

From ‘New Taiwan Cinema’ to ‘World Cinema’: A Critical Case Study of Edward Yang’s Career

Chen Ronggang

*Department of Media and Communication, London School of Economics and Political Science,
London, UK
r.chen20@lse.ac.uk*

Keywords: Edward Yang; New Taiwan Cinema; World Cinema

Abstract: Edward Yang (1947-2007) made only seven full-length films, but stands as a pivotal figure in Taiwanese cinema and the New Taiwan Cinema movement. This thesis delves into the evolution of Yang’s reputation from local innovator to global cinematic icon. It charts his journey, highlighting external forces that transformed his image, such as distribution strategies and global rebranding efforts. Particular attention is given to his 1990s works, like *A Brighter Summer Day* and *Yi-Yi: A One and A Two*, which mark critical periods in his career. These films exemplify his integration into international film festivals and the emerging ‘world cinema’ category.

1. Introduction

Edward Yang (1947-2007) made only seven full-length films but is a key figure in Taiwanese cinema. As a child, he arrived in Taiwan after the Civil War (1946-50) and later studied engineering abroad. After briefly attending the University of Southern California’s film school, he returned to Taipei in 1981, beginning his film career. This paper explores the reception of Yang’s films, understanding his transition from a New Taiwan Cinema pioneer to an internationally recognized director, analyzing how both the production and reception of his films intertwine with local and global elements. It focuses on his early career and the rise of the New Taiwan Cinema Movement in the 1980s, the global distribution and branding of his films, and intellectual property issues related to his work. Using a mix of scholarly articles, production data, industry critiques, and film festival retrospectives, this paper aims to understand why Yang is celebrated in world cinema and contribute to the discussion on Edward Yang.

2. The Early Career: Auteur of New Taiwan Cinema

2.1. The Industrial and Institutional Coordinates

Amid Taiwan’s economic downturn, vertically integrated film companies managing both production and distribution fell from 67.85% to 37.26% in the late 1970s.^[1] Within the restructured industry, several small film studios surfaced. Despite the rise in domestic films in the late 1970s from these studios, audiences remained distant. As Peggy Chiao notes, the dismissal of Taiwanese films

reflected broader concerns about identity and arts, with specific critiques aimed at the film sector.^[2] On the contrary, Hollywood retained a dominant position, appreciated for its diverse themes and cutting-edge techniques. Besides, as Yeh Yueh-yu says, ‘the industry was hit by the decline of domestic Mandarin-speaking film audiences, who turned to Kung Fu films and comedies from Hong Kong.’^[3]

Market depression led to policy changes. In 1978, the General Manager of Central Motion Picture Corporation (CMPC), Ming Ji, pushed domestic film professionals to collaborate with overseas-trained filmmakers. By 1980, the Government Information Office hired visionaries like Hsiao Yeh and Wu Nien-jen, who became prominent in later years. These changes faced opposition from traditionalists, but reshaped the film industry’s resource allocation, paving the way for new cinema. New cinematic practices emerged. In 1982, Yang collaborated on *In Our Time*, marking the start of New Taiwan Cinema. Its success surpassed everyone’s expectations. As Hsiao Yeh remarks, this unusual film (*In Our Time*) proved a miracle from the morning of the premiere date (28th, Aug 1982). It endlessly broke the box-office records... (We) became dizzy with excitement and ecstasy... However, we only had one week on the running schedule [thus] *In Our Time* was compelled to be taken out of the theaters at its peak. General Manager Mr. Ming decided to continue to show this film in True Beauty Theater, showing western films at that moment... It was unheard of that a domestic film would do better than the western films.^[4]

Following this success, Yang directed his first film, *That Day, on the Beach*. The film’s production and distribution marked a significant shift in the industry. Notably, crew members like cinematographer Christopher Doyle were not from CMPC. This film’s success changed the hiring practices of state-run film companies, moving from seniority to creativity. As Hsiao Yeh notes, many talented individuals became in-demand for films thereafter. Theaters initially hesitated to screen the film due to its 169-minute length, potentially affecting profit margins. Yet, as Hou Hsiao-hsien noted, its box-office success marked the ‘beginning of positive competition.’^[5] In retrospect, *In Our Time* and *That Day, on the Beach* can be seen to have inaugurated the New Taiwan Cinema Movement not simply because of their creative inventions of stylistic motifs and new stories, but also because of their contributions and response to changing regulations in the local film industry.

