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Exploring Intersemiotic Translation Models – A Case Study of Ang Lee's Films

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A Case Study of Ang Lee's Films

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Declaration

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Haoxuan Zhang

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Abstract

Roman Jakobson's notion of intersemiotic translation provides an opportunity for translation studies scholars to respond to the broad move from the dominance of writing to the dominance of the medium of the image. Due to the linguistic bias of translation studies, however, intersemiotic translation has yet to receive systematic attention. The present research is thus designed to respond to this under-discussed and yet growing phenomenon in the age of digitalization and aims to contribute an understanding of intersemiotic translation by focusing on the case of film as one of the most notable instances of intersemiotic translation.

Though intersemiotic translation enables film to be discussed through the prism of translation studies, past research in this area, which perceives film as a transmission from verbal signs to non-verbal signs, oversimplifies the mechanism of film-making. This comes at a price, however, since the researchers neglect the fact that other parameters of film language, such as cinematography, performance, setting and sound are governed by audio-visual patterns that are included in film's other prior materials. To remedy this deficiency, a rigorous investigation of these audio-visual patterns has been carried out, and answers are provided for the research question: How do intersemiotic translators translate?

In this dissertation, these quality-determining audio-visual patterns are considered as the film-maker's intersemiotic translation models, which provide translation solutions for verbal text segments in the screenplay. Using elements from Even-Zohar's polysystem theory and Rey Chow's theory of cultural translation, a multi-levelled system of intersemiotic translation is proposed, comprised of a hierarchy of two levels: cultural and semiotic. In this system, each intersemiotic translation model is considered to be the result of a cross-level combination that relates to a specific type of semiotic system within a specific cultural system, employed in one or several parameters of film 'language'. These intersemiotic translation models and their functions are explored through case

studies of three of Ang Lee's films, namely, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, *Lust, Caution*, and *Life of Pi*.

List of Abbreviations:

CP   *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*

EXT   exterior scene

INT   interior scene

IST   intersemiotic translation

POV   point of view

SL   source language

ST   start text

TT   target text

TLC   *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

VFX   visual effects

VO   voice over

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Introduction

0.1 Research Theme and Objective

Intersemiotic translation is defined as "an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs from a non-verbal sign system" (Jakobson 2004: 139). Since Roman Jakobson first proposed this concept in 1959, however, intersemiotic translation has been largely ignored. This is because attention has been mainly focused on the linguistic aspects of translation studies, i.e., the process of transferring from one natural language to another. Following technological developments in the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century, non-verbal forms of communication have been expanded to a degree which cannot be ignored. In his response to this phenomenon, Gunther Kress referred to it as "the broad move from the now centuries-long dominance of writing to the new dominance of the medium of the image" (2003: 1). It therefore seems less and less justifiable for translation studies scholars to continue to focus on the linguistic aspect of translation: as Kobus Marias (2019: 22-23) claimed, "with technological development, multimodal communication is becoming the norm, and translation studies will define itself out of existence if it limits its interests to interlingual translation only". Under this premise, the study of intersemiotic translation provides an opportunity for translation studies to expand its focus from the linguistic-centred approaches, and to formally respond to the rapidly expanding non-verbal forms of communication.

The aim of the present dissertation is to contribute to the theory and understanding of intersemiotic translation by endeavouring to answer one question: how do *intersemiotic* translators translate? The term 'intersemiotic' is italicized here to emphasize the fact that to date the study of intersemiotic translation has been largely influenced by binary verbum-centred theorizations and that the complexity of the intersemiotic domain has seldom been addressed.

This means that in trying to find a straightforward translation between two texts (in a broader sense of the word), i.e. more or less complex constructs composed of elements of two different semiotic systems, each according to the mode of operation of its semiotic system, the researchers into intersemiotic translation are often confined to a binary transmission paradigm from verbal signs to non-verbal signs (as was the case with Jakobson in 1959). Adhering to this binary transmission between 'verbal' and 'non-verbal' means that one must leave unexamined other *non-verbal* prior materials that determine the non-verbal quality of intersemiotic translation. Consequently, the wider complexity of intersemiotic translation phenomena has been ignored (this is reviewed in Chapter 1).

The primary research question of this thesis is therefore raised in response to the deficiencies in the consideration of audio-visual aspects in the currently limited research in the area of intersemiotic translation. It is to these theoretical deficiencies that this dissertation hopes to offer a useful supplement. By focusing on identified audio-visual patterns as one kind of the many prior materials of intersemiotic translations, this research will therefore challenge the current verbum-centred bias in intersemiotic translation studies.

Film, as one manifestation of intersemiotic translation, is the focus for discussion in the present dissertation. Unlike previous research in this area, this thesis endeavours to avoid confining film to a binary transmission process from one finite (normally verbal) source to its filmic realization (see, for instance, Cattrysse 2014). Rather, a film is considered here to be the translation result of chains of prior materials that are defined as a film's 'start texts' (see Section 2.4). With the full understanding that intersemiotic translation, like any other form of translation, is an infinite process without an absolute beginning or an absolute end (CP: 2.303), the focus of the present research is on the finite process between a film screenplay and its audio-visualization. Within this context, a film's non-verbal prior materials include the audio-visual patterns to be employed by the intersemiotic translators to translate the information provided in the screenplay.

The bulk of this dissertation is focused on exploring these audio-visual patterns, which are here referred to as the filmmakers' intersemiotic translation models (IST models). It is argued that the filmmakers, as intersemiotic translators, translate by appropriating a film's audio-visual prior materials and employing the audio-visual patterns represented in these materials as their IST models. It is by this appropriation and employment that the intersemiotic translators mediate their translations across cultures and media.

0.2 Research Material and Methodology

This dissertation presents a discussion of intersemiotic translation models based on case studies of three films directed by Ang Lee, namely, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000), *Lust, Caution* (2007) and *Life of Pi* (2012).

These films were chosen as the objects of study because of their international recognition both artistically and commercially. Each of the three films was acclaimed in major film festivals across the globe[1], and also achieved significant financial box office success worldwide[2]. Such artistic and commercial successes indicate that each of the three films has gained "accessibility and transmissibility" (Chow 1995: 200) among global spectators. The global recognition of these films will make the case studies of these films more familiar to readers of this dissertation and is an indication that intersemiotic translation applies not only to niche areas of filmmaking such as the products of avant-garde filmmakers, but is also applicable to mainstream cinema, where the phenomenon of intersemiotic translation is foregrounded to a highly visible degree.

The three films were also chosen for the significance of their director, Ang

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[1] To exemplify the success that these films have had worldwide, a few of the many distinguished accolades are mentioned here. *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* received 10 Academy Awards Nominations in the 73rd Annual Academy Awards, and won four, including Best Foreign Language Film. *Lust, Caution* received 12 nominations at the 2007 Golden Horse Awards, winning seven including Best Film and Best Director. *Life of Pi* received 11 Academy Awards Nominations, winning four, including Best Director. Source: https://www.imdb.com.

[2] *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* grossed $213,525,736 worldwide. *Lust, Caution* grossed $67,091,915, which makes it the highest-grossing NC -17 rated film worldwide. *Life of Pi* grossed $609,016,565 worldwide. Source: https://www.boxofficemojo.com/.

Lee. Having taken the world's major film festivals by storm multiple times (most notably for winning three Academy Awards, five Golden Globe awards and four British Academy Film Awards), Lee can be considered as one of the most successful film directors in Asia. In addition to his success, and his global recognition, Lee is also known for taking risks. Considered as an outsider everywhere[3], Lee achieves "the critical detachment necessary for the uniqueness of creative vision" (Said 2002: 366). Following his creative vision, Lee's films have been full of risks both topically and stylistically. He employs visions of both East and West, and his utilization of silence, his incorporation of the environment, and his narration through physical posture and facial expression all contribute to making his film 'language' unique. Thus, as an intersemiotic translator, Lee mediates between cultures through appropriating, remediating and revisiting audio-visual patterns from both East and West. The three films selected each offer excellent examples of this, while providing the ideal data for analysing how an intersemiotic translator translates by employing audio-visual patterns from different cultures.

The other important reason for selecting Lee's films as the material for the present research is to bring the concept of intersemiotic translation into the area of pan–Chinese cinema, since, in both mainland China and Taiwan, film as intersemiotic translation is a rather new concept. With their global recognition, Lee's three films serve as valuable examples for an academic analysis of how an Eastern director shapes his films through intersemiotic translation of the screenplay, and how, by appropriating visions from different cultures, he connects his translation both to a foreign culture and innovatively to his own culture. Thus, these three films not only offer an opportunity for researchers in this area to understand film through the prism of intersemiotic translation, they also provide excellent examples for other filmmakers, as intersemiotic translators, to learn to

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[3] Ang Lee remarked in an interview on December 11, 2005 that "I never was a citizen of any particular place… My parents left China to go to Taiwan. We were outsiders there. We moved to the States. Outsiders. Back to China. Now we were outsiders there, too --- outsiders from America" (cited in Ebert 2007: 820).

actively negotiate global visibility for their own translations.

The primary materials of this research are these three films, and the three screenplays on which the films are based. Primary data were collected via a textual analysis of these three films. Using shot by shot analysis, each of the three films was broken down generally into the four areas of cinematography, mise-en-scène, editing, and sound. These four areas can be further divided into 10 parameters, namely: setting, costume and make-up, lighting, staging, photography, framing, shot duration, editing, acoustic sound and music. The primary data collected were categorized with regard to these parameters. This is a novel methodology that has yet to be introduced in mainstream translation studies (as discussed in Section 3.2.1.4). The primary data were compared with their corresponding segments in the screenplay, and this comparison between the screenplay and the primary data collected exemplifies the outcome of intersemiotic translation.

The intersemiotic translation outcomes were then analyzed in comparison to the audio-visual patterns that the intersemiotic translators used as their IST models. The crux of this analysis was to explore how an intersemiotic translator employs an IST model, why they use it, and what the employment of this model achieves. Some of these IST models were identified via secondary data collected from secondary materials. These materials include the published production notes of the three films, namely, *The Making of Crouching Tiger*; *Lust, Caution: The Story, the Screenplay and the Making of the Film;* and *The Making of Life of Pi*. The research also uses interview data from published and online resources. Ang Lee's autobiography *Ten Years of Cinematic Dreams* provides valuable interview data in which Lee reveals the details of his filmmaking process (especially with regard to *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*). Lee's interviews online offer additional credible explanatory tools for his decision-making in the case of *Lust, Caution* and *Life of Pi*, which are not included in his autobiography. These secondary sources help identify the audio-visual patterns that Lee imposed while also offering his own response concerning why he employs these patterns as IST

models. Some audio-visual patterns, such as cinematic patterns, composition techniques and film settings are self-evident through textual analysis alone. In these rather obvious cases, secondary data that were collected from the above-mentioned materials is useful in justifying the argument made in the research.

It is fully understood that a film has a collaborative authorship, however, a discussion of this collaborative authorship will inevitably divert the research attention towards the management of intersemiotic translation projects, where the complex interactions and negotiations between each intersemiotic translator need to be carefully examined (as discussed in Section 7.2). So that the focus of this research remains the discussion of non-verbal prior materials of intersemiotic translation, Ang Lee is defined as the intersemiotic translator who is responsible for the selection and employment of IST models. In the context of this dissertation, it is also understood that Ang Lee is given the credit for the translation behaviour of his entire crew, e.g., his cinematographers, his art designers, his performers, etc.

0.3 Thesis Structure

This thesis has six chapters. Chapters 1 to 3 can be regarded as theoretical chapters. Chapter 1 presents a literature review that examines the state of intersemiotic translation studies, and begins by mapping the theoretical development of intersemiotic translation in general. After the overview, the literature that is focused on discussion of films is then critically reviewed. The review of these materials is carried out in two parts, i.e., firstly those that investigate the translation process from a verbal source to a non-verbal text, and secondly those that discuss the non-verbal sources of films. The aim of the review is to specifically reveal the paucity of consideration for the audio-visual aspect of intersemiotic translation, to which the present research offers a thorough response.

Chapter 2 proposes a paradigm of intersemiotic translation in the form of a conceptual scaffold to be used throughout the entire dissertation. Moving beyond

a verbum-centred theorization, this chapter reviews the intersemiotic translation process and proposes key terms to be used in the study of intersemiotic translation. It first challenges the simplified binary perception of film as intersemiotic translation, which neglects the complex mechanism of filmmaking, and proposes a detailed paradigm of film's points of departure from the superficial verbum-centred theorization of intersemiotic translation. On this basis, it is argued that film is an intersemiotic translation comprised of chains of prior materials, both verbal and non-verbal. In this chapter, the concept of 'text' is redefined to refer to any form of semiotic communication, and is regarded as the basic unit for intersemiotic translation. Accordingly, the term 'start text' is chosen over 'source text' to describe the film's multiple points of departure. These start texts will be generally grouped into three types, with each type of film prior materials categorized with regard to their timeline and function in the filmmaking process.

Chapter 3 establishes a theoretical framework and methodology for the dissertation. It introduces Itamar Even-Zohar's conceptual scheme of polysystem theory (1997), and Rey Chow's theory of cultural translation (1995), as theoretical tools to analyse intersemiotic translation models. Even-Zohar's polysystem theory proposes the concept of the model as a distinct level of 'repertoire', with the concept of repertoire considered as one of five constituents involved in social communication. Chow's theory of cultural translation, on the other hand, responds to the visual aspect of audio-visual representations, which she regards not only as translations of a culture, but also as audio-visual constructs that determine the way in which a culture is perceived. Following on from a discussion of these two framework theories, it is argued in this chapter that every IST model belongs to a culture. An IST model translates a culture by representing the cultural lens through which the culture is put 'under gaze' and is comprised of audio-visual constructions. Following logically from this premise, in this chapter, a novel system of intersemiotic translation models is introduced as the underpinning methodology for future research. These IST models constitute a 'system' in the way that they formulate clusters of audio-visual

patterns. These clusters can be recognized as each belonging to a specific type of signifying practice that is affiliated to a culture, therefore this system of IST models combines two hierarchized levels, of cultural model (the culture which the audio-visual patterns belongs to) and semiotic model (the signifying practices that defines the semiotic nature of the audio-visual patterns). Accordingly, four types of IST models are examined, namely, home intersemiotic IST models, home intrasemiotic IST models, foreign intersemiotic IST models and foreign intrasemiotic IST models. Key elements and concepts of this proposed system is explained in detail.

Chapters 4 to 6 can be regarded as analytical chapters where the proposed system of intersemiotic translation models is applied to case studies of Ang Lee's films. Chapter 4 discusses how intersemiotic translators translate by employing their home IST models, based on the case study of scenes in the film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. In this chapter, the spatial composition of Chinese ink-wash painting and the controlled formal artistry of Chinese calligraphy are regarded as examples of Lee's home intersemiotic IST models. The mise-en-scène of classic martial arts films and Wire Fu choreography are regarded as examples of Lee's Lee's home intrasemiotic IST models.

Chapter 5 discusses how an intersemiotic translator translates by employing foreign IST models based on case studies of scenes from *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, *Lust, Caution* and *Life of Pi*. Foreign IST models refer to non-Chinese audio-visual patterns that are utilized by Lee in his IST. In this chapter, the visual pattern of Mughal composite paintings is regarded as Lee's foreign intersemiotic IST model. The employment of the prolonged following shot, and inclusion of explicit sex scenes are presented as examples of Lee's foreign intrasemiotic IST models.

Chapter 6 discusses the cases where an intersemiotic translator employs home and foreign IST models, not in isolation, but in a cross-cultural combination. This combination describes the cases where IST models of different cultures are employed for a transnational gaze, where an IST model from one culture is

employed to make up for the other's deficiencies. Intercultural combinations of IST models are examined through the case studies of the bamboo scenes in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and the Vishnu landscape images in *Life of Pi*.

In the Conclusion, the findings of the study are summarised and areas for further research are suggested.

Chapter 1 Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

A review of the existing literature on intersemiotic translation has revealed two research problems. Firstly, there is a lack of discussion concerning the transmission process from verbal sources to non-verbal materialization, and secondly, there are inadequacies in the discussion of non-verbal sources that determine the audio-visual qualities of intersemiotic translation. The literature selected is reviewed with the key question in mind of how film, as an intersemiotic translation, is executed.

In order to answer this question, two sub-questions first need to be addressed:

a. How are verbal sources transmitted audio-visually?

b. How are audio-visual sources mediated?

To address these problems, the literature discussing intersemiotic transmission procedures from verbal to non-verbal is examined, and the literature related to non-verbal sources of intersemiotic translation is also discussed. It should be emphasized that the audio-visual aspects of intersemiotic translation are the sole concern for the present research.

This chapter is divided into four sections. Section 1.2 presents an overview of the past research on the area of intersemiotic translation in general. Section 1.3 provides an overview of the research concerning film as intersemiotic translation. Section 1.4 focuses on reviewing research into the verbal-source-to-target-film translation process, and finally, research into the non-verbal sources of filmic mediation is reviewed in Section 1.5.

The chapter consists of a selective review of publications on intersemiotic translation from 1959 to 2020. Within this period, the selected literature includes academic journals, monographs and book chapters. They are the results of a search for the words "intersemiotic translation" in the title, abstract or keywords

via the search engines in academic databases, including Web of Science, JSTOR, Science Direct and Taylor and Francis Online.

1.2 The Imperfect Journey of Intersemiotic Translation

This section provides a general overview of past research on intersemiotic translation by reviewing past and present theories. It also looks into the methodological and theoretical flaws in intersemiotic translation research concerning the exploration of IST phenomena in the case of film.

The term *intersemiotic translation* was first proposed by Roman Jakobson in his essay of 1959 "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation", where it is defined as: "Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems" (Jakobson 2004: 139, italicized in the original text). This could be considered as the starting point from which intersemiotic translation received universal recognition. Jakobson claimed that "the meaning of a sign is its translation into another sign, or sequence of signs, in the same language, in another language or in other semiotic medium, therefore, translation is not limited only to the intralingual or interlingual level" (Jakobson 2004: 139). The translation processes may therefore be internal to the same language, or they may occur between a verbal sign system and a non-verbal sign system.

It may be supposed that Jakobson's proposition of intersemiotic translation provided theoretical insights that connect translation with interdisciplinary studies, which would contribute immensely to broadening the theoretical boundaries of translation to encompass other kinds of transmission. Intersemiotic translation has not, however, received wide academic attention. There were no notable publications on key academic platforms on the topic of intersemiotic translation between 1960 and 1991 (see Figure 1.2.1).
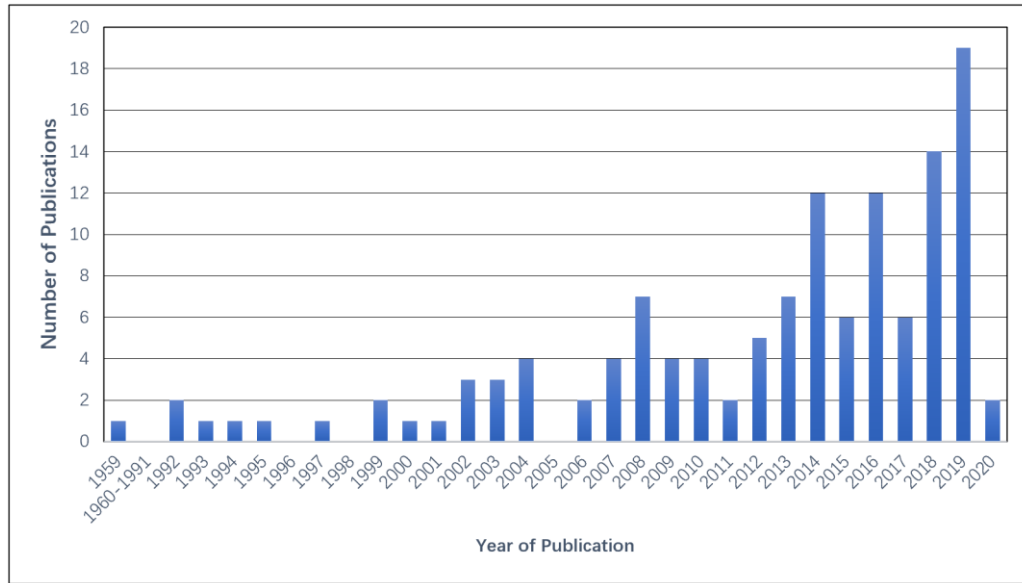
Figure 1.2.1 Annual publications on intersemiotic translation on key academic platforms from 1959 – 2020[4]

One reason why intersemiotic translation has not received much attention from translation scholars may be that its proposer, Jakobson himself, was a linguist who focused his discussion on linguistics, and was not interested in going too far beyond linguistic domains. This point is clear enough, considering the fact that Jakobson named his seminal paper 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation' to emphasize that it was linguistics that formed the foundation for his theoretical discussion of translation. Accordingly, all three of the translation categories he identified are verbum-based, with intersemiotic translation referring to "the recodification of linguistic text-signs into non-linguistic codes" (Gorlée 1994: 162). Following this logic, it might be said that in suggesting that translation necessarily involves natural languages, Jakobson started a linguistic bias (as mentioned in Marais 2019: 15-16). As a result, as Marais (2019: 16) observes, non-verbal semiotic translations are seldom considered as simple translations, and the attention of translation studies scholars is directed mainly to

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[4] The selected publications were collected from key academic platforms sourced from Web of Science, John Benjamins and Taylor and Francis Online. A journal article will only be considered if it is published in the journals listed in A&HCI (Arts and Humanities Citation Index) and SSCI (Social Sciences Citation Index).

transmissions between natural languages (see Nida 1964, Vinay & Darbelnet 1995 and Catford 2004 as typical examples). Moreover, Jakobson did not discuss intersemiotic translation in any detail, let alone develop a methodology for investigating it that could have paved the way for future researchers to explore this topic further.

Considering that Jakobson focused on categorizing transference of verbal signs, his translation categorization is reasonable. His mention of intersemiotic translation, however, shows that he clearly noticed that the phenomenon of translation is not exclusively limited to linguistic aspects of communication, as his verbum-centred translation categorization defines non-linguistic aspects as intersemiotic translation. At this point, it may be argued that Jakobson's theory of intersemiotic translation is flawed for the following two reasons:

Firstly, Jakobson's juxtaposition of three translation categories, namely, interlingual translation, intralingual translation and intersemiotic translation can be understood as an assertion that all non-verbal translations are intersemiotic translations. Such an assertion is an oversimplification. If there are circumstances where lingual signs are transferred within one language, there may well be circumstances where non-verbal signs are transferred within one non-verbal semiotic system (see Eco 2001, 2003). This categorization is more problematic if verbal signs are considered as a semiotic system (see Gorlée 1994, Gottlieb 2007), and then Jakobson's "interlingual translation" may well be "intersemiotic translation". Thus, Sergey Tyulenev claimed that intersemiotic translation only makes sense when juxtaposed with intrasemiotic translation, such as painting to painting, or music to music (2018: 33).

Secondly, Jakobson's verbum-centred theorization is a narrow definition of "intersemiotic translation". He suggested that intersemiotic translation involved a transference from verbal signs to non-verbal signs, and having modelled this transference, he asserted a dichotomy – semiotics is either verbal or non-verbal. He neglected to consider that the term "intersemiotic" indicates an interrelation between two semiotic systems, of which both ends of the transmission may

involve innumerable non-verbal forms. If lingual signs are transferred by means of another language, there may well be circumstances where non-verbal signs are transferred by another non-verbal sign system (see examples in Gottlieb 2007).

With a verbal and non-verbal dichotomy, Jakobson oversimplified the many forms that heterogeneous non-verbal sign systems can take. For instance, photography, film, opera, and painting are all separate non-verbal sign systems. Considering their diverse mechanisms, transferences between these sign systems are also forms of intersemiotic translation, e.g., transference of non-verbal signs by means of non-verbal signs. Jakobson's verbum-centred definition of intersemiotic translation, therefore, limits the scope of intersemiotic translation to accommodate other intersemiotic transferences that are not simply verbal to non-verbal. Taking into account the innumerable non-verbal forms of communication, the term "non-verbal" is not at all efficient in identifying, and defining, any specific non-verbal types. Tyulenev, therefore, observes that "intersemiotic translation does not figure as a separate type because the term is applicable to so many types of translation that the term means little without a further concretization of which sign systems are involved" (Tyulenev 2018: 34).

Accordingly, it may be inferred that a verbum-centred assertion restricted Jakobson from providing a comprehensive definition of intersemiotic translation. This verbum-centred theorization also explains the reason why almost all research on intersemiotic translation must recognize a notable verbal source material for the object of study in order for it to be justifiably considered as an intersemiotic translation. Discussions have been undertaken concerning verbal text and opera (Gorlée 2008, 2016), verbal text and film (Cattrysse 1992, Torop 2013), verbal text and book covers (Sonzogni 2011, Mossop 2018), verbal texts and music (Norouzi 2016, Mossop 2019) and verbal text and dance (Yeung 2008, Aguiar & Queiroz 2015). Chapter 2 will further examine how this binary theorization can be problematic.

It cannot be denied that Jakobson's concept of intersemiotic translation, despite its flaws, created the opportunity for translation to be considered as a

general phenomenon that includes complex forms of communication that are not necessarily verbal. As Gorlée remarked, Jakobson has made transduction beyond language, in other non-linguistic disciplines, a real possibility (Gorlée 2015: 105). Even as translation scholars may have been "obsessed with" (as described in Wu 2014: 155) elements of linguistic transfer due to the limitations of space and time, "intersemiotic translation" as a revolutionary academic concept would allow translation scholars to respond to and make greater sense of the immanent expansion of audio-visualization and digital media.

Thirty years after the publication of Jakobson's important article, discussion of intersemiotic translation began to appear in major academic publications, and some translation scholars followed in Jakobson's footsteps to theorize about intersemiotic translation. Although the present research only focuses on discussing film as a case study of intersemiotic translation, it is worthwhile to reconsider publications by these authors, since their theorizations for intersemiotic translation paved the way for future discussion of instances of intersemiotic translation. To this end, the works of Dinda. L. Gorlée, Umberto Eco, Henrik Gottlieb and Kobus Marais were selected for review. They theorize intersemiotic translation based on their expertise in semiotics, although at this point it must be emphasized that semiotics is not the concern of this study.

Gorlée (1994, 2004, 2015) derived her theorization of intersemiotic translation from Charles S. Peirce's theory of signs, and presumed that Jakobson's categorization was also inspired by Peirce's theory.

Gorlée responded critically to the one-way verbal to non-verbal theorization of intersemiotic translation, suggesting it was a relatively narrow concept of the intersemiotic translation process (2015: 15). She further suggested that the term intersemiotic translation has been stretched to include, not only the transmutation of verbal signs into non-verbal sign systems, but also the reverse (ibid.). Gorlée's observation may be considered as an effort to challenge the priority of linguistic signs, even though her own theory of intersemiotic translation did not move away from the binary interactive pattern between verbal and non-verbal signs. Thus,

she did not switch the focus from the linguistic domain to the non-linguistic domain, but engaged exclusively with the complex mediation of intersemiotic translation, which might just be non-verbal to non-verbal. Although she had revisited translation through the rudimentary paradigm of semiotics, Gorlée still did not break through the linguistic confinement of translation as she might have hoped to do. This was inevitable, however, since her case studies concern, almost exclusively, the inter-art relations between different forms of literature (only one of the six case studies concern the intersemiosis of visual art, in Gorlée 2015).

Gorlée's re-discovery of intersemiotic translation follows the framework of Charles S. Peirce's three-part categorization of semiotics: sign, object and interpretant (see CP 2.303). Her discussions of semiotranslation (Gorlée 1994) and transduction (Gorlée 2015) are firmly based on past research in semiotic studies, which are both particularly founded on the theorization of Charles S. Peirce's conceptualization of translation as "mediation, or the modification of firstness and secondness by thirdness…" (CP 2.89). Gorlée observed that translation has gone through three evolutionary stages: transposition, transcoding, and transmutation (Gorlée 2015: 99-105):

1. **Transposition** (First of Thirdness) – the systematic handling, or manipulation, of the representational content. A transposition may be illustrated by the transfer between the syntaxes of two languages to reach the syntagmatic likeness between both sides.

2. **Transcoding** (Second of Thirdness) – converts from one form of coded information to another reflecting the "power of experience" (linguistic index or cultural token) to knowledge (the indexical relationship between a sign and an object). A transcoding may be illustrated by the translator setting up an equivalence between segments of natural languages.

3. **Transmutation (**Third of Thirdness**) –** reflects a sign of Firstness and Secondness to change Thirdness, and generally means the total transformation from one form of energy into another. A transmutation

may be illustrated by the change from one discipline to another, or from one familiar context of the source culture to another cultural context unfamiliar to the target language.

Gorlée described transmutation as the third step, generated through a coded conversation into something different that causes a personal or artistic transfer that implies alternation or exchange (2015: 103). Her usage of the word "transmutation" does not specifically mean intersemiotic translation (as it did for Jakobson 2014: 139), but can be taken to mean the change from one form of language to another, and thus represents the final stage of translation. However, taking into account Jakobson's usage of the word, Gorlée further suggested that transmutation can be applied not only to "transmit the numerical differences of semiotic logic, but can also transform the differences of source messages and the conceptual codes of the source language into a foreign message, belonging to other cultural discourses" (Gorlée 2015: 105). In this regard, transmutation can be understood as the action of language transferred into a "wide range of multimedial translation" (ibid.) and Jakobson's usage of the concept made the "transduction" between non-linguistic disciplines a real possibility (ibid.).

Following Jakobson, Gorlée proposed the word "transduction" to mean the process of converting the intersemiotic translation from verbal texts to visual art. "Transduction" may be considered as intersemiotic translation in quotation marks. Considering the dynamic interpretant-sign relationship, transduction is not a semiotic sign-action of translation, but reflects a pseudo-semiotic sign action, away from semiosis (ibid.: 124). The term "pseudo-semiotic" has been emphasized in Gorlée's discussion of intersemiosis within case studies, mainly concerning the intersemiosis between the arts (ibid.: 136), and it may be inferred from this that she still held the perception that translation is a fixed interpretant-sign behaviour. Gorlée continued by arguing that "instead of this 'hard' definition of the sign-potential of transduction, one can employ an open-ended 'soft' flow of an *Umwelt*-like potential of creative ideas, comments, and habits transmitted

into a variety of the arts (painting, sculpture, dance and so forth)" (ibid.: 124). From this perspective, translation is rule-governed, whereas transduction is 'un-ruled' (ibid.: 235). The un-ruled transduction "exists to change the standard equivalence of the rule-governed semiotranslation within the uncoded and non-equivalence performance of art" (ibid.). This observation is not different from her claim that "all non-verbal codes are artistic codes" (2010: 12). With this claim in mind, it is understandable why Gorlée needed to propose transduction as a free transposition of signs which may tolerate a "creative transposition" (Jakobson 2004: 238), and which leads to a dynamic interpretation of signs. She gave examples of transduction such as the cases of Thoreau's diary of the wonders of nature, Grieg's theatrical reli-kitsch, and Dali's anthropomorphic statues.

It may be argued, however, that the term "transduction" could be considered as an unjustified replacement term for intersemiotic translation. The proposition of "transduction" may be regarded as an effort to engage the translative patterns from linguistic texts, and to apply them to non-verbal art forms, only without using the term "intersemiotic translation". It is suspiciously tautological for Gorlée to have proposed "transduction" as another term for "intersemiotic translation" just because transduction involves artistic signs. Since artistic signs take non-verbal form, "transduction" is undoubtedly intersemiotic translation. What then is the difference between "transduction" and intersemiotic translation? It may be said that Gorlée's interpretation of intersemiotic translation was inherently ambiguous in "seeing them [intersemiotic translations] as both translations and not translations" (Evans 2014: 301).

Gorlée's view of artistic transduction as un-ruled, and non-artistic translation as ruled, may also be arbitrary. Firstly, art is itself a vague concept which encompasses countless semiotic communications (O'Sullivan 2011: 15). The extent of autonomy possessed by the artists may vary according to the field of production (Bourdieu 1993). Secondly, different art forms communicate through different codes, and the codes are norm-governed behavioural patterns which guide the artistic work to a certain form, system, or genre (Toury 1995). Even in

the extreme case of the avant-garde arts (exemplified by the example of Dali in Gorlée 2015: 201-220), the artist still has to base his/her "transductions" on the premise of existing models (see the example of Venus in ibid.: 205). Considering that artists are "enculturated and socialised agents" (Tyulenev 2014: 26), and their "transductions" (Gorlée 2015) are produced within their embedded fields of production, it might be questionable how truly un-ruled and idiosyncratic these so-called autonomous artists are. It might be argued that rather than promoting the term "transduction", and leaving translation to its ordinarily established boundary, what really needs to be done is to expand the boundary of translation so that it includes as many translational instances that take place between multiple semiotic forms (discussed later in this section) as possible.

A possible understanding might be that Gorlée already considered translation as semiotranslation, and that, for her, translation is merely defined as an exchange of signs. Semiotranslation, therefore, already replaces the notion of translation (Gorlée 1994). Under this premise, transduction has to be differentiated from semiotranslation, in all its wide and complex patterns, in order for Gorlée to specifically include the (non-verbal) artistic interpretation of verbal signs. This argument does not really provide a better theorization of intersemiotic translation. Instead, transduction is promoted in case "intersemiotic translation" loses its specificity by being labelled as "semiotranslation". Or, to put it another way, it may be said that the very term "transduction" theoretically derailed "intersemiotic translation".

Like Gorlée, Umberto Eco also responded to intersemiotic translation while trying to critically encompass the term within the scope of translation studies. Eco singled out intersemiotic translation as "translation" in quotation marks, which is different from translation without quotation marks, in that the former is freer than the latter. Eco remarked that "insofar as they [intersemiotic translations] are freely creative, they are not translations, since a translator has always to tame, in some way, his or her 'creative' impetus" (Eco 2003: 170). Eco also remarked that "translators are duty-bound not to say more than the original text, while in

transmutation the critical intention of the 'adapter' becomes preponderant, and represents the very essence of the whole process" (Eco 2003: 170). It might be considered that Eco emphasized intersemiotic translation in quotation marks precisely because "intersemiotic translation" facilitates a different transmission mechanism as compared to interlingual/intralingual translation.

Eco considered intersemiotic translation as an "intersystemic interpretation with mutation of continuum" (2001: 118), where "there is a decided step from purport to the purport of the expression, as happens when a poem is interpreted through a charcoal drawing, or when a novel is adapted in comic-strip form" (ibid.). Within this category of "intersystemic interpretation", Eco further identified the semantic difference between "parasynonymy" and "adaptation". "Parasynonymy" describes a purposeful intersemiotic transmission to translate the purport of the source "in which an object is shown in order to interpret a verbal expression that nominates it" (Eco 2001: 118). "Adaptation," or "transmutation," on the other hand, radically changes the prior source. Eco's discussion of intersemiotic translation takes into consideration many forms of intersystemic mediation such as those from music to film, those from music to painting, those from poem to painting and those from novel to film. Based on these observations, Eco further identified five characteristics of transmutation:

1. An adaptation has the ability to show the source text and target text simultaneously in such a way that they may support each other reciprocally. For instance, "an adaptation of a musical piece for ballet involves the simultaneous presence of music (source text) and choreographic action (target text)" (ibid.: 120).

2. An adaptation may manipulate the source through adaptation. For instance, an adaptation of a musical piece may radically re-contextualize the source according to the adapter's own interpretation (ibid.: 121).

3. An adaptation has the ability to show something in the target that is unsaid in the source text. For example, film adaptation will add audio-visual

details to better render the design, dress, or chromatic tone of a character, or a story, which the literary source did not prescribe (ibid.: 121 - 124).

4. An adaptation may highlight a level of the text which the adapter wishes to render in the target text. For instance, a film adaptation may take the novel, isolate the narrative level, and drop its stylistic aspects (ibid.: 125).

5. An adaptation may be regarded as a new work. For instance, where spectators would not judge an adaptation by considering whether it is better or worse than the execution of the original text, but would instead focus their attention on the way the adapter adapts the source through other semiotic languages (ibid.: 127).

According to these observations, it may be said that intersemiotic translation, like any type of translation, is a series of meta-textual transmissions. In the case of a filmic translation of a screenplay, for example, the film visually interprets the messages that describe the actions of the characters, while visually adapting the appearance of the characters and imbuing them with specific physical shapes. Thus, intersemiotic translation may involve both "parasynonymy" and "adaptation" as its meta-textual translation procedures. The former procedure translates segments of information that are provided by a verbal source, whereas the latter procedure translates expressive information that is not sufficiently conveyed, or is left unsaid, in the verbal source. This will be discussed in Section 2.4.

These five characteristics of adaptation, in Eco's context, may also be understood as including different intersemiotic translation strategies, with his points 1, 3 and 4 describing the technical aspects of the intersemiotic transmission procedure from verbal to non-verbal. This will be reviewed in more depth in Section 1.4.

By differentiating between "intersemiotic translation" and translation, what Eco may be emphasizing is that researchers should adopt a different academic perception, and research methodology, to discuss "intersemiotic translation".

Thus, Eco's observation that "intersemiotic translation" implies "a manipulation that only the foolhardy would designate as translation" (2001: 123) may not be understood as an assertion that "intersemiotic translation" should be ruled out of the scope of translation; instead, what he really intended to say may be that it is incorrect to evaluate intersemiotic translation using traditional equivalence-based translation analysis (with equivlance-based translation analysis most notably exemplified in Nida 1964, Koller 1989 and Newmark 1981). Intersemiotic translation needs to be considered theoretically and practically different from "conventional translation" (Gottlieb 2007: 5). Eco's concern may be solved by a conceptual revisiting of translation theory, and this is something which Henrik Gottlieb (2007) has attempted.

Gottlieb (2007) developed an epistemology of intersemiotic translation. He saw the need for a broader definition not only of intersemiotic translation, but also of translation in general to promote a wider multidimensional understanding. Gottlieb's theorization of translation went a step further than Jakobson in considering translation from outside a verbum-centred universe.

Gottlieb claimed that translation is more than just words (Gottlieb 2007: 3). This proposition is outlined in his redefinition of language (Gottlieb 2003) as an "*animate communicative system working through the combination of sensory signs*" (Gottlieb 2003: 167, italicized in the original text). This redefinition set "sensory signs" as the basic paradigm for transference rather than words. On this basis, Gottlieb (2007) went on to redefine text and translation:

Text may be defined as *any combination of sensory signs carrying communicative intention.*

Translation may be defined as *any process, or product thereof, in which a combination of sensory signs carrying communicative intention is replaced by another combination reflecting, or inspired by, the original entity.*

(Gottlieb 2007: 3 italicized in the original text)

Gottlieb's redefinition firstly concerned the way information is transmitted, e.g., verbal text is just one of innumerable forms of communicating information, and is made up of sensory signs. Secondly, the redefinition complicates and generalizes both ends of the translation, i.e., the starting point and the receiving point. Unlike in Jakobson's theorization, therefore, the starting point of translation may be non-verbal. Gottlieb's definition of translation encompasses numerous forms of translational instances which he reduced to four central juxtapositions:

1. Intersemiotic vs intrasemiotic translation
2. Isosemiotic vs diasemiotic, supersemiotic and hyposemiotic translation
3. Conventionalized vs. inspirational translation
4. Verbal vs non-verbal translation

Gottlieb's observations may be considered as a theoretical development towards intersemiotic translation. His four juxtapositions considered the channels of representation that may be manifested by various forms of communication, enabled by technological development. Based on these four juxtapositions, Gottlieb went on to propose a taxonomy of 30 translation types of which 18 are intersemiotic and 12 are intrasemiotic (see Gottlieb's categorization in Gottlieb 2007: 7).

These types that Gottlieb proposed can be regarded not as different translation types, but as the many situations in which intersemiotic translation could potentially apply. There is no denying that Gottlieb's juxtapositions and taxonomy endeavoured to accommodate and categorize as many translation phenomena as possible. However, although his consideration of intersemiotic translation types has not escaped from the binary source-and-target translation paradigm, his sampling of intersemiotic and intrasemiotic translation types may oversimplify the complex cross-semiotic translation mechanisms.

For instance, Gottlieb gives the example of film re-makes as "inspirational

intrasemiotic translations" (2007: 7), however, as will be shown in Section 2.1, film re-makes are not executed simply by transferring audio-visual information from the original version to the re-made version. At a micro-textual level, film re-makes are executed via a series of meta-textual transferences that transmit information through a number of stages. This involves adapting the plot of the original version at the screenplay level, which verbalizes the audio-visual representation into a verbal textual medium. The re-made version will then be executed based on the adapted screenplay. This argument may be best justified by the fact that film awards for the best adapted screenplay are recognized as a distinct category at film award ceremonies. Contrary to Gottlieb's categorization, film re-makes are firstly a verbalizing intersemiotic translation from a film to a screenplay and then a deverbalizing intersemiotic translation from a screenplay to a film. This counter-argument will be specifically elaborated in Chapter 2.

Secondly, by proposing "non-verbal", "deverbalizing" and "verbalizing" as criteria for taxonomies (Gottlieb 2007: 7), Gottlieb initiated another verbum-centred theorization. This led to contradictory forms of translation types, for instance, Gottlieb's "supersemiotic translation" describes the instances where a target text system involves multiple channels. In raising this concept, Gottlieb considered the possibility that verbal text may constitute one of the multiple representation channels, which includes film lines, film titles, and film props (words that appear on props) as typical examples. As noted by O'Sullivan, "film and television are polysemiotic media which signify through combinations of visual, verbal and acoustic elements" (2011: 15). Thus, audio-visual representation does not exclusively depart from verbal signs (see also Eco 2001: 120). For instance, in the case of a "screen adaptation of a novel", which Gottlieb considered as "deverbalizing supersemiotic translation" (Gottlieb 2007: 7), there exist situations where texts are not erased but rather represented on screen as visual components (as discussed in Section 4.2.2). The difference between an audio-visual system and verbum system is that in an audio-visual system verbal texts are not the only form of communication, but co-exist with other

representational forms. This alone may provide enough ground to doubt the validity of Gottlieb's "verbalizing" and "deverbalizing" dichotomy (Gottlieb 2007: 7). It may be argued that Gottlieb did not fully consider the complexity of audio-visuality, as his juxtapositions were of audio-visual representations as opposed to verbal textual representations, and therefore, although he made some progress in redefining "text" and "translation" to divert intersemiotic translation studies from a verbum-centred theorization, his research still follows the verbal and non-verbal patterns, only camouflaged in more complex forms. Thus, linguistic bias still exists in Gottlieb's conceptualization of translation. There has been a formal response to this bias from Kobus Marais (2019).

Marais is introduced here because of his recent publication on the theorization of intersemiotic translation studies. His book *A (Bio)semiotic Theory of Translation* (2019), provides an exclusive theorization on translation through the prism of semiotics. His aim, he claims, is to mobilize the linguistic bias of translation studies and to contribute to "a theory of translation that is able to account for all instances of translation" (2019: 61).

Marais traces this bias back to Jakobson's conceptualization of translation, which he describes as a "skewed interpretation" (2019: 8) of Peirce's theory of semiotics, of which the aim was to "account for all signs, not only lingual signs" (ibid.: 15). From this point of view, he critically reviews the works in the "meme pool of translation studies" (the concept is borrowed from Chesterman 1997), who followed Jakobson's legacy in focusing on the linguistic aspect of translation. This linguistic bias also applies to those who have studied translation from the perspective of semiotics. Although their research presents potential in showing a path out of the linguistic bias, and the means to focus on a wider array of translational practices, their conceptualizations are still not broad enough, and much of their work still focuses on interlinguistic translation (Marais 2019: 47).

Marais expands the scope of translation by returning to the Peircean theory of semiotics, which he claims Jakobson has interpreted too narrowly (ibid.: 15). His first objective, he states, is to "deal with the task of conceptualizing

translation" (ibid.: 121), and to "consider categories of translation to replace Jakobson's categories" (ibid.).

To keep clear of linguistic bias, Marais suggests the notions of "source text" and "target text" be replaced by that of "incipient and subsequent sign systems" (ibid.: 124), to conceptualize any semiotic process-phenomena, not only lingual process-phenomena, as translations. This proposition of terms emphasizes that both ends of the translation "are recognizable habits or forms in process" rather than "stable things" (ibid.). Marais also uses the concept of "negentropy", which refers to the process of manufacturing energy by drawing raw materials from the environment, upon which living systems exist (ibid.). This notion, not so different from that of Lotman (1977), is applied by Marais to suggest that translating meaning is what all living organisms do, from the basic requirement of survival.

An incipient sign exists by virtue of the ability of human beings to materialize meaning into form. In this regard, meaning is conceptualized by Marais as "a chaotic stream that has to be given form by living organisms in order for it to be ordered to manageable proportions" (2019: 125), and it is a "continuous, never-ending process of creating relationships between representamens, objects and interpretants, ad infinitum" (ibid.: 126). Following this logic, he conceptualizes translation as a negentropic work that causes change to any part of the semiotic triad (ibid.: 129). Accordingly, Marais proposes three kinds of translation:

1. Representamen translation: translation that takes place by changes to the representamen. This applies to changes in the material nature of the representamen. Examples include the change of a spoken representamen to a written representamen, or from a dance representamen to a painting representamen (ibid.: 145-146).

2. Object translation: translation that takes place by changes to the object. This applies to cases where a new object needs to be provided by a representamen. For instance, according to technological advances, a platypus is changed into a new category of animals, from mammal to reptile (ibid.: 148).

3. Interpretant translation: translation that takes place by changes to the interpretant. This applies to the translation whose aim is to come to a new interpretation. This might be, for example, reading a novel for a second time for a new understanding (ibid.: 154).

Each of the three major translation categories can be differentiated further into more specific types. Representamen translation can be further categorized with regard to the hierarchical levels (intra, inter and extra-systemic translations), the five senses (visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile and gustatory) and the medium in which the representamen is materialized (music, sculpture, painting, etc) (2019: 157). Object translation can be categorized into two subcategories of the immediate and dynamic object (ibid.), and interpretant translation covers three types, namely, dynamic, immediate and final interpretants (ibid.). Thus, this categorization of translation includes as many translational processes as Peirce's semiotic theory can include.

Marais considered that these translation categories occur in combination rather than in isolation (2019: 147), as Peirce too had argued for the elements in his semiotic trichotomy, and as a consequence, Marais claimed that "a field of study or a theory that focuses on representamen only will always be a partial theory" (ibid.) . Following Marais's logic, focusing on any of the three translation categories will also only end up producing a partial theory of translation. This is true, but it contradicts Marais's initial statement in which he "argue[s] for a nuanced consideration of both the universal and the particular" (ibid.: 9). For the sake of feasibility, researchers can only concentrate their specific discussion on one type of translation, or on one instance of that type of translation. For an individual researcher, not to put forward a "partial theory", according to Marais's standard, is therefore impossible. In this sense, an impartial and universal theory of translation studies is accomplished not by the works of an individual but by the works of groups of researchers in combination. Marais's translation categories are to be understood as him drawing the map of the translation studies landscape. Going through the Marais map helps us (especially translation scholars) to

appreciate the limited area which translation studies scholars have examined to date, and the vast area of the territory that is still left under-discussed, if not neglected. Thus, in proposing a semiotic conceptualization of translation, Marais should not be attacked for setting a high standard for translation theories. Instead, one should note his standards for translation studies and also the fact that he advocates a greater focus on the under-studied categories that he has identified. Coincidentally, this dissertation, in attempting to address these under-discussed areas, focuses on the audio-visual sources of intersemiotic translation, which has been identified as one of those areas.

Marais specifically focused on object translation, which he considered useful in analysing the way that societies and cultures emerge through semiotic process, i.e, translation. This could be understood as the second task he set himself. To this end, he pays much attention to Pierce's notion of a degenerate sign: a sign that is related to the object in ways other than by convention, and allows us to relate to reality and "weave reality and the causality in reality into our web of experience" (2019: 170). Of the degenerate signs, Marais pays particular attention to the index, i.e. a representamen that is "really affected by the object" (CP 2.248).

Marais sees the study of indexes as providing a vital opportunity to respond to Latour's argument that the social is never visible in itself, but only through its observable traces (Latour 2007: 8). Indexicality treats these traces as signs. Thus by focusing on these oft-neglected indexical signs, Marais is more interested in asking questions about what social and cultural phenomena can indicate to us, as indexes of the translation that created them, rather than discovering the linguistic interactions that caused the emergence of a particular social form (2019: 175). Marais proposes this as a call for future research to respond to, however, the audio-visual patterns that are represented in intersemiotic translation models are clearly cultural indexes that show how their embedded culture constrains their representation mechanism. This dissertation links with this under-discussed area by creating a novel system of intersemiotic translation models (explained specifically in Section 3.2.1).

One may hardly argue that Marais has contributed a concrete translation theory which can be applied, since the aim of his book, as Marais has admitted, is not to produce a particular theory of translation but "a philosophy of translation to explain any particular approach to translation" (Marais 2019: 178). Considering Marais's anxiety with regard to the pressure on translation studies of linguistic bias, and the revolutionary change of human communication from verbal to non-verbal/multimodal which is already happening, the radical way in which he "storms" (as Robinson describes it in 2018: 395) with regard to existing linguistically-focused translation theories is understandable. This "storming" is by no means a finishing point, but rather a starting point which future researchers may critically revisit and from which they could radically depart from the constraints of linguistic biases to date, and embark on a journey to analyse intersemiotic translation from an entirely different perspective or, as Marais would have said, to "provide the vehicle" that sets the wheels of (intersemiotic) translation studies in motion, and makes them turn (2019: 135). This dissertation may be considered as a direct response to that idea.

As Tyulenev (2018: 34) suggested, the study of intersemiotic translation makes little sense without further concretizing which sign systems are involved. Thus, it might also be argued that the notion of intersemiotic translation only makes sense when applied to specific instances of intersemiotic translational processes. Case studies show in detail how intersemiotic translations function, and how the general theoretical concepts may be put to use. In other words, a general theory can only be proposed when various intersemiotic translation instances have been discussed in detail, with enough attention being paid to the translation mechanisms themselves. It is in this way that a case study focusing on a particular instance, or instances of intersemiotic translation, is more productive than general theoretical approaches (such as Gorlée 2015, Eco 2001, Gottlieb 2007 and Marais 2019). In fact, studies of intersemiotic translation normally take the form of case studies, and discussion of intersemiotic transference in a specific situation. Efforts have been made to apply intersemiotic translation to the study

of opera (Gorlée 2008, 2016), book covers and illustrations (Torop 2000, Pereira 2008, Fochi 2010, Sonzogni 2011, Jullien 2014, Nazarloo & Navidinia 2017, Chen 2018, Mossop 2018), music (Norouzi 2016, Mossop 2019), dancing (Yeung 2008, Aguiar & Queiroz 2015, Queiroz & Atã 2019) and other translational cases. This study focuses solely on theorizing intersemiotic translation in the case of film, and the following three sections specifically review past research in the area of intersemiotic translation studies that are devoted exclusively to the analysis of film.

Film has been selected in preference to other cases of intersemiotic translational phenomena because it is to be considered as the widely distributed audio-visual text in the digital era, and because it is a wide "accessible and transmissive" intersemiotic translational phenomenon and is considered to be a straightforward example of what may be called an audio-visual text, as opposed to a verbal text.

1.3 Film as Intersemiotic Translation

The majority of the existing literature discussing film as a form of intersemiotic translation focuses on film adaptations of novels, in line with Jakobson's binary transmission pattern. These scholarly studies mainly discuss how films work as an intersemiotic translation between a verbal source and its non-verbal representation. These studies were conducted largely through comparative analysis, by directly juxtaposing the literature and its filmic version. However, the assertion that intersemiotic translation is binary, and the comparative methodology that its proponents have used, may lead to insufficient discussions and theorizations of the topic.

Past intersemiotic translation studies research in this area suffered from little or no discussion of filmic quality. The fact that film is recognized as an audio-visual medium, and being neither purely visual nor audio, is exemplified by the many attempts made to consider the film adaptation of a novel as a form of

intersemiotic translation (Bennet 2007, Majcher 2015, Dusi 2015, Ghandhari & Sheikhzadeh 2015, to name but a few). Even though these studies regard film as an audio-visual medium, what they were describing, in their comparative analyses, is the film's plot (screenplay). Thus, the main body of these studies were devoted to intralingual or interlingual translation, even though camouflaged as 'intersemiotic translation research'. It may be argued, however, that these studies engage with intersemiotic translation only metaphorically, which is similar to the "translation as a trope" statement made by Palmer (2004: 262). Lacking comprehensive theorization that fully respects the film's complex transmission process, its production, and its involving translators, intersemiotic translation studies have always suffered from the lack of a rigorous methodology (Venuti 2007: 25). It might also be inferred that a lack of rigorous methodology impeded the research from generalizing a theory of intersemiotic translation.

Despite the above-mentioned deficiencies, efforts are being made to engage methodologically with the complexity of film (adaptation) as intersemiotic translation. Among them, Patrick Cattrysse (1992, 1996, 1997a, 1997b, 2014), Lawrence Venuti (2007) and Wai-Ping Yau (2016) may take the credit for providing insights into why film should be systematically explored within the scope of translation studies. It should, however, be noted that their research focused exclusively on film adaptations from literature. This binary paradigm of film is critically examined in Section 2.1.

Cattrysse endeavoured to apply Even-Zohar's polysystem theory and Toury's norm theory to the study of film adaptation. Cattrysse's case studies mainly concern the American *film noir* in the 1960s. Though not specifically mentioning "intersemiotic translation", Cattrysse's research was undoubtedly grounded in a discussion of the intersemiotic transmission from the literature to its film adaptation. His major concern is the innovative or conservative function of film adaptations (Cattrysse 1992).

Following Even-Zohar's polysystem theory, Cattrysse considered that the genre norms, and the positions of the literary and cinematic genres, can play a

very important role in the selection of the literature to be adapted, as well as in the adaptation process (Cattrysse 1992: 59). He remarked that "when the importing genre holds a stable and successful position, the function of film adaptations tends to be conservative. When the stability of the film genre is endangered, the function of film adaptations becomes innovative" (ibid.). Thus, the function of the adaptation is also to determine the policy for the source text (literary source) selection: "If the function of a film adaptation consists in sustaining and preserving a stable and successful genre, the selection policy consists in selecting source material which corresponds maximally to the dominant film genre conventions. When the function of film adaptation consists in renewing a petrified film genre, both selection and adaptation polices are reversed" (ibid.).

Using Toury's concept of norm, Cattrysse (1996) identified film adaptation as a translation from literature that is governed by "normative norms" and "descriptive norms" (ibid.). "Normative norms" refer to what the film adaptations are expected to be "in the sense that an aesthetic or cultural value is attached to the film adaptation on the basis of its faithful reproduction of the source text" (ibid.: 168). "Descriptive norms" refer to "the actual adaptation behaviour" (ibid.) as contrasted with normative norms which refer to "behaviour which is desirable, but therefore not actually realised" (ibid.). Cattrysse observed that the normative norms may determine descriptive norms and "it may be interesting to examine in what way and to what extent the normative norms have determined the actual adaptation behaviour and thus become descriptive norms" (ibid.: 168-169).

In Cattrysse's case studies, normative norms refer to the production code of *film noir*, whereas descriptive norms refer to actual adapted filmic representations. Cattrysse considered norms to be "energetic mechanisms which determine semiotic devices in a non-idiosyncratic way" (1996: 168). He thus considered that film's rendering of suspense and the simplification of information from the novel to the film as norms (Cattrysse 1992: 57) and it may be concluded that these are what he later defined as descriptive norms. Cattrysse utilized "norm" to

interrogate the genre of *film noir* in general, and defined them as descriptive norms because many translators made somewhat similar adaptation choices. It might, however, be argued that "the actual adaptation behaviour" varies from translation to translation, as each filmmaker in turn makes idiosyncratic choices. This may contrast with Cattrysse's observation of norms as a "non-idiosyncratic" performance instruction. Given that Toury defines norms as "rule-governed" behaviour (Toury 1995: 65), Cattrysse's "descriptive norms" may seem to be a somewhat problematic term. Even as some adaptation behaviour may share certain similarities, these similarities are not rules that force the translators to make certain decisions. Thus, it might be problematic for Cattrysse to define these similarities simply as norms. For this reason, Cattrysse's norm theory provoked a critical response from Venuti (2007).

Venuti considered Cattrysse's application of translation theory as a "more flexible and sophisticated, but nonetheless recognizable, version of the discourse of fidelity" (2007: 32). He further criticized Cattrysse's utilization of Toury's norm as "too narrowly defined and too simply applied to encompass the multiple factors that enable and constrain film production, but the emphasis on equivalence stops short of describing the hermeneutic relation between an adaptation and its prior materials" (ibid.: 32). And he also criticized Cattrysse for reducing the translation shifts to norms without considering their complexity (ibid.: 33). Instead, Venuti takes Mikhail Iampolski's "interpretant" (1998) as an essential category for studying adaptation.

