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台灣現代化印記和集體記憶：以台灣動畫電影《幸福路上》為例

**On Taiwanese Animated Film *On the Happiness Road*:
Modernization Traces and Collective Memory of Taiwan**

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Abstract

This research aims to study Taiwanese animated film *On the Happiness Road*. The film *On the Happiness Road* brings the audience back to the past 40 years in Taiwan through the growth of Lin Shu-chi. It represented the collective memory of Taiwanese by hand-drawn animation.

Based on the development of modern Taiwanese society, this study explores the complex relationship between Taiwanese animated films and social changes in Taiwan. In addition to an overview of Taiwanese historical and cultural backgrounds, it discussed how the director uses animation to construct and represent Taiwan's modernization and democratization process after martial law. And it analyzed how the film reflects the collective memory of the Taiwanese audience.

This research analyzed *On the Happiness Road* in textual analysis and semiology in different socio-cultural themes, such as education under Martial Law, democratization after Martial Law lifted, post-Cold War influence on Taiwan, gender, class, and ethnicity. This thesis hopes to point out the collective memory presented by the director and the significant historical and cultural experience in Taiwan.

Key Words: *On the Happiness Road*, animation, modernization, democratization, collective memory

摘要

本研究以 2018 年台灣本土動畫《幸福路上》為研究文本，《幸福路上》藉由女主角林淑琪的成長過程，帶領觀眾感受台灣近 40 年來的時代變遷，透過一張張手繪動畫，重新紀錄身為台灣人都曾有過的共同記憶。

以當代台灣社會為背景，本研究探討台灣動畫電影與台灣社會變遷之間的複雜關係。除歷史與文化背景概述，同時探討導演如何使用動畫，建構並再現戒嚴後台灣的現代化與民主化歷程，進而反映出屬於台灣觀眾的集體記憶。

本文以文本分析和電影符號學方式，主題式探討《幸福路上》中台灣社會文化議題，如：戒嚴後的教育體制影響、解嚴後的民主化過程、後冷戰時期下的台灣、女性、階級和種族議題，連結電影文本與現實情況，以便了解導演呈現的集體記憶指涉何種台灣過去的歷史文化經驗。

關鍵字: 幸福路上、動畫、台灣現代化、民主化、集體記憶

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Research Motivation

Last year, I had my internship at Public Television Service Foundation and I was assigned to assist Taiwan International Children's Film Festival (TICFF). I always wonder what is the difference between animation for children and adults in my internship. *The Breadwinner* (戰火下的小花, 2017) was chosen as the opening film in TICFF 2018 to respond to the theme of belief and hope.¹ In this film, children can learn the protagonist's spirit of courage under the tough condition. The adults can bring out the discussion of Afghanistan condition with children. It renewed my perspective toward animation that brought deeper impact than other cartoons or animation I watched in my childhood. Documentary or live action feature film is not the only film genre to present the historical path. I am fascinated by the way of using animation as a new way to present a complicated history and it is further accepted by different generation and foreigners.

Then, I happened to have a chance to watch *On the Happiness Road* (幸福路上, 2018) in a private screening. After watching the film, I felt that I had a time travel in the past 30 years of Taiwan and recalled many memories of this small island I live. It was the first time I saw Taiwanese animated film integrate with lots of political elements. At the end of the movie, the director dedicated this film to her family and her homeland. I was overwhelmed by her dedication that we actually shared the same memory and the past. For me, it is an outbreak to watch this kind of animated film in Taiwan. It gave

¹ According to official website of TICFF: <http://www.ticff.org.tw/About/Archive>

me the similar feeling as I watched *The Breadwinner*. It forced me to throw back the past of my nation and the influence of history on me.

For this reason, it triggered my interest toward this animated film and tried to understand the development of Taiwanese animated films. As a Taiwanese audience, I was drawn to the story itself, character design, art, music or paintings, and on the top of that the identity of being a Taiwanese. Thus, it is crucial for me to discover what are represented in this film in terms of the development of post-colonialization, globalization and modernization in Taiwan. I would like to further understand how the director reconstructs the history in this animated film and recalls the collective memory of Taiwanese audience. Therefore, in the following research, I would like to discuss this animated film thematically by the reason of its various social issues in Taiwan history.

1.2 Research Background

1.2.1 Historical Overview of Democratization Process in Taiwan

From the historical perspective, Taiwan has been undergoing with the condition of complex national and historical identity under different regime. Briefly, the occupation of Taiwan began with the Dutch colonists from 1624 to 1661 and followed by the two hundred years of Qing dynasty's administration from 1683 to 1895. Later, the Japanese came to occupy between 1895 to 1945 and KMT ruled over the island after WWII (Huang, Wu & Chang, 2011)². In this research, I would like to focus on the discussion of the colonial period of Taiwanese history for the past 100 years and the democratization process after 1987.