2.2. The Ideological Coordinates

Ideologically speaking, those state-sponsored films in the 1960s and 1970s were considered central to discovering ‘Taiwanese-ness’, a nationalist concern that can also be seen to underwrite the emergence of New Taiwan Cinema in the 1980s. The New Taiwan Cinema is related to both the modernism movement of the 1960s and the root-searching eagerness of the 1970s in the field of literature in particular, a large number of veteran writers embarked on a project to represent the history of Taiwan. In addition, from so-called ‘healthy realist film’ in the 1960s and 1970s to New Taiwan Cinema, the resulting literary emphasis on realism as the appropriate means of capturing Taiwanese experience also pervaded the cinematic enterprise. Thus, the New Taiwan Cinema has lines of continuity with wider debates about realism and the historical context of modernization as the backdrop for the search for nationhood. This emphasis is evident in the use of the term ‘National film’ to indicate what is now more frequently referred to as ‘Taiwanese films’ or ‘domestic films’. The older nomenclature accurately captures the ongoing centrality of questions of indigeneity or ‘nativeness’ to Taiwanese films as the industry moved into a new era in the 1980s.

In the case of Yang, these issues of identity provide the immediate context for his inaugural involvement in Taiwanese film as a scriptwriter, which predates his contributions as a director. *New Left Review* has published the entire transcript of an interview between Yang and Leo Chen, in which Yang talks about his motivation to take part in the project of *The Winter of 1905* (1981). Hong Yi,

educated in a westernizing Japan in the early 20th century, returned to China and became a monk influencing the democratic revolution. In an interview, Yang expressed greater interest in the Russo-Japanese War's history than Hong's personal journey. Yang drew parallels between early modern China and the Vietnam and Cold War eras he lived through.

Yang's 1980s films care about national experiences and gender issues. For instance, *Departing from Expectations* portrays a single mother's struggles, while the 'Urban Trilogy' examines young lives in Taipei. *That Day, on the Beach* focuses on two young women, Lin Jiali and Tan Weiqing, spotlighting emerging feminist ideologies. The Urban Trilogy addresses middle-class concerns in changing Taiwan. Their success aligns with the rise of the urban middle class, especially after the Oil Crisis led to urban advancements and rural migration. By the 1980s, this urban populace became key for Taiwan's transformation. The trilogy not only showcases Taiwan's changes but appeals to middle-class values.

Despite the historical and societal backdrop aiding directors like Yang, the New Taiwan Cinema faced decline by 1987, with films underperforming and facing criticism. Reviewers, as Wu Chiao-chi noted, increasingly frowned upon 'artistic indulgence'.^[6] The excoriation of New Taiwan Cinema culminated with a book edited by Mi Zou and Liang Xinhua *The Death of New Cinema: From 'All For Tomorrow' to 'A City of Sadness'* in which critics argue that Hou Hsiao-hsien had tampered with the historical facts of the 228 Incident in *A City of Sadness* (1989).^[7] Due to negative reviews and shifting industry challenges, including dwindling investor confidence, many New Taiwan Cinema directors, including Yang, halted filmmaking. In an interview, Yang mentioned that post-1986's *The Terrorizers*, he took longer preparing for his next film as both investment dynamics and critical discourse had become unfavorable to filmmaking.^[8] In order to meet pragmatic financial concerns, Yang thus had to change his filmmaking strategies in the late 1980s.

3. The Late Career: Transnational Cinema

3.1. As a European-Influenced Auteur

While Yang is recognized for focusing on contemporary Taiwan, many attribute the roots of his vision to European literary and cinematic influences. Seen as a Taiwanese avant-garde director with ties to European modernism, debates often center on whether Yang is an Asian original, a European derivative, or a blend of both in film discussions and reviews.