Interpretants, observed by Venuti, describes the "principles of selection that always constitute interpretive moves" and that "guide the choice of a source text and the verbal choices made by the translator and editors of the translated text" (2007: 31). In the context of film adaptation, Venuti examined the interpretant as a concept that would "enable the film to inscribe an interpretation by mediating between its prior materials, on the one hand, and the medium and its conditions of production on the other – by providing … a method of selecting those materials and transforming them into the adaptation through the multimedial choices made

by the filmmakers" (ibid.: 33).

In Venuti's case, the interpretant can be either formal or thematic. "Formal interpretants" may include a relation of equivalence, a style or a genre (ibid.). "Thematic interpretants" are codes, values and ideologies (ibid.). Venuti considered that, given the complexity of the film medium, a number of interpretants will be applied in any film adaptation. To analyse the interpretants, it is necessary to "focus on shifts, on the additions, deletions and substitutions" by comparing the adaptations with their prior materials (ibid.). Venuti asserted that "it is the translator's application of interpretants that guides the process of decontextualizing and recontextualizing the source text" (ibid.: 31).

Venuti's notion of "interpretant" may have the virtue of helping researchers engage with the complexity of intersemiotic translation by avoiding the "unwitting or automatic introduction of an [filmic] interpretation of [the film's prior] materials" (ibid.: 33). The notion of "interpretant" may also help researchers to reflect on the context of the translation, the traditions and practice of translation and the social conditions of reading and viewing (ibid.). Venuti's categorization of interpretant, however, represents a dichotomy of practical and social behaviour. Following Venuti's categorization, the principles that guide the translation are either semantic or ideological. What Venuti may have overlooked is that equivalence, style or genre may themselves be products that are shaped and cultivated by their embedded codes, values and ideologies. A formal and thematic interpretant may, therefore, be of a hierarchical rather than a parallel relationship. Venuti's dichotomized categorization may also potentially reduce "interpretants" to a specific kind, which was precisely what he had criticized the narrow and limitedness of Cattrysse's norm theory for (Venuti 2007: 33).

Venuti's theorization of "interpretant" was scrutinised by Wai-Ping Yau (2016), who particularly criticized Venuti for ignoring the complex mechanism of the production of film adaptation as intersemiotic translation. Yau argued that Venuti paid little attention to the methodological issues of contextualization and ideological analysis. For instance, Venuti has not given answers concerning how

to map the multiple interacting factors affecting both the production and reception of film adaptations, how to take into consideration the different actors involved in the film adaptation process, how to identify the interpretants that are employed in the film adaptation, and how to discuss the ideological implications of these interpretants (ibid.: 258).

INSTITUTIONS
Classification, regulation and censorship

CHANNELS
Marketing, distribution, exhibition, home viewing,
reviewing and criticism

AUTHORS -- **AUDIENCES**
Collaborative authorship   Spectators as social subjects

TEXTS
Adaptations and films based on original screenplays

REPERTOIRES
Canons, codes and models
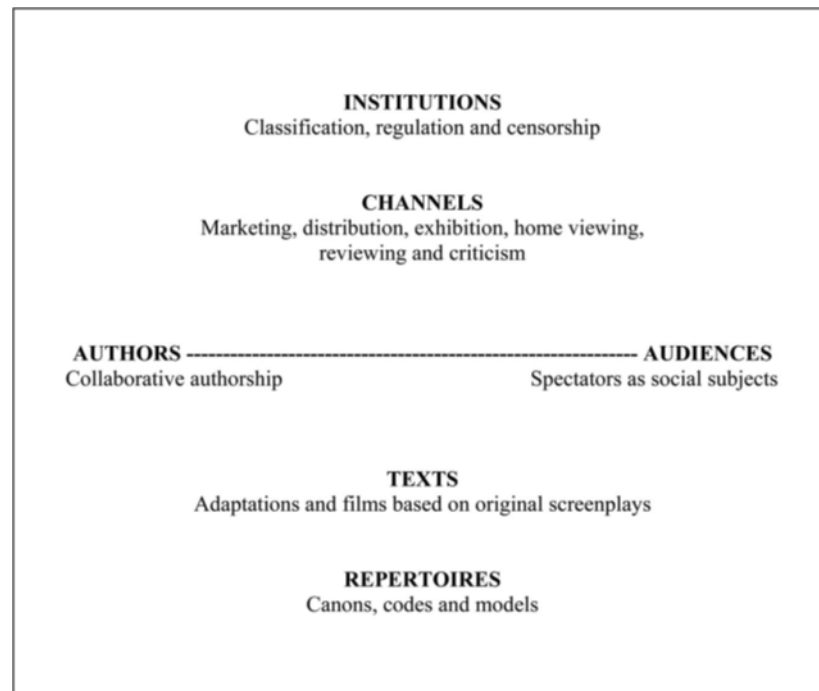
Figure 1.3.2 A System Model of Film Adaptation (Yau 2016: 260)

Yau considered Venuti's comments on Cattrysse as a partial reading, and argued that Even-Zohar's polysystem theory and Toury's norm theory may both be utilized in order to address the methodological issues of social contextualization and the ideological analysis of intersemiotic translation (ibid.: 256). Yau suggested that systems and norms can not only draw attention to the textual shifts from within the literary source texts, but can also "provide a methodological framework for investigating the significance of these shifts in their social and ideological contexts" (ibid.: 260). Accordingly, he proposed the above systemic model of film adaptation (see Figure 1.3.2).

Yau's system follows Even-Zohar's conceptual scheme (see Even-Zohar

1997) to represent the production processes that are involved in the film system. His model elaborates the discussion of film adaptations from the scale of an intersemiotic textual transmission to that of a social practice, "involving agents, institutions, repertoires and channels of communication" (Yau 2016: 261). Yau's diagrammatic model considers the film adaptation as a discourse between authors and audiences, with both authors and audiences considered to be active producers of meaning (ibid.).

Yau's model may be regarded as a theoretical and methodological breakthrough in intersemiotic translation studies in many respects. Firstly, Yau moves away from the binary verbal to non-verbal patterning of intersemiotic translation where the sole relationship is between one literary source and one target text. Yau's "text" consists of many sources such as "novel, short story, play, non-fiction book, newspaper article, comic or video game" (ibid.: 261). He considers that "films can be considered as either adaptations or films based on original screenplays" (ibid.). Although Yau's "text" concerns the starting material of a film adaptation, rather than the art of film in general, he has moved away from literary-based analysis of film and is beginning to consider "text" as a term to accommodate complex and multi-semiotic representations. Secondly, Yau has also moved away from regarding the director as the only author of the film, and takes into account the collaborative nature of film production (see also Evans 2014: 310). Yau considers the authors of film to include the agents involved throughout film production stages of "finance, preproduction, production and postproduction" (2016: 261). Yau's notion of authors perceptively includes the producers of the text at each stage of the intersemiotic translation process. This point, although not taken into account in the present dissertation, where Ang Lee is still considered as the sole translator for the film texts, provides a pointer to where research should evolve in the future (see Section 7.3). In addition, Yau connects film to its contexts of production, and to its intertextual links (2016: 261). He defines "repertoire" to include the rules and materials that may determine film quality, thus avoiding what Venuti referred to as the "automatic

introduction of an interpretation of the materials themselves" (2007: 33). It might be argued, however, that Yau's five constituents are each heterogeneous and may be further differentiated and identified into more specific components. A more detailed discussion of Yau's concept of "repertoire" will be continued in Section 1.5.

It should be noted that although all the above-mentioned methodologies, however systematic and complex, are based on the comparison between information concerning the literary source and the film, they nonetheless ignore screenplay, and other points of departure, which determine the final quality of intersemiotic translation. It is true that "adaptations frequently produce not only variations in expression but also a substantial change in content" (Eco 2003: 170). This is because the filmic medium has its expressive plane, governed by the semiotic language, and its content plane, governed by a screenplay (verbal source). Films are never simply a verbal to non-verbal transmission and their many sources cannot be reduced to such a clear-cut verbal to audio-visual pattern. A critique of this simplification of the intersemiotic translation process is undertaken with a detailed discussion in Section 2.1.

In general, the selected research oversimplifies the audio-visual aspects of film. Considering its collaborative authorship, complex production process, and multimodal mechanism of expression, film must be seen as different from verbal literature. The audio-visualization of films is not based on literary sources, but on the adapted screenplay that is based on the literature. On the other hand, the audio-visual quality of film cannot be simplified into non-verbal semiotic presentation, since the audio-visual quality is itself accomplished by multiple parameters: cinematography, lighting, performance, picture action, design, sound, editing, and music (see Bordwell & Thompson 2004). As a result, the past research into film as intersemiotic translation reviewed here suffers from insufficient discussion in two areas:

a. The intersemiotic translation process from verbal to audio-visual

b. Expressive sources that influence or determine the quality of intersemiotic translation

The following two sections evaluate past research that offers explorations of these two under-studied areas.

1.4 Verbal to Audio-visual

There is no denying that the identification of verbal to audio-visual transmission patterns follows Jakobson's (2004) theorization. Audio-visualization of verbal texts is the major concern within intersemiotic translation studies. The non-verbal transformation of verbal texts has suffered from insufficient discussion, owing to a simplification of the term "non-verbal system". This lack of discussion has occurred because the researchers in intersemiotic translation studies largely come from backgrounds in linguistics, semiotics or comparative literature. Few of these scholars have sufficient academic or practical expertise in film studies and practice to take the non-verbal filmic sign system into a systemic discussion. As a result, a non-verbal sign system tends to be regarded by academics as an entity that is no different from any other homogeneous language system, and researchers therefore still follow the analytical pattern they utilized for investigating interlingual translation. This binary comparative analysis does not fully take account of the multi-tracked film system. Consequently, the identical narrative differences are discussed more frequently than the actual intersemiotic transformation. For this reason, past research differentiated few mediations that are intersemiotic, even according to Jakobson's theorization. This will be explored further in Section 2.1.

This section reviews research within the limited literature on intersemiotic translation studies that has discussed the verbal to non-verbal intersemiotic transmission process. The research of Chow (1995), Torop (2013), Eco (2001), Strowe (2017) and Leontovich (2015) will be reviewed. These researchers did pay attention (though arguably limited) to the actual intersemiotic transformation

through which verbal signs are introduced to the polysemiotic filmic systems.

Among the discussions of film as an intersemiotic translation, Rey Chow is particularly of note for the present research since her theory is a thought-provoking application of Jakobson's intersemiotic translation to the case of cinematic translation, as practised in Chinese cinema, i.e. Chow's research is especially relevant to the present study of intersemiotic cinematic translations by a Chinese director. In her book *Primitive Passions: Visuality, Sexuality, Ethnography and Contemporary Chinese Cinema* (1995), Chow argues that Chinese film belongs to the history of the transformation of the sign systems – from written word to the technologized visual image. She sees film as a new technology whose visual structure signals a successful dismantling of the older signs, the verbal text and its translation into the filmic image (ibid.: 26).

Chow's application may be particularly useful in helping researchers to see intersemiotic translation from beyond the level of unit-to-unit translation, as she does not consider intersemiotic translation as a transmission from any concrete literary source. Instead, she treats these translations in the general scope of a spatial-temporal context, with audio-visualization purposefully initiated, to translate culture or cultural signs anew to the modern age (Chow 1995). Her observation echoes the work of Thomas Elsaesser, whose concern was New German Cinema, which he saw as an attempt to translate the memory of a generation, a nation or a culture by amalgamating images, sounds and stories (Elsaesser 1989: 323). Chow interprets Elsaesser as having proposed two types of translation at work in cinema: "First, translation as inscription: a generation, a nation and a culture are being translated or permuted into the medium of film; and second, translation as transformation of tradition and change between media: a culture oriented around the written text is in the process of transition and of being translated into one dominated by the image" (Chow 1995: 182). Chow placed much of her focus on the discussion of Elsaesser's second point, i.e., film as a vehicle that substitutes written text in order to translate culture.

Though devoting less discussion to the direct intersemiotic translation

process between verbal texts and non-verbal films, Chow responded to the ontological difference between verbal and non-verbal semiotic systems by considering the great expressive and communicative potential of the filmic medium. What she highlighted, using Walter Benjamin's concept, is the "arcade" of the transparent audio-visualized film language that may translate the non-western culture (exemplified particularly by Chinese culture, in Chow's case). Chow argued that through auto-ethnographic effort, the Chinese directors actively exoticize China through circulating to the world powerful images of China's ethnic culture (ibid.: 202). Thus, "intersemiotic translation" needs to be considered from outside the traditional word-for-wordness and fidelity criteria, and not even with the terms such as 'deconstruction' or 'adaptation', since these terms "remain incapable of conveying a sense of the new medium into which the 'original' is being transported" (Chow 1995: 193). Chow's theory of film as cultural translation, will be adopted as one of the underpinning theories examined in the present research and will be explored in detail in Section 3.1.2.

What Chow does not highlight is the inner complexity of the multi-channelled film language. The difference between single and multiple channels of representation may be considered as the essential ontological difference between verbal and film language (Wu 2014).

This inner complexity has been considered by Peeter Torop (2013), who identifies the single to multiple transformational pattern of intersemiotic translation. Instead of focusing on comparing the change of content between a literary source and its filmic version, Torop is more interested in how texts are transformed intersemiotically. His concern is to find an analytical tool to understand "text" in the intersemiotic space (ibid.: 243). Torop regards intersemiotic translation as a transformative pattern from a single text to a polylogue where "a source text opens simultaneously from a new angle in several sign systems" (ibid.: 242). The polylogue of intersemiotic space is, therefore, remarkably complicated when considering multiple types of syntactic relations.

Torop is one of the few scholars of intersemiotic translation to recognize

multiple parameters in the intersemiotic space, and to define "material" and "composition" as the two parameters of that space (ibid.). It is clear that at this point, Torop is fully respecting the complexity of intersemiotic translation while also paying attention to the multi-systematic representation of the target sign system. Film text, in Torop's context, differs from verbal text in that "a major part of non-linguistic cultural texts consists of heterogeneous material, that is, several sign systems are involved simultaneously…" (ibid.: 243). Film frames can therefore be regarded micro-textually as a photo or metatextually as an element in a montage which correlates with the metatexts of film, and with the general scale of film in its entirety (ibid.).

To initiate what he regarded as a comprehensive comparative analysis, Torop considered Mikhail Bakhtin's chronotopical analysis as an efficient tool for intersemiotic textual analysis. Chronotope is considered by Torop as a universal parameter which encompasses culture, text, and the text's transformations (ibid.: 244). Chronotopical analysis enabled him to carefully examine how the syntax of film is organized and composed within its embedded spatial-temporal contexts. Torop also managed to develop the concept of montage into the application of new media (ibid.: 248), and with a chronotopical analysis of film montage, conducted a cultural-semiotic analysis of montage which enables one to explain "the genesis of montage theory in film art, the relatedness of this theory with the general development of humanities, and its influence on cultural semiotic way of thought" (ibid.: 248-249). Thus, chronotopical analysis of film montage enabled Torop to review films within the time and space of the film productions, thus revealing the ideology of the filmmakers/translators.

It may be inferred that as a semiotician, Torop's primary concern is verbal text and its transformation. Though 'text' has clearly been broadened in Torop's context to accommodate non-linguistic elements, verbal 'text' is still his major concern. More specifically, Torop is interested in the syntactic quality of text, e.g. the meaning of text and how texts are phrased and it was this verbum-focused concern that led him to borrow the literature-based chronotopical analysis

methodology. The notion of text in Torop's context was not, however, properly defined or formally broadened to encompass non-verbal forms. Nor did he give an in-text formal definition of 'text' to explain whether text is considered as a general semiotic form that encompasses both verbal and non-verbal communications (as did Gottlieb 2003, 2007), or refers simply to words. This lack of definition may be problematic, especially when Torop considers text as a basic paradigm for discussing its intersemiotic transformation.

On the other hand, Bakhtin's chronotopical analysis is an analytical tool in literary analysis which was introduced into intersemiotic translation solely because Torop considered intersemiotic translation as a binary interaction between the literature and its filmic version. In fact, of the four chronotopes in the intersemiotic space listed by Torop (2013: 244), namely, topographical chronotope, psychological chronotope, metaphysical chronotope, and creative chronotope, only creative chronotope relates to actual filmmaking behaviour. Thus, Torop's application of chronotopical analysis contributes mostly to his discussion of the verbal textual sources, considering the event, (human) characters of the literature. This literature-focused methodology diverts research attention rather than concentrating it on the intersemiotic quality of the transferred filmic text. Consequently, Torop's case study of *The Last Relic* focused largely on discussing the lyrics in the film and their correlated filmic images, which were purposefully montaged to represent the lyrics. The audio-visual analysis was conducted by Torop in a comparison to the song lyrics. Thus, it may be said that Torop considered the visual aspect of the film as supplementary to verbal texts.

It may also be inferred that Torop was still following Jakobson's verbum-centred theorization, by juxtaposing verbal signs with non-verbal signs. It is thought-provoking that Torop considered text as a multi-parametered phenomenon which is simultaneously both concretely material and abstractly imaginary (ibid.: 243). He did not, however, differentiate the parameters of film text, which is more multi-tracked and multi-layered than verbal text. Parameters,

for Torop, concern the material and composition (ibid.) of verbal texts, rather than the multiple parameters of film. In addition, rather than a comprehensive investigation of multiple representation parameters of film, the discourse of film is reduced to a combination of text and non-text. Thus, Torop failed to mention that lyrics belong to the channel of film music which is only one of the multiple parameters of film language.

In addition to his conceptualization of intersemiotic translation in general, Eco (2001, 2003) also discussed specific instances of the verbal to non-verbal transmission process in the case of the generally overlooked transmission process from a screenplay to film (2001: 105). He observed that cinema directors may "perform screenplays, in the sense that the script may say that a character smiles, but the director can make that smile sarcastic or tender" (ibid.). For Eco, the definition of what is intersemiotic translation lies in the case where screenplays are written to be "more like literary rough drafts" (ibid.). In Eco's context, the criteria for what is "precise" or "rough" lie in the specification of information that is provided in the screenplay, although it may be argued that a screenplay only offers the bare bones of information, i.e., plots, action and lines (see Field 2005: 23). Thus, a screenplay with connotative verbal language cannot be "precise" in covering all the multi-parameters of filmic representation.

Eco argued that "no matter how discreet or modest the [film] director may be, he would have *to show us* something more than the written text does" (2001: 122). This exemplifies the case where the text (in his case, a novel) does not describe how the characters are dressed, yet the film must show them dressed in some way (ibid.). Thus, film has the capacity to deliver the message which its textual source has left unsaid (ibid.).

Eco, like the film scholar James Monaco (1981: 121), identified the ontological difference between verbal text as connotative and film texts as denotative. Eco also remarked that "in transmuting the verbal text into another continuum, a moviemaker is obliged to compel the spectators to accept a given visual interpretation of a verbal reticence" (2003: 163). Hence, whereas a verbal

text may leave the spectator room for imagination, its filmic transmutation compels the director to make choices for us (ibid.: 160), and as a consequence, the concrete audio-visualization leaves the spectator with less freedom than the reader (Eco 2003: 160). It might be argued, therefore, that it is precisely this connotative nature of verbal texts that leaves the intersemiotic translators with room for imagination, and enables a (creative) filmic transmission in the first place. This study examines whether intersemiotic translators always have pre-textual information that they need to convey, and whether finding an equivalence for the verbal texts is either the concern of the translator or the mechanism by which a translator works. This will be the focus of discussion in Chapter 2.

Nicola Dusi (2015) also focused on the exchange between verbal and audio-visual systems, and has specifically emphasized the complex semantic nature of film language. Dusi remarked that filmic elements are "not only 'staged', starting from a deeper level of signification, but are also 'framed' (… or *turned into discourse* from a given enunciatory point of view) and then 'sequenced', that is, reworked in the syntagmatics of the editing and in the manipulatory possibilities of post-production" (ibid.: 193, italicized in the original text). Dusi thus considered that these textual manipulations will inevitably result in transpositions of verbal texts, and further observed that cinema acts as a "syncretic semiotic system" which gives the filmic text "plenty of scope for concealing, for suggesting and for working by way of narrative, figurative and discursive implications" (ibid.: 195). Dusi determined that audio-visual images may facilitate semiotic language in translating the ambiguities and semantic openness of the source text by employing "contrasts in sound, unfocused, point-of-view images, partial shots of actors, with points of view limited to specific details" (ibid.: 195-196).

Having recognized the textual strategy of film language, Dusi also drew attention to the significance of recent cognitive theories, such as the phenomenological theory of "perception" (see Merleau-Ponty 1962) and that of "embodied thought" (see Lakoff & Johnson 1999). Dusi advocated that the

development of trans-semiotics is based on the principle of inter-translatability grasped at the sensory level, and that a polysensorial idea of translation indicates that a translation is always an inter-sensory translation embodied with all the complex senses (Dusi 2015: 187). Dusi's statement coincides with Gottlieb's redefinition of translation as encompassing full consideration of sensory signs (Gottlieb 2007: 3).

Like Torop (2013) and Dusi (2015), Leontovich (2015) also recognized the capacity of intersemiotic translation for encompassing multiple parameters of representation. She studied cinematographic narratives via multiple parameters: narrator, audience, plot, time, space, characters, semiotic signs, logic and causality of events (ibid.: 290). Her parametrical analysis still tends to follow the pattern of the diegetic quality of the target film's quality, and many of the differentiated parameters like the narrator and audience. Logic does not belong to the cinematographic events if cinematography, as a channel of filmic language, is taken into consideration (see shot-by-shot analysis as a method for film analysis in Ryan & Lenos 2012: 12-16). If her flawed observation of film's representational parameters are put aside, Leontovich's "semiotic signs" did provide a brief, but thoughtful, insight concerning the intersemiotic quality of verbal signs.

Leontovich mentioned that verbal signs are transferred into the film system in sound and graphic forms (2015: 293). She considered that verbal signs not only take on a colloquial communicative quality, but can themselves function as cultural graphic signs, for example, signs to render an (exotic) cultural quality. She also observed that in intersemiotic translation, verbal signs may be considered as the ethnic component, and that "the choice of a language plays a great role in the expression of cultural meanings" (ibid.). In Leontovich's context, what she referred to as the "ethnic component" most likely concerns a foreign ethnic component unfamiliar to the adapted film's target audience. Leontovich remarked that "when most of the film [adaptation] is done in the language of the target audience, it often includes passages in the original, e.g., in the form of

songs, religious services, street signs, slogans, etc. which give the adaptation an ethnic flavour" (ibid.). She also mentioned that the phonetic quality of verbal signs can also be represented in films. Her example concerns the case where English speech is delivered with strong foreign (Russian) accents in the 2007 English-language adaptation of *War and Peace* (ibid.). Leontovich did not, however, elaborate on any of these insights, and did not go on to develop these observations on the filmic utilization of verbal signs within the scope of translation studies. In spite of the fact that the verbal signs are transferred intersemiotically on screen, Leontovich did not mention that the configuration of ethnic signs is a translation action for the purpose of rendering the cultural quality of the intersemiotic translation (as did Chow 1995).

Anna Strowe (2017) likewise paid attention to the filmic transformation of textual signs. Unlike Torop (2013), who considered how film images reflect texts through the composition of pictorial elements, Strowe discussed the difference in representation mechanisms of verbal texts and films, so that both semiotic forms may be understood as being from different communicative codes. Strowe's case study concerns the opening credits of the TV show *Homeland*, produced by three graffiti artists hired by the production team. Although Strowe's case study focused on hijacked interlingual translation, she did consider how the graffiti artists' hijacked translation mediates actual effects through filmic representation. What should be highlighted, however, is her emphasis on the communicational capacity of multimodal texts enabled by the audio-visual medium that enables a hack made by those three graffiti artists.

According to Strowe, the graffiti shown on screen "is merely a representation of Arab settings that is playing host to the show, and any actual cultural details, including Arabic script itself, are co-opted into participating in that hospitality" (2017: 29). The expectation of the function of graffiti determined how the message would be conceived. Although the graffiti artists took an active approach in hijacking the graffiti with ironic translation, their activist stance cannot be appreciated by the majority of *Homeland*'s target viewers, who are non-Arabic

speakers: "for the majority of viewers, who cannot read Arabic, the visual semiotics subsumes the semantic content unless the viewer has been told about it already" (ibid.). To them, these ironic textual signs function only as visual elements to render an exotic cultural flavour, therefore, although hijacked by the graffiti artists, the graffiti still managed to fulfil its visual function as "for those who can read Arabic, the processing of the semantic content is made difficult by the speed of the action, the camera focus and the only partial visibility of the texts" (ibid.). Thus, the supposedly widely accessed audio-visualized media may also dilute the information gained from the textual signs by facilitating its multimodality. Presumably, this was what forced the graffiti artists, as translators, to formally address their translation intention through a written declaration to remind the public of the visibility of their work (ibid.).

Strowe's research focus is, however, to interrogate how the translator takes an activist stance and gains visibility. It is a pity that Strowe did not pursue her investigation concerning the visual power of intersemiotic translation, where the efficiency of transferring textual information relies on the audio-visual methodologies that are adopted by intersemiotic translators. Nor did she explain that the multi-tracked semiotic system conveys meaning through the combination of all the parameters. What Strowe should have examined is that if graffiti artists are considered as intersemiotic translators, for example, by translating the demanded messages interlingually, and visualizing them through graffiti, the messages that they convey only exist as an information of design that belongs to one of the many representational parameters of the TT audio-visual. The film editor and cinematographer allocated only limited time and space for the visualization of these verbal signs. It is because of this that the hijacked translation did not receive as much visibility as the translators expected. To this point, Strowe might have argued that the audio-visualization should be considered as having a more representational capacity than the monomodal verbal textual signs.

It is clear that film communicates meanings differently from verbal

languages and inevitably involves more concretized audio-visual information with multiple representational parameters. Thus, it may also be suggested that a film's audio-visual information cannot be exclusively governed by a single verbal source. Audio-visual practices may be determined by other audio-visual sources. This leads to another key under-discussed area of intersemiotic translation, namely the transmission process from an audio-visual source to a film.

1.5 Audio-visual to Audio-visual

If one agrees with Eco's observation that intersemiotic translations, like traditional translations between natural languages, involve a content plane and an expressive plane (Eco 2001: 30), an immediate question to be asked is: can verbal texts supply enough information on both planes? Considering the ontological difference between verbal language and film language (see Eco 2001 and Monaco 1981), the answer would most certainly be no. Taking a look at the actual practice of film, from a descriptive rather than a prescriptive point of view, would lead one to recognize multiple audio-visual sources (Cattrysse 1992: 61). One would then inevitably be led to the discovery that these audio-visual sources share an intertextual relationship with the audio-visual quality of a film.

The audio-visual sources of film are, however, seldom investigated in intersemiotic translation studies. There are a few researchers like Cattrysse (1992, 1997a, 1997b) and Yau (2016), who have ventured to discuss film's relationships with other audio-visual practices but their discussions have yet to develop any systematic theorization of these interrelated audio-visual sources within the scope of translation studies. There are also other researchers who only partially mention a film's mediation of its audio-visual sources (see Evans 2014), but these discussions have been focused on film re-makes as intersemiotic translation. Their discussions of audio-visual to audio-visual transferences between a film and its sources will be reviewed in this section.

Cattrysse's work needs to be discussed again in this section, since he is among the few scholars in this area who has considered film's audio-visual prior materials. Cattrysse (1992) saw the necessity to investigate other sources of film that do not originate from a literary source. Cattrysse remarked that "several practices, simultaneously and at different levels, normally serve as models for the production process" (ibid.: 61) and emphasized that "other aspects beyond a film's narratological level, such as directing, staging, acting, setting, costume, lighting, photography, pictorial representation, and music, may well have been governed by other models and conventions which did not originate in the literary text and did not serve as a translation of any of its elements" (ibid.: 62). Cattrysse was clearly mindful of the fact that the complex nature of the phenomenon of film cannot be reduced to a binary transmission between one verbal source and another. His discussion took note of the intertextual nature of film adaptation as translation, and he continued to explore this in his following works (see Cattrysse 1997a).

Supporting his argument, Cattrysse gives the example of American *film noir* for which "the stories of many short stories and novels have indeed been adopted as a basis for adaptation. On the photographic level, however, directors of photography were largely inspired by German Expressionism of the 1920s as well as American contemporary photography, drawing and painting." (Cattrysse 1992: 61). Cattrysse (1997a, 1997b) continued this intertextual exploration of the relationship between film and other practices, by using this intertextual link to suggest that adaptation studies should switch from the traditional source, which takes a binary approach, to a multilateral approach for future researchers to discuss "the transference with a wide variety of modelling source materials" (Cattrysse 1997b: 79). His proposal of what he called "a star like model" (see Figure 1.5.1) is thought-provoking.
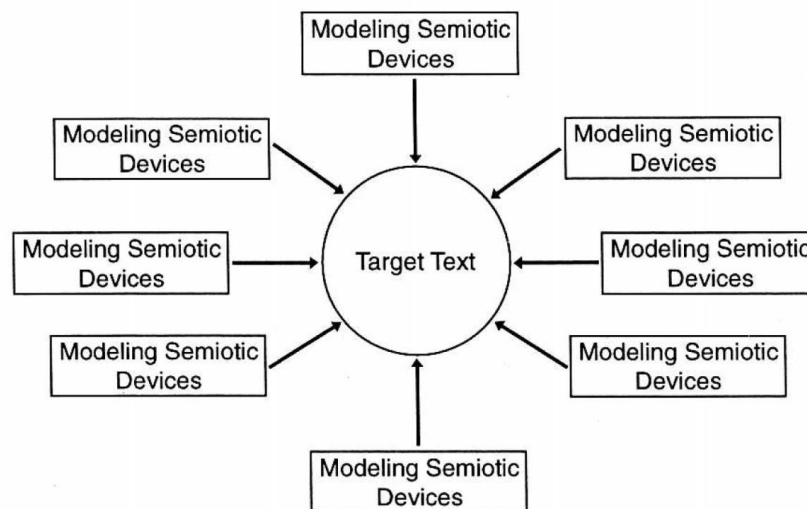
Figure 1.5.1 A diagram of a multilateral approach to adaptation studies (Cattrysse 1997b: 80)

In Figure 1.5.1, Cattrysse put forward various "modelling semiotic devices", which include "narrative, acting style, setting, photography, music and sound as well as the surrounding cultural, political and social norms and conventions" (ibid.). That Cattrysse has all the arrows pointing towards the centre indicates that only one point of view may be adopted at a time. This also indicates, however, that "the target text shows traces of many transfer processes and relationships", each of which may function in a unique way (Cattrysse 1997b: 80).

There are two points in Cattrysse's observation that deserve special attention, namely, the propositions of "model" and "discursive practice."

The proposition of "model" in this context may serve three purposes. Firstly, "model" clearly refers to the didactic nature of the "(source) practices". Whereas a literary source offers only limited instructions on a film's storyline, modelling practices may guide a film's other representational parameters. Secondly, "model" is proposed as a concept that specifically emphasizes the complex intertextual nature of intersemiotic translation. Intersemiotic translations, in turn, may be determined not by a singular verbal source text but also by many modelling practices, whereas interlingual translations or intralingual translations may often

rely on one single literary source text. Thirdly, the concept of "model" was proposed in order to differentiate it from "source text". Cattrysse remarked that "it is important to consider them not as source material to be reconstructed, but as models which have determined the production of the target text in some way and to a certain extent" (Cattrysse 1992: 61-63). Thus, the concept of model, as proposed by Cattrysse, was meant to divert the study of intersemiotic translation from a traditional source text-oriented approach. In line with the above-mentioned purposes, Cattrysse proposed the term "(source) practice" as an equivalent to "source text" in studying film adaptation as translation. He did not, however, formally define "(source) practices". This could lead to a terminological confusion between source practices and source texts, without a clear-cut definition to distinguish between the two.

The boundary line that Cattrysse intended to draw by saying that these modelling practices are to be considered not as source materials to be reconstructed, but "as models which have determined the production of the target text (adaptation, translation, parody, etc.) in some way and to a certain extent" (1992: 63) was also unclear. The problematic terminological relationship concerning "source texts" may also lead to confusion concerning the nature of the phenomenon of mediating "(source) practices". Firstly, the filmic mediation of a "model" inevitably involves radical re-enactments, re-contextualizations or re-mediations which are all forms of reconstruction. Secondly, the modelling practices are ontologically prior materials to be reworked to fit the translational purpose, which makes these practices the source materials of the film. This phenomenon, which lacks any formal definition from Cattrysse, may instantly be connected to the phenomenon of translation. It is important to provide answers to the question of whether these practices are to be regarded as source texts, and whether the mediation of these models is to be regarded as an act of translation. This problem will be specifically discussed in Section 2.4.

In addition, his multilateral transference model provides an illustration of an ideal rather than a ready-to-use scheme. Cattrysse did not develop this radiation-

like "modeling semiotic device" (1997b: 79) into a more rigorous categorization. As a result, the model conglomerates ideological and cultural norms and conventions together with audio-visual models, like acting, setting, and sound. In this way, Cattrysse is implying that norms and conventions are also models, regardless of their hierarchical relations.

Venuti (2007) also considered the situation where audio-visual materials can be considered as one of a film's prior materials. He considered both translation and adaptation as interpretations that radically decontextualize the prior text (2007: 29). In film adaptation, prior materials are detached from their context. Looking at film adaptation within a hermeneutic model, Venuti thus examined the multiple forms of film adaptation:

> These contexts [i.e. of a film's prior materials] are also multiple, both originary and subsequent, and they determine the meanings, values and functions of the materials, whether the latter consist of literary, dramatic or musical texts such as novels, plays, operas and songs, nonfiction texts, such as memoirs, biographies, histories and archival documents, or visual forms such as other films, television programs, paintings and comic strips – even the screenplay that a director might take as a point of departure.
>
> (Venuti 2007: 29-30)

Analogously to the hermeneutic theory of film studies, Venuti clearly considered film adaptation as a general hermeneutic phenomenon, suggesting that, in a way, it is no longer considered as a subgenre of film but rather as the functional nature of the film itself. Such an observation echoes Eco's remark that "intersemiotic translation cannot be anything other than adaptation, because it transforms, often radically, the previous text" (Eco 2001: 123), although Venuti stopped short of specifically analysing the audio-visual to audio-visual transmission process.

Jonathan Evans (2014) also responded to the intertextual nature of film.

Evans' major concern was not the audio-visual source of the film in general, but the specific cases where a film remake translates its source film. Evans examined film remakes as a form of intersemiotic retranslation, as they translate a written text: "retranslation of another film that has already performed this process" (Evans 2014: 304). The fallacy of this observation, though, is that a remake hardly utilizes the same screenplay as the previous film, and so cannot be regarded as a retranslation of the same written text. In most cases, film re-makes are based on an adapted screenplay of the previous film(s), as shown by the fact that 'Best adapted screenplay' constitutes a definitive category in the film awards. It is worth noticing, however, beyond this theorization, that Evans's observation extends the discussion of remakes into the audio-visual intertextual relationship between films. Evans observed that "if one trusts the recognition of narrative repetition on its own, then remake could include all films where there are elements of narrative repeated from other films, whether or not they could legally be considered derivative" (ibid.). Evans suggests that film employs a communicative form that borrows ready-made audio-visualizations from other films, and concludes that "every film would, in some way, remake another" (ibid.).

Evans focused on how the film mediates the "cultural allusions and cinematic elements" (ibid: 306) of its prior material. Evans also considered that film reworks its prior material through "visual and audio cues, gesture, mise-en-scène, music and dialogue and through interaction of these codes" (ibid.). He compared how the "cinematography, dress, [and] representation of sex" of the adapted films differ from their prior films. He also considered how a film remake combines culture by appropriating, and alluding to, cinematic and visual tropes (ibid). It would have been helpful if Evans had looked into the functional use of a film's employment of prior filmic models for its own purpose. Unfortunately, however, he returned his analytical attention to the comparison between a plot-level transformation of two films as "total translation" (Catford 2004). He did not follow Verevis's efforts (see Verevis 2006) to consider audio-visual sources not only as a source for total translation, but also the source for meta-textual

translation. It might also be argued that audio-visualizations do not necessarily come exclusively from film but also from other art forms. Other than previous films, a film's audio-visual code may be deduced from a painting, an opera or other art-forms. This will be explained further in Section 3.2.1.

Following Cattrysse, Yau (2016) put forward a systemic model of film adaptation. Yau considered film adaptation as a system that not only interacts with other systems but also with other cultures. In the diagram he created (see Figure 1.3.2) he used the term "repertoire" as a category to include Cattrysse's modelling of discursive practices:

> Repertoires comprise the rules and materials available for the production and reception of film adaptation, and may involve literary and cinematic texts (along with their history of interpretation), semiotic codes (e.g. the composition of a sentence in a novel; the mise-en-scène, cinematography, sound and editing of a film) and textual models (e.g. the genre conventions of westerns; the melodramatic mode manifested across genres and media), as well as other cultural codes and models (concerning, for example, the representation of race, class, gender and sexuality). Codes and models are regulated by institutions through the adoption or rejection of specific norms.
>
> (Yau 2016: 261)

Yau's "repertoire" is a term that encompasses literary works, cinematic texts, semiotic codes, and textual models. Yet, such an encompassing term is not without its problems. Yau did not further identify the difference between a literary or cinematic text within the film's repertoire, and "text" as one of the components of film adaptation (Yau 2016: 260-261). Further, he did not discuss the functions of the semiotic codes, nor did he differentiate the typology of these semiotic codes to enable researchers to specifically identify any of them in future investigations. Thus, Yau's repertoire is an over-generalized term without a systematic identification of its inner heterogeneity.

Firstly, "repertoires" vary *spatially* according to their cultural origin. Those that are subjected to Chinese culture produce different effects to those that are subjected to American culture. For instance, if a translation's target audiences are from a Chinese cultural background, a translator may be likely to apply repertoires from Chinese culture, as this would be more understandable for the audience. Secondly, repertoires vary according to the *semiotic systems* they belong to. For instance, repertoires, as they are represented in films and paintings, stem from different semiotic systems and may function differently. Thirdly, the polysemiotic audio-visual film system has multiple representation *channels*. For example, within one film sequence, different repertoires may affect one or two representational channels. In another example, American *film noir* was inspired by German Expressionism in the 1920s on the photographic level, while *noir* music follows its own conventions (observed in Cattrysse 1992: 62).

Considering the heterogeneous nature of "repertoire", it is necessary to identify separate representational parameters of film through which influential translation models mediate specific effects. A system of intersemiotic models will be proposed in Section 3.2.1 to address the three issues mentioned above.

At this point, it might be concluded that there are presumably two reasons why audio-visual sources of film are generally neglected in intersemiotic translation studies.

Firstly, it is difficult to understand the relationship between the audio-visual material and the film within the scope of translation. It is difficult to be sure whether these materials are to be understood as source materials of intersemiotic translation at all. It is also difficult to decide whether the mediation of these materials should be considered as an act of translation. In Chapter 2 it is argued that audio-visual sources are to be regarded as one of the starting points of intersemiotic translation.

Secondly, it is hard to identify a film's audio-visual source. Unlike a screenplay or an original novel, which are recorded as the film's prior material, the audio-visual source is less fixed and tangible. It is undoubtedly more difficult

to trace a film's audio-visual source than to find a screenplay and an original novel. This might explain why scholars like Evans prefer to discuss audio-visual to audio-visual transmission, with the case in point of film remakes, as a film remake has its prior film as a fixed source to start from. It should be noted that it is possible for researchers to identify the audio-visual sources through secondary materials such as interviews and autobiographies, or an analytical guess and archival materials (this is mentioned in Section 0.2).

Previous research by pioneers in the field has blazed the trail in intersemiotic translation studies. Their theorizations and arguments may be partial or incomplete, given that intersemiotic translation studies are still under-studied, but they have nevertheless devoted their efforts to incorporating audio-visualization as an object of translation studies so as to prevent translation studies from "taking a very marginalised position in the rapidly changing field of communication" (Wehn 2001: 71). This study follows in their footsteps in furthering the theorization and methodology of intersemiotic translation. The chapters which follow look into the underdeveloped discussion of both verbal to audio-visual transmission and audio-visual to audio-visual transmission.

It has been argued that to understand film as intersemiotic translation, one needs to regard it as an object of translation both through the multi-parameter quality of the translation, and through the mechanisms of film production. The present research may provide an opportunity for future research to examine phenomena of intersemiotic translation from beyond Jakobson's verbum-centred theorization, and the literature-based methodology and investigation of past intersemiotic translators. This study will base its theoretical discussion on the semiotic quality and entity of the film system in the same way that past interlingual translation studies have based their theorizations on observation of the mechanism of literature, with the works of Even-Zohar (1978, 1997), Toury (1995, 2012) and Lefevere (1992) as typical examples. Instead of reducing film to a verbal to non-verbal transmission within the semiotic pattern, it is suggested that it would be more fruitful for intersemiotic translation studies to consider the

complex and multifaceted mechanism of the film-making process.

1.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, selected publications in the field of intersemiotic translation have been reviewed. These publications were reviewed from two aspects, i.e., those that conceptualize intersemiotic translation from a general theorization, and those that discuss intersemiotic translation through the case study of films.

It has been shown that general theorizations in past studies suffer from a binary verbum-centred conceptualization of intersemiotic translation. In addition, case studies of film intersemiotic translation in past research are flawed in that the audio-visuality of intersemiotic translation is not discussed, and as a result the intersemiotic translation process from verbal text to its audio-visualization is not thoroughly considered and the audio-visual sources of intersemiotic translation hardly receive any systematic attention. Following an overview of the research in this area, those authors who have made some contribution, albeit rather limited, to research on the two under-discussed areas were selected for review, and from their publications it has become clear that those who did pay attention to the verbal to non-verbal and audio-visual to audio-visual transmission processes lacked a rigorous methodology for a thorough consideration of the audio-visual parameters of intersemiotic translation and the associated audio-visual prior materials.

The following chapters are designed to address these deficiencies, and to contribute to a paradigm and methodology for studying film as a form of intersemiotic translation.

Chapter 2 A Paradigm of Intersemiotic Translation

The aim of this chapter is to put forward a paradigm of intersemiotic translation that will serve as a basic scaffold for the whole dissertation. In this chapter, film is regarded as a kind of intersemiotic translation that is determined by multiple prior materials.

Before considering a new approach to the proposition of a paradigm of intersemiotic translation, it is first necessary to question the theoretical foundation of those discussions that regard a film adaptation of a novel as a Jakobsonian intersemiotic translation from a verbal sign system to a non-verbal sign system. It is contended here that film, as an intersemiotic translation, is not simply a binary verbal to non-verbal transference. When tracing the sources of film as an intersemiotic translation, one frequently finds that the prior underpinning material for a film is not exclusively a novel or a screenplay but, in many circumstances, materials that are not realized in verbal forms.

Secondly, 'text' can be regarded as a basic unit of intersemiotic translation. This section includes a re-definition of the concept of 'text', by elaborating the term's limited diction within the verbal linguistic sphere, to encompass a wider scale of semiotic expression. Thus, the term 'text' can describe not only as words but also images and sounds.

Defining 'text' as a semiotic phenomenon will prevent any potential cognitive and theoretical confusion which may occur when comparing a film with its numerous prior materials. The confusion is alleviated when intersemiotic translation is approached from beyond a binary verbum-centred dichotomy (see the debate on text and practice as an example in Cattrysse 1992).

In order to perceive the film's prior materials within the scope of intersemiotic translation, in Section 2.4, these materials are regarded as the film's original points of departure. The term 'start text' is then chosen over 'source text'

in order to formally establish film as a multi-sourced translation. A film is a mediation result of many start texts. The filmic mediation of each of these texts will be regarded as meta-textual translation behaviour that is executed in order to finalize the film on screen.

Finally, with the background to intersemiotic translation in the case of film established in Section 2.1 and the units of translation identified in Section 2.3, a paradigm of intersemiotic translation is then further developed by classifying film's prior materials into three types. Each type of start text will be introduced with regard to its function in the filmmaking process.

2.1 Questioning Binarism

Before a paradigm of intersemiotic translation is proposed, the aim of this section is to question the established simplified/binary perception of film as intersemiotic translation.

As reviewed in Chapter 1, previous research tends to reduce the complex pattern of intersemiotic translation into a binary source-target "supermeme" (Chesterman 1997: 8), reflecting the idea that translation goes from a ST to a TT. Previous researchers have insisted on identifying literature as the only verbal textual source for films. They claim that they are undertaking intersemiotic translation analysis by comparing the information expressed in the verbal text sources with the film as a so-called 'audio-visualized targeted outcome'. This section challenges this conception as an oversimplified paradigm of intersemiotic translation, which neglects the actual mechanism of filmmaking. This section further breaks down and examines this somewhat superficial verbal vs non-verbal format with a detailed outline of film's points of departure, to which research has so far failed to pay attention.

In this study, film is recognized as a form of intersemiotic translation whose quality is determined by multiple earlier materials. It may, therefore, be postulated that the translation process is not always destined or planned. It may

also be argued that in the film production process, there are both explicit sources and implicit sources. The term 'explicit sources' refers to the officially declared sources that are visible and therefore easy to observe. Typical examples of explicit sources include the novel on which the film is based, yet to-be-adapted films and film screenplays. 'Implicit sources' are the sources that are frequently not officially recorded and therefore less observable.

Previous research has often focussed on the most explicit sources, such as literary texts. Implicit sources, on the other hand, are often neglected because they are hard to trace and are often not written down anywhere, and exist only in the mind of the filmmakers. Both implicit and explicit sources are indispensable for the finalization of an intersemiotic translation project, and it is hard to definitively theorize intersemiotic translation if any sources, implicit or explicit, are not taken into account.

What the binary verbal/non-verbal pattern often neglects are the implicit sources, as can be illustrated with the following examples. In the intersemiotic translation process, there might be inspirational materials which take pre-textual forms. Unlike the novels, these sources may be implicit without being officially recorded. They may be selected even before a literary source is chosen. This is a response to Gilles Deleuze, who observes that a film adaptation only occurs when there is an encounter between a cinematic idea and a literary idea (Deleuze 2007: 321). In which case, a literary text was chosen to be adapted by the filmmakers because they have ideas in cinema that resonate with what the literature presents as novel ideas (ibid.). In the present case, these 'pre-literature materials' may even have stimulated the original cinematic idea from which a literary source is chosen, because it coincides with the memes extracted by the filmmakers from these materials. For instance, Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* may be officially credited as a filmic adaptation based on a part of novelist Wang Dulu's *Crane Iron Pentalogy*. However, Lee's cinematic idea, that stimulated this intersemiotic translation, originated not from the book but from his childhood memories of watching the martial art films of King Hu and Chang Cheh (Zhang 2013: 442).

These films established an impression of China that emotionally motivated Lee to make *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* even before he selected Wang Dulu's novel for adaptation. Thus, the films of Hu and Zhang formed a notable point of origin, providing Lee with visual stimulation and imagery which served as a foundation for the making of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. Under which premise, Wang Dulu's novel *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* was chosen because it resonated with Lee's filmic idea that he extracted from multiple audio-visual sources absorbed in his childhood. These materials acted as the film's early sources of inspiration and sowed the seed for a cinematic idea, which in turn functioned as the basis for initiating an intersemiotic translation project.

Since there may be multiple implicit and explicit points of departure involved in film adaptations, it might be asked whether the same arguments can be applied to those films that are based on an original screenplay. The answer, again, is yes.

Films that are based on an original screenplay may also have their inspirational sources. This may be evidenced with examples from two of Lee's feature films from his early career. Lee's first feature film *Pushing Hands* (1991) was based on an original screenplay written by Lee himself, but the film story was based largely on Lee's personal experience in the United States. For instance, the overwrought and hysterical wife in *Pushing Hands* mirrored Lee's period of unemployment (Zhang 2013: 66). The characteristics of the film's protagonist – an elderly *tai chi* teacher– were based on those of the real-life practitioners around Lee's home at the time, and from Lee's personal training experience (Zhang 2013: 69). Many of Lee's own life-experiences can be found projected through the drama of his key film characters, from whose life-choices the basic plot of *Pushing Hands* was derived. Lee's second feature film, *The Wedding Banquet* (1993)*,* was also based on his own original screenplay. Like *Pushing Hands,* many scenes in *Wedding Banquet* were inspired by Lee's real-life experiences in the United States. The sequence of the embarrassing and chaotic wedding originates directly from Lee's own wedding, and "the marriage testimony, the rough horseplay at the wedding, the groom's father's speech, and the bittersweet

feelings of the groom's mother make it almost [my] personal narrative" (Zhang 2013: 108, my translation). Lee's mother's words "Our family owes you a lot, we let you down with such a shabby wedding, we came all this way for nothing" (Zhang 2013: 59, my translation) were borrowed almost word-for-word in the screenplay, and later represented on screen. In both cases, the trajectory of the textual screenplay stemmed from a "real-life drama" (Lazarus 1992: 5). This justifies Cattrysse's question as to the originality of all film by asking "How original are originals?" (Cattrysse 1992: 67).

The sources of an intersemiotic translation may be said to be multiple and complex, since countless inspirational materials constitute its pre-textual points of departure. The verbal materials, be they novels or original screenplays, serve as intermediated materials which are already pre-determined by those pre-textual departure points.

The commonly accepted binary paradigm of intersemiotic translation may also be flawed in that it does not provide a well-founded theory to explain the seemingly finite translation processes that occur between a screenplay and a film. In this process there still exist innumerable audio-visual data that do not correspond with any segments of verbal materials in the source script. Eco (2001: 123) suggested that in assuming the audio-visual results are simply screenplay-based translation, one would need to ask the following question: Can film be regarded simply as a transference from a purely verbal screenplay to non-verbal materials? The answer would probably be no.

Firstly, apart from the script and storylines of the film, screenplays offer only very basic descriptions of a film's audio-visual information. Considering the fact that a film is a polysemiotic art form, these basic descriptions in the screenplay are by no means sufficient to support the film's multiple semantic channels. According to Monaco (1981: 160), the words are connotative, whereas the filmic images are denotative. The contrast between the connotative mono-semiotic verbal screenplay and the denotative polysemiotic nature of the film will inevitably lead to many unscripted variables.

For this reason, many of the finalized parameters of the intersemiotic translation product do not exactly correspond with any segments of their so-called verbal source texts. A typical example concerns the fight sequences in Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, which are simply described in the screenplay as "They fight" (Norman 2016: 38). This extremely limited information was certainly insufficient to support a translation into a detailed fight scene. What then guided the filmmakers to create their translation solutions to achieve a concretized polysemiotic representation using only the rudimentary information given? One of the observations being made in the present case study of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* is that Lee derived many of his audio-visual solutions by mediating audio-visual mechanisms of realized artistic patterns. The acrobatic fight sequences in the film stemmed from the choreography in Hong Kong martial arts films, while the cinematography adapted the visual mechanisms of Chinese ink-wash painting, as will be shown later in Section 4.2.1.

The fact that film is a multi-parameterized medium indicates that film language accommodates various other artistic codes, conventions and expressions that are derived from different pre-existing art forms. This has been observed by Eisenstein, who claimed that "cinema is the heir of all artistic cultures" (2016: 109). These "artistic cultures" offer audio-visual devices to semantically support the filmmakers' expressions. Filmmakers may also find useful devices from pre-existing films since "everything that has been said onscreen has been said a thousand times" (Price & Rhodes 2010: 90). For example, film techniques such as Eisenstein's montage technique and Bazin's long take technique, are intrasemiotic audio-visual devices that constitute a film's expression at the cinematographic level. The use of negative space, the mise-en-scène, blocking techniques and the operatic mode, on the other hand, function as intersemiotic audio-visual devices that enrich the film in terms of cinematography, sound and editing. There may be no trace of these materials within the screenplay but they are prior materials of film that establish the film's audio-visual lexicon. These long-established prior materials mediate semantic effects between the

screenplay and the final intersemiotic translation. These practices, as non-verbal semiotic devices, have been described by Cattrysse, although his description lacks a systematic discussion (see Section 1.5).

The difference in semiotic nature between a screenplay and a film also leaves space for unplanned variables, a typical example being improvised film scenes. These describe situations where translation actions are executed off the screenplay, or even off the shooting scripts. These are cases where accidental translations, or translation errors (in the sense that the translation does not strictly follow the script), make their way into the final film. One example of this concerns the opening scene of Francis Coppola's *The Godfather* (1972), where Vito Corleone (Marlon Brando) considers his response to a petitioner's demand for retaliation while gently stroking a cat. The cat was actually not part of the script and it had seated itself on Brando's lap just before filming began (Cowie 1997: 53). Another example concerns the final scene of Akira Kurosawa's *Sanjuro* (1962), where Sanjuro (Toshiro Mifune) strikes his adversary Hanbei (Tatsuya Nakadai) with a single and swift *katana* blow and a fountain of blood gushes from Hanbei. This notorious explosion of blood was actually caused by excess pressure in the fake blood compressor. The compressor hose that was attached to Nakadai blew a coupling that caused a much larger gush of fluid than planned, and almost lifted him off the ground.[5] In both cases, the finalized intersemiotic translations were the result of an improvised translation action that was permitted by the director to appear in the final cut, and both became classic film scenes world-wide. It may be that accidental translations, though not pre-planned in scripts, or any other written manuscripts, coincide with the cinematic idea of the translator. In Coppola's case, the cat established the dramatic duality of the Godfather's character, juxtaposing the tender side of his nature against his

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[5] Source: The documentary *Akira Kurosawa: It Is Wonderful to Create,* produced by Teruyo Nogami in 2002, Retrieved
from : https://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMjA5NDk3MDIw.html?spm=a2h0k.11417342.soresults.dtitle.

ferocity. In Kurosawa's case, the blood explosion, though horribly exaggerated, created a massive visual release from the visual tension which has built up between the two protagonists, translating violence and death. Accidental translations that are derived from inspirational or opportune materials may, therefore, meet the translator's communicational purpose, even though they may have been, technically, a translation error in the original written material.

These observations give a brief overview of the cases of actual filmmaking that do not fit into a simple verbal/non-verbal dichotomy. If a verbal textual source is regarded as a film's only prior source, one would rapidly conclude that the substantial information for the filmic translation must consist of adaptations, alterations and additions. This led Eco to observe that "only the foolhardy would consider adaptation as translation" (2001: 123), and Cattrysse to remark that many filmic elements "should not be considered as translation of any kind" (1992: 61). The fact that film is not exclusively determined by a film's verbal sources does not, however, mean that the STs of these "unsourced" audio-visualizations cannot be found. They are simply not sourced from the verbal texts. It is argued that these problems may be solved more efficiently by proposing a new paradigm of intersemiotic translation beyond a verbum-centred universe.

The key point of this section is not to deny the function of verbal elements, nor is it to suggest a once-and-for-all departure from verbal textual phenomena, as Tarkovsky suggested (1986: 122). The present research pays full attention to the functions played by verbal texts in the process of intersemiotic translation. There is no denying that linguistic terms constitute one of the basic paradigms of human communication and it is by this standard that other communicative phenomena are perceived and understood. Terms such as 'visual literacy', 'film language' and 'visual grammar' which are frequently used in film studies are typical examples of this kind. The purpose of this section is, rather, to problematize the verbum-centred criterion in studying film within the scope of intersemiotic translation. Analysts need to consider whether the transference of verbal texts should be prioritized as the most important issue of intersemiotic

translation behaviour, or whether it should be regarded only as one of the factors of intersemiotic translation, to be treated equally alongside other quality-determining audio-visual prior materials.

It may be deduced that the audio-visual quality of the final intersemiotic translation process is mainly determined by elements that are not from verbal sources like the screenplay or original books. Such complexities provide enough reason to question the assertion that film is to be regarded simply as the result of verbal to non-verbal intersemiotic transference.

The questions that need to be asked at this stage are: What should one study in terms of intersemiotic translation with all its complexities? What is the basic unit of intersemiotic translation? What is the paradigm of intersemiotic translation? The following sections are devoted to discussing these questions.

2.2 What is Text in Intersemiotic Translation?

With the verbal and non-verbal dichotomy of intersemiotic translation paradigm now problematized, it can be seen that intersemiotic translation involves multiple points of departure that are not exclusively verbal. Under such a premise, if 'text' is still to be regarded as the basic unit for intersemiotic translation, the term should be formally explained. It is necessary to emphasize that the present study departs from a linguistic perception of 'text' as it tends to direct the attention to linguistic components like lexicon and syntax. Instead, this section aims to understand text in the semiotic domain, which understands text as a device that accommodates both linguistic and extra-linguistic signs.

By broadening the concept of 'text', the conventional definition of the word as a coherence of linguistic components needs a radical revisit. Once there is a general understanding of 'text' as a semiotic device, a precise definition needs to be formulated. At this point, it is worth taking a detour back to Yuri Lotman's semiotic observation of text (1977) for a theoretical revision of the term.