When Japanese colonial government surrendered after WWII, Taiwan was taken by the control of the KMT government. With the withdrawal of Japanese forces, Taiwanese originally expected to have more autonomy and participation in politics. But the fact is that the KMT government even oppressed than Japanese. With the language and ethnicity differences, it resulted in conflicts between domestic Taiwanese and Chinese mainlanders afterwards. Due to these factors, the February 28th Incident in 1947 happened and was regarded as the massive confrontation of the government and the people (Huang, Wu & Chang, 2011).

² 黃秀政、吳文星、張勝彥（2011）。《臺灣史》。臺北市：五南。

Martial law was firstly declared in 1947 for dealing with the February 28th Incident. Later in 1949, the KMT government retreated to Taiwan for losing the war against the Communist Party in China and declared Martial Law again which lasted thirty-eight years. In the period of implementing Martial Law, the freedom of speech and human rights of Taiwanese people are restrained. People were forbidden to express their real opinions freely, organize individual political parties and publish newspapers. The government had even set up the Taiwan Garrison Command to inspect people's daily life such as entertainment, appearance and clothing. The government censored the content of mass media and in turn to control mass media to propagate government policy. It prohibited any statement or behavior that criticized the government and ignored the diversity of domestic Taiwanese culture. The political control of the government restricted citizen's free will and sent dissidents to prison, executed, or exiled. Under suppression of this policy, the whole Taiwanese society lived in a tensive terror and strong uncertainty which is called White Terror Era (Chen, 2010)³.

Furthermore, Taiwan was politically isolated in globe and a closed society under the control of Martial Law. In 1970s, there were many dynamic changes on political, economic and cultural aspects. Firstly, it faced with a series of diplomatic frustration internationally that Taiwan is forced to withdraw from the member of UN in 1971, later the United States signed Three Communiques with People's Republic of China from 1972 to 1982 (Huang, Wu & Chang, 2011). After then, there was the termination of

³ 陳佳宏（2010）。《鳳去臺空江自流：從殖民到戒嚴的臺灣主體性探究》。臺北市：博揚文化。

diplomatic relations with Japan in 1972 and the United States in 1979. Taiwan became a political orphan in globe. With continuous political and diplomatic crisis, it caused the instability of economy in nation and a sense of uncertainty in society (Lu, 1998, p. 112)⁴. In order to deal with this condition and the threat from China, the government produced propaganda film to calm down people's mind. The main themes of those propaganda film were to promote the national pride and people's identification with the KMT government. However, this kind of content is only finding the past memory of victory in the history, in order to forget the frustration in reality and establish a mental defense mechanism (Lu, 1998, p. 113).

Taiwanese intellectuals were frustrated because of a series of diplomatic setbacks in the world and the transformed attitude of the U.S under Cold War period. It stimulated them to have a realization of their own culture. The intellectuals began to raise their attention toward the lower-class people in society such as farmers, fishermen, and workers which became the themes for the Taiwanese nativist literature (Wang, Lin, Hsu &Ren, 2019).⁵ For instance, *the Sandwich Man* (in Chinese: 兒子的大玩偶, 1969) by novelist Huang Chun-ming (黃春明) depicted the hardships of the common people who struggled under the reality as well as the process of Taiwanese society transformed from the agricultural society into a modern and civilized society (Wang, Lin, Hsu &Ren, 2019). The poet Wu Sheng (吳晟) wrote poems *Soil* (泥土, 1979) to depict his mother

⁴ 盧非易 (1998)。《台灣電影：政治、經濟、美學，1949-1994》。臺北市：遠流出版事業股份有限公司。

⁵ 王智明、林麗、徐秀慧、任佑卿 (2019)。《回望現實・凝視人間：鄉土文學論戰四十年選集》。臺北市：聯合文學。

who worked as a farmer and kept the spirit of perseverance. He also stated that he only “wrote about Taiwanese people, depicted Taiwanese things, painted Taiwanese scenery and expressed Taiwanese emotions” (Lin, 2005, p.27)⁶.

Not only the intellectuals had the alternative feedback about the global situation, but also the Taiwanese youth gradually began to change. They turned to assert their own distinct cultural identities and had the thought of “sing our own songs” which is regarded as the Taiwanese campus folk song movement (台灣校園民歌運動). It became a new genre of Taiwanese music with its roots as student songs from the 1970s to 1980s. Mostly folk songs sang about the themes of the meditation on the past, Taiwanese daily life, childhood, love or friendship. For instance, the most representative folk songs are *Granny's Penghu Bay* (外婆的澎湖灣) by Pan An-ban(潘安邦), *Descendants of the Dragon* (龍的傳人) by Lee Chien-fu (李建復) and *Childhood*(童年) by Lo Da-yu (羅大佑)(Chang, 2003)⁷.

