

FRUIT CHAN'S
Durian Durian

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1

Introduction

Durian Durian is not the film one immediately thinks of when the name of Hong Kong film director Fruit Chan is brought up. The stunning success, both locally and internationally, of his low-budget debut as an independent director, *Made in Hong Kong*, has ensured that Chan's reputation will always be tied to that film. Yet *Durian Durian* has much to offer the lover of Hong Kong cinema and the admirer of Fruit Chan's work. A post-1997 film set both in Hong Kong and mainland China, with mainland Chinese protagonists, the film is a fine example of a Hong Kong tradition of socially sensitive realist films focused on the low-caste outsider, and is the result of a maturing director's attempt to articulate the new, often still contradictory, realities of 'one country, two systems' in action. Less explosive than *Made in Hong Kong*, *Durian Durian* is nonetheless a film that quietly captures a hybrid nation's uncertain mood.

The film opens with a familiar shot of the Hong Kong harbour, complete with a green and white Star Ferry placidly making its

way across the screen. As the voiceover of Yan in her northern-accented Mandarin speaks of the river in her hometown, the Hong Kong waters turn red and the buildings of Hong Kong gradually dissolve into the sparse riverside cranes of Mudanjiang, Yan's Mainland home. The familiar political slogan 'one country, two systems' used to position Hong Kong's paradoxical relationship to China is spatially and visually reinforced in these opening frames as they emphasise both difference and sameness. The image is of two waterways, two different cities, yet sharing the same screen space, the same composition (Stills 1.1 and 1.2). Where in the past the Hong Kong-China relationship has often been imagined in terms of binary oppositions, Chan suggests that, despite differences, Hong Kong and China are bound together by sameness too. If, as Stephen Teo suggests, Hong Kong film is 'obsessed with the notion of identity', I will argue that Chan's film reveals that identity is also a serious concern for mainland Chinese nationals, experiencing the abrupt changes of a communist society too rapidly transforming itself into a capitalist one ('Local and Global Identity', 2). As such, both Hong Kong and China are places where identity is multiple and ambivalent, where people struggle to come to terms with an uncertain, unstable future. Ostensibly a film about China, with its two mainland Chinese leads, Yan and Fan, this is also a film about Hong Kong. The film has its eye on two places at the same time, visually and palimpsestically reminding the viewer of China in Hong Kong and Hong Kong in China, and the intertwined, contiguous relationship between the two. Much like the film's opening image, we must attempt to hold two places in our minds at the same time, for the film is an endeavour to re-think Hong Kong and mainland China as a single entity, a single imagined community in a post-1997 era, and an exploration of 'one country, two systems' in not just political, but also spatial and affective terms.

One of the first films to deal with the Hong Kong-China relationship after the handover (Hong Kong's return to Chinese



Still 1.1 The opening scene — the Hong Kong harbour ...



Still 1.2 ... dissolves into a riverside shot of Mudanjiang

sovereignty), *Durian Durian* is, I would like to suggest, borrowing Chris Berry's term, a 'DissemiNatory' film that 'begins the work of imagining ... a new form of community' that will disturb and challenge dominant notions of Chinese nationhood through hybridity and difference ('A Nation T(w/o)o: Chinese Cinema(s) and Nationhood(s)', 53). Using Homi Bhabha's notion of

dissemiNation — a process of subversion from within the nation-state by a proliferation of other kinds of ‘nations’ that fragment a unitary collective identity — and bringing it to bear in the non-European space of China, Berry examines the various Chinese cinemas (China, Hong Kong and Taiwan) for signs of dissemiNation at work. Writing before 1997, Berry suggests that the dissemiNatory quest in the cinemas of mainland China and Hong Kong is a failure — the former, in the wake of the Tiananmen Incident, protecting sameness and unity; and the latter, despite a knowing sense of Hong Kong as a hybridised space, lacking a sense of ‘collective and fragmented selfhood’ as a nation (55). However in the post-1997 context, in which Hong Kong is part of mainland China and China itself is both communist and capitalist, one country with two systems, it is time to reassess Berry’s assertion of dissemiNatory failure. Chan’s film, I would like to argue, is an attempt to map new notions of nationhood by exploring both Hong Kong and mainland China as a newly combined and hybrid imagined community, both riven into contradictory fragments that constantly unsettle notions of established selfhood. A film with two protagonists, two narrative arcs and two distinct locations, Chan tells varying stories about this new imagined community of Hong Kong and mainland China that constantly reveal multiple and fractured identifications with either Hong Kong or mainland China, as well as with Hong Kong-China as a single entity.