In 1988, US film-reviewer William Babcock declared in *The Christian Science Monitor* that Yang 'is the ambassador of cinema for Taiwan' and 'an original' in light of the direction he gave Taiwanese films.^[9] However, in more scholarly accounts, there is an emphasis on the experimental nature of his films, especially *That Day, on the Beach* and *The Terrorizers*, which are often plausibly but misleadingly linked to European exemplars such as Michelangelo Antonioni. Yeh Yueh-yu notes that Fredric Jameson goes so far as to call Yang the 'Chinese Antonioni' due to a putative semblance between their shooting and narrative techniques:

Frederic Jameson signals his esteem for Edward Yang's film by putting him in elite European company (in *Remapping Taipei* [1992]). Lately, the 'Chinese Antonioni' idea continues to linger,... Jameson's groundbreaking has remained that, at least in English-language criticism, without sufficient further cultivation on Yang or other directors.^[10]

When Flannery Wilson compares the reflection of modern Taipei and London in *The Terrorizers* and *Blow-Up* (1966) respectively, he claims that

Both films also function as artefacts - as reflections of a particular strain of political resistance that appears in art within a specific historical context. While Antonioni's film reflects the drugs and rock-and-roll counterculture of 1960s London, Yang's film critiques the empty materialism of the rising middle class in 1980s Taipei.^[11]

However, Yang himself was somewhat resistant to these comparisons with Antonioni on the grounds of stylistic similarity, an argument that went into widespread circulation via Tony Rayns, who specifically remarked on the influence of Antonioni on Yang's films. Yang once commented, 'I admire so many people, of course including Antonioni. But he is not one of the most impressive people.'^[8] At the same time, Yang's critical significance spread across various academic disciplines and subfields across the 1990s in the wake of Fredric Jameson's account of *The Terrorizers* as a national allegory in his landmark essay *Remapping Taipei*.^[12] Jameson's essay uses Yang's film to reinforce his earlier argument that all third-world literature operates in the form of national allegory, not only those works that depict nationalist struggles but also the ones that seem grounded in the personal.^[13] Jameson's argument was embroiled in controversy from the moment it appeared, with the most fierce criticism of it written by Aijaz Ahmed who identifies the Eurocentrism implicit in Jameson's argument.^[14]

Despite this critique, however, many have adopted Jameson's perception and applied it to Yang's following films. As a result, other Yang's Taipei films thus became indispensable to a highly influential account of late capitalism and post-colonialism. Yeh Yueh-yu, for instance, considers the use of the music of Elvis Presley in *A Brighter Summer Day* from the perspective of neo-colonialism. In this account American popular music is not simply a window on the Taiwanese experience of homogeneous urban life but also representative of larger issues in the postcolonial context.^[15] 'Taiwan New Wave' can also be approached as a marketing intervention that further draws out those characteristics in Yang's films that meet with international recognition and approval. In *Remapping Taipei*, Jameson suggestively quotes Peter Wollen's more direct statement that the term 'new wave' was used to promote the entry of Taiwan film products into the international cultural market.^[16] Certainly Yang's signature as a 'new wave director' enforced his position in the enlarging transnational film market within which Taiwan film was increasingly placed across the 1990s.

3.2. Transnational Strategies in the 1990s

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Taiwan entered the era of globalization. *A Brighter Summer Day* was co-produced by Yang's own film company, Yang & His Gang Filmmakers, and the US-based Jane Balfour Films, while being funded by a Japanese company. This film is adapted from the real life case of a youth who kills his lover. Yang puts this story into an ambitious background that reveals the ethnic collision between Taiwanese and the diasporic populations from the Chinese mainland. Labelled a 'US/Japan/Taiwan co-production', *A Brighter Summer Day* was awarded several accolades at the Tokyo International Film Festival and Three Continents Festival.