Though the domestic culture under the control of the KMT government was forced to use mandarin, a group of people began to express their identity as Taiwanese. In the face of the suppressive ruling authorities, there are still many Taiwanese intellectuals seeking the methods to break through the martial law system as well as pursuing freedom and democracy. There is gradually voice of urging democratization appeared

⁶ 林明德 (2005) 。〈鄉間子弟鄉間老—論吳晟新詩的主題意識〉，《國文學誌》，10：27-56。

⁷ 張釗維 (2003) 。《誰在那邊唱自己的歌：1970 年代台灣現代民歌發展史》。臺北市：滾石文化股份有限公司。

around 1980s. Intellectuals began to demand the rights of political reform and the rights of freedom of speech. Along with the time, the power kept growing (Chen, 2000)⁸.

The Formosa Incident in Kaohsiung (高雄美麗島事件) happened in 1979 which was the most massive confrontation between the government and the people during the period of Martial Law. Members of *Formosa Magazine* gathered people and demanded democracy and freedom. It is a critical and historical incident which influenced the Taiwanese citizens paying more attention to politics and challenged the KMT government. Later, A new political party Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was founded in 1986 which aimed to advocate the independence of Taiwan and other civic social movements. The unstoppable urge of liberation and human rights from people forced the government to abolish the Martial Law in 1987. With this trend of pursuing democracy, the democratization process of Taiwan reached a new stage (Chen, 2000).

Since the lifting of martial law, Taiwan has undergone a period of rapid industrialization and democratization which has changed the face of Taiwanese society. The power of the economic development is also stimulated by the process of democratization. The society becomes prosperous so that the political awareness and civic consciousness are gradually rising. The campus became the place for gathering the social power and the Wild Lily Student Movement (野百合學運) broke out in 1990. Participation of this movement quickly grew to 22,000 demonstrators and they

⁸ 陳鴻瑜 (2000)。《台灣的政治民主化》。臺北市：翰蘆圖書。

demanded the rights to have direct elections of Taiwan's president, vice president and replaced the representatives in the National Assembly. The government took measures and had a revolution on its legislation due to this movement (Hsu, 2016)⁹. Moreover, Taiwan Independence Association Movement (獨台會案) occurred in 1991. The Ministry of Justice Investigation Bureau arrested five people in National Tsing Hua University by reason of offenses against the internal security of the state with the legislation of Capital punishment in Taiwan (懲治叛亂條例) and further accused them death penalty. Nevertheless, five of them didn't have any practical action of violence, but only read the book *Modern History of Taiwanese in 400 Years* (台灣人四百年史) by the Taiwanese independence pioneer Su Beng's (史明). It erupted a sequence of political confrontation and students protested at Taipei Main Station. Under the citizens' pressure, the government finally abolished Capital punishment in Taiwan. Students were innocent of all the charges against them and advocated the freedom of speech in Taiwan (Hsueh, 2004)¹⁰ which can be also examined in the case study of *On the Happiness Road*.

As Taiwan's democratic consciousness awakened, people stood up to appeal their need. Most of the people in Taiwan were working class and labor rights issues often controlled by the government or employers. Labor unions movement was suppressed under the political power of Lee Teng-hui(李登輝) during 1989 to 1996. In order to maintain livelihoods and protect labor's right, Taipei Trade Unions and trade unions in

⁹ 許伯鑫 (2016)。《衝撞世代：由街頭運動見證台灣民主歷史的重要時刻》。臺北市：尖端出版。

¹⁰ 薛化元 (2004)。《戰後臺灣民主運動史料彙編十二：言論自由(四)》。臺北市：國史館。

other counties gradually formed in 1994. Taiwan Confederation of Trade Unions put in place in 1997 against the government for labor rights and organized several labor movement (Chiu, 2016).¹¹

In 2000, Chen Shui-bian(陳水扁) from DPP won the presidential election. There was the first political party alternation in Taiwan which also ended the rule of the KMT government in the past fifty years. But Ma Ying-jeou(馬英九) from KMT was elected as President from the term 2008 to 2016. Later, Sunflower Student Movement (太陽花學運) occurred in 2014. The Sunflower protesters perceived the trade pact with the People's Republic of China would hurt Taiwan's economy and strengthened political influence from China. It was the most massive civil disobedience movement after Wild Lily Student Movement. At last, the political movement from people advanced the government to make changes and adjust legislation. With continuous confrontation and communication between government and citizens, it helps Taiwan to go on the path of becoming a more democratic island (He, 2014)¹².

