

Ann Hui's
Song of the Exile

Audrey Yue



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“At first glance, Square Word Calligraphy appears to be nothing more unusual than Chinese characters, but in fact it is a new way of rendering English words in the format of a square so they resemble Chinese characters. Chinese viewers expect to be able to read Square Word Calligraphy but cannot. Western viewers, however are surprised to find they can read it. Delight erupts when meaning is unexpectedly revealed.”

— Britta Erickson, *The Art of Xu Bing*

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Introduction

Song of the Exile was released in Hong Kong from 27 April 1990 to 16 May 1990, and grossed over HK\$3,071,212 (MPIA 1990). Produced by Cos Group and distributed by Golden Harvest, the film consolidated the career of the director, Ann On-wah Hui, Hong Kong's 'most influential director in the '80s' and 'one of Asia's premium directors' (Kei 1994; Foong 2001).

Hui was born in Anshan, a Chinese iron-mining city in Liaoning Province, Manchuria, in 1947 to a Japanese mother and Chinese father. When she was two, her family moved to the Portuguese-administered Macau. At the age of five, her family moved to Hong Kong. Hui studied English at primary school, and later wrote her Masters thesis on Alain Robbe-Grillet as a student of comparative literature at Hong Kong University. Between 1972 and 1974, she trained at London Film School. In 1973, she returned to Hong Kong and worked as an office assistant to the late Beijing-born, Hong Kong-based director King Hu for three months where she helped to check the English subtitles to *A Touch of Zen* (Berry 2005: 426).

She then joined Hong Kong's Television Broadcasting Limited (TVB) for eighteen months, where she directed nearly twenty episodes of tele-dramas and documentaries, some on 16mm (Doraiswamy 1990: 21). In 1977, she directed six episodes for the Independent Commission Against Corruption, a body set up to combat the triad bribery of Chinese and British police officers, and made three featurettes in the series *Below the Lion Rock*, of which the best known is *Boy from Vietnam*.

Hui is part of the Hong Kong New Wave that inaugurated a new style and a local consciousness for cinema in the 1980s. She introduced the themes of displacement and migration that have become key features of the New Hong Kong cinema. As Hong Kong's foremost female director, her films also showcase women in the vicissitudes of their everyday intimacies, in the domesticity of the home and their transformation in public life. From *The Secret* (1979) to *Night and Fog* (2009), Hui's cinema has traversed the materiality of bodies, cities, memories and affect. In a career that spans three decades, Hui has been director, producer, writer and actress in more than thirty films. This book examines her ninth film, *Song of the Exile*, undoubtedly one of her finest.

Song of the Exile is based on Hui's semi-autobiographical story about a daughter coming to terms with her mother's Japanese identity. When it was released in 1990, the film's themes of cross-cultural alienation, inter-ethnic marriage, generational reconciliation and divided loyalties resonated with the British colony's 1997 transition to Chinese sovereignty. Its narratives of migration also spoke to the displacement of the Hong Kong people as they left the colony in panic to escape the impending Chinese rule. Almost two decades after its release, and ten years on from Hong Kong's handover, Hong Kong's emigrants have returned as new diasporic settlers, and the film is still a perennial favourite among global cinephiles and international Hong Kong cinema students. In Hong Kong and between the film aficionados, *Song of the Exile* is a new

Hong Kong film classic. Many consider it the most haunting and poignant of Hui's films.

Existing analyses of the film are in short essays and frame it as exemplary tropes for border crossing, gendered modernity, generic transformation and exile cinema (Abbas 1997a; Barlow 1998; Erens 2000; Freiberg 2002; Ho 2001; Naficy 2001). This book brings together and extends these existing analyses with a new sustained approach on the intersections between intimacy and diaspora. Theorizations of intimacy in Hong Kong cinema have focused predominantly on the films of Wong Kar-wai and Fruit Chan. These discussions highlight intimacy as private, erotic and sexual (Abbas 1997b; Leung 2008; Lu 2007, Marchetti 2006; Siegel 2001). This book extends these approaches by providing a theoretical framework for intimacy as an orientation that emphasizes certain modes of relationship, not simply tied to the private, erotic and sexual, but also associated with the limits of (diasporic) borders and the externality of risks.¹ It incorporates Hong Kong film studies, cultural geography, film archival studies, postcolonial feminist film and spectatorship theories, media reception study, critical pedagogy, nostalgia and modernity studies, and critical theories on intimacy and diaspora, to examine these orientations and demonstrate this framework in the film.

