

Research on the Qi-Lu imagery and Confucianism in Edward Yang's Films

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Abstract: Edward Yang is known as a prominent representative of Taiwan's New Wave Cinema movement, and as the next generation of migrant, born in Shanghai and originally from Meixian, Guangdong Province, however, shows a strong representation of Qi-Lu Culture in his films, and reflects a deep sense of national culture. His film intervenes on two levels: the survival of Shandong people who migrated to Taiwan and the historical allusions to Qi-lu culture, focusing on the mainland imagery of Shandong and the extended Confucian culture of Qi-lu.

Keywords: Edward Yang; Taiwan Film, Qi-Lu Culture; Chinese culture.

1. Introduction

Despite his extended stay in the United States and adoption of a western way of life, Edward Yang has always had China at the forefront of his mind. He possesses a special sense of civilizational introspection. In an effort to address the subjective identity crisis that the modern Chinese population is experiencing, his films demonstrate a reflection on Chinese culture within the context of the critique of modernity. His work is infused with the traits of the Western modernist movement, but it is primarily focused on resolving Chinese concerns and has a strong feeling of place and nation. The work centres on the critique of modernity, which is seemingly as radical as the Western film masters' emphasis on the cultural adaptation of contemporary man, but with a keen awareness of the cruel features of traditional Eastern civilization interacting with modernity. The film is concerned with the issue of China through the images of Qi-Lu Culture and is open to the issue of how the modern oriental personality is being constructed in Shanghai, Tokyo, and Singapore, the entirety of East Asia's Confucian culture. In a word, Chinese learning do noumenon, Western learning do use. The director attempts to use a Western-style lens to reflect the Chinese landscape and to confront the modern living conditions of the Chinese people.

This is evident in the role of the boss "Shandong" and the Tsingtao instructor in *A Brighter Summer Day*, as well as the borrowing of the slogan "Don't forget to be in Ju, attack the mainland". The illuminating dialogue between a taxi driver with a Shandong accent and the author of Confucian Confusion, thus intervening on two levels: the survival of Shandong people who have moved to Taiwan and the historical allusions to Qi-Lu Culture, focusing on the imagery of the mainland and the extended Confucian culture of Shandong.

2. Survival of Shandong people who moved to Taiwan

2.1. Section Headings

2.1.1. Sub-section Headings

The Qi-Lu cultural allusions were used to mock the authorities' policy of counter-attacking the mainland. After

their defeat and escape to Taiwan, the Kuomintang housed their troops and dependents in military dependents' villages, where conflict and contradictions arose between local and foreigners, both inside and outside the military dependents' villages.

In *A Brighter Summer Day*, the military dependents' village 217 gang's boss is known as "Shandong", a vicious character who kills the Tai Bao gang's boss Honey, and later, when the Tai Bao gang goes to take revenge, the action is jokingly referred to as "Tian Dan recovers the country, Don't forget to stay in Ju, counter-attack the mainland", the call itself revealing the provincial conflict and, more importantly, the use of Qilu imagery to drive mainland imagery.

The Qi-Lu Culture allusion actually expresses strong Chinese imagery, and goes on to deride Chiang Kai-shek's motto for the rest of his life: "Tian Dan recovers the country, don't forget to stay in Ju". This involves two historical allusions. The first is that in 284 BC, when the Yan state united with its rivals to attack Qi, the only two remaining places in Qi were Jimo and Jucheng, and finally Tian Tian, the leader of Jimo, defeated the Yan state and assisted King Xiang of Qi to recover the lost territories and restored the country, which means "recovering the country". In 686 B.C., Qi Xiaobai fled to his grandmother's house in the state of Ju to avoid death, and later returned to Qi to become the leader of the Five Hegemons of the Spring and Autumn Period, which means "don't forget the past" or "don't forget your intentions".

The Qi-Lu Culture allusion became Chiang Kai-shek's motto, as a self-caution for the so-called 'counter-attack on the mainland'. military dependents' village gang was named 'Shandong', based both on the fact that The name "Shandong" is based on the basic fact that the Kuomintang army has a high proportion of Shandong soldiers, but also on the overlapping of the name "Shandong" with the imagery of "Counter-attacks the mainland", so this part is not to emphasise the Shandong imagery, but to use it to refer to mainland imagery, and to recount the unique historical past of the two sides of the Strait in a derisive manner.

In *A Brighter Summer Day*, the Shandong instructor laments that Taipei is not as good as Qingdao, "The buildings in Qingdao are particularly good, built by the Germans, especially the sewers, which are particularly large and wide,

and no matter how hard it rains, when the rain stops, the ground will never be waterlogged, unlike Taipei, which will be waterlogged when it rains for a while." This mix of colonial identity with the sentiment of the original hometown is not to highlight Qingdao's complete urban infrastructure, but to relieve a feeling of nostalgia. The movie depicts people from another province moving to Taiwan in the 1960s with the intention of staying there for a while before returning to their home province as soon as possible, only to find themselves in a situation where they were unable to do so. The film shows the sense of rootlessness of provincial in Taiwan and conveys the home complex of the motherland through the words of a Shandong instructor, and as a result, this portion of the Shandong imagery still relates to the mainland homeland in general rather than Shandong specifically.

