Macbeth’s death, Welles ironically cuts to Fleance as the crowd follows Macduff’s chant, ‘Hail Malcolm. King of Scotland’, suggesting that the new King’s reign will be as brief as his predecessor’s. The witches function as supernatural embodiments of power mechanisms affecting Macbeth. When they first depart, Macbeth dictates a letter to the Holy Father. As the camera tracks in to a mid-close-up, his speech changes to voiceover. Macbeth’s voice then gradually merges with that of Lady Macbeth so that they both speak as a chorus ironically echoing the witches”, and “Replacing theatrical soliloquies, these voiceovers cinematically embody murderous thoughts inhabiting dark environments”.

In addition to that, some devices used in the cinemas also could be seen as a part of the successful cinema. Pedro Blas Gonzalez has indicated that the function of timing in the Roman Polanski’s film *Rosemary’s Baby* (1968), “The subtlety of evil that the film presents is successful because of the exquisite timing deployed to tell the story”. And in the criticism of Welles’ film *Macbeth*, Williams presents the device which is used by Welles, “Welles also employs relevant cinematic devices to avoid redundant theatricality. The instrument in the famous dagger speech does not appear. Instead, influenced by Eisenstein’s montage of associations, an abrupt cut to a knife slicing the head of a voodoo doll introduces shadow images of a tormented hero”.

The dominating motivation of the Classical Hollywood cinema is the narrative, which means that the storytelling is the basically primary mission, almost all the elements, techniques and devices are in the service of the narrative (Bordwell, Staiger, & Thompson, 1998). And for the CHC (Classical Hollywood Cinema), it has a nearly integrated narrative system including the camerawork, the character, the editing and so on. The critics evaluate the CHC within the singular content logic, generally will estimate whether the techniques of the cinema perfectly achieve the aim of telling story.

However, many of the Chinese-language cinemas’ purposes are not telling stories, sometimes they are the personal emotional appeals of the directors or establishing a sort of particular mood and atmosphere, and there are not many drastic drama conflicts. Therefore, the cinematic techniques and devices in the Chinese-language cinemas have different task from them in CHC, and the criteria of the judgment are not same either.
3.2 In the Singular Context

Like the critique of the Chinese-language cinemas, the critics give the comments to the classical Hollywood cinemas within the singular context as well. The core conception of this value regime – the authorship is considered as the patent of European cinema, and the European director could represent an author, because they have the “open artistic aspirations” and the right of control his films (Wollen, 1969). The condition in Hollywood cinema is another story, Hollywood cinema has a paradigm of classical style for producing the works; generally the “authors” hardly would be classified in its institution, and the directors, or directors cannot get their authorial status from the Hollywood cinema, except for several rare directors (Disney, Hitchcock and Chaplin) (Bordwell, Staiger, & Thompson, 1998).

However, there are still some directors of CHC have been seen as the “auteur”, because of their distinctive style and treatment of making their films, such as Howard Hawks, Orson Welles, John Ford and Fritz Lang. Based on finishing the narrative, they add the device with their personal style, and after a long time, people can find out their consistent style in their films. For the critics, the auteur’s style of the classical Hollywood cinema is taken into consideration for evaluating the cinemas.

David Sanjek demonstrates the director’s style of storytelling in the criticism of Allan Dwan’s film Abroad with Two Tanks (1944), he thinks that “Through high points and hellholes, Dwan retained a remarkable equanimity and undiluted commitment to the rewards of no-frills, pretension-free storytelling”. And he also quotes the comment of David Thomson⁷, “Dwan’s liking for visual narrative proved stronger than all the foolish corners he was forced to occupy. His flexibility was proof of imaginative cheerfulness.”

And then, in the critique of Douglas Sirk’s film Summer Storm, David Sanjek has talked about the director by quoting Andrew Sarris’s phrase⁸ at the beginning of the passage, “is it still necessary to call attention to the ‘formal excellence and visual wit’ in Douglas Sirk’s films that Andrew Sarris highlighted some 40 years ago? Not that such a characterization sums up the totality of the director’s achievements or ambitions, but you would think that Sarris’ further admonition might have clinched the matter for any subsequent commentators: ‘Sirk requires no special rationalization, and his films require no elaborate defense. The evidence of his style is visible on the screen.’”