Intimacy is a pertinent discourse to engage the diaspora because it is a conduit for unraveling the interdependent relationship between self and other, private and public, law and lore, home and host. This is evident in diasporic relationships where home and host cultures are transformed as a result of their interaction with each other. In the diaspora, intimacy also refers to the nostalgia of deep longing for the familiar, the cultural memories that make up diasporic archives, and the transformation of kinship structures. Diasporic intimacy is also produced through new media and technological connectedness. For Hong Kong, these orientations provide a critical site to expose the dominant symbolic and material

conditions that fulfill the fantasy of Chinese national identity; they also provide a theoretical frame to reposition Hong Kong as an alternative epistemological object excentric (or off-centre) to China and central to Hong Kong modernity.

Intimacy is also significant to the wider circulation and popular recognition of Hong Kong cinema. The cinema has always enjoyed a unique status in the global film circuit as diasporic cinema, from the 1950s with the South-East Asian distribution empire of the Shaw Brothers, the 1970s cult success of Bruce Lee and the now iconoclastic role of transnational action in Hollywood. The circulation of Hui's cinema is no exception. *Song of the Exile*, first screened at the 1990 Cannes Film Festival, was one of the first New Hong Kong Cinema films to receive international recognition, before the best actress Berlin acclaim of Maggie Cheung for Stanley Kwan's *Center Stage* (1992), the Palm d'Or of Wong Kar-wai's *Happy Together* (1997) and the Lifetime MTV Award honoured to Jackie Chan. This recognition of Hong Kong cinema, through film structure and institutional genres, as well as through the flows of regional proximity, subcultural exotic and global otherness, is a form of intimacy, of knowing through familiarity, and competency through mastery and emulation. As diasporic cinema, Hong Kong cinema also cultivates the intimacy it enjoys with its diasporas, and intimates the place of Hong Kong itself as a diaspora. This book approaches *Song of the Exile* through these features of Hong Kong cinema as diasporic cinema.

Chapter one, 'The Diasporas of Hong Kong', examines the intimate relationship between the homeland and diaspora. This chapter begins by first providing a critical overview of Hui's films to highlight the centrality of the diaspora in her oeuvre. It further examines the film's representations of homelands (Britain, China and Japan) to demonstrate the diaspora's intrinsic yet contradictory relationship to the homeland. This chapter will show how new practices of diasporic intimacies are produced by the displacement

of migration. Diasporic intimacies expose the myth of home as singular, domestic, familial and romantic. The film's representations of the second home (Macau, Manchuria) are further examined to critically consider its excentric location as a new ontology for Hong Kong modernity. For Hong Kong, this provides a different starting point to return to its postcolonial predicament to consider how it makes itself present according to the historicity of its own conditions.

Chapter two, 'Re-turn to Hong Kong: Authorship, Memory, Intimate Biography', begins by examining the historical discourse surrounding the film to show Hui's cinema as a model of female creativity and counter-cinematic practice. It demonstrates Hui's cine-feminism by showing how female textual authorship is evident in the use of postcolonial feminist autobiography and the maternal melodrama. These practices construct a narrative of re-turn that challenges the teleology of homecoming. Rather than a return to the impossibility of roots, rather than a return to the motherland, a politics of 're-turn' is marked by a movement that looks to but takes a turn away from the motherland as the original home. The narrative of re-turn questions the utopic tropes of homecoming, reunification and reconciliation; it searches for new cultural sites of desires and belongings through routes rather roots. This chapter further considers how a newly reconstituted home is constructed in the diaspora of Hong Kong. It examines the intimate history of this home through the film's use of indirect and collective memories, common places and future nostalgia. For Hong Kong, the film's practices of re-turn provide an ethics to consider its current political transition as an ethics of self-fashioning and co-existence that confronts the honesty of its diasporic yet intimate relationship to the motherland, China.

Chapter three, 'Teaching *Song of the Exile* in the Diaspora: Minor Cinema, Transcultural Literacy and Border Pedagogy', continues the focus on the intersection between diaspora and intimacy by examining the teaching of the film in Australia as part

of the political pedagogy of critical multiculturalism. It shows how the film's status as minor cinema challenges the normalizing claims of a neoliberal film curriculum. As a deconstructive critical practice, the film's minor mode of diasporic distribution allows students to acquire a critical media literacy that opens up alternative ways to orient new modes of co-existence and ethical self-fashion. As a performative text, the film's affective capacities for critical border epistemologies allow students to acquire transcultural literacy. These literacies reflect the contact zone of intercultural communication as a site of diasporic intimacy.