Chan’s journey from his beginnings in the Hong Kong commercial film industry to the Hong Kong-identified *Made in Hong Kong* and the more exploratory and dual-country identified *Durian Durian* is an interesting one. Born in neighboring Guangdong in 1959, Fruit Chan did not develop an interest in film until after secondary school. Enrolling in courses organised by the Hong Kong Film Culture Centre, Chan was taught by the leading lights of the Hong Kong New Wave — Tsui Hark, Ann Hui and Yim Ho. The Hong Kong Film Culture Centre offered Chan his first

taste of the film industry and from there he moved to the Century Film Company in 1982, working as assistant director to Kirk Wong and Alfred Cheung. Golden Harvest beckoned in 1984 and there Chan continued as an assistant director and coordinator, even occasionally appearing as an actor in bit parts when required. Chan was involved with major films starring Jackie Chan and Sammo Hung and worked as assistant director for established directors Shu Kei and Tony Au. In 1991, while working on Tony Au's *Au Revoir Mon Amour*, Chan had his first directorial break. Filming had been interrupted and Chan, taking advantage of the interruption to utilise sets and props from the film, began shooting his directorial debut, *Finale in Blood*. The film was a critical but not a financial success. Chan's career as a director was back on hold, though his ability to exploit gaps in the commercial film industry for his own ambitions would prove to be very useful, especially in the making of his breakthrough film, *Made in Hong Kong*.

Made in Hong Kong was released in 1997, the much-anticipated year of Hong Kong's return to China. The film had been in the making for at least three years by then. Chan had begun writing the script as early as 1994, and was simultaneously collecting leftover film stock from Hong Kong superstar Andy Lau's Teamwork Productions and other film companies in preparation for the shoot. By 1996 he had collected 80,000 feet of film stock. Chan was once again displaying great initiative in exploiting the lacunae in the commercial industry for his own purposes. The film was a surprise winner at the Hong Kong Film Awards where it captured the Best Film, Best Director and Best Newcomer (for Sam Lee's performance) awards. It was also a winner at the Golden Horse Awards in Taiwan, winning the awards for Best Director and Best Original Script, while at the Locarno Film Festival, *Made in Hong Kong* was given the Special Jury Award. Internationally, the film was making Chan's name.

Since then, Chan has not looked back, following *Made in Hong Kong* with a rapid string of films, including the other two that complete his Handover Trilogy — *The Longest Summer* (1998) and *Little Cheung* (2000) — as well as *Durian Durian* (2000) and *Hollywood, Hong Kong* (2001), the first two installments in his Prostitute Trilogy, and the stand-alone film *Public Toilet* (2003). While his films have not been commercial successes, Chan has nonetheless continued to be critically acclaimed both locally and abroad.¹ *Durian Durian* won the awards for Best Original Screenplay and Best New Performer for Qin Hailu in 2001 at the Hong Kong Film Awards, while at the regional Golden Horse Awards in 2002, the same film swept the board, winning the Best Film, Best Actress, Best New Performer and Best Original Screenplay categories. On the European festival circuit, *Durian Durian* was selected for competition at the Venice Film Festival following the success of *Little Cheung*, which received the Silver Leopard at the Locarno Film Festival.

As a film director, Chan's stock began to rise in a time of crisis for both Hong Kong and the Hong Kong film industry. *Made in Hong Kong's* impact was also partially the result of its unusual provenance. The film was a rare thing in the fiercely commercial Hong Kong industry — a critically and relatively financially successful independent feature film produced outside of the usual modes — and it proved, in a time of declining market share and creative bankruptcy for the Hong Kong commercial film industry, that there were other ways of making films in Hong Kong. Chan was not the first independent filmmaker in Hong Kong, but at a time when the local film industry was floundering, reeling from one crisis to another, Chan's successful pursuit of an independent mode of filmmaking, bypassing traditional commercial paths, was a piquant reminder of the viability of alternative filmmaking routes. With this one film, Chan had declared himself a director to watch, not only for his ability to capture the city's zeitgeist in a work

focusing on the city's neglected denizens, but also for his success in striking out on a new production path.