The domestic box office returns of *A Brighter Summer Day* were only 9,368,930 US dollars, although the single price for the ticket was at an unrivalled high level of 160 New Taiwan Dollar (approximately 5.8 US dollars at the time).^[17] Before *A Brighter Summer Day*'s theatrical release in Taiwan, its costs were already covered by an overseas copyright trading of 34 million US dollars following its Tokyo and Nantes debuts. This strategy yielded a profit of 8 million US dollars before its domestic premiere. Wu Chiao-chi suggests this transnational production model might help others cover costs, earn profits, tap into export markets, and potentially revive the domestic market.^[18]

After Taiwan lost its seat in the United Nations in 1971, international film festival organizers had only been able to accept Taiwanese films as a subnational category within the PRC. Wu Chiao-chi takes the example of Hou Hsiao-hsien's *The Time to Live, The Time to Die* (1985) which, when it was shown at the Berlin Film Festival in 1986, was labelled 'Taiwan/China' instead of 'Taiwan' due to political intervention from PRC. On the contrary, the transnational production origins of *A Brighter Summer Day* facilitated its appearance on the international film festival circuit as a 'US/Japan' film.^[19] The success of *A Brighter Summer Day* prompted the recognition of Taiwanese directors as an

independent force in the genealogy of Pan-Chinese films. Although the political boundaries around Taiwan were still strictly enforced, the flow of global capital opened a path for Yang and successive Taiwanese directors to produce films that would be released on widening distribution networks.

Owing to the success of *A Brighter Summer Day*, Yang's later films of the 1990s circulated widely in Europe, Japan and Hong Kong. As with *A Brighter Summer Day*, *A Confucian Confusion* and *Mahjong* are also the creations of international co-operation. What is more, in February 1994, the US enterprise Warner Brothers Entertainment Inc. established Warner Brothers (Asia) and adopted a Hollywood-style marketing and distributing system within Asia with *A Confucian Confusion* as its first project.^[20] The distribution push mounted by Warner, saw *A Confucian Confusion* appear in Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, Philippine and Malaysia within a relatively short timeframe.

However, despite this promising shift that saw Taiwanese films gain highly ranked overseas reputations, these films continued to perform dismally in the domestic film market in the 1990s. Yingjin Zhang identifies the governing dynamic of the Taiwanese film industry in the 1990s as follows, 'Ironies have beset Taiwan cinema since the early 1990s. On the one hand, Taiwan auteurs and art films have won multiple prestigious international awards; on the other hand, domestic feature production has reduced to an inconsequential market factor.'^[21] After 1996, in the general context of Taiwanese adjustment to the demands of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the need to comply with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), there were no more restrictions on imported film as there had been previously under a quota system. Hence, Hollywood and Hong Kong films consolidated their dominance in Taiwan. The small share won by domestic films was so eroded that in 1996 the proportion of Taiwanese films was only 1%-2%.^[22] Although Yang's international success did not generate a recovery of the Taiwanese film industry, there were further international shifts still to come into play that influence Yang's career on the global stage.

3.3. The Exemplar of World Cinema: Yi-Yi

Yang's last film *Yi-Yi* is a transnational production made with global capital from multiple Japanese companies, including Pony Canyon Enterprises, Omega Project and Nemuru Otoko Seisaku linkai, and the US-based Atom Films. *Yi-Yi* is the pinnacle of his career if such things are judged by international industry awards, which was marketed and received as a more universal story in the context of world cinema, an increasingly influential category in both industrial and critical contexts. While, the concept of world cinema is admittedly always in dispute the provenance of the term is clear. As Daniel Curran writes, world cinema is 'used primarily in English-speaking countries to refer to the films and film industries of non-English-speaking countries.'^[23] While the term is often used interchangeably with the term foreign film, it carries a different ideological burden insofar as the presumed norm from which world cinema deviates, but also addresses as its intended audience, is the English-speaking world.

World cinema's uniqueness stems from cultural relativism applied universally, emphasizing linguistic and geographical differences while highlighting universal emotional truths. Thus, *Yi-Yi* exemplifies world cinema by framing Taiwan's rising middle class within global urbanization. While it showcases globalization, it emphasizes emotions, family, and love. The film balances local preferences with a western inclination, mirroring world cinema's broader scope.