Lotman's definition of 'text' was made up of three concepts: expression,

demarcation and structure (ibid.: 51-52). A text is expressed through the use of signs, which indicates that text is to be viewed "as a realization of a system, as its material embodiment" (ibid.: 51). This means that a text is to be perceived through a combination of signs from a sign system. A text also has a boundary, to exclude all materially embodied signs not entering into its composition, and resist all structures not marked by that boundary (ibid.). This regulates text as a closed body of semiotic combinations within a finite scale of time and space. A text is internally organized to be transformed into a structural whole (ibid.: 53). These conceptual features establish the basis for text to be understood as a closed-ended and coherent form of signs deployed from a finite system to communicate information. Lotman's observation of signs provides a theoretical foundation for this study to embrace the translation scholar Henrik Gottlieb's definition of text as "any combination of sensory signs carrying communicative intention" (2007: 3) as a formal definition of 'text' to be used in the present study.

Gottlieb may be regarded as one of the few translation studies scholars who has formally defined 'text', 'language' and 'translation' in the general semiotic sense. He particularly saw the necessity for translation scholars to formally understand 'text' from beyond a verbum-centred perspective. Gottlieb dismissed the fact that discussions of modern mass communication rarely consider non-verbal elements as part of the "text" (2003: 167). He particularly considered the case of communications that involve more than one semiotic system, which he referred to as "polysemiotic texts" (ibid.). Gottlieb further observed that polysemiotic texts are multi-channelled and it would make little sense if they were to be stripped of their non-verbal semiotic layers, since these threads together make up the texture of the message (ibid.). Gottlieb thus saw the necessity of broadening the concept of text to accommodate modern complex forms of communication. He further emphasized the fact that as semiotics implies semantics, "any channel of expression in any act of communication carries meaning". For this reason, even exclusively non-verbal communication may deserve the label 'text', thus "accommodating phenomena such as music and

graphics" (ibid.).

Theorizing text as a semiotic phenomenon makes it possible for the concept of 'text' to be used to describe multi-modal and polysemiotic phenomena "following the revolutionary development of the digital world" (Wu 2014: 150). This makes it possible for 'text' to be used to describe other forms of human communication, such as painting, opera, film, and music. This also makes it possible for forms of communication to be considered as source 'texts' for intersemiotic translation.

Text has already been utilized by researchers to encompass multi-modal phenomena. Christian Metz (1974) defined film as text. He remarks that the only principle of relevancy capable of defining the semiotics of the film is "the desire to treat films as *texts*, as units of discourse, consequently forcing itself to study the different *systems* (whether they are or are not codes) which give form to these texts and are implicit in them" (ibid.: 21). A semiotic recognition of text, therefore, enables textual analysis to be used as a methodology that is as efficient for studying audio-visual text as it is for studying literary/verbal text (see textual analysis in Mckee 2016 for an example). In fact, as a form of textual analysis, 'shot by shot' analysis is the major methodology for the present study to evaluate the audio-visual quality of film. A semiotic definition of text thus enables the present research to consider film's 'non-verbal' prior materials as texts. Text may henceforth be the basic unit for intersemiotic translation in analysing the interrelation between the final texture of film and its prior materials. This concept will be explained more thoroughly in Section 2.4.

It should be noted that a semiotic redefinition of text uncouples 'text' from being a signifier of purely verbal semiotic specification. Since 'text' no longer signifies only words, it inevitably needs to be semantically affiliated to a semiotic system in order to achieve the intended consensus of meaning. Otherwise, the conceptually generalized text may easily lead to confusion (as discussed in the case of Torop in Section 1.4). Thus, 'text', as a basic unit of semiotic combination, only makes sense when demarcated within a semiotic system. For instance, verbal

text refers to a combination of signs from the system of natural languages. Audio-visual text refers to a combination of signs from the system of audio-visual signs. A 'text' may also be constrained within a specific discipline. For instance, literary texts are specifically those that are realized within the literary system. Film texts specify those that are realized within the film system. With 'text' being expanded in the semiotic sense to encompass both linguistic and extra-linguistic elements, segments of texts need to be properly regulated with their semiotic affiliation. Thus, terminologies like 'film texts', 'verbal texts' and 'literary texts' are vital for theoretical clarification. A semiotic specification of text would also spare future researchers the difficult task of defining what is a literary text or film text, as it is only a question of explaining the mechanism of the system of literature and film, with texts as the realized combination of signs of that system. 'Text' would thus maintain the focus of research on the appropriate realized combination of signs. Thus, the observation of these combinations can be used in order to deduce the mechanism for the embedded semiotic system of a text.

Having defined 'text' as a finite and coherent combination of signs that are deployed from a system to communicate information, it may then be argued that intersemiotic translation, like all translations, may be regarded as a mode of discursive transfer which "constitutes one among a number of possible modes of the intercultural movement of texts" (Hermans 1996: 27). As discussed in Section 2.1, film is of a multi-sourced nature, because of which, 'start text' is a more accurate term to describe a film's point of departure than 'source text'.

2.3 Start Text

As indicated in Section 2.1, film, as an intersemiotic translation, has multiple points of departure, and it then becomes problematic to consider it within the conventional 'source text to target text' paradigm that is commonly taken for granted within "the meme pool of translation studies" (Chesterman 1997: 8). Given the premise that it is hard to assume any of the departures of film as the

ultimate source for the finalized film production, the present study adopts Antony Pym's term "start text" to describe film's prior materials.

The term *start text* is proposed by Pym to refer to the text that one translates from to produce the *target text* of the translation (2014: 1). Pym considered the conventional term "source" as a metaphorical description of a translation's pristine material as the pure water source. Pym challenged this convention by replacing "source text" with "start text" and by asking "how can we blithely assume that the text we translate from is not itself made up of translations, and reworked fragments of previous texts" (ibid.: 2)? Pym furthered his argument by questioning the inherent assumption of the ST and TT paradigm, saying that translation must not be reduced to "an affair of two sides ('start' and 'target')" (ibid.). He observed that "each target is only a link toward further actions and aims, in further language and culture", thus "texts usually contain traces of more than one language and culture" (ibid.). He therefore suggests that these texts are all "tied up in never-ending translational networks" (ibid.).

Pym's concern may be considered as a direct response to the idea of a never-ending series of interpretations that is implied by Peirce (1932) and Wittgenstein (1967). Peirce inferred a sign to be a semiotic agent through which "anything which determines something else (its *interpretant*) to refer to an object to which itself refers (its *object*) in the same way, the interpretant becoming in turn a sign, and so on *ad infinitum*" (CP: 2.303). Similarly, Gorlée concluded that if the meaning of the sign is always another sign, this generates an endless series of interpretive signs (1994: 100). In the exercise of translation, the final interpretant stands for the perfect translation, at which point the translator's work is completed. A translation is not, however, completed because the semiosis has reached its exhaustion, but because the translator judges his/her professional performance concluded based on criteria arising from their personal, cultural and other backgrounds (ibid.: 109). This corresponds to Wittgenstein's observation that the final interpretation is not a further sign or picture, but the thing that cannot be further interpreted. It is a psychological, not a logical terminus, where one would

be inclined to think that there's no possibility for further interpretation (Wittgenstein 1967: 231). To use Witgenstein's own words: "What happens [therefore] is not that this symbol cannot be further interpreted, but: I do no [further] interpreting. I do not interpret, because I feel at home in the present picture" (ibid.: 234).

Peirce's theory of semiosis corresponds to Pym's concern that the start text is not an ultimate "source" but merely one point among the endless translation networks, from which another chain among the infinite chains of translations begins. Pym's critical definition of "target" may reflect Wittgenstein's observation. Even when the translator "feels at home" in his finalized translation, and regards that translation as "a stopping place", translation as the "language game" may still be continued by others to "start the interpreting process afresh at any time" (Gorlée 1994: 110). Pym did not, however, seek to completely deconstruct the ST to TT paradigm. He considered it sufficient for translation theories to merely replace "source text" with "start text". This makes sense, since a translation scholar often focuses on a finite scale of translation behaviours even though the nature of the available "translation networks" may be infinite.

The present study shares Pym's concern that neither the source nor the target of intersemiotic translation are absolute. As argued in Section 2.1, film is considered as a borrowing art form (Stam 2005: 1). Film's prior material may be deduced from un-credited inspirational sources. These prior materials may also be produced by filmmakers as working texts in the middle of the filmmaking process to 'flesh-out' or draft the final intersemiotic translation. They may, in addition, complicate the original literary source. There is also the possibility that a film may be re-made by other filmmakers, which will further confuse the sources. A literary source may have many film versions since it may be re-adapted into film many times over, and the treatment of a film sequence may be borrowed and imitated by future filmmakers in new intersemiotic translations. Under which premise, film cannot be considered as an intersemiotic translation with one exclusive 'source' but of multiple prior matierals with each of them to be

considerd 'starting points' in various stages of the filmmaking process. The origin of an intersemiotic translation is not one defined source but comprises multiple texts to start from. It is to this end that 'start text' is chosen over the assertive 'source text' as the one that filmmakers translate from. As a result, the target end of film cannot be considered a finite and ultimate intersemiotic translation. As the present study is a product-oriented piece of research, it will not consider anything beyond the film product itself as the target of intersemiotic translation.

The purpose of this research is not to follow Pym's daring assumption by considering film as part of an endless intersemiotic translation chain. To restrict the analysis in line with the principles of feasibility and specificity, the present research will be limited to the applied discussion of the finite filmmaking process, rather than engaging in a nihilistic and open-ended discussion (see section 2.4). In order to remain within the research boundary of the present study, therefore, the study will consider a start point and an end point of an intersemiotic translation project. It will not, however, exclude the never-ending nature of the process of translation (as emphasized by Peirce in CP: 2.303). The trajectories of prior texts of film will be analysed through the system of models that is put forward in Chapter 3. The complex starting points of film will be considered in depth, whereas the influences of finalized film will be only briefly noted.

Accordingly, the use of "start text", as a less suggestive term, may prevent this study from following in the footsteps of previous discussions in treating film as a binary intersemiotic translation. It enables this study to offer a more exclusive consideration of film's prior materials, and to discuss how these materials may determine the final quality of the film.

It is clear that film is to be understood as a translation process that is determined by chains of start texts that are divided into several types. This observation complicates the conventional paradigm of translation as the transmission of a finite source text to a finite target text. In the meantime, regarding film as a multi-sourced translation product also challenges the entrenched verbal to non-verbal dichotomy cherished by many previous

intersemiotic translation scholars. At this stage it is necessary to question whether it is theoretically useful to persevere with Jakobson's paradigm of intersemiotic translation, where the semiotic nature of the text is regarded as the centre for identifying both ends of the translation. With the observations above providing evidence to the contrary, a new paradigm of film as intersemiotic translation needs to be formulated.

2.4 A Paradigm of Intersemiotic Translation

For a systematic understanding of how the start texts of films function, it is necessary to propose a specific categorization of these texts. Taking into account the innumerable semiotic forms of film start texts, and the fact that these forms encompass a variety of semiotic systems, it is problematic to dichotomize these texts according to Jakobson's verbum-centred definition of intersemiotic translation. Therefore, considering the actual mechanisms of filmmaking, this section will identify and categorize a film's start texts not according to their so-called semiotic nature, but according to their position in the intersemiotic translation process.

Following Paul Lazarus' (1992) conceptual scheme of the filmmaking process, the film's start texts can be categorized into three types, according to the three stages of the process of filmmaking, namely, the development stage, the pre-production stage and the production stage. The process of intersemiotic translation is shown in Figure 2.4.1.
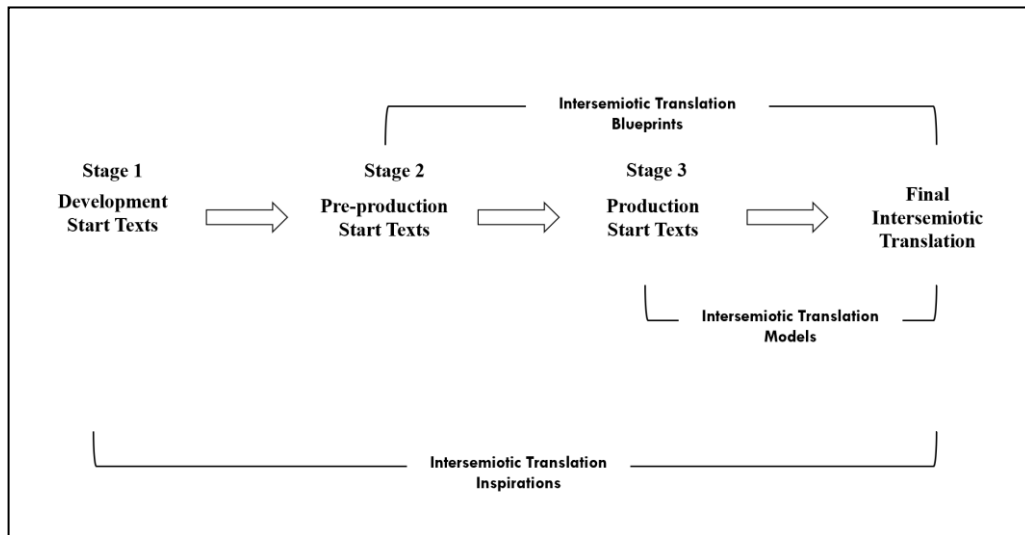
Figure 2.4.1 Intersemiotic Translation Process

Development Start texts refer to the start texts that inspire or help initiate the intersemiotic translation project. These texts may be considered as the origin of a film. According to Lazarus, before films existed in "screenplay form, they may have begun as original ideas, treatments, short stories, books, plays, magazine articles, or even new stories" (Lazarus 1992: 3). Thus, the start texts can be anything from the filmmaker's personal experience, or a real-life drama taken from a newspaper, to a concrete media product, such as literature, or a film or TV show. These texts inspire, or coincide, with the cinematic ideas which the intersemiotic translators are trying to convey. *Development start texts* start or stimulate the vision or motif of a translation project, and facilitate the development of that vision into a film. For this reason, they may be functionally referred to as *intersemiotic translation inspirations* (or *IST inspirations*).

Development start texts may also be further divided based on the timing of their influence on the filmmaker/translator's idea. A particular development start text may function as the genesis of a film by inspiring the filmmaker to establish a cinematic idea. With a cinematic idea already formulated, other development start texts may be selected based on their resonance with the formulated idea. For instance, Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* was inspired by a "Cultural China" that is visually formulated by the audio-visualizations of filmmakers like

King Hu (Zhang 2013: 320). Hu's visuality first stimulated Lee's cinematic idea through what he has described as a "dream of China" (Lee, cited in Berry & Farquhar 2006: 67). Lee chose to adapt Wang Dulu's novel into film because the content of Wang's novel best coincided with Lee's "dream". In this case, Hu's films and Wang's novel are both development start texts, but the latter was selected as a result of the ideas that were stimulated by the former.

The reference to *inspiration* indicates that the relationship between *development start texts* and the film is not deterministic but is one of "plastic control" (a concept that is borrowed from Popper 1972: 240-241). This means that the filmmakers are not forced to submit their intersemiotic translations to the control of the total content of *development start texts*. Rather, they are free to select pieces of information to stimulate a vision that may evolve into other pieces of information that are entirely different from the pieces selected. For instance, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* may have been partly inspired by the visual impression established by Hong Kong martial arts films, but the finalized version of the film established a different visuality and narration. The vision of the translators is relatively independent, since the stories, the screenplays and the audio-visualizations that are developed within the filmmaking translation process are not designed to let the start texts appear on screen with absolute exactitude. Though inspired by the development start texts, the vision that is developed through these texts may serve a different "skopos" (Reiss & Vermeer 2013). The functional nature of the development start texts alone derails the suggestion of the often-criticized fidelity norm in film adaptations. What are referred to as film adaptations recognize the cases where literary texts, or film texts, as the film's most obvious development start texts, are refracted radically according to the translator's vision they have inspired.

Thus, development start texts may be metaphorically compared to the booster rockets of a space shuttle that are detached after providing the initial thrust when their fuel is depleted. There is no denying that by inspiring the vision of the translators, certain information from the development start texts may make its

way towards the screen, but what eventually appears on screen may have only a remote resemblance to the texts. It could be said that development start texts provide the translators with fragmented and un-systematic information. The ideas and visions that this information inspires are also vague and incoherent and need to be elaborated upon by the translators and turned into an organized and structured story. The value of the film lies, therefore, in everything that is done consequent to acquiring this inspiration rather than to the inspiration itself. This alone may explain why Borges questioned the fidelity norm by saying "it is his [the translator's] happy and creative infidelity that must matter to us" (1999: 106).

Pre-production start texts refer to the start texts that establish the blueprint for the intersemiotic translation project. Unlike *development start texts* or *production start texts*, which may be created by other text producers, *pre-production start texts* are created by members of a filmmaking crew, or by a group of translators assembled for the intersemiotic translation project. Thus, pre-production start texts are destined to follow the vision inspired by *development start texts*. They are created exclusively to provide a foundation for the production of the film/translation. In most cases, the start texts at this stage take on verbal textual forms. As Lazarus has observed, "It is fundamental to motion pictures that everything begins with the written word. An idea may spring up in a number of ways, but a movie begins to take shape when words are put on paper" (1992: 64). An intersemiotic translation project can therefore only be formally initiated by establishing pre-production start texts. Production start texts may, therefore, be referred to functionally as *intersemiotic translation blueprints* (or *IST blueprints*).

In this context, the term *blueprint* functions in a similar way to pre-production start texts in the technical drawing of a planned architectural project. Based on a blueprint, a construction project may be started and a building may be constructed. Analogously, pre-production start texts are referred to as a 'blueprint' because these start texts offer basic information that depicts the primary shape or structure of the film. The *blueprint* pre-determines the general shape of a building, likewise, the screenplays, as *intersemiotic translation*

blueprints, provide the scaffold for how the final translation will be structured.

Examples of *pre-production start texts* are most notably written screenplays. According to Syd Field, "A screenplay is a story told with pictures, in dialogue and description, and placed within the context of dramatic structure" (2005: 2-3). The screenplay establishes the story, the dramatic structure, the characters, and the description of sequences and scenes. Screenplays, therefore, offer basic information that establishes the film plot with brief descriptions of scenarios. A screenplay does not offer specific instructions on audio-visualizations, but it sets up the structural foundation based upon which the audio-visualization may be created. Thus, the director Peter Hyams remarked "I can tell you as a director the most important thing [in film making] is the screenplay" (Hyams, cited in Lazarus 1992: 65).

The screenplay may itself be the result of countless series of intrasemiotic transferences, i.e., draft, redraft, alteration and re-alterations (see Price 2010: 63-64). This study will not, however, discuss these intrasemiotic transferences in any detail, and will take only the final script as the basic data for analysis. The screenplay may also spawn other texts that offer basic instructions for production processes such as storyboard, shooting scripts, sound scripts, and performance scripts that provide the foundation for each representative parameter of film 'language'. To maintain the focus of this research, the screenplay is the one typical exemplified pre-production text to be analyzed.

Production start texts refer to the materials that may support the translators, with pre-existing audio-visual patterns, in finalizing their intersemiotic translation projects. Production, in the context of the present study, describes the whole finalization process of an intersemiotic translation by means of which a screenplay is audio-visualized through film language. Thus, the 'production stage' includes the processes of both film-shooting and film-editing. By 'production start texts' are meant the "models and conventions" which Cattrysse identified as governing audio-visual aspects such as "directing, staging, acting, setting, costume, lighting, photography, pictorial representation, music etc" (1992: 61).

Materials at this stage are normally in audio-visual form, in order to provide exemplary semantic models. If these models are imitated, reworked or mediated, the materials may inform or influence the translators' audio-visual solutions and eventually determine the audio-visual quality of the intersemiotic translation. Accordingly, these materials assist the filmmaker's decision-making process by bringing certain audio-visual fixtures to 'flesh out' the *intersemiotic translation blueprint*. Production start texts, therefore, offer semiotic devices for the filmmaker's semantic strategy. Production start texts may be exemplified by film techniques, filmic treatment of classic sequences, paintings, operas and other pre-existing representations that provide film with audio-visual codes.

Production start texts have been recognized, and theoretically approached by previous researchers who have been credited with terms such as "interpretant" (Iampolski 1998: 55) and "repertoire" (Yau 2016: 261). The former concept, borrowed from Charles S. Peirce's semiotic trichotomy, emphasizes the intermediary position of production start texts between the ST and the TT. The latter, borrowed from Even-Zohar's systemic scheme, refers to the aggregation of all the production start texts as a translator's tool kit. Neither term, however, describes the functional nature of individual production start texts. "Interpretant" does not fully involve the user of the production start texts, and can only be understood within a specific context along with a sign and an object. "Repertoire" is recognized as referring to the full range of the filmmaker/translator's tool kit, but is a general term that describes a cluster of tool kits without specifying their individual constituents. In this section, production start texts are functionally referred to as *intersemiotic translation models* (or *IST models*). They are referred to as 'models' because these start texts offer audio-visual patterns that are imposable in an intersemiotic translation.

The term *intersemiotic translation model* takes into account the basic properties of production start texts. Firstly, 'model' emphasizes the functional nature of production start texts as exemplified patterns that can translate certain information within certain semantic channels. For instance, a montage is an

intersemiotic translation model that exemplifies a pattern which communicates meanings on the film editing channel, by connecting two separate sequences together. Secondly, 'model' emphasizes specificity by referring to one particular start text whose features and functions are utilized purposefully by the translator. For instance, the visual treatment of the bamboo sequence in King Hu's *A Touch of Zen* (1971) is a specified intersemiotic translation model for Ang Lee to employ in order to create emotion in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. Thirdly, 'model' implies a space for the translator's approximation. By employing a model, translators reduce the complexity of the production start text by retaining only certain features of it. For instance, what Lee's bamboo sequence in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* retains is only the bamboo setting from King Hu's *A Touch of Zen*. These three properties of a model demonstrate the need to identify its channel of effect, to discuss its trajectory, and to analyze the translator's employment of the model. These issues will be specifically discussed, along with the systemic scheme of intersemiotic translation models, in Section 3.2.

It may be argued that the finalized intersemiotic translation is determined by all three of the above-mentioned start texts. The interrelationship between the film's three start texts and the finalized intersemiotic translation is represented diagrammatically in Figure 2.3.2.
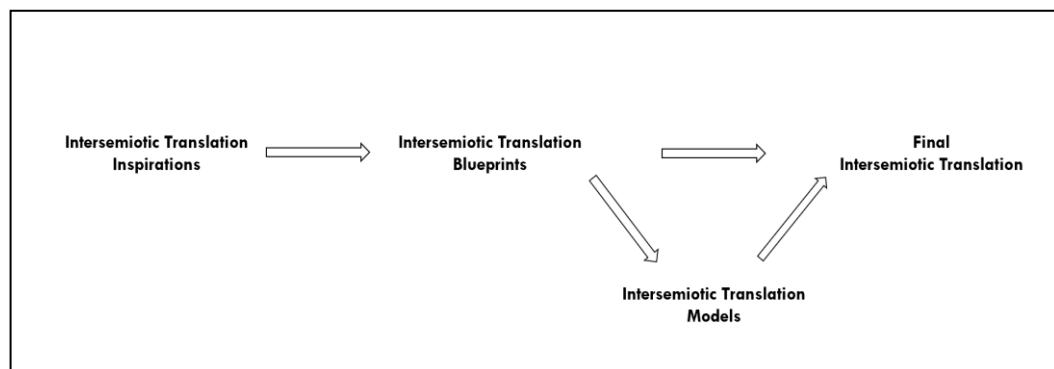

Figure 2.3.2 The interrelationship between the start texts of intersemiotic translation

Development start texts, as *intersemiotic translation inspirations*,

functionally trigger the initiation of an intersemiotic translation project. Pre-production start texts, as *intersemiotic translation blueprints*, frame the objects to be translated intersemiotically. Production start texts, as *intersemiotic translation models,* provide the devices of intersemiotic translation.

This study focuses on the finite temporal space between *intersemiotic translation blueprints*, *intersemiotic translation models* and the finalized intersemiotic translations. *Intersemotic translation models* are employed purposefully according to *intersemiotic translation blueprints* and are closely related to each other. *Intersemiotic translation inspirations*, excluded from the production stage of intersemiotic translation, will be considered as one of the factors that may empower and shadow the entire process of intersemiotic translation.

Within the production process of intersemiotic translation, the triadic relationship between *intersemiotic translation blueprints*, *intersemiotic translation models* and finalized intersemiotic translations may have established a Peircean semiotic trichotomy between "representamen, interpretant and object" (CP 1.340). *Intersemiotic translation blueprints* may have established a representamen, *intersemiotic translation models* may serve as the translator's interpretant and the film as the translated object. Peirce and his followers are, however, more interested in identifying objects and putting them in the right place within the semiotic trichotomy (see Gorlée 2004, 2015 for typical examples). They intend to explicate how to understand certain semiotic entities within the scope of semiotic translation. It is not sufficient merely to identify the text's semiotic position in the communication process, although this proposed paradigm of intersemiotic translation may fit into Peirce's semiotic framework; rather, it is important to take a step further, to discuss how intersemiotic translators strategically rework *intersemiotic translation models* to translate *intersemiotic translation blueprints*, and how these *intersemiotic translation models* help one to understand fully the intersemiotic translators' strategies. Despite a resonance with Peircean semiotic trichotomy, it is insufficient merely to follow the footsteps

of semio-translation (such as Gorlée 2004, Torop 2008 and Stecconi 2007, to name a few).

As audio-visualized performance instructions, *intersemiotic translation models* are closer to the finalized film than the *intersemiotic inspirations* and *intersemiotic blueprints*. In order to translate *intersemiotic translation blueprints*, the translator inevitably employs multiple *intersemiotic translation models*. Thus, *intersemiotic translation models* are selected by the translators and then adapted into films, in order to translate *intersemiotic translation blueprints* into a concrete and coherent film text. Through employment, *intersemiotic translation models* are already decontextualized, reworked and carried over from their original context to that of the translator's work. The analysis of *intersemiotic translation models* will, therefore, help the researcher to understand more explicitly the decision-making and strategies adopted by intersemiotic translators.

2.5 Conclusion

In summary, this chapter puts forward a new paradigm of intersemiotic translation, after first questioning the verbum-centred paradigm through a brief overview of examples from the actual filmmaking process. These examples problematize the verbal vs. non-verbal paradigm as an inept mapping tool that cannot fully consider film's prior materials and fully explain the complex mechanism of filmmaking. This prioritises the necessity to radically revisit the past paradigm of intersemiotic translation. To fully consider a film's prior materials, this chapter has established a new framework to explicate the mechanism of film as intersemiotic translation.

To set up the proposed revised pattern, this chapter first examined the basic unit of intersemiotic translation, and has redefined 'text' as the basic unit of intersemiotic translation. The concept of 'text' was elaborated from its linguistics-based definition to a general signification of semiotic communications. This permitted the concept of 'text' to include both linguistic and extralinguistic

phenomena. It replaced 'source text' with 'start text' in order to take into consideration a film's many prior materials as its multiple points of departure.

The newly proposed intersemiotic translation paradigm consists of three types of start text which categorize film's prior materials according to their position in the filmmaking process. These categories are development start texts, pre-production start texts and production start texts. These texts are functionally referred to as intersemiotic translation inspirations, intersemiotic translation blueprints and intersemiotic translation models respectively. Intersemiotic translation inspirations trigger an intersemiotic translation project, whereas intersemiotic translation blueprints, intersemiotic translation models and the finalized translation formulate a triadic relationship which describes the production mechanism of intersemiotic translation projects. It is argued that the translators concretize the blueprint by manipulating intersemiotic translation models. An analysis of intersemiotic translation models in operation will, therefore, be helpful in explaining the translator's meta-textual strategy.

In the subsequent chapters, this proposed paradigm of intersemiotic translation will provide the foundation for an actual case study of intersemiotic translation based on three of Ang Lee's films. Through this paradigm, the prior materials of these films will be exhaustively considered to facilitate a thorough discussion of the translators' decision-making.

It should be noted that this chapter only establishes the basic structure of intersemiotic translation. Having noted that models are closely related to a translator's strategy and generally having considered the function of the models and their position in the filmmaking process, the following questions need to be addressed: How to differentiate these diverse intersemiotic translation models to fully consider their heterogeneity? How to describe these models to explain their trajectory and ontology? In what circumstances are these models selected and employed? These questions will be formally answered in Chapter 3, where a novel system of intersemiotic translation models will be proposed.

Chapter 3 Framework and Research Methodology

The previous chapter proposes a transmission paradigm of intersemiotic translation and sets out one of the basic frameworks for the present research. This chapter focuses on putting forward a theoretical framework and methodology for studying film as intersemiotic translation based on the proposed paradigm.

The chapter consists of two sections. Section 3.1 introduces and explains the theoretical framework which supports the proposition and theorization of the intersemiotic translation models. Section 3.2 proposes the system of intersemiotic translation models as a methodology on the basis of which the research will be conducted.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

In Chapter 2, production start texts are defined as intersemiotic translation models. This chapter will look at intersemiotic translation models and how they function based on two theories, namely, Itmar Even-Zohar's polysystem theory and Rey Chow's theory of cultural translation.

It must be emphasized that neither theory is exclusively focused on 'model'. In Even-Zohar's theory (1997), a 'model' was proposed as a secondary level within the factor of "repertoire" that determines the making and handling of a cultural product. Chow's theory focused on how film may be interpreted as a translation of culture. Both theories were chosen for they can each offer a partial theorization concerning the features of intersemiotic translation models. Even-Zohar's polysytem theory examines and theorizes the concept of 'model' while clarifying its relation to culture. He also positioned 'model' with regard to all the essentail elements in the production of the finalized cultural product. Rey Chow's theory of cultural translation moves from the interlingual aspect to the

intersemiotic aspect of crosscultural communication. In adopting different types of visuality to represent different cultures, her theory draws on an integrated understanding of audio-visual patterns and their relationship to culture, while offering in-depth viewpoints concerning the interrogation of filmmakers' decision-making. To this end, both theories are to be used jointly in the generation of a theory of intersemiotic translation models by helping to explain their function and usage.

For a comprehensive understanding of an *intersemiotic translation model* in the present study, with reference to its theoretical background, and including insights from Even-Zohar and Chow, this section will introduce models by first comparing them to these two related conceptual schemes, before proposing and explicating a novel system of intersemiotic translation models.

3.1.1. Even-Zohar's Polysystem Theory

In the present research, the concept of 'model' follows the conceptual scheme which Even-Zohar introduced in his article 'Factors and Dependencies in Culture: A Revised Outline for Polysystem Culture Research' (1997). Even-Zohar examined "model" as one of two distinct levels within the structure of the "repertoire". He first juxtaposed "individual elements" from "models" according to a scale of exclusivity. Individual elements include single disparate items, which are embedded within clusters of models. However, "individual units may be there not only as abstractions but also as working items for making new strings" (Even-Zohar 1997: 22).

"Models" are defined as "the combination of *elements* + *rules* + the syntagmatic ('temporal') *relations* imposable on the product" (Even-Zohar 1997: 22, italicised in the original text). With these three basic conceptual elements, a model thus functions within the producer's repertoire to tackle a conceptual challenge. Even-Zohar emphasized that "a knowledge of order (sequence, or succession) is therefore an integral part of a model" (1997: 23) to inform the text

producer what to do.

Having affiliated the concept of model within the concept of repertoire, Even-Zohar did not further explain model in any detail beyond stating its internal constituents. His focus was on repertoire as the tool kit of culture, and he considered model as the clusters of individual units through which a repertoire takes on specific forms. It is therefore not the mechanism of model that defines the quality and function of model and the concept of model cannot be understood in isolation, only by its relationship to the systemic structure in which it is embedded, i.e. the repertoire.

"Repertoire" is one of the six constitutive factors involved in any socio-semiotic cultural event which can be shown diagrammatically, as in Figure 3.1.1.1:

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                      INSTITUTION                         │
│                      REPERTOIRE                          │
│   PRODUCER                                    CONSUMER   │
│                        MARKET                            │
│                       PRODUCT                            │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
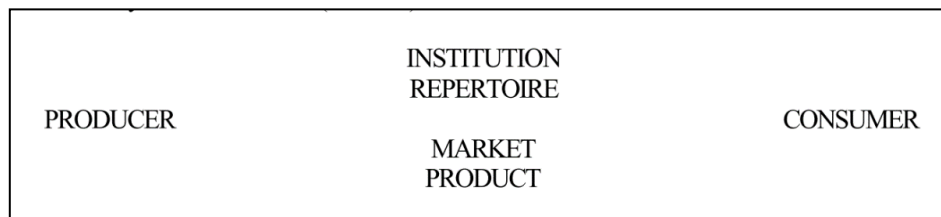
Figure 3.1.1.1 The Constitutive Factors of Semiotic Events (Even-Zohar 1997: 19)

According to Even-Zohar, "repertoire designates the aggregate of rules and materials, which govern both the *making* and *handling*, or production and consumption, of any given product" (Even-Zohar 1997: 20, italicized in the original text). In Even-Zohar's conceptual scheme, model is a component that is subject to the structure of "REPERTOIRE", which in turn generates a PRODUCT, with its usability "constrained, determined, or controlled by some INSTITUTION on the one hand, and a MARKET where such a good can be transmitted on the other" (Even-Zohar 1997: 20, capitalized in the original text).

The concept of repertoire, in Even-Zohar's context, involves systemity and sharedness. It suggests that repertoire is closely connected to the concept of

culture, with culture recognized as "a framework, a sphere which makes it possible to organize social life" and repertoire understood as "where the necessary items for that framework are stored" (ibid.). It also means that a culture will not exist "without a commonly (agreed) shared repertoire" so that a group of people could "communicate and organize their lives in acceptable and meaningful ways to the individual members of the group" (ibid.: 21).

Repertoire is also embedded in heterogeneous socio-semiotic systems, with its features determined by prevailing factors such as the primary institution and the market (ibid.). As the socio-semiotic system is hypothetically heterogeneous, multiple repertoires may function for each possible set of circumstances in society (ibid.). Thus, Even-Zohar also considered the circumstances where "options constitute competing and conflicting repertoires" with the repertoire's state of dominance and periphery determined by its usage in different circumstances, and within different social clusters.

Even-Zohar considered that it is hard to determine the exact person responsible for establishing a specific repertoire. Thus, while he observed that repertoires tend to be "conceived of as spontaneous creations of society" (ibid.: 26). He also considered circumstances where the trajectory of interacting factors between repertoires, and their producers, can be highly predictable when "the more repetitive models used by people" are observed (ibid.: 25). Even-Zohar also considered cases where there are repertoires that are attributed to certain societies, and there is also evidence of individuals who have "initiated, elaborated, and successfully inculcated repertoire innovations" (ibid.: 26).

It is clear that Even-Zohar was more concerned with repertoire than with particular models. He was however, aware that the effects of these multiple repertoires will result in implementing models as their specific components. Even-Zohar therefore, gave consideration to "how much fixedness is required for each single event, or how much leeway is allowed to manoeuvre, depends on the possibility to combine various models." (ibid.: 25). Thus, one studies the repertoire through the specific models that belong to that repertoire. A repertoire

is therefore reworked through intermediation with various models. Accordingly, it is then safe to deduce that a repertoire can itself be recognized as a systemic cluster of models, and may thus define its encompassed models. It is also determined by other factors and systems within the production of semiotic communication. With this relationship now settled, it is understandable that repertoire includes the shared features of its models, and thus the relational interactions of two different repertoires take effect through the relational interactions of two systems of models. One cannot, therefore, discuss a repertoire without discussing its models, and one cannot understand a model without understanding the repertoire in which it is embedded.

Even-Zohar did not examine any particular kind of repertoire, as he proposed that this conceptual scheme could be applied to the process of any semiotic production, under a general sense of socio-cultural context. He did, however, use this scheme to discuss his major research interest, i.e., the position of translated literatures within the literary polysystem (see for instance Even-Zohar 1978, 1990). It is argued here that the scheme can also be particularly useful in the case of film as intersemiotic translation. It can move a researcher's focus away from considering the ST as the main object of study, by relating the translator's work more widely through consideration of translator's models, in order to discuss their textual strategies more efficiently. Even-Zohar's theoretical tool formed the basis for the theories of Cattrysse (1992, 1997a, 1997b, 2014) and Yau (2016), who use this scheme to discuss film adaptation as intersemiotic translation. Their thought-provoking theoretical and methodological approach to the study of film as intersemiotic translation, with regard to their application of the work of Even-Zohar, has been reviewed in Chapter 1.

It is worth noticing that neither Cattrysse nor Yau continued the systematic investigation of filmmaker's models and repertoires. Cattrysse's main focus was on the function of film adaptations in strengthening, or diminishing, film genres. He did, however, briefly mention filmmaker's models, giving examples where a film's audio-visual quality is determined by models that are extracted from other

films (as discussed in section 1.5), although he did not go on to formally define model, or to systematically discuss different types of models. Yau (2016), on the other hand, places film's models under "repertoire", which include genre codes, conventions, and film techniques (2016: 261), but without grouping these varied kinds of models in any systematic order. This may be because Even-Zohar himself did not continue to dig deeper into repertoire by discussing the models within repertoire in any detail.

Even-Zohar discussed with great clarity the function of repertoire and its interrelation with the institution and the market, although, having already established a hierarchical systemic level between models and repertoire, what he did not distinguish particularly well is the heterogeneity of "repertoire" itself, with a detailed categorization of groups of models. If Even-Zohar's polysystem concepts can be traced further within the case of "artistic texts" (Lotman 1977), this detailed categorization may reveal the inner complexity and multi-layered nature of repertoire. A repertoire may be applied to a socio-cultural entity, and may also be subjected to types of behavioural disciplines, such as literature, painting, opera or film, to which repertoire, as a concept, is most widely applied. Models of different repertoires under different disciplines provide different semiotic ways of communicating information. Given its heterogeneity, a specific discipline may be categorized still further into groups or genres within that discipline. For instance, the film system is a heterogeneous system which can be further grouped into genres such as westerns, melodramas or thrillers or styles such as German Expressionism or Italian Neorealism.

Hitherto, it is agreed that groups of models, under different repertoires, form a hierarchical multi-levelled polysystem. Accordingly, Even-Zohar's "repertoire" may be more efficiently discussed if models are systemically grouped so that they are determined not only by culture but also by the semiotic disciplines that are subject to that culture. A novel system of models will be proposed in section 3.2.1 which underpins the research methodology for the current study. This system of models will more efficiently reveal the producer's strategy for communicating

information. This is achieved by carefully examining how the producer manipulates material between codes and conventions by implementing models from different disciplines to actively produce meaning.

At this point, applying Even-Zohar's theory to the present case, it may be said that intersemiotic translation models are "elements + rules + syntagmatic relations" that are imposable on an intersemiotic translation. Intersemiotic translation models govern both the production and consumption of the intersemiotic translation project. An intersemiotic translation model connects to the culture which produces it and the model, in turn, represents some identifiable culturally specific information.

Even-Zohar's polysystem theory serves as a general framework to be applied to socio-semiotic communications. His conceptual scheme, however, did not describe audio-visual phenomenon in particular. How then would one understand the modelling of audio-visual patterns within the framework of translation? How may the intersemiotic translator, using the audio-visual fixtures of the intersemiotic translation models, mediate between different cultures? To this end, Rey Chow's theory of cultural translation, which is firmly based on her case study of fifth-generation Chinese film directors, is particularly useful.

3.1.2 Rey Chow's Theory of Cultural Translation

Rey Chow's theory of cultural translation is mostly derived from the concluding chapter of her influential book *Primitive Passions: Visuality, Sexuality, Ethnography and Contemporary Chinese Cinema* (1995), and considers first the need to broaden translation from written texts, and to pay attention to non-verbal mediums. Chow specifically considered film as a vast transcription service, which, in her context, deals with cultural translation, especially with regard to the co-modified technological image, in the post-colonial, post-modern age (Chow 1995: 182).

The following section focuses specifically on Chow's concern for film to be

understood as a translation between cultures in the post-colonial world, and her theory of cultural translation which goes beyond the nativist approach in other theories of cultural translation. Accordingly, the section will be considered from two aspects: the problem of cultural translation and cultural translation as an alternative to that problem.

3.1.2.1 The Problem of Cultural Translation

According to Chow, the problems facing cultural translation always concern two constantly battling aspects: anthropological deadlock vs. the nativist approach. This is due to the bias of both Western and Eastern epistemology, created by "Western imperialism and colonialism of the past few centuries" (Chow 1995: 176), which, raising the question of "self" and "foreign", "original" and "translation", sabotages cross-cultural communications.

What Chow referred to as "the deadlock of the anthropological situation" (ibid.) is first a result of the "domination of representation" and recognizes the inability of anthropologists to understand "other" cultures as their object of study. Chow observed that the Western anthropologists must insert themselves and their social practices into the "primitive" context of other cultures. Yet the very presence of these anthropologists means that these "other" cultures are changed and displaced forever from their "origins" (ibid.: 177). The origin is destroyed in the sense that, after an anthropological encounter, those who seek to understand the culture, including those that are part of that culture, "have to look up Western source books" written by those anthropologists. Thus, "the methods and practices of anthropology and ethnography have simply served to reinforce and empower colonial administration, and thus to bring about the systematic destruction of these 'other' cultures" (ibid.).

The deadlock of this anthropological situation in the post-colonial world, according to Chow, follows this trend in that "we cannot write/think/talk the non-West in the academy without in some sense anthropologizing it, and yet anthropology and ethnography, atrophied in their epistemological foundations,

remain 'very much still a one-way street'" (ibid.). Paul Bowman elaborated on Chow's "one-way street", describing it as moving the source of authority to Western books and institutions. It also requires the enquirer, from any culture or tradition, to adopt the Western protocols and reading practices involved in the construction of the "original knowledge" (Bowman 2013: 109).

The aggression of Western ethnocentric representation bias has stimulated a nativist response which rejects these representations in order to preserve the "authenticity" of ethnic culture (Chow 1995: 178): likewise, examples can be found in the argument of cultural opacity (see Venuti 1995 and Glissant 1997 as typical examples). One typical example of such a nativist stance concerns the criticism faced by Chinese filmmakers like Zhang Yimou for making movies for Westerners and "selling oriental exoticism to a Western audience" (Chow 1995: 176). Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and *Lust, Caution*, both of which set the film story against a romanticised Chinese cultural background, was bombarded with similar accusations (Chen 2009: 35).

According to Chow, however, such a stance "is not exactly the preservation of the ethnic culture as such but often an unwitting complicity in perpetuating the deadlock of the anthropological situation" (Chow 1995: 178-179). Chow observes that the nativist stance serves as a steady polarization against Euro-American homogenization, that "instead of enabling alternatives to the deadlock, nativist demands of cultural 'fidelity' have great potential of becoming prohibitive deterrents against cultural translation altogether" (ibid.: 179). They hold on to "tradition" without considering the fact that "tradition survives through transmission to be passed on through translation" (Chow 1995: 183)

To this end, Chow proposes cultural translation as an alternative to this deadlock, establishing it as a link between ethnography and translation through visuality, which includes different kinds of filmic representation. This alternative is also based on the fact that the violence of the anthropological "one-way street" was dependent on the asymmetry of power of verbal language: "the languages of the third world are weaker in relation to Western languages" thus they have no

choice but to submit to "forcible transformation in the translation process" (Chow 1995: 178). To this end, the existence of film language gives Chow a chance to contribute to a theory of cultural translation with verbal language being substituted by audio-visual media in the age of mass culture.

3.1.2.2 Film as Cultural Translation

Chow's theory of the cultural translation that is film, involves first a dismantling of "origin" and "alterity" as two deeply biased concepts in translation studies. The first undermines translation as either a betrayal of, or secondary to, the "origin". The latter always dichotomizes the concept of "us" and "other" and thus inevitably stumbles into the old East vs West binarism.

According to Chow, the "origin" may not be the origin at all but is itself the result of translations. Based on Derrida's deconstructionist theory, Chow considers origin as "always a différance -- always already translated" (1995: 193). Since "origin" is already a translation, prioritizing the concept of "original" is itself a blind chasing after illusions. The idea of origin is dismantled even more forcefully under the scope of intersemiotic translation, since in this context, the notion of translation highlights the fact that it is an activity between two kinds of media as two already-mediated data (ibid.). Thus, the 'orginal' is unavailable as it is "lost, cryptic, already heavily mediated, already heavily translated" (ibid.).

The critique of origin was especially targeted at the nativist approach mentioned above, which undermines film as a shallow translation and a betrayer of "tradition", which is considered the core of a culture. Having dismantled the origin of translation, Chow went on to argue that "the word tradition itself, linked in its roots to translation and betrayal, has to do with handing over. Tradition itself is nothing if it is not a transmission. How is tradition to be transmitted, to be passed on, if not through translation" (ibid.: 183)? Based on this critique, Bowman went on to question directly the very construction of "China" or "Chinese culture" as the subject which the nativist approach intends to guard:

"China" is always and already only ever was a discursive and textual construct—an idea, an argument, a set of associations, and so on. Even to the extent that it is a thing, specifically a nation state, this is at once also a textual matter (nations are written into existence by—and as—documents, as Chow has pointed out), and moreover something that is in no way divorced from the attending discursive textual constructs of ideology—the many different kinds of visual, sonic and narrative of celebration of the Chinese nation.

<div style="text-align: right">(Bowman 2013: 114)</div>

This deconstruction of origin casts Chow's argument of translation as re-construction, which will be visited later in this chapter.

To dismantle alterity requires a dismantling of the disparity between West and the rest. This, however, is only possible if "coevalness of culture" is thoroughly considered: the primitive that is Europe's other is not of another time but is "West's contemporary" (Chow 1995: 194). This coevalness is now exhibited more thoroughly, following the age of digitalization and the wide accessibility of mass media, e.g., in Chow's case, film. Chow observes that "the mass culture of our media, into which even the most 'primitive' societies have been thrown, makes this coevalness ineluctable" (ibid.). Bowman elaborates more thoroughly on this point, argueing that the vast traffic in global popular cultural encounters (for example, the trans-nationalism of film) means that, "even if what the world has seen over the past centuries can be described as 'Westernization,' it is still the case that cultures, east and west, north and south, are more and more 'coeval' – arising and developing together" (Bowman 2013: 116).

Coevalness, in Chow's context, does not mean an idealized peaceful co-existence among cultures. It means considering "other" cultures as equally problematized by the co-temporality of power structures "that mutually support and reinforce the exploitation of underprivileged social groups, nonhuman life

forms, and ecological resources *throughout the world*" (1995: 196, italicized in the original text). Thus, Chow concludes that "genuine cultural translation is possible only when we move beyond the seemingly infinite but actually reductive permutations of the two terms – East and West, original and translation – and instead see both as full, materialist, and more likely equally corrupt, equally decadent participants in contemporary world culture" (ibid.).

Moving beyond "origin" and "alterity", Chow asks two questions to theorize the cultural translation that is film: "Can we theorize translation between cultures without somehow valorizing some 'original'? Can we theorize translation between cultures in a manner that does not implicitly turn translation into an interpretation towards depth, toward 'profound meaning'" (ibid.: 193)? Answering these questions requires a switch from deeply entrenched linguistic-centred translations, to intersemiotic translations which are more than words and which function differently and more efficiently than intralingual or interlingual translation. This reveals that "the translation between cultures is never West translating East or East translating West in terms of verbal languages alone but rather a process that encompasses an entire range of activities, including the change from tradition to modernity, from literature to visuality, from elite scholastic culture to mass culture, from the native to the foreign and back, and so forth" (ibid.: 191). It may be understood that a switch of attention from verbal to non-verbal is the centre of Chow's theory. Thus, what is highlighted in Chow's cultural translation is that attention should be extended beyond the verbal and literary languages to the medium of film itself and to the relations between films and other signifying practices.

At this point, the cultural translation that is film offers an alternative to the above-mentioned deadlock in the following two ways:

Firstly, the fact that different media interact in different ways across national and international contexts (Chow 1995: 197) weakens the foundation of Westernization, i.e., their verbal language. Through the shift of verbal to non-verbal, one dominant mode of signification no longer exists and different social

groups are able to deploy different modes of signification. Under this premise, film, as a translation that is intersemiotic in nature, involves histories and populations hitherto excluded by the restricted sense of literacy, and challenges the class hierarchies long established by such literacy in societies both West and East (Chow 1998: 174).

Secondly, the cultural translation that is film focuses not on reading but on visual perception, based on its wide transmissibility and acceptability. On this basis, Chow proposed that the previously ethnographized "weak" cultures now have the opportunity to actively ethnographize themselves in different ways and by using different media (Chow 1995: 180). How they then want to show themselves, forms the bulk of Chow's theory of cultural translation.

What is to be perceived as the key non-verbal quality of film is the visuality, as the primary event of cross-cultural translation, which displays the culture through what Chow terms as its "to-be-looked-at-ness". The term "to-be-looked-at-ness" is taken from Laura Mulvey's feminist arguments about vision and looking in her article 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' (1985). Mulvey's feminist concern describes the gender inequality that women are to be more looked at by men than the other way around (ibid.: 314). Chow takes this term, to apply it to the asymmetry of power between cultures. Chow, however, moves further in arguing that: "the state of being looked at not only is built into the way non-Western cultures are viewed by Western ones; more significantly it is part of the *active* manner in which such cultures represent – ethnographize themselves" (1995: 180, italicized in the original text). In this context, Chow defines "to-be-looked-at-ness" as "the visuality that once defined the 'object' status of the ethnographized culture and that now becomes a predominant aspect of that culture's self-representation" (ibid.). Through films, the weak cultures purposely expose themselves to the western gaze, and impose the way they are to be looked at or even "construct" themselves (ibid.). Through these self-representations, film actively presents them as subjects. Thus, "being-looked-at-ness, rather than the act of looking, constitutes the primary event in cross-cultural representation"

(ibid.).

Drawing on Thomas Elsaesser's theorization of New German Cinema as cultural translation, Chow's cultural translation that is film, with "to-be-looked-at-ness" as its core concern, can be interpreted in several senses.

Firstly, translation as inscription: "a generation, a nation and a culture are being translated or permuted into the medium of film" (Chow 1995: 182). As Elsaesser has suggested, the New German cinema is an attempt to "gather and make up the memory to *translate them, from their many perishable supports in people's minds to the one medium that, after all, promises paradoxically to be the most permanent: the cinema*" (Elsaesser, cited in Chow 1995: 181, italicized by Chow). This draws on film's capacity as a permanent visual archive, to store cultural activities. Chow explains more explicitly that film permeates the reality by its mechanical apparatus and "the mechanically reproduced image has brought about a perception of the world as an infinite collection of objects and people permanently on display in their humdrum existence" (Chow 1998:174).

Secondly, translation as transformation of tradition and change between media: "a culture oriented around the written text is in the process of transition and of being translated into one dominated by the image" (Chow 1995: 182). This describes the significance of the intersemiotic shift, which alters not only the way of perceiving information, but also of providing an alternative to the anthropological deadlock. This brings about Chow's concern of translation between cultures, based on "film's accessibility which would engage audiences in ways independent of their linguistic and cultural specificities" (Chow 1998: 174). Thus, Chow considers film as a vast transcription service: it transcribes the objects of a culture into a permanently archived widely accessible mechanism.

At this point, Chow's theory of cultural translation, as Bowman (2013: 111) concludes, has two intertwined positions: firstly, different forms of representation are different kinds of "translation" from one register to another, following different kinds of protocols. Secondly, these representations all feed into the way in which groups are seen. All types of perceptions have effects on perceptions

and apperceptions (self-perceptions). In Chow's case of Mainland Chinese directors, film is seen as an ideal medium to translate the past as what is bygone through an iconoclastic construction of the culture, and at the same time show the culture as vividly moving images for the spectators to perceive. It is through these means that film translates culture and permits cultures to be widely perceived.

In line with this concern, Chow suggests that "cultural translation needs to be rethought as the co-temporal exchange and contention between different social groups deploying different sign systems that may not be synthesizable to one particular model of language or representation" (Chow 1995: 197). This clearly shows that the age of media communications presents multiple forms of signifying practices as opposed to verbal linguistic signs. This connects two distinct features of film as the translation medium i.e., "transmissibility" and "accessibility", concepts which Chow draws from Walter Benjamin's essay 'The Task of the Translator' (1968).

In Chow's examination, "transmissibility is that aspect of a work which, unlike the weight of philosophical depth and interiority, is literal, transparent, and thus capable of offering itself to a popular naïve handling" (1995: 199), whereas "accessibility" defines the translation's immediacy of perception, permitted by its literalness and transparency (ibid.). Chow takes Benjamin's notion of "literal" (Benjamin 1968: 79) to mean "that which is superficial, crude or naïve" (Chow 1995: 186). Thus, Chow thinks the precise sense of "literalness" means that "a real translation is not only that which translates word by word but also that which translates literally, depthlessly, naively" (ibid.). "Literalness" connects with Chow's key notion of "putting together" and she argues that Benjamin indicates that "translation is primarily a process of *putting together*" (Chow 1995: 185, italicized in the original text). According to Chow, the audio-visual film translates culture precisely through this "literalness" – a transparent audio-visual "putting together". Thus, rather than a properly anchored "truth," "literalness signifies mobility, proximity, and approximation" (ibid.: 200). In the case of film, where the language is audio-visual, what is "literal" is what acquires a "transparency"

that allows the original/content to be transmitted and translated (ibid.). In its naïve, crude, and literal modes, popular and mass culture is a supplement to truth, a tactic for passing something on (ibid.).

This transparency makes the encounter between cultures a fluid and open-ended experience which shows the world a "fable", that is, versions of stories that need to be interpreted (ibid.). In other words, these stories are themselves realties that are given life through film to present the interpretations (ibid.). To Chow, these "fables" are neither real nor true, but rather audio-visual constructions that show "how a culture is 'originally' put together" (ibid.: 198). This transparent "putting together" makes the cultural translation that is film capable of bringing what Benjamin referred to as "an active force of life" (Benjamin 1968: 79) – something that is hidden in the origin that can only be liberated through translation.

To Chow, film as cultural translation brings "an active force of life" in two respects:

Firstly, film makes a culture (self-)evident by an act of translation (Chow 1995: 198). Multimedia communications like film enable one to visually see how a culture, as itself a heavily mediated constructed origin, is put together. In Chow's case, the films directed by Chinese fifth-generation directors clearly followed this path, and by rendering the oppressive customs, and the dehumanizing rituals of feudal China, they make evident how a culture is constructed in all its cruelty. Through a literal construct, filmic representation makes it possible for one to see one's own culture as "foreign bodies" (ibid.: 199).

Secondly, film enables an act of transmission. A film, when put on screen, enables the audience to experience a culture, while enabling the culture to circulate across time and space. It enables whoever perceives it to not only take on the role of the inheritors of the culture, as visual construction, but also as transmitters of that culture by spreading the culture's visual images. In Chow's case, the visible Chinese tradition is visually perceived by the Chinese audience and whatever they perceive on screen, they experience as "a passing-on" of

culture (ibid.).

Chow does not deny that film, as translation, involves a kind of sacrifice for the sake of transmissivity, and that this sacrifice might consist of reducing a culture to a superficial audio-visual representation of a "putting together" of "naïve symbols". However, it is these naïve symbols that impinge on the mind of the global audiences as "unforgettable ethnic images" imprinted by the filmmakers as translators (ibid.: 202). Thus, Chow concludes that if film as a cultural translation is considered as betrayal, using (audio-)visual symbols as fabling of the culture, "the translator pays their debt by bringing fame to that culture" (ibid.). The fame is enabled through transmissibility and accessibility which ensure that a culture can be translated while gaining global visibility. This fame is the culture's "afterlife", through which the culture survives and thrives. This leads Chow to the question, "A faithlessness that gives the beloved life – is that not … faithfulness itself" (ibid.)?

It is argued here that what Chow says about film may be applied to other audio-visual phenomena. Unlike written texts, these audio-visual phenomena offer a literal, transparent and more accessible way of representing a culture. This may apply not only to the specific situations of third world cultures self-translating to negotiate visibility with first world cultures. Rather it applies to all cultures which, through audio-visual texts, self-translate "to be looked at" interculturally. Under this premise, Chow's theory of cultural translation can be of help especially in explaining the relationship between any intersemiotic translation models and their embedded cultures, i.e., between the audio-visual patterns and the cultures that they self-represent.

Applying Chow's theory to the present research, intersemiotic translation models are themselves translations of cultures. They translate their embedded culture through transparent audio-visual constructions for the cultures "to-be-looked-at" by members of different cultural groups. Being transparent (easy to understand) and literal (open to approximation), intersemiotic translation models are capable of translating culture simply through an audio-visual putting together

of visual components and features. Thus, audio-visual patterns that are represented in the intersemiotic translation models are not merely results of that culture's cultivation, but are rather audio-visual constructions that are adopted by members of that cultural group to self-translate their own culture. Culture, in the multimedia age, is an audio-visual construct which spreads transparent images. These audio-visual constructs are to be refered to as "fables" – interpretations of the world.

