

WILEY BLACKWELL COMPANIONS TO
NATIONAL CINEMAS



A Companion to
Hong Kong Cinema

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WILEY Blackwell

Foreword

Ackbar Abbas

This landmark *Companion to Hong Kong Cinema* is a genuinely collaborative effort, building on and extending the critical and scholarly work done in the past two decades. One of its chief collaborators is the city itself. Hong Kong cinema we might say grew out of an attempt to engage with and respond to the city's complex and paradoxical history. Or we might say the exact opposite: that it grew out of an attempt to ignore and forget an all-too-pressing history by providing distraction and simple entertainment. In either case, the city remains an elusive presence whose effects we can feel even before we understand their causes.

The editors of this volume aptly remind us that the history of Hong Kong cinema dates back to at least 1909. This reminder is important if only to free us from the illusion that the Hong Kong cinema began fully formed with Stanley Kwan, Ann Hui, and Wong Kar-wai. Nevertheless, a critical history would have to address both continuities and breaks. When these filmmakers emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, Hong Kong cinema was in the process of transforming itself from a local cinema with at best a regional distribution, to a transnational cinema viewed and applauded in many other parts of the world. The puzzle that we are still trying to unravel, and that this volume addresses in a variety of ways, is how this transformation came about.

One partial answer is to see the transformation of the Hong Kong cinema as part of a larger spatial transformation, of which the 1997 handover is itself an instance: an important but not determinate instance. Thus it could be argued that

the Hong Kong cinema became transnational not by abandoning the space of the local but by *dislocating* it and showing implicitly that the local does not have a local habitation and a name. Dislocation means that we cannot feel home at home; home loses its specificity, but by the same token homelessness loses its pathos. It is Hong Kong cinema's evocation of this sense of dislocation that elicits an immediate intuitive response in New York, Buenos Aires, Johannesburg, or Beirut. The recent trend noted by some contributors towards the co-production of "Hong Kong films" can be regarded, too, as yet another exemplification of spatial dislocation. (We saw this earlier in mainland cinema when Chen Kaige could no longer rely on state sponsorship after Tian'anmen to make films like *Yellow Earth*, and started making co-produced blockbusters like *Farewell My Concubine*.) Co-production suggests that the identity of Hong Kong or Hong Kong cinema is not some kind of platonic essence, but is made out of changing spatial contradictions and differences.

These spatial changes, unlike a special date, are not immediately visible or intelligible. They are first registered in however inchoate a form on the affective level - provided we understand affect not just as a synonym for emotion, but rather as emotion-without-a-name, or as emotion that we do not yet or no longer understand, and all the more intense for that. Affect is something different from "a structure of feeling" because it is the seemingly arbitrary manifestation of affect that points us towards the perception that the structures themselves are changing. It is not weird psychology but skewed space that produces strange affects, which can take the form of anomalous behavior, or the eruption of the monstrous in the everyday, or the making of dumplings out of human placenta. Affect does not obey the law of genre. We are already seeing in the current Hong Kong cinema a tentative fusion of what is

usually regarded as two opposed genres, the documentary and the horror film. Can we expect to see in future the documentary as horror film, the horror film as documentary?

To track the space of Hong Kong cinema particularly after 1997, the Companion enlists the aid of theory, in a spirit not unlike Yeats who wrote that “in dreams begin responsibilities.” Responsible theory is not the same as critical pieties that sound radical and correct. When we denounce “colonialism” in Hong Kong, as we still need to do, we should remember that we are dealing not with the imperialist version but with a mutant form, an “X-Colonialism” that has developed a kind of immunity to the usual remedies and critiques leveled at it. Theory therefore needs new terms and frameworks, but it also needs to be inflected by memory: not memory as perfect recall or as the past caught in a freeze frame, but memory as the relation between fragments of the past, or as something important that we only half remember. As Godard has shown in *Histoire(s) du Cinema*, it is not history that explains cinema, but cinema that makes history legible. This Companion gives us reason to believe that the Hong Kong cinema in the years to come will be equal to the task.