Yi-Yi, with events typical of family drama, can be viewed as an autobiographical tale of Yang Yang and Ting Ting's childhood. At the film's close, Yang Yang's confession at his grandmother's funeral moves his parents. Its emotional impact transcends language, as highlighted by a CBS Sunday Morning review which credited its universal middle-class themes for resonating with American audiences. Unlike other Yang films, *Yi-Yi*'s ending is so uplifting that some reviews claim it leaves viewers feeling more 'alive' and attuned to the essence of love.^[24] The end of the film resonated with

the middle-class taste of US audiences. Roger Ebert concentrated on the middle-class perspective it encapsulates that ‘Yi-Yi provides American audiences with both a different imagination of Chinese family and a similar vision of those families from many mainstream American films that are impatient in family life: people meet; they feel desire and act on it.’^[25] While, John Anderson, in his monograph on Yang, suggests ‘Yang represents the transnational nature of modern Taiwan’ but I suspect that what he calls ‘cosmopolitanism’ is more likely an imagined affinity derived from his experience of living in the west.^[26]

Six years later, in the various obituaries that appeared after Yang’s unexpected death, Yi-Yi was often cited as a turning point in his career. In New York Times it was commented that while Yang’s approach ‘was extremely fresh and extremely intimate’ in the context of Taiwan and much of the rest of Asia, in an international context it was less than new.^[27] As the obituary continues:

Still, even as his international renown grew, Mr. Yang remained largely unknown in the United States, where interest in foreign-language film was on the wane. It wasn’t until Yi Yi, his last completed feature, that American audiences were finally introduced to a filmmaker widely hailed as one of the most important in contemporary cinema.

Just as a national agenda underwrote the European film festivals at which Yang first rose to success, a global agenda played an integral role in the exhibition and circulation of Yi-Yi. When Yi-Yi was reshown by the Film Society of Lincoln Center on November 2011, the film critic Simon Abrams suggests that Yang’s name had been synonymous with Yi-Yi to American audiences since 2000.^[28] The story of Yi-Yi resonates with western audiences due to its familiar sentimental elements, aiding the envisioning of a global community. Ebert notes that while Taiwanese films once seemed foreign, characters in Yi-Yi inhabit a world similar to Toronto, London, or Sydney. In their socio-economic context, culture is shaped more by corporations and media than tradition. Therefore, in terms of Yang’s specialist reception, many argue he is influenced by European directors and aligns with the European art film tradition. Concurrently, as this perception spreads through industry magazines and film festivals, he is also seen as a leading post-colonial director in scholarly discussions.

4. The Posthumous Career: The Problem of Intellectual Property

Widely recognized as Yang’s two masterworks, both *A Brighter Summer Day* and *Yi-Yi* raise the question of who owns the right of succession to copyright inside and outside Taiwan. In this section I trace the complex impediments that exist within the schema of capital globalization in association with the concept of IP and its impact on Yang’s late career. As in so many other ways, Yang was situated at the intersection of these regional and global vectors.

4.1. Film as Intellectual Property in Taiwan

In Taiwan, like elsewhere, IP’s importance has grown across a diverse creative sector, now solidified in law and industry practices. I aim to explain how IP was integrated into the Taiwanese film industry amid regional and global protocols that sometimes clashed. In the 1990s, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) defined IP as ‘the legal rights which result from intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, literary, and artistic field.’^[29] WTO, WIPO, and related institutions have promoted IP discourse, emphasizing the privatization of creative content. Taiwan began prioritizing IP around its 1994 GATT application, which championed multilateral trade. This move introduced IP discourse into the Taiwanese film industry during a crucial period. To join GATT, Taiwan agreed to protect US film copyrights. The Ministry of Economic Affairs in Taiwan oversees IP violations, like video piracy.