¹¹ 邱毓斌 (2016) 。〈政黨輪替與勞工運動：民進黨執政時期下的自主工運〉，〈變遷與整併：南台灣的發展危機、轉型與重生〉，55-68。

¹² 何榮幸 (2014) 。《學運世代：從野百合到太陽花》。臺北市：時報文化出版。

1.2.2 Historical Overview of Modernization Process in Taiwan

Aspalter (2017) defined modernization as in the aspects of scientific revolution, democratization on politics, industrialization on economy, urbanization in society, liberalization on ideologies, and humanization on culture. Within this concept, Taiwan has transformed into a modernized society successfully by facing the issue of national identity, the factors behind political liberalization and democratization, labor movement, the emergence of social movements that promote new social policies, and the impact of democratization on welfare state politics (Aspalter, 2017).

As different colonial governments had taken over Taiwan, the economy of Taiwan had experienced a distinctive development from the agricultural society toward industrial society. Taiwan was considered to be an agriculture society before 1970s, and the economy developed rapidly after that. Taiwan had attracted foreign investment and technology while the developed countries required to transfer labor-intensive industries to developing countries. It utilized cheap labor as advantages to adjust economic development strategies. The economy developed rapidly and also became one of the leading countries in East Asia. Taiwan even became one of the Four Asian Tigers along with South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong (Lu, 2001, p.5)¹³.

Two factors which supported early period of KMT government to stabilize the economy in Taiwan after WWII that is the help of well-constructed basic foundation left by the Japanese colonial government and with the economic assistance provided by the United

¹³ 盧漢超（2001）。《台灣的現代化和文化認同》。臺北市：八方文化企業公司。

States. Even though there is a politically closed and suppressed society before 1987, Taiwan had a rapid economic growth under the tight control of the KMT government's autocracy (Qu, 2017)¹⁴.

After that, the government set up the first export processing zone to increase the income of international trade in 1962. Due to the economic policy in Taiwan, Taiwanese businessmen engaged in trade around the world. Products were processed in Taiwan and exported overseas. It increased the need for labor force and further provided many job opportunities for Taiwanese female. The slogan "living room is factory" (客廳即工廠) widely spread to show the importance of Taiwanese female's labor force in this period. Also, the KMT government implemented the nine-year compulsory education in 1967. This education system gave Taiwanese female a chance to emerge in the society that also contributed to the rising of female status in the society in the future. With the improvement of education, it strengthened the self-awareness of female and helped them to engage in political participation afterwards (Lu, 2001, p.137).

Moreover, in order to deal with the oil crisis, the government promoted the Ten Major Construction Projects in 1973 which established a great basis for the industrial development. It had built up international airport, railways, highways and ports for the transportation, and even developed the nuclear power at this time. Later, it further founded the Science Park in Hsinchu in 1979 to encourage foreign cooperation to invest in local technology industry which transformed the economic structure of Taiwan.

¹⁴ 瞿宛文 (2017) 。《台灣戰後經濟發展的源起：後進發展的為何與如何》。臺北市：聯經出版公司。

After abolishment of Martial Law, it lifted the ban on newspaper. Along with time, restriction of people and regulation loosened. The numbers of newspapers, TV stations and magazines had dramatically raised. With the expansion of massive communication tools, people's freedom of speech also increased. The diversity of media increased civic participation and it played an important role in assisting the progressive democratization and modernization in Taiwan (Wang, Lee & Kung, 2008)¹⁵.



¹⁵ 王宏仁、李廣均、龔宜君（2008）。《跨戒：流動與堅持的臺灣社會》。臺北市：群學出版股份有限公司。

1.3 Research Goal & Research Questions

On the Happiness Road is a pioneer animated work in terms of political implications and records part of the modernization in Taiwan, but it is still a fictional and commercial film. The director has simplified the complicated historical events in Taiwan, hoping to make the story easily understood by most of the audience. Therefore, I only point out and explain these important moments of Taiwan. *On the Happiness Road* utilized different Taiwanese presidential terms to bring up the past historical events, and it further corresponded to Chi's life story. Due to this reason, in this research, I focus more on the content of the film itself instead of the form of film.

Therefore, I propose three research questions as followings:

- 1: How do Taiwanese animated films manifest socio-cultural aspects of Taiwan and its historical development?
- 2: How does the animated film *On the Happiness Road* reflect the modernization traces of Taiwan?
- 3: From the story of *On the Happiness Road*, what kinds of symbols, signs or filmic elements do the director use to reconstruct or recall the “collective memory” of the audience?

In order to answer these three questions, I choose some issues as study themes such as education under the White Terror, the democratization after Martial Law, Global post-Cold War world situation on Taiwan, ethnicity, gender, class, modernization and collective memory.