Introduction

Esther M.K. Cheung, Gina Marchetti, and Esther C.M. Yau

Time haunts Hong Kong cinema in a peculiar way that sets it apart from other film cultures. Critics talk about it in terms of “time pieces” (Stephens 1996), “poets of time” (Rayns 1995), “translating time” (Lim 2001), “violence of time” (Law 2006), and “marking time” (Ma 2010). As Esther M.K. Cheung and Chu Yiu-wai (2004) remind us, Hong Kong film exists at a time of crisis “between home and world.” As a colony on “borrowed time” and as a “Special Administrative Region (SAR),” then and now, Hong Kong marks time in several inevitable shifts in its political identity. Economic booms and busts, imperial twists and turns, postcolonial pains and global migrations give it a timeline unique in world cinema. Hong Kong films narrate our postmodern present and open a window to exilic nostalgia, urban (un)consciousness, everyday imaginations, collective memories, and cultural representations of the past that speak to audiences far beyond the territory’s borders. Filmmakers put “time” on screen as indicated by the titles of films such as *Fulltime Killer* (2003), *Once Upon a Time in China* (1991–97), *Time and Tide* (2000), *Ashes of Time* (1994) and *As Time Goes By* (1997).

However, looking at Hong Kong film in “real” time gives pause. The year 2009 may or may not have been the centenary of Hong Kong cinema.¹ The Benjamin Brodsky-produced comic short, “Stealing a Roast Duck,” no longer exists, but it may, indeed, mark the beginning of Hong Kong’s local film production in 1909. Or, maybe it does not. Evidence of its date of production, plot, and very existence remains sketchy at best. Picking 2009 as the date to

celebrate, however, might not have been completely arbitrary. The centenary of Hong Kong cinema seemed to be in very good company. The year 2009 marked the 90th anniversary of China's May Fourth Movement, the 80th anniversary of the beginning of the Great Depression, the 70th anniversary of Hitler's invasion of Poland and a banner year for Hollywood film (*Wizard of Oz* [Victor Fleming, 1939], *Stagecoach* [John Ford, 1939], *Gone With the Wind* [Victor Fleming, 1939], *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* [Frank Capra, 1939]). It was also the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the 50th anniversary of the Great Leap Forward, the 30th anniversary of the Democracy Wall Movement and the beginning of the Hong Kong New Wave (Ann Hui's *The Secret* [1979], Tsui Hark's *Butterfly Murders* [1979]), the 20th anniversary of the June Fourth Tian'anmen Square crackdown, and the 10th anniversary of the return of Macau to Chinese sovereignty.

Surveying Hong Kong cinema's history from 1909, then, highlights the importance of its geopolitical position - from Hollywood and Europe to its neighbors China and Macau. However, the uncertainty surrounding 1909 also indicates that Hong Kong cinema can never be fully "known" and that its mysteries can make it both a frustrating and rewarding object of study. Perpetually in "crisis," prey to its commercial position vis-à-vis Shanghai and Hollywood, and subject to the vicissitudes of history from British colonialism to its current status as an SAR of the PRC, Hong Kong cinema tantalizes the scholar with its many enigmas.

Any companion to the tumultuous history and current state of Hong Kong cinema must be willing to engage critically with the known and unknown of the territory's film culture, face the controversies, and move forward in a spirit that accepts contradictions as inevitable. As a companion on the

journey to appreciating Hong Kong's place in global film culture, this book collects new research on the cinema. It marks time by providing a framework for understanding Hong Kong cinema through a survey of the extant scholarship as well as providing essays that attempt to break new ground. However, it goes beyond chronicling the history and mapping the territory associated with Hong Kong film studies by matching current critical and theoretical debates in global film studies with cutting-edge research on Hong Kong cinema. It navigates a path between what is known about Hong Kong film (as well as what may likely never be known) and how we can best make sense of what we do know. It also offers tools for the future exploration of Hong Kong film in light of emerging technologies, industrial practices, and economic, social, and political changes.