Despite a profitable early career in the local film industry as assistant director and even director, he has remained an independent, working outside the constraints of an industry that prioritises profits, and free instead to give voice to society's forgotten, marginalised persons. His independence has enabled Chan to experiment stylistically and to select less winsome protagonists and unexpected subject matter. While his film style has ranged widely as I shall discuss shortly, Chan's eye has always been for the forgotten and the marginalised. This has remained constant despite the unpredictability of Chan's film output. A director unafraid of change, his films have ranged considerably in style and tone. As Chan has said in an interview:

the last thing I want is to become pigeonholed as a certain type of director. While I'm still young, I want to try out new things.
(*Hollywood Hong Kong*, 87)

Indeed his current oeuvre can be sectioned off into blocs of varying and distinct styles. *Made in Hong Kong* and *The Longest Summer* are highly expressive and dynamic, the most indebted to the commercial genres that dominate Hong Kong popular cinema. Both are unstable concoctions of popular genres, expressionism and serious social commentary, heartfelt but occasionally emotionally overblown. *Little Cheung* and *Durian Durian*, in contrast, are restrained and sensitive examples of social realist filmmaking. The rough handheld camerawork, the quick cuts and pacing that had so far defined the Fruit Chan style gives way to more observational, documentary-like camerawork dominated by long takes and long shots and a calmer pace and tone. The concern is with portraying the everyday life of marginalised characters in the least sensational manner possible. *Hollywood, Hong Kong* and *Public Toilet* reveal

Chan as a director ready to challenge local audience expectations with experiments in protagonists, form, mood and style. Never content with one style, Chan's next film *Hollywood, Hong Kong* shifts tack once more. The realism that the film shares with *Little Cheung* and *Durian Durian* is now tinged with a vein of black comedy that veers dangerously close to tragedy at moments. With its unusual leading characters and its uncertain tone, the film is difficult to classify, a trait shared by Chan's next film, *Public Toilet*. With an episodic structure loosely focused on public toilets all over the world and the search for an elixir of life sought by various characters in order to save loved ones, *Public Toilet* ambitiously spans several countries including mainland China, Hong Kong, South Korea, India and America. The film is an experiment in terms of its unusual subject matter and international scope, its multiple, overlapping narratives, its generic fluctuations from comedy to fantasy (the Korean section features an ill mermaid convalescing in a portable toilet by the sea) and even its medium, shot as it was using digital video instead of film. By using digital video to shoot a feature length film, Chan has placed himself among the vanguard of independent filmmakers seeking alternative ways to shoot their films.²

Fruit Chan's career trajectory demonstrates that he is an auteur willing to reinvent himself, constantly exploring new styles, new modes and new means of film production. Chan has also proven to be an astute commentator on Hong Kong society. With his Handover Trilogy, Chan captured and expressed the effects and affect of the convulsions of change around the time of the handover, with *Made in Hong Kong* particularly encapsulating the Hong Kong zeitgeist. It is Chan's ability to articulate a zeitgeist that I will explore in this book, though with reference to *Durian Durian*, a film often hailed as Chan's masterpiece by local critics.

The first film of a proposed trilogy concerning prostitutes, made immediately after the final film of Chan's previous trilogy, *Durian*

Durian is not a clean break from the film that precedes it. Sharing locations, actors and a similar handheld camera style with *Little Cheung*, *Durian Durian* looks as if it belongs with the group of handover films; and with its first section, focused largely on Mongkok life, it declares its provenance as a Hong Kong film, interested in Hong Kong social realities. Yet as it leaves Hong Kong for scenes set in Northeastern China, it becomes obvious that the film is itself a transitional film in more ways than one. It not only enables Chan to segue into his new area of interest and new sequence of films, it also captures the transitions of both Hong Kong and mainland China as the former deals with the influx of mainland Chinese and the latter moves away from its communist principles. With the second half of *Durian Durian* Chan turns his attention to mainland China, successfully evoking the shudders and jolts of change as it experiences its own capitalistic handover. A film director who has always been interested, as he has said, in 'the social development of Hong Kong' and in 'evoking local people's sentiments', with *Durian Durian* we see Chan expanding his notion of the local to include mainland China, reinforcing the new identity of Hong Kong as part of China ('Hollywood Hong Kong', 88).