The purpose of this study is intended for the readers who are not familiar with the history of Taiwan. The research aims to analyze the animated film *On the Happiness Road* on how the director tries to reconstruct the path of modernization of Taiwan and further recall the collective memories of the Taiwanese audience under its complex historical background, as described in previous sections.



1.4 Structure of Chapters

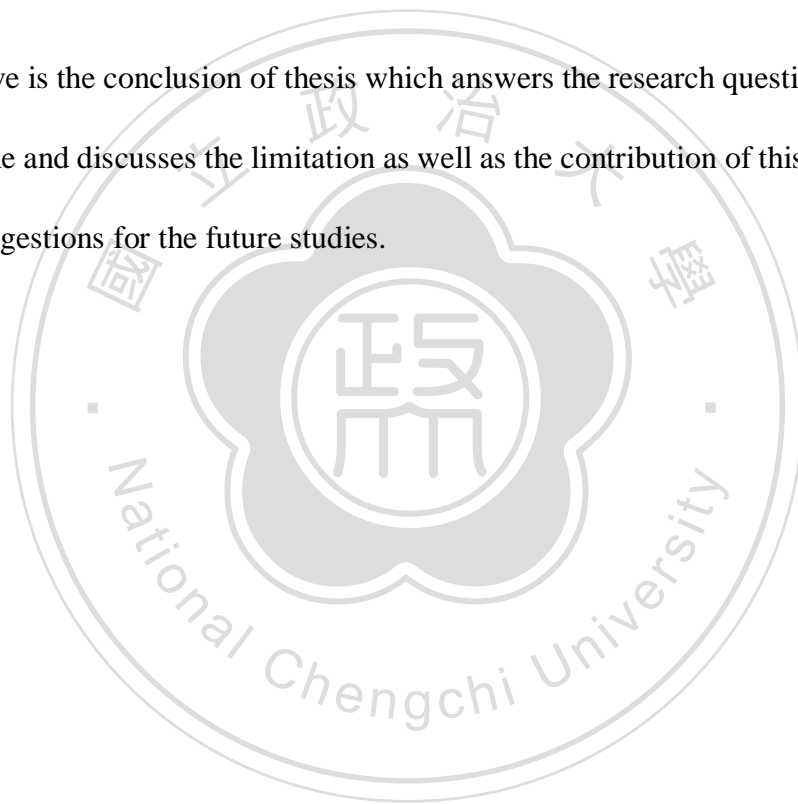
There are five chapters in this thesis. The focus of Chapter One is to understand the historical background of the democratization process in Taiwan. It further discusses the modernization process in Taiwan from the agricultural society toward industrial society from the perspective of political, economic, national level.

In the Literature Review of Chapter Two, it discusses the relationship between Taiwanese cinema and changes in the society. In order to understand how *On the Happiness Road* appeared in the flow of Taiwanese animated film history and its meaning, it focusses on the historical development of Taiwanese animated films and some examples reflected the Taiwanese society from different period. Then, it discusses the similar cases with *On the Happiness Road* and the past study related to *On the Happiness Road*. Last, it brings up concept of collective memory to further understand the cultural collective memory of different generations in Taiwan.

For Chapter Three, I introduce how this research is implemented. The research uses textual analysis to discuss *On the Happiness Road* from the elements of film and analyze its modernization traces reflected in the story. The research incorporates with analyzing the symbols in semiology to discuss how social, political and cultural issues embedded inside this text and further analyze what different themes being reflected about Taiwanese society.

The Chapter Four is the main focus of the thesis. In section one, it provides the background information of director and her producing process of *On the Happiness Road*. Then, in section two, it is the storyline of *On the Happiness Road*. Later, I explore different issues reflected in the film such as the education under the White Terror, the democratization after Martial Law, Global post-Cold War world situation on Taiwan, ethnicity, gender, class, modernization and its collective memory.

Chapter Five is the conclusion of thesis which answers the research questions raised in Chapter One and discusses the limitation as well as the contribution of this study. Last, it is the suggestions for the future studies.



Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Taiwan Cinema Under Cultural and Historical Context

Taiwan cinema is strongly affected by the Taiwanese social and cultural development. Thus, in order to understand the significance of Taiwan cinema, it's essential to look back to the historical traces of Taiwan and understand the complicated national identity with its postcolonial background. Taiwan's complex historical power, forces and dynamics, all of which transform and mold the nature and practices within contemporary Taiwan society. In specifically identifying the condition of Taiwan, scholars such as Liao (1999) have argued that Taiwan is in a state of "postcolonialism" which refers to a particular stage in its narrative of "collective memory retrieval and of nation rebuilding" (Liao, 1999, p.201). According to Liao, it is associated with Taiwan having a history with different periods of "foreign and domestic colonial cultures- the Netherlands, Spain, China, Japan and KMT" (Liao, 1999, p.200).