This book extends existing theorizations on Hong Kong cinema studies with a new framework on intimacy and diaspora. It also shows how a critical Hong Kong film studies can be enriched by media reception study using research-led teaching to map a sociology of the film as diasporic maintenance and negotiation, as well as a tool for border pedagogy. In studies of Hong Kong nostalgia, the significance of the 1970s to Hong Kong's cultural memory, film history and modernity is emphasized. The focus on transnational minor cinema and its distributive cultures also brings a materialist framework to studies in independent Chinese cinemas. This book hopes to show how the border cinema of *Song of the Exile*, as a practice of representation and a representation of practice, can articulate an alternative Hong Kong modernity as a new form of public pedagogy central to the ethics of its re-turn.

1

The Diasporas of Hong Kong

Song of the Exile traces the postwar life of a Japanese woman married to a Chinese Nationalist soldier, her adolescent daughter's discovery of her mother's ethnicity, and their reconciliation as she accompanies her homesick mother back to her native town in Japan. Moving deftly between the past and the present through a series of extended flashbacks, the story takes place across China, Britain, Macau, Hong Kong and Japan. The central motif is the diaspora as the inheritance of exile. Exile is a condition that 'most explicitly invokes a home or homeland' (Peters 1999: 19). The Chinese title, 客途秋恨, literally translated as *Guest Route Autumn Regret*, directly infers this. It is taken from an old Cantonese song popular in South China about a solitary traveller who yearns for his homeland (Stokes and Hoover 1999: 14). This chapter will consider how diasporic intimacy functions in these sites and conditions of diaspora in the film.

Diasporas in Hong Kong Cinema and the Films of Ann Hui

The term 'diaspora' comes from the Greek word *diaspeirein*, meaning 'to disperse', or as *speirein* suggests, 'to scatter'. It refers to the dispersion or spreading of people belonging to one nation or having a common culture. Historically, this classical typology speaks of the dispersions of the Jewish, Greek, Armenian and Polish communities and articulates the condition of peoples without nation-states (Tölölyan 1996: 3–17). The classification of this experience has resulted in the study of diaspora as a sociological and ethnic concept, evident in the trade, slave, religious and labour characterizations of the Chinese, African, Sikh and Indian dispersions (Cohen 1997). Unlike the term 'exile' that more specifically refers to the psychological condition of people who have been forcefully removed from the homeland, the concept of 'diaspora' focuses more on the conditions of displacement (and resettlement) in the hostland.

The last few decades, affected by the changing landscapes of late modernity, have witnessed the growth of diasporas. New demographics are being formed 'along the spatio-temporal-information axes of world economy' where 'the national, unilateral colonial model has been interrupted by the emergence of a transversal world that occupies a "third space" (Bateson, Bhabha), a "third culture" (Featherstone) beyond the confines of the nation-state' (Chambers 1994: 108). Migration, mobile work contracts, globalization and cosmopolitanism have enabled the formation of a new world of shifting populations or ethnoscaapes (Appadurai 1996: 48–65). Diasporas are the 'the exemplary communities of the transnational moment' (Tölölyan 1991: 5), characterized by cultural displacement, new modes of expression and economies of exchange. The Hong Kong diaspora attests to this transformation.

Hong Kong has always been part of the global pan Chinese diaspora. Ceded to the British in 1842 and occupied by the Japanese during the Second World War before its return to Chinese sovereignty in 1997, its postcolonial experience parallels the diasporic condition of 'living here and belonging elsewhere' (Clifford 1994: 311). Throughout its history, Hong Kong has been a destination for Mainland Chinese immigrants and refugees, as well as expatriate Britons, indentured South Asians and Sephardic Jews (McDonogh and Wong 2005). More recently, emigration from Hong Kong in the years leading up to the handover has also resulted in the growth of the overseas Hong Kong diaspora in North America, Europe and Australia.¹ Against this, it is not surprising the diaspora is a common feature in contemporary Hong Kong cinema.