The split and yet conjoined structure of the film is key to Chan's exploration of this one country with two systems and it is a pattern that the following chapters will reflect. The next chapter will sketch the development of independent filmmaking in Hong Kong in an attempt to understand the production contexts from which *Durian Durian* has emerged. Independent filmmaking is emerging as a development to watch in the Hong Kong film industry and Chan's success as an independent has had a part in this, though it is crucial to recover some of Hong Kong's hidden alternative filmmaking traditions to be able to place Chan's indebtedness to the past as well as his shifts away from it. In the chapters that follow I will continue to focus on how Chan constantly moves from a specific and narrow Hong Kong focus that highlights insularity to a more

pluralistic viewpoint that engages with the larger entity of China. In the third chapter, I look at how *Durian Durian* reflects Chan's roots in a Hong Kong version of social realism but also how the film has diverged from that tradition to engage in a dialogue with the social realism of mainland China's Sixth Generation filmmakers. The fourth chapter discusses how *Durian Durian* utilises and then deconstructs the Hong Kong stereotypes that have accrued to the figure of the Mainland prostitute. By also following the Mainland prostitute back onto her home turf, Chan reveals his interest in going beyond the stereotypes in order to acknowledge her significance to understanding the current shifts in mainland Chinese society. Chapter five examines the tradition of border-crossing films made in Hong Kong on which I will suggest *Durian Durian* draws. It will also explore how *Durian Durian's* portrayal of the Hong Kong-China relationship rewrites the binary opposition usually posed between the two into a contiguous relationship of kinship in times of change. If the guiding principle of Hong Kong's return to mainland China is that of 'one country, two systems', Chan's film begins the task of imagining what one country may, in reality, mean, particularly in spatial and affective terms. The final chapter looks at *Hollywood Hong Kong* in an effort to see how the latest addition to the Prostitute Trilogy develops Chan's explorations of nationhood in *Durian Durian*. With a director like Fruit Chan, whose films are consciously constructed as trilogies and with *Durian Durian* in particular, which overlaps so closely with *Little Cheung*, it is impossible to write on one film without bringing into the discussion his other films. The meaning of one Fruit Chan film is often tied to his other films envisioned in the same series and I will therefore be bringing into play discussions of Chan's entire oeuvre.

7

Conclusion

The significance of *Durian Durian* lies in its beginning of the work of imagining convergence. By looking through the eyes of the Mainland Other, Chan's film attempts to build contiguities and tenuous kinships, exploring what 'one country, two systems' may actually look and feel like. Full of parallelisms that palimpsestically inscribe Mudanjiang, China onto Hong Kong, *Durian Durian* imagines a multi-layered one country, yet one that is still fragmented into north and south, still divided by borders. Chan's explorations of post-1997 national identities on both sides of the border are part of on-going negotiations within the commercial and independent sectors of the Hong Kong film industry exploring the economic, cultural and social implications of Hong Kong and China as one country.

The commercial industry has been quick to capitalise on the economic potential of one country. With the Hong Kong film industry in crisis since the mid-1990s, mainland China's immense film market has increasingly been seen as a potential saviour for a

beleaguered local industry with a shrinking market share. The Hong Kong film industry has therefore been keen to seek greater economic convergence with the Mainland film market. It has been eager to promote its films in the Mainland, lobbying to have them re-classified as domestic, and not foreign, films. With the Closer Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) which took effect at the beginning of 2004, Hong Kong films will gain access to the coveted Mainland market without prejudice, creating the much sought-after economic convergence of the Hong Kong and Mainland markets. Prior to CEPA, the Hong Kong industry had already been subtly employing strategies in preparation for entering and competing in the Mainland market. Co-productions, location shooting on the Mainland, and the use of a mix of Mainland and Hong Kong actors in films were already common practices. A film like the martial arts epic, *Hero*, for example, was shot on the Mainland, was directed by China's Zhang Yimou, had a cast largely consisting of Hong Kong film stars — Tony Leung, Maggie Cheung and Jet Li — and its martial arts sequences were choreographed by Hong Kong experts. More recently, the major Hong Kong studio Media Asia Films has signed up a Mainland director with the popular touch at home, Feng Xiaogang, to helm one of its films as part of its continuing strategy to break into the Mainland film market ('With an eye to mainland chance', 4).