Due to its complicated historical development in Taiwan, people in Taiwan had encountered the problem of who they are, some express a clear position as Taiwanese, whereas some are sentimentally attached to the identity of Chinese. The divergence resulted in identification crisis in the whole society (Lu, 1998, p. 227). There are still complex changes in "freeing itself from Japanese colonial legacies and American neocolonialism" for Taiwanese people (Liao, 1999, p.199). Moreover, this condition is more problematic by the fact that "Taiwan is still uncertain about its own identity and destiny" (Liao, 1999, p.299). Also, the relationship with China is further complicated, in which "colonialism is also coupled with Chinese nationalism" (Liao, 1999, p.203). From the past till nowadays, Taiwanese people tried to find their own status as

Taiwanese. There is more or less implied anxiety of national identification reflected in Taiwanese cinema. Taiwan cinema reflects the complicated identification and reveal postcolonial issues in Taiwan (Yeh & Dai, 2016)¹⁶.

For example, *A City of Sadness* (悲情城市) in 1989 is a breakthrough in that it is the first Taiwanese cinema depicted identity problems in Taiwan and the February 28th Incident. Director Hou Hsiao-Hsien(侯孝賢) depicted a story of a family and through what had happened to those family members to reflect changes of a nation and its historical destiny as a political allegory (Chen& Lo, 1993, p.71)¹⁷.

On the other hand, *A Brighter Summer Day* (牯嶺街少年殺人事件，1991) by director Edward Yang (楊德昌), started from perspective of mainlanders to depict the contrast of two generations to show vague attitude of identification which also reflected the identification of the majority in society that most people don't have a clear position. They lived in their in-closed community and constantly had the confrontation with Taiwanese. The second generation of mainlanders stayed in a dilemma that they didn't have the goal to identify themselves. Moreover, *the Puppetmaster* (戲夢人生，1993) by director Hou Hsiao-Hsien went back to the colonial experience of Taiwan from Japanese regime and the complicated national identification of being Han Chinese (Lu, 1998, p. 231).

¹⁶ 葉月瑜、戴樂為（2016）。《台灣電影百年漂流：楊德昌、侯孝賢、李安、蔡明亮》。臺北市：書林出版有限公司。

¹⁷ 陳儒修、羅頗誠（1993）。《台灣新電影的歷史文化經驗》。臺北市：萬象圖書股份有限公司。

In 1980s and 1990s, the Taiwanese cinema in this period has a reform movement and the style of the film is mainly realistic. It was regarded as Taiwan New Cinema Movement (TNC) that its theme pressed close to reality and the society through looking into the real life of people. The film *In Our Time* (光陰的故事, 1982) by directors Jim Tao (陶德辰), Edward Yang(楊德昌), Ko I-chen (柯一正) and Chang Yi(張毅) is the first and the most representative film work in TNC. The film tells the story about different four stages of life, the growing experience of people, the changes of interpersonal relationships and most importantly it was also the transition in Taiwan's society in the past 30 years (Yeh & Dai, 2016).

In Taiwan cinema, there is a strong relation between the content of the film and the development of Taiwanese society. Embedded with historical footprints and post-colonial experience in Taiwan cinema, those film opened the opportunity for the audience to connect themselves with the island and reconsider their position or relationship with the film itself (Chen & Lo, 1993, p.51).

2.2 A Brief Introduction of Taiwanese Animated Films

Taiwanese animated film industry has experienced a dynamic change till nowadays. In 1970s and 1980s, as Japanese animation company such as TOEI animation company and U.S. animation company began to seek for Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) of animation overseas, Taiwan becomes the priority choice (Hwang & Yu, 1997, p.196)¹⁸. During this period, Taiwan had become the largest animation production center that even produced the amount of one third animation work in the world. Wang Film Productions(宏廣公司) was mainly in charge of OEM production for American animation such as Walt Disney and Hanna Barbera. In the peak of Wang Film Productions, it produced over 250 animation per year (Zhou, 2006).¹⁹

However, there were still creators trying to produce original animation in Taiwan at the same time. For instance, Chinese Cartoon Production Company (中華卡通公司) produced animated film such as *Journey to the West* (西遊記, 1971) and *Investiture of the Gods* (封神榜, 1973) and *Three Kingdoms* (三國演義, 1979). The theme of original animated films in this period was mainly taken from folktales; nevertheless, it emphasized much more on the special effects or grand spectacle than cultural meaning itself. At that time, it was still not able to create animated film that was equipped with both artistic and commercial feature (Shih, 2005).²⁰