At this point, it can be said that each intersemiotic translation model is seen to be related to a culture and is signified both as a cultural lens of meaning-making and as a spectacle to represent the culture itself. What needs to be examined further is how to identify and categorize different groups of intersemiotic translation models. It is to this end, that the following novel system of intersemiotic translation models is proposed.

3.2 Methodology

Based on the above-mentioned theoretical framework, this section puts forward a novel system of intersemiotic translation models as the key underpinning methodology of the present study. For the sake of concision, from this section onwards, the term 'intersemiotic translation' is abbreviated as IST.

The system of intersemiotic translation models is proposed partly based on the above-mentioned theoretical framework. The conception of 'model' is based on Even-Zohar polysystem theory whereas the dichotomy of semiotic IST models is inspired by Rey Chow's theory of cultural translation. The identification of 'home' and 'foreign' draw on interlingual translation framework with special reference to the concept of "original" and "translation" by the translation theory of Walter Benjamin.

The development of IST models is also inspired partly by shot-by-shot analysis. Repetive audio-visual patterns can be discovered by collecting primary

data and then be recognized as intersemiotic translation models and categorized carefully according to its cultural background and mode of signifying practice. The geneology of these patterns can be found in earlier films which can be identified either through analytical shot-by-shot analysis or through secondary sources (see section 0.2).

3.2.1 The System of IST Models

This section proposes a novel system of IST models that are shown diagrammatically in Figure 3.2.1.1. Applying what Stuart Hall says about "systems of representation", the IST models are to be regarded as 'systems' because they consist "not of individual concepts, but of different ways of organizing, clustering, arranging and classifying concepts, and of establishing complex relations between them" (1997: 17).
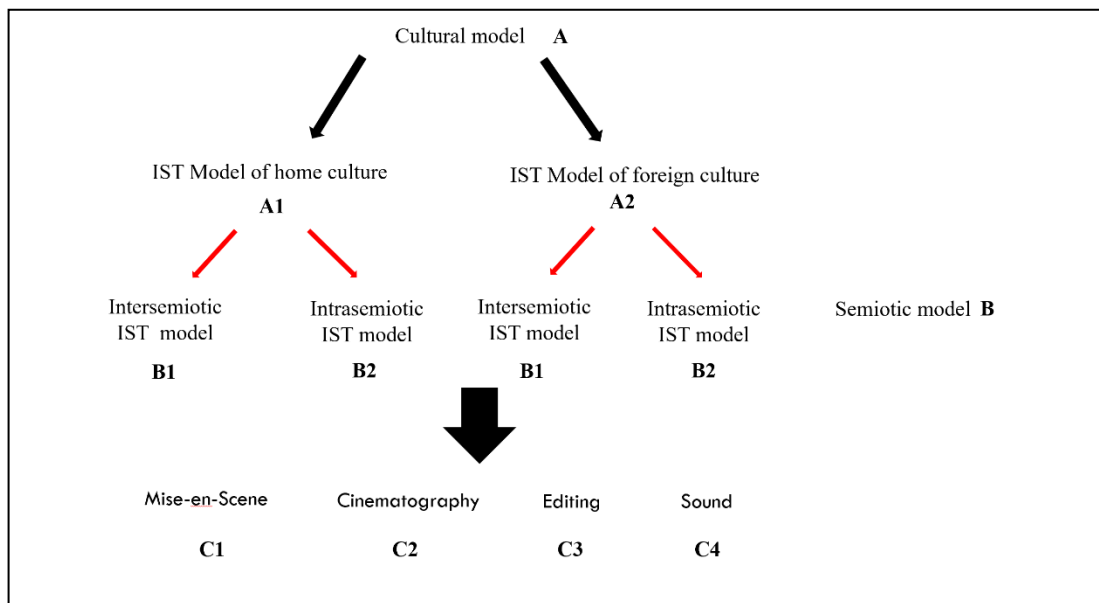

Figure 3.2.1.1 Diagram of a system of IST models

The system combines two hierarchized levels of the cultural model (A) and semiotic model (B) with the channels of employment (C). The following section will introduce the key elements in this system. This forms the basic methodology

underpinning the present study.

3.2.1.1 First Level – Cultural level

The proposed system of IST models comprises two hierarchized levels. The first level of the system is the cultural model (see Figure 3.2.1.1.1). It is proposed as an arch-model that is subjected to the nationality or locale of the translator.
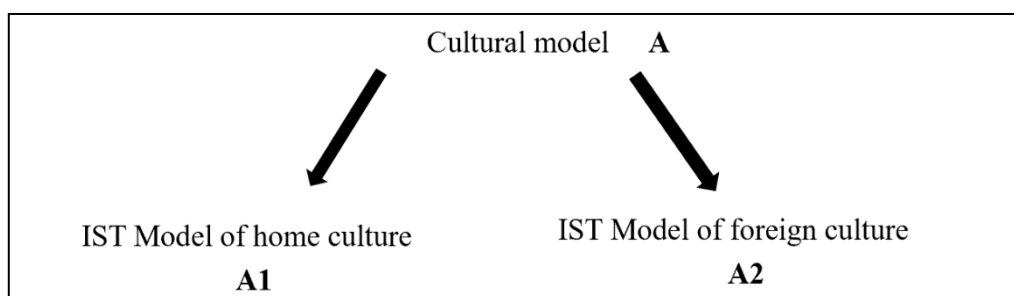
Figure 3.2.1.1.1 Cultural model

The proposed term 'culture models' is based on Even-Zohar's conceptual scheme where the notion of model is affiliated to a cultural repertoire. 'Cultural repertoire' is observed in the following way: "If we view culture as a framework, a sphere, which makes it possible to organize social life, then the repertoire in culture, or *of* culture, is where the necessary items for that framework are stored" (Even-Zohar 1997: 22, italicized in the original text).

In this context, the cultural model in question is the cultural model for an intersemiotic translator who recognizes it as his/her model and who is supposedly cultivated within a cultural community. Within the proposed system of intersemiotic translation models, cultural models also refer specifically to the artistic non-verbal start texts which, according to Chow, represent or translate a culture through audio-visual "constructedness of the world" (1995: 201). This means the audio-visual constructions presented in these models are capable of translating the embedded culture "literally, depthlessly and naively" (ibid.: 186). Thus, these "transparent" cultural models are to be understood also as fables, the

construction of which represents interpretations of the world. As a cultural model, these interpretations are shared by that community. According to Stuart Hall's theoretical model, discursive practices (or texts) are culture-bound behaviours which are formulated by formal, and informal, cultural patterns which identify the agreed values. Thus, the audio-visual pattern represented in these models also functions as a culturally unique lens to make sense of the world.

According to Stuart Hall, culture can be defined as "the systems of shared meanings which people who belong to the same community, group, or nation, use to help them interpret and make sense of the world" (1995: 176). Hall's definition of culture may be useful in this context because it may be generally applied to three hierarchized levels of collectivity which are all scales of human communities. Nation, in Hall's observation, encompasses "group" and "community". In the present study, Hall's concept is chosen to frame the scale of culture, through groups of people, on the level of national locale. It is used here because this chapter intends to discuss the role of mediation and communication between groups of people that are distinctly identified according to "a sociable, populist and traditionary way of life, characterised by a quality that pervades everything and makes a person feel rooted or at home" (Hartman 1997: 211). This chapter therefore considers culture on a 'nation-scale' which is the most collective level of Hall's definition of culture.

This applies to the case of translation where translators, as mediators between cultures, are firstly human beings that are cultivated by their home culture. According to Sergey Tyulenev, culture in the case of translation is defined as "behavioural patterns acquired through socialisation into a particular human collectivity" which is "usually associated with larger groups extended in space and time, such as nations or nation-states as geographical, historical and political units or to people within such units" (2014: 23). Accordingly, Tyulenev recognized translators as culturalised "human beings representing a particular national culture" (ibid.: 26).

At this point, it is necessary to summarize the concept of cultural model.

Based on the theories of Even-Zohar and Rey Chow, by categorizing the models under the term "culture", IST models are regarded as audio-visual constructions which, through their "elements + rules + syntagmatic relations", functions both as a cultural lens to interpret the world and as fables "to be looked at" as images of that culture. Following Tyulenev's definition of translator, and Hall's definition of culture, culture is framed on a national scale. Thus, the translator's cultural model in this context is geographically categorized according to the IST model's national origin.

The IST models are dichotomized into the models of *home* culture (A1) and the models of *foreign* culture (A2). What is defined as "home" and "foreign" is identified according to the national origin of the translator. Accordingly, a translator's home models refer to the models that originate from the translator's national origin while a translator's foreign models refer to the models which belong to another culture that is different from the translator's national culture. A clear example would be that in Ang Lee's case the compositional technique of a Chinese painting is a home model whereas the camera movement technique of a French film is a foreign model. Presumably, all models, like Mikhail Iampolski's intertexts, "bind a text to a culture, with culture functioning as an interpretive, explanatory, and logic-generating mechanism" (1998: 247). Examining the translator's models, therefore, helps to reveal how the translator mediates between cultures.

It should be stressed that rather than emphasizing how an IST model belongs to a specific culture, one needs to understand IST models as self-representations of their affiliated cultures. This applies to Chow's theory of cultural translation in that "to-be-looked-at-ness" is the core concern for cross-cultural translation. Elaborating Chow's theoretical context of the term, a culture can be translated with audio-visual patterns represented in IST models because cultures, whether of East or West, 'third world' or 'first world', have become "infinitely visualizable surfaces" (Chow 2011: 560) as words have been substituted by visuals.

3.2.1.1.2 Home and Foreign

In the present context, "home" and "foreign" are to be interpreted according to the origin and translation dichotomy proposed by Walter Benjamin (1968). What Benjamin referred to as "translation" may be referred to as 'foreign', and what he referred to as "origin" may be referred to as 'home'.

If text is to be broadened as "any combination of sensory signs carrying communicative intention" (Gottlieb 2007: 3) (as discussed in Section 2.2), and if language is to be understood as signifying practice (Hall 1997: 61), then IST models must be understood as exemplary language patterns, i.e., patterns of signification that bear the code of a specific culture. In which case, 'foreign' refers to 'foreign language'— the audio-visual pattern as signifying practice coded by another culture. 'Home' refers to the translator's mother tongue, the 'home language'— the signifying practices coded by the translator's own culture. In these cases, language pattern is represented by semiotic pattern in audio-visual forms that are related to culture. In this sense, a translator's appropriation of model is the way in which he/she uses languages, either his/her mother tongue or a foreign language.

As stated earlier in Section 3.2.1.1, 'home' and 'foreign' are identified on a national scale. It should be emphasized in this section that 'nation' is introduced here as a cultural concept with no political indications. Unlike Benedict Anderson's definition of nation: "an imagined political community as both inherently limited and sovereign" (1991: 6), in this context, 'nation' indicates the spatial difference of culture but does not limit the concept of culture to a politically recognized sovereign state. 'Nation' in the present study is conceived according to Anthony Smith's definition, as "a type of identity whose meaning and priority is presupposed by [a given] form of culture" (Smith 1991: 91-92). Accordingly, the form of a national culture builds up the identity of its members.

What is referred to as "national shared culture" recognizes that national culture is conceived as a system of mutual understanding, which combines a

nation's members over time and space. Likewise, Gregory Jusdanis observes that "nations are indeed modern and manufactured, but they have been built on an old, often centuries-old foundation" (2001: 36). Jusdanis concluded that "the formation of nations incorporates common stories and symbols, despite the fact that the idea of shared biological ancestry is imaginary" (ibid.: 37). Nation is a historically built-up identity of its members, through close interactions between communities and groups. The history of national members' interactions is based on cultural phenomena such as "language, religion, shared texts, sentiments, symbols and myth" (ibid.), as acquired behavioural patterns practised by its members through historical development and shared experiences.

Looking on the notion of 'nation' as a cultural concept, however, indicates that national models may radiate influence beyond their politically recognized territories. As Chris Berry and Mary Farquhar have suggested, culture or ethnicity are frequently deployed as the primary criteria to define nation rather than territorial boundaries (2006: 7). A typical example is "Greater China" (Uhalley 1994), with "China" recognized as a cultural embodiment of shared values which encompasses the politically diverse and administratively disputable sphere of Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan.

What also needs to be emphasized, in the context of present research, is that the term 'cultural models' is not proposed as suggesting a homogenous conglomeration under a collective national identity, rather it implies, as explained above, the fact that a national culture functions as a polysystem accommodating heterogeneous components. Thus, the term stands for a heterogeneity of components under the geographical sphere of a cultural nation, a compound which can be identified as a cultural polysystem. The heterogeneous components can each be considered as systems that constitute a national cultural polysystem. In this way, the possible constituents of this polysystem, such as IST models originating from a regional school, or having an ethnic feature, can be identified within the realm of a heterogeneous cultural nation with full consideration of their idiosyncratic and unique traditions.

3.2.1.2 Second Level - Semiotic Level

The lower level of the system is the semiotic model (B) (see Figure 3.2.1.2.1) which is differentiated by what Chow refers to as "modes of signification" (1995: 188). This sub-system is divided into the intersemiotic IST model (B1), and the intrasemiotic IST model (B2). The two models are dichotomized regarding the semiotic system of the object of study. As the object of study in this chapter is the film system, intrasemiotic IST models refer to the audio-visual patterns from within the filmic system whereas intersemiotic IST models refer to those outside the filmic system (such as painting, opera and other non-verbal art forms). For instance, King Hu's bamboo forest setting in the film *A Touch of Zen* serves as an intrasemiotic model for Lee's bamboo fighting sequence in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. To juxtapose, the light colour treatment style of Chinese ink-wash paintings serves as an intersemiotic model for Lee's colour grading in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.
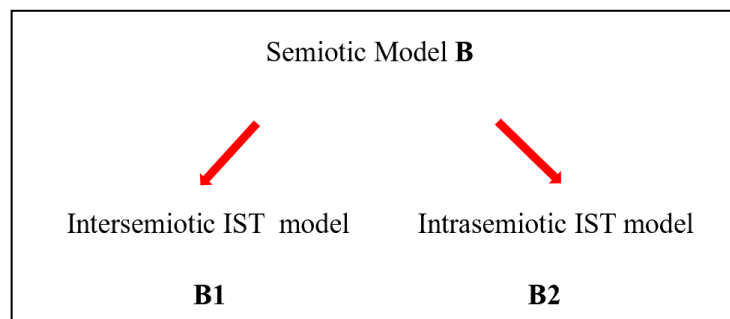
Figure 3.2.1.2.1 Semiotic model

It should be emphasized that a semiotic model is always affiliated to a cultural model, and that the system of semiotic models is to be regarded only as a subsystem within the system of cultural models. This means that a semiotic model is either a semiotic model of home culture or a semiotic model of foreign culture (see Figure 3.2.1.1.1). It might be argued that there is no cultural model (A) that does not take specific semiotic forms (B) and there is no semiotic model (B) that is detached from its cultural roots (A). For instance, when speaking of

ink-wash painting as an intrasemiotic model of Lee's translation in the case of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, one cannot analyse ink-wash painting without considering its genealogy in the Chinese culture. In this case, the model of ink-wash painting, as Lee's intersemiotic IST model, is culturally affiliated to the system of Lee's home cultural model that is Chinese, whereas the Chinese cultural model takes specific semiotic forms in the Chinese ink-wash paintings.

An IST model is thus always the result of a cross-level combination between the level of cultural models and the level of semiotic models. The cross-level combination categorizes an IST model by specifying both the hierarchy of its cultural locale and its semiotic nature. This cross-level connection results in the following four types of IST models:

1. Home intersemiotic models (A1B1): non-filmic audio-visual patterns which are realized within the translator's home culture. For instance, visual treatment of Chinese ink-wash paintings is in this context an A1B1 model.

2. Home intrasemiotic models (A1B2): filmic audio-visual patterns are realized within the translator's home culture. For instance, choreography treatment from a Chinese martial art film is in this context an A1B2 model.

3. Foreign intersemiotic models (A2B1): non-filmic audio-visual patterns which are realized within a different culture. For instance, the visual style from Indian composite paintings is in this context an A2B1 model.

4. Foreign intrasemiotic models (A2B2): filmic audio-visual patterns which are realized within a different culture. For instance, camera movement technique from an American Western film is in this context an A2B2 model.

The four forms of model identified may also be a rudimentary unit for more complex forms of combination. They are the audio-visual patterns resulting from cross-semiotic combination in the polysystem of IST models. There are cases where a translator may use two models to support his translation of a ST segment.

In this circumstance, the combinations can be either intracultural or intercultural.

Intracultural combinations take two forms: A1B1 models+A1B2 models or A2B1 models+A2B2 models. These forms of combination occur where the translator uses two kinds of visual solution that are each derived from different art forms, and affiliated to the same culture. For instance, Lee's bamboo forest sequence in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* uses both King Hu's bamboo forest setting in *A Touch of Zen* (A1B1) and the picture composition technique from Chinese ink-wash paintings (A1B2).

Comparatively, intercultural combinations can result in more complex forms: A1B1+A2B1, A1B1+A2B2, A1B2+A2B1, A1B2+A2B2. These forms of combination take into account the case where the translator uses two kinds of audio-visual solution that are each derived from different art forms affiliated to diverse cultures. For instance, Lee's outer-city hunting sequence in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* uses background designs from traditional Chinese art forms such as the Peking opera and Chinese cross-talk (A1B1), and the long take technique which is frequently used in Hollywood films (A2B2). The intercultural combination may be considered as a translator's innovation of a translation model, by employing culturally diverse representation forms which remediates each other.

Each of these identified models, and their combinations, will be analysed in greater detail in the following chapters of this thesis.

3.2.1.3 Third Level – Channels of Employment

Mise-en-Scène	Cinematography	Editing	Sound
C1	C2	C3	C4

Figure 3.2.1.3.1 Channels of employment

The lowest level, Level C, encompasses the representation channels of the

intersemiotic translation (see Figure 3.2.1.3.1). This level juxtaposes four channels of film language. It is through these channels that a film, as an intersemiotic translation, conveys transmitted start text information.

Level C includes four big channels of the filmic representation, namely, mise-en-scène (C1), cinematography (C2), editing (C3) and sound (C4). These channels are differentiated by David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson in their book *Film Art: An Introduction* (2004), which accommodates all parameters of film language. Apart from editing, the other three channels can each be differentiated into its specific constituent aspects (see Figure 3.2.1.3.2).

Mise-en-Scène C1				Cinematography C2			Editing C3	Sound C4	
Setting	Costume and Make up	Lighting	Staging	Photography	Framing	Duration		Acoustic Sound	Music

Figure 3.2.1.3.2 Constituent aspects of the four channels of employment

'Mise-en-scène' (C1) originally means "putting into the scene" in French and was used as a term in film studies "to signify the director's control over what appears in the film frame" (Bordwell & Thompson 2004: 176). According to Bordwell and Thompson, the channel of mise-en-scène includes four general areas, namely, setting, costume and make-up, lighting and staging (Bordwell & Thompson 2004: 176-227). 'Cinematography' (C2) describes how mise-en-scène is filmed, ie, how an event is shot (Bordwell & Thompson 2004: 229). Cinematography involves three general aspects, namely photography, framing and duration. The photography aspect describes how the filmmaker adopts speeds of motion (slow motion, comic speed or freeze frame) and perspectives (lens, depth of field and focus) (ibid.: 229-252). The framing aspect describes dimensions of shape, the use of space, the angle, level height and distancing of framing and the mobility of framing (ibid.: 252-293). The duration aspect describes the length of the shot, i.e., how long the camera will be rolling before it stops (ibid.: 284-293). Sound describes all the audio elements of film. Sound in

the present study is divided into acoustic sound and music (ibid.: 347-388).

It is also through the channels of mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing and sound that the IST models employed mediate specific effects. Each IST model is purposefully employed to facilitate effects through a specific representation channel. For instance, the choreography of Hong Kong martial arts films is used by Lee as an A1B2 model of the aspect of staging in the channel of mise-en-scène (C1). In this case, the mechanism of the A1B2 model takes effect on channel C1 as one of the four general representation channels of the TT film system. An IST model may also be employed to support the intersemiotic translation on multiple channels. For instance, the Chinese painting technique of emphasising negative space is used by Lee as an A1B1 model for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* in translating messages through the channel of mise-en-scène (C1) and cinematography (C2). Level C helps the researcher to analyse the functional purpose of a model employment by identifying the concrete results of the employment that are shown respectively on each channel of the TT film system.

3.2.1.4 Function of the Diagrammatic System

The system of IST models recognizes three conceptual levels, i.e., culture, semiotic and representational channels. As a methodology, the system of IST models may be efficient in three ways.

Firstly, the system may urge a researcher to regard IST as a translation behaviour that is determined, or influenced, by models. Rather than metaphorically analysing the translation solution alone, this system may help researchers to consider the translation solution's intertextual connection with the origin of the modelling audio-visual patterns.

Secondly, the basic concepts, the affiliations and interconnections between the concepts are clearly and categorically mapped in this system. It conceptualizes the IST models as a system where each IST model is to be located according to its cultural roots and semiotic nature. Through this system, a researcher may identify and categorize the translator's model efficiently into its

cultural locale and art forms.

Thirdly, having mapped out a model's cultural and semiotic background, a researcher may be able to systematically discuss the translator's appropriation of this model. Thus, the system may encourage researchers not only to engage communication devices in and out of the filmic system, but also to connect the translator's employment of these devices with all kinds of cultural phenomena.

It should be emphasized that system of intersemiotic models is a system for translators to manipulate. Unlike norms, the translator may rework or appropriate the models for his purpose. They may twist a genre convention by subverting a home IST model through a foreign IST model. They may also introduce a foreign IST model to a home cultural narrative by appropriating that foreign IST model to fit with a home cultural context. The system does not, therefore, merely map out a static position for each IST model. Rather, it functions as a starting point to locate and identify an IST model employed, while emphasizing that the translator's employment of it is simultaneously an appropriation. Consequently, the final model employment in IST is always a mediation of diverse cultural IST models which reveals the dynamic nature of the system of intersemiotic translation models itself.

This system serves as the framework for the next three chapters, where examples of Lee's sequential translations are presented. The following case studies will exemplify how these systems can be put to use.

Chapter 4 Home Intersemiotic Translation Models (A1 IST Models)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses how an intersemiotic translator translates by employing his/her home IST models. A translator's home IST models represent audio-visual patterns that belong to the translator's 'mother tongue'. They represent "elements + rules + syntagmatic relations" (Even-Zohar 1997: 22) that translators, as well as members of their culture, use to "interpret the world meaningfully" (Hall 1997: 17). These IST models represent unique and distinct audio-visual features of a translator's own culture. A translator's appropriation of IST models from their home culture may, therefore, be understood as a phenomenon akin to the translator 'speaking' their own native 'language'.

Home IST models embody the home cultural "code" (ibid.: 21). The home cultural models correlate to the making of an IST project. In this case, home cultural models concern the cases where intersemiotic translators make meta-textual choices based on their 'language' background. These cultural codes represent the dominant poetics which must inevitably govern how the home cultured translator interprets written information from the IST blueprints. These codes establish "elements, rules and syntagmatic relationships" which set up a "signified-signifying" relationship that fits into the translator's "cultural scripts" (Lefevere 1992: 89). For instance, the emphasis on negative space in Chinese ink-wash painting composition fits into the culturally held philosophy, or cultural script, that "humanity has to give way to nature"[6]. This mode of composition is adopted as one of Ang Lee's home IST models, because Lee shares this feeling for the human-landscape relationship and adopts it in his own cultural scripts. By employing a home IST model, an IST translator introduces their own cultural code that is then embodied in the IST model. Such a cultural code can be seen as

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[6] Source: The interview entitled 'Ang Lee on King Hu', published on 31 Oct 2017, retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C86B5_lPOX0.

a lens through which they re-construct the world audio-visually.

Home IST models represent the whole repertoire of the translator's home culture, which then "governs the production and consumption" (Even-Zohar 1997: 20) of an IST project. In this case, the interrelationship between the home cultural models of the translator must be balanced against the acceptance of the groups of potential audiences who accept, or buy into, the audio-visual patterns represented in these models. As home IST models are patterns shared by members of the translator's home culture, a translator's employment of these IST models must also be understood as a decision-making process that not only concerns his/her own creativity but also depends on acceptance on the part of the audience who are familiar with his/her home audio-visual patterns.

Accordingly, the employment of home IST models may be seen as an effort to appeal for acceptance from members of the translator's home culture, and an appeal for acceptance of his home culture by audiences from other cultures. For instance, the audio-visual patterns of Chinese painting and calligraphy are rooted in the cultural awareness of Chinese audiences. This presumption, however, makes suppositions about the wider target audiences. For, in many cases, home IST models have established an identity of their own which has become well-recognized inter-culturally. For instance, the audio-visual patterns of Hong Kong martial arts films appeal not only to pan-Chinese audiences, but also to audiences from Euro-American cultural backgrounds, where these films have also successfully found a market and recognition (See Bordwell 2000a). In this case, Rey Chow's concept of "to-be-looked-at-ness" (1995: 180) explains the usage of home IST models as the intersemiotic translator's self-representation of their home culture by rendering the models' recognizable audio-visual patterns into the translation. The "to-be-looked-at-ness" of the home models is therefore not only created to represent the way the translators see their own culture, but also how they expect their own culture to be recognized by audiences from both inside and outside their home culture.

This chapter discusses the situations where an intersemiotic translator translates through their employment of their home IST models, based on case studies of excerpts from Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. In this chapter, home IST models are exemplified by Chinese audio-visual patterns, since Lee recognizes his Chinese heritage as his cultural upbringing and an

important part of his personal identity (Berry 2016: 54). He commented on this upbringing, saying that he responded particularly to the function of signifying pratices in Chinese culture – "the story-telling from our parents and family elders, books, pictures and films" (Zhang 2013: 442, my translation). He also remarked that he considers such practices to be 'Chinese aesthetics' that he considered "has influenced him through his childhood memories as a traditional Chinese way of communicating emotions" (ibid.:444, my translation). It is then safe to identify that Chinese audio-visual patterns are, to him, as home IST models.

According to Douglas Wilkerson: "When discussing [Chinese] visual systems, the tendency is to point to those films which have most successfully integrated the new technology with the style of visual art which appears to be most distinct from that of the West, and therefore most distinctively Chinese" (2008: 41). Wilkerson's comment may be used to describe the criteria for choosing examples for analysis in this chapter. The audio-visual patterns employed by Lee have been selected because they present unique and stylistic features that are distinct from those commonly employed in the 'West' (referring specifically to Euro-American audio-visual patterns).

With reference to the system of IST models introduced in Section 3.2.1, this chapter proposes a dichotomy between home intersemiotic IST models and home intrasemiotic IST models. Here, home intersemiotic IST models are exemplified by Chinese painting and Chinese calligraphy, which Lee employed and appropriated to fit his translation purposes. Home intrasemiotic IST models are exemplified by Hong Kong wire fu choreography and classic Hong Kong martial arts film settings, which Lee borrows as didactic filmic patterns.

Based on the case studies of sequences in the film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, this chapter explores how Lee, as an intersemiotic translator, employs signifying practices from his own culture, and how he introduces a culturally specific lens which enables these pre-existing translation strategies to be seen from the specific viewpoint of the translator.

4.2 Home Intersemiotic IST Model (A1B1 IST Model)

In this section, home IST models refer to the audio-visual patterns

represented in Chinese non-filmic art forms. For Lee, home intersemiotic IST models which are his own Chinese cultural heritage references refer particularly to visual forms such as paintings, calligraphy and operas, which Chow describes as belonging to a "pre-twentieth century China" (1995: 36), and therefore are to be recognized as an "older visuality" (ibid.) as opposed to a "modern visuality" ("modern visuality" refers to film and is to be discussed in Section 4.3).

The dichotomy between "older visuality" and "modern visuality" as proposed by Chow refers to the relationship between tradition and modernity "in terms of politics of the technologized image" (1995: 36). According to Chow, the "[Chinese] older visuality" to be found in "paintings, calligraphy and other 'visual arts'" continues to "fascinate students and specialists of classical China, and continues to live a life in museums, art galleries, books, and academic teaching, writing, and publishing" (ibid.). (Chow mentioned older visuality may also be applied to describe poetry, fiction and other materials which may not immediately be classified as visual. To focus the discussion on the audio-visual patterns, these other materials will not be discussed in any detail.) As the "[Chinese] older visuality is increasingly associated with 'origins,' i.e., with notions of the past, the ancient, and the lost", Chow suggests that these older visual art forms become "aestheticized" (ibid.). In Chow's context, "origin" and "aesthetics" are closely interrelated. "Origin" is constructed by old (audio-) visual patterns that fascinate the imagination of a "classical China". In other words, these audio-visual patterns are regarded as "aestheticized" images of "[Chinese] origin" precisely because they are temporally "old". Chow responds to this point by saying that "the modes in which such nature is apprehended, together with everything else, have become coded with connotations of what can no longer be" (ibid.).

Applying Chow's paradigm to the present case, home intersemiotic IST models are "aestheticized older [audio-] visualities" that relate to an old and therefore classical China. This helps to explain Lee's usage of home intersemiotic IST models in two ways:

Firstly, home intersemiotic IST models are "aestheticized", in that they are coded with 'Chinese poetics', which Lee, along with other products of his culture, intuitively uses to imagine and re-construct a 'classical China'. In this way, 'Chinese poetics' may be regarded as the "dominant poetics" (Lefevere 1992: 26) which govern the range of symbols and prototypical situations to be chosen by the intersemiotic translators to render his own culture with the sense of authenticity.

For instance, Lee remarked that some of his audio-visual treatments in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* use imageries and metaphors that had imprinted their existence on his childhood memories (Zhang 2013: 144). He also remarked that "such traditional forms of expression are so familiarized among Chinese that they don't need anyone to teach them what they mean" (ibid., my translation). Such dominant poetics of home culture governs not only how Lee interprets messages from his home cultural background, but also his intersemiotic translation of messages with the backdrop of foreign cultural texts. For instance, the negative space emphasizing technique that is unique to composition in Chinese painting, is utilized both in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and in *Life of Pi*.

Secondly, as home intersemiotic IST models "are associated with 'origin'" in Ang Lee's case, the patterns represented are closely related to a "classical China". Such a "relationship" to a classical home culture may be regarded as more important to the translator, as it is built into the way translators make their meta-textual decisions. Most importantly, this relationship builds into the way their IST project is "to-be-looked-at" by its spectators in terms of its adherence to their home culture. It is because of this relationship that "older visuality" may be said to have a "symbolic power" (Bourdieu 1991).

Symbolic power is defined by Pierre Bourdieu as "a power of constructing reality, and one which tends to establish a gnoseological order: the immediate meaning of the world (and in particular of the social world) depends on what Durkheim calls *logical conformism*, that is, 'a homogeneous conception of time,

space, number and cause, one which makes it possible for different intellects to reach agreements'" (1991: 166, italicized in the original text). Applying Bourdieu's notion to the present case, the "older visuality" has symbolic power in the sense that the patterns represented can be seen as ways of apprehending objects that are assumed to be aesthetically Chinese. When the spectator "looks at" these older visualities, he assumes that he is "looking at" a "classical China". It is in this way that the closer Lee, as an IST translator, approximates to these older visual patterns, the more his IST projects communicate what is 'Chinese'. This correlates to the prime symbolic function of home intersemiotic IST models, which is to make one's translation appear to be closely representative of a presumed genuine home culture.

Chow suggests that this "older visuality" helped the (Mainland) Chinese filmmakers in the 1980s and 1990s to deconstruct "politicized modern visuality" as it was represented during the Cultural Revolution (ibid.: 38). Likewise, in Lee's case, "older visuality", as represented in home intersemiotic IST models, helps him to restore the version of the accepted "modern visuality" that is exemplified by Hong Kong martial art films which he considers has failed to communicate a "cultural China".

According to Lee, Hong Kong martial arts films "rarely involve Chinese feelings and Chinese culture" (Zhang 2013: 279, my translation). Lee also expressed the embarrassment that he felt concerning previous "low-quality" martial arts films, which, because of their wide accessibility, became a symbolically empowered cultural translation of China – the content communicated through these films being accepted as what is 'Chinese culture':

> The martial arts films had become the best, and even the only channel, through which foreigners and second-generation overseas Chinese - like my son- could learn something about Chinese culture. However, that something was somewhat vulgar and of inferior cultural content. I was always dissatisfied with this fact but could do nothing to change it.

Such a dissatisfaction with "modern visuality" urged Lee to turn back to the IST models that are "older" and which he therefore reckoned might carry traditional Chinese cultural values. Since visual patterns expressed in previous martial arts films as home intrasemiotic IST models were such a disappointment, he turned to the intersemiotic models of Chinese fine arts, which turned out to be a reliable alternative to support him in rendering what he considers to be "Chinese feelings and Chinese culture" (Zhang 2013: 444, my translation). It is in this sense that an IST translator's usage of their home intersemiotic IST models is to be understood as a 'renaissance', where one's home culture is restored by returning to what Lee believes should be "looked at" and introducing a depth of cultural heritage that "modern visuality" often neglects.

The following section presents an analysis of how home intersemiotic IST models can be employed through the case studies of Lee's use of Chinese painting and Chinese calligraphy in the film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

4.2.1 Chinese Ink-Wash Painting

One example of Lee's employment of home intersemiotic models concerns his appropriation of traditional Chinese painting. Lee worked with the cinematographer Peter Pau to ensure that the film's cinematography applies the visual code of Chinese ink-wash painting (Zhang 2013: 384). Ink-wash painting as Lee's home intersemiotic IST model provides him with two audio-visual patterns that can be appropriated: spatial composition and imagery.

4.2.1.1 Spatial Composition

The salient feature of spatial composition in Chinese ink-wash painting is 'leaving white space' (*liu bai* 留白), a stylistic feature whereby the painter often leaves a vast amount of space untouched by ink (see Figure 4.2.1.1.1). Large

blank spaces can often be the result of reducing a large panorama, seen from a lofty vantage point, to fit onto a small surface (Zhen 2008: 68). According to Ni Zhen (ibid.), these vast empty spaces embody a key ontological concept of Taoist philosophy, the emergence of the vital force (*qi* 氣) from nothingness (*wu* 無).

It could be said therefore that by including areas of blank space into the composition of the paintings they become permeated with vital potential energy. Ni Zhen adds that the sense of space can also reflect many Taoist and Zen spiritual concepts such as "loftiness", "serenity", "spiritual emptiness" and the "Great Void" (Zhen 2008: 68). Accordingly, the concepts that are conveyed by the technique of leaving empty space can reflect psychological and emotional states, which result from the expression of a painter's experiences and union with nature (ibid.). This characteristic feature of ink-wash painting is employed as one of Lee's home intersemiotic IST models at the level of mise-en-scène (C1) and cinematography (C2) of the film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

Figure 4.2.1.1.1 Part of *Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains*, 1350[7]

Example 1.

IST blueprint

  EXT. YUAN COMPOUND - DAY

  …. We see across the lake a lone horseman entering the village…

         (Wang, Schamus & Tsai 2000: 29)

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[7] Source: National Palace Museum, Taipei.

Figure 4.2.1.1.2 Landscape shot of Shulien's hometown[8]

A typical example of 'leaving space' occurs in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*'s opening sequence (see Figure 4.2.1.1.2). The sequence introduces the location and environment of the Yuan Security Company building, which is owned by Shulien. Lee uses a wide-angle landscape shot to represent a panoramic landscape view. The landscape shot distances the man-made objects from the screen. By reducing the space taken up by the bridge, the cottages and the walking villagers, Lee leaves two thirds of the frame for the surrounding natural environment. The 'blank space' is established through the negative space that is created by the water in the foreground and the remote mountains in the background, with the man-made objects and barely recognizable human figures as accessories. Water, as the visual element of calm movement, translates the serenity of the landscape. The remote mountains, graded by the distance-implying shades of light blue, build up a suggestion of depth and height. A fixed and static camera placement further strengthens the sense of peacefulness.

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[8] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang lee (Time: 00.00.50 – 00.00.55).

Example 2.

<u>IST blueprint</u>

I/E. CARRIAGE/ MONGOLIAN DESERT – DAY

… She sits in a carriage, part of a caravan, with guards on horseback, that is

travelling through the spectacular desert.

(Wang, Schamus & Tsai 2000: 59)

Figure 4.2.1.1.3 Extreme long shot of extended convoy crossing the desert[9]

In the exterior scenes in the Mongolian desert (see Figure 4.2.1.1.3), 'leaving space' is enabled in the composition through setting (C1) and framing (C2) by establishing a strong contrast between the human figures and the natural environment. Lee adopts a wide shot of the convoy crossing the desert. The negative space is dramatically emphasized through the distance, and the figures are far away from the viewer, enabling the greater part of the screen to be occupied by the desert. The desert, vast and lifeless, dominates the frame. The human figures are squeezed into a thin line at the edge of the dried-up plain. They serve only as accessories or tiny points of interest within the endless desert. The

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[9] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 00.28.05 – 00.28.14).

visual treatment follows the composition pattern of ink-wash painting in that the portion of space occupied by human and man-made structures is considerably reduced in order to emphasise the dominance of nature. The dry land expresses a sense of desolation which relates to the exiled state of Jen and her family: that of a government official being deployed to a remote territory far from the political centre. The spectacular landscape of wilderness provides a strong contrast to the scenes of central Chinese civilization, and also establishes a visual contrast with the setting of Jen's confined living-quarters in Beijing. This supports the implication of Jen's desire for a freedom that for her is to be rid of feudal restrictions and traditions. Thus, Lee employs the model of 'leaving space' to convey the theme of a vulnerable exiled individual lost in the endless desert. The concept of space without boundaries also signifies a freedom that is distinct from the confined environments that signify feudal restrictions.

That ink-wash painting as a home IST model supports Lee in translating the IST blueprint is evident. In the above-mentioned cases, the home IST models support Lee with the semantic apparatus in translating the situation through an audio-visual pattern that suggests and strengthens the situation described in the IST blueprints. In the meantime, such a model is employed to render the spatial-temporal context of these situations through the lens of Lee's home culture. The cultural lens employed first concerns the pure "aesthetic" taste expressed in the corporeality of 'leaving space' as a spatial composition pattern This relates to Lee's intention of building up "a graceful artistic sphere in which the audience may indulge themselves, as well as a heroic spirit that the spectators are longing to find within themselves" (Zhang 2013: 304, my translation). Both the "artistic sphere" and the "heroic spirit" are created in Lee's IST project through the use of space: i.e., through the model of 'leaving space'. To this end, 'leaving space' functions as a "naïve handling" which translates the concept of space in a way that needs no in-depth reading, described by Chow as "literally, depthlessly, naively" (1995: 186).

What is also translated, through a naïve handling, is the notion of 'void',

which the 'leaving space' model connotes. The association between space and 'void' is related to the poetics of 'leaving space' as a semiotic pattern encoded with a distinct meaning, i.e., the Taoist ideology that is shared by Lee's home cultural system. Baihua Zong reveals the philosophical implication behind this style suggesting that the blank white is not spatially a dead place, but the eternally creative Tao that produces everything in the phemonal world (Zong 1981: 95). Ni Zhen also observes that it is by inscribing the composition and structure of paintings with 'blank whiteness' that they become permeated with vital energy (2008: 68). Blank whitness thus transforms the Chinese landscape into a realm where "'All things are of themselves produced and ordered, /The Great Void remains desolate,' and 'The myriad phenomena multiply to no avail; / In quietude the Great Void keeps its distance.'" (ibid.). The space that is presented in this IST model is presented as a signifier of void, with void emphasized fully through the spatial contrast of humans and landscape. Lee personally responds to the culturally distinct meaning that this connotes:

> The philosophy of Chinese art is to respect the negative space. The matter is the reflection of the truth which is 'emptiness'. So, the space happens because you define space not because they exist in the matter. You are not important, you have to give in to nature, and to the void which is the truth, the unknown. I think that's very important in the Eastern culture. Here [in the West] is like 'Me! Me! Me! I am the most important'. But in the Eastern culture it is very important to observe and suggest not even utilize space.[10]

"Void", as a cultural connotation, serves as a key philosophical motif that Lee refers to throughout the film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. In the IST blueprint, "void" is constantly mentioned in the film script. At the audio-visual

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[10] The interview entitled 'Ang Lee on King Hu', published on 31 Oct 2017, retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C86B5_lPOX0.

level, "Void" is conveyed through the spatial composition of humans and nature by employing the 'leaving space' model. Lee responded to this point by saying that "I have my own fantasy of the so-called 'return one's mind to the void', which emphasizes a relinquishing of love and desire" (Zhang 2013: 344, my translation). In this way, the 'leaving space' pattern embodies the notion of "void" in Lee's IST translation in its corporeality. Such an embodiment needs no in-depth reading on the part of the spectator, as the notion of "void" and the pattern of "space" represented are interrelated in a transparent manner: void is emptiness and emptiness is signified by empty negative space. In this way, the appropriation of this IST model not only conveys the cultural notion which Lee intends to convey, but also offers it up "to a popular and naïve handling" (Chow 1995: 199).

4.2.1.2 Imagery

Apart from spatial composition, Chinese ink-wash painting, as an IST model, may also support Ang Lee's audio-visual choices on a more practical level by providing set elements that can be adopted directly on screen. Set images such as mountains, water, sky, and clouds are those most frequently introduced in Chinese ink-wash paintings, as exemplified in Figure 4.2.1.2.1. These images are adopted to translate not a specific scene in its corporeality, but an idea that is deeply embedded in the repertoire of Chinese aesthetics and which formulates the perspective through which the world is perceived. It is because of this that the images in the ink-wash paintings translate not reality but a transcendental fantasy. Dazeng Hao responds to this point strongly: "Chinese paintings did not portray reality; the world which the viewer entered was a realm of literature or philosophy, a realm which transcended nature" (2008: 51).
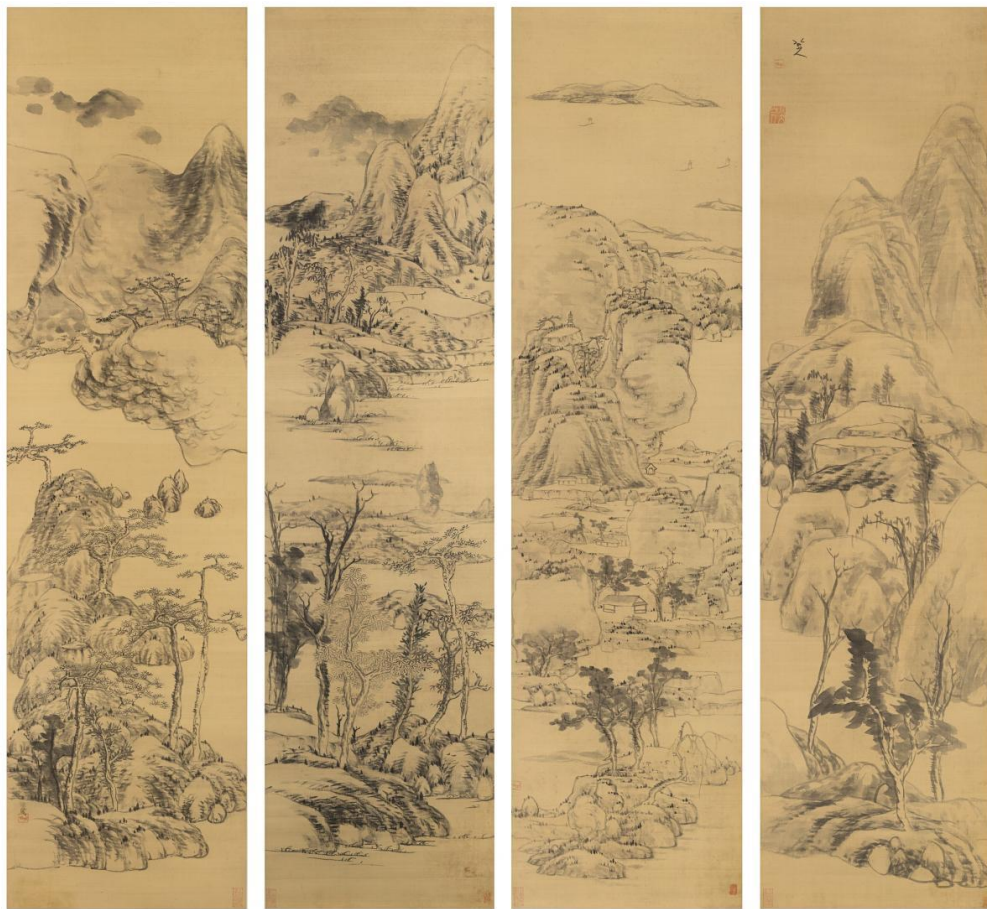
Figure 4.2.1.2.1 Four Landscapes by Zhu Da, Ming Dynasty[11]

According to Berry and Farquhar, "in Chinese paintings, the highest form of brushwork delineates an idea" (2008: 85). As the materials of Chinese painting necessitate a swift finish, the painters do not work directly from external models, but from an image already fully and precisely formed in their mind (ibid.: 89). The set images are, therefore, not realistic depictions of physical forms but an abstract conceptual representation of the painter's intention. They can be understood as elements that constitute a graphic discourse in order to represent a meaning that transcends physical forms. Inspired by Taoist teaching, each image is an indicator of a philosophical concept, which may be described as

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[11] Source: National Gallery of Victoria, retrieved from: https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/essay/zhu-da-the-mad-monk-painter/.

emphasizing symbolism over realism.

Example 1

<u>IST blueprint</u>

EXT. WU TAN MOUNTAIN – DAY

Lo catches up to Jen, who stands on a bridge. The gorges below are shrouded in clouds.

(Wang, Schamus & Tsai 2000: 138-139)

Figure 4.2.1.2.2 Lo looks at Jen who is standing on a bridge from afar[12]

An example of adopting classic set images is the astonishing ending of the film. In the final sequence of Jen's leap, Lee borrows the set images of high cliffs, pines and the sea of clouds (created by VFX), which together constitute a surreal realm. The depiction of this realm borrows the image of a Taoist mythological world, with temples high in the mountains, cloaked by an unfathomable ocean of clouds. The sequence is set on Mount Cangyan on its landmark Bridge Tower Hall (Qiao Loudian) which is supported by an arched stone bridge across a narrow gorge. The landmark brings together the classic poetic images of ink-wash

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[12] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.53.43 – 01.53.53).

paintings with an iconic representation that establishes the necessary background for Lee's artistic creation. The cloud sea that veils the abyss beneath the bridge can be considered as a signifier of the 'great void' (*tai xu* 太虛), which is an identical concept of the Taoist philosophy. The void refers to the illusionary nature and nothingness of all forms that are transitory. 'Great void' also refers to the Taoist eternity. It refers to the sublime state of a Taoist master through which a spiritual detachment from everything that is human can be achieved.

Thus, Lee uses set images from the model of Chinese painting, to set up a philosophical premise, indicating that by transcending the limitations of human emotions, one may return to the void for an ultimate spiritual ascension. These set images enable Lee to visually concretize the spiritual height which the film's protagonists aspire to reach, and it is also the height which the male protagonist Mubai has aspired to all his life and eventually failed to achieve.

Example 2

IST blueprint

EXT. WU TAN MOUNTAIN – DAY

… (Jen) leaps into the clouds. They seem to catch her gently, before she disappears into them.

(Wang, Schamus & Tsai 2000: 139)

Figure 4.2.1.2.3 Jen's leap of faith[13]

In the final sequence of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, Lee sets up an interaction between Jen as the protagonist of the picture and the cloud as a signifier of the state of 'Great void'. The use of set images from the ink-wash painting model illustrates that Jen is confronting the dilemma of whether she may rise to eternity by forsaking her love. This dilemma has been haunting Mubai for his entire life. By leaping off the bridge (see Figure 4.2.1.2.3), Jen also leaps into the void and forsakes the emotional and family bonds that curtail her freedom. The action can be interpreted as suggesting that Jen achieves what Mubai could not, by letting her form merge into the void and her spirit rise to eternity. Lee himself explained the meaning behind this cinematic sequence:

A genuine spiritual ascension and purification would mean forsaking everything and jumping off the cliff. But human emotion is a burden that keeps us on the ground. Mubai does not achieve his ascension for he wants to be chivalrous and be faithful to his nature. It may be said that Jen surpasses him by reaching a higher spiritual level, but it also means that she lacks human emotion when compared to Mubai

(Zhang 2013: 368, my translation).

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[13] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01:54:36 – 01:54:55).

Figure 4.2.1.2.3 A landscape shot of the unfathomable cloud sea[14]

The closing sequence of the film presents a panoramic view of the cloud sea from the mountain-top, which resembles a classic image that appears frequently in ink-wash painting. A wide shot captures the boundless dimension of vast clouds that extend to the horizon and hide everything below. The cinematography of the sequence adopts the point of view that originates from traditional landscape painting. As Dazheng Hao observes: "When observing nature, the ancient Chinese were more interested in horizontal expanse than in depth" (2008: 47). The composition of the sequence eliminates a focal centre and thus weakens the feeling of depth. This means that the plane of the picture expands horizontally, and this contributes to a visual stability. The stability emphasizes the eternity of the 'Great Void', represented visually in the form of clouds. The 'Great Void' implies Jen's fate by enveloping her form and hiding her forever. The void also creates a visual metaphor that refers to everything that is hidden underneath and emphasizes the notion of 'Hiddenness' as the leitmotif of the film. The action in the picture correlates to the Taoist teaching that everything comes from the void and will return to the void.

By introducing the visual elements from ink-wash paintings into his filmic

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[14] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.54.55 – 01.55.02).

translation, Lee introduces the poetic context and its philosophical implications. It could be said that by utilizing the model of ink-wash painting, Lee borrows both the form and the spirit of traditional fine art in order to connect the storyline with the heart of Chinese cultural values, in the same way that ink-wash painting transcends form through its use of context.

4.2.2 Calligraphy

Chinese calligraphy, as a home intersemiotic IST model, is a significant meaning-making device in Lee's translation of writing scenes. The audio-visual borrowing of Chinese verbal characters on screen as a unique cultural sign may be considered an intersemiotic loan.

The term "loan" is adopted from the translation procedures elaborated by Jean Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet. A "loan" is a SL word/word combination taken directly from the ST to make up for the deficient counterpart in the TL and TT (Vinay & Darbelnet 1995: 31). For instance, the English use of the French phrase 'bon voyage' or the French use of the English 'le five o'clock' are typical examples of inter-lingual loans.

If calligraphy is to be considered a home IST model through which verbal signs are represented audio-visually, then Lee's employment of calligraphy may be understood as an intersemiotic loan of his home verbal signs. In which case, the film employment of Chinese calligraphy represents a form of dynamic loan of Chinese verbal signs, which provides sensory experiences by presenting both the corporeality of Chinese characters and the tactile experience of writing them. Thus, calligraphy is an artistic representation that is both information-resourceful and inter-textually cross-related.

The calligraphy that is executed through the strength and skill of the calligrapher can only be appreciated by representing a complete and dynamic process of writing. Ang Lee's visual appropriation of calligraphy as an IST model, therefore, functions very much like a fight sequence in the film, where a martial

arts technique is to be appreciated only through the presentation of its whole dynamic movement of combat. In *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, Lee shows in great detail the process of Chinese calligraphy in the writing scene set in Bo's room.

The scene depicts the process whereby Jen slowly reveals what she really is behind the camouflage of a docile lady that veils her real nature. This message, depicted in the IST blueprint, is translated through Lee's juxtaposition of the two calligraphy styles employed, namely, 'regular script' (kai shu 楷書) and 'grass script' (cao shu 草書). Regular script, as a writing model, is executed by the writer within a carefully calculated rigidity. Grass script, on the other hand, breaks this rigidity with a wild execution, or the producer's personal idea. Lee uses the two distinct patterns to set up a visual contrast that exposes Jen's duality between a ladylike façade and the 'hidden dragon' (with Jen's Chinese name 玉嬌龍 literally translated as Jade Tender Dragon).

Lee's employment of these writing styles, as a unique model from his home culture, also enables his IST to carry the model's cultural connotation. According to Wen Fong, "Chinese calligraphy is at once the most rigorously disciplined and the most fiercely individualistic of the arts" (1992: 123). The emulation is to perform a physical act generated from within and the wise student learns not to be a slavish imitator but to seek self-realization (ibid.). Fong also remarked that the form of the calligraphy itself is a meaningful paradigm which reveals a personal philosophical universe. He observes that "the blank paper surface represents the undifferentiated oneness of the universe with the first stroke establishing the primary relationship between a person's yin and yang" (ibid.). Thus, it may be assumed that one reveals one's hidden inner forces through performing calligraphy. This makes calligraphy an efficient IST model for Lee to explain Jen's unintentional

self-revelation of her hidden inner secrets to Shu Lien, as discussed in the following sections.

4.2.2.1 Kai Shu (Regular Script)

Example 1

<u>IST blueprint</u>

>   INT. BO'S ROOM – DAY

>   Jen practices calligraphy…

>   (Wang, Schamus & Tsai 2000: 55)

In translating this IST blueprint, regular scripts are employed to concretize the calligraphy that Jen is practising. Semantically, calligraphy in this context is first introduced in accordance with the peaceful feudal rules that symbolically represent Jen's social position.

According to William Willets, *kai shu* represents a disciplined writing style in that "the characters are schematized, and so are the brush-strokes, the smaller ones distinctly wedge-shaped" (1981: 67). Wenguang Jiang also commented that the stylistic feature of this calligraphy style is described by the very name *kai* (楷), which "involves 'discipline', 'paradigm', or 'pattern', indicating the idea of 'good model'. The name of the style indicates that the writing style (*kai shu*) is to be regarded as a model for calligraphers" (Jiang 1993: 31, my translation). This stylistic feature is exemplified in Wang Hsi-chih's（王羲之）renowned transcription of *Huang Ting Jing* (*The Yellow Court Classic* 黃庭經) (see Figure 4.2.2.1.1).

Figure 4.2.2.1.1 *Huang Ting Ching* by Wang Hsi-Chih (first part)[15]

[15] Source: Chen Chih-mai's *Chinese Calligraphers and Their Arts*, p 57.

Kai shu, as an IST model, is employed in this context firstly to depict a stereotypical aristocratic lady: gentle, disciplined, reserved and well-educated. These characteristics tally with the stylistic features of the *kai shu* style, which is intensely disciplined and schematized. This is evidenced by Lee:

> This (Kai-Shu) is a specific design for women back then to write. If they are literate and educated, they will be practicing only that type of writing ... [they are] small and they regulate you … you are righteous, you sit still, good posture which I had her (Ziyi Zhang, the actress who plays Jen) do that. I had her do calligraphy every day. It is part of the boot-camp training. … she has to sit there for hours and going through the regular sitting and in a formality of writing calligraphy[16]

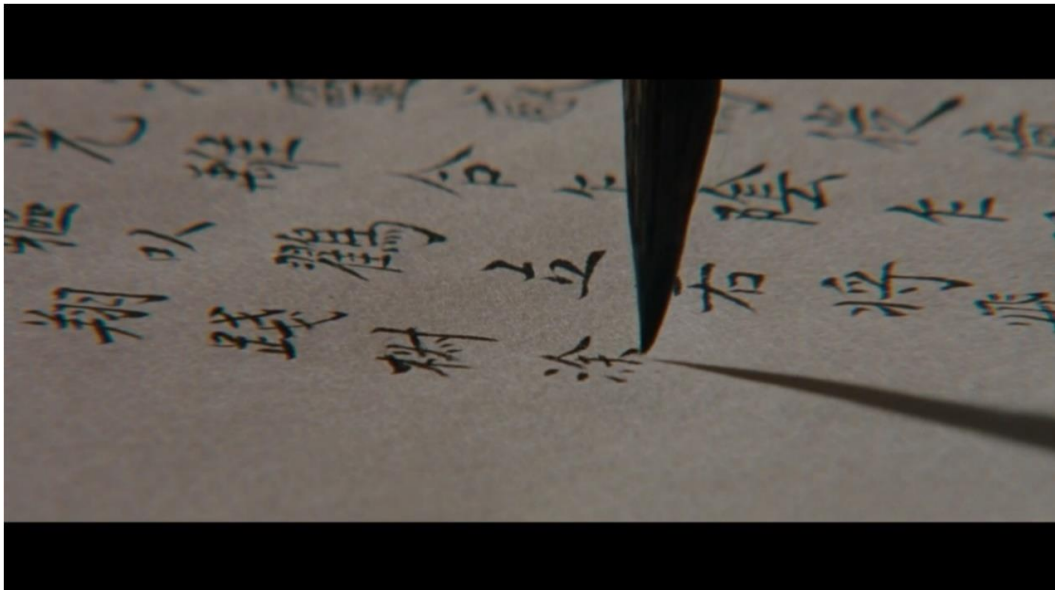**Figure 4.2.2.1.2 Close-up of Jen practising regular script[17]**

Lee thus intends to employ *kai shu* characters as the signifiers of the feudal restrictions so that Jen's writing of these characters embodies the repressed

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[16] Ang Lee's directorial commentary on *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

[17] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 00.23.50 – 00.23.55).

temperament that is required to fit her social role. He presents Jen's practice using a medium angle close-up which captures the schematized *kai shu* characters in detail (see Figure 4.2.2.1.2). The script is small and tidy, carefully aligned both vertically and horizontally, with each character placed in its precisely calculated space. The close-up also registers the tactile experience of writing these characters, with the tip of the brush, placed at the centre of the frame, gently pressing against the texture of the paper with a restrained carefulness. The tactile writing experience is also rendered by the low-key light from the upper left of the frame. The light casts a perpendicular shadow of the tip of the brush. The shadow converges occasionally with the brush on the *kai shu* script, which serves as a double emphasis on the haptic writing process.