In terms of subject matter, commercial Hong Kong films have also been subtly addressing their films to Mainland audiences. As critic Shelley Kraicer has shrewdly noted of *Shaolin Soccer*, the recent successful vehicle for Hong Kong mega-star and comedian Stephen Chiau:

[The film] was a fascinating re-imagining of director and star Stephen Chiau's Hong Kong Everyman image into something like a (mainland) Chinese Everyman. ('Chinese Films', 3)

Though the film is a Hong Kong production and its characters, save for the female lead, speak in Cantonese, the film is actually set in Shanghai and Vicky Chao, its female lead, is a Mainland actress popular in Hong Kong. The use of the upmarket department store Lane Crawford in the film is particularly clever, for with branches in Hong Kong and Shanghai Lane Crawford signifies to both Mainland (Shanghainese) and Hong Kong audiences, creating a sense of faint familiarity to a diverse audience.

Greater cooperation and integration between the Hong Kong and Mainland film industries and film markets has already resulted in the creation of commercial film products that present a hybrid Hong Kong-mainland Chinese identity. Interestingly, a similar process has also been occurring on the less commercial independent filmmaking front. New Wave director Yim Ho was one of the first Hong Kong directors to set his films in mainland China (*Homecoming*, *The Day the Sun Turned Cold*) and to deal with Chinese stories. In his wake, there has been Fruit Chan, with *Durian Durian* and *Public Toilet*, and more recently, Hong Kong independent filmmaker William Kwok, whose second film, *Darkness Bride*, is set in rural China and deals with traditional Chinese customs concerning arranging underworld marriages for the dead. There is also the interesting case of Nelson Yu, who can be considered one of China's Sixth Generation filmmakers but whose films are set in Hong Kong. Trained in the Beijing Film Academy and cinematographer for, and friend of, one of the leading Sixth Generation directors, Jia Zhangke, Yu is an anomaly in Hong Kong, having bypassed the more immediate Hong Kong film industry in favour of the independent film scene on the Mainland. However, Yu's directorial debut, *Love Will Tear Us Apart*, reveals his leanings towards his native Hong Kong, set as it is in Hong Kong, not the Mainland. The film nonetheless shares much with the Sixth Generation Chinese filmmakers in terms of its aesthetics, its sensibilities and its protagonists. The film focuses on the

marginalised people of Hong Kong, including a Mainland prostitute running from her past and a young, directionless Hong Kong elevator repairman who makes crank calls to radio programmes, and follows these drifting nomads of Hong Kong as their lives accidentally cross paths. Yu's work as both cinematographer for Jia Zhangke and an independent director in Hong Kong reveals the cross-fertilisation at work too between the independent film sectors in China and Hong Kong. Filmic borders are growing increasingly porous and the beauty of a film such as *Durian Durian* is its reminder of this reality for Hong Kong.

However, it is not merely mainland China and Hong Kong that are growing increasingly interlinked. In the future, Hong Kong films, both independent and commercial, will continue to be increasingly hybridised and globalised as they seek stories and profits from not only China but also the rest of Asia. Co-productions with other Asian nations are already a common occurrence. For example, in a shrewd move recognising the new realities of the Asian film industry Peter Chan's Hong Kong production company, Applause Pictures, works with Korean, Thai and Singaporean filmmakers and production houses. The commercially successful horror films *Three* and *The Eye* were both Applause Pictures films created with regional cooperation, drawing production support and directing and acting talent from all over Asia. *Three* consists of three short horror films, respectively helmed by a director hailing from Hong Kong, Thailand and South Korea. *The Eye* was backed by Applause and Singapore's Raintree Pictures, directed by the Hong Kong-born but Thailand-based Pang brothers, starred a Malaysian actress and a mixed cast of Hong Kong and Singaporean actors, and was shot in Hong Kong and Thailand.