While the western film industry prizes auteur originality, IP rights protect other stakeholders. Both Taiwanese and Western laws converge in transferring Taiwanese cultural goods globally. By the

1990s, IP superseded Taiwan's censorship system. As Donald Richards highlights, this mirrored a neoliberal turn, prompted by external debt crises, which integrated countries into global markets and broadened capital agreements.^[30] Warner selected Hong Kong, a major financial hub, to establish a Hollywood distribution system using Taiwan's film industry network. IP became a crucial force in this new cultural economy. Taiwan's economic liberalization mirrors Asia's broader shift towards Western neo-liberalist paradigms. While Japan adopted economic liberalization swiftly post-World War II, Taiwan embraced the free market and the 'creative economy' concept much later. Over the past two decades, the drive for cultural globalization, fueled by capital growth and transnational legal frameworks, influenced the latter part of Edward Yang's film career.

4.2. Intellectual Property and *A Brighter Summer Day*

Though many reviewers celebrated the long-awaited release of *A Brighter Summer Day* on Blu-Ray DVD by Criterion Collections in March 2016, few paid attention to the prior film restoration project conducted by the Martin Scorsese Film Foundation (MSFF) or the reasons behind the lengthy delay in the film's re-distribution in any format. To be sure, the copyright history of *A Brighter Summer Day* is something of an enigma being the subject of public equivocation and private speculation, some of which enters the realm of the conspiracy theory.

The restoration project uses 'the uncut version of *A Brighter Summer Day*' which has a running time of 237 minutes' and adopts '35mm camera and sound negatives provided by the Edward Yang Estate and preserved at the Central Motion Pictures Corporation.'^[31] This project was launched in 2009 after a long negotiation with the Edward Yang Estate, to which copyright was ceded after Yang's death in 2007. The very recent statement about the difficulties surrounding the copyright of *A Brighter Summer Day* comes from Wen-chi Lin and Guohua Zhong.^[32] Zhong recalls that MSFF negotiated poorly with the copyright owner, Edward Yang Estate. The estate restricted MSFF from distributing the restored film, fearing it might hamper their long-term strategy due to its perceived limited market appeal. This left the film's DVD distribution in limbo and MSFF's ambitions of expanding the audience and recovering costs unmet.

Since 1991, *A Brighter Summer Day* grappled with copyright issues, stemming from Taiwan's shaky distribution system. After its premiere, it featured at global film festivals and sold rights to companies in Britain, France, and Japan, but distribution in Taiwan and other formats was restricted. Lin emphasizes that the initial copyright problems were not solely profit-driven but also influenced by personal conflicts. Yang and his CMPC colleagues had tense ties with businessmen. Only in 2011, two decades post-premiere and four years after Yang's passing, did the restored film have a single screening in Taiwan. Yet even this screening was less than optimum since 'CMPC had to prepare an auxiliary projector to project the original subtitles (necessary because much of the film involves characters speaking in different dialects) because the restored edition only had the image and soundtrack, without both Chinese and English subtitles.'^[33]

4.3. Intellectual Property and *Yi-Yi*

While *A Brighter Summer Day* had its own marketing challenges, *Yi-Yi* faced both clearer and more complex issues. Despite its international circulation in countries like France and Japan in 2000, no Taiwanese distributors bought *Yi-Yi*. As films evolved into export products influenced by global capitalism, the Central Government promoted films for international circulation over those targeting local audiences. This policy does not benefit the domestic industry focused on box-office returns. Consequently, Hollywood films gained traction locally, and Taiwanese directors pursued government sponsorship for projects with international appeal.