The *kai shu* characters, represented as multimodal texts, are to be considered as an embodiment of Jen's camouflage, i.e., the restrained social roles she has to play. The represented *kai shu* characters are then the signifiers which translate Jen's social role and symbolize what she is compelled to be. Using the *kai shu* style as an IST model supports Ang Lee in configuring the parts of the medium used to "hide" the "dragon" (a reference to Jen's name), i.e., to regulate and conceal her strength and desire which is well established, only to be broken later.

4.2.2.2 Cao Shu (Grass Script)

To translate the segments which follow in the IST blueprint, Lee imposes a second Chinese calligraphy style, *cao shu* (Grass script), as another home intersemiotic IST model. As exemplified in Figure 4.2.2.2.1, *cao shu* is characterized by its seemingly careless, slanting, quick-moving and undulating brushstrokes (Chang & Frankel 1995: 93).
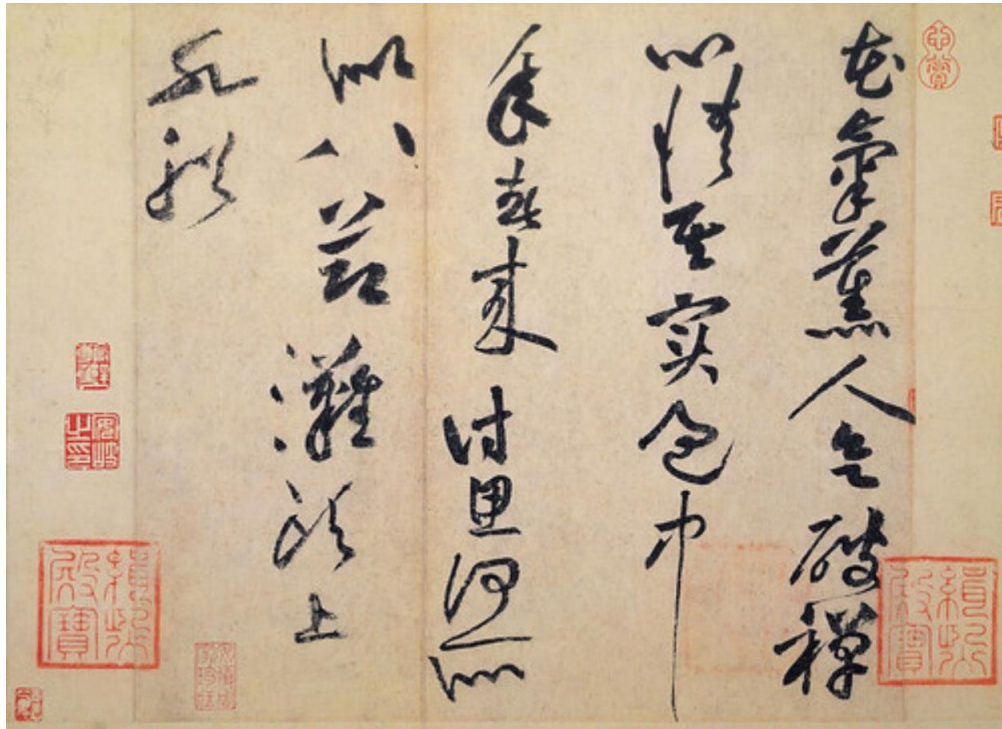
Figure 4.2.2.2.1 Huaqixunren Tie by Huang Tingjian[18]

According to Chen, the *cao shu* characters can "bear very little resemblance to the structural organization of the characters…" (1966: 166). Chen describes this wild style of brushstrokes as "they [the calligraphers] were prone to allow the brush the maximum freedom and to cast all conventions to the wind, with the result that many of the characters are completely illegible… in their mad drive for dramatic appeal they chose to write the characters in any way they pleased so that the same character appeared in a variety of forms in the same text" (ibid.). Thus, the *cao shu* style presents a radically different representation mechanism from that of *kai shu* (regular style) in that the wildness of the former seeks to break with the regulatory formality established by the latter. Such a contrast, in Lee's context, provides an efficient translation of what Jen truly is - the dragon hidden behind the docile exterior.

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[18] Source: National Palace Museum, Taipei. Picture via chinaonlinemuseum.com.

Example 1

IST blueprint

> INT. BO'S ROOM - DAY
>
> …
>
> Jen writes Yu's name with great confidence and swiftness.
>
> …
>
> (Wang, Schamus & Tsai 2000: 56)

To translate the IST blueprints, Lee uses the *cao shu* characters to establish a dynamic loan of Shu Lien's family name 俞 (Yu) onscreen. This dynamic loan must be considered as a diegetic point which closely connects with the advancement of the film's narration.

Lee's IST translation presents a close-up of Jen's writing from her point of view (see Figure 4.2.2.2.3). The four-second close-up POV shot captures Jen writing the character '俞' with one stroke. A close-up registers the textures of the character in detail, which enables a cinematic gaze at Jen's writing technique, and her brush manipulation. It is often maintained that the aesthetic of Chinese calligraphy is the product of brush manipulation (Chiang 1973: 137). The techniques lie in the force with which Jen manipulates the brush, which can only be appreciated through a tactile experience.

In this sequence, Jen's slanting execution of the strokes exhibits a technique which unleashes her inner force. Through revealing her true self, Lee builds up an inter-textual connection between Jen's writing and Jen's sword-play. Lee himself has remarked on this interrelation:

> The martial art movement is similar to the style of calligraphy, the use of force is just like *qi* (the Chinese concept of energy flow) and *shen* (the Chinese concept meaning of spirit), which are intimately interconnected…. Martial artists combine their movement and their force into one. Similarly,

calligraphers concentrate the forces of their bodies and minds into the forces at the tip of the brush. Fencing and calligraphy equally emphasize the importance of 'concentrating force in one's wrist': both when you use your sword and when you hold your writing-brush you need a powerful wrist to unleash your force…

(Zhang 2013: 358, my translation)
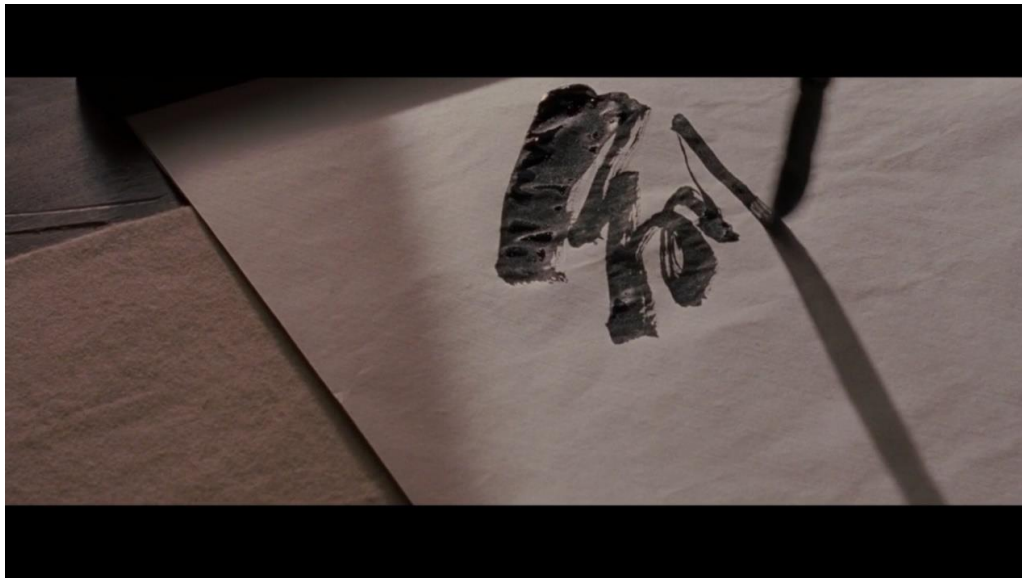
Figure 4.2.2.2.4 Close-up of Jen's Execution of Shulien's Family Name "Yu" (俞)[19]

That *cao shu* character as a signifier of Jen's fencing technique is first expressed through representation of her use of force in her rendering of Yu's name. The application of the brush correlates with the calligrapher's use of force from their wrist. A calligrapher needs to learn to control their wrist before they can properly unleash their force and apply the brush to the writing-paper. When one appreciates the writing strokes, the calligrapher's use of force may also be notified. Lee captures the dynamic motion as well as the brushing sound on the paper, so that the audience may observe Jen's technique by seeing the movement and feeling the rhythm and pace of her writing: the method and the strength as

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[19] Source: *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 00.25.10 – 00.25.14).

she compresses, raises, or heavily presses down with the brush as she completes writing the whole character. Likewise, Chinese fencing, or sword-play, emphasizes the control of force through the skilful manipulation of the wrist, which is related closely to Chinese calligraphy. Within the martial art genre, the pause and burst of movements can easily be connected to the thrust, riposte and piercing movement of Chinese fencing. The interconnection on a sensual level translates Shu Lien's line in the IST blueprint "I see the way you move your wrist. Calligraphy is so similar to fencing" (Wang, Schamus & Tsai 2000: 56).

This interrelation is also created through a visual resonance between the written characters. As the *cao shu* style tolerates a careless and creative execution of the Chinese characters, Lee appropriates the style so that Jen's writing of '俞' (Shu Lien's name) is deliberately designed to have a visual resemblance to the Chinese character '劍'(the Chinese character for 'sword'). As is shown in Figure 4.2.2.2.4, the component '刂' in the lower right half of the character '俞' is composed to the entire right half of Jen's writing of that character. The cursive execution of the rest of the character shares a visual similarity with the character component on the left side of the character '劍'. The resemblance is more obvious if one compares Jen's writing with the *cao shu* version of '劍' in figure 4.2.2.2.5.

Figure 4.2.2.2.5 The Chinese Character "Sword" (*jian* 劍) Written in

Grass Script[20]

It is in this way that the intrasemiotic similarity between the compositions of two different calligraphic characters also establishes an intersemiotic visual reference to Jen's involvement in martial arts. Chen Chih-mai explained that *cao shu* characters, as they are executed, bear very little resemblance to the structural organization of the characters: "They have turned nearly all the elements into symbols, and it is for the connoisseur to learn the symbols before he [or she] can read the text" (Chen 1966: 166). Permitted by the free writing style, the way Jen writes the character '俞' (Yu, Shu Lien's family name) is calligraphically similar to '劍' (the Chinese character for 'sword'). This visual resemblance corresponds to Shu Lien's line "I never thought my name looks like 'sword'" (Wang, Schamus & Tsai 2000: 56).

The semiosis of the loaned context, therefore, mediates dynamically from the supposed typographical correlation with the character "Yu" to be shown with a visual resemblance with the character "sword", which establishes an intrasemiotic connection. The dynamic loan itself suggests Jen's hidden secret beneath her graceful and docile appearance as an aristocratic lady. It offers a diegetic implication that Jen is not what she appears to be.

Through this dynamic loan, Lee also manages to accomplish a cultural

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[20] Source: picture retrieved from shufa.guoxuedashi.com.

translation by presenting cultural objects from another culture, while deliberately explaining the elements of those objects which are culturally specific to their original culture. Lee does not intend to make the loaned elements a culturally opaque concept to 'Westerners' (i.e., non-Asian spectators). Though the Chinese character, as a linguistic sign, is alien to spectators from another culture (from non-Asian context), Lee is purposefully explaining the interconnection between Jen's writing, calligraphy, and the techniques of sword-play, through Shu Lien's comments, as described in the IST blueprints. Thus, Lee's presentation and explanation of the interconnection between Chinese martial arts and Chinese calligraphy offers an understandable and exotic sensory experience, especially to 'Western' audiences (the Euro-American audiences to whom this film was marketed).

It is worth mentioning that Lee's appropriation of the calligraphy model also extends its influence, in that it has been regarded as an efficient model for cultural translation by Chinese filmmakers since then. This writing sequence has spawned followers, especially in the case of Yimou Zhang's *Hero* (2001), in which the imagined Chinese cultural link between sword-play and calligraphy which Lee established is emphasized, only in a more exaggerated manner (see Figure 4.2.2.2.6).

Figure 4.2.2.2.6 The writing of the word "sword" implies the hero's mastery of sword-fighting[21]

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[21] Source: *Hero*, directed by Yimou Zhang (Time: 00.25.57 – 00.26.01).

Lee remarks that he wanted to shoot a *wuxia* film "not only to fulfil my childhood dreams, but to express a longing for a 'Classical China'" (Zhang 2013: 279; my translation). Whitney Crothers Dilley also observes that "Lee did not seek to present a historically accurate vision of China but, instead, the 'China of his imagination,' an image of China that is felt deeply in the heart" (2015: 120). Lee's "imagination of China" is, however, a purposeful aesthetic restoration to the martial arts genre films. He aims to raise the standard of the genre so that it is capable of exhibiting refined aesthetics, and of representing the profound philosophy which Lee thinks a martial arts genre, as a widespread cultural symbol, should be able to do (Zhang 2013: 446). Lee's purposeful depiction of an imagination of China may, therefore, be more accurate in setting up links to Chinese poetics by appropriating more visual traits from Chinese traditional arts than previous martial arts films, which had only succeeded in presenting intense combat choreography.

When asked by Peter Pau, the film's cinematographer, if there were any Hong Kong martial arts films that impressed Lee on a cinematographic level, Lee simply replied "There is none" (Zhang 2013: 383, my translation). Lee's response reveals his resistance towards the established home intrasemiotic IST models of the same genre. He expressed his dissatisfaction with past *wuxia* films, as he considered such models to be limited merely to sensual stimulation.

Lee's response also reveals the fact that established home intersemiotic IST models may be used to refine filmic conventions of audio-visualization that are overused and have become clichéd due to previous intrasemiotic models. Unlike home intrasemiotic IST models, home intersemiotic IST models concern practices that are executed from a different semiotic system, and thereby present "elements + rules + syntagmatic relations" that are manipulated through different sets of audio-visual codes. Utilizing intersemiotic models means also inviting a different method of audio-visualization/expression. The effort to employ such models may be understood as an effort to return to classical home traditions that have not been used extensively by previous filmmakers/translators. Such

employment also introduces the artistic contexts that are generated through the artistic traditions of these models, and reflects a profound philosophical contemplation of reality in a non-idiosyncratic way. These contexts not only enable a rendering of ethnicity, but also provide resourceful multi-layered humanistic insight.

In the case of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, Lee's employment of home intersemiotic models is closely connected with insights originating from Taoist and Zen Buddhist philosophy, and this adds a depth of humanity beyond an exotic portrayal of Kung Fu fighting. It may be inferred that the purposeful employment of these IST models brings about a brand-new audio-visual experience, which is different from the shallow and violence-oriented audio-visual patterns presented in Hong Kong martial arts films. By adhering to the Chinese fine arts, Lee shows his determination to break genre conventions and to establish an intersemiotic translation which stays faithful to his 'dream of China', i.e., the 'China' that is aesthetically constructed through the high arts.

Thus, contrary to the common sense approach towards the creation of a new visuality refashioned from the old, Lee's application of home intersemiotic IST models presents a re-working of audio-visual patterns the other way around: with old aesthetics rejuvenating the new. That an older visuality is used to re-work the new visuality is discussed by Chow (1995).

Chow sets up this dichotomy of an old and new visuality in the context of "post-Cultural Revolution" filmmaking, where filmmakers use the old visuality to deconstruct and question the politicized visuality, and bring together the culture that was shattered by the Cultural Revolution (ibid.: 36-38). Similarly, in Lee's case, he employs home intersemiotic IST models so that the older visuality that is communicated through the models employed, with its symbolic relationship to the high arts and traditional values, may dilute the stereotypical representations communicated through the film language. What Lee seeks to deconstruct is the stereotypes and "misrepresentations" of previous intersemiotic translations, and to pull together what he considers to be the legacy of a dream of China, a China

that is re-constructed aesthetically through the visual poetics communicated in traditional Chinese art forms. Such an intracultural 'renaissance' explains the semantic function of the translator's IST models, which communicate through a comparatively distinct semiotic mechanism.

4.3 Home Intrasemiotic IST models (A1B2 IST Model)

Home intrasemiotic IST models may display inherited mechanisms from home intersemiotic IST models. Often, they are the result of moderations of "older visualities", adapted to be accessible to a wider audience. If Lee's home intersemiotic IST models representing a dream that is China are described as a "(Chinese) older visuality" (Chow 1995: 36), then his home intrasemiotic IST models belong to a "(Chinese) modern visuality" (ibid.). Chow presents a dichotomy between an "older visuality" that is "aestheticized" and a "modern visuality" that is "politicized" (ibid.). She explains what she means by "politicized" as referring to "the tendency to see in modernity the urgency of an inaugural moment, a new beginning" (ibid.: 37).

In Chow's case, "modern visuality" is "politicized" in that it carries with it a deliberate intention to be different, and more advanced than the old, and to establish a new beginning. Chow's "modern visuality" concerns images of Mainland China which are typified by cultural productions that are distributed to serve political ends. Her consideration of a "modern visuality", however, did not include films distributed in other regions of cultural China that did not serve an obvious political purpose. Hong Kong cinema may be seen as a typical example, as films are distributed not with a political intention but for popular consumption and global accessibility. According to Bordwell, "Hong Kong's film industry offered something audiences desired. … their audacity, their slickness, and their unabashed appeal to emotion have won them audiences throughout the world"

(2000a: 1). If the notion of Chinese cinema is considered as an entity that encompasses films from Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, and if, as Chow asserts, 'Chinese' stories on screen present an exchange between 'China' and the areas where "these stories seek their markets" (Chow 1995: 60), it may be said that Chinese "modern visuality" is more 'popularized', while the "old visuality" is more aestheticized.

Describing Lee's home intrasemiotic IST models as 'popularized', indicates that Chinese "modern visuality" is distinct from Chinese "older visuality" in the sense that it is designed to be "looked at" by mass audiences. Their "to-be-looked-at-ness" is enabled through the "transmissibility and accessibility" that is required of the medium to ensure a more efficient circulation. In this way, home intrasemiotic IST models are more subject to genres, which fit exactly with the needs of specific groups of audiences.

Different from home intersemiotic IST models, home intrasemiotic IST models provide audio-visual patterns that are realized within the semiotic system of the translator's IST. It is because of this that home intrasemiotic IST models are more 'norm-like' for an IST translator. They are 'norm-like' in that the IST translator may be compelled to use home intrasemiotic IST models because this is how previous IST models in that culture translate certain information using the target semiotic language. In the case of film, this concerns genre codes and home semiotic conventions. If an IST project is set in an established genre of a home culture, an intersemiotic translator may inevitably employ audio-visual patterns from that genre as his home intrasemiotic IST models. This is also the case with Lee's translation choices in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

Lee remarked in an interview that in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, "there are things I don't know why I have to do it…you have to do that in martial arts [films]. I don't know why"[22]. Considering Lee's comments within the framework of Even-Zohar (1997), he "has to do it" because his IST product belongs to the

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[22] Ang Lee's directorial commentary on *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

Hong Kong martial arts film genre. He therefore has to turn to ready-made models (what Lee frequently refers to as 'clichés'[23]) to pay homage to the genre where he locates his IST project. These IST models belong to the repertoire of the *wuxia* genre which determines the production and consumption of *wuxia* films. Lee's use of home intrasemiotic IST models may, therefore, be understood as a subversion of the *wuxia* genre norms. The "elements + rules and syntagmatic relations" represented in these *wuxia* models are briefly described by Bordwell: "Reverse-motion shooting created impossible stunts, like leaping onto a roof. Hidden trampolines launched fighters into the air, and strong wires kept them aloft. On the sound track, thunderous whooshes underscored leaps and blows" (Bordwell 2000b: 16).

Lee's employment of home intrasemiotic IST models may also serve as an insistence on translating the uniqueness of what is Chinese. This uniqueness is expressed through a symbolically empowered audio-visual construction, with the pre-existing syntagmatic relations immediately recognized by the audience to be 'Chinese'. Lee's appropriation of *wuxia* choreography and classic filmic settings thus help explain the effect that a translator may achieve by employing his/her home intrasemiotic IST models.

4.3.1 Mise-en-Scène

It has been said above that Lee has to incorporate ready-made IST models in cases where his translation project belongs to a well-established film genre. Lee also remarks that martial arts filmmakers like King Hu influence him most in terms of "the look"[24].What is referred to as "the look" describes the symbolically empowered visual stereotypes represented through the level of mise-en-scène (C1), which constructs the visual and aural environment of the film (see Section

[23] Ang Lee's directorial commentary on *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

[24] Source: The interview entitled 'Ang Lee on King Hu', published on 31 Oct 2017, retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C86B5_lPOX0.

3.1.2.4). In Lee's context, such a mise-en-scène constructs a spectacle which Szeto describes as "a major element of the epic, exhibited through sets, costumes, characters, landscapes, and narrative" (2011: 54). This look may be considered as stereotypical.

A stereotype is described by Stuart Hall as a form of signifying practice which "reduces people to a few simple, essential characteristics, which are represented as fixed by nature" (1997: 257). According to Hall, "stereotypes get hold of the few 'simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognized' characteristics about the person, and *exaggerate* and *simplify* those traits" (ibid.: 258, italicized in the original text). Hall's definition of stereotype emphasizes a false consciousness with regard to different racial groups, which formulates a "symbolic order" so that the patterns represented in these stereotypes have symbolic power.

In the case of Lee, the *wuxia* genre films also present stereotypes, as the previous *wuxia* audio-visual patterns clearly reduce the martial arts world and an (imaginary) Chinese culture to memorable, easily grasped and widely recognizable visual components, e.g., settings or costumes. These elements constitute what Lee refers to as "the look". This "look" determines how an imaginary presentation of China is "to be looked at" by the spectators. Instead of focusing on a critique of a stereotype as a self-exoticizing effort, what is to be focused on here is how Lee utilizes the stereotype's symbolic power to add to the visibility of his own translation. This again relates to Chow's notion of "to-be-looked-at-ness" in that a stereotypical representation of a group then becomes the group's self-representation, so that it actively negotiates a presence among viewers (1995: 180).

One typical example of the stereotypical "look" is the film's setting (C1). According to Lee, "the traditional setting of martial arts films – restaurants, taverns and bamboo forests, are familiar to us since childhood… Tavern fighting scenes appear frequently in the films of Chang Cheh, King Hu, Lau Kar Leung and Jackie Chan" (Zhang 2013: 371, my translation). Lee, nonetheless,

appropriates these stereotypical settings as his home intrasemiotic IST model.

This "look" is exemplified in King Hu's *Come Drink with Me* (1966), where the heroine confronts the surrounding trouble-makers in an enclosed tavern (see figure 4.3.1.1). Similar examples share the same components– the tavern, tables, and enclosed space, and present similar 'syntagmatic relations' – the protagonist sits with confidence while being cautious and prepared for potential trouble from the surrounding trouble-makers, who then corner and threaten the protagonist, surrounding him, and tempting him to make an attacking first move.

Figure 4.3.1.1 Tavern Confrontation in King Hu's *Come Drink with Me*[25]

In *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, Lee borrowed such a "look" by employing it as his IST model. A similar scene is employed as a model at the level of mise-en-scène (C1) to translate the first two fight scenes that Jen is involved in after she has sneaked out of Beijing with the Green Destiny sword. Both scenes establish a brief glance of the 'Jiang Hu' (江湖)[26] world, which Jen, having rebelled against her feudal and oppressed role by refusing the political marriage arranged for her, is insisting on experiencing life for herself. Both scenes are also

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[25] Source: *Come Drink with Me*, directed by King Hu (Time: 00.17.21 – 0.17.23).

[26] Jiang Hu or Giang Hu, 江湖 is literally translated as rivers and lakes. In Chinese, this term refers to the underworld that is not controlled by the government.

essential in rendering a context for the situation in which Jen would deal with confrontation within this world, and how she completely disregards the behavioural codes of 'Jiang Hu' and deals with this alienated world in her own way. That both fight scenes take place in dining places, may be understood as a signification of the complex 'Jiang Hu' society.

The first fight scene is set in a tea-house in the bamboo forest (see Figure 4.3.1.2). The cross-dressed Jen sits down and orders in a peremptory manner, which triggers the attention of two nearby martial artists. The two then stand up and come towards her table in an unfriendly manner and stand in front of her with a threatening demeanour, clearly seeking trouble. Though it is not strictly an enclosed interior setting, this scene follows the mise-en-scène model of tavern fighting. It sets a situation within a dining area where tension is built up through confrontation, with the two fighters crowding Jen and reducing her personal space, which makes a fiery confrontation inevitable.

Figure 4.3.1.2 Tea Stall Confrontation in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*[27]

The employment of the tavern fighting model in Jen's second fight scene sets up a formalized mise-en-scène for an interior tavern fight scene (see Figure 4.3.1.3). The tavern fighting occurs on "two floors, with a middle courtyard, and

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presents layers of views. Once the fighting begins, the chopsticks, spoons, cups and plates, along with the food are all used as props and smashed. The chase in between the chairs, tables and the stairs, creates a sense of a series of obstacles and also a sense of demolition. This formulates a visual tradition" (Zhang 2013: 371, my translation). In a similar, but more complex pattern, Jen's fight in the tavern is also initiated by creating a sense of encirclement. The feeling of entrapment created through the setting is then breached by Jen in order to escape. The more desperate and dangerous the situation represented, the greater the relief experienced when the heroine breaks out of the entrapment and eventually escapes from the ferocious gang.
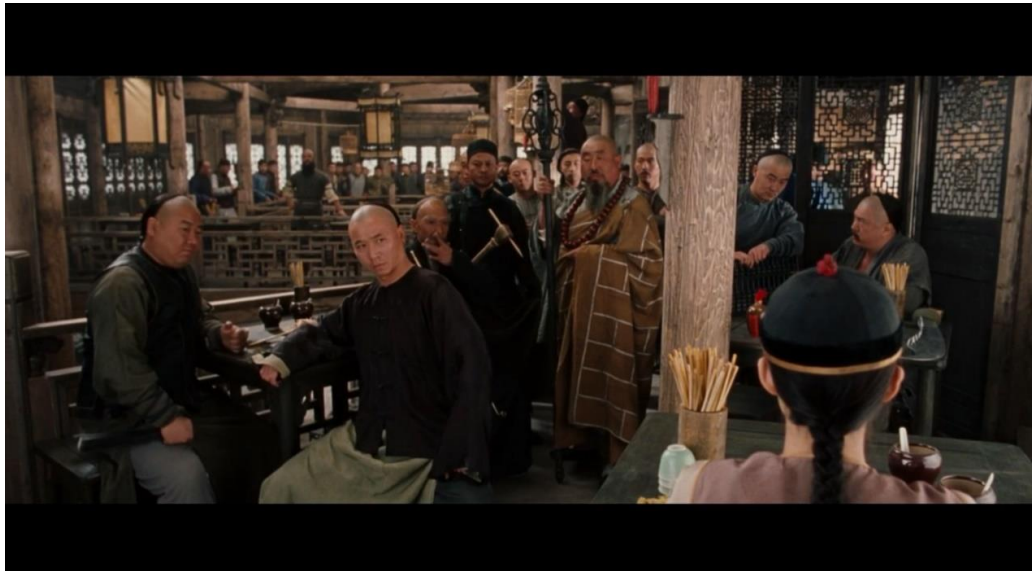
Figure 4.3.1.3 Jen surrounded by gang members with martial arts skills[28]

In both cases, Lee's appropriation of the tavern model is a setting for what he has described as the sheer visual joy of "demolition". For the viewers, this joy comes not only from the heroine's breaking free of the visual encirclement, but from her breaking free from what such an encirclement stands for, namely the enforcement of a restrictive code of behaviour and convention which demands that those entrapped must follow it. Such a joy may be likened to what Nietzsche

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[28] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.21.17 – 01.21.23).

described as the 'spirit of the lion', which he describes in the following way:

> Thou-shalt not,' is the great dragon called. But the spirit of the lion saith, 'I
> will.'… all values have already been created and all created values do I
> represent. Thus speaks the dragon… To create for itself freedom and give a
> holy nay even unto duty, that much the lion can do.
>
> (Nietzsche 2003: 55)

What Lee translates through such an appropriation is Jen's situation, where she has been constantly encircled by heavy behavioural restrictions and forced to conform to traditional values from which she seeks to escape. For Lee, the appropriated tavern model presents a straightforward contrast of the "thou-shalt not" dragon versus the "I will" lion. "Thou-shalt not" is represented by the enclosed tavern setting. The surrounding gang can be considered as the "dragon" who, as the signifier of 'Jiang Hu' codes, "with every scale of glitter's golden 'thou shalt not'" (ibid.). In this case, the gang, each symbolizing a different school of martial arts styles, and the many facets of the well-established 'Jiang Hu' world, sequentially set up their values and principles and confront Jen and try to force her into submission. Jen's violent reaction and escape is to be understood as a passionate refusal to submit. What she smashes is the stringent regulations which have been applied to her i.e., the so-called 'Jiang Hu' code: humility, honour and submissiveness. What Lee establishes is the sheer joy of a violent refusal and rejection of that submissiveness. Thus, by breaking away from this entrapment Jen symbolizes the victory of her "I will", and her freedom from spiritual, emotional and physical submission and imprisonment.

What Lee intends to convey, through employing the tavern mise-en-scène, requires no in-depth interpretation, for the meanings that are communicated are straightforward. The messages of 'repression' and 'breaking free from repression' are communicated through the pre-existing model of mise-en-scène that is designed for sheer visual pleasure. Thus, in addition to introducing visual

pleasure by inserting the tavern model itself, Lee uses the visual pattern as an interpretant to translate his long-lasting creative intention – "Repression is a main element of my movies, It's easier to work against something than to go along with something" (Lee, cited in Dilley 2015: 1). The visual pleasure introduced therefore also becomes Lee's celebration of his translation not only of the IST blueprint but of his own intention as a translator.

4.3.2 Wire Fu Choreography

The phrase "wire fu" combines the two terms "wirework" and "kung fu" and describes a style of fight scene choreography applied in Hong Kong martial arts films. The term is created to emphasize the scenario where "kung fu" is represented by the filmmakers with the support of wirework. This IST model was introduced to portray the acrobatic fighting skills that are described in *wuxia* (martial arts) novels, where the martial artist may engage in "qinggong", i.e., the fighting skill of being able to master and defy gravity by making the body lighter. The essence of the model of wire fu is that the skills of the performer, or stuntman, are augmented with wires so the performer may be pulled aloft to give the illusion of super-human acrobatic skills (as exemplified in Figure 4.3.2.1). Due to developments in digital technology, the thick wires can be removed through VFX (visual effects) at the post-production stage. This enabled the wide application of wire fu models in film after the 1990s, with complex acrobatic skills achieved by wires rather than the trampolines and quick editing techniques (see examples of King Hu in Section 6.2.2).

Figure 4.3.2.1 A visual demonstration of how wire fu is performed[29]

Wire fu may be considered as an intersemiotic translation of the acrobatic skills which find their origins in Chinese martial arts novels. Lee responded to this point in an interview:

> When it comes to wire work or ethereal or floating martial art films … I think any Chinese filmmaker is more or less affected by the vaulting skills in the martial art pulp fictions. That was described for a hundred years. That is in our fantasy that somehow you are lighter. Not only you can jump higher but you are enlightened. I think defying gravity is always our dreams.[30]

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[29] Source: Picture retrieved from http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/m/yunnan/cultureindustry/2013-08/20/content_16907844_3.htm.

[30] Source: The interview entitled 'Ang Lee on King Hu', published on 31 Oct 2017, retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C86B5_lPOX00.

Figure 4.3.2.2 The Wire Fu Sequence in *Tai-Chi Master*[31]

Figure 4.3.2.3 The Wire Fu Sequence in *Once Upon a Time in China*[32]

Lee's remark explains the way that wire fu, as an IST model, is adopted both as a pattern for translating a cultural imagination and an expectation through

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[31] Source: *The Tai-Chi Master*, directed by Yuen Woo-Ping (Time: 01.20.15 – 01.20.20).

[32] Source: *Once Upon a Time in China*, directed by Tsui Hark (Time: 01.58.11 – 01.58.12).

which members of a Chinese group perceive a fighting sequence. Wire fu translates the dream of being able "to defy gravity" in an uncompromising manner. Such a skill provides an IST model representing the martial arts movements with a "supernatural aura" (Bordwell 2000b: 17).

The use of wire work is widely applied in Hong Kong martial arts cinema, for example in films such as *The Tai Chi Master* (1993) (see Figure 4.3.2.2) and *Once Upon a Time in China* (1991) (see Figure 4.3.2.3) where wire fu operates as a visual pattern to translate the fighter's acrobatic skills.

Within the *wuxia* genre, wire fu choreography is considered to be the dominant poetic in representing visual segments related to fighting. The frequent practice of wire fu on screen is symbolically empowered in the sense that the filmmaker translates super-acrobatic skills in such a way that the audience takes them for granted and assumes that such feats can be performed by martial artists in reality. This is part of a cultural fantasy built up by Hong Kong martial arts cinema so that the fighting model not only "let the viewer feel the blow" but also allows you to "come out of these cinemas, thinking you can do anything, including fly!" (Bordwell 2000a: 248-281).

To translate the super-acrobatic skills, cinematic tricks are used to eliminate the evidence of the wirework. According to Bordwell, "cinematographers cunningly concealed wirework by shooting straight into the sun or by the 'Charlie bar,' which blocks the light beam so that the edge of the wire is not visible" (2000: 209).

Another frequently adopted method is through rapid editing, something which Szeto has examined in detail:

> Rapid editing and montage aim to enhance the speed and illusion of movement rather than the authenticity of the flight itself as a cinematic spectacle. This is due in part to technical constraints, as Hong Kong filmmakers traditionally have had to use fast editing to hide the wires for the stunt work. Since filmmakers do not want the thick wires showing in their

filming, they also must choreograph the flying sequence carefully. Thus, they typically prefer not to film the whole action in one long take, because they cannot hide the wires from the camera.

(Szeto 2011: 56)

In Lee's case, however, both the economic capital and technology permit him to appropriate this IST model so that the expressive quality of wirework may be strengthened by having the stunt skills represented in long takes and long shots. Lee's demand for the long take is also evidenced in his autobiography: "The martial arts directors said to me 'In Hong Kong this would involve at least five shots', or they would ask '[Mr Lee], can we perhaps insert a shot in the middle of the take?'. I kept saying 'Try to finish within one shot'" (Zhang 2013: 368-369, my translation). Besides this, wire fu visuals are represented in synchronised following shots, i.e., the camera tracks the flying characters in real time. This seeks to slow the rhythm and to let the motion of the camera imbue wire fu with a sense of beauty. Lee responds to this by saying that "I want the image to be poetic, so that when the viewers see the fighters it is as if they are looking at dolphins swimming in the water" (ibid.: 368; my translation).

Lee's appropriation of the IST model is also an attempt to refashion it so that its expressive power is enhanced. The dream-like flying motion described in the *wuxia* novels now receives a faithful pictorialization. This is shown in the night fight sequence where Jen and Shulien fight over the roof-tops.

Example 1

<u>IST blueprint</u>

EXT. ROOF TOP

Yu and the Black Figure continue to fight.

(Wang, Schamus & Tsai 2000: 53)

The IST blueprint follows what Lee describes as the "they fight" style i.e., it is no more than a description of diegetic points. The fight over the roof-tops is

translated through massive usage of wire fu, but unlike the wire fu sequences in earlier *wuxia* films like *The Tai-Chi Master* and *Once Upon a Time in China*, Lee appropriates wire fu with long shots and longer takes. Such an appropriation makes the IST product represent 'qinggong', with longer sequences and enough spaces to fully translate the supernatural fighting skills, and to strengthen the 'qinggong' as a "simulacrum" which correlates to the dream but "has no relation to any reality whatever" (Baudrillard 1994: 170).

In figure 4.3.2.3, the pursuits over the roof-tops are translated with a static long shot of the fighters. The fighters enter from the right side of the frame. Lightly leaping over the roof-tops, they run to the left side of frame, entering the frame's depth of view. This shot lasts for 5 seconds, and fully and smoothly exhibits the pursuit from right to left. A representation of 'qinggong' in long shot with a single take "provides the evidence of the real body in performance" (Szeto 2011: 59).

Similarly, Figure 4.3.2.4 also represents a flying movement in a long shot in a single take. Within an interval of 1 second (29 frames), the long shot shows Jen as she escapes Shulien and, like a crane, dramatically launches herself backwards up onto the high watch-tower behind her. It is noticeable that Lee's representation of wire fu in this instance is temporally longer than the previous wire fu movement shown on screen.

In addition to long shot and prolonged take techniques, Lee also seeks to enhance the movement through an unusual usage of following shot, i.e., with wirework fixed not only to the performer but also to the cinematographers, so that the cameras can follow the flying movement. According to Lee, "When filming the 'qinggong' movements, I required the camera to follow the movement. The shot needed to be smoothly executed in one go. For the images of roof-top fighting, I wanted the audience to see the entire process of launching, touching down and flying" (Zhang 2013: 384, my translation). Lee enables the sense of motion to be communicated not only through the choreography but also through the gazing cinematic lens which focuses on the fighters' flying movement.

Figure 4.3.2.3 Static long shot of the roof-tops pursuit[33]

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[33] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 00.18.03.02 – 00.18.07.17).
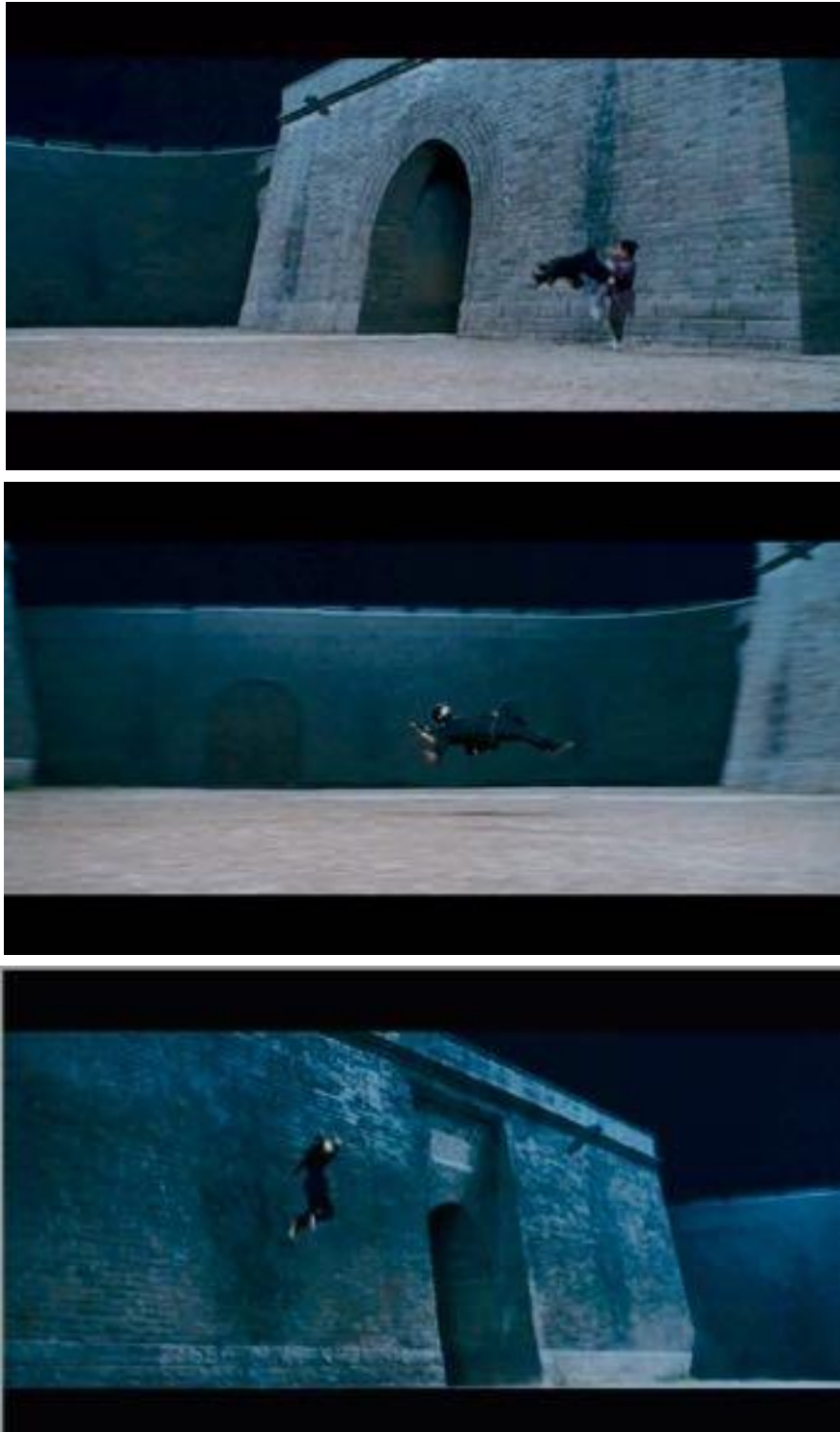
Figure 4.3.2.4 Long shot of Jen's escape to the watchtower[34]

An example of a following shot can be seen in Figure 4.3.2.5. Lee uses the following shot represent the pursuit, with Shulien near the camera chasing Jen in

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[34] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 00.20.58.02 – 00.20.59.00).

front. Within an interval of 5 seconds, the shot covers a changing sequence of views, presenting the movements of the actors and at the same time capturing their surrounding environment as they fly. In this way, the viewer can not only see the movement but also "feel the movement", just as they "feel the blow" (Bordwell 2000a: 248-281).

Lee's employment of wire fu choreography is also contextualized and varies according to the film's protagonists. Such a contextualization can be found in Figure 4.3.2.6. The shot first shows Shulien jumping down to the ground. As she runs along between narrow walls and buildings the camera quickly tilts up to the sky, where Jen 'whooshes' past on the screen. The camera then tilts back to Shulien, still on the ground. This juxtaposition is established within a single shot, achieved by the movement of the camera. A contrast between the detached and freely moving Jen and the heavier, gravity-burdened Shulien is also shown in the way they engage and fight, with Shulien always trying to drag Jen back to the ground. This is shown in Figures 4.3.2.7 and 4.3.2.8. Such an interaction corresponds to the conflict between the two female characters, where Shulien always wants to force the burden of feudal traditional morality, responsibility and honour onto Jen, whereas these are the very values that Jen is seeking to overturn and get rid of.

Lee personally responds to this point by saying that the gravity-defying choreography is used to translate the characteristics of the fighters, and provides support not only to visual beauty but also to the film's narrative and many other pieces of information (Zhang 2013: 365). Lee goes on to explain how his utilization of wire fu takes into consideration more than just the model's audio-visual pattern:

> Mubai is most powerful, and thus he flies comparatively elegantly. Jen is young, eager and unencumbered. Whatever she decides to do, she does it right away. Given that she's talented, these qualities will support her all the way to achieving the highest martial arts skills. Her staggering abilities are

unstoppable. Even when she narrowly escapes from being pursued, she escapes like a flash, flying upto the top of the watch-tower before she flees. Shulien bear on to herself the heaviest burden [of social tradition], therefore, and even as she flies over the roof-tops, her movement is determined by the many obstacles she encounters. As she flies, there's a force that is constantly trying to drag her back to the ground.

(Zhang 2013: 365-368, my translation)

Figure 4.3.2.5 Following shot of the roof-top pursuit[35]

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[35] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 00.18.10.00 – 00.18.15.10).

Figure 4.3.2.6 A single shot juxtaposes Shulien on the ground and Jen in the sky[36]

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[36] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 00.18.15.11 – 00.18.20.28).

Figure 4.3.2.7 Shulien kicks Jen back to the ground[37]

Figure 4.3.2.8 Shulien drags Jen back to the ground[38]

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[37] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 00.18.47.29 – 00.18.48.24).

[38] Ibid. (Time: 00.19.36.06 – 00.19.40.28).

Lee further explains how he manipulates wire fu as a cultural mode of signification to represent 'qinggong' as a meaningful sign:

> The skill of defying gravity is a detachment, a romance but also presents a restriction … I use wirework a lot because it correlates to the film theme that I intend to convey. Humans seek to be detached from reality and break restrictions, but no matter how hard you try gravity drags you back to the ground. Being able to defy gravity gives you only a momentary detachment…the world we live in is loaded with emotions, burdens and gravity.
>
> (Zhang 2013: 368, my translation)

Accordingly, Lee's utilization of wire fu considers not only the model's semantic quality or the necessity of following the norms of the genre in which his IST product is located. Instead, he uses wire fu as a sign to communicate a message, rather than merely showing the spectacle of the choreography itself. In this way, his usage of wire fu differs from that of its previous users in *wuxia* genre films in Hong Kong. Lee correlates 'defying gravity' with the characteristic setting of a fighter who makes the "qinggong" a meaningful sign which is represented to signify something other than "qinggong" itself.

Chow describes such a usage of sign as a "seduction" that turns a sign "away from meaning, from its own truth" (1995: 149). In Chow's context, "seduction" concerns the visual images in Yimou Zhang's films, of which the appeal is "that they keep crossing boundaries and shifting into new spheres of circulation" (ibid.). In Lee's case, the way he uses a wire fu model to translate the fighting sequence presents a similar shift. The wire fu model enables the gravity-defying movements, which translates the verbal sign "they fight", which seems to be the purpose of the translation. However, Lee's employment of the wire fu model also shifts to the translation and explication of the fighters' different personalities and experiences, which shifts to the translation of repression vs detachment, which in

turn shifts to a translation of various Taoist beliefs about human life itself, and so on.

For Chow, such a shift empties the employed audio-visual pattern of the culturally-loaded meaning and reconstructs it in the "surface plane" which "looks, stares and speaks" (ibid.). In Lee's case, the shift presents as a circle. The selection of a wire fu model first concerns the "surface plane"– its exotic audio-visual pattern. Lee then seeks to load this pattern with cultural context. Under such a context, he communicates his interpretation of the supposed cultural meaning that may be embedded within this culturally determined audio-visual pattern. The messages that are communicated through this shifting and appropriation of this intrasemiotic IST model then mediate its effect back to the denotative and transparent film language, by which Lee's shifted interpretation is communicated through the straightforward unfolding of visuality. It is in this way that Lee appropriates his home cultural model so that his IST may communicate new meanings.

4.4 Conclusion

An intersemiotic translator's employment of his/her home IST models is the translator translating using their mother tongue. This means that home IST models are the patterns through which the translator, brought up by that culture, makes sense of messages in the IST blueprint. Based on the above-mentioned case studies, the employment of their home IST models may be theorized in the following ways:

Firstly, home IST models represent a dominant poetic of the translator's home culture. This means that home IST models are imbued with cultural codes that are shared by the translator as a member of his home culture. A home IST model governs a translator's decision-making by presenting pre-existing audio-visual patterns that are to be adopted for the IST project, to fit into the translator's home cultural script (Lefevere 1992: 89). Each home IST model connects to the cultural logic-generating mechanism which represents a home cultural lens through which to look at objects. A translator uses these models intuitively

because he/she is both familiarized with them, and also because he/she shares these cultural scripts with others, so that he/she can use these patterns to construct his/her audio-visuality.

Secondly, home IST models appeal to audiences who are familiarized with their represented audio-visual patterns and who identify these as being from the translator's home culture. Thus, home IST models appeal to audiences both from within and outside the translator's home culture. In this case, the "to-be-looked-at-ness" of home IST models not only concerns how a translator perceives his/her own culture, through culturally unique spectacles, but how a translator expects the spectacles of his/her own culture to be recognized inter-culturally. It is in this way that a translator expects the models employed to be understandable and familiar to audiences so that his/her translated segments may be easily accepted. Home IST models, therefore, serve the "skopos" of the translator to communicate with audiences through these shared audio-visual patterns, while yet retaining a cultural uniqueness.

The system of home IST models presents a dichotomy between home intersemiotic IST models and home intrasemiotic IST models. In the present case, what is 'intersemiotic' is non-filmic audio-visual patterns, and what is intrasemiotic is filmic audio-visual patterns. In Lee's case, home intersemiotic IST models present an "old visuality", as opposed to home intrasemiotic IST models, which present a "modern visuality". An "older visuality" may be considered as "aestheticized", that is, concerned more with finesse and "primitive" cultural productions, whereas "modern visuality" is popularized and concerned more with transmissivity and accessibility among large groups of audiences.

As employed by Lee, each of the IST models serves a "skopos". In the case of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, Lee's employment of home intersemiotic IST models is aimed at restoring a cultural image which he thinks is falsely represented by home intrasemiotic IST models. His employment of home intrasemiotic IST models show his respect for the norm of home genre films.

It should be emphasized that an IST model is not passively subjected to a translator's home IST models as distinct audio-visual patterns that are coded with the dominant cultural poetics. Rather, a translator's selection and employment of his/her home IST models must be considered as an active self-representation. This means that home IST models are employed by the translator to fit in with

his/her own translative intention. Apart from providing expected semantic patterns to represent messages in the IST blueprint, the translator may appropriate his/her home IST models to convey additional messages. If a translator's home culture may be perceived globally through the transparent audio-visual constructions represented in the home IST models, then the decision to employ home IST models may be considered as an act of cultural translation. In addition, a translator may fit such IST models more closely to the narrative of IST blueprints, so that the spectacle of a translator's home is built into the way the audiences make meaning of the IST project (as in the case of calligraphy in Section 4.2.2.). A translator may also make the employed home IST model into a culturally unique sign, to mean something other than the signified object (as in the case of wire fu in Section 4.3.2). If, according to Chow, film is to be understood as "transparency becoming fable" (1995: 198), then it is the translator's active appropriation of his/her home IST models that turns his/her IST projects into fables under his/her home cultural lens – or meaningful interpretations of the world.

Chapter 5 Foreign Intersemiotic Translation Models (A2 IST Models)

5.1 Introduction

The employment of foreign IST models can be considered as the intersemiotic translator 'speaking' a foreign language. Foreign IST models are "elements + rules + syntagmatic relations" that belong to another culture, which the intersemiotic translator is not familiarized with and which he/she has to make sense of.

Questions need to be asked about how an intersemiotic translator may speak a 'foreign language' even though they may not know the relevant "natural language" (Lotman 1977) of that foreign culture at all. These can be answered by understanding the different mechanism of intersemiotic translation, as compared to interlingual translation. To be more precise, whereas the latter uses verbal languages, the former uses audio-visual semiotic 'languages'. Monaco's analysis of film as a 'language' may be helpful to explicate this.

Monaco makes the point that the difference between verbal language and 'film language' is that 'film language' presents a closer relationship between 'signifying and signified': "a picture of a book is much closer to a book, conceptually than the word 'book' is…An image of a rose is an image of a rose is an image of a rose – nothing more, nothing less." (1981: 127-128). Monaco therefore concludes that film presents us with a 'language' that "consists of short-circuit signs in which the signifier nearly equals the signified" (ibid.: 130). Whereas a natural language is connotative in that "there is a very significant difference between the signifier and the signified" (ibid.: 129), film 'language' is denotative in that "it is what it is and we don't have to strive to recognize it" (ibid.: 130).

That difference between verbal language and film 'language' may be applied

to describe the general difference between verbal and audio-visual language in general, in that the former is connotative and the latter is denotative. This comparatively transparent "short-circuit" mode of signification allows intersemiotic translators to communicate meanings using foreign modes of signification, even when they have no knowledge of foreign verbal languages. Referring to them as foreign modes is an indication that even though the audio-visuality is transparent, the construction of audio-visuality is culturally determined. This means that the concretized images are nevertheless constructed in a culturally specific way. It is in this way that an IST model may be described as 'foreign' to an intersemiotic translator since the patterns that are constructed audio-visually present a different mechanism to that of their home culture.

Since the employment of foreign IST models is an act of speaking a 'foreign language', questions should be asked as to why an intersemiotic translator needs to speak a 'foreign language'. The first reason might concern the genealogy of the target 'language' that the IST is translating into. If that target 'language' is, by nature, 'foreign', an IST translator will inevitably be speaking a 'foreign tongue'. This applies to Lee's case as he considers film itself as a language introduced from a foreign culture:

> Film was introduced to China as 'the Western lens'. We learned film techniques either from Japan or from the West. Anyone making a film would start by imitating films from the West, and appropriating these techniques and combining them with local culture and production conditions. This is how a localized filmic quality is formulated.
>
> (Lee in Zhang 2013: 448, my translation)

What Lee is pointing out, rather bluntly, is that film itself is for him a 'foreign language', which means that the patterns expressed are established by foreign cultures, and anyone who makes films is speaking a 'foreign language'. This applies to a variety of film techniques like 'the long take', or montage, which

have long been commonly employed in the West.

Secondly, employing a foreign IST model can be an efficient way of translating an IST blueprint whose background is set in a foreign culture. Foreign IST models introduce foreign methods of communication. Like in interlingual translation, by transposing foreign IST models such as "calque and loan" (Vinay & Darbelnet 1995: 31) into one's films, one invokes a unique world-view behind these IST models which can help the translator better render the source culture. It is to this end that the employment of a foreign IST model makes use of the symbolic power of that model in representing its embedded culture.

To say that foreign IST models have symbolic power means that the audio-visual pattern represented in those models builds an instant symbolic link with that culture from which the IST model is derived. So long as the spectator sees the audio-visual pattern that is presented in the IST model, they can assume that they see the culture. For instance, when translating the IST blueprint in the case of *Life of Pi*, a story with an Indian background, Lee applies Indian paintings as a visual motif so that his IST will stay close to, and appear to represent, that culture. Ang Lee's long-time collaborator James Schamus responds directly to this point:

> …Cinema provides the absolute simulacrum of this belief in the universal transnational transportability of culture … when in fact it allows people to pretend they can culturally adjudicate objects that literally are completely abstract…and that's an odd way to think of culture, if you think of the most profound emotional moments you've ever experienced in the culture these days tend to be cinematic as opposed to textual and if you understand at that moment that you are literally experiencing a simulacrum of a culture, and that you probably don't have any idea what it is….[39]

In staying close to the respective cultural image, such a functional employment is similar to that of home IST models. Employing foreign IST models gives the film a foreign identity at the straightforward audio-visual level. Unlike with home IST models, an intersemiotic translator needs to learn these unfamiliar patterns and understand the context behind them. Intersemiotic translators have to make sense of, and learn to manipulate the cultural meanings behind these contexts so that the IST models employed may be interconnected at the film's diegetic level, and not only imposed as a superficial exotic foreign element.

As a Taiwanese filmmaker, Lee is renowned for translating stories from various cultural backgrounds. It should be noted that of the 14 films he has directed, nine are set against a foreign cultural background, including the two films that won him an Academy Award for best director, i.e., *Brokeback Mountain* (2005) and *Life of Pi* (2012). He is therefore recognized as a skilful mediator between cultures. His capabilities in cross-cultural filmmaking may be analysed in greater detail through his employment of foreign IST models, as exemplified in the cases of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon, Lust, Caution,* and *Life of Pi*, outlined below.

5.2 Foreign Intersemiotic IST models (A2B1 IST model)

Foreign intersemiotic IST models, as codified figures, are visually more opaque than foreign intrasemiotic IST models, in the way that their exotic features provide a visual stimulus. For an intersemiotic translator from a different cultural origin, the geographical distance may alienate the initial meanings behind these features, and yet the expressive nature of these features enables the director to generate new meanings with an unpredictable open interpretation. This new way of understanding can be seen as a liberation from ethnographical preconceptions, and can provide an innovative translation methodology. It may be deduced that

this function of energizing the translational language enables the director/translator to use foreign intersemiotic translation models. Lee has personally reflected on this point: "It is easier to make art out of other people's cultures, because there's a distance and I can play with that culture and test its potential." [40] Perhaps Lee's notion of "play" best coincides with Steiner's conclusion about the advantage of cultural remoteness: "Whatever the archaeologists may tell us, we have come to envision antique statuary as pure white marble; and time's erosion, having worn away the original loud colours, affirms our misprision" (Steiner 1998: 380).

The uniqueness of these highly ethnographical models also provides the director from a different cultural background with a dilemma. Namely, whether to stay with the inevitable foreign gaze (Chow 1995: 179) and let the foreign features remain opaque as a simple and unique cultural audio-visual form, or to make the opaqueness of these models gradually more transparent by integrating these models at the film's diegetic level.