The primary aim of this book is to situate current scholarship on Hong Kong cinema within the vortex of theoretical debates in contemporary film and cultural studies. For example, instead of providing a linear chronology of Hong Kong cinema, this companion offers a look at how evolving approaches to historiography have shaped the way we understand Hong Kong film history. Rather than look at the history of the depiction of women in Hong Kong film, the chapters collected here explore how changing research on gender, the body, and sexual orientation alter the ways in which we analyze sexual difference in Hong Kong cinema. Developments in theories of (post)colonialism, postmodernism, globalization, neoliberalism, Orientalism, and nationalization transform our understanding of the economics and politics of the Hong Kong's film industry, its relation to global flows of labor and capital, and its position in relation to the UK and the PRC as well as the local government. Concepts of crisis, diaspora, nostalgia, exile, and trauma offer opportunities to

rethink accepted ways of understanding Hong Kong's popular genres and stars. Approaches to deciphering the everyday urban space provide insights on the aesthetics and politics of Hong Kong as a locality within global-national-local transformations. The book also poses philosophical questions concerning how we understand what we see on screen in Hong Kong cinema and how we make sense of this knowledge. Building on this theoretical framework, the volume explores various aspects of Hong Kong film culture within geographic, aesthetic, institutional, cultural, and scholarly contexts. Hong Kong cinema provides a very rich site to generate theoretical discourse in dialogue with film and cultural studies.

Taking a theoretical approach to Hong Kong cinema is not unprecedented. Paul Bowman's *Theorizing Bruce Lee* (2010) immediately comes to mind, and many scholars have engaged Hong Kong cinema with an eye to contemporary debates in cultural theory (e.g., Ackbar Abbas and the "déjà disparu," Esther Cheung on Benjamin's "moment of danger," Evans Chan, Stephen Teo, and Tony Williams on postmodernism, Meaghan Morris on Bruce Lee's pedagogical practices, David Martin-Jones on Deleuze and Jackie Chan, Rey Chow and sentiment). However, this theoretical turn is rather recent and coincides with the spotlight turned on Hong Kong film in the years leading up to the 1997 Handover. There is a need to look back as well as forward to clear a path for new research.

Two phases of scholarly interest in Hong Kong cinema in English shape the field historically. The first coincides with the phenomenal commercial advance of Hong Kong martial arts films outside of the Asian market in the early 1970s. Beginning with the breakout success of *Five Fingers of Death / King Boxer* (1972), it soon reached its peak around the time of Bruce Lee's death in 1973. Although not directly related to this phenomenon, Jay Leyda's history of

Chinese cinema *Dianying: Electric Shadows – An Account of Films and the Film Audience in China* appeared in 1972. Even though the book devotes only a single chapter to Hong Kong cinema and draws heavily on Cheng Jihua's Chinese-language book *The History of the Development of Chinese Cinema* (1963), Leyda does set the stage for many of the historical works to follow that place Hong Kong film within the broader context of Chinese cinema. Verina Glaessner's *Kungfu: Cinema of Vengeance*, written for a popular audience in 1974, takes a sobering look at exploitation within Hong Kong cinema, the structure of the industry, the representation of gender in the martial arts genre, the nature of the film audience, and the struggles faced by filmmakers and performances at all levels. Ian Jarvie's 1977 *Window on Hong Kong: A Sociological Study of the Hong Kong Film Industry and Its Audience* offers a more comprehensive overview that goes beyond Leyda's need to link Hong Kong to developments in the People's Republic and Glaessner's exclusive focus on *kung fu*. He takes a more systematic approach to Cantonese- and Mandarin-language production, the rise of popular genres, and the importance of female stars within the studio system. However, Jarvie's focus on the postwar colonial environment and films made primarily in the 1960s and early 1970s only gestures toward the phenomenal changes that would occur with the worldwide embrace of Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan, and Hong Kong's action cinema.