Yang sought Japanese investment for his last film, *Yi-Yi*. This choice complicated the film's

circulation, preventing its Taiwanese theatrical release until 2009. Yang did not have legal rights to Yi-Yi's copyright, which after legal disputes, went to the Japanese company, Omega Corporation. Even though Yi-Yi was shown in seventeen countries by Golden Scene, a Hong Kong company, it was unavailable to Taiwanese viewers. Yang discussed Yi-Yi's distribution challenges in an interview with Michael Berry:

This is related to a problem concerning film distribution in Taiwan. ... I feel this especially so after having made Yi-Yi. Living in this rather difficult environment, we are forced to face all kinds of things we may not like to... You have to do everything yourself ... including distribution... Even though there are many capable people involved in New Taiwan Cinema who have contributed so many constructive things, because of all these unreasonable rules and regulations in terms of distribution, it is extremely difficult for our films to make a good profit. Even when our popularity was at its peak, the system still made our survival very difficult.^[34]

From Yang's interview with Berry, we learn that when he applied for Sponsorship to attend to the Cannes Film Festival, the application was declined because the authorities did not regard Yi-Yi as a Taiwanese film since most of the investment came from Japanese Y2K Project, which invited directors from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan to tell urban stories. Yang's situation resonates with Pang Laikwan's research among emerging directors at the turn of the millennium who must also negotiate an increasingly complex industry:

In spite of the glamour associated with the filmmaking business, young directors are exemplary creative laborers, who are exposed to an increasingly volatile environment with no career safety net. The creative industries' emphasis on agglomeration and flexibility actually deprives workers of a stable creative environment in which to engage with filmmaking more meaningfully. Among the young directors I talked to, almost all were nostalgic for the old studio era, when directors only needed to direct.^[35]

Throughout his career, Yang consistently criticized Taiwan's film industry for lacking professionalism and independence. The shift from state censorship to IP and copyright challenges in the globalized era underscores this. Once criticized for 'artistic indulgence' in the 1980s, Yang's final film, Yi-Yi, resonated globally without losing its Taiwanese essence. While Yang navigated the VHS and DVD era, younger Taiwanese directors will inevitably face more complex IP challenges due to the ease of online distribution, surpassing national and economic boundaries.

5. Conclusion

Edward Yang's career, from its 1980s start in the New Taiwan Cinema Movement to its rejuvenation through digital formats, mirrors broader shifts in film production and consumption. This dissertation explores Yang's reception using frameworks like auteurism and postcolonial critiques. Once a novel local director, Yang transitioned into a global artist, a change reflecting institutional shifts in Taiwan's film industry in a global era. This work illuminates the evolution of Taiwan's society and its film industry within a global context and also highlights changes in film criticism. My research prioritizes cultural policy and industry constraints. Yang's foresight into cinema's global branding and his strategies to maintain his unique touch offer valuable lessons for critiquing films in today's transnational age.

References

- [1] Lu I-fei, *Taiwan Cinema: Politics, Economy, Aesthetic (1949-1994) (1949-1994)* (Taipei: Yuanliu, 1998), 322-323.
- [2] Chiao Peggy, *New Taiwan Cinema* (Taipei: China Times Publishing, 1988), 22.
- [3] Yeh Emilie Yuehyu and Darrell William Davis, *Taiwan Film Directors: A Treasure Island* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 55.
- [4] Hsiao Yeh, *The Start of a Movement* (Taipei: China Times Publishing Co., 1986), 103.