The auteurism also is used in the criticism of Fritz Lang’s film House by the River (1950), David Cairns points out the director’s style in the film, that “amid tatty sets (actors practically scuttle sideways to avoid brushing the backdrops and rumpling the sky), Lang presides over a highly stylized, near-expressionist drama of human corruption and implacable fate. At turns bizarre, hysterical and compelling, House by the River embodies all of its director’s idiosyncrasies, and takes some of his obsessions to ludicrous

extremes”. Then he continues the judgment at the end, that “the resulting film is flawed, but its flaws are Lang’s own, and fascinate just as much as the more successful sequences. *House by the River* may not be one of the very best of Lang’s American films, but it is perhaps the most characteristic, showing all his obsessive themes and stylistic mannerisms at their most florid and intense”.

In the critique of Richard Linklater’s film *Before Sunset* (2004), Kevin Lee demonstrates the manner how Linklater express his personal opinion in the film, “Linklater’s filmography has rarely delved into the overtly political (even the post-9/11 reflection *Live from Shiva’s Dance Floor*[2003] avoids political rhetoric), choosing instead to focus on existential dilemmas, a desire to achieve a kind of personal liberation through the manner of his artistic expression, one that celebrates the liberating act of truly engaged social discourse and uninhibited collaboration”.

For the criticism of the auteur cinema *Ceiling Zero* (1936), which is directed by Howard Hawks, the critic Pedro Blas Grozalez has specially introduced Hawks, that “As a film director, Hawks was as competent making comedies, gangster films and romantic comedies as he was war films and westerns. Because he directed, wrote and produced, – and due to the identifiable “signature” of his work – he came to be regarded by some French film critics of the 1950s and 60s as an auteur. The effectiveness of his ability in these diverse aspects of cinema is that he was able to take control of the technical and creative intricacies of making films”. Hawks has been considered as one of the greatest Hollywood filmmakers, he can manage almost every genre, develop the genre to the new and creative perspective, and make things achieve a higher level than that they reached before. Furthermore, Hawks was so fortunate that he could be his own producer at an early stage in his career, and he had the right of selecting his own project, writers and cameramen.

Then Tony Williams comments on another American auteur - Samuel Fuller in the criticism of his film *Forty Guns* (1957), Williams points out that, “*Forty Guns* provides a great illustration of the auteur theory at its most concrete. Written, directed and produced by Samuel Fuller, it is also a key example of how a creative mind not only subverted the so-called ‘genius of the system’ promoted by corporate-minded critics today but also one which radically reworks generic premises”; and “Fuller’s comments on violence and politics in American society are stated subtly within the image, never didactically bombarding the audience into insensibility but leaving them to consider the implications for themselves”.

In addition to Samuel Fuller, in the criticism of Sam Peckinpah’s film *The Wild Bunch* (1969), Williams also indicates the particular style of Peckinpah through quoting Paul Seydor’s study of this director, “Peckinpah developed a technique that tends to divorce feeling from sensation (which is what makes his art so seductive, hence disturbing) and that enables him to strike exactly the right balance between an emotional, indeed an almost palpably physical proximity to the violence and an aesthetic distance from it”.

58
What is different between the critique of Chinese-language cinema and classical Hollywood cinema in the singular content logic is that the critics do not care much about the art cinema directors of Hollywood cinema, which is not like their preference to the Chinese art film directors. About the Hollywood cinema, they concern the directors’ uniqueness of filmmaking and how they can stand out in so many Hollywood cinema directors.

3.3 Collective Content

Within the value regime of collective content, the criticisms of the classical Hollywood cinema is quite different from those of the Chinese-language cinemas. The motifs of the Chinese-language cinema that the critics are interested in are nostalgia and Chinese culture ones, but for the CHC, the critics have another points of interest, because of the cultural diversity between the eastern and western countries.