The diaspora has served as a rich site to explore themes of migration, displacement, mobility and hybridity. New Wave filmmakers like Allen Fong and Johnny Mak use the aesthetics of social realism and themes of lawlessness to capture Hong Kong as a diaspora for Mainland Chinese refugees. The overseas Hong Kong diasporas also feature in auteur films such as John Woo's *Bullet in the Head* (1990), Stanley Kwan's *Full Moon in New York* (1990) and Wong Kar-wai's *Days of Being Wild* (1990). Star vehicles like the late Leslie Cheung's *Okinawa Rendezvous* (dir. Gordon Chan 2000), Andy Lau's *A Fighter's Blues* (dir. Daniel Lee 2000), Leon Lai's *Moonlight in Tokyo* (dir. Felix Chang and Alan Mak 2005) and Jay Chou's *Initial D* (dir. Andrew Lau and Alan Mak 2005) are also set in the Hong Kong diaspora in Asian cities. Of the three thousand films produced between 1989 and 1997, these motifs, of Hong Kong as part of the Chinese diaspora, and the overseas Hong Kong diaspora, reflect anxieties surrounding the crisis of identity and belonging.

In the study of Hong Kong cinema, the diaspora has also occupied a central approach. Underlying Ackbar Abbas's (1997a) seminal concept of disappearance is the diasporic condition of

displacement. Supporting Esther's Yau's (2001) conceptualization of the androgynous cinema is the effect of diasporic hybridity. The transnationalism of action culture discussed by Meaghan Morris, Siu-Leung Li and Stephan Chan (2005) traverses a history of diasporic connections. The film reader, *Between Home and the World* (Cheung and Chu 2004), provides an expansive overview of these intersections surrounding Hong Kong, the globalization of its film industry and the politics of memory. The development of the cinema and its studio institutions have also been archived through the diaspora (Fu and Desser 2000). Writers like Gina Marchetti (2006), Sheldon Lu (1997; 2007) and Helen Hok-sze Leung (2008) have also approached themes of transnationality, commodity consumption and sexuality through the disjunctures afforded by the diaspora.

Diasporas are signature sites in the films of Ann Hui. In 1978, while working at the government network, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), she began the first of what has been described as her Vietnam trilogy, with *Boy from Vietnam* (1978), a powerful episode as part of the popular dramatic series *Below the Lion Rock*. Her focus on the displacement of Vietnamese refugees in Hong Kong brought media attention to the plight of the 'boat people'. In 1979, when she joined the film industry, she made her first film, *The Secret*. Partially set in the diaspora of Macau, it was praised for its 'intricate structure' and 'firmly established [her] as one of the freshest and most exciting cinematic voices of the Hong Kong New Wave' (Berry 2005: 424). Her second feature, *The Spooky Bunch*, is a light comedy about ghosts. Horror and the ethereal are treated as liminal spaces, just like the diaspora. *The Story of Woo Viet* (1981) and *The Boat People* (1982) complete the Vietnam trilogy and consolidated Hui's status as a critically acclaimed filmmaker. *The Story of Woo Viet* mixes gangster action with the charisma of Chow Yun Fatt, and brought to light political concerns of immigration facing the people in Hong Kong. Considered by

many as Hui's masterpiece, *The Boat People* introduced Andy Lau to the film industry and received many accolades, including official selection at the Cannes Film Festival and the best film at the second annual Hong Kong Film Awards. Based loosely on a Japanese novel about a Japanese photo-journalist who witnessed the communist liberation on the streets of Da Nang in Vietnam, it was a controversial film initially banned in Taiwan, taken out of distribution in Hong Kong and eventually banned in China. While some criticized its portrayal of violence against Vietnamese refugees, the Vietnamese refugees themselves queried Hui on the mild treatment of violence. This period also saw Hong Kong cinema facing double censorship from British and Chinese governments. The film's anti-communist stance was considered politically sensitive. Its plot of the displacement of refugees as a result of the communist take-over was also considered a metaphor for the plight of Hong Kong in 1997 when the British territory would return to Chinese sovereignty. As Li Cheuk-to states, the film 'touched a collective nerve among Hong Kong people who were by now increasingly worried over their future' (cited in Foster 1997: 142). These four films herald the dynamism of Hui's repertoire and single out the multi-layered diaspora as a key theme in her film style.