The regular publication of bilingual catalogues by the Hong Kong International Film Festival, which began in 1978, contributed to the understanding of Hong Kong film culture in a more sustained way. However, aside from some scattered essays primarily on martial arts cinema, serious attention from international film scholars only began to pick up again and produce monographs on Hong Kong film around the time of the Handover in 1997. The 1990s saw

the rise of the second phase of Hong Kong New Wave cinema with filmmakers such as Wong Kar-wai, Stanley Kwan, and Clara Law, the belated embrace of Jackie Chan outside the Asian region, where he had been a major star for decades, and the growth in international popularity of Hong Kong cult cinema featuring “heroic bloodshed,” Category III excess, and Oriental exoticism. However, scholars took some time to catch up with these developments. It seems remarkable, for instance, to realize that twenty years separates Jarvie’s book from Stephen Teo’s *Hong Kong Cinema: The Extra Dimensions* (1997). However, given that 1997 marked the end of British colonial rule, it comes as no surprise this date would provide the apposite moment to consider the history, contributions, current state and likely future of one of the world’s most productive and varied motion picture industries.

As the combined titles of David Bordwell’s *Planet Hong Kong: Popular Cinema and the Art of Entertainment* (2000) and Lisa Odham Stokes and Michael Hoover’s *City on Fire: Hong Kong Cinema* (1999) indicate, Hong Kong film became a hot property globally in the years leading up to the end of the millennium. Many other fine books dealing with Hong Kong cinema have appeared since 1997 as well. However, most focus on specific filmmakers (Johnnie To, John Woo, Tsui Hark, Wong Kar-wai), genres (horror, martial arts films), studios (Shaw Brothers), periods (pre- and post-1997 cinema), or single films (the New Hong Kong Cinema series from Hong Kong University Press). This volume moves in another direction by taking up the major theoretical debates that define film and cultural studies today in order to chart a new course for future research on Hong Kong cinema.

Previously published collections on Hong Kong film have gestured in this direction. Poshek Fu and David Desser’s

The Cinema of Hong Kong: History, Arts, Identity (2000) enlarges the field by juxtaposing historical and auteur studies with consideration of Hong Kong film as urban cinema inflected by transnational flows, diasporic formations, postmodern aesthetics, and nostalgic reflections on the colonial past. Esther C.M. Yau's introduction to her anthology, *At Full Speed: Hong Kong Cinema in a Borderless World* (2001), highlights cultural globalization, translocal as well as regional connections, and puts forth the world city notion to conceptualize Hong Kong cinema in a more sophisticated way. Esther M.K. Cheung and Chu Yiu-wai's *Between Home and World: A Reader in Hong Kong Cinema* (2004) examines how the notion of the "crisis cinema" provides a critical paradigm for investigating Hong Kong cinema through a combined lens of the global, national, and the local. Gina Marchetti and Tan See Kam, editors, also explore the global reach of Hong Kong film using Hollywood as a compass in their volume, *Hong Kong Film, Hollywood and the New Global Cinema: No Film is an Island* (2007). *Chinese Connections: Critical Perspectives on Film, Identity and Diaspora* (2009), edited by Tan See Kam, Peter X. Feng and Gina Marchetti, place Hong Kong cinema in regional and translocal networks as well as within Chinese diasporas. Meaghan Morris, Li Siu-leung, and Stephen Ching-kiu Chan's edited volume, *Hong Kong Connections: Transnational Imagination in Action Cinema* (2005), places Hong Kong action film genre in translocal, global reception, and cultural discourses. Lo Kwai-cheung's *Chinese Face/Off: The Transnational Popular Culture of Hong Kong* (2005) explores the ethnic borderlands of Hong Kong's popular discourse. Edited by Esther Cheung, Gina Marchetti, and Tan See Kam, *Hong Kong Screenscapes: From the New Wave to the Digital Frontier* (2011) is the first of its kind to offer alternative paths and theoretical perspectives for the

study of Hong Kong's commercial, art-house, and independent screen productions.