- [5] Li Youxin. *Six Major Directors in Hong Kong and Taiwan* (Taipei: Evening Independent, 1986), 73.
- [6] Wu Chia-chi, 'Festivals, Criticism and the International Reputation of Taiwan New Cinema,' in *Cinema Taiwan: Politics, Popularity and State of the Arts*, ed. Darrell William Davis and Ru-Shou Robert Chen (London: Routledge, 2007), 85.
- [7] Zou Mi and Liang Xinhua, *The Death of New Cinema: From 'All For Tomorrow' to 'A City of Sadness'* (Taipei: Tonshan Publications Inc., 1991).
- [8] Huang Chien-yeh. *The Study of Edward Yang's Films* (Taipei: Yuan-Liou, 1995), 230.
- [9] William A. Babcock 'Edward Yang Gives Taiwan Direction,' *Christian Science Monitor*, Dec. 15, 1988.
- [10] Yeh Emilie Yueh-yu and Darrell William Davis, *Taiwan Film Directors: A Treasure Island* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 137.
- [11] Flannery Wilson, *New Taiwanese Cinema in Focus: Moving Within and Beyond the Frame* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 59.
- [12] Fredric Jameson, 'Remapping Taipei,' in *New Chinese Cinemas: Forms, Identities, Politics*, ed. Edited by Nick Browne, Paul G. Pickowicz, Vivian Sobchack and Esther Yau (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 146.
- [13] Fredric Jameson, 'Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism,' *Social Text*, 15 (Autumn, 1986), 65-88.
- [14] Aijaz Ahmad, 'Jameson's Rhetoric of Otherness and the 'National Allegory',' *Social Text*, 17 (Autumn, 1987), 3.
- [15] Yeh Yueh-yu, 'Elvis, Allow Me to Introduce Myself: American Music and Neocolonialism in Taiwan Cinema,' *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*, 1 (2003), 1-28.
- [16] Fredric Jameson, 'Remapping Taipei,' *The Geopolitical Aesthetic: Cinema and Space in the World System* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1992), 119-120.
- [17] 'The Domestic Box-office Records in 1991', *The Database of Taiwan Cinema*, <http://cinema.nccu.edu.tw/BOX/3A/3A91.HTM>.
- [18] Wu Chia-chi, 'Festivals, Criticism and the International Reputation of Taiwan New Cinema,' in *Cinema Taiwan: Politics, Popularity and State of the Arts*, ed. Darrell William Davis and Ru-Shou Robert Chen (London: Routledge, 2007), 86.
- [19] Wu Chia-chi, 'Festivals, Criticism and the International Reputation of Taiwan New Cinema,' in *Cinema Taiwan: Politics, Popularity and State of the Arts*, ed. Darrell William Davis and Ru-Shou Robert Chen (London: Routledge, 2007), 79.
- [20] Wu, Shunhua. *The Strategies of the Distribution of 'A Confucian Confusion': An Interview With Executive Manager of Warner (Asia) Ivan Cheah*. 'Cinema Influence,' 52 (1994), 42-43.
- [21] Zhang Yingjin. *Chinese National Cinema* (London: Routledge, 2004), 271-272.
- [22] Government Information Office (GIO), *Republic of China Yearbook, 2001*: 286.
- [23] Daniel Curran, *Foreign Films: More than 500 films on video cassette*, (Evanston, Illinois: CineBooks, 1989), 5-6.
- [24] 'Take a Chance on a Chinese Film,' *CBS Sunday Morning*: Oct. 8, 2000.
- [25] Roger Ebert, Review: Yi Yi, March 2, 2001: <http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/yi-yi-2001>.
- [26] John Anderson, *Contemporary Film Directors: Edward Yang* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 99.
- [27] Manohla Dargis, 'Edward Yang, 59, Director Prominent in New Taiwan Cinema, Is Dead,' *The New York Times*, July 2, 2007.
- [28] Simon Abrams, 'A Rational Mind: The Films of Edward Yang,' *Slant*, Nov. 17, 2011.
- [29] World Intellectual Property Organization, *Introduction to Intellectual Property Theory and Practice* (London: Kluwer Law International, 1997), 3.
- [30] Donald G. Richards, *Intellectual Property Rights and Global Capitalism*, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 104.
- [31] The database of Martin Scorsese Film Foundation: <http://www.film-foundation.org/world-cinema>.
- [32] Luo Yuzhou, Cai Jialing and Bo Mi, *The Entertainment Channel of Phoenix Net, Specialists from Film Archive Talk About the Development of Film Restoration in Chinese mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong*, 5th Sept. 2012, http://ent.ifeng.com/movie/special/70venice/dujiacehua/detail_2013_09/05/29350753_1.shtml.
- [33] Wu Terry, *The Interview Before Screening Restored a Brighter Summer Day*, Online video clip. YouTube. YouTube, 12 July 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJC6fyLddWQ>.
- [34] Michael Berry, *Speaking in Images: Interviews with Contemporary Chinese Filmmakers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 288-289.
- [35] Pang Laikwan. *Creativity and Its Discontents: China's Creative Industries and Intellectual Property Right Offences* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 126.