3.3.1 Discussion of Cinema Style

About the cinema style of the Classical Hollywood cinema, the critics lay stress on the unconventional or unexpected ones, since there is an almost formed and uniform style for the Classical Hollywood cinema, the uniqueness generally could be seen as the valuable feature in most cases. Nicholas Ray’s film *Bitter Victory* (1957) is criticized by David Sanjek, who has anatomized part of the cinema’s plot, and indicates that, “Whatever the intention, the effect remains disquieting, but so does the whole of *Bitter Victory*, a war film that depicts armed conflict without any degree of heroism and romance without any possibility of fulfillment”. In the criticism of Samuel Fuller’s cinema *Forty Guns* (1957), Tony Williams talks about how the film shows the characteristics of the B-movie, and at the end he sums up the style of this film, that “Style and substance unite in this film linking history, politics and emotion together in a significantly cinematic and meaningful combination”. Then in the criticism of Orson Welles’s film *Macbeth* (1948), Tony Williams also demonstrates the particular style of the film, that “*Macbeth* is a collage of different styles and concepts. It formally resembles popular musical experiments, typified by punk and garage rock, which assault dominant conventions. It is more coherent than the fragmented, experimental nature of *Othello* (1952) (4), but it also employs a deliberate fusion of cinematic styles influenced by the paranoid nature of a postwar, nuclear world”. This comment present Welles’s revolt to the Hollywood cinema conventional style, as Williams referring, “*Macbeth* is a dialectic appropriation of competing techniques representing Welles’ idiosyncratic take on Eisenstein’s cinema of collisions”, and the quote of Welles’s comment on Peter Bogdanovich, “I hate to be held down by what exists. I like to manufacture what I want”.

3.3.2 Discussion of Genre

The genres of the Chinese-language cinemas, which attract western critics, mostly are drama, Kong Fu, martial art and gangster; but the condition changes when they critique the Classical Hollywood cinemas, except the drama genre, the Kong Fu and martial art genre hardly can be used in Hollywood cinema. For Hollywood cinema, the western, war and horror genres are quite different from the Chinese-language cinema, and the critics would like to devote many words to comment the films of these genres.

Westerns

In the beginning of the 20th century, the western cinema has emerged in America with Edwin S. Porter’s eight-minute cinema *The Great Train Robbery* (1901), which often claimed “the first western cinema” (Langford, 2005). There are several features of westerns: about the cultural form, the western establishes the conflicts between cowboy heroes and scoundrels with the background of the American West; and in the plot, the gunfights, the escape and chase scenes, and the overthrow of the vicious power are the conventional contents; the scenery and settings are arranged in the rural town or homestead, and the action scenes usually occur in the desert and the mountain regions (Miller & Stam, 1999).

The most basic elements of American identity could be presented in the Western cinemas to a certain extent, and the Westerns assemble the special complex of the American history, fantasy and ideology, which forms the principal key for audiences to unlock and understand the American national identity and character (Langford, 2005). Moreover, the Western has the ability of absorbing and developing the material of almost any source (Saunders, 2001), and Langford (2005) thinks that “of all genres” the Western “has been perhaps the most reliable to the widest audience for the longest period of time.”

In the criticism of Samuel Fuller’s Western cinema *Forty Guns*, Tony Williams has talked about the genre of the cinema, that “*Forty Guns* is a 50s Western but one by a director fully attuned to those wartime emotions repressed within an era of men in grey flannel suits which would soon erupt in the next decade. As Fuller recalled, this was one of his many juvenile delinquency films, a subject influenced by *Rebel without a Cause* (Nicholas Ray, 1955), seen in *Run of the Arrow* (1957), *Verboten!* (1958), and *Underworld U.S.A.* (1960).”

Tony Williams also criticizes Sam Peckinpah’s Western cinema *The Wild Bunch* (1969), he considers that “although its violent reputation may seem anachronistic by today’s standards and possibly surpassed by “rednecked peckerwood” imitators such as Quentin Tarantino, *The Wild Bunch* still remains unsurpassed as one of the great Westerns of the last century. Following Peckinpah’s ideological assault upon the conventions of John Ford’s cavalry trilogy in the mutilated, but still resonant, *Major Dundee* (1965), *The Wild

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9 Samuel Fuller, A Third Face: My Tale of Writing, Fighting, and Filmmaking, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2002, p. 34.
Bunch continues his brutal interrogation into the pathological nature of American masculinity and society – making his film more relevant now than ever.”

The Western cinema contributes a lot for publicizing distinct American culture, which could be seen as the exclusive culture of the United States and is totally different from the culture of Eastern countries.

**Horror Cinema**

Horror cinema has been a quite popular cinema genre since it was produced at the beginning, and there are numerous enthusiasts of horror cinema all over the world; additionally, as Jancovich (2002) notes, the horror cinema has been the genre which is most criticized about by critics.