With his unerring instinct for the *zeitgeist*, Fruit Chan's most recent film, *Public Toilet*, echoes Applause Picture's hybrid strategies but on the independent filmmaking front. Made with the generous backing of South Korean entertainment group

DigitalNEGA, the film moves Chan away from his familiar Hong Kong roots to include Korea, mainland China, India and America and features a cast of pan-Asian actors. Hong Kong, usually so central to Chan's narratives, becomes merely a small part in a larger narrative. Though the film has two sets of Hong Kong characters — a Fruit Chan favourite, Sam Lee, as an assassin on his final mission and, in a generous recognition of Hong Kong's ethnic diversity, two Cantonese-speaking South Asian brothers born and bred in Hong Kong — the first character we see and the one who holds the episodic film together is the young Chinese man born in a Beijing public toilet. Just as in *Durian Durian*, the film is filtered largely, though not completely, through the consciousness of a young Mainlander. It is as if Chan has returned to the Mainland to 'reclaim a re-identification with China' as Stephen Teo has speculated ('Post 1997 Trends', 5). Yet, even as *Public Toilet* continues a process that *Durian Durian* began, it also decentralises the importance of this re-identification with China as the film extends its reach to the wider world and China, like Hong Kong, becomes merely one location in a diverse, heterogeneous world.

Is Chan's most recent film a step towards global filmmaking, as Christoph Huber suggests in his *Senses of Cinema* review of *Public Toilet*? And is it an example of one of the possible futures of Hong Kong cinema? Fruit Chan's films consistently explore and re-examine the meaning of Hong Kong and Chinese identity and he has done so by continually widening the geographical contexts of this search for identity. If *Durian Durian* suggests that Hong Kong cinema's future is in taking up stories from across the border in conjunction with Hong Kong narratives, *Public Toilet* suggests that looking across the border is not quite enough, though its experimental, uneven nature also indicates that global independent filmmaking of this kind is still an uncertain proposition. As the deliberations continue and as we await Chan's next film, one thing is certain: *Durian Durian* will have an abiding significance within

Chan's oeuvre as the film that opened Chan's and Hong Kong cinema's horizons to a wider world outside of the claustrophobic Hong Kong he had mined and represented so well in his earlier films.

Notes

Chapter 1 Introduction

1. According to the Hong Kong Movie Database (<http://www.hkmdb.com/index.en.shtml>), both *Little Cheung* and *Durian Durian* earned about half a million Hong Kong dollars each. A commercially successful Hong Kong film usually earns in excess of HK\$10 million.
2. Independent filmmakers from Hong Kong such as Evans Chan have long used digital cameras as an alternative to film when shooting feature-length films, but Fruit Chan, a winner of Hong Kong Film Awards and awards at international film festivals, is the most high profile Hong Kong auteur to use a digital camera for his films.

Chapter 2 Contexts: Independent Filmmaking and Hong Kong Cinema

1. Even Wong Kar-wai's production company Jet Tone has a similar approach. It produced, for example, Jeff Lau's commercially successful

- comedy *Chinese Odyssey II*. Wong has also pioneered new forms of revenue through clever marketing of peripherals tied in to his own cult films.
2. However 2004 marked Fruit Chan's return to commercial film-making as he helmed one segment of Applause Picture's follow-up to its previous box-office success, *Three*. Chan directed *Dumplings*, which was released as one of the three short horror films that made up *Three: Extreme*. Chan also directed an extended version that was released separately as *Three: Dumplings*.
 3. The general consensus is that the Hong Kong New Wave began around 1979 when the first New Wave directors (Ann Hui, Alex Cheung for example) released their first films.
 4. Even these more alternative films are firmly placed within the popular genre of the martial arts film, once again demonstrating how often innovation works within the frameworks of the commercial Hong Kong film industry.
 5. The degree to which these independent productions are 'outside' the traditional commercial film industry is ambiguous and will be explored in the next section.

Chapter 3 Contexts: Social Realism in Hong Kong Cinema

1. Given the film's ambivalence, *Sorrows of the Forbidden City* was not surprisingly later severely criticised as anti-patriotic by the Communists, much to the despair of its left-wing director, Zhu Shilin.
2. Hong Kong cinema at this time supported both a Mandarin and a Cantonese film industry. The 1950s and 60s were the heyday of Hong Kong's Mandarin-speaking cinema. It was more popular and influential, and eclipsed the Cantonese film industry until the latter made a comeback in the 1970s.
3. In some respects, the left-wing studios were little different from their right-wing counterparts, Shaw Brothers and MP & GI. The latter were pro-Taiwan studios which willingly sold their films to Taiwan and produced more escapist, less educational fare. Putting aside the differences in political allegiance, both sides had very similar systems

of running a film studio — each had their own exclusive stable of directors and stars, their own film magazines promoting their films and celebrities, and a focus on specific kinds of genre films. There were also business contacts between the two sides. Before Shaw Brothers and MP & GI began their film production operations, they bought films from left-wing film studios to help fill the bill at their extensive networks of theatres throughout Southeast Asia.