Some studies of local cinema and individual films also put forward theoretical premises that pertain to locality and transcultural implications, including work by Steve Fore, Pang Laikwan, Michael Curtin, Julian Stringer, Leon Hunt, Christina Klein, Kin-Yan Szeto, Kenneth Chan, Martha Nochimson, Jenny Lau, Sheldon Lu, and Zhang Yingjin, among others. Other have stretched the theoretical boundaries of Hong Kong cinema with studies involving gender and sexuality, including the work of Yau Ching, Helen Hok-sze Leung, Audrey Yue, Olivia Khoo, Yvonne Tasker, Li Siu-leung, David Eng, Song Hwee Lim, Tan See Kam, and Chris Berry, among others. Looking at independent filmmaking and the urbane, Esther M.K. Cheung's *Fruit Chan's Made in Hong Kong* (2009) provides theoretical views on memory and identity; many of the other volumes in the Hong Kong cinema series also take the theoretical foundations of inquiry into this area very seriously. The scholarship suggests a vibrant field of study. This volume's unique contributions are built on this exciting conceptual work and they make advances on what has been established. By highlighting the often contentious debates that shape current thinking about film as a medium and its possible future(s), this companion provides a theoretical platform and critical blueprint for the ongoing study of Hong Kong film.

Hong Kong cinema poses some particularly thorny questions for a field dominated by studies of Hollywood and European cinema. Given the prominence of "national" cinema research in which language, ethnicity, geographic borders, and cultural identity become paramount in understanding specific films, identifying Hong Kong cinema in relation to a specific "nation" poses some serious problems. Moreover, Hong Kong boasts a global standing

and transnational production and distribution network that places it in competition with Hollywood in some regional markets. Hong Kong, like Hollywood, is a cinema that has been shaped by exiles, immigrants, and diasporic migrants throughout its history, and the continuing exchange of technology and talent within Asia as well as with the West needs to be understood theoretically in relation to postcolonial flows, hybrid cultures as well as global capitalism. Kwai-cheung Lo, for example, calls Hong Kong an “ethnic borderland,” and this position on the edges of Chinese identity must be taken into account. Stars, such as Bruce Lee, Michelle Yeoh, and Jackie Chan, attain global celebrity while others outperform Hollywood personalities regionally.

Hong Kong, as Asia’s so-called “world city,” itself is a cosmopolitan icon and a major “star” of the territory’s cinema. Within Hong Kong as well as Hollywood film, the city’s skyline serves as shorthand for non-Western urbanity, locality, modernity, and occasionally dystopian imaginations of the future in films such as the Japanese anime *Ghost in the Shell* (1995) and the Hollywood blockbuster *The Dark Knight* (2008). Its space borders China but extends into the world beyond in a way that other Asian cities do not, while simultaneously Hong Kong hosts very local popular expressions of humor, as seen in films by Stephen Chow and the animated series McDull, Canto-pop music and dance films, and the ritualized annual viewing of the Lunar New Year comedies. It has a local stake in political issues that have a global reach, including questions of the “rule of law,” representative democracy, neoliberal economics, the global penetration of consumer capitalism, and the continuing importance of feminism, LGBTQ and anti-imperial agitation.

Hong Kong’s commercial industry may be perpetually in “crisis,” but out of that has come a lively, varied, and

mature film culture. This book attempts to take the full spectrum of Hong Kong cinema into account as it juxtaposes commercial features with experimental video, cartoon animation with CGI-simulated live action, documentary production with spectacular star vehicles, local comedies with transnational star-studded blockbusters, and mainland co-productions with activist agit-prop interventions. In the process, it pushes current film theory to reconsider definitions of “global,” “transnational,” “diasporic,” and “accented” cinema and expand considerations of urban, feminist, queer cinema in light of Hong Kong’s contribution to the international New Wave, independent, festival, and art film as well as the new documentary and micro-cinema movements. Hong Kong intervenes in global film aesthetics on multiple fronts, and this book spotlights highly visible genres, stars, and auteurs as well as occult gems and more modest cinematic endeavors. From the darlings of Cannes to the vulgar trash on the back shelf of the soon-to-be-defunct video store, Hong Kong pushes the parameters of scholarly understanding of film form as well as camp culture.