The primal horror cinema was established on the gothic literatures of late eighteenth-century England, with the stories of mystery, terror and supernatural (Worland, 2007). With the particular characteristic, the horror cinema is set apart from other genres, and people’s attitude to it can be divided into two extremes: its aficionados and the group of total rejection (Wood, 1985). About this special genre, many critics and scholars have presented the opinions, for instances, Robin Wood (1979) gives the definition of the horror film that it could be demonstrated as a collective nightmare, in which the normal life is “threatened by the Monster”, James B. Twitchell (1985) attempts to make out the difference between “horror” and “terror”, and Dennis Giles (1984) indicates that the main strategy of horror is “delayed, blocked or partial vision.”

The horror film connects the ancient mythology with the modern life, to confront the universal questions of philosophy and moral with the thought of human destiny and the wicked nature; then the horror cinema emphasizes the processes of the psychological activities, which are reflected in or motivated by the frightful narratives; through the studies of the horror film, finally the critics want to explore the genre for the social and political ideology’s allegories. (Worland, 2007)

In the criticism samples for this research, there are two Hollywood horror films have been criticized. In the criticism of Roman Polanski’s horror film Rosemary’s Baby (1968), Pedro Blas Gonzalez points out that this film is “a complex film that works on several levels” at the beginning of the article, and he continues, “On a patent level, it evokes the horror and fright that audiences seek in films of this genre. Yet this description is rather misleading in that this film’s horror is all of a “close room”, psychological variety. Ultimately, the film can be regarded as an exquisite study of the relation between appearances and reality, showing us how the careful planning of crafty, evil people clouds young mother Rosemary’s sense of morality.”

Another horror and crime film, Fritz Lang’s House by the River (1950), is criticized by David Cairns, he demonstrates that “House by the River is a gothic melodrama, and it marshals its limited resources to create a rich and pervasive atmosphere of decay and
corruption, even though the threadbare production values often show.”

Although the horror film is the genre that not only attracts the general audiences but also the genre critics, for Chinese-language cinema, the horror film is not so attractive for western critics, because traditional Confucius culture and the cinema censorship of Chinese government restrict make the great pressure for the development of Chinese horror film, which leads to few filmmakers have the motivation to create the horror film (Guan, 2009). The condition of horror film is better in Hong Kong than in mainland China, in 1980s, the horror films appeared in Hong Kong, and after 1990s, the Hong Kong horror film is quite popular in Chinese language districts; and the themes of the Hong Kong horror film are considerably various. However, the quality of these films is not very high, and because of the culture difference, it is not easy for the western critics to understand the films with the context of Chinese culture.

3.4 Collective Context Logic

In the research samples of the Classical Hollywood cinema criticisms, there is not any comment on the film within the collective context logic, which is significantly different from the criticism of Chinese-language cinema. There are two reasons could be conjectured: the first one is that the western people are familiar with the Classical Hollywood cinemas, they do not have to know them through the film festivals and the awards; but the Chinese-language cinema is known by the western audiences and critics generally through the international film festivals or the international awards. The other reason is that the attendance of international film festivals and getting the awards are less important for Hollywood cinema than for the Chinese-language cinema, the critics may believe that for evaluating the Hollywood cinema, which are most important are the technique, the theme, the narrative, the auteur and so on. However, for Chinese-language cinema, the international awards could be considered as the approval from western cinema world.
Conclusion

The main purpose of this research was to find out how do the western cinema critics evaluate the Chinese-language cinema, what the criteria used by them, and whether they use different standards to judge the Chinese-language cinema and the Classical Hollywood cinema. The research analyzed the criticisms in the frame of the Value Regimes theory; in Chapter 2, the criteria for the critics evaluate the cinemas are explored in the four value regimes in detail.

1) Within the regime of singular content, the analysis has showed that the techniques of filmmaking are quite important for a good Chinese-language cinema. As the combination of art and technology, cinema has a high requirement for the techniques; only within the excellent techniques, the cinema can clearly express the theme and idea, and convey the emotion to the audiences. Through the research of the criticisms of the journal “Senses of Cinema”, what can be found is that the almost all the critics take account of the techniques of the filmmaking when they critique the Chinese Language films, and the they discuss them from several aspects, such as the lighting, the camerawork, the visual effect and the music.

For the lighting, there are several cinema criticisms have mentioned it, like Song of Exile, The Puppetmaster and In the Heat of the Sun. The critics indicate that by using the lights in an effective way, the cinema gets the ability of expressing the emotional mood, and crating the appropriate atmosphere for the theme and the environment of the cinema.