3. The "Confucian Confusion" is alleviated by a cab driver with Shandong accent

A Confucian Confusion is the English title of the film the age of Independence, and the book "A Confucian Confusion", written by Wei Qianxian in the film, is meant to reflect on the story of Confucius, who traveled to modern times and was welcomed by the people for his success, but was also misunderstood as a hypocrite. Wei Qianxian told Qiqi that he is the only person in the world who understands her misunderstood situation, but she doesn't appreciate this and takes a taxi, the writer was in hot pursuit and ran headlong into the taxi, which led to a conversation with the driver who speaks Shandong dialect that inspired him to express his feelings:

That's right, what person doesn't fear death and love life? Why not interpret "lust" as an appreciation and gratitude for all that is good and beautiful? In fact, in this society, we are all like him, we have no way of recognising the good and the beautiful. In that case, there must be many more new aspects of what we see waiting to be discovered, and it is only when we continue to discover new truths every day that life becomes interesting. From this little car accident, to every plant and tree, to every living person, there are hints of a new hope that we can live happily ever after. So to overcome hypocrisy is not really to die, but to live with real honesty. I'm just too stupid! If there is truth everywhere, what reason is there for those who think they believe in themselves to continue to pretend? If we don't go on to stipulate that there is only one true (truth), how can so many false ones come running? It is because of this difficulty in distinguishing between truth and falsehood that there is so much suspicion of people, so much misunderstanding of people, so many unreasonable expectations of one another. Maybe he (pointing his finger at the driver) is the real Confucius reincarnated? (Driver: Nuts!) It's just that instead of giving him any chance to show any of his talents, we have falsely prescribed him into this closed-mindedness by using that standard set of answers from Confucius! Let him become so blind and so empty, so empty that he takes those books of Wei Qianhan as narcotics. No wonder he suspects that your naivety and goodness is a disguise; he will surely degenerate even if he has the talent to comprehend the truth!

The whole incident somehow made the writer revive and gain new hope in life, determined to reject hypocrisy and be honest, and arguing that the village-willing and the difficulty

of distinguishing the truth from the falsehood of the gentleman had caused suspicion and misunderstanding among people, and that the Confucian autocracy had left people empty and blind, leading them to comfort themselves with narcotic-like entertainment books, making it difficult to identify with innocence and goodness, and even seeing the kindness as hypocritical hypocrite. And the driver, even if he were a reincarnated Confucius, would have found it difficult to fulfil his ambitions in such an environment. As the author of A Confucian Confusion, Wei Qianhan actually unpacks "A Confucian Confusion", which means that individuals should face up to hypocrites, reject hypocrisy and stick to their true nature.

4. Reflecting on the authoritarian Confucian culture and advocating the spirit of independence of personality

The director's reflection on Confucian culture consists of two main aspects, one being a critique of the hypocritical hypocrite, which is still prevalent under the capitalist model. "Xiangyuan (hypocrite), the thief of virtue" (The Analects of Confucius - Yanghuo), refers to the yesman who appears to be loyal and honest, smiling and cheeky but is a hypocrite to the extreme and unprincipled, a kind of person of scorn by Confucius and Mencius.

The hypocritical, slick, and worldly hypocrite represents a group of people who are very competent in secular society and is at the top of the food chain in traditional society. Under the false model of capitalism, he has evolved into an unscrupulous and refined egoist, a two-faced person who conceals his true feelings and plays the game of thrones. The well-known reborn Confucius and Qiqi are able to remain authentic and natural, but in a culture of false sentiment and public opinion, but are misunderstood in an environment of false sentiment and public opinion as disguised and most dangerous, which in turn leads them into a confucian's confusion.

On the other hand, it is a critique of the Confucian authoritarian culture, which has lost the ability to express itself and judge independently. Although Confucianism was not the only form of autocracy in ancient China, and even more decisive was the role of legalism, Edward Yang uses this as a way to reflect on Chinese culture. If one knows what one wants, thinks independently and judges rationally, one will not be confused by the dominance of the smooth and worldly hypocrite, and will be able to keep to the path of innocence.

5. Conclusion

Edward Yang recalls the home complex for provincial through the imagery of Shandong, mocks the Taiwanese government's strategy of counter-attacks the mainland, but truly concentrates on the more comprehensive historical story of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. In essence, Edward Yang is a man who genuinely "takes the world as one's own duty" and holds that "poverty is good for itself, while attainment is good for the people". He also tries to address the crisis of subjectivity that modern Chinese people are experiencing when they encounter hypocrites by fostering an intellectual consciousness of independent judgement rather than mindless obedience.

References

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