¹⁸ 黃玉珊、余為政（1997）。《動畫電影探索》。臺北市：遠流出版事業股份有限公司。

¹⁹ 卓文惠（2006.09.28）。〈華人世界的迪士尼，宏廣公司為我們創造〉。取自「台灣電影網」網頁
<http://www.taiwancinema.com/Articles/ArticlesContent/?ContentUrl=52670>

²⁰ 石昌杰（2005.07.07）。〈台灣動畫創造力〉。取自 http://maa.ntua.edu.tw/labs/animation_center/in_content.htm

With the rapid growth of economy in 1990s, the wages in Taiwan raised and caused the increased production costs of the OEM in animation industry. In order to save costs, animation factories in Taiwan were forced to be relocated to other places with cheaper labor such as China and Southeast Asia (Huang, 2006).²¹ Losing superiority in the global market of OEM of animation and the lack of enough funds, the animation industry in Taiwan turned to look new way out in original theme of local. Government Information Office (GIO) provided funds to assist Taiwanese animation companies (Chang & Shih, 2017).²² With the financial assistance from government and the transformation in animation industry, there are several animated works that focus on local culture such as *Grandma and her ghosts* (魔法阿媽, 1998), *Ka Va Lan* (少年噶瑪蘭, 1999) and *Mazu* (海之傳說：媽祖, 2007). Even though these films also used local culture, folktales and beliefs as their themes, it conveys deeper significance and reveals current social development in Taiwan.

The followings are the brief summary of those animated film.

***Grandma and Her Ghosts* (1998) (魔法阿媽)**

Grandma and Her Ghosts can be considered as one of representative Taiwanese animated films in recent years. It is directed by Wang Shau-di (王小棣) who founded Rice Film Company (稻田電影工作室) in 1992. *Variety* commented on the film that “it creates lively vibe and reverses the traditional customs understandable by the youth”

²¹ 黃貞維 (2006)。〈臺灣動畫產業背景解析〉，《新社會政策》，48：10-14。

²² 張晏榕、石昌杰 (2017)。〈台灣動畫十年〉。《給下一輪台灣數位藝術的文件：2006-2016》。台北市：典藏藝術家庭。

(Wang, 2006, p.205).²³ This film described a story between a little boy Dou Dou and his grandmother who has the magical power to communicate with ghosts. He made a trade with the evil spirit to sell his grandmother by collecting three tears, but after experienced a series of mysterious incidents, he started to change his mind and emotions toward his grandmother. In the end, he grew up and altered his attitude toward his grandmother (Wang, 2006, p.198).

Grandma and her Ghosts is based on the background of Taiwanese local customs and religious beliefs to introduce the Ghost Festival(中元節) by offering foods toward the ancestors and opening gate to underworld so that the ghosts can wander around in living world. The theme of this film is very diverse which depicted ghosts and folktale in Taiwanese religion. It also combined the interaction of family members, friendship and adventure of a naughty boy growing up into a brave hero.

Also, from the contrast of the city and countryside at the beginning of this film, it reveals the modernization process of Taiwan in different areas (Wang, 2006, p.200). The evil ghost used its power to swallow up other weak spirits which can also be seen as an allegory of the selfishness in the human world. The battle of Dou Dou and the evil ghost can be regarded as purity against evil. The film was well-received by many Taiwanese audience to further create resonance for the family, Taiwanese people and their community (Wang, 2006, p.200).

²³ 王小棣 (2006)。《魔法阿媽，我把阿媽變卡通了》。臺北市：麥田出版股份有限公司。

***Ka Va Lan* (1999) (少年噶瑪蘭)**

Ka Va Lan was produced by Hong Kong Animation Company in 1999, which was also co-founded by director Kang Jin-ho(康進和) and PTS. It is adapted by Lee Tung's(李潼) novel which described an adventurous time travel of a teenager based on the culture of indigenous tribe Ka Va Lan. From the confrontation and the interaction between different generations, he finally realized the belief of his ancestors and his tribe that hold the respect toward the nature and keep protecting the environment (Shih, 2010).²⁴

The animated film *Ka Va Lan* attempted to make the connection with the past 200 years of Taiwanese history, the relationship with local people and culture of Ka Va Lan tribe. In this film, it reveals the ecological crisis created by modern society from the change of the past to current northern-east of Taiwan. It also discussed the issue of preservation of cultural authenticity.