This book features innovative, previously unpublished essays written by scholars up to the challenge of theorizing Hong Kong cinema for the future. These contributors have demonstrated expertise in the field, and they offer their perspectives on the key debates in Hong Kong film studies. Many of the chapters feature a polemical incursion into ongoing controversies in the field, while others outline the broader parameters of these debates. The book is divided into six parts, each featuring a short commentary that highlights major issues and emerging trends linking the chapters to larger conversations in the field. More interventions than summaries, these provocative short postscripts take readers beyond the parameters of the

individual chapters and point them to topics requiring further discussion, analysis, and debate.

Part I: Critical Paradigms: Defining Hong Kong Cinema Studies

[Part I](#) includes essays which explore Hong Kong cinema from both historical and theoretical perspectives. It establishes four critical paradigms – the national, the global, the urban, and the ethnic – as focal points for analyzing Hong Kong cinema. With both a historical survey of the critical literature and an original angle of articulating that field of study, the essays map out a terrain for a film and cultural studies approach, and provide an overall framework for readers to explore crucial cultural issues in the subsequent sections of this companion.

In the light of Hong Kong-PRC co-productions in the new millennium, the section begins and ends with the chapters that deal with new shifts in Hong Kong cinema. Esther Yau writes about the attraction and appropriations of Hong Kong movies amongst viewers of the mainland to consider a complex connectivity in the cinemas of Hong Kong and China as one phenomenon of cultural globalization. With the notions of managed globalization and transregional flexibility, her chapter examines “cultural renationalization” and “reinvention” in co-production as a practice with imbrications of state, industry, and identity that are manifested in the tensions of partnership, assimilation, and difference. Dealing with the urban topography in the new millennial films, Esther Cheung offers “crisis cinema” as a critical paradigm to examine the intricate relationship between urbanity, globality, and postcoloniality. The study of “topophilia” as a new structure of feeling and locality as threatened and crisis-ridden sheds new light on the dynamics of the post-handover cultural milieu and its everyday space. This spotlight on quotidian culture, everydayness, and locality find its resonance in other chapters in the section on narratives and aesthetics. Kwai-

cheung Lo investigates the topic of ethnic borderland in which multiple meanings of ethnicity and their representations chart the process of territorialization and reterritorialization. With this critical paradigm, he proposes to view the cultural politics played out in ethnic bodies as what illuminate otherness and exoticism that are relevant to discussions of gender and sexuality as well as critical geographies in the subsequent sections of this companion. Mirana Szeto and Yun-chung Chen take a critical view of the ways neoliberal ideology and “mainlandization” have restructured the industry, practices, and co-produced films of Hong Kong. Their chapter investigates the cultural politics in a post-1997 “cinema of anxiety.” Sheldon Lu’s commentary on the critical paradigms in this section proposes to include new terms within the transnational frame to encompass the modes of existence in contemporary Hong Kong cinema on national, local, regional, and global levels.

Part II: Critical Geographies

In this part, the critical and creative geographies of Hong Kong cinema are mapped beyond the confines of the city, its identity, and its well-discussed relationship with Hollywood. The essays re-historicize and theorize transnational Hong Kong cinema through examining its connections with Japan since the 1960s, incorporation of new regionalism of Asia through exotic Asian bodies, and its translocal co-production in the Chinese mainland. The essays challenge the cultural nationalist characterization of Hong Kong cinema by attending to the new economic and power structures, or geopolitics, of the region, and examine the agendas and practices of expanded creative geographies in films and in programming of the Hong Kong International Film Festival.

Olivia Khoo investigates the regional imaginary of Hong Kong cinema that defines itself vis-à-vis exotic Asian bodies, the latter as figures of a Hong Kong identity that incorporates Asian visuality, accented dialects, culture, economic, and political imperatives. Kimberley Wing-yee Choi and Steve Fore examine complications in local consciousness and map translocal geographies through the inventive McDull feature-length animation series produced by a small Hong Kong based franchise between 2001 and 2012. The stories and creatively fanciful animation topography illuminate the shifts in boundaries and identities following co-production practices with mainland partners. In response to a rigid state ideology, the films' counter-strategies ascertain the importance of place-making along with translocal geographies opening themselves to multiple horizons. David Desser examines Hong Kong-Japanese connections in terms of the local cinema's historical strategies of transforming its films and styles into a cosmopolitan and global entity and re-