After these four films, she joined Shaw Brothers and made *Love in a Fallen City* in 1984, the year of the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration that sealed the date for the 1997 return of Hong Kong from the British to China. Set in 1941 on the eve of the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong, the film, adapted from Eileen Chang's (Zhang Ailing) novel, focuses on Hong Kong as a refuge for the Shanghai and European diasporas. Writing in the 1940s and considered China's most distinguished writer of that period, Chang's works explored love and loss, and contemporary relationships between men and women. Hui uses 'the past to visualize the forthcoming transfer of Hong Kong to the mainland and what the future holds for the fallen city' by '[drawing] attention

to the ambiguity of “origin” and “consequence” (Yau 2007: 133). The film became an allegory about the angst associated with Hong Kong’s impending return, a theme coming to the full fore in Hong Kong cinema and dealt with more directly by Hui in *Starry Is the Night* (1988). During this period, Hui adapted Jin Yong’s martial arts writings and made two period epics set in Mainland China, *The Romance of the Book and Sword* (1987) and *Princess Fragrance* (1987). The two-part film adaptation, about the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty by ethnic Hans and minority Muslim women, continues the theme of diaspora through its focus on belonging and non-belonging, centres and margins.

In the 1990s and 2000s, the diaspora has become more explicit in Hui’s contemporary dramas. *My American Grandson* (1991) shows how the return of an overseas-born Chinese boy to Shanghai to spend a summer vacation with his grandfather is an emotional journey of cultural adjustment and reconciliation. *Zodiac Killers* (1991), an action film, is set in Japan about overseas Hong Kong students. *Ordinary Heroes* (1999) historicizes the territory’s political activism through the plight of Hong Kong’s boat families while the more recent *The Way We Are* (2008) examines the predicament of a notorious small town in the New Territories. *Ah Kam* (1996), *Eighteen Springs* (1997) and *Summer Snow* (1995) show how women are marginalized in the development of modern Hong Kong (Ho 2001). These liminal themes continue with the crisis of mid-life in *July Rhapsody* (2002) and the haunting of the after-life in *Visible Secret* (2001). From small towns like Nande in *Goddess of Mercy* (2003), to the cosmopolitan metropolis of Shanghai and the frontier province of Manchuria in *The Postmodern Life of My Aunt* (2006), China, as Hong Kong’s diaspora, also features strongly.

In these films, and through eclectic genres, the many diasporas feature not only places (Macau, Shanghai, China, Manchuria, Japan, Britain, America), but also people (refugees, immigrants, ghosts,

islanders, ethnic minorities, fringe dwellers, second generations) and psychological conditions (crisis, loss, exile, nostalgia and reparation). These tropes are explicitly dealt with in her diaspora masterpiece, *Song of the Exile*.

Patricia Brett Erens approaches the film from Stuart Hall's concept of the diaspora as a locus for articulating the complexity of double consciousness and cultural identity. She discusses the film's 'diasporic aesthetic' through the characters' embodiment of hybrid identity, the stylistic construction of the past through memory and highlights the role of women's autobiography (2000: 46). Freda Freiberg (2002) emphasizes the themes of travel and food as motifs for border-crossing. Tony Williams (1998) extends this discussion by situating it as an example of border-crossing cinema. According to Esther Yau, border-crossing films in the 1980s consider the 'complex dynamics and symbolic structures that mark the cultural positioning of a population whose ambivalence toward the colonial administration is accompanied by nationalist sentiments toward China' (1994: 181). Siew Keng Chua (1998) focuses on the twofold marginalization of home by drawing an explicit parallel between women's relegated role in the domestic sphere and the condition of otherness faced by the experience of exile. This chapter extends these discussions by focusing on intimacy.

This chapter begins by considering the spaces of diaspora represented in the film. Britain, China and Japan are evaluated as homelands that are entangled in Hong Kong's postcolonial predicament. Macau and Manchuria are further examined as excentric second homes that foreground the diaspora as a peripheral force in shaping an alternative Hong Kong modernity. The intimate relationship of diaspora to colonization is highlighted as a conduit for unravelling the interdependent relationship between self/other and home/host. Diasporic intimacy is further demonstrated through the concept of second homes that decentres the myth of a single home. These considerations are central to how postcolonial Hong

Kong articulates its self-presence and cultural location, and key to the film as an ode to the quest of home.

Framing Diaspora and Migration-as-Transition

As the term “diaspora” has gained currency in recent times due to global migration and the rise of new nationalisms, it is necessary to frame its taxonomy and briefly survey the field of diaspora studies. In a seminal essay, ‘Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return’, William Safran lists six defining features of the diaspora: first, it refers to people who ‘have been dispersed from a specific original “center” to two or more “peripheral,” or foreign, regions’; second, diasporic groups ‘retain a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland’; third, members of this group ‘believe that they are not – and perhaps cannot be – fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it’; fourth, they ‘regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return – when conditions are appropriate’; fifth, they ‘believe they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland’; and sixth, they ‘continue to relate, personally and vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship’ (1991: 83–84).