According to the research, as the basic technique of the filmmaking, the camerawork is also significant for evaluating a cinema. Many cinema critics indicate that the good camerawork and shot ensure the high-quality images in their criticism of the Chinese-language cinema. Specifically, the criticisms refer the distance from the camera to the subject, like the The Puppetmaster, Yi Yi and In the Mood for Love, with different camera distance, the directors can achieve different aims for their films. And by analyzing the comments on the shots of the Chinese Language films, the long shot is quite appreciated by the critics, since the long shot can make the film more objective which is good for the realistic films. In addition to that, some other cinematography is also considered by the critics, for instance, the “resourceful camerawork” of Fruit Chan’s film Made in Hong Kong; the “smooth transition of camera” of Wang Xiaoshuai’s film Beijing Bicycle”and the “soft-focus” of Tsui Hark’s Shanghai Blues are critiqued in the criticisms.

Another technique considered by cinema critics is the visual effect, and two aspects of the visual effect are discussed in the criticisms, colour and settings of space. The colour of the image can influence the mood of the cinema, and give the implication of the period or the background to the spectators, especially for the history film and
nostalgia film. The criticisms of Chinese-language cinemas, such as Zu: Warriors from the Magic Mountain, Infernal Affairs and In the Mood for Love. Furthermore, the critic Stephen Teo praises the settings in the mise en scène of the film The Fate of Lee Khan, since the settings is one of the elements that will make the influence for the visual effects.

Moreover, the result of the research shows that the music also plays an important role in the filmmaking, which serves as reflecting the specialty of the film’s period, and recalling the audiences’ memory of that historical period. Additionally, the good music can be used for impacting the emotion of the audiences, and conveying the message for the narrative. In the criticisms of the journal, quite a lot of critics have indicated that the good music is a significantly useful element of a Chinese Language film, the music of the films In the Heat of the Sun, Platform, Farewell My Concubine and so on, is considered as a key role in the technique category.

Therefore, the techniques of the cinema could be seen as the criterion for evaluating the Chinese-language cinema, which means the good cinema have to be provided with effective techniques; by analyzing with Greima’s binary opposition, if the techniques of the cinema are ineffective, it can hardly be judged as a good cinema. And the effective techniques include the effective lighting, the high-quality camerawork, the good visual effect and good film music.

According to this result, the western critics expect the perfect techniques of Chinese-language cinemas; the filmmakers need to put in time and effort on perfecting the techniques of filmmaking if they want their films getting more attraction from western world. In the process of filmmaking, for ensuring the film achieving the ideal effect and high level, the filmmaker need to think about every aspect including the lighting, the shot angle, the focal length, the cutting, the setting and so forth. Furthermore, the film academy colleges also can do something to perfect the quality of teaching, and improve the hardware facilities of school, for cultivating more and more excellent film talents for the Chinese-language cinema.

2) In the singular context logic, the analysis of this part has demonstrated that the filmmaker or the auteur of the Chinese-language cinema is a factor for evaluating the cinema. Generally, the auteur has little restraint for creating what their want to make, and expressing their personal ideas, which is appreciated by the critics. Through the research, some of the Chinese Language filmmakers have special attraction for the western critics, such as Hou Hsiao-hsien, Wong Kar-wai, and Tsai Ming-liang, they have very particular personal style; their films are classified as the art cinema, which are basically irrelevant to entertainment. For Chinese-language cinema directors, the critics prefer the art cinema directors to the commercial cinema directors.

However, several commercial cinema directors are also welcome by western critics, because of their personal artistic characteristics, which made their films have more
value than the general commercial ones. The films of Chinese Language filmmakers Johnnie To, John Woo and Tsui Hark have been talked many times by the critics, although they are not the art cinema filmmakers, with the special personal style, such as the particular narrative structure, the exquisite image and distinct editing, they are also praised by the critics.

Therefore, the Chinese art cinema directors are more easily attracted the western critics than the commercial filmmakers, and the commercial cinema directors with personal artistic style have more attraction than those without it.

With this result, the western critics expect the auteur of Chinese-language cinema and the distinct personal characteristic filmmakers, which could give the Chinese-language cinema institutions the suggestions that exploit more cinema talents and make the immense space for them to make the films. In addition to that, the government needs to make the policies to support the filmmakers with their film creation.

3) Within the collective content logic, the criteria have referred many respects of the Chinese-language cinema, such as the narrative, the ending, the theme and the genre, for each section, the critics state clearly their attitude and preference for the films.