It may be argued that in its "to-be-looked-at-ness", the nature of film determines that self-ethnographizing audio-visual models, such as costumes and architecture, will inevitably be opaque and constantly at the stage of being looked at under a foreign gaze. However, it may also be argued that these audio-visual patterns are not only formulated to be gazed at but are also deliberately designed by that culture to be 'looked at' as the culture's self-presentation. An intersemiotic translator may make the audio-visual patterns presented in the intersemiotic IST models gradually more transparent by employing them as efficient mechanisms of story-telling. This applies to Lee's employment of Mughal composite painting as a foreign IST model in his film *Life of Pi*.

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[40] Source: The Symposium on *Life of Pi* on Nov 25th 2012 on Taiwan Public Television, retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Tu0W_h-nu8.

5.2.1 Mughal Composite Painting

Jean-Christophe Castelli, the co-producer of *Life of Pi*, commented on the pre-production fieldwork in India: "What Lee wanted at this early stage of the film's development were background facts and ideas… the research for *Life of Pi* grew out of the book and script" (2012: 26). He went on to say that "Indian local paintings, especially the composite paintings of elephants which are made up of other animals, contribute to the visual motif of the film" (ibid.). The composite paintings of elephants he was referring to belong to the Mughal composite painting genre.

Mughal composite painting is a painting genre which first evolved in northern India (Del Bonta 1999: 69). The Mughal composites are made up of disparate elements from throughout nature, most notably animal and human (ibid.). Mughal composites are found in India from the early Mughal period onward, hence their name (ibid.: 70). The style of a painting often takes the form of an outline, or shell, figure which is composed of multiple disparate elements. For instance, in Figure 5.2.1.1, the elephant functions as the shell, inside of which the figures of humans and animals are artistically intertwined and combined in a creative mosaic. This style of painting indicates "the unity of nature which is intrinsic to Indian thought, and it often serves as a visual pun or metaphor indicating that things are not always what they appear to be but, instead, encompass layers of meaning" (ibid.: 69). It may reflect the Hindu religious belief in the unity of all beings and illustrate the doctrine of the transmigration of souls through successive reincarnations. It may be inferred that this type of composite painting questions singularity, while producing a single immediate pictorial form that is simultaneously both connotative and denotative.

Figure 5.2.1.1 Composite Mughal Elephant Painting, 1600[41]

As Castelli has revealed, the model of Mughal composite painting is employed in Lee's translation of multiple sequences. As much of the film relies on digitalization, the composite painting sets up a basic IST model within the film's visuality.

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[41] Source: Composite elephant, Mughal, circa 1600. In Agha Khan Museum, Toronto. The illustration displayed part of the painting.

Example 1. Composite painting – design

> 1 EXT. PONDICHERRY ZOO, INDIA, 1961 – DAY
>
> … Flamingoes strut about in the aviary, their pink feathers reflected in the water…
>
> (Magee 2010: 1)

Figure 5.2.1.2 Mural of a Composite Elephant in Pondicherry Zoo[42]

A dense employment of the composite model can be found in Lee's translation of the film's starting scene, where the composite painting is borrowed, on screen, as an exotic mural (see Figure 5.2.1.2) of the Pondicherry zoo. The mural is chipped and faded, and the picture depicts a prince in a white robe and pagri turban, armed with a bow and arrow, and riding a war elephant. With a closer look, it can be seen that the figure is a mosaic of various small animals and characters. The elephant's entire body is made up of numerous characters and animals that are related to the prince in some way. In this sequence, the model of composite painting is loaned as a decorative genre in the opaquest form. It strikes the viewer as an exotic pictorial component with no explanation. Such an exotic

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[42] Source: *Life of Pi*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 00.00.58 – 00.01.13).

component functions as a symbolic sign of India and thus implies the country in which Pondicherry Zoo is found. The empty shot of the mural lasts only for 2 seconds before the group of flamingos that are described in the IST blueprint enter the frame from the left-hand side and distract the audience's attention from the mural. It functions as a hidden design which may only be understood through a combined reading with the composite figurations which follow.

Example 2. Composite painting – picture action and design

IST blueprint

> A141 EXT. THE LIFEBOAT – NIGHT
>
> … RP'S POV – starting on his own reflection in the water and travelling downward, through schools of darting tuna, squid and lantern fish, past fleeting memories of a storm and zoo animals struggling to survive in churning waters…

> (Magee 2010: 57)

Figure 5.2.1.3 A giant squid attacks a sperm whale[43]

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[43] Source: *Life of Pi*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.24.39 – 01.24.52).

Figure 5.2.1.4 The figure then disperses into a composite of animals[44]

A less dense but obvious employment of the IST model concerns Lee's translation of the underwater scene where hallucinations of underwater lives and Pi's memories are described. The mise-en-scène depicts the deep-sea battle between a giant squid and a sperm whale, and the action follows the figure of the giant squid attacking the sperm whale with its tentacles wrapped around the whale's head (see Figure 5.2.1.3). Then the figure transforms into a shell figure which is loaded with a mosaic of a hippo, zebra, giraffe, crocodile, leopard, elephant and rhinoceros, all of which come from the Pondicherry Zoo (see Figure 5.2.1.4). An obvious transposition of the composite style may trigger an interconnection with the elephant mural in the earlier sequence, and thus set up an intra-textual relationship which emphasizes the film's cultural background. The frames of the underwater composition depict the animals from Pondicherry Zoo and each component has been shown separately in the film's opening sequence. This composite model therefore establishes an index between Pi's past and the animals as symbolic icons of everything that belongs to Pi's family.

In this context, the employment of the IST model can be considered as a re-contextualization of the Mughal composite model. The traditional Mughal

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[44] Source: *Life of Pi*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.24.52 – 01.25.00).

composite elephant figure translates a sense of stability which shows the unity of souls and reincarnations. The composite figure of the giant squid fighting the sperm whale, on the contrary, describes a perilous situation by giving the visual impression of suffocation and struggle. The animals in the sequence are squeezed into an unstable shell following the struggling motions of the squid and the whale, which eventually tear the composition apart into different sections. The darkness of the deep ocean background establishes a theme of a dangerous abyss, which contrasts with the often bright and warm colour theme of the Mughal composite paintings. In this sequence, the composite model is adjusted to fit the diegetic development as a metaphorical depiction of Pi's ship-wreck situation. Pi, through gazing into the abyss, recollects not only his past but also the depth of his inner world. The composition may therefore function as a signification of the many possibilities that hide under a visual singularity, here represented by the whale.

Beside the formal employment of the composite painting, the composite model functions also as a visual code for a more dynamic form of model employment. This is exemplified in the sequence of underwater hallucinations.

Example 3. Composite painting – picture action + design

<u>IST blueprint</u>

> A141 EXT. THE LIFEBOAT – NIGHT
>
> … Pi finding a broken ship and memories of a former life lying dormant on the ocean floor…

> (Magee 2010: 57)

Figure 5.2.1.5 The luminous lotus flower composed of countless luminous micro-organisms[45]

Figure 5.2.1.6 The flower then changes into a hallucinatory image of Pi's mother[46]

In translating the underwater scene, as the camera zooms deeper towards the bottom of the ocean, large-scale sea creatures give way to small-scale zooplankton. The basic components of composite figures change from fishes, whales, sharks and squid into particle-like luminescent jellyfish. The bio-luminescent and gregarious jellyfishes function as image pixels, and contribute a more dynamic form of digitalized visual effect that enables the creation of

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[45] Source: *Life of Pi* by Ang Lee (Time: 01.25.22 – 01.25.28).

[46] Ibid. (Time: 01.25.28 – 01.25.36).

identifiable visual forms. The composition is less in the formalistic form of a stylistic painting, and more closely related to actual footage. As the abstract forms made up of bubbles and micro-plants disperse, a lotus flower appears which is composed of a vast number of bio-luminescent jellyfish (see Figure 5.2.1.5). This filmic semiotic language imbues the imagistic form with a dynamic representation of motion. The use of the jellyfish as constituents enables the dynamic representation possibility of the composition. The composite lotus flower is then transformed into a composite figure of Pi's mother (see Figure 5.2.1.6) as a concretized figure of "a former life" that is described in the IST blueprint. The dynamic transformation connects the two icons as interrelated symbols which equate the lotus flower and the mother figure as mutual indexical symbols.

Example 4. Composite painting – montage

The use of the composition technique emphasizes the subtle correlation between the visual forms, which constantly refer to the complex indexes inside what has been seen as "memories of a former life" (as described in the IST blueprint in Magee 2010: 57). The correlations between the shell figure and its constituents are not only limited to the portrait of composite images in isolated film scenes, but are also shown through the interconnection between these scenes. The technique of composite painting is, therefore, also employed on the film-editing panel. This montage of sequences, not of an immediate sequence-to-sequence connection, creates a space-time intratextual connection between the current composite picture actions, and the concrete picture action earlier in the film's time-line.

Figure 5.2.1.7 The interconnection between the lotus flower and the underwater hallucinatory image of it[47]

Figure 5.2.1.8 The interconnection between the figure of Pi's mother and the hallucinatory image of her[48]

This underwater scene provides strong connotations of Pi's past by formally connecting the illusionary composite figures underwater with actual frames from the earlier sequence where Pi's mother introduces the Hindu religion to Pi as a child. The composite underwater lotus flower figure corresponds to the lotus flower which Pi's mother drew on the floor with white sand (see Figure 5.2.1.7). The composite mother figure, transformed from the composite lotus figure, formally corresponds to the close-up of Pi's mother (see Figure 5.2.1.8). Lee's intratextual link between the actual figure and composite figure establishes an actual shell figure to underpin the indexical relationship that is presented in later composite figures. This interconnection offers a way to generate meaning which, according to Iampolski, is "generated between a physically given datum and an image residing in the memory" (1998: 250). Itstrengthens the intratextual link between the sequences for a cinematic metaphor that the fantasy-like visions in

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[47] Source: *Life of Pi* by Ang Lee (Time: 00.12.49 – 00.12.58 and 01.25.14 – 01.25.31).

[48] Ibid.

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Pi's story-telling may have their own indexes with Pi's memory. This index-icon relationship is established as a constant reference to the connotative nature of the composite model. This is just as Iampolski observes, "cinematic figures emerge as a complex semantic process, whose complexity escalates the more it ramifies into a wider intertextual field" (1998: 249). Lee's intratextual link establishes a concrete pictorial landscape-face relationship (on landscape-face as a concept, see Deleuze & Guattari 2003: 172) and serves as a strong visual metaphor by revisiting scenes that the viewer has already seen.

The intratextual link establishes a concrete icon of the shell image, and the assemblage of this shell figure, later in the film's time-line. This correlation serves as a constant reminder of the multi-layered narrative that the film seeks to present by juxtaposing radically different versions of Pi's survival story. Each visual form that appears in Pi's first narrative thus becomes a signifier that is way more complex than its iconic form. The composite visual technique functions as an efficient meaning-making mechanism that allows the audience to generate meanings through these intratexts, by regarding the figurations of the film as symbols that are to be further deciphered. The composite model employed provides a new form of visual perception, and stimulates a reflection on the visual metaphor which provides viewers with a more energetic way of reading the film.

Lee's employment of the composite model invests in a strong visual motif which resonates with the unusual means of story-telling employed in the film. The IST blueprint describes a second version of Pi's survival story which provides a shocking plot twist, and deconstructs the visual components of the first narrative. With the twisted plot in mind, an index-icon relationship is established between the audio-visual components of Pi's first story and the details of Pi's second story. The composite model employed thus facilitates the film's visual code as a constant stimulus which urges the viewer to question its visual forms, and to meditate on the hidden meanings behind these forms, and forces the viewer to revisit their earlier audio-visual perceptions.

5.3 Foreign Intrasemiotic IST Models (A2B2 IST Models)

Foreign intersemiotic IST models may be considered as opaque and distinctively ethnographic, whereas foreign intrasemiotic IST models, representing the 'parole' and 'langue' of TT language itself, are comparatively transparent. In the present case, the term 'foreign intrasemiotic IST models' refer to the filmic audio-visual patterns represented in a foreign culture. If, as Lee has said, film is referred to by the Chinese as the 'Western lens' (西洋镜), then it may be assumed that most of the filmic patterns he employs are to be identified as foreign. Although regarding the entire film as foreign may seem an oversimplified way of perceiving this heavily interculturally mediated medium (as discussed in Chapter 6), the very concept of 'Western scope' does reveal the cultural genealogy of the film medium. Hence, an interpretation of 'Western scope' may provide insights to help us understand what it means for the translator to employ foreign intrasemiotic IST models. In addition to what was said in Section 5.1, there are two ways to interpret the notion of a 'Western lens'.

Firstly, it can be understood as referring to the foreignness of the film language itself. It emphasizes the fact that filmmaking is for Lee an IST process of interpreting verbal signs from the IST blueprints by means of signs from the filmic audio-visual sign system of a foreign cultural system. These modes of signification offer performance instructions that are to be learned or rather inevitably used as the 'parole' and 'langue' that constitute the TT. In this sense, therefore, the audio-visual film language is borrowed, whereas the audio-visual texts represent ready-made models and the intersemiotic translator is obliged to construct their audio-visual solution with these IST models so that an IST may be initiated in the first place. This may be analysed analogously to Toury's concept of "textual linguistic norms" which "govern the selection of linguistic material for the formulation of the target text, or the replacement of the original material" (2012: 83). In the context of intersemiotic translation, foreign intrasemiotic IST

models represent the norms which influence the formulation of film text itself in an unmediated manner.

Secondly, the 'lens' of the 'Western lens' may be understood analogously with the concept of 'gaze', which represents the apparatus with which to "look at" objects. In this sense, film is to be regarded as a cultural lens adopted by members of other cultures (especially 'the West'). This indicates that when a non-Western translator is making a film, he/she invokes this foreign 'lens' as an efficient gazing machine with which to look at their own culture. This again relates to Chow's notion of "to-be-looked-at-ness" in the sense that translators are using the eyes of Western ethnographers as an active tool to represent themselves (1995: 180). In addition to Chow's theoretical concept, it may be argued that the object of gaze is not limited to the translator's home objects but may be used as a lens to "look at" spectacles from other culture. It is in this sense that the foreign intrasemiotic IST model that is film is to be understood as an omnipresent 'cinematic lens'. The models not only represent specific meaning-making mechanisms for members of the foreign culture to make sense of the world in a "transparent" and "transmissible" manner. More specifically, they provide within the represented filmic patterns the lens for the intersemiotic translator to be able to translate that part of another culture which is under-translated by films of his/her own culture.

Lee's employment of prolonged following shot and explicit sex may exemplify how an intersemiotic translator translates by employing his/her foreign intrasemiotic IST models.

5.3.1 Prolonged Following Shot

In cinematic terms, "a take is one run of the camera that records a single shot" and a 'long take' therefore describes a shot of notable length (Bordwell 2004: 285). In the Hollywood context, a long take is employed to serve the "continuity norm" which stands for "the smoothly flowing narrative, with its

technique constantly in the service of the causal chain, yet always effacing itself"
(Thompson 1985: 194-195). Continuity may, however, be achieved without
editing, whereas a prolonged take may load the shot with "causal chains" of
events in order to achieve a flowing narrative. This expressive quality of the
prolonged take is described by Bordwell as follows: "The long take may use
panning, tracking, craning, or zooming to present continually changing vantage
points that are comparable in some ways to the shifts of view supplied by editing"
(2004: 286). He also suggests that "the long-take can present, in a single chunk
of time, a complex pattern of events moving towards a goal, and this ability shows
that shot duration can be as important to the image as photographic qualities and
framing are" (ibid.: 287). In addition to prolonged duration, for its plot-driven
narrative the Hollywood continuity norm emphasizes that what drives the plot is
having the focus constantly on the protagonist. Thus, a prolonged following shot
is often adopted by Hollywood filmmakers as their cinematographic model.

Prolonged following shots combine the concept of the long take with the
"following shot", whereas the "following shot" describes a camera movement
that traces a figure as it moves (ibid.: 273), and the "prolonged following shot"
describes the pattern "in which the camera tracks a character moving along a
lengthy path" (Bordwell 2006: 134). This pattern is a direct response to the
continuity norm, where the lengthy shot represents how the protagonists
experience a chain of events in a way that is spatially and temporally unbroken.
Classic examples of such usage can be seen in the trench scene in Stanley
Kubrick's *Paths of Glory* (1957), where a single shot shows a general taking a
walk through the trenches and thereby depicts the situation of the soldiers in the
trenches.

Figure 5.3.1.1 Prolonged following shot of the walk in the trenches in *Path of Glory*[49]

According to Bordwell, "partly because of these influential figures [like Stanley Kubrick], and thanks to lighter cameras, and stabilizers like Steadicam, the shot pursuing one or two characters down hallways, through room after room, indoors and outdoors and back again, has become ubiquitous" (ibid.: 135). Such employment of the prolonged following shot follows what Richard Maltby sees as a continuity system which "constructs the space in which its action unfolds as a smooth and continuous flow across shots" (2003: 312). These prolonged following shots "are held long enough for the audience to take conscious notice of the camera's position in the screen space, and each shot is presented as if 'triggered' by the events unfolding in the fiction, as the camera reframes to accommodate figure movement" (ibid.).

The prolonged following shot is not a transition device but is used for a detailed explication of the character's inner feelings through maintaining the focus on one individual. To this end, mise-en-scène becomes the background which provides the spectator with the character's situation. Lee's focus is constantly on the individuals, and he makes the performers, not the landscape, the locus of his visuality, while allowing the landscape to be the background: with the mid shot leaving space between the character and the background.

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[49] Source: *Paths of Glory* by Stanley Kubrick (Time 00.05.52 – 00.07.17).

Contrary to Ang Lee's home IST models, the Hollywood prolonged following shot is to be considered as a character-strengthening rather than a landscape-strengthening visual pattern. Here the tracked movement makes the landscape (or cityscape) the background, and serves to translate the feelings of the protagonist, who is often placed at the centre of the field of view. Hence the prolonged following shot, as a foreign IST model, reverses the spatial and semiotic relationships in Lee's home IST models. Space is thus reduced to the function of an index rather than a concretized and strengthened icon. These prolonged following shots serve only to explicate what is experienced by the character, where the movement and the face of the character are forcefully emphasized. Lee frequently adopts this reversion, since it is the oft-neglected and repressed individual that he forcefully seeks to highlight. Compared to the negative space strengthening model (described in Section 4.2.1), the prolonged following shot specifically depicts the human, normally arranged in a medium shot in a visible range. By placing the human figure at the camera's centre of focus, space serves as a background whose only role is to serve as an index sign to render the human's emotion, which is the constant focus of Lee's creation.

The employment of the prolonged following shot may be considered as Lee's subversion of a Hollywood norm in his role as translator. However, the selection of such an IST model must be considered as using a foreign language pattern to fit the translation of his intention, when such 'language' is deficient in his home cultural repertoire. Thus, Lee employs the prolonged following shot primarily to switch focus from the landscape to the oft-neglected individual, i.e., to discover the individual's feelings and how this individual interacts with the cityscape or landscape.

Lee's employment of the prolonged following shot model may be seen in the following three examples in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, *Lust, Caution* and *Life of Pi*. The foreign angle presented in this IST model serves as Lee's cinematic lens in depicting his heroes, and introducing a cultural translation of his home and foreign cultural context.

Example 1. Bridge sequence in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*

Duration: 22 seconds

IST blueprint

    EXT. BRIDGE – Day

    Bo is searching for the Tsais. The bridge is full of jugglers. But the two are

    nowhere to be found.

(Wang, Schamus & Tsai 2000: 54)

Figure 5.3.1.3 Medium shot of cross talk[50]   **Figure 5.3.1.4 Bo enters the frame**

Figure 5.3.1.5 Blocked by a camel   **Figure 5.3.1.6 … camera moves in front of Bo**

Figure 5.3.1.7 continues swerving to Bo's right   **Figure 5.3.1.8 to Bo's back**

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[50] Source: *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 00.22.44 – 00.23.06)
This applies to Figure 5.3.1.3 to Figure 5.3.1.12.

Figure 5.3.1.9 to Bo's left **Figure 5.3.1.10 to a medium shot with more space**

Figure 5.3.1.11 follows to depict **Figure 5.3.1.12 … the exotic performances**

The IST blueprint describes the moment in the plot where Bo is searching for the Tsais on the crowded bridge (the outer gate area of Beijing where jugglers perform to make a living). It depicts the state of confusion when Bo cannot find what he is looking for. Here, Lee uses the following long take to depict Bo's confusion in the ethnographized Beijing City, where the crowded space, in all its complexity, only makes matter worse.

Ethnographized China refers to the mis-en-scène, where exotic Chinese art forms like cross-talk, acrobatics and music performance are used to translate the "jugglers" in the IST blueprint. In this context, the prolonged following shot presents a foreign cinematic lenswhich puts Lee's home "jugglers" under gaze. The prolonged following shot keeps the focus of the camera frame constantly on Bo. This form of "mobile frame" (Bordwell 2004: 266) enables an overall depiction of these art forms as part of the surroundings, thus rendering the complex background around him. In this way, the spectators are becoming very aware of Bo's situation by looking at the exotic and deliberately ethnographized 'China' that is represented through the body of the Old Beijing cityscape. The foreign lens serves to alienate and distance the ethnographized mise-en-scène.

This means that, the foreign lens presents a different way to defamiliarize the intersemiotic translators' home cultural objects. They are to be visually perceived under a new angle as a new audio-visual construction and to be seen "in a new and unforeseen way" (Jameson 1972: 52). Thus, the mise-en-scène is not only perceived as an exotic visual construction "to-be-looked-at" by the eyes of foreign spectators but also as a "foreign body" (Chow 1995: 199) to be perceived by spectators from Lee's own culture.

As Bo enters the frame (Figure 5.3.1.4), the camera traces his movement by circling him clockwise so that Bo functions as the camera's axis. The circling camera depicts Bo's surroundings in continuity, to translate the street in its totality. The foreign gaze captures an all-round visualization of all sorts of characters as part of Lee's denotation of the cityscape, and presents a personal angle from Bo as an individual. Lee's IST translates his perception of the cityscape. Thus, the foreign IST model represents an individual rather than a trans-individual view of the mise-en-scène (which is often presented in Lee's home IST model). Lee uses the prolonged following shot model to establish a character-driven scene, with the narrowed and yet focused angle presenting a human-space interaction with Bo placed at the centre of the frame, which directs the audience's attention to him.

The prolonged following shot offers an undulating depiction of Bo as he searches through the streets. As he goes past the camel (Figure 5.3.1.4), the swerving camera presents a changing view, with the cross-talkers now moving to the background and the audience gathered round them becoming visible (Figure 5.3.1.6). As the camera follows Bo and circles round, it captures peddlers to his left (Figure 5.3.1.7) and in front of him (Figure 5.3.1.8). As the camera circles to Bo's left, two jugglers come into view, with one playing with bow and one performing an exotic belly-dance (see Figure 5.3.1.9). The camera then again circles to Bo's left, into a medium shot allowing more space in the background (see Figure 5.3.1.10). Bo then walks past the two jugglers performing exotic ethnic arts to allow them to be gazed at more closely (see Figures 5.3.1.11 and 5.3.1.12).

The circling camera continually captures both the protagonist's body and his face. The circling movement constantly establishes an interaction with the human face and the changing view in the mobile frame. The commonly adopted medium shot in the model of a prolonged following shot keeps the human face in a visible camera distance. On this basis, with Bo as the axis, Lee's circling camera eye may capture Bo's figure from both anterior and posterior viewpoints. Thus, in addition to establishing the changing position of protagonists, this pattern of camera movement can denote how the landscape affects the mood.

Example 2. *Lust, Caution*   Duration: 40 seconds

IST blueprint

> EXT. NANKING ROAD – SHANGHAI – WINTER 1942 - DAY
>
> A late afternoon, bright winter light still fills the air as she walks out onto the street. Her watch says almost four-thirty.
>
> On the streets, she looks around, but recognizes no one.
>
> No tricycle cab in front, so she walks over to Seymour Road.
>
> People throng the sidewalks and many tricycles zoom by, but none is vacant.
>
> (Wang & Schamus 2007: 216-217)

Figure 5.3.1.13 Long shot Wang walks out[51]   **Figure 5.3.1.14 to a medium shot trying to catch a cab**

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[51] Source: *Lust, Caution*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 02.21.18 – 02.21.58). This applies to Figure 5.3.1.13 to Figure 5.3.1.22.

Figure 5.3.1.15 She has failed

Figure 5.3.1.16 Crossing the street

Figure 5.3.1.17 Trying to catch another cab

Figure 5.3.1.18 Failed again

Figure 5.3.1.19 She has reached the other side

Figure 5.3.1.20 as people pass by

Figure 5.3.1.21… she walks back pointlessly

Figure 5.3.1.22 … to the side she came from

In this case, the IST blueprint describes the situation after the heroine Wang Chia-Chi had blown her identity by deliberately releasing the target, Mr Yee. She is at a complete loss. The city, however, rolls on like a machine, strangely untouched by the incident, and in this uneasily normal atmosphere of cityscape, she is expecting her death. The IST blueprint depicts the situation which renders her utter helplessness, desperation and perplexity. Lee employs the prolonged following shot as a model to translate the mood of desperation through a lengthy

depiction of the threatening atmosphere.

Here, the IST model of the prolonged following shot again supports Lee in translating this entire segment of message in one take. It permits an unbroken narrative, so that Wang's situation is embodied. In this context, the background space represents Lee's visual construction of the city of Shanghai under Japanese occupation at that time a treacherous city cloaked in a highly Westernized cityscape where historical spatial-temporal semiotics are emphasized over opaque ethnographic ones. Lee's translation of space must be seen as restoring the aura of the spatial-temporal context, and the prolonged following shot is to be understood as Lee's translation of Wang's personal encounter with history by placing her vulnerable body against the spatial-temporal background represented by the cityscape.

Wang's vulnerable state, described in the IST blueprint, is then translated with a lengthy and continuous depiction of her that unfolds the relationship between her face (and her emotional expression) and the cityscape (the surreally indifferent and bustling atmosphere of the street). This is translated first through Lee's "word for word" translation of the diegetic information given in the IST blueprint that Wang twice fails to catch a tricycle cab. The medium shot pattern of the prolonged following shot model keeps both Wang's figure and the cityscape at a close distance, with her face close enough to create meaning while communicating emotion. It can be seen how the sense of perplexity is translated through Wang's reaction as she tries to catch a cab (Figure 5.3.1.14) and fails, only to see the occupied cab race away (Figure 5.3.1.15). As she walks along the street, the mobile frame becomes a medium shot of her back, and she tries to catch another cab (see Figure 5.3.1.17) and, to her despair, fails again (Figure 5.3.1.18). The prolonged shot keeps the audience's attention concentrated on Wang in order to capture the whole process of the transmission of this diegetic information. In this context, the translation establishes the contrast in pace between that of Wang and that of the street. Accordingly, the non-vacant tricycle cab is an index of the pace of the street, which proceeds in its mechanical functions regardless of

Wang's emotion. It also translates perplexity in its depiction of how Wang is trapped in this space and yet is somehow detached and alienated from it.

The prolonged following shot also unveils how the cityscape, unfolded through the mobile frame, presents a change of view to depict the environment that traps and surrounds Wang. The prolonged following shot permits a continuous unfolding of that environment, representing a change of different spatial planes in a 'flat-deep-flat' pattern. The change of view presents both the space of the cityscape in the depth of view, and, in shallow focus, the mise-en-scène of the unfamiliar groups of people on the street who share no interactions and therefore further detach Wang from the cityscape. Lee first adopts a shallow depth-of-view of one side of the road as Wang walks out of the shop (Figures 5.3.1.13 and 5.3.1.14). Behind her, groups of people are walking along the road. As Wang crosses the street, the mobile frame follows her, to transit to a deep depth of view in superimposing her against the deep dimension of the street (Figures 5.3.1.15 and 5.3.1.16). As Wang walks to the other side of Seymour Road, the camera reframes back to the view of her depicted against the depthless image of the other side (Figures 5.3.1.17 to 5.3.1.19). The camera then shows a more populous environment, where Wang is blocked in the middle ground, encircled by the pedestrians on the road and the bicycles and tricycle cabs whooshing past in the foreground. As she walks back, the camera reverses the pattern from the depth of the street (Figures 5.3.1.21 and 5.3.1.22) to the depthless opposite side of the street. The model connects them in the pattern of a constant flow through the angle of Wang, to communicate the sense of detachment and an uncomfortably undisturbed dimension, thus establishing a sense of isolation and helplessness. The prolonged following shot of Wang wandering in this space only increases this uneasiness.

Unlike the previous example, Lee's employment of the prolonged following shot does not adopt the tracking 360-degree shot. Nevertheless, the tracing movement does capture the three combined elements of space, body and face. Wang's face is visible enough to communicate meaning in order to denote her

personal feeling towards the space – body relationship. The prolonged following shot was, however, also used by Lee to depict only the space-body relationship, with the face deliberately left absent. An example of this occurs in *Life of Pi*.

Example 3. *Life of Pi* - Underwater Sequence   Duration: 59 seconds[52]

<u>IST blueprint</u>

EXT. BENEATH THE WATER - CONTINUOUS 80

> Silence as Pi hangs below the surface, arms wide, groping for focus and calm. Lightning casts a blazing white veil over the surface of the water above him, backlighting fish and animals, and waves frozen in time like wrinkled bedsheets, their motionless texture pocked and dimpled with raindrops. As the sky explodes in white flashes, the scene is caught in surreal still shots.
>
> A hippo swims past, its heavy form moving gracefully. Pi swims toward the camera - then freezes, reacting in horror as a shark swoops past him and up toward the struggling animals near the surface. Pi dives defensively - the camera follows. Ahead, the Tsimtsum is visible, fifty feet beyond Pi, its deck lights dipping below the surface, casting an eerie underwater glow, bubbles flowing up to the surface; nearby, Pi can make out a floating oar.

(Magee 2010: 36-37)

Figure 5.3.1.23 Pi dives under water   **Figure 5.3.1.24 … lightning makes the sharks visible**

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[52] Source: *Life of Pi*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 00.42.47 – 00.43.46). This applies to Figure 5.3.1.23 to Figure 5.3.1.30.

Figure 5.3.1.25 Trying to avoid the sharks

Figure 5.3.1.26 Pi dives deeper as camera pans left

Figure 5.3.1.27 to a medium shot facing the sinking ship in awe

Figure 5.3.1.28 Pi swims back to the lifeboat

Figure 5.3.1.29 Passing through as the sharks attack the hippopotamus
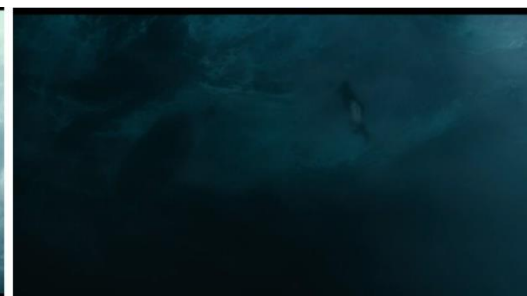
Figure 5.3.1.30 Long shot to Pi's life boat

The IST blueprint depicts the scene of an underwater shipwreck. The deep underwater space is described in a surreal pattern, with the environment above water disastrous, and the storm unleashing its rage over the sea and mirroring the wayward and dangerous environment beneath the surface. The blueprint also describes the shipwreck, where Pi sees the ship carrying his entire family sinking into the abyss of the ocean. Thus, this scene is to be understood as a formal depiction of how Pi is deprived of all his family and is reduced to a lonely soul cast away on his own unknown adventure. Lee employs the prolonged following shot model to combine the space of the ocean and the shipwreck in a single unity,

so that the uninterrupted representation allows the audience to embody the situation in which Pi finds himself.

Unlike the previous two examples, the prolonged following shot employed in this case does not provide much change of camera position. The camera movement is no more than a 'pan right to left' pattern following Pi's movement. In this scene, length of shot is emphasized more than the camera movement itself. In other words, the two views presented in the prolonged following shot are each given enough time to be formally registered by the spectator. The prolonged following shot first captures the mise-en-scène near the surface of the sea, seen from underwater, with the icons described in the IST blueprint, where the hippopotamus swims and the shark swoops by (Figures 5.3.1.23 and 5.3.1.24). The mise-en-scène translates danger through the depiction of the movement of dangerous sharks and the drowning hippopotamus. The camera track-pans from left to right following Pi as he dives to transit to the mise-en-scène of the shipwreck (Figures 5.3.1.25 and 5.3.1.26) to a medium shot where he hovers, suspended, watching the ship sink glowing with eerie underwater light (Figure 5.3.1.27). This part translates the sense of the abyss through a still time-image with the freeze frame focus on the sinking ship as an icon now fully registered with the spectator. After the shot is held for a few seconds, the camera pans back, following Pi as he swims back to the boat, then to the previous view where groups of sharks kill the hippopotamus (Figure 5.3.1.29), and then to a long shot of Pi and the floating lifeboat (Figure 5.3.1.30). The prolonged undulating shot encompasses the two views so that the dangerous underwater area close at hand and the faraway eerie shipwreck deep below form a spatial unity to give the viewers a sense of depth. In this case, the lengthy underwater shot traps the character in this unfathomable and dangerous space so that the sense of suffocation is fully translated and emphasized.

Another difference from the previous two examples is that the prolonged following shot does not depict Pi's face. Though Pi is framed within a medium long shot, both the dark and shady tonality and the angle adopted present a

deliberate avoidance of any facial presentation. Thus, a prolonged following shot in this context establishes a human-space relationship only through superimposing the body within the space. Such an appropriation of the following shot must be read as an example of Lee's insertion of Ingmar Bergman's model in the film *The Virgin Spring* (1960).

Figure 5.3.1.31 Long shot of the father asking God why such a calamity has befallen his family[53]

In *The Virgin Spring*, after the father has avenged the rape of his daughter and found her body, he kneels down and asks God why this has happened. Rather than a close-up of the father's facial expression, Bergman frames the father within a long shot with him kneeling and facing away from the camera. It is by means of this pattern that Bergman, by deliberately distancing the performer, translates the intense mood through the human body only. Mood is translated here not through icon but through index, where the back of the body alone suggests the intense mood that is too strong to be depicted directly through facial expression. Ang Lee personally responded strongly to this scene:

Usually, in this yearning, questioning, soulful performance, you would put the camera in front of him in the high angle of him look up. But it was

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[53] Source: *The Virgin Spring*, directed by Ingmar Bergman (Time: 01 01.23.05 – 01.23.21).

peculiar I noticed that camera was way in the back behind the father. And that really strikes me as something that so mysterious and contemplative. Until this day, I occasionally I put camera behind actor when he is thinking about something fundamentally important and when somebody in a contemplative mood, I could not help myself to imitate that shot.[54]

Accordingly, it may be safe to presume that the absence of face in the underwater following shot is the result of Lee's employment of Bergman's model. In this context, Pi is the sole protagonist of the shot, and his feeling is translated through the environment, with his body enveloped in the environment and seen from behind. The way Lee has appropriated the prolonged following shot model thus constitutes a refusal of the "affection image" – that which communicates meaning through a close up of an expressive face with well-loaded details and their micro-movments and at the expense of sacrificing all other movements (Deleuze 2005: 89-90). The outcome of Lee's appropriation specifically applies to the moment when the camera pans to the medium shot of Pi looking at the sinking boat and seeing the loss of his family (Figure 5.3.1.27). Instead of cutting to a reaction close-up of Pi's face (which Hollywood films tend to do under such circumstances) the prolonged following shot fixes in the frame from behind Pi's back, allowing his stunned, drifting body to serve as an index of how the intense feelings evoked by the tragic scene ahead of him have affected him.

5.3.2 Explicit Sexual Representation

Explicit sexual representation describes a filmic depiction of sexuality in a way that is graphic. In this pattern, sex is performed with straightforward nudity, sometimes with the performers' genitals exposed, as they engage in either simulated or un-simulated sexual behaviour. This visual pattern, considered as a

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[54] Ang Lee on Ingmar Bergman's *The Virgin Spring*, retrieved via: https://youtu.be/vfUzWn_R7jE.

direct, 'literal' translation of sexuality, may find its genealogy in pornography, and has then, like other audio-visual art forms, been mediated and merged into film 'language'. Examples can be found in the sexploitation that is shown in the European or Japanese cinema, with the films of Michelangelo Antonioni or Bernardo Bertolucci as examples (see Figure 5.3.2.1), and with Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom* (1975) and Nagisa Oshima's *In the Realm of the Senses* (1976) exemplifying how such exhibitionism may be pushed to extremes.

Figure 5.3.2.1 Explicit sex scene in Bertolucci's *Last Tango in Paris*[55]

An exhibitionist display of sex is regarded as a foreign intrasemiotic IST model in the sense that such an audio-visual pattern violates Lee's home cultural norm. To be more precise, in Lee's home cultural context, not only is the display of nudity restricted, but sex itself is an under-translated subject. In this, the language pattern or repertoire produced within Chinese culture, especially in film, is deficient when compared to other cultures. Accordingly, graphic sex as a model is borrowed and introduced from audio-visual patterns from outside China. Explicit sexual representation may therefore be considered as a foreign 'language' pattern for Lee.

That explicit sex is affiliated to the repertoires of foreign cultures does not mean that the texts resulting from such a translation strategy are not controversial

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[55] Source: *Last Tango in Paris*, directed by Bernardo Bertolucci (Time: 00.35.01 – 00.37.13).

in that culture. In other words, such an audio-visual construction is always rebelled against by the dominant codes of any culture. This may be explained by the position of pornography in the cultural polysystem.

Laura Kipnis observes that "pornography provides a realm of transgression that is, in effect, a counter-aesthetics to dominant norms for bodies, sexualities, and desire itself" (2006: 121). Kipnis, therefore, argues that pornography presents the opposing side of a culture's canon, concluding that "if culture is grouped along a hierarchy from high to low, then this puts pornography into analogy with the bottom tiers of the social structure" (ibid.: 126). For this reason, the exploitation of sex scenes in film, precisely because it violates the culture codes, inevitably results in the film being relegated to the most restricted ratings. It means that such a translation strategy, even in the cultures where it is most visible, procures a peripheral position within the film system of that culture. A brief explanation is called for here as to why it is necessary for filmmakers to translate sex in an explicit way, given that "a creator only does what he or she absolutely needs to do" (Deleuze 2007: 321).

One way to interpret it is that explicit sex, as an audio-visual pattern, exposes the fragments of society that are concealed by that society. For instance, explicit sex in pornography "induces us to look at what's conventionally banished from view" (Kipnis 2006: 120). What is often concealed is the most intimate aspect of relationships between social members. It is because it is private that the emotional bondage between individuals speaks most truthfully and without any social semiotic fabrications. Unlike pornography, explicit sex scenes are employed to translate real-life problems rather than a merely superficial representation of visceral pleasure. As Tanya Krzywinska observes, in hard-core pornography the audiences are invited to identify with "the pleasure and sensation of the participants" (2006: 224), whereas explicit cinematic representation of sex (real sex films, in her original context) "are designed to address real-life problems, tensions and conflicts of interest that arise in relation to sex, including gender politics and the complexities of interpersonal relations" (ibid.: 46). Beyond the

visceral sensations, therefore, explicit sex in film is designed for the skopos that through watching sex, "the spectator is narratively cued and cajoled into making an emotional, empathic and speculative investment in the two characters" (ibid.: 224).

For the above-mentioned analysis, explicit sex scenes in film must be understood as a realist translation strategy. Such a reality not only invites a direct look at the intense and concealed sensations, but also emotionally involves the spectators with the characters' situation. For Lee, the capacity of the explicit sex model to negotiate intimacy and reality is important. Sexuality – the tabooed and often under-translated object in Lee's home culture – has been massively supplemented by the representation of sexuality in foreign cultures. Employing the exhibitionist representation of sex is not only to be considered as an integration, or a political gesture, it also adheres to Lee's translative intention – the repressed individual's voice is actively expressed and heard through sex.

In the meantime, it is when two characters are naked and therefore deprived of the semiotics of their social identities (as signifiers of labels or camouflages) that they are reduced to communication through their bodies. Hence, the excessive sensations of the spectators make an emotional empathic and speculative investment in the characters with the effect that their emotional interaction is translated all the more fully. This is the reason why explicit sex as an IST model is employed to translate the real relationship between Wang and Yee, when they are facing each other in all their naked simplicity and free of any artifice. Lee's first assistant director Roseanna Ng responded to this point:

> The love scenes in *Lust, Caution* portrayed not only lust, but the struggle between lust and passion, and between love and hate by extension. The exposition of the complex and convoluted nature of the relationship between Wang Chia-chi and Mr. Yee relied solely on these scenes.
>
> (Ng 2007: 257)

It should be emphasized that explicit sex scenes are not without their

economic functions. This radical IST model is invented to negotiate the IST itself, and its visibility in the film market. Krzywinska argues that European art films use sex as a spectacle to negotiate visibility: "In looking to hard-core to win audience attention, European art cinema appears to be using the attraction of real-life sex to compete with the sensation-inducing spectacle of Hollywood's high-octane special effects-laden blockbusters" (2006: 218). With Krzywinska's comments in mind, it can be said that the IST models present the radical audio-visual pattern as a spectacle, so that the IST itself may gain visibility in the film market. Accordingly, visibility may be part of the reason why Lee decided to employ this model. As he remarked, "In order to win, we must strike the audiences with something spectacular, something that will surprise them and surpass whatever has been produced by others. Even if we present something as good as what the West can produce, the audience will still choose to see Western films." (Zhang 2013: 449, my translation). With this skopos in mind, and considering the IST blueprint is set against a Chinese background, Lee's employment of the model of explicit sexual representation may easily be considered as a self-orientalising approach which perfectly accords with Rey Chow's "to-be-looked-at-ness". This is, however, also to be understood in a broader sense within the scope of Chow's cultural translation theory, which will be mentioned later in this section.

For the reasons given above, for Lee, the employment of explicit sexual representation as a foreign intrasemiotic IST model, is also to be understood as a semantic pattern adopted to translate sex 'literally', 'straightforwardly' and 'depthlessly'. That is, sex is no longer regarded as an index through pretentious visual metaphor, but through the firstness icon of sex, in its corporeality in the most brutal and straightforward way. In Lee's context, therefore, sex is to be understood as a sign of authenticity, which he employs to translate not only sex but the reality of a relationship itself in its "brutal nakedness" (Chow 2011: 561). This is exemplified through a textual analysis of the following two examples from *Lust, Caution* where the explicit sex model takes its most visible forms.

Example 1.

<u>IST blueprint</u>

INT. YEE'S RESIDENCE – GUEST ROOM – SHANGHAI – DAY

> …

> Naked, on the bed, Yee on top of her – he takes her face in his hands, insisting that she look in his eyes.

> Afterward, they hold each other.

> …

<div align="right">(Wang & Schamus 2007: 181)</div>

Figure 5.3.2.2 Yee caresses Wang[56]

Figure 5.3.2.3 Wang licks Yee[57]

Figure 5.3.2.4 Cut to a German Shepherd[58]

Figure 5.3.2.5 Cut back to penetration[59]

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[56] Source: *Lust, Caution*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.40.19 – 01.40.45).

[57] Ibid. (Time: 01.40.45 – 01.40.55).

[58] Ibid. (Time: 01.40.55 – 01.41.04).

[59] Ibid. (Time: 01.41.04 – 01.41.14).

Figure 5.3.2.6 Yee refuses Wang's gaze[60]   **Figure 5.3.2.7 Yee gazes at Wang**[61]

Figure 5.3.2.8 Wang gazes back[62]   **Figure 5.3.2.9 They become intimate**[63]

As indicated in the IST blueprint, this is Wang and Yee's first sexual contact with no clothes, which indicates that the lovers share an intimacy. The IST blueprint describes a diegetic point where Wang insists on looking into Yee's eyes, indicating that she is trying to take an active role in the sexual contact, and showing that she is taking control of their relationship. Intimacy is the key theme of the scene, showing that they are building a mutual romantic contact between them. This is certainly a turning-point.

In addition to the messages described in the IST blueprint, Lee concretizes the scene by depicting the whole process of intercourse. The scene begins with foreplay, with a prolonged take starting from a close-up of Yee kissing and licking Wang's face and breast. The camera then pans left to the mirror which reflects a medium close-up of Yee kissing Wang's breast while his hand caresses her external labia, showing a tenderness sharply in contrast with his sadistic

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[60] Source: *Lust, Caution*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.41.14 – 01.41.49).

[61] Ibid. (Time: 01.41.49 – 01.42.01).

[62] Ibid. (Time: 01.42.01 – 01.42.16).

[63] Ibid. (Time: 01.42.16 – 01.42.40).

behaviour in the previous sex scene (Figure 5.3.2.2). It then cuts to Wang, who returns the favour by licking Yee, a performance showing an action which demonstrates an equal interactive contact (Figure 5.3.2.3). Once he has fully established the eroticism through the lustful tactile experience, Lee quickly jump cuts to the watch-dog, to break the flow of eroticism, and then to the long shot of Yee's armed guards outside his mansion (Figure 5.3.2.4). Guards and dogs, as signs of caution, abruptly break the flow of eroticism. The insertion of dogs between the graphic sex scenes simultaneously links up to Yee's profession as a secret agent experienced in the art of torture. With this meaning established, sex is no longer purely erotic, but an intertwined struggle between spies, a constant game of prey and predator. Lee then cuts back to a medium body shot of penetration and then slowly back to tilt up and down showing Yee on top, dominating Wang – a position where Yee also performs a male gaze (Figure 5.3.2.5). Wang tries to gaze back and interact actively with Yee, only to be refused, with Yee forcing her back down on the bed to safely maintain his dominance (Figure 5.3.2.6). This however gradually changes as Lee cuts to a prolonged shot showing Yee, still gazing (Figure 5.3.2.7), lying down level with Wang. A two-shot showing the change of position gives Wang a chance to return the gaze back to Yee (Figure 5.3.2.8). Lee then cuts to a two shot from above, showing the lovers holding each other (Figure 5.3.2.9), with Wang finally able to be intimate with Yee and 'make love' with him rather than being passively dominated by him. Lee then cuts to a close-up of Wang, who finally looks back at Yee, then cuts to a prolonged take which begins with a levelled two shot. As Yee climaxes with a low groan, he holds Wang tight, while the camera pans right to a close-up of Yee and then to Wang, showing their bodies shaking and their faces exhausted. At last, they become truly intimate.

Example 2.

<u>IST blueprint</u>

INT. APARTMENT – BEDROOM – SHANGHAI – NIGHT

Wang and Yee in bed, having sex in the dark.

They roll over, Wang on top.

She straddles him, slowly moving.

She closes her eyes, slowly rocking on him, then opens them, looks at him.

On the chair next to the bed, his clothes hang. His gun and holster.

Her eyes drift to the gun, then back to him.

As she rides him harder, tears start to flow from her eyes.

(Wang & Schamus 2007: 191-192)

Figure 5.3.2.10 Wang on top[64]

Figure 5.3.2.11 Yee gazes at Wang while noticing[65]

Figure 5.3.2.12 that Wang is gazing back[66]

Figure 5.3.2.13 Yee turns the sex rough[67]

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[64] Source: *Lust, Caution*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.52.52 –01.53.08).

[65] Ibid. (Time: 01.53.29 – 01.53.33).

[66] Ibid. (Time: 01.53.34 – 01.53.38).

[67] Ibid. (Time: 01.53.38 – 01.53.54).

Figure 5.3.3.14 A quick montage of violent sex[68]

Figure 5.3.3.15 Wang kisses/suffocates Yee[69]   Figure 5.3.3.16 Wang on top[70]

Figure 5.3.3.17 Wang notices the gun[71]   Figure 5.3.3.18 Wang presses the pillow over Yee[72]

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[68] Source: *Lust, Caution*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.53.55 – 01.54.01).

[69] Ibid. (Time: 01.54.02 – 01.54.04).

[70] Ibid. (Time: 01.54.05 – 01.54.23).

[71] Ibid. (Time: 01.54.23 – 01.54.33).

[72] Ibid. (Time: 01.54.33 – 01.54.36).

Figure 5.3.3.19 Wang dominates Yee[73]   **Figure 5.3.3.20 to his collapse[74]**
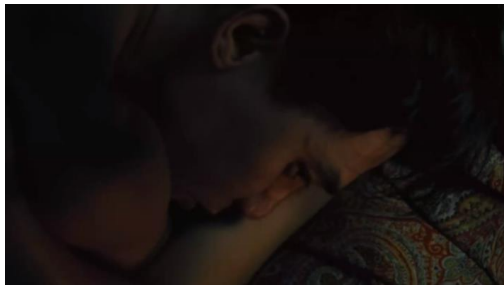

Figure 5.3.3.21 Yee yields to Wang[75]   **Figure 5.3.3.22 Wang cries[76]**

Having established a primary intimacy by means of the previous sex scene, the messages in the IST blueprint develop their relationship deeper, to the state where Wang and Yee communicate intense emotions of brutal love and hatred based on their intimacy. The diegetic point lies in Wang taking an active stance within their relationship – not only can she look at him, she can ride him. The two are closely intertwined with each other physically and mentally, with their bodies engaged in a sadomasochistic dialogue. This scene follows up the previous scene in the car where Yee, left out of the notorious No.76[77], molests Wang while telling her how he tortured a KMT (referring to Kuomintang as the Chinese nationalist party) agent (Wang is also a recruited KMT agent). Thus, the montage again

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[73] Source: *Lust, Caution*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.54.36 – 01.55.20).

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid. (Time: 01.55.20 – 01.55.32).

[76] Ibid.

[77] No. 76 refers to the headquarters of the intelligence and secret police in war-time Shanghai under the Wang Jingwei regime. The agency gained its notoriety for arresting, murdering and torturing anti-Japanese individuals. It is referred to as No. 76 because it was located at No. 76 Jessfield Road in Shanghai.

closely links sex to torture.

This intense dialogue is translated through explicit sex against a dark background, where the low-key lighting, together with the high-frequency music soundtrack, is used to establish the sex scene and give it a suspenseful and dark atmosphere. The skin-enhancing low-key light emphasises the chiaroscuro effects on the body, with the body shapes outlined, which also enhances the haptic quality of the image and intensifies the tactile experience. Lee begins with a static high angle two shot of the lovers as they lie on the bed with Wang on top (Figure 5.3.2.10). It then cuts to a prolonged take which begins from a levelled close-up of the lovers' heads showing their pained faces. Wang then sits up straight, riding Yee and this makes the frame a close-up of Yee. She can take control of their relationship. Even as Lee presents Yee on top in the missionary position, he quickly cuts to a prolonged take moving from a close-up of Yee's back to a close-up of Wang's face as she looks up. Lee then presents a low angle close-up of Yee, who frowns when he notices that Wang is gazing at him (Figure 5.3.2.11). This is quickly followed by a high angle close-up of Wang's face from Yee's viewpoint, showing Wang gazing confidently back into Yee's eyes (Figure 5.3.2.12). Lee then presents an intercut between the lover's faces as Yee kisses Wang and the kiss suddenly turns violent and the intercourse becomes rough (Figure 5.3.2.13). He then cuts to a quick montage, which connects seven shots within six seconds, showing the intense and torturous interactions between the two as they inflict joy, pain and anger, while licking, caressing and biting each other (Figure 5.3.2.14). Backgrounded with a drum beat in the soundtrack, this sudden acceleration of narrative rhythm indicates the duration of their sexual activity while raising their sadomasochistic battle to an extreme level. Lee designed their position to be intertwined with fragmented body shots, deliberately avoiding a straight-forward revealing of their body parts. All that the audience see is the intense contacts of bodies and flesh, with the lovers' intertwined with each other, and not knowing who is who. Lee then cuts to a high angle two shot of Wang kneeling at one side of the bed, kissing Yee upside down as if suffocating him (Figure 5.3.2.15). It is

to be understood that here Wang is the torturer. She is equally capable of inflicting pain on Yee. With a fade in and fade out indicating the passage of time, Lee begins with a levelled establishing 'two shot' from behind the lovers' backs, showing Wang on top riding Yee (Figure 5.3.2.16). He follows this with an intercut low and high angle close-up of their faces, showing a relationship of gazing with Wang, determined and exhausted, looking at the wall in front of her, trying hard to please Yee, who gazes at her with an evil smile. This intercut clearly translates Wang's desperation to please Yee, who is having a good time enjoying her service. Then, as in the previous sex scene, Lee inserts semiotics of caution. He cuts to a medium close-up of the lovers kissing and then switches focus from the lovers to Yee's gun and holster, as Wang's eyes drift to them (Figure 5.3.2.17). Lee then quickly switches the focus back to the lovers, as Yee notices the gun and Wang is looking at it. 'Caution' is translated both through the icon of the gun and holster, and through the reaction of the lovers which is triggered by this icon. This brings the tension to extremes, as Wang is clearly close to revealing her true intention, and yet she suddenly makes a radical move and pushes the pillow over Yee's head (Figure 5.3.2.18). Lee then connects an intercut of close-ups showing first Yee, close to suffocation, and then Wang, painfully exhausted. There follows a prolonged take with the camera panning up to show Wang looking down (Figure 5.3.2.19) at Yee as he twitches and struggles (Figure 5.3.2.20), and this translates the completely reversed power of the gaze. In this case, Wang's sadistic behaviour clearly translates her real intention of killing Yee. For Yee, this masochistic behaviour frightens, excites and tortures him at the same time as he twitches, with his mouth wide open as if in a nightmare. Lee quickly cuts to an established shot from the back, showing Yee as he quickly turns Wang over and ejaculates. As Yee finishes, the locus of the camera is now on Wang, with a medium two shot showing her crying while holding Yee. Lee ends the scene with another prolonged shot as Yee buries his head between Wang's breasts like a baby (Figure 5.3.2.21). Yee has clearly succumbed to Wang, who is now in full control of him. The camera then tilts to a close-up of Wang as she cries (Figure 5.3.2.22). Though she

has now taken full control, she too is completely broken. The love-hate relationship has worn her out because she was confused by her true feelings and hated herself for letting Yee into her heart through sex.

It is clear, through the textual analysis above, that the relationship between Wang and Yee is translated even more fully through intense haptic experiences. In both scenes, the lovers negotiate for power – the relationship of gaze and being gazed at, the intense emotions of sexuality and anguish in the torturous intimacy are enveloped by Lee in the brutality of the firstness of sex itself. If, according to Deleuze (2005: 90), face describes the 'firstness' of icon, then the sweaty and shiny surface of the body equally possess "faceity" (ibid.: 91), just like the lustful and agonised faces of the lovers. This faceity brings about an extreme sensory experience with an intense haptic quality – an experience that cannot be translated if sex is represented any other way but by showing its firstness – through sexual contact and nudity. This explains why Lee has to translate sex through this peripherally positioned model in the foreign culture, since this is the "elements + rules + syntagmatic relations" through which the brutality of (historical and cultural) reality is translated by unfolding, through the firstness of intercourse in all its cruelty, the brutality of the senses.

By employing the model of explicit sex, Lee viscerally translates the firstness of sex through the sense of touch. This brings a kinetic experience that imbues the spectator with the senses experienced on screen. The fact the scenes onscreen may arouse haptic experiences in the spectator is due to a phenomenological understanding of film, whereby the theory of embodiment emphasizes that film brings multisensory experiences. Films not only present images to be gazed at, but also lure the spectators into making sense of those images with their own sensual experience. On which point, Vivian Sobchack has offered a thorough explanation:

Insofar as I cannot literally touch, smell, or taste the particular figure on the screen that solicits my sensual desire, my body's intentional trajectory,

seeking a sensible object to fulfil this sensual solicitation, will reverse its direction to locate its partially frustrated sensual grasp on something more literally accessible. That more literally accessible sensual object is *my own subjectively felt lived body*. … I will reflexively turn toward my own carnal, sensual and sensible being to touch myself touching, smell myself smelling, taste myself tasting, and, in sum, sense my own sensuality.

(Sobchack 2004: 76, italicized in the original text)

Thus, sensory scenes on screen provide the audience with an embodied experience. In addition, Sobchack also added that this embodied sensual grasp is doubled, since the reflexive rebound makes the spectator "both the toucher and also the touched" (ibid.: 77). With Sobchack's comments in mind, the often hinted-at and yet absent icon of sex in Lee's home culture is not only exhibited in its corporeality but also brings a direct sensual experience of desire and intimacy itself. This sensory experience is also enhanced, with Lee making frequent use of close-ups, extreme close-ups, and skin-enhancing lighting to present the explicit sex. For Lee, the intense sensory experience is employed purposefully so that the audience may be empathetic not only to the intimacy of the lovers but to their situation. Just as Krzywinska observes, the spectacular pleasure in watching a real sex film comes at a price, in that the spectator is lured to "make emotional, empathetic and speculative investment in the characters" (2006: 224).