historicizes Hong Kong cinema's transnational achievement beyond its well known borrowings and surpassing of Hollywood's pictures. The essay's rich references and examples characterize Japan as a modernizing and regenerating source for Hong Kong martial arts films with the stories, specialized locations, and a model in producing films for a regional audience and festival audience. Cindy Hing-yuk Wong discusses creative and critical geographies through programming in the Hong Kong International Film Festival as a laboratory of globalization and a unique node of the local and the global that are heavily entangled with the economics, networks, and personal connections in the world of film festivals. Evans Chan details the emergence of Hong Kong cinema as a geo-cinema which has been nourished by cultural forms rejected by the modernist, legislative, state-building center of the post-1911 Chinese nation-state. Stephen Yiu-wai Chu elucidates the concepts and method of critical geographies, and he highlights the salient contribution of each essay in this section to understanding the shape and future of Hong Kong cinema.

Part III: The Gendered Body and Queer Configurations

The analysis of gender and sexualities has taken a distinctively global turn in recent years focusing on transnational sexualities beyond borders, redefinitions of gender made flexible by global migration, and intimacy straining the boundaries of the nation, the family, and the couple. This section reflects and re-historicizes studies of gender and sexualities (straight, queer, metrosexual, and amorphous) through taking up questions of local cultural politics as well as that of Western and Chinese sexual norms. The chapters also bring existing critical discourse on gender and sexuality in Hong Kong films into conversation with critical elaborations of corporeality, performance, memory, and intimacy.

Gina Marchetti begins the section by considering some of the ways in which Hong Kong women filmmakers have taken up feminist themes and gender politics in the decade since the establishment of the HKSAR in 1997. Using three films by Ann Hui, she sets the stage for the chapters that follow by looking at the way in which Hong Kong's particular blend of cosmopolitanism and feminism has been translated on screen by the territory's most celebrated woman filmmaker. Focusing on a younger generation of filmmakers, Helen Leung employs queer critical studies to interrogate the way intimacy and space find visual expression the HKSAR. Audrey Yue moves the consideration of queer issues into the Chinese diaspora by looking at Hong Kong filmmakers' treatment of the domestic sphere. Shu-Mei Shih responds to the way in which the border between Hong Kong and the Chinese mainland figures in all three chapters as gender and sexuality take on new meanings in a postcolonial setting.

Part IV: Hong Kong Stars

In this part, a selection of Hong Kong stars and star texts are in conversation with recent scholarship on ethnonationalism, regional imagination, cultural politics, geopolitical locality, and post-DVD textuality. The essays rehistoricize and resituate star studies of Hong Kong cinema in the intertextual materials and intersecting discourses in local, global, and national frames.

Paul Bowman theorizes the resurgence of Bruce Lee in recent Hong Kong martial arts films as an ethnonationalist specter in the reworking of China as a filmic construction. The essay examines previous scholarship on the influence of Bruce Lee's fight choreography in world cinema and analyzes the recent and successful Ip Man films among others to illustrate the structuring of visual, cinematic, and dramatic quotations of Bruce Lee in films that make a metonym of Hong Kong as an economically successful conduit of East and West. Tony Williams examines the stardom of actor and director Wang Yu as a transitional martial arts star representing regional imagination. The first detailed study of martial arts masochism and obsession vis-à-vis Wang Yu's trajectory in notable Shaw Brothers productions, the essay combines film genre and historical scholarship with star studies to re-evaluate the scope of Hong Kong martial arts cinema studies. Natalia Siu-hung Chan makes a close analysis of the cross-dressing performances of Leslie Cheung and Anita Mui. Using theories of flexible dualities and performance, the essay establishes the stars' charisma in two groundbreaking paradigms in Hong Kong's screen and stage performance history. Kin-Yan Szeto makes a provocative examination of Faye Wong's multiple, contradictory cinematic personae on screen in the films of Wong Kar-wai. Faye Wong's image of coolness does more than leverage a paternalistic economy

but amounts to disrupting dichotomies of tradition and modernity, local and global, as well as the dominant narratives of nationalism and neocolonialism. Gary Bettinson reviews existing scholarship on Hong Kong stardom and advocates “a poetics of performance” as a critical paradigm for Chinese star studies of film with the focus on acting and star performance.