For the narrative of the Chinese Language film, the research find that the complex plot in the narrative is important for a good cinema, the criticisms of Tsui Hark’s two films “Time and Tide” and “Once Upon a Time in China” have indicated that the complex plot of the films make a good effect for the expression of theme and transmission of intention. Like the plot, the critics take account of the ending of the film as the criteria of evaluation as well, by analyzing their criticisms, such as “The Code of the Mission” the creative and open ending is considered as one standard for a good film, which makes the audiences to think deeply for the motif and the intention of filmmakers.

About the theme of Chinese-language cinema, the result shows that the critics’ preference is the nostalgia film, which has the background of the Chinese special history and the characteristics of the specific period. The criticisms of “Senses of Cinema” mentioned many Chinese nostalgia films, such as To Live, Farewell My Concubine, In the Mood for Love and The Time to Live and the Time to Die. According to the theory of binary opposition, the contrary of the nostalgia film is the future world theme, which has less attraction for the critics.

And another theme is relevant to the Chinese traditional culture, which is much different from western culture and attractive for western people. The criticisms of Zhang Yimou’s films Raise the Red Lantern and Red Sorghum both refers the Chinese Confucian culture of the films, this culture is the peculiarity of Chinese culture, and has the long history and dominated position. Thus the films with the special Chinese
culture theme can attract the western critics more easily.

Then, for the genre section, the western critics also have the preference of some special genres of Chinese-language cinema, the research demonstrate that they prefer the Kong Fu, Wuxia (martial arts) and the gangster films. As the very “Chinese” genre, the Kong Fu and Wuxia film has unique meaning for western people, the critics talks several Chinese films of these two genres, like Once Upon a Time in China, The Fate of Lee Khan, The Valiant Ones and House of Flying Daggers, which has shown that for western people, the Kong Fu and Wuxia genres are always the representation of Chinese film genre. Besides those genres, the gangster genre is also preferred by western critics, especially the Hong Kong gangster cinema. The Hong Kong gangster film can be seen as the most Hong Kong style film, from John Woo’s gangster film in 1980s to Johnnie To’s film in 2000s, the gangster film play a significant role in Hong Kong cinema. The critics of the journal have commented on lots of the gangster film, like The Mission, Exiled, Running out of Time and the trilogy of Infernal Affairs.

In terms of the research result, the western critics expect the Chinese-language cinemas possess the distinct Chinese characteristics, thus the suggestion for Chinese cinema workers is to make the films on the basis of Chinese culture context and find the creative way to convey or develop the quintessence of Chinese culture in the films.

4) In the collective context, the result of the research represent that the international awards, the international film festivals and the overseas distribution can add the value for the Chinese-language cinemas. Many critics has referred the cinemas that they critique get the nomination of Academy Rewards, the Golden Lion Awards, the Golden Bear Awards and the National Society of Film Critics’ Awards. They consider the awards and the attendance of important international film festivals as the criterion for critiquing the films. Relatively speaking, the western critics much more appreciate the Chinese Language films with the international awards or with the international influences.

Consequently, the Chinese-language cinema can be more active on international stage: the cinema institution should make more and more films take part in the international film festivals, and the companies also need to make effort to sell more films to foreign markets and do the marketing promotion for the films in the foreign countries. However, the premise of all of these is improving the quality of the Chinese-language cinemas.

5) Comparing the criteria of the cinema evaluation for Chinese-language cinema and the Classical Hollywood cinema, the research approached it in each value regime. In the singular content, like the criteria of good Chinese-language cinemas, the effective techniques are also necessary for the good Hollywood cinemas. But there are some differences in detail, such as the colour, the screen composition. In the singular
context logic, as same as the Chinese-language cinema, the auteur with unique style of the Classical Hollywood cinema is also praised by critics, what is different is that the Hollywood filmmakers are given the positive evaluation by the critics are not totally art cinema directors, not like the Chinese Language art cinema directors who get a more special position from the critics than the commercial directors. Within the collective content regime, the critics consider about the unique style of the Hollywood cinemas, also appreciate the good narrative and plot, like they evaluate the Chinese cinemas. But for the genre, the western and the horror cinema, which are attractive for the critics, are totally different from the representing genres of Chinese cinemas. Last, the research finds out that the critics do not care about the issues of the collective context regime, which is quite distinct from the criticisms of Chinese cinemas.
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