Under the premise of sensual embodiment, Lee's employment of the model of explicit sex translates the brutality of reality, that which is destined to be concealed if the visual pattern of Lee's home culture were followed. The metaphoric representation of sex in Zhang Yimou's *Red Sorghum* may serve as an example of this (see Figure 5.3.3.23). That Lee's (explicit) sex translates reality has been remarked upon by several scholars. Ah Cheng (who had worked with Ang Lee on the script of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*) was the first to respond to this point.

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Figure 5.3.3.23 The metaphoric sexual representation in *Red Sorghum*[78]

Ah Cheng remarked that the (explicit) sex scenes in the film may be the only authentic phenomenon among many alienated concepts that are translated on screen:

> In *Lust, Caution*, we have seen the phenomenon of alienation… This film raises the question of what is alienated. For instance, the ethnic nation is alienated, the sense of security is alienated. What is probably left un-alienated is the sexuality. If everything were to be alienated, the film would be extremely complicated. Only when sex – the 30-minute sexual sequence is presented un-alienated will the film present you with an invariable element for you to measure and experience other variables in the film. If a film presents everything as alienated variables, it will be impossible for the consumerist spectator to handle.[79]

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[78] Source: *Red Sorghum*, directed by Yimou Zhang (Time: 00.21.31 – 00.21.39).

[79] Source: Ah Cheng's lecture entitled '文化不是味精' (Culture is not seasoning) at Lingnan University on Nov 16 2007. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xpOeTKNSlIk&t=4409s, my translation.

Ah Cheng's notion of authenticity is posited in opposition to the concept of alienation. Authenticity refers to the un-alienated, the undistorted sign to be comprehended by its 'firstness' of meaning. This indicates that of all the audio-visual signs Lee employs in the IST product, sex is a notion that is not alienated from its firstness, i.e., sex is what it is onscreen. Sex is the easiest 'text' for the audience to perceive – lovers communicate with each other with nothing but their physical bodies. Authenticity thus means a representation of relationship, unsullied by distorted social identities. It describes a context that Lee has pre-established through the model of explicit sex. In this context, the information that is translated is also real. This reality is not only of sex itself, but of the emotional attachment this relationship represents.

What is translated first, as shown in the textual analysis above, is the development of a relationship through the close-knit display of gaze and sexual position. The intense struggle presented through these two must be understood as a translation of a power negotiation. That gaze is a power-embedded mechanism has been observed countless times. As Laura Mulvey observes: "In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly" (1985: 309). Thus, gaze is inserted within the employment of an explicit sex model as a sign of power. Rather than subverting to the 'male gaze' as coded in the Hollywood "patriarchal order" (Mulvey 1985: 314), however, Lee's sexual sequence presents both male and female gaze, thus making gaze a sign of power to translate sex as the battlefield for manipulation. The model of explicit sexual representation, therefore, not only translates torture through a unitary representation of Yee's gaze and domination of Wang's body (as Chris Berry has argued strongly in Berry 2012), but, more importantly, shows how Wang actively and gradually negotiates power away from Yee. She turns from being first a passive object under Yee's male gaze from the missionary sexual position to the position of mutual gaze from a levelled sexual position. In the last scene, she is capable of returning a gaze

back at Yee that foreshadows his potential loss of control. The female gaze is shown not only through Wang's eyes, but through Lee's erotic close-up of Yee's back that imitates Wang's capability to gaze back. This representation of gazing back foreshadows Yee's potential loss of control, as his violent reaction only mirrors his weakness. In the end, by depriving Yee of his male gaze with a pillow, Wang makes Yee a completely passive object for her female gaze. There she shows dominant power over Yee while thrusting Yee to his final ejaculation/collapse. The brutality of reality, therefore, lies in the way that it is represented in the tension of negotiation which takes an explicit, radical and torturous form.

This torturous power negotiation also functions as a sign to translate the nature of Wang's patriotic action, which forms the plot of the entire IST project. To this end, Rey Chow also reads Lee's explicit sex as a translation of reality which correlates to his initial proposal to undertake the IST project as an effort to "rescue history" (Chow 2011: 560). In Chow's interpretation, translating the authenticity of sex to their monstrous sex scenes is the same as translating the authenticity of the history, as in both cases the purpose is be make believe and to reveal that "things were really like that" (ibid.: 560-61).

For Chow, Lee's exploitation of sex is the same as an exploitation of the past: "[T]his strip search of the past, in a conscientious endeavor to make the formerly untouchable (or, what amounts to the same thing, the lamentably vanishing) yield its secrets, to make the subaltern (sexuality) speak, as it were, is fundamental to the framing of the original in this context" (ibid.: 560). In this context, sex in its corporeality, translates literally the nature of Wang's loyalty, letting Wang sacrifice her body as a trap for the good of the nation. This semiotic connection established between the firstness of sex and the firstness of history leads Chow to make the shrewd reading of the realist mode as a radical revelation of the nature of nationalist patriotism: "the actor must play his or her role with body and soul, submitting fully to the cause (saving China; serving Japan), even as the cause remains elusive – indeed, treacherous in its indifference to the actor's personal

grievances and its readiness to betray and sacrifice him or her" (ibid.: 562). It is to this end that exploitation of sex, as a foreign model, supports Lee in translating the past of his home culture by showing how it is "put together in all its violence" (Chow 1995: 198). In this sense, Lee's employment of the explicit sex model is a strategy that is compatible to the Chinese fifth generation directors, who critically "look at" the backwardness of Chinese culture through the eyes of previous ethnographers. With Chow's framework of cultural translation in mind, the graphic sex scenes must be understood as Lee's purposeful translation (with some discomfort) of how his home culture's past is put together, using the most unmentionable of perspectives, in all its cruelty.

It could be said that the foreign model enables Lee to present the home culture as debauched, to fit the "to-be-looked-at-ness" of his home culture to an active negotiation with the Western market. Yet the employment of this foreign model does more than an orientalist gaze for a depiction of the debauched Orient. The fact that it is a foreign semantic pattern indicates that the sex represented, along with its obscenity and cruelty, is something that is not unfamiliar in foreign cultures. What the sexual content translates, therefore, is not the West's other, but rather the West's equal: "[T]he West's 'primitive others' are equally caught up in the generalized atmosphere of unequal power distribution and actively (re)producing within themselves the structures of domination and hierarchy that are as typical of non-European cultural histories as they are of European imperialism" (Chow 1995: 195). The struggle for power that is created in Lee's IST may be equally found in the context of the West, where one only needs to trace the genealogy of the model of graphic sex to its source cultures. Hence the employment of explicit sex fits Lee's IST to the premise of what Chow calls, a "genuine cultural translation" – to see both East and West as "full, materialist, and most likely equally corrupt, equally decadent participants in contemporary world culture" (ibid.).

5.4 Conclusion

It can be said that the employment of foreign IST models is to be understood as the translator translating using a 'foreign tongue'. It is an indication that when applying these models, the translator is using audio-visual patterns from another culture that is different from his own. To be more precise, he is adopting the "rules, materials and syntagmatic relations" from the other culture. He is translating other cultures while also using the lens of the other to translate his own culture.

Foreign IST models may help the intersemiotic translator to translate a culture, or the messages of a culture, that is different from his own. In this case, the intersemiotic translator is taking the position of an ethnographer. He may apply the distinctive, if not exotic, patterns as identifiable signs to represent this culture, and foreign IST models may be said to have symbolic power in the sense that the distinctive audio-visual patterns function as icons to render the foreign culture. The intersemiotic translator imposes his gaze on the foreign IST models employed as objects. This applies in the case of foreign intersemiotic IST models which are opaque in the sense that their semiotic patterns are sensorially noticeable. The intersemiotic translator may also integrate the combination of "elements + rules + syntagmatic relations" for his/her own understanding regardless of its original signifying and signified relations. It is in this way that the cultural remoteness of foreign intersemiotic IST models makes it possible for their users to appropriate it for new interpretations.

Foreign IST models represent the dominant poetics of the foreign culture. They are to be regarded as representing meaning-making mechanisms that are different from that of the translator's home culture. There are cases where he is obliged to obey these dominant poetics when the target language of the translation itself genealogically belongs to a foreign culture. This applies to the nature of filmmaking, which Ang Lee has referred to as dealing with a foreign art. Lee adopts foreign filmic patterns as foreign intrasemiotic IST models partly because he has to subvert the textual linguistic norms of the foreign culture. On the other

hand, foreign intrasemiotic IST models also present a foreign cultural lens that provides the translator with a comparatively novel angle from which to interpret messages from the IST blueprint. In this instance, the translator uses foreign intrasemiotic IST models as gazing apparatus to "look at" objects that are left untranslated by the translator's home culture. In this way, when applying foreign intrasemiotic IST models the translator stands in the shoes of the ethnographer to perceive his own culture as a foreign one, i.e., something to be make sense of and to be radically revisited and retranslated.

Chapter 6 Intercultural Concatenation of Intersemiotic Translation Models

6.1 Introduction

Now that home and foreign models have been examined separately, it is important to consider examples where IST models are employed, not in isolation, but in intercultural combination.

The translator's intercultural combination of IST models may be comprised of different units, where a unit refers to either a film sequence or a film scene. An intercultural combination of IST models may also be used to translate a single unit. In the case of film, intercultural models are not only a combination of models from different cultures, but also present an "exchange between cultures" (Chow 1995: 60).

In her analysis of contemporary Chinese films, Rey Chow explored the idea of an "exchange between cultures". According to her, Chinese films, with their stories presented on screen, frequently comprise "an exchange between 'China' and the West in which these stories seek their market" (ibid.). She thus concluded that "the production of images is the production not of things but of relations, not of one culture but of *values between cultures*" (ibid., italicized in the original text).

Chow's argument concerning Chinese filmmakers may therefore be applied to IST translators like Lee who, as a Chinese diasporic filmmaker, is constantly confronted with the concept of 'China' as his 'home' in terms of his cultural roots, and the West as his 'foreign' or adopted home, from which 'China' can be looked-at from a distance.

If culture is regarded as a "system of shared meanings" (as discussed in Section 3.2.1), in which each IST model is influenced by, and is a representation of, these shared meanings, through which a value is expressed (as discussed in Section 3.2.1), then it is by combining IST models that an IST translator creates

a cross-cultural exchange.

As discussed in Section 3.2.1, each IST model is considered to amalgamate "rules, materials and syntagmatic relations" that are subject to a culture, and shared by the members of that culture (Even-Zohar 1997: 20). IST models, whether 'home' or 'foreign', each represent an agreed cultural 'lens' through which members of that culture perceive their own culture and mores (as discussed in Section 3.2.1). These culture-specific lenses are therefore shared, and evolve, through the use of intercultural combinations of IST models. Through such a combination, an IST translator places segments of information, as well as their embedded cultural context, under a trans-cultural gaze.

Chow defines the concept of 'gaze' as "to-be-looked-at-ness". This term describes the visual relationship between cultures where one culture is "looked at" by another culture through the medium of film. In Chow's definition, this "looking" implies an ethnographic inequality with "third world" cultures the passive "objects" under the visual scrutiny of the "first world"' (as discussed in Section 3.1.3). However, she describes "to-be-looked-at-ness" as a mutually active engagement whereby the "to-be-looked-at" cultures self-represent, or even re-invent, themselves: "the visuality that once defined the 'object' status of the ethnographized culture now becomes that culture's self-representation" (Chow 1995: 180).

When applying Chow's notion of "to-be-looked-at-ness" to the present case studies, what are "looked-at" are not only cultural objects, to be translated intersemiotically, but also the cultural lenses through which the IST models are viewed. In this case, the act of "looking" may be reciprocal. 'Foreign' models may be looked at through a 'home' lens, and vice versa. Each model may thus simultaneously be both the "viewed subject" and the "viewing object". Hence intercultural combinations of IST models are to be regarded as "interactive" in the sense that a "cross-cultural exchange" contributes to an enrichment of the audio-visual patterns of both the home and foreign cultures, i.e., each IST model is employed to make up for the other's semantic deficiencies. It is in this sense

that an intercultural combination of IST models is to be considered as a kind of intercultural "putting-together" (ibid.: 185) through which a culture is brought to life by an IST translator who translates each segment of information in the IST blueprint (screenplay) in terms of its complementary cultural interrelationships.

This chapter discusses two case studies of Ang Lee's film sequences which exemplify the sharing of intercultural IST models, namely:

a. the bamboo forest sequence in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*

b. the Vishnu landscape images in *Life of Pi*.

6.2 The Case of the Bamboo Forest Sequence

According to Lee, the bamboo sequence was not in the original screenplay: "The bamboo sequence did not exist in the first draft of the screenplay. Then it suddenly came into my mind, and I said to the screenwriter Huiling Wang: write a bamboo scene" (Zhang 2013: 339, my translation). Thus, it might be argued that the bamboo sequence embodies Lee's personal vision. Lee confesses that "Shooting a bamboo sequence has been what my heart desires" (ibid., my translation). In the bamboo forest sequence, Lee translates his "dream of China" (Lee 2000: 7) by putting together what he imagines to be the cultural essence that builds up this "dream".

Lee's dream of China mediates his thinking of this dream by appropriating "China" as a construction, i.e., a "putting together" of IST models. He achieved this by having one appropriate another and by having one set of models make up for the deficiencies of the other. As the audio-visual patterns represented in these IST models connect to a culture as a logic-generating system, Lee's intercultural concatenation of IST models also invites a transcultural scrutiny made possible by combining IST models from both his 'home' culture and his 'foreign' culture.

<u>IST blueprint</u>

EXT. Bamboo Forest – DAY

     Jen runs into a sea of bamboo. She appears to have lost Li but is not slowing down. Her white clothes are new stained with blood and mud. The wind had picked up and every breeze sounds like an air attack by Li.

     The two leap onto the tips of the bamboo tress and begin their dance and dodges. They glance off bamboos and each other while staying aloft. Finally, Jen lands on the same stick of bamboo as Li. The two hold their positions for a while, as the bamboo bends.

     … Jen tries to shake Li off the bamboo but Li recovers nicely…

     … Li suddenly leaps off the bamboo tree. The bamboo straightens up and throws Jen toward the ground. Jen quickly pulls herself up and charges at Li. Jen chases after Li, into a clearing, out of the bamboo forest.

                                 (Wang, Schamus & Tsai 2000: 121-125)

     The IST blueprint conveys the key information to be translated – the pursuit in the bamboo forest. At a diegetic level, this segment may be dissected into three – the run into the forest, the confrontation in the forest, and the flight out of the bamboo forest. Upon closer scrutiny, the translation of the bamboo sequence involves the employment of multiple IST models: King Hu's setting and action pattern (home intrasemiotic IST model), the wirework choreography and quick editing techniques of Hong Kong martial arts films (home intrasemiotic IST model), the composition of Chinese ink-wash painting (home intersemiotic IST model), the prolonged following shot (foreign intrasemiotic IST model) and the sensual close-up of Hollywood films (foreign intrasemiotic IST model). These translation models stem from different cultural roots and serve as different forms of visual construction to represent those cultures. Each of these IST models serves to supplement the other, to semantically make up for each other's deficiencies. It is the blending of these IST models that contributes to Lee's final translation.

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6.2.1 King Hu's Setting and Action Pattern (A1B2)

Based on the international recognition it gained at the Cannes Film Festival in 1976, the bamboo sequence in *A Touch of Zen* may also be considered as a symbolically empowered IST model to construct an Eastern visuality. Lee's personal comment reflects on his subversion of the symbolic power of Hu's bamboo setting: "This is a bamboo forest, there's no other bamboo forest scene that famous."[80] Lee also responded to the fact that Hu's audio-visual pattern were perceived by his generation as an image of "Cultural China": "as for me, the influence of King Hu extend way beyond the martial art cinematography to the visual construction of Chinese image ... This image includes quality, atmosphere, outlook, colour and behaviour. His visualization of a cultural China has more influence for me than martial art" (Zhang 2013: 442 my translation). Accordingly, it may be argued that Hu's bamboo setting is to be regarded as Lee's home intrasemiotic model (A1B2).

According to Lee, Hu's model influenced him particularly through the aspects of mood, the use of space and the aesthetic look.[81] In Hu's model, these modes of communication are indispensable elements in his cinematic language. This especially applies to Hu's treatment of landscape. The representation of landscape in King Hu's context belongs to the Eastern aesthetic of rendering emotion through the depiction of individual moments. The use of a bamboo forest in *A Touch of Zen* serves primarily as an explicitation of mood. "Mood" can be considered as describing the expressive mechanisms of Hu's visual treatment that are used as Lee's IST model in that it presents "rules, materials and syntagmatic relations" that can be imposed in order to make implicit human feelings explicit.

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[80] Source: Ang Lee on King Hu, retrieved from
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C86B5_lPOX0.

[81] Ibid.

Figure 6.2.1.1 Bamboo forest fight scene[82]

Figure 6.2.1.2 Empty shot with smoke casting sunlight to create mood[83]

At the beginning of Hu's bamboo scene, the protagonists trace the antagonists to the forest. Following a medium close-up of the characters (see Figure 6.2.1.1), Hu cuts to an empty landscape shot of the bamboo forest (see Figure 6.2.1.2). A point of view shot implies that the protagonists are searching for the enemy. The setting of a bamboo forest naturally establishes a mystical atmosphere, with sporadic shafts of sunlight and the vertical trunks setting up a

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[82] Source: *A Touch of Zen*, directed by King Hu (Time: 01.37.21 – 01.37.27).
[83] Ibid. (Time: 01.37.28 – 01.37.34).

complicated naturalistic pictorial environment of foreground, middle ground and background. Hu's use of smoke plays with the shadowing effect of crepuscular sunlight and is a deliberate visual emphasis on suspense. The bamboo scene in Hu's film strongly reinforces the audience's feelings of suspicion and anxiety, as they identify with the protagonists' acute awareness of the hidden danger.

Figure 6.2.1.3 Medium close-up with a man-in-frame picture with Mubai looking at the surrounding bamboo forest[84]

Lee's employment of Hu's landscape considers firstly the IST model's aesthetic function. The bamboo appears first in the sequence where Mubai and Shulien trace Yu to Southern China. The scene is composed of the bamboo forest in the background framed by a window (see Figure 6.2.1.3). In this scene, Mubai is appreciating the serene scenery as if he is appreciating a painting. Apart from the sheer serenity that the "firstness" of the setting naturally represents, the bamboo forest also serves as a signifier for hidden and repressed human desires. 'Looking at the bamboo forest' in this scene is also a reference to Mubai's meditation on his own repressed feelings and his hidden inner struggle. This metaphorical meaning is reflected by Mubai's line later in this sequence, as he

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[84] Source: *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, drected by Ang Lee (Time: 01.18.23 – 01.18.29).

holds Shulien's hands: "Giang Hu [Jianghu] is a world of tigers and dragons" (Wang, Schamus and Tsai 2000: 110). This metaphorical meaning is closely related to an idiosyncratic psychological universe brought to the fore in the line read in Chinese: "There are as many crouching tigers and hidden dragons in Jiang Hu, as there are in the human heart. There's as much fierceness in sword and blade, as there is in the human emotions" (Wang, Schamus and Tsai 2000: 110, my translation).

In Lee's context, 'mood' is to be understood as an IST model of audio-visual communication, which translates a vague notion of 'whimsicality' with a pattern of mise-en-scène. Hu's visualization of 'mood' stimulates Lee's decision-making in utilizing a bamboo forest to incorporate dynamic and connotative interrelations. Hu's explication of mood offers a concrete example of a visual solution which is then recontextualized in Lee's translation, with Lee borrowing Hu's icon and that icon's index, but not limiting himself to Hu's established icon-index relationship.

Apart from the general application of Hu's setting, Lee did pay a specific cinematic tribute to Hu by incorporating the choreography (C1) and editing (C3) in Hu's 'dive bomb scene' (as described in Bordwell 2000a: 210) into his own bamboo sequence. Perhaps the most obvious example of this is the acrobatic encounter between Jen and Mubai in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* with that of Yang Huizhen's deadly blow in *A Touch of Zen*.

In Hu's sequence, the fighting among the bamboo comes to an astonishing close. Having secured the strategic advantage, the heroine Yang Huizhen attacks the villain on the ground. She gently leaps over a trunk and begins performing the "dive-bombing action" (Bordwell 2000b: 19) (see Figure 6.2.1.4). Hu specifically depicts Yang's leap using constructive editing, which builds up the entirety of an action by showing only parts of it (on constructive editing as an editing technique, see Bordwell 2000a: 210). Bordwell observes that this constructive editing technique is ideal for scenes demanding fantastic or supernatural feats, and feats of exceptional skill can be faked by inserting shots of doubles, or by cutting together a shot of a man leaping up with a shot of the

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same man very high in the air. In the case of Hu's model, constructive editing combines two shots of Yang's diving assault, a visual trick which emphasize the feats of her flight by prolonging the 'bursting' (see pause-burst-pause as a rhythmic feature of Hong Kong cinema in Bordwell 2000a: 210). The leaping sequence first presents a static high-angle medium long shot of Yang's diving action, with her thrusting her sword towards the enemy. Then it cuts to the tracing high-angle medium long shot where the camera traces her flying through the bamboo branches like a predatory hawk. Hu's action pattern ends with Yang slashing the villain as the sequence's final resolution. Hu's dive-bombing scene therefore translates an acrobatic fighting feat while following the "pause-burst-pause" pattern.

Figure 6.2.1.4 Yang Huizhen charges at the enemy[85]

This 'dive-bombing' action model has been borrowed in Lee's bamboo fight sequence. Although Lee remarked that Hu's treatment relies on quick editing whereas Lee is utilising mis-en-scène, Lee still manages to borrow Hu's action pattern and the constructive editing technique when translating the acrobatic combat between Jen and Mubai, as described in the pre-production start text.

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[85] Source: *A Touch of Zen*, directed by King Hu (Time: 01.40.19 – 01.40.25).

The action begins with Jen securing a position at the top of a bamboo plant while Mubai lies confidently below on the bamboo branches looking up at Jen above. Mubai suddenly kicks the bamboo trunk and Jen loses her balance and begins to fall (see Figure 6.2.1.5). The picture then cuts to the medium horizontal tracing shot of Jen falling fast, head first, as she is constantly hit by the passing leaves and branches (see Figure 6.2.1.6). This is then followed by a low-angle front shot of Jen's fall from the same camera position as that of Figure 6.2.4 (see Figure 6.2.1.7). As she falls, Mubai simultaneously launches himself upwards to engage with Jen (see Figure 6.2.1.8). In this case, Lee's context is different from that Hu's. Jen is forced to fall passively and involuntarily, while in Hu's model Yang's 'dive-bombing' action is clearly pre-planned. The different contexts do not, however, prevent the action pattern, of 'dive-bombing' and the final encounter, from supporting Lee's action design. Hu's action mode still offers Lee a visual solution for a mid-air encounter to rivet the audience's attention.

Figure 6.2.1.5 Jen begins to fall[86]

Figure 6.2.1.6 through the branches and leaves[87]

Figure 6.2.1.7 towards[88]

Figure 6.2.1.8 the final falling encounter[89]

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[86] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, drected by Ang Lee (Time: 01.36.59 – 01.37.04).

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Ibid.

On a general level, Hu's bamboo scene as an IST model mediates its effect through the setting, editing and choreography. These three elements are closely knitted within Hu's cinematic language, which is both rhythmic and intense, and yet exhibits no shortage of elegant suspense. Hu concretizes the mood of suspense through the setting, and creates an unexpected visual impact through the daring choreography performed by the protagonist. The expressive power of that choreography pattern is also reinforced by Hu's fast editing so that the acrobatic skills could be further exaggerated.

For Hu, the bamboo forest setting is designed to render the character's inner feelings. Hu treats this setting as a background to establish an atmosphere. Here, the bamboo landscape, in its corporeality, has an aesthetic rather than a narrative function. The setting's aesthetic function is remarked on by Bordwell as a way of delivering poise: "Although fighters clash in mid-air, hurling themselves from spindly branches high above the ground or dive-bombing one another in a flurry of fast cuts, the overall impression is of poise – the sheer serenity of perfectly judged physical movement" (Bordwell 2000b: 19).

On the other hand, landscape in Lee's context bears a diegetic function. Lee has remarked that he uses the bamboo model to show repressed desires: "I want to do something metaphorically to show the hidden dragon, the repressed sexuality, something whimsical and sassy, with movement abstract … I thought of bamboo"[90]. Such a remark shows that landscape in Lee's context has imposed on it a semiotic meaning much richer than that of Hu's landscape. Hu's bamboo forest serves to render a surreal situation, whereas Lee's bamboo forest aims to convey the repressed desires inside both protagonists.

It may also be said that Lee intends to relate the bamboo landscape closely to the leitmotif of his translation. In Lee's context, the bamboos are employed as performers. Lee instructed the camera crew that the bamboo scene was to be

[90] Source: Ang Lee on King Hu, retrieved from
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C86B5_lPOX0.

treated "in a dream-like way" (Zhang 2013: 339, my translation). Lee refers to the bamboo's capability of dynamic representation in his autobiography: "Bamboo can be bent, cut, and blown by the wind and it is actually quite erotic" (ibid., my translation). Hu's bamboo forest is mostly static, whereas Lee's is in a state of constant motion, and further agitated by the fighting of the protagonists.

6.2.2 Wire Fu (A1B2)

Lee's appropriation of King Hu's bamboo setting may be most notably recognized at the level of performance through the aspect of fight choreography. Lee once remarked that "everyone fights in the bamboo grove; I want to fight above the bamboo grove" (Zhang 2013: 339, my translation). Lee also emphasized the difference between Hu's bamboo forest and his bamboo forest in an interview: "His bamboo [fighting] is on the ground, whereas my bamboo [fighting] is in the air and on the bamboo tips, and has a different aesthetic".[91] These two comments indicate how, and in what aspect, it is possible to contribute something new by adding other IST models to Hu's original setting. By getting his fighters to fight in the air and on the bamboo tips, Lee utilizes the 'wire fu' model as his home intrasemiotic IST model, one which is commonly practised in Hong Kong action films. Such an appropriation of the IST model may be considered as Lee's remediation of the the IST model, to rid it of its spatial-temporal constraints.

The technical nature of film, as an intersemiotic translation, recognizes that an intersemiotic translation is not only determined by filmic ideas but is also restricted by the technical conditions on the basis of which the idea is to be translated. Though Hu tried to get his actors to perform gravity-defying movements, the technical conditions of his time limited his choices. He managed to show acrobatic skills through the use of trampolines instead of wirework,

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[91] Source: Ang Lee on King Hu, retrieved from
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C86B5_lPOX0.

partly because the wirework in the 1970s could not be removed by digital editing. A trampoline would enable his performers to jump high enough to perform supernatural movements in a transparent manner, i.e., the effect of immediacy that "erase all traces of mediation"(Bolter & Grusin 2000: 5), without the problem of having to eliminate the recognizable wirework being attached to the performer. Consequently, the performers bounce rather than fly, and acrobatic sequences last for only a few seconds, with the result that the spectacle of 'Qinggong' can only be translated through montage techniques, i.e., through a combination of segments (as explained in Section 4.3.2).

Lee chose to alter Hu's choreography mode because by then the 'wire fu' technique was sufficiently advanced for the wires to be digitally erased in the post-production process. Lee could, therefore, venture to try a translation mode to achieve what Hu could not achieve. Developments in industrial and digital technology had revolutionized filmic language, and provided Lee with a wider choice of translation solutions.

Besides being an obvious effort to provide some semantic support in translating the flying movements, Lee's employment of wire fu serves, in a straightforward way, to represent the relationship between humans and landscape relationship, which creates the effects needed to support Lee's translation goal "to express something whimsical and sassy"[7].

In Lee's context, the fighters fly in the air and on the bamboo tips and interact with bamboo in a more dynamic way than those of Hu, and this greatly enhances the sense of vitality through the performance of the bamboo itself. Lee remarks that the bamboo "not only provides middle ground, background and foreground, they themselves can also be bent and cut like a woman's body. Bamboo can be quite erotic" (Zhang 2013: 320, my translation). Thus, the wire fu technique maximizes the representational capacity of the bamboo as a visual metaphor of desire, with the performers standing upon and flying through the tips, bending and leaping from one bamboo trunk to another. The bamboo itself becomes a signifier of desire with its dynamic interactions with the fighters flying

movements in the bamboo forest translating the concept of "whimsical and sassy".

On the other hand, the wire fu model provides Lee with the audio-visual capability to establish a visual juxtaposition of the relationship between humans and landscape, which Lee puts under the gaze of two other models: 'the prolonged shot' and 'ink-wash painting'.

6.2.3 Prolonged Shot (A2B2)

Unlike the wire fu sequences adopted in Hong Kong cinema, which normally last a count of 10 frames, according to Bordwell (2000), the speed of the action in the bamboo sequence is slower, so that the concept of Lee's "whimsicality" may be conveyed. What Lee did is to use prolonged shots (as explained in Section 5.3.1) for the wire fu sequences, something which is rarely practised by other translations which adopt the wire fu model (as explained in Section 4.3.2). In these sequences, prolonged shots reveal the spectacle of the mise-en-scène, and incorporate the overall arrangement of the characters and the setting. The performers' actions are thus carried out continuously as opposed to by a montage. This is exemplified in the following two examples

Example 1. Depth of view prolonged shot

Figure 6.2.3.1 Close-up of Jen's feet[92]

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[92] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.35.29 – 01.35.33).

Figure 6.2.3.2 Medium shot of Jen launching upwards[93]

Figure 6.2.3.3 Long shot of Jen diving into the bamboo sea[94]

The depth of view in the prolonged shot at the beginning of the bamboo sequence begins with a close-up of Jen's feet entering the frame and standing on the ground, which is covered in fallen bamboo leaves (Figure 6.2.3.1). As Jen launches herself into the air, the camera tilts up into a medium shot of Jen flying, with her body stretched out like a crane, and facing the bamboo forest in front of her (Figure 6.2.3.2). Jen then moves into the background as the camera tilts up into a long shot as she dives into the bamboo sea (Figure 6.2.3.3). The long take thus elegantly guides the audience into the bamboo setting through following Jen's movements.

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[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid.

Example 2. Static prolonged shot

Figure 6.2.3.4 Prolonged shot of Jen and Mubai fighting on the tops of the bamboo[95]

The static prolonged shot shows the two fighters as they encounter each other and separate, then some together again, as the bamboo trunks sway. This prolonged shot established an uninterrupted series of movements so that the

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[95] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.36.20 – 01.36.29).

fighting on the bamboo tips can be represented "with full causal interaction of persons and objects" (Branigan 2006: 9).

Wire fu enables Lee to establish a mise-en-scène with the flying movements "looked at" by long shots, so that for him the incorporation of wire fu possesses more expressive power than the translation effects of earlier wire fu sequences. At the same time, this mise-en-scène is "looked at" through the symbology of Chinese ink-wash painting, where the symbolically empowered model is imbued with Chinese poetic meanings to communicate the human-nature relationship. The mise-en-scène also contributes a human-landscape relationship which is made more obvious through the flat mise-en-scène Lee has adopted from Chinese ink-wash painting.

6.2.4 Chinese Ink-Wash Painting (A1B1)

To visualize this spatial emphasis, Lee utilized the visual code from Chinese ink-wash painting. In doing so, he appropriates the model at the level of the multiple-perspective and drastic human-nature spatial composition i.e., leaving space, or the use of negative space.

According to Dazheng Hao, "Traditional Chinese landscape painting generally employs multiple perspectives, with objects on a smaller scale, such as buildings and gardens, represented in parallel perspective" (Hao 2008: 46). As opposed to Western painting styles, multiple perspective in Chinese landscape painting is adopted to transcend an individual spectacle (ibid.). Accordingly, whereas in the Renaissance system the sense of space was established by representing the view from an individual perspective, "Chinese painting strove for a timeless, communal impression, which could be perceived by anyone, and yet was not a scene viewed by anyone in particular" (ibid.). Thus, "when observing nature, the ancient Chinese were more interested in horizontal expanse than in depth" and adopted "multiple perspectives and/or a perspective elevated well above the apparent horizon in order to avoid the visual concreteness which

accompanies the use of a visual horizon or vanishing point" (ibid.). This is exemplified in Figure 6.2.4.1

Figure 6.2.4.1 Lofty Mountain Lu by Shen Zhou[96]

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[96] Source: National Palace Museum, Taipei. Picture via comuseum.com.

The appropriation of the ink-wash painting model is exemplified by Lee's translation of the flying downwards sequence (see Figure 6.2.4.2). The appropriation relates both to Lee's manipulation of colour and to his cinematography.

Figure 6.2.4.2 A landscape wide shot of Mubai chasing Jen as they are flying downwards[97]

Firstly, Lee establishes the human-nature relationship through the colour contrast between bright white and bamboo green (also known as 'Jiangnan green' or 'lush green' as Lee calls it in Zhang 2013). According to Lee, the colour green is selected as a metaphor to emphasize the hidden desire which stands as a Taoist signifier, referring to the ultimate yin-ness – the most mysterious feminine factor of which men have no knowledge (Norman 2016: 37). In Lee's case, this applies to elements in the film such as the sword "Green Destiny", and the villain "Jade Fox" (literally translated as 'green-eyed fox' in the Chinese version). Lee remarks that "just for me, anything green is hidden dragon, desires and repression" (ibid.).

The juxtaposition of white and green emphasises the two basic colours in the entire sequence, establishing the two white fighters against the lush green like a background canvas, and this enables Lee to apply the IST model of ink-wash painting to the composition of the sequence: the flat mise-en-scène and the

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[97] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.37.38 – 01.37.47).

extreme utilization of negative space.

The human-landscape relationship is also depicted through the composition. In the 'flying down' scene, Lee adopts a wide landscape shot, visually reducing Jen and Mubai to two small white dots against the ocean-like unfathomable bamboo forest. This drastic spatial composition is a direct borrowing from the ink-wash painting model, where nature is maximized and humans are minimalized. Thus, the bamboo is emphasized visually as the signifier of desire, with the fighters as accessories to the forest. Ink-wash painting, as an IST model for composition, enables Lee to translate information concerning individuals giving way to unfathomable desire, the hidden desire that not only defines "Giang Hu [Jiang Hu]", but also the "crouching tiger" that is psychologically concealed in the human heart (see Section 6.2.1).

The concept of bamboo as a signifier of unfathomable desire is also strengthened through a spatial extension of the scale of the bamboo forest, which is communicated via the multiple perspectives adopted as the visual code of ink-wash painting. In the 'flying down' scene (see Figure 6.2.4), the landscape shots eliminate the focal points as the boundless bamboo forest pervades the frame. Such a flat mise-en-scène transcends the sense of dimension, with the green bamboo expanding both horizontally and vertically. Lee adopts a smooth downward camera movement so that the sense of flatness is not breached by the creation of any sense of dimension with the change in depth of view.

The ink-wash painting model may be considered as a landscape – strengthening the IST model of mise-en-scène, which is established to emphasize nature over the individual, landscape over what is human. According to Lee, "It [ink-wash visuality] suggests not even utilizes space" [98]. However, Lee's translation of the bamboo sequence also intends to focus on depicting human figures. The narrative of the sequence is driven by humans, with the human face serving as a signifier to psychologically establish the hidden desire, so that the

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[98] Source: Ang Lee on King Hu, retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C86B5_lPOX0.

very notion of a "crouching tiger" may be translated and comprehensively put together visually, with the landscape as the signifier of desire, while the human movement symbolizes a psychological interaction with that desire. Thus, Lee invokes following shot and the facial close-up as two foreign intrasemiotic IST models. By appropriating these IST models, he invokes an individual spectacle to make up for the often-neglected depiction of the human face in his home culture.

6.2.5 Following Shot (A2B2)

It may be argued that the national schools of Chinese film-making, following the style inherited from the national schools of Chinese painting, emphasize nature over the human, and the transcendental over the individual. On the one hand, the visual strategies adopted in these films do not emphasize human characters and often position humans as accessories of the landscape (as described in Section 4.2.1). On the other hand, the Chinese painters believe that much to be said about a character may be derived from the depiction of landscape rather than by describing the characters themselves. Lee's translation strategy partly follows this convention by adopting his home IST models. However, Lee's intention is to see beyond this stereotypical cultural translation, by adopting IST models which could promote a focus on the neglected individuals. This may be explained by analysing Lee's employment of following shot (A2B2 model) as opposed to static landscape shots.

Following shot is best exemplified by tracking sequences where the camera moves alongside the subject being recorded. This is commonly practised in western film language, which recognize the character as the central figure to be observed. Since the camera moves in parallel with the character, the spectator may not only visually focus on the character but also may consider the character's surrounding environment as an embodied individual experience. Thus, such movement sequences offer an efficient meaning-making device when

intersemiotic translators are intending to emphasize the character experiencing their environment, but without allowing the character to become overwhelmed by the environment itself (see Section 4.2.1.1).

In Lee's translation of the bamboo sequence, the spectacle that is communicated through employing a following shot may be seen as an individual perspective that is packaged with an "Eastern vision circle" (Zhang 2013: 370, my translation), since the sequence is a character-driven sequence with the cinematic lens constantly focused on Jen and Mubai. This applies to the 'flying down' scene, where the viewpoint and composition both adopt the model of ink-wash painting (A1B2 model), whereas the camera movement adopts the character-driven model (A2B1 model).

Taking a landscape shot, the camera tilts slowly downwards, following the descent of the human figures, and placing Jen and Mubai constantly at the centre and to the left of the field of view. The character-driven model employed visually translates the 'hide and seek', 'reveal and conceal' movements performed by the two characters, as is shown in Figures 6.2.5.1 to 6.2.5.3, with the continuous execution of 'hunting through the woods' by having the characters perform 'in and out of the surface' action sequences. It may be understood that this 'hide and seek' movement, communicated through the character-driven model, visually translates the concept of 'hiddenness'. Combined with the ink-wash painting model, this final translation depicts 'hiddenness' both iconically through the action and indexically through the setting.

Figure 6.2.5.1 Both characters above the bamboo sea[99]

Figure 6.2.5.2 Both fighters hide under the bamboo sea[100]

Figure 6.2.5.3 Switching position, with Jen to the left and Mubai to right[101]

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[99] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.37.38 – 01.37.47).

[100] Ibid.

[101] Ibid.

The camera movement also performs a narrative function by establishing a flowing transition within the setting (see Figure 6.2.5.5), with the tilting down movements capturing layers of bamboo covering a mountain landscape, from the bamboo sea, to the lake and waterfall at the foot of the mountain, which then naturally carries the performers to the next action. This shows how Lee has utilized the foreign IST model for its efficiency as a strong narrative semantic strategy, although packaged with the IST model of mise-en-scène found in Chinese culture. Lee's translation strategy can thus be seen as being more narrative-focused, as opposed to expressive-focused.

Apart from the character-driven movement, Lee's translation aims for an in-depth depiction of the human figure, which considers a woman (especially the face of a woman) as a symbol of yin-ness. According to Lee, "Yin is what breeds life. It is the gateway towards all curiosities… Woman is what man desires the most and also what confuses them the most. According to the dualism of Yin and Yang, women are men's ultimate desire" (Zhang 2013: 348–349, my translation). This is exemplified by Lee's employment of a male gaze on Jen's face, and applying a sensual close-up as his foreign intrasemiotic IST model, as is commonly practised in Hollywood romantic cinema.

Figure 6.2.5.5 A visual representation of different levels of the bamboo forest with top, middle and bottom[102]

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[102] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.37.38 – 01.37.47).

6.2.6 Sensual Close up (A2B2)

The seductive close-up and slow motion are both commonly practised in Hollywood-style cinematography. One example of this is Hitchcock's *Rear Window* (1954), with an extreme and seductive close-up of Lisa (Grace Kelly) in Figure 6.2.6.1. The IST model of the close-up makes the female face itself an efficient meaning-making machine, hence the remark that "no statement is as utterly revealing as a facial expression" (Balázs 2010: 37).

Figure 6.2.6.1 Seductive facial close-up of Lisa[103]

In addition to using the close-up model, Lee translates the brief encounter between Jen and Mubai using segments of slow-motion footage. According to Bordwell and Thompson, "slow-motion footage often functions to suggest that the action takes place in a dream or fantasy" (Bordwell & Thompson 2004: 235) and "it is also increasingly used for emphasis, becoming a way of dwelling on a moment of spectacle or high drama" (ibid.).

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[103] Source: *Rear Window*, directed by Alfred Hitchcock (Time: 00.15.49 – 00.15.51).

Figure 6.2.6.2 Jen's Sensual Close-up[104]

The slow motion and the facial close-up together impose a gaze on Jen's seductive face, with the strands of her hair softly caressing it, and her beautiful eyes casting an evocative sensual look, gently demanding attention among the out-of-focus green leaves. Like the Hollywood close-up model, Jen's facial close-up presents an exotic and seductive female image, which itself materializes the concept of beauty and attraction. Jen's face also presents a sense of melancholy and loneliness, and her beauty is communicated through this un-worldly and unhappy look, repressed and self-exiled by the restrictions of feudal China. It is in this way that Jen's face must be understood as a multi-layered sign and it is precisely in this way that her face appears seductive.

The sensual close-up of Jen's face visually constructs what Lee considers as the "hidden dragon" – the repressed and unspoken sexual desire which is only touched upon through this momentary encounter deep among the bamboo leaves, hidden in the green ocean of the bamboo forest (there is a similar evocation in the underwater sequence in *Life of Pi*, where hidden images emerge one after another. See Section 5.2.1). Thus, to a 'male gaze' (see the concept of "male gaze" in Mulvey 1985), the facial close-up may be understood as a signifier conveying an

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[104] Source: *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.36.39 – 01.36.43)

encounter with desire. What is communicated through the representation of Jen's face from Mubai's point of view, translates as Mubai's desire, rather than Jen's. This is evidenced by Lee's own remark:

> In *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, we put in elements of sexuality to challenge ethical code of the masters. In Chinese society, sexuality and desire have always been taboo and unspoken, and yet they have existed in daily life. What can be spoken of is what is passed down from the master to his disciples, but what happened when a male master encountered an attractive female disciple? … I wanted him [Mubai] to face this dilemma of humanity… When Mubai sees Jen, he feels compelled by the paternal duty. He does not want her to be led astray, like a jade being stained. The tricky thing is that Jen is an attractive young female. A woman was what caused his master's death and the theft of the doctrine of his school. Femininity is what haunts Mubai. His master has fallen for femininity. What about himself? This is what he fears.
>
> (Zhang 2013: 348, my translation)

Like the sword Green Destiny which bewitched, attracted and thrilled Mubai, Jen's face as a signifier of "yin-ness" shines in front of Mubai's vision, mirroring a pre-destined, haunted and aching beauty. Thus, an extreme facial close-up in slow motion serves as a double emphasis to enhance the expressive effects of a gaze. The emphasis on a momentary sensual encounter may also serve as a prophecy that foretells Mubai's own destiny. Lee personally responded to what he intended to convey in translating this encounter: "Green Destiny, spirit, Jade Fox, and Jen are objects of ultimate yin-ness. At the very moment Mubai touches or enters this ultimate yin-ness, an irresistible sense of impending doom rises within his heart. As he becomes aware of this doom, an immense anguish also follows" (Zhang 2013: 349, my translation).

Thus, Jen's face under Mubai's gaze mirrors a premonition of what Mubai

desires and also what he fears most, just like the sword Green Destiny which mirrors both the desire and the pre-destined doom that awaits him. As Lee remarked "More often than not, the good stuff lies on the brink between life and death. It brings excitement and nervousness, abundant vitality but also fearfulness" (Zhang 2015: 349, my translation).

In the case of the bamboo forest sequence, Lee has permuted the 'vision circle' described in the intersemiotic translation blueprint. To translate the blueprint, he purposefully employed multiple IST models of different cultural backgrounds. From the meta-textual level, the IST models are used so that their expressive power may be borrowed to impinge on the screen to fit the translation purpose. The utilization and appropriation of IST models, however, not only need to be considered from a textual level, they also need to be regarded as the embodiment of the cultural concepts which these appropriated IST models represent. Thus, the purposeful selection and appropriation of the models may be considered not as an idiosyncratic semantic choice, but as a translation of culture in general.

If Lee's employment of IST models is considered within the context of Chow's theory of cultural translation, the models represent not only heavily mediated translations of culture, but also the spectacle of how a culture, i.e., in Lee's case, a dream of China, 'is looked at'. China is "a visual, sonic and narrative celebration" (Bowman 2013: 13) and the imposed spectacles are each to be understood as an imagination of the Chinese culture. Under this premise, it is by Lee's blending of these IST models that the "dream of China" is re-imagined and reconstructed.

If each IST model is considered as belonging to a repertoire that is subjected to an institution which governs the making and handling of a cultural product, then these models may be considered as belonging to the dominant cultural poetics, so that the translator's employment of an IST model takes into account the consumption of the finalized IST and the familiarized audience may be appealed to and may accept the translation. In this way, Lee's intercultural

concatenation of IST models may be considered as a purposeful activity to make his IST accessible for a global audience. However, if a translator's appropriation of IST models is to be considered from beyond the almost clichéd consumption-oriented framework, and each of them is regarded as a spectacle by means of which a culture is perceived, then the appropriation and employment of IST models is an imposition of spectacle and the meaning-making mechanism behind the spectacle. In this way, the intercultural concatenation of IST models must be understood as an effort to invite a transnational gaze. This transnational gaze should not be interpreted merely from a postcolonial perspective as a strategy of self-orientalism. The spectacle that is imposed by employing and appropriating Western IST models clearly serves Lee's purpose of re-imagining the dream beyond symbolically empowered stereotypes, and observing the often-neglected aspects of a visual construct. In the case of the bamboo forest, foreign IST models are put under gaze through the lens of home IST models.

In this case, the home IST models establish an eastern spectacle, so an appropriation of home IST models establishes a stereotypical China, i.e., a China that is constructed through familiarized audio-visual components to signify a generally accepted China. On the other hand, the foreign IST models represent how objects are not frequently perceived, i.e., the more idiosyncratic vision. Through this vision, the human figure is given more attention, with the narrative constantly focused on the two fighters' performance and the environment serving as the background. The close-up is a blatant signifier of eroticism by putting Jen under the male gaze of Mubai, and making her serve as the object of his repressed desire. Through blending these IST models, Lee brings the "dream of China" from the imagery aspect of a "vision circle" to the psychological level. Each IST model acts as a lens to put the other under gaze, while making up for the other's deficiencies in representation and, in turn, contributing to the construction of the dream in its entirety.

If Lee's remark that *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* represents a dream of China, and the bamboo is a part of that dream, then by appropriating multiple

models to translate his insertion of a bamboo sequence, what he intends to do is not only a homage to the old *wuxia* tradition (as he has suggested in Zhang 2013: 292) or a simple tribute to his childhood dream. His intention is to use intersemiotic translation to build an "arcade" (Chow 1995: 198) through which the picture of China communicated in the old *wuxia* tradition may be revisited. That Lee makes repression the key theme of his films suggests that he is simultaneously working against the stereotypical visuality, by working against such IST models and the mechanisms of audio-visual construction that they represent. The re-imagined dream is thus the result of a blending of IST models with a transnational viewpoint, and by having these two forms of spectacle mediate against one another, thereby contributing to a comprehensive dream, the landscape and the human elements that it mirrors and embodies are therefore constructed audio-visually as a whole, i.e., "to-be-looked-at" from all angles.

6.3 The Case of the Vishnu Landscape

There are Vishnu figure imageries in Lee's translation of three of the scenes in *Life of Pi*, namely 36 EXT. MUNNAR TEA FIELDS, 1973 – DAY, 42. INT. PI'S BEDROOM, 1973 – DAY and 168 EXT. LIFEBOAT – NIGHT (Magee 2010). The Vishnu figure imagery was not, however, described in any of the three start texts. The Vishnu figure imageries, in Lee's translation of these scenes, are therefore, to be understood as intersemiotic additions based on the context of the pre-production start text. Like that of the bamboo forest sequence in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, this adaptation can be interpreted as a result of the translator's personal creative choice. Through adding the Vishnu figure as a visual motif, these scenes, which bear the same diegetic function, are intratextually connected: they suggest a divine eye watching over Pi as he makes decisions that will change his life.

The imposition of the Vishnu landscapes in Lee's intersemiotic translation

results from an intercultural concatenation of two IST models: the Mughal composite painting as a foreign intersemiotic IST model, and the anthropomorphic landscape of Mount Guanyin as a home IST model. Lee's combination of these two models contributes to the finalized intersemiotic translation of Vishnu landscape imagery.

6.3.1 Mughal Composite Painting (A2B1)

Lee's translation of the Vishnu figure landscapes firstly utilized Mughal composite painting (see Figure 6.3.1) as a foreign intersemiotic IST model. According to the film producer Castelli, "Resources included …. Indian painting (particularly [Indian] composite paintings of elephants made up of other animals, another visual motif that made its way into the film) …" (in Castelli 2012:26). It is thus safe to say that Mughal composite painting can be considered as Lee's foreign intersemiotic IST model (as discussed in Section 5.2.1).

Figure 6.3.1 Composite elephant, Mughal, reign of Akbar, c. 1590[105]

As discussed in Section 5.2.1, Mughal composite painting, as an Indian IST model, comprises a shell figure that is composed from various internal figures

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[105] Source: San Diego Museum of Art, California. Cited in Del Bonta 1999: 70.

which hint at an interrelation between the dissected visual elements, while also implying a unity between them. The painting style is simultaneously connotative (referring to the shell figure) and denotative (unfolding all of the characters and objects in a mosaic). Its use contributes to the film's visual motif as an exotic visual signification method. Ang Lee has imported this stylistic feature into the translation model, as shell + mosaic combination + composite visual elements (see Section 5.2.1). Having established Vishnu as the shell figure, through the translation of Scene 42 (as discussed in 6.3.3), Lee applies the above-mentioned composite model to his translation of landscapes, by having the geographical elements represented as the shell to be filled by various internal comp visual elements to translate Scene 36 and Scene 168. Based on his appropriation of the Mughal composite painting, Lee mediates an anthropomorphic landscape. Whereas the composite visual motif comes from Mughal composite painting, the imagery of the anthropomorphic landscape comes from the actual landscape of Mount Guanyin in Taipei City. This landscape is to be regarded as Lee's home intersemiotic IST model.

6.3.2 The Anthropomorphic Mount Guanyin (A1B1)

Mount Guanyin is an extinct volcano in New Taipei City in Taiwan (see Figure 6.3.2), named after the Guanyin Pusa (Chinese translation of Avalokiteśvara, also translated as Kuan-Shi-Yin by Kumārajīva), as the landscape shares a visual resonance with the outline of Guanyin (see Figure 6.3.3). According to *Rewritten Gazetter of the Fengshan County* （重修鳳山縣志）, "The landscape of Mount Guanyin is undulating and sinuous. A cliff stands out in the middle, like a seated Bodhisattva."[106] (my translation of "觀音山，起伏

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[106] Source: *Rewritten Gazetter of the Fengshan County* 重修鳳山縣志, edited by 王瑛曾 in 1764, printed in 1962, retrieved online from: https://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&chapter=532388.

盤曲，中一峰屹立，如菩薩端坐"). Another interpretation of the landscape can be found in *Gazetteer of Taiwan Place Names* (台湾地名辞典), indicating that Mount Guanyin is named after Guanyin Pusa because the shape of the landscape looks like the shape of Guanyin Pusa's face (Chen 1960: 34).

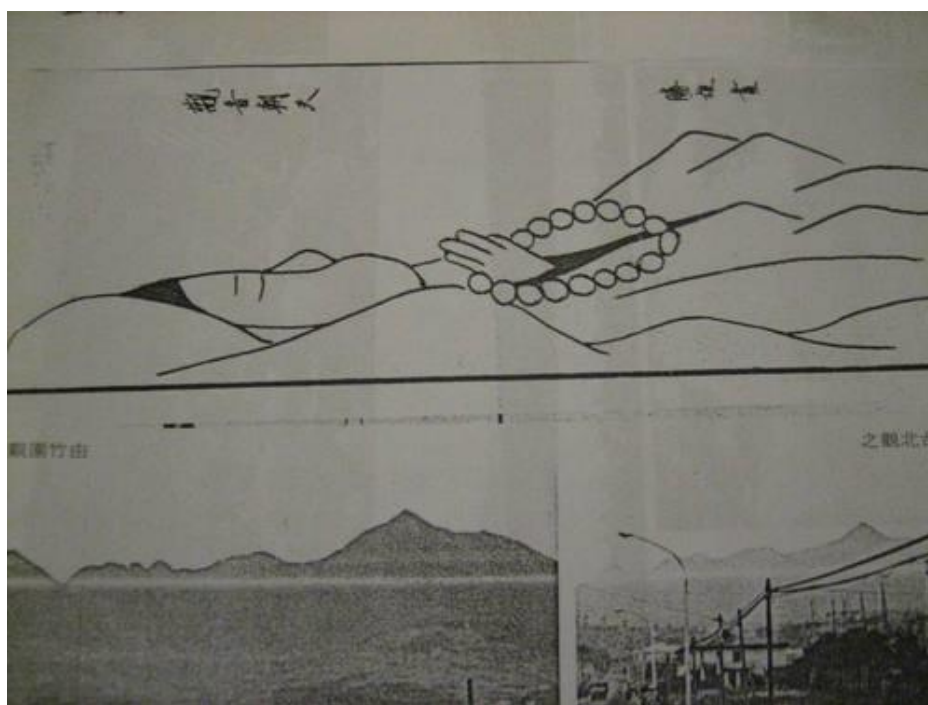**Figure 6.3.2.1 Mount Guanyin in New Taipei City[107]**

Figure 6.3.2.2 Visual illustration of a landscape–face relationship[108]

According to Branigan, "anthropomorphism assigns human or personal attributes to an object that is not human" (2006: 36). In the present case, the concept of anthropomorphism is employed to describe the landscape of Mount Guanyin using the attributes of a human (or divine) figure. Figure 6.3.2.2 illustrates visually how the landscape–face relationship is established so that the mountain is read as an embodiment of Guanyin. It shows one perspective that recognizes the landscape as an image of Guanyin lying supine, and pressing her hands together in prayer in front of her chest. Another perspective views Mount Guanyin as the shape of Guanyin's solemn face facing up (Figure 6.3.2.3). It is highly likely that Lee has adopted the second version, as he commented on this point "I built the island according to my memory. In my design, the body parts above the neck take on a resonance with Mount Guanyin"[109].

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[108] Source: picture retrieved from: https://tamsuitour.pixnet.net/blog/post/149178696.

[109] Interview with Ang Lee by Zhixun Lin, published on Chinatime.com on Jan 24th 2013, retrieved from:
https://tw.news.yahoo.com/pi-%E7%9C%9F%E8%97%8F%E8%A7%80%E9%9F%B3%E5%B1%B1%E6%9D%8E%E5%AE%89%E8%AA%87%E5%8F%B0%E7%81%A3%E7%B6%B2%E5%8F%8B%E5%8E%B2%E5%AE%B3-213000551.html, my translation.

Figure 6.3.2.3 Facial resonance between the landscape of Mount Guanyin and the face of Kuan-Shi-Yin Pusa

The mountain tends to be imagined by people as an embodiment of spirit, and is thus perceived as an object of worship, although the mountain itself has no spirit. It should be emphasized that the landscape does not function as a text per se and it is only text because it is perceived by humans as text. The textuality lies not in the landscape itself, but in the way the landscape is read by its culturalized and socialized viewers. The way of reading a landscape makes the landscape into a sign, so that in the Barthesian sense it "says something but refers to something else" (Barthes 2014: 109). How one perceives a landscape is thus how one establishes a signifying practice. The text as a signifying practice, is itself a translation: a meaningless landscape is thus translated through its interpretant into a meaning-making device and the established relationship between the sign and the object is to be regarded as a translation. In this way, Mount Guanyin matches the criteria of being a text: it is a combination of sensory signs carrying communicative intention (Gottlieb 2003: 167). If it is continually serving as a

normative method of reading the landscape, then the anthropomorphic landscape itself become a translation model for the future appreciation of that very landscape.

That Mount Guanyin serves as Lee's IST model is evidenced in Lee's comment: "it is true I hide Mount Guanyin as an imagery in the floating carnivorous island… I hid three imageries of Mount Guanyin."[110] Lee also remarked that Mount Guanyin is a sign he is familiarized with because "when I was in high school, I would walk pass Nanxing Bridge. I would just stand there and gaze at Mount Guanyin in a daze. I have made videos and written articles on this mountain."[111] As a home intersemiotic IST model, the anthropomorphic Mount Guanyin presents a text as it embodies Lee's imagination of a supernatural god that transcends him and is watching over him as well as the rest of the world.