Safran’s definition differentiates diaspora from other groups such as expatriates, immigrants, refugees and aliens, and stresses the emigration of people and their minority statuses within nation-states. His taxonomy characterizes the first field in diaspora studies. This field focuses on diasporic communities as ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but

Notes

Introduction

1. See for example: Berlant 1997, 1998; Bhabha 1999; Cohen 2002; Dowrick 1991; Giddens 1992; Kasulis 2002; Lévinas 1969. This theorization will be fully explored in chapter one.

Chapter 1 The Diasporas of Hong Kong

1. According to the official Hong Kong government's figures tabled by Ronald Skeldon (1995: 57), emigration from Hong Kong accelerated from around 20,000 per annum in 1981 to about 62,000 in 1994.
2. Hamid Naficy (2001) discusses claustrophobia as a mode of spectatorship that reflects the liminal perspective of the migrant.
3. On translation as a practice of the social relation of communication between two language communities, see Naoki Sakai (1997: 15).
4. On the transformation of inheritance in the diaspora, see Chakrabarty (2001) and Chow (2007).

5. Hui revealed in an interview that Cheung was the film investor's choice for the film. Hui initially did not consider Cheung appropriate for the role as she was of the wrong age. See Kong 1999: 19.
6. Chapter two will discuss the flashback sequences more fully in relation to genre and memory. Arguably, there is a seventh 'flashback' — the scene in Manchuria — which is actually Hueyin imagining the event as told by the brother.
7. For a discussion of ethnic Han Chinese migration to Manchuria during this period, see Reardon-Anderson 2005.

Chapter 2 Re-turn to Hong Kong: Authorship, Memory, Intimate Biography

1. The writings of Laura Mulvey, Teresa de Lauretis, Pam Cook, Mary Ann Doane, Ann Kaplan, Annette Kuhn, Judith Mayne and Deidre Pribam are key in this field. For a detailed history of the movement, see Blaetz 2007.
2. I have not used the term 'post-feminist' to frame Hui's cine-practice. In popular discourses in the West, the term 'post-feminist' describes the backlash against second-wave feminism in the early 1990s and has been loosely associated with third-wave feminism. These discourses encapsulate a range of practices by a generation of women born after the second wave; some of these take an anti-feminist stance that promotes female self-empowerment (through individual capitalism) but do not interrogate the structures of heterosexism and patriarchy; and some even proclaim that feminism is no longer relevant. On these critiques, see Bordo 1997, Faludi 1991 and Walker 1992. Hui's model of female creativity and her counter-cinematic strategies do not reflect these generational, individualistic and anti-feminist positions and practices.
3. For a development of these approaches, see Olney 1980; Smith 1987.
4. The May Fourth tradition in cinema comes from the political and intellectual developments in May Fourth thought, and is characterized by the 'nationalist opposition to imperialist aggression, support for

the political democratization of Chinese life, and rejection of traditional Confucian morality and values' (Pickowicz 1993: 297).

5. As witnessed during the initial stage of the transition in 1991 when the colony initiated its first democratic elections, the previous 140 years or so of British imperialism have revealed deeply entrenched colonial structures.
6. Foucault (1997) refers to ethics as a specific set of regulations defined not in relation to universal law (morality) but subjectivation. Subjectivation is a process of the transformation of an individual into the subject. That is, the subject is the outcome of a set of procedures that produce the transformation which constitutes it. This means the subject is produced through a history that determines and defines the conditions of existence for the subject. To understand an ethical history of the subject is to question how history 'subjects', 'subjectivises' and 'makes subject'. Foucault formulates ethics as a practice of the self to refer to the labour of self-cultivation and transformation: 'a history of "ethics" (is) understood as the elaboration of a form of relation to self that enables the individual to fashion himself into a subject of ethical conduct' (1985: 251). The ethical subject is a subject (of self-knowledge) as well as an object (of regulation). As the process of the formation of cultural identity and as the process that transforms the individual into a subject, subjectivation is also a practice of the border.

Chapter 3 Teaching *Song of the Exile* in the Diaspora: Minor Cinema, Transcultural Literacy and Border Pedagogy

1. In this diverse cohort, two thirds of the students were from various Asian backgrounds including China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and Malaysia, and the rest were from Anglo-Australian backgrounds, or from American and South American backgrounds. Student statuses vary, including local, international and exchange. Their responses to the film are coded from S1 to S30.

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