4. Under the umbrella of a RTHK drama programme called *Below the Lion Rock*, both directors produced fictional films that depicted how a local community coped with social problems. Fong's *The Song of Yuen Tsau Chai* (1977) examined life in a depressed fishing village in the New Territories, while Hui explored the effects of the dismantling of a pedestrian bridge on a public housing community in *The Bridge* (1978).
5. Films like *Father and Son*, *Boat People* and *Homecoming* were critical successes, even winning Hong Kong Film Awards, but were not successful commercially.
6. For example, Alex Cheung's *Cops and Robbers* and *Man on the Brink* combined the entertainment value of the cops-and-robbers genre with a sense of fatalism that captured the tone of Hong Kong society in the early 1980s ('Social Psychology', 20).
7. See Stephen Teo's 'The Father-Son Cycle: A Critique of Thematic Community in Cantonese Cinema' for a detailed discussion of Fong's film and its antecedents.
8. Not all Sixth Generation filmmakers are socially realist in inclination, though they may employ social realist elements or documentary forms. For my purposes here I have tended to focus on the Sixth Generation filmmakers who do deploy social realism as a filmic mode.

Chapter 4 The Representation of the Mainland Chinese Woman in *Durian Durian*

1. Though we have caught glimpses of another Yan in Hong Kong, especially when she is alone. The scene of her stretching in an alleyway in Hong Kong for example hints at her operatic background.

2. Please see chapter 3 for my discussion of Fong's treatment of women in his films, *Ah Ying* and *Just Like Weather*.
3. Her assimilation is temporary however, for in choosing to follow her gangster husband into exile she finds herself a fugitive and an illegal immigrant in New York City, an alien in a foreign country where she can no longer pass as local.
4. This issue of Mainland women coming to Hong Kong to work as prostitutes while on temporary visas remains a problem to this day.

Chapter 5 Durian Adrift: The Contiguities of Identity in *Durian Durian*

1. Some of these divisions and ambivalences remain after 1997. Strict immigration quotas are still in place and the Government sought and received a reinterpretation of the Basic Law concerning the right of abode in Hong Kong of Mainland children of Hong Kong parents, to prevent an alleged flood of Mainlanders seeking the right of abode in Hong Kong.
2. *China Behind* was made in 1972 but not released till 1987. The late release of the film has been attributed to political censorship. Though it is a film in part about the Cultural Revolution and is definitely not about the handover negotiations, which began only in the early 1980s, its late release and pessimistic view of China lent itself well to general 1980s apprehensions about the forthcoming handover.
3. Though in *Little Cheung* we do see Fan wandering beyond the safe confines of the alleyway with her Hong Kong friend, Little Cheung. In that film, Fan does get to experience more of Hong Kong, including a moment at Hong Kong's famed harbour.
4. The few point-of-view shots that appear in the Hong Kong segment of the film are used during moments between Yan and Fan — once as Yan takes a break in the alleyway while Fan spies on her out of curiosity, and again when both hide in the restaurant kitchen when the police appear in the alleyway. These shots are used to help establish the friendship between the two.

5. Though Yau is also careful to note that the mythic notion of rural China presented in the film is undermined by tensions, already evident in the rural village, between the urban and the rural, the modern and the traditional (see pages 195–6 of 'Border Crossing'). Coral's home village is a refuge that is already in the throes of change.
6. The lyrics of the song are:
 - Why do you have to go to school
 - Why do you have to go to work
 - Why do you have to eat
 - Why do you have to sleep
 - Please don't ask me why
 - I don't want to reply
 - Why do I have to drink
 - Why do I have to sing
 - Why do I have to laugh
 - Why do I have to make love
 - Please don't ask me why
 - I'm not qualified to reply
 - Why do you keep asking me why
 - Why don't I answer you why
 - If you want to know why
 - I do whatever I like
 - Why does she have to be silent
 - Why does she have to be helpless
 - Why does she have to be angry
 - Why does she have to cry
 - Please don't ask me why
 - I'm simply unhappy

Chapter 6 The Prostitute Trilogy So Far

1. The third film in the trilogy has yet to be made, as Chan followed *Hollywood, Hong Kong* with *Public Toilet*. We await to see if this trilogy will ever be completed.