Mount Guanyin, as a cultural text, is itself correlated with a logic-generating system. Firstly, it coincides with a supernatural anthropomorphic perception of a landscape. This landscape-reading perspective must be correlated with Ang Lee's home cultural poetics. This connects to the essence of Stuart Hall's definition of culture, i.e., a system of shared values with which the cultural members make sense of the world (Hall 1995: 176). A mountainous landscape stimulates a mystification of nature, with its mystification closely related to mythologies shared by cultural communities. Such a mythological reading of nature is perhaps best illustrated by Lu Xun:

> When primitive men observed natural phenomena and changes which could not be accomplished by any human power, they made up stories to explain them, and these explanations became myths. Myths usually

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centered round a group of gods: men described these gods and their feats and came to worship them, singing hymns in praise of their divine power and making offerings in their shrines. And so, as time went by, culture developed. For myths were not only the beginning of religion and art but the fountain-head of literature.

(Lu 1976: 9).

Secondly, it correlates to the culture of Chinese Mahayana Buddhism. According to the Buddhist Lotus Sutra, Guanyin appears in the human world in various forms or images to enlighten mundane lives. These forms may re-appear visibly as Guanyin's face, which is known as *Fa Xiang* (a term for "phenomena" translated as "Dharma" by Venerable Cheng Kuan 2014). This is described in detail in the *Lotus Sutra of Wondrous Dharma*:

Virtuous Man, in a certain Buddhaic Universe, if there be some Multibeings who are meant to be delivered by one in the Buddhaic form, Kuan-Shi-Yin Pusa would manifest a Buddhaic form to divulge the Dharma for them; if they are meant to be delivered by one in the *Pratyeka-buddhaic* form, he would manifest the *Pratyeka-buddhaic* to divulge the Dharma for them…

(translated by Cheng 2014: 526).

The *Lotus Sutra of Wonderous Dharma* goes on to describe 32 forms in which Kuan-Shi-Yin Pusa may manifest, namely, "Buddha", "Pratyeka-buddha", "Auricular", "Celestial Brahman-King", "Shakya-Devanam", "Masterful Celestial", "Great-Masterful Celestial", "Vaisravana Celestial", "lesser Potentate", "Patrician", "lay practitioner", "Perfect", "Brahmin", "Bhikusu or Bhiksuni", "upasaka or upasika", "womenfolk", "lad or lass", "Deva", "Dragon", "Yaksa", "Gandhabha", "Asura", "Garuda", "Kinnara", "Mahoraga", "human", "quasi-anthropoid", "Vajra-bearer Deity" (translated by Cheng 2013: 526-528).

Accordingly, the many avatars of Kuan-Shi-Yin Pusa influenced the way in which natural landscapes are "looked-at", and perceived as an embodiment of Pusa's Dharma.

In Lee's context, these two poetics behind Mount Guanyin, as a model to represent Vishnu, come from the fact that the legends of Vishnu and Guanyin resonate with each other in the way the two deities reveal themselves in different incarnations (or Dharma), to enlighten their believers at the times when they are most needed.

In Hindu mythology, Vishnu, as the major Hindu deity, has innumerable incarnations (Bryant 2007: 18). According to the Hindu purana *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: "O brāhmaṇas, the incarnations of the Lord are innumerable, like rivulets flowing from inexhaustible sources of water." (*Bhāgavatam* 1.3.26)[112]. Among these avatars of Vishnu are ten which are celebrated as his major appearances. These are "Matsya" (the fish), "Kurma" (the tortoise), "Varaha" (the boar), "Narasimha" (the lion man), "Vamana" (the dwarf), "Parashurama" (the sage with an axe), "Rama" (Hindu deity), "Krishna" (Hindu deity), "Buddha" and "Kalki" (the man with a white horse) (Lochtefeld 2002). This resonates with the legends of Guanyin's revelation through a transcendent form. In this case, Guanyin and Vishnu may be interrelated, with Guanyin being the interpretant to translate Vishnu, not only because both are culturalized religious heroes, but also because of the similarity in the way they unfold their heroic powers, i.e., they incarnate their deity selves in various forms.

In this case, the combination of two figures is to be understood differently from the previous example, in which IST models are employed to make up for each other's deficient semantic capability. That Lee combines two signs from two different religious cultures has to be understood as employing an interpretant within the framework of semiotics. According to Iampolski, an interpretant refers

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[112] Source: *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, First Canto: Creation* (1972). translated by translated by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Retrieved online: https://vedabase.io/en/library/sb/1/3/26/.

to how one makes sense of a sign (1998: 79). In Lee's case, Mount Guanyin is employed not only as an IST model, but as Lee's interpretant for the foreign mythological context. In this case, Guanyin is the sign that Lee is familiarized with, whereas Vishnu is an alienated sign which Lee must make sense of. Mount Guanyin, through correlating to the interconnection between a natural deity and Buddhist teaching, serves as the interpretant for Lee to make sense of signs from the Indian mythological universe.

Thus, the combination of the foreign intersemiotic IST model and the home intersemiotic IST model achieves the following semantic result: the home intersemiotic IST model leads to the establishment of the anthropomorphic landscape, while the foreign intersemiotic IST model leads to the meta-textual design of a composite figure. The shell figure takes on the form of the Hindu God Vishnu as the ST culture's visual symbol.

6.3.3 Concatenation of the Two IST Models in Action

The design of a Vishnu landscape also follows this translation model. Unlike the previous examples in Chapter 5, the shell figure does not dissect immediately to show the stylistic mosaic composition. Instead, this visual motif is translated through a loose and hidden intratextual connection, by interrelating the translation of the three separate sequences mentioned above.

Example 1. Establishing the shell figure.

IST blueprint

42. INT. PI'S BEDROOM, 1973 - DAY

Pi kneels, smiling, in an attitude of worship.

Pi

Thank you, Vishnu, for introducing me to Christ.

Adult Pi (V.O.)

I came to faith through Hinduism and I found God's love through

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Christ, but God wasn't finished with me yet.

<div align="right">(Magee 2010: 16)</div>

Figure 6.3.3.1 Establishing shot of the Vishnu Image[113]

Vishnu as a shell figure is introduced through the translation of Scene 42 (see Figure 6.3.3.1). The pre-production start text describes an interior sequence of young Pi praying to the idol of Vishnu in his bedroom. The IST blue print gives no further description of the interior environment or further details of Pi's bedroom, and invites the director's creativity to fill in these blanks. The close-up of the idol of Vishnu is the most significant adaptation.

The time is set in the evening, shortly before Pi goes to sleep. Pi places his right hand piously on the idol. The shot is an extreme close-up shot of Pi's upper body facing left, which only involves Pi and the idol of Vishnu in the frame. thus emphasizing the interaction between the two. The camera pans slowly from left to right, from the idol of Vishnu, neatly placed on Pi's bedside table, to the worshipping Pi. The camera focus switches from the idol to Pi as it pans. After Pi gives thanks, he prays with an Indian *namaste* gesture - hands pressed together, palms touching and fingers pointing upwards with thumbs close to the chest. He then turns off the light and lies down to sleep. The camera then pans slowly from right to left, back to the idol of Vishnu.

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[113] Source: *Life of Pi*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 00.17.47 – 00.18.12).

With the lamp now turned off, a low-key lighting effect which simulates moonlight casts a contour light onto the figure of the idol from directly above. Since it is now at the centre of the frame, and a close-up, the viewer is able to register clearly that Vishnu is lying down and sleeping on top of the serpents which protect him. The camera stays static for 4 seconds on the idol, with the adult Pi's voiceover on the soundtrack. The function of static shots and the rim lighting is to emphasize the significance of the character and figure of the idol. The background voiceover mentions God in order to connect the divine observance within Pi's mind with the Hindu god Vishnu's recumbent image. This is the first time the recumbent figure of Vishnu is pictorially and concretely depicted in the form of the Hindu god. It also symbolizes the concept of God which Pi constantly refers to throughout the film. The Vishnu figure therefore functions as an indication of the broader sense of a divine power beyond a narrowly defined concrete Hindu character.

Example 2. Hidden design - Vishnu-like mountain tops

<u>IST blueprint</u>

> 36 EXT. MUNNAR TEA FIELDS, 1973 – DAY
>
> Rocky mountaintops jut up through a sea of clouds and mist.

(Magee 2010: 14)

Figure 6.3.3.2 A landscape shot of Munnar Tea field[114]

Figure 6.3.3.3 Enlarged part of Vishnu landscape in the background[115]

Earlier in the film, before the Vishnu figure is introduced in its corporeality, it appears as a hidden background design, as a translation of Scene 36 through the concatenation of the model of Mount Guanyin (A1B1) and Mughal composite painting (A2B1).

The shot is a master wide-angle shot of the farmlands in the mountains (see Figure 6.3.3.2). The foreground is a peaceful Indian countryside setting with tea fields, farmers working, and winding mountain roads. The background design presents a grand theme of nature, with clouds and mists surrounding the green mountains. It would seem like an image-to-image translation, apart from the detailed components of farmers and winding roads, but a closer examination of the misty mountain in the background (see Figure 6.3.3.3), reveals an

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[114] Source: *Life of Pi*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 00.15.25 – 00.15.33).
[115] Ibid.

anthropomorphic landscape in the shape of a recumbent Vishnu that is explicated later in the film.

It should also be mentioned that this master shot was edited with the camera tilting vertically from the sky to the mountains to align with the theme of divine instruction. This movement manipulates the landscape design to imply that Pi's adventure is instructed by God, and that it is God that introduces Pi to Christ.

This directorial addition of a hidden design serves as an indicator of 'God's instruction', and may be unnoticed by many viewers as one of the several concretizations for the grand landscape background. Lee's addition of face-like landscapes correlates with the abstract notion of "God" that Pi repeatedly emphasizes. Lee's use of landscape as the meaning-making machine can also be considered as a tribute to the function of film art as an art of index, but Lee does not make the indices as concrete and clear as he does in Figure 6.3.3.1. There is no arbitrary statement given by the director that the mountain is a projection of Vishnu and not just a simple set of remote mountaintops cloaked with green trees. The duality of this design is that it tries to make an implication while not making itself obviously visible. The Vishnu-like mountain figure is positioned in the background of the frame, and the brevity of the sequence is aimed at distracting the audience's attention away from it. The unexplained loose face-landscape connection is however emphasized in the next example, where it appears on screen for the last time.

Example 3. Vishnu-like carnivorous island

Pre-Production Start Text 3

168 EXT. LIFEBOAT – NIGHT

> ST: WIDE-ANGLE – looking over the tiger's shoulder, taking in the entire island. From this distance, it looks – and sounds – as though the island is gently expanding and contracting with the tides…As though it is breathing.
>
> (Magee 2010: 62)

Figure 6.3.3.4 Medium shot of Richard Parker looking at the island[116]

Figure 6.3.3.5 Landscape shot of the island[117]

The master shot sequence of the Vishnu landscape is perhaps the most thrilling sequence in the entire film. Like the previous examples, this sequence is a directorial addition to the setting of the ST. The ST, as indicated above, demands an over the shoulder wide-angle shot from behind the tiger which shows the bioluminescent island contracting and expanding, with the waves lapping on its shore as if it is breathing.

Instead of following the ST's instruction for one wide-angle shot, the sequence consists of two shots: one slowly up-tilting low-angle long shot from behind the tiger in the boat (see Figure 6.3.3.4), and one wide-angle landscape

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[116] Source: *Life of Pi*, directed by Ang Lee (Time: 01.40.16 – 01.40.21).

[117] Ibid. (Time: 01.40.21 – 01.40.29).

shot from deep in the ocean , which includes the whole island (see Figure 6.3.3.5). The first shot is a medium long shot of the tiger, Richard Parker, on the lifeboat near the shore covered with bioluminescent plants and trees. In the deep field of focus, the luminous forest on the island is visible. The green light is designed to match the night theme and to establish an eerie atmosphere. The colour in the foreground is bright, and the water casts reflected light onto the white body of the boat. The tiger's body also reflects the green lights of the island, and mirrors a darker green which matches the shadows on the island. Lee's adaptation reproduces the elements offered in the ST as the prelude to the final revelation of a greater mystery, rather than the mystery itself. The cautious tiger in the boat, and the multi-layered greenish lighting, establish the foundation for a mysterious atmosphere and trigger the spectators to expect more.

The background music strengthens the atmosphere. The slow sporadic piano part emphasizes the movement of the water and the lights reflected in the water. It also generates a sense of uncertainty. The piano introduces the string part and a low-pitched chorus to heighten the expectation of the impending disclosure of a bigger mystery. The glinting sea water and the reflection of the shimmering waves on the sides of the boat provide the audience with a haptic experience, as the gently swaying boat on the luminous glittering water, coupled with the tiger undulating with the boat combine to appeal to the viewer's kinaesthetic sense. The piano part also matches the rhythms of the waves to mimic the sound of the water.

Having translated the strange environment described in the IST blueprint as the mysterious mise-en-scène, the next shot creates an overall landscape of the entire island. By splitting a single shot into two separate shots, Lee dramatically introduces his addition: the landscape presentation of a complete overview of the whole island – a recumbent human-like luminous figure. The landscape shot is presented with a sense of motion. The shot slowly zooms out with the sporadic lights expanding and flowing through the whole island like blood through veins. The greenish colour is surrounded by the darkness of the vast sea, which casts a

bright contour light on the island's shore. The lighting contraction forces the audience to concentrate on the appearance of the island. The greenish light contrasts with the darkness and establishes a haunted, luminous effect. The background music accompanying the shot starts with the low-pitched chorus and the base soundtrack creates a ghostly and suspicious atmosphere. The woodwind further emphasizes the sense of horror and mystery.

Unlike Examples 1 and 2, this sequence emphasizes the complete horizontal view of the landscape, with the music in the previous shot preparing the audience to expect and concentrate on the filmic revelation landscape. This is the third time that the recumbent man-like figure appears on screen. This time Lee does not try to hide the portrait as an implication, but rather uses deliberate emphasis. It must be stressed that all three cases intra-textually relate to each other due to visual similarity. Based on the concrete presentation of Lord Vishnu's statue in the first example (Figure 6.3.3.1), it can be seen that Lee builds a face–landscape connection with the face/appearance of Vishnu in both the mountain figure and the island figure.

Deleuze and Guattari suggest that "the face is what gives the signifier substance: it is what fuels interpretation, and it is what changes, changes traits, when interpretation reimports signifier to its substance…the signifier is always facialized" (Deleuze & Guattari 2003: 115). According to Deleuze and Guattari, "all faces envelop an unknown, unexplored landscape; all landscapes are populated by a loved or dreamed-of face, develop a face to come or already past" (Deleuze & Guattari 2003:172). In Lee's case, the landscape-face connection is manifested in a combined representation of a face/statue landscape. The viewers observe the idol and the island at the same time. This establishes a white wall/black hole system, as suggested by Deleuze and Guattari (2003: 167), with the island as a white wall of signifier and the idol shape of the island as a black hole cut into the 'white wall' of the island figure for Lee's intended signification. In doing so, Lee makes this interconnected idol/landscape representation an efficient meaning-making device.

The Vishnu figure landscape corresponds to Pi's first account of his divinely-ordained adventure, when he says, "Even when God seemed to have abandoned me, he was watching" (Magee 2010: 65). This interconnection between God and Pi's adventure is repeatedly emphasized and comes back onto the screen twice. The implementation of an idol-landscape connection on the floating island also introduces a sensational surreal experience and, along with the night-time setting and the background music, establishes an unknown and mysterious theme. The mystifying atmosphere foreshadows Pi's horror at discovering the truth that the whole island is in fact carnivorous. Lee's adaptation may also strengthen the implication that it is the surreal power of God that alerts Pi to the danger and urges him to leave the island, for as Pi recalls "he gave me a sign to continue my journey" (ibid.).

Beside the embodiment of the deity in the landscape, and the omnipresent interconnections and incarnations of souls, that are communicated through the many signifying practices, e.g., Mount Guanyin and Mughal composite painting introduced by Lee as his IST models, such a "reading" of Lee's imagery also needs to be correlated with the foreign cultural context behind Vishnu, the sign for which Lee's representation serves as an interpretant. In Hindu mythology, Vishnu avatars appear whenever the cosmos is in crisis (Lochtefeld 2002). This is described in the *Bhagavad Gītā*

> Whever and wherever there is a decline in religious practice, O descendant of Bharata, and a predominant rise of irreligion – at that time I descend myself. In order to deliver the pious and to annihilate the miscreants, as well as to reestablish the principles of religion, I advent myself millennium after millennium
>
> (4.7-8)[118]

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[118] Source: *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* (1972). Translated by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Retrieved on line from: https://prabhupadabooks.com/bg.

Accordingly, in Lee's translation of Scenes 36, 42 and 168, the 'Vishnu landscape imagery' is invoked as a culturally concretized semiotic to reveal the horrible truth about the carnivorous island. The Deleuzian face-landscape relationship is thus visualized through the 'firstness' of the Vishnu figure, packaged under an intercultural mediation of Mount Guanyin and composite visual code. That Lee's established face-landscape relationship may also be correlated with what Iampolski describes as "hieroglyphs of intertextuality" (Iampolski 1998: 30) results in a textual anomaly that the audience has to make sense of by seeking its roots outside the film text. This then firmly connects the textuality of Lee's translation as an intertext that connects itself to a logic-generating system behind the two appropriated models. In other words, Vishnu and Guanyin, as cultural semiotics of gods, relate to Lee's inserted intertext, which contextualizes Lee's 'Vishnu landscape', both within and without Lee's foreign culture, by constructing God through a combination of Hindu and Buddhist deities. To this end, 'Vishnu landscape' is enabled to be understood via an indepth "reading" (Chow 1995: 180) and can be interpreted as a meaning-making device of which the "actualization" is offered through establishing an interconnection behind the cultural information that the models represent. In this sense, meaning is communicated by making the 'Vishnu landscape' to a sign of "thirdness" by making the Vishnu figure related to the cultural script of Hinduism and Buddhism.

If, however, the focus is not on "reading" but on "transaction", and visuality is to be "without depth" (Chow 1995: 180), then the 'Vishnu landscape', can be analysed solely for the quality of its "to-be-looked-at-ness", resulting from the two perspectives provided by Lee's appropriated visual patterns that are represented in the two IST models. This "to-be-looked-at-ness" emphasizes the visual "expression" of the 'Vishnu landscape'. To this sense, what is emphasized is the "firstness" of the putting together of two distinct visual traits that is totally free from any concretized connections to any "objects".

"Firstness" refers to "the qualities or powers considered for themselves, without reference to anything else, independently of any question of their actualisation. It is that which is as it is for itself and in itself" (Deleuze 1986: 100). This firstness can also be interpreted as a sign of mystery when no explanation of the background is given by the intersemiotic translator and the spectator perceives nothing concrete other than the visuality of the figure themselves. This may be applied to the present cases, since the first two appearances of the 'Vishnu landscape' are hidden designs that the spectators might not even notice. The three inserted imageries are intratextually so loosely interrelated to the extent that their spectators may not establish a connection with the established concretized shell figure in Example 1, and the hidden design in Example 2 at all, and move on without a second look. Presumably, the anthropomorphic landscape which results from Lee's appropriation of home and foreign IST models is represented as an experience of firstness for its sheer visuality, i.e., "[it] expresses the possible without actualising it" (Deleuze 2005:101).

It is worth noticing that Lee does not seek to make an explicit link between the figure of Lord Vishnu and the figures that Pi confronts in his adventure by making this connection concrete. It permits the viewer to constantly contemplate on the meaning behind an idol-like landscape through which they themselves select their interpretants. It also stimulates the viewer to identify the idol through a constant imagination of the potential correlation between the figure and the elements, or characters, of the film.

By comparing the second narrative of Pi's adventure, a popular explanation is that the carnivorous island symbolizes the corpse of Pi's mother which Pi feeds on when he's dying, since the figure looks like a recumbent female (see about Thorn 2015 for an example). Interconnected with the vision of Vishnu, the Vishnu-like island figure may be interpreted as standing for the consolation that Pi seeks from religion while eating his mother's corpse, just as he seeks consolation after he kills a dorado in the earlier sequence by praying "thank you Lord Vishnu … for coming in the form of a fish and saving our lives" (Magee

2010: 50).

The face-landscape connection may imply the answer that is needed when facing profound questions or a dilemma which Pi cannot explain, such as the question of 'How one finds religion?' None of these interpretations are justified by Lee and yet these interpretations are nonetheless permitted by his adaptations as they highlight to a visible degree the surreal divine religious interconnection behind Pi's adventure which Lee intends to discuss. Not establishing a solid semiotic connection, Lee's imposed landscapes became signs of mystery which only stimulates the spectator's curiosity. These Vishnu landscapes, therefore, create a meaning-making device which is mystified by the absence of an explanation from Lee.

Roland Barthes writes that "myth is not defined by the object of its message but by the way in which it utters this message" (1993: 109). Accordingly, mystery is translated by not going beyond the "firstness" of the sign, even though knowing that the sign itself is clearly related to something. In this way, the loose connection made with 'Vishnu-island' is to be understood as a sign of firstness, i.e., it is "as it is for itself and in itself" (Deleuze 1986: 100) and is independently of any questions of its actualization. The referencing is absent not because it does not exist, but because its connotations are purposefully withheld by the translators to make this sign of the firstness mystical. As Ludwig Wittgenstein observed, "It is not *how* things are in the world that is mystical, but *that* it exists" (TLC 6.44). In Lee's case, it is not what the shapes mean or what idol they refer to, but the fact that they are portrayed in the likeness of a meaningful idol-like figure with no explanation that haunts the spectators as mysterious icons to invite their interpretations on Lee's deeper meaning behind it.

Regarding the intention of directorial adaptations, Lee's personal response provides a useful insight. Lee remarked that:

> I am not very clear about what I had done throughout the film, it is difficult
> for me to utter in a rational way what is irrational in my creation.

Nevertheless, it would destroy the mysteriousness of my film if I were to explain what I intended to do.[119]

Lee's comment, which is not very different from what many directors might say when confronted with the question 'What do you mean?' may be interpreted in two ways:

Firstly, Lee claims that he cannot explain the meaning behind his icon and so he cannot give a concrete explanation for his creation. Rey Chow remarked that similar excuses make the director a seducer who does not consciously know that he is seducing even though he is fully engaged in the game of seduction (1995: 150). Chow observes that such seduction follows the enigmatic traps a director sets "in order to engage his or her viewers in an infinite play and displacement of meanings and surfaces, to catch these viewers in their longings and desires, making them reveal passions they nonetheless do not fully understand" (1995: 150). It stimulates the text receivers' curiosity as the absurdity/exotic elements represented translate mysteriousness concerning "that it exists" rather than "how things are".

Secondly, Lee's comment may be understood as his refusal to offer clear meanings. Lee says "I would like to represent the growing up process of us humans in which things we've encountered, be that God or the entire life, are actually absurd with no meaning."[120] Lee's remark coincides with the adult Pi's line in the film "If it happens, it happens, why should it have to mean anything" (Magee 2010: 64)? Such an explanation, however, is clearly unconvincing, since it contradicts Lee's earlier remark that the purpose of story-telling is the communication of meaning. Why seduce the spectators with clearly connotative signs and connect them intertextually if it does not have to mean anything? This

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[119] Source: Ang Lee's interview in the film forum of *Life of Pi*, broadcasted live on Nov 25th 2012 by Public Television Service, retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Tu0W_h-nu8, my translation.

[120] Ibid.

refusal may only be explained by Lee himself as an intention to retain a "mystery of creation".[121] It may also be contemplated as Lee's anticipation of an upcoming endless interpretation process triggered by his translation. Lee remarks that "meanings are manmade to make sense out of these random absurdities by telling stories."[122] Intentionally forsaking his opportunity to give an official explanation, Lee lures the spectators into initiating a meaning-making process between Lee's onscreen reality and other possible realities which may lead to an infinite interpretation which they themselves do not fully understand. The result of such meaning-making processes varies from individual to individual as one reaches a final interpretation only at a psychological rather than a logical terminus (Wittgenstein 1967: 234).

Consequently, through Lee's Vishnu landscapes, a theist may see the power of religion, an atheist may see the denial of religion and a pessimist may see the possible truth. A new viewer will always be able to start the interpreting process afresh. One could say that by leaving the imposed meaningful visual components unexplained, a director makes his or her intersemiotic translation alive yet deeply enigmatic.

6.4 Conclusion

Intersemiotic translators are not only translators of a specific culture, but also initiate exchanges between cultures. A further intention of this cultural exchange is to appeal to a target culture. Each model belongs to a repertoire (as discussed in Section 3.1.1). These models may therefore be considered as being subject to different cultural poetics, so an IST model can be chosen to appeal to a target culture whose members are already familiarized with the audio-visual patterns

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[121] Source: Ang Lee's interview in the film forum of *Life of Pi*, broadcasted live on Nov 25th 2012 by Public Television Service, retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Tu0W_h-nu8, my translation.

[122] Ibid.

specific to that culture.

If, however, an IST model is to be enabled from beyond the consumption-oriented frameworks, and each model is considered to be a lens through which a culture is perceived, this represents a translation of these culturally specific visual spectacles, and therefore invites a transnational gaze. This transnational gaze applies to the case studies which have been discussed, where Ang Lee employs and combines multiple IST models, or audio-visual patterns, in order to communicate his 'intention'.

Lee's remark in an interview about *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* epitomizes why an IST translator needs to employ IST models inter-culturally:

> With 'Crouching Tiger,' for example, the subtext is very purely Chinese. But you have to use Freudian or Western techniques to dissect what I think is hidden in a repressed society – the sexual tension, the prohibited feelings. Otherwise you don't get that deep… to be more Chinese you have to be Westernized, in a sense. You have to use that tool to dig in there and get at it.
>
> (Lee, cited in Chan 2009: 79).

So how does an IST translator "get deeper" by putting his/her 'home' culture under a 'foreign' gaze or vice versa, and how, through an inter-cultural combination of models (described by Lee as "techniques"), may a translator "dig in there and get at it"? To answer these questions, one has to return to the creative process of "putting together" as suggested by Benjamin's framework in his essay 'The task of the translator'.

Chow suggested the process of "putting together" is appropriated from Benjamin's "gluing together" which he describes as follows:

> Fragments of a vessel which are to be glued together must match one another in the smallest details, although they need not be like one another.

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In the same way a translation, instead of resembling the meaning of the original, must lovingly and in detail incorporate the original's mode of signification, thus making both the original and translation recognizable as fragments of a greater language, just as fragments are part of a vessel.

(Benjamin 1968: 78)

Chow interprets Benjamin as proposing a "liberation", in the sense that "both 'original' and 'translation,' as languages rendering each other, share the 'longing for linguistic complementarity' and gesture together toward something larger" (1995: 188). Chow elaborates Benjamin's notion of "origin" and "translation", suggesting that "original" may refer not only to something written in the "original language", but also the "native/original language of the native speaker/translator" (ibid.: 189). Similarly, "translation" may refer to "not only the language into which something is translated but also a language foreign to the translator's mother tongue" (ibid.).

Chow's interpretation may be applied to the present dichotomy of 'home' and 'foreign' cultural IST models, where "original" refers to the 'home' IST models which are in the translator's mother tongue. In the same way, "translation" may refer to the translator's 'foreign' cultural models which manifest as different audio-visual patterns (see a further discussion of the 'home' and 'foreign' dichotomy in Section 3.2.1). Thus, the inter-cultural combination of IST models corresponds to the underlying principles of Benjamin's argument: 'home' should let the 'foreign' "affect, or infect, and vice versa" (Chow 1995: 189). To master such a combination is what Benjamin refers to as "the task of the translator":

It is the task of the translator to release in his own language that pure language which is under the spell of another, to liberate the language imprisoned in a work in his re-creation of that work.

(Benjamin 1968: 80)

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Accordingly, what Lee refers to as "hidden" is what Benjamin refers to as an "imprisonment". This describes the under-translated and neglected information in that culture. This information is under-translated in that it is not referred to or visually represented, and is therefore "imprisoned". These hidden messages may only be liberated by means of a supplemental model from a culture and language that is different from their own. In this way, therefore, "imprisoned" cultural information is supplemented by 'foreign' IST models.

For instance, the under-translated intention of human desire in Chinese IST models is supplemented by Western IST models from Hollywood. The anthropomorphic landscape of Chinese IST models also functions as a liberation for "imprisoned" Indian IST models. In both cases, it is Lee's inter-cultural combinations of IST models that translates, and visually creates, the hidden cultural meaning in the IST blueprints. It is through this "putting together" that Lee's translation contributes to a cinematic presentation of the hidden or imprisoned elements.

This combination may be explored through the concept of "pure language", which Benjamin explains thus: "all supra-historical kinship between languages consists in this: in every one of them as a whole, one and the same thing is meant. Yet this one thing is achievable not by any single language but only by the totality of their intentions supplementing one another: the pure language" (1986: 79).

In the present case, IST cultural models are each considered as fragments of that "pure language". In turn, the pure language is considered as a complete, or universal, language which communicates beyond cultural or national boundaries. If the system of IST models presents a dichotomy of 'home culture' and 'foreign culture' sources, this inter-cultural combination of IST models, where each model is dependent on the clear conceptual boundary between 'home' and 'foreign', violates that boundary. The IST translator can therefore be seen to enable audio-visual patterns comprised of different cultures that are constantly in dialogue with each other.

If an intercultural combination of IST models is considered as a "putting

together" of "fragments", then it is by the "putting together" of these IST models that the IST translator accomplishes a re-construction of the "greater language": a language that is efficient in translating the segments of messages, and their cultural context, through audio-visual images. In the case studies discussed here, it is through this "putting together", that Lee communicates his creative intention beyond cultures, and yet taps into universal ideas that are common between cultures.

Conclusion

7.1 Research Summary and Findings

This aim of this research is to answer the question of how intersemiotic translators translate, using the case studies of three of Ang Lee's films, namely, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, *Lust, Caution* and *Life of Pi* as examples. To answer this question, the the deficiencies in the extant debate in the literature concerning the audio-visual aspects of IST studies are addressed.

A new paradigm of intersemiotic translation is then proposed to challenges the traditional verbum-centred one, where film is considered as an audio-visualization of one finite literary source (as has been assumed by most of the past research in this area). The binary verbal to non-verbal paradigm of film as intersemiotic translation undermines the complexity of the filmmaking mechanism. It also results in other prior materials of film being neglected. Instead, the proposed new paradigm of intersemiotic translation considers film as an intersemiotic translation not of one but of multiple prior materials (both verbal and non-verbal) that comprise its start texts.

These start texts can be generally categorized into the three stages of filmmaking, namely, the development stage, pre-production stage, and production stage [123]. Accordingly, three types of start texts for an IST are identified, namely IST inspirations (start texts in the development stage that inspire the initiation of an IST project), IST blueprints (start texts in the pre-production stage that provide the structure of the IST) and IST models (start texts in the production stage that offer audio-visual patterns to be imposable on the IST).

Based on this proposed paradigm of intersemiotic translation, the focus of

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[123] In this context, production means the production of the film text. It comprises both the film's production process and post-production process.

this research is on discussing the finite translation process from the IST blueprint (in this case the film screenplay) to an IST. In this context, it is proposed that an intersemiotic translator translates an IST blueprint by employing IST models.

To provide a theoretical examination of the intersemiotic translator's IST models, elements are borrowed from Itamar Even-Zohar's polysystem theory and Rey Chow's theory of cultural translation. Even-Zohar recognizes an IST model as a combination of elements and rules and syntagmatic relations that are imposable on a product (1997: 22). Under Even-Zohar's conceptual scheme, a model is affiliated to a repertoire under a culture which governs both the production and consumption of any given product (ibid.: 20) and connects to a culture by presenting identifiable culturally specific information. Chow's theory attends to audio-visual phenomena as translations of a culture, with a special focus on film. To Chow, the visuality of film is the primacy of cross-cultural translation, i.e., its "to-be-looked-at-ness", which Chow then defines as "the visuality that once defined the 'object' status of culture and that now becomes a predominant aspect of that culture's self-representation" (1995: 180). Thus, a film translates a culture as an audio-visual construction to be "looked at" interculturally. Applying Chow's theory, IST models are themselves translations of cultures, as they represent their embedded cultures as audio-visual constructions enabling the cultures "to be looked at" by members of different cultural groups. An IST model is therefore to be regarded as a meaning-making cultural lens of through which a culture is seen. It is by employing these IST models, therefore, that an intersemiotic translator mediates between cultures.

Following the two framework theories, a novel system of IST models is put forward as this study's underpinning methodology. Here, these IST models are regarded as elements within systems, because the models each consist of different ways of organizing, clustering, arranging and classifying concepts while establishing complex relations between them (Hall 1997: 17). These systems of IST models consist of a hierarchy of three levels: (A) cultural models and (B) semiotic models, which are then mediated in (C) the level of employment. An

IST model is always a result of cross-level combinations between the level of cultural models and the level of semiotic models. An IST model can be categorized into four types, namely: home intersemiotic IST models (A1B1), home intrasemiotic IST models (A1B2), foreign intersemiotic IST models (A2B1) and foreign intrasemiotic IST models (A2B2). Examples are provided of each type of IST model and are extracted from three films directed by Ang Lee.

The home IST models represent elements, rules and syntagmatic relations that the intersemiotic translator, as well as members of the translator's own culture, use to interpret the world meaningfully. The employment of home IST models is to be understood as the translators speaking their own native 'language', and they represent the dominant poetics of the translator's home culture, i.e., they imbue the translation with cultural codes that are shared by the members of the translator's own culture. Home IST models are concerned with both how an intersemiotic translator perceives their own culture, and how they expect their own culture to be 'looked at' interculturally. In the case of Ang Lee, the home IST models are Chinese audio-visual patterns.

The dichotomy of home intersemiotic IST models and home intrasemiotic IST models presents a contrast of "older" and "modern" visuality (Chow 1995: 36). In Lee's case, his home intersemiotic IST models are aestheticized in that they are concerned with finesse and "primitive" (Chow 1995) cultural productions, whereas his home intrasemiotic IST models are popularized and concerned with transmissivity and accessibility to large audiences. In the case of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, Lee's employment of the IST models of Chinese ink-wash painting and Chinese calligraphy fulfil his aim of restoring his home cultural image, which he thinks is translated falsely by his home intrasemiotic IST models. He still employs the home intrasemiotic IST models, however, as in the case of classic *wuxia* mise-en-scènes and the wire fu choreography, to pay tribute to the norm of home genre films, while appropriating it to mean something other than the accepted visual patterns. It is through Lee's appropriation of his home IST models that his IST places his home culture under

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the home cultural lens – to produce a meaningful interpretation of the world.

The foreign IST models are the combination of elements, rules and syntagmatic relationships that belong to another culture with which the intersemiotic translators are not familiarized and which they must make sense of. The employment of foreign IST models can be considered as the intersemiotic translator speaking a foreign tongue. 'Foreign' refers to the fact that the audio-visual patterns in those IST models represent different meaning-making mechanisms as compared to those of the translator's own culture. In this sense, foreign intersemiotic IST models are more visually opaque, and distinctively ethnographic, in that they represent identifiable and unique visual patterns of that culture's self-representation. Lee's employment of Mughal composite paintings in the case of *Life of Pi* serves to translate the Indian cultural context that backgrounded the IST blueprint while also acting semiotically as the visual motif of the film and being an efficient story-telling device.

In comparison to the foreign intersemiotic IST models, foreign intrasemiotic IST models are transparent. In Lee's case, filmic patterns are considered as foreign intrasemiotic IST models, since to Lee, film is genealogically a foreign art. Lee adopts the filmic patterns as foreign intrasemiotic IST models, partly because he has to convey the textual linguistic norms of the foreign culture, but also because the filmic patterns employed present novel angles to interpret the messages in the blueprint that his home IST models are incapable of translating. Accordingly, in the three films selected, Lee's employment of prolonged following shots brings back the visual emphasis from the landscape to the human figures, in contrast to the reverse pattern employed to convey his own culture. Lee's usage of explicit sexual representation in *Lust, Caution* presents a radical revisiting of his home culture and exposes it from the most unmentionable of perspectives. Through such an employment of an IST model, Lee critically translates his own culture, while accomplishing a genuine cultural translation through rendering the debauched as universal (Chow 1995: 196). Thus, in using the foreign IST models, Lee is translating other cultures while also using the

cultural lens of 'the other' to translate his own culture.

A translator can also employ the IST models in an intercultural combination which presents an exchange, or combination, of elements between cultures. In this case, "looking" is reciprocal, where each IST model is employed to make up for the deficiencies of the other, and is simultaneously employed as a viewed object and the viewing subject. It is in this way that the intercultural combination of IST models provides an enrichment of both the translator's home, and foreign, audio-visual patterns. The bamboo scene in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon,* and the Vishnu landscape in *Life of Pi,* provide examples to help understand how Lee combines IST models interculturally.

To translate the bamboo scene, Lee uses seven IST models, namely, King Hu's bamboo setting, the wire fu choreography, the prolonged shot, the ink wash painting, the following shot and the sensual close-up. In this case, each IST model is employed to make up for the other's translational deficiencies, and it is through the transnational gaze that Lee's IST of the bamboo scene reaches a "linguistic complementation" (Benjamin 1968: 79). The Vishnu landscape in *Life of Pi* is a result of Lee's combination of the model of Mughal composite painting with the model of the anthropomorphic Mount Guanyin. Lee uses the two IST models as each other's interpretant, and together they contribute to Lee's creation of the Vishnu landscape as a meaning-making device, that offers the translator's creative addition to the messages in the IST blueprint while fitting into the mystery of the multi-layered story that is described in the that blueprint. In this case, each IST model can be considered as a fragment of Benjamin's "pure language" (ibid.). Through an intercultural combination of IST models, an intersemiotic translator accomplishes a 'putting together' of fragments and a re-construction of the "greater language" (ibid.: 78).

At this point, it is clear that an intersemiotic translator translates by employing pre-existing audio-visual patterns as his or her IST models. The combination of 'elements + rules + materials' in an IST model is an audio-visual 'putting together', that translates a culture while also representing the lens of

meaning-making adopted by members of that culture. It is by employing IST models that an intersemiotic translator translates the IST blueprint. It is also by employing IST models that an intersemiotic translator translates culture and mediates across cultures. Arguably, the intersemiotic translators are original not because of these IST models, but because of how they appropriate and employ these models.

The main purpose of this research was to address the complexity of intersemiotic translation phenomena, with film as its object of study, and to develop a brand-new theorization and methodology for studying and understanding intersemiotic translation. An intersemiotic translator not only responds to the increasing number of non-verbal phenomena, but most importantly, with audio-visual forms considered as devices for translation, translates and mediates between cultures more efficiently than interlingual translators.

By focusing on audio-visual patterns, this research may be considered as taking a radical leap of faith across the boundary of translation studies, a field that is often comfortably seen as restricted to the transmission of natural languages. For translation studies, however, if scholars are to respond to the present age that is dominated by the image, it is precisely this comfortable boundary that needs to be drastically expanded, if not broken. If in addition to contributing to the theorization and methodology of intersemiotic translation, this dissertation succeeds in moblilizing the traditional perception of translation studies in general so that a redefinition of translation and a revisiting of the methodology used in studying translation is called upon, it will have accomplished its chief objective.

7.2 Contribution to Wider Research

It must be emphasized that although the present research is exclusively focused on film, the methodology developed in this dissertation is not limited

solely to the area of films. Rather, it is through the examination of film case studies that the theorization of intersemiotic translation is radically revisited.

This research offers a formal response towards a culture that is now dominated by the image (Chow 1995: 182) and presents a novel and efficient methodology through which to examine intersemiotic translation of the continually expanding range of non-verbal texts. If audio-visual phenomena in general are to be considered as intersemiotic translations, they are, arguably, intersemiotic translations of chains of prior materials. This applies to other artefacts whose prior materials must not be reduced to a mere verbal/non-verbal paradigm, but must be considered with regard to the actual production process. For example, the starting-point of an orchestra can be traced to several texts that inspired the formulation of ideas. An idea of an orchestra may then be developed into sheet music. This sheet music is then translated into an orchestral performance. Such an observation, moving away from the binary verbum-centred paradigm of intersemiotic translation, describes the prior materials not according to their semiotic nature (which can never be simply differentiated as either verbal or non-verbal) but to their function and position in the intersemiotic translation process. This will help future researchers to analyse an audio-visual phenomenon from beyond a binary paradigm of translation, and to consider the actual mechanism by which that medium produces texts.

It is hoped that the proposed system of IST models will stand as a valid and efficient analytical device in helping to understand the intersemiotic translator's strategy in translation by appropriating pre-existing audio-visual patterns. This system of IST models applies not only to the area of film but also to other arts. For instance, a painter may employ visual patterns from another painting, or from a photograph, as an intersemiotic IST model to be appropriated into his own painting. They might also employ visual patterns from a foreign culture or from their own culture. Accordingly, one is able to understand and model the intersemiotic translator's translation strategy, analyse how they adopt that strategy, how they appropriate and choose to creatively adapt these audio-visual

patterns, and how, by looking through the lens of one culture they translate a second culture through a 'putting together' of different audio-visual patterns.

7.3 Limitations and Prospects of the Research

This research challenges the binary verbum-centred paradigm of IST, and puts forward a new paradigm which differentiates inspirations, blueprints and models. Due to the limitations of time and space, it has not been possible to exhaust the investigation of prior materials in the development stage of IST. The audio-visual patterns discussed are by no means the only examples that have been found in the analysis. They were, however, chosen for discussion because of their uniqueness, and as representative of each type of IST model identified.

Due to practical and financial considerations, the research also heavily relies on second-hand interview sources and published production notes as the key secondary materials. It is acknowledged that these resources are insufficient to represent adequately the massive amount of potential data that is accumulated in the production process of an intersemiotic translation. Many of the identified audio-visual patterns that are strongly suspected of being the director's IST models are, therefore, left unproven and cannot be included in the discussion.

This research has not included translational decisions and actions on the part of other individuals involved in the filmmaking process beside the director. Instead, Lee, as the film director, is seen as being responsible for filtering and adapting the translational behaviours of his crew. Regarding Lee as the translator was, however, an efficient strategy for keeping this dissertation focused on discussing the audio-visual aspect of the translated text. Since the primary purpose of the research was to develop and propose a methodology for studying intersemiotically translated text, and to establish a paradigm for the understanding of intersemiotic translation, this simplification is believed to be acceptable, and it is by no means a return to the oft-criticized "auteur mythology" (as mentioned in Cattrysse 2014). Now that the proposed basic framework and

methodology are well-established, much can be done to elaborate and apply them further, with more attention being paid to other variables within the process of an intersemiotic translation.

For future investigations into the mechanism of intersemiotic translation, in addition to textual analysis (employing the framework and methodology proposed), the focus of attention must be shifted from the text to the production of the text itself. This would mean that in addition to the translated text, attention must be paid to the intersemiotic translators (or, more likely, groups of intersemiotic translators) themselves.

Following this logic, an intersemiotic translation can be understood as the result of negotiations within a network of intersemiotic translators (referring to the actor network theory advanced in Callon 1986 and Latour 2007). In this context, the selection and formulation of texts at each stage of production are decided through negotiation between groups of filmmakers.

The negotiations at the development stage of the production take many factors into account, and often result in the key skopos of the IST being agreed between the project commissioner and the intersemiotic translators. At the development stage, IST inspirations are collected by the filmmakers and are selected, through negotiation, to be translated into the IST blueprints during the pre-production stage.

The verbal screenplay is one of many IST blueprints in the film pre-production stage and it is a result of negotiation between multiple intersemiotic translators. These intersemiotic translators include script-writers, directors and producers. Based on the screenplay, many forms of IST blueprints are produced by many filmmakers to be translated during the production stage. These include the IST blueprints for the director, the cinematographer, the gaffer, the production designer, the performers, the sound recordist, the composers, as well as for the editors, and other filmmakers that will be involved in the production process. Likewise, these IST blueprints are each a result of negotiations between various members of the film crew. At the production stage, each filmmaker selects their

own IST models to help them translate their own IST blueprints. The selection and employment of IST models are again determined through negotiations between filmmakers. Negotiations between the intersemiotic translators at the production stage will, therefore, inevitably cause changes to the IST blueprints and result in a process of constant reworking and reselection of IST blueprints and IST models.

To thoroughly engage with, and understand, these negotiations in the translation processes, a methodology must be adopted that can access and evaluate, at first hand, the source materials of an intersemiotic translation project. The methodology should include interviews with members of the film crew and an archival study of the production notes. A primary field investigation also needs to be conducted, as part of the film crew itself, to gain as much first-hand data about the above-mentioned negotiations as possible. It is hoped that with all these data gathered, and evaluated within the framework and methodology proposed in the present dissertation, a more comprehensive theorization of intersemiotic translation can be developed.

Appendix

Ang Lee – A Short Biography

Ang Lee can be regarded as a translator both in the semiotic sense and in the cultural sense. His uniqueness as a translator comes primarily from the ambiguity of his background. Lee's journey has been, as he self-remarked, "placed somewhere between cultural shock and accommodation" (Zhang 2016: 11, my translation). Geographical dislocation can be considered his birth right, and his life can be seen to represent a dialogue between cultures from both East and West.

In 1954, Lee was born to a Mainland Chinese family who moved to Taiwan following the Chinese Nationalists' defeat in the 1949 Civil War. When the entire Lee family moved from Hualian to Tainan when Lee was 10, the cultural shock and resulting exile identity rendered his cultural identity growing up somewhat ambiguous. After graduating from National Tainan First Senior High School, where his father was the principle, Lee entered the then National Arts School in Taipei (now recognized as National Taiwan University of Arts), where he developed his interest in drama and art. After finishing his mandatory military service in the Republic of China Navy in 1979, Lee went to the USA to study at the University of Illinois, where he completed his bachelor's degree in theatre in 1980. He then completed an MFA degree in film production at the Tisch School of the Arts, New York University.

In 1983, Lee started a family in America with his wife Jane Lin. After 6 years of unemployment in New York, Lee started his career as a filmmaker and made his first feature film *Pushing Hands* (1991). Lee still, however, considered his life's journey as one of an outsider:

> I was never a citizen of any particular place … My parents left China to go to Taiwan. We were outsiders there. We moved to the States. Outsiders. Back to China. Now we were outsiders there, too – outsiders from America.
>
> (Lee, cited in Ebert 2007: 820)

It was arguably this perception of being an outsider that stimulated his journey as a filmmaker, by giving him the "critical detachment necessary for the uniqueness of creative vision" (Said 2002: 366). Cursed and blessed by his ambiguous cultural identity, Lee's work is full of risk. His detachment permits him the vision to explore daring topics, where the interactions between cultures are evidenced through the dialogues between uncompromising viewpoints. This fierce dialogue is a unique feature of Lee's films.

Lee's first three films, namely, *Pushing Hands* (1991), *Wedding Banquet* (1993) and *Eat, Drink, Man, Women* (1994) are backgrounded in Chinese culture, and put Chinese cultural elements in constant dialogue with foreign cultures and the transition towards globalization. In his first two films, this dialogue is represented through a well-loaded father and son relationship. In *Pushing Hands*, a Chinese son who started a family in the US has to seek a balance between his wife, a struggling American writer and his father, a Tai-Chi master. In *Wedding Banquet*, a young homosexual Chinese-American has to confront his father, a retired army general, who wanted his son to have a family and further his bloodline. The father figure was further explored in *Eat Drink, Man Woman*, where an old esteemed and widowed cook, has to maintain his family integrity while his four daughters are trying to seek their independence. The focus on the so-called 'father knows best trilogy' is a fierce contrast between East and West, tradition and modernity, patriarchy and individuality. All three films were well-received worldwide: *Pushing Hands* swept the 28th Golden Horse Awards and *Wedding Banquet* and *Eat, Drink, Man Women* were nominated for best foreign language film in the 66th and 67th Academy Awards.

Following the success of his first three films, Lee turned his cinematic attention to the west, his adopted home. In 1995, he was invited to bring the Jane Austen novel *Sense and Sensibility* to the screen. This British period film dealt with repression, opposition and resolution in a nineteenth century British family with four daughters. Lee explored parallels between his home and foreign cultures and accurately built the tension while achieving a careful balance in representing a conservative society. The film won Lee world-wide recognition and freed him from the marginalized category of foreign language film.

Lee continued to make two more films in Hollywood. *The Ice Storm* (1997) presents a family drama in post-Watergate America. Lee depicted a family in an era where ethical values are compromised: the younger generation rebel against imposed moral codes and experiment with casual sex, while the lives of the older generations, spiral out of control through inappropriate thrill-seeking. The ensuing crisis that confront this middle-class family are connoted through the chaos of conflicting morals, beliefs and social codes.

Lee then went on to look deeper into the history of his adopted home by making the US Civil War film *Red with the Devil* (1999). This film was narrated from the perspective of two friends who joined the Bushwhackers that were loyal to the Confederacy. The film presents a rare glimpse of the understated part of the American history through the story of two 'outsiders', an ethnic German and an African American, who find themselves fighting for ideals they do not believe in. This continuing theme of a sense of cultural and moral ambiguity is integrated into all Lee's films, evidencing his capacity to seek universality between cultures, be they remote or close to him.

These films also gave Lee the courage to continue producing major Hollywood blockbuster films. It was not, however, until the year 2000 that Lee established himself as a Hollywood big-budget filmmaker. *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon* (2000) was a milestone in Lee's filmmaking career and became his most globally recognized work. Lee chose the genre of Hong Kong martial art films to tell the story of a young female Chinese warrior who steals the sword

of a renowned swordsman and seeks her freedom in the feudal society of Qing Dynasty China.

Lee adapts the stereotypical approach to the martial art film genre with grace and humanity. His ability to repackage and re-appropriate the Chinese identity beyond cultures is presented in full force in this film. The film became the highest grossing foreign language film in US history and swept the 73rd Academy Awards, receiving ten nominations and four wins.

This success did not, however, carry over to his next project, i.e., the big-budget film *Hulk* (2003). Here Lee ventured into the realm of Marvel Comics, telling the story of the superhero Hulk, a researcher with a tragic past who turns into a green monster when he gets angry. Lee tried to blend the father and son relationship with a touch of Greek tragedy, however *Hulk* consequently became an awkward combination of big budget production and art house film. The film became both a commercial and artistic disaster, and Lee's first major failure.

The failure of *Hulk* wearied Lee both physically and psychologically and he considered giving up his career as a filmmaker. It was Lee's father who, having initially opposed Lee's intention to enter the film industry, persuaded Lee to regain his courage and continue his filmic journey.

His next film *Brokeback Mountain* (2005) brought about a reversal of fortune. The film tells the story of a secret homosexual relationship between two cowboys. Once again, Lee depicts their relationship and desire multi-dimensionally with its tenderness, joy and sorrow vividly represented. This low-budget film turned out to be a huge success and it won Lee the best director award in the 78th Academy Awards, making him the first Asian director to win the award.

More than a reversal of fortune, *Brokeback Mountain* sufficiently recovered Lee's weariness for him to take on another heavy challenge in *Lust, Caution* (2007), which may be regarded as one of Lee's most controversial films, telling a story of the emotional intrigue of a national traitor in Japanese occupied Shanghai. In the film Lee translated the concepts of lust and caution through excessive sexual scenes that are "virtually indistinguishable from conventional

pornography" (Chow 2011: 559). Lee blends the themes of obsession, sexuality, loyalty and patriotism, but also confronts the topic of brutally in sex, a tabooed area in Chinese culture. Lee describes the making of *Lust, Caution* as the confrontation of his karma but once again exhausted himself physically and emotionally in translating the unmentionable side of his home culture.

Lee's next film *Taking Woodstock* (2009) may be regarded as a break between big productions. The film, set in the generation defining Woodstock concert, may be considered as a sequel of *The Ice Storm* (Dilley 2015: 17), however, unlike *The Ice Storm*, Lee foregrounds the topic of homosexuality and the gay-liberation movement. Like *The Ice Storm*, *Taking Woodstock* did not gain high visibility, grossing only 9 million dollars worldwide, and can be regarded as the most invisible of Lee's films.

Lee may have been saving his strength for a more ambitious project, and the phenomenal film *Life of Pi* (2012) was a huge gamble, involving the three uncontrollable factors that filmmakers instinctively avoid, namely, children, animals and weather. The film represents the spiritual journey of a boy who, following a shipwreck, endures a lengthy voyage as a cast-away trapped on a lifeboat with a fearsome tiger. Lee employed the then new 3D technology to achieve the impossible – telling a story that happens almost solely on the ocean where the only drama lies in the interaction between the boy and the tiger. Lee found enough blank space however to render the unfathomable side of spirit and faith by combining visual elements from multiple cultures, including Indian, Canadian, Taiwanese, Chinese and Japanese. Lee also combined basic concepts and images from various religions such as Hinduism, Christianity and Islam as experienced by Pi as a young boy. *Life of Pi* achieved a huge success both commercially and artistically, with 11 nominations and 4 wins at the 85th Academy Awards. Lee won the Best Director Award and became the only Asian director to win this category twice.

After *Life of Pi*, Lee decided to explore the limits of technological filmmaking. His latest two films, *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* (2016) and

Gemini Man (2019) were both shot with the extra high-frame rate 120fps. In *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*, human emotions were rendered in extreme facial close-ups. In *Gemini Man*, Lee create an on screen 20-year-old version of the 51-year-old Henry Borgan (Will Smith). Though both films deserved to be written in film history books for their technical breakthroughs, they were undoubtedly production failures. *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*, was a box office bomb, grossing only 30.9 million dollars worldwide against a production budget of 40 million dollars, *Gemini Man*, brought back memories of *Hulk* and considered a frustratingly subpar story with clichéd settings and characters and an awkward plot and a the net loss of around 111.1 million dollars.

Lee is no stranger to failures, having endured his six years of unemployment from the age of 31 to 37, and the aftermath of *Hulk* and yet come back with even stronger productions. Lee's bravery lies not only in his "divergent genres and unpredictable subject matter" (Dilley 2015: 20) but in how he renders these topics with striking audio-visuality. Lee's films have impinged unforgettable moments into the memories of global audiences, however, from the start of his directorial works, it is the power of Lee's use of silence that is most notable. His first film, *Pushing Hands,* begins with a 15-minute dialogue free scene between the daughter in-law and father, powerfully denoting their conflict. In *The Ice Storm*, the husband was left in his mistress's house for hours. In *Brokeback Mountain*, the secret of the two gay lovers was communicated through the repressive silence in the mountains.

Lee's use of silence is closely linked to his use of space. The concept of space is rendered with a sense of aesthetic awareness where landscapes, a cultural signifier for the "great void", are represented by dazzling natural spectacles. For example, this can be found in the grand plains of Kansas in *Ride with the Devil*s, the Mongolian desert in *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, and in the endless ocean in *Life of Pi*. He also uses space to build tension, where a lengthy repression leads to an evitable explosion. Such unleashing of repressed energy can be seen in the fierce dining hall confrontation in the *Wedding Banquet*, the final

confession in the mansion in *Sense and Sensibility* and the desperate accusation of misery in the tiny loft in *Lust, Caution*. It is through a skillful handling of human and space relationships that Lee efficiently translates the hidden emotion of the human heart.

The uniqueness of Lee's film language can also be found through his masterful representation of faces. Through the strict, caring and reconciling father figure (Sihung Lung), in the father knows best trilogy, the repressed affection of Shu Lien (Michello Yeoh) in *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon* and the combination of brutality and sentimentality of Mr. Yee (Toney Leung), Lee's has demonstrated his capability to bring multiple facets and depth to his characters, which is why his audiences empathize with his characters so strongly..

Lee also dares to make cinematographic and technical innovations: in *The Ice Storm*, Lee uses glasses to reflect the fragmented social values, in *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon* Lee's extensive and innovative use of wire-fu was designed to reflect the duality of freedom and restriction,, in *Life of Pi*, Lee demanded that the waves should be accurately rendered in CGI. His recent use of high-frame 120 fps cinematography in *Billy Lynn's Long Half-time Walk* and *Gemini Man* is one of the many examples of innovative moves to push the limits of cinematography, which can make working with him very challenging and unpredictable

Beyond his divergent genres, unexpected topics and unique cinematic language, Lee is constantly asking the basic question of personal identity. This develops the complexity of his characters as they seek to escape from countless dilemmas between tradition and transition, desire and morality, freedom and responsibility. This sense of detachment can be found in Jen in *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon* where her ideal of Jianghu (江湖) is dislocated with the reality of feudal society. It can be found in Wong Chia Chi (Tang Wei) in *Lust, Caution* where her idealistic passion for patriotism and romance results in brutal nakedness and exploitation. It can also be morphed into the cast away journey in

Life of Pi where Pi's beliefs are tested with the unimaginable emotional and physical challenge of sole survival. Through detachment, Lee offers a perspective to step away from the spatial and temporal context to meditate upon the essential questions of human existence beyond time and space.

Through film, Lee frequently seeks dialogue between two uncompromising sides, e.g, fathers and sons, foreign and home, enemies and friends and yet the dialogues that often lead to uncompromising endings that haunt their audiences with powerful emotional memories. Lee does not feel bound by a particular culture, instead, he lives inside his films and his dreams[124], and it is through sharing these dreams that he looks into his own soul as well as the nature of the human experience in general.

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[124] Source: Ang Lee, cited in an interview with Anupama Chopra, "Adrift with a Tiger and the Film God," *New York Times*, September 9, 2012.

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