Part V: Narratives and Aesthetics

This part contains a range of essays from the general exploration of the stylistic and aesthetic characteristics of Hong Kong films to analyses of specific moments of innovation and experimentations in Hong Kong film history. With a mixture of popular films and avant-garde video productions, it explores the connection of narrative time and space in relation to locality, translocality, and polylocality. It probes the difficulty of generic classification for Hong Kong films, redefines the relationship between the local and the global, as well as examines the way in which the aesthetic - nostalgia, documented sentiments, and the musical soundtrack - provides productive ways of analyzing Hong Kong cinema.

Fiona Law opens this section with her study on Chinese New Year (CNY) films. By working on a corpus of films which shed light on the relationship between locality and the ritual of movie-going during festive times, she examines CNY films as both artifacts of popular consumption and everyday practices. Bliss Lim's essay on ghost films expands the scope of translocality by analyzing films produced in a pan-Asian context. Her analysis of the two layers of allusionism in the chosen films brings to bear the contradictions inherent in this transnational mode of production. With a focused study on Wong Kar-wai's *Chungking Express*, Giorgio Biancorosso analyzes how the sound of music is an embodiment of a global-regional-local nexus. He argues that, together with the film's narrative and *mise-en-scène*, the soundtrack helps to shape our understanding of a city / place in mutation. Focusing on a selection of video productions which she calls "diary films," Linda Lai explores the way in which sentiments in screen texts can be deciphered as narrative forms and historiographical accounts. With these so-called

independent productions, she examines how 1997 can be thought of as a sustained historical moment where a subdued form of activism in a locality can be observed. Yingjin Zhang responds by proposing “space-time, nostalgia, reception, and performance” as four additional sets of issue for ascertaining the relationship between narratives and aesthetics in Hong Kong cinema.

Part VI: Screen Histories and Documentary Practices

As questions of collective memory, cultural heritage, and nostalgia rub up against the process of decolonization, demands for democratic participation, visibility in the public sphere, and the rule of law in the HKSAR, filmmakers face challenges that link Hong Kong's colonial past to its current political landscape. This section highlights issues involving contested histories, cross-border cinematic imaginations, documentary interventions, activist aesthetics, human rights, and the rule of law.

Vivian Lee begins this section with a critical look at the treatment of Hong Kong history on screen. Ain-ling Wong looks at the importance of the archive to an understanding of Hong Kong film history's place within the wider sphere of Chinese-language cinema. Ian Aitken and Michael Ingham highlight current developments in Hong Kong documentaries against the backdrop of the history of non-fiction filmmaking in the territory. Marco Wan concludes the section by examining the way in which human rights, justice, and the law appear on Hong Kong screens. Stephen Ching-kiu Chan wraps up not only this section, but the entire volume with his thoughtful commentary on the political implications of the current state of Hong Kong cinema.

This volume provides not only a companion on the path to understanding Hong Kong cinema's past contributions, but offers a roadmap for plotting future scholarship and navigating the heated debates that continue to make it such a dynamic field within film, media, and cultural studies.

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Note

1 See the recent debate in Lai, Shek 黎錫 (2014), "105 Nian qian de yiduan xianggang dianyingshi gongan: Li Minwei yu Zhuangzi shi qi" 105年前的一段香港電影史公案:黎民偉與《莊子試妻》("An unsettled issue of Hong Kong film history 105 years ago: Lai Man-wai and *Chuang Tzu Tests His Wife*"), *Ming Pao* 明報 (May), <http://premium.mingpao.com/pda/ppc/colDocDetail.cfm?>

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Part I
Critical Paradigms
Defining Hong Kong Cinema Studies