***Mazu* (2007) (海之傳說：媽祖)**

In 2000s, animation production had changed from hand-painting to 3D painting. It created content in digital way which is also a turning point of Taiwanese animated film. *Mazu* is produced by director Lin Shi-ren(林世仁) and the Chinese Production Company (中華卡通公司) in 2007. It utilized the technology of both 2D and 3D painting of animation and adapted by the traditional folktale of the Chinese goddess of

²⁴ 石昌杰(2010)。《逐格造夢：台灣動畫歷史、記錄與論述》。臺北市：臺北市府文化局。

sea Mazu and was released in English, Spanish, Mandarin and Taiwanese version. This film mainly depicted the adventurous story of Mazu turned from the mortal to become the goddess of sea. It links the origin of Mazu with the local religion and folktale in Taiwanese society (Deng, 2007).²⁵

In the process of promoting this animated film, it also cooperated with the Dajia Jenn-Lann Temple(大甲鎮瀾宮) in Taichung County which is the most renowned Mazu temple in Taiwan to market several film-related products such as T-shirt, stamps and dolls. Moreover, the statue of Mazu also participated in the screening of film and created a special event of the Taiwanese animation industry and local religion (Sung, 2007).²⁶

Overall, as the above-mentioned animated film, there is already several animated film in Taiwanese animation industry that has presented certain socio-cultural aspects of Taiwan. Taiwanese animators are devoted to integrating the core value of people's relationship, folk tradition and cultural heritage with local to create the intimacy with the audience. But they seldom involved with the economic and political aspect in their animation creation which reflected the depoliticization of Taiwanese animation. Since the international status of Taiwan is continuously marginalized by the oppression of

²⁵ 鄧亞剛 (2007)。《「海之傳說－媽祖」動畫製作流程》。臺北市：中華卡通製作有限公司。

²⁶ 宋秉忠 (2007.04.19)。〈靠大甲媽做生意 千萬鈔票入袋〉。取自「今周刊」網頁

<https://www.businesstoday.com.tw/article/category/80408/post/200704190019/%E9%9D%A0%E5%A4%A7%E7%94%B2%E5%AA%BD%E5%81%9A%E7%94%9F%E6%84%8F%20%20%E5%8D%83%E8%90%AC%E9%88%94%E7%A5%A8%E5%85%A5%E8%A2%8B%20P.112>

China, Taiwan is excluded from the international community. It resulted in the fact that Taiwanese lack of clear national identity. The government, politicians, media, and the public only putting enthusiasm of political affairs inside island, whereas Taiwanese are self-forgotten or self-exiled outside the world. This situation is rooted in Taiwan's specific historical and socio-political context. Also, it may be the reason that the Taiwanese animated film neglect the political description of situation in Taiwan and had the condition of depoliticization.

At the same time, when it comes to animation, Taiwanese audience only brought out the image of entertaining American and Japanese animation in their mind. People underestimate the potential of this new genre of animation. Even though this kind of animation are more considered to be released in film festival and strengthen its artistic feature than commercial. However, it even can break the limitation of live-action feature film. Thus, in this research, I would like to discuss *On the Happiness Road* which differed from the past Taiwanese animated films and figure out the its socio-cultural meaning.

***On the Happiness Road* (2018) (幸福路上)**

On Happiness Road is a story produced by director Sung Hsin-yin (宋欣穎) based on her own life experience. It is also a story for the epitome of a generation about 30 years in Taiwan. Through a female main character Lin Shu-chi(林淑琪) who was born in 1975, the film represented Chi's growth under various changes of the times. With Chi's

self-searching, she experienced the process of pursuing self-identity and the struggling of trying to figure out what is the real happiness for her.

The animated film *On the Happiness Road* won three prizes in 2018 Taipei Film Festival as well as the Best Animation Award in 55th Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival. It is released in many countries and has been awarded in at least 12 international film festivals and received recognition overseas. Although *On the Happiness Road* is widely acclaimed, the box office is only NT 12.5 million.²⁷ It seems that it is more likely to be an art-oriented animation and it is harder for ordinary audience to accept.

Nevertheless, the French newspaper *La Croix* (2018) commented *On the Happiness Road* “through a Taiwanese female's questioning of identity, it is extended to the question of the political evolution of the country.”²⁸ Also, *Los Angeles Times* (2018) gave the feedback of this film that “at a time when viewers are calling for greater diversity in film, *On Happiness Road* marks the introduction of a promising new female voice in animation.”²⁹ It still made its milestone as Taiwanese animated film to contain political consciousness and brought out the perspective of female.

²⁷ Details of Box Office of *On the Happiness Road*, retrieved from <https://news.ltn.com.tw/news/life/breakingnews/2363396>

²⁸ Charles, S. (2018/11/14). Reviews: Ansel Elgort in Jonathan, plus animation, indies and world cinema. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn- capsule-feature-string-20181114-story.html>

²⁹ Dreyfus, S. (2018/07/31). Happiness Road, If Taiwan Told Me. *La Croix*. Retrieved from <https://www.la-croix.com/Culture/Cinema/Happiness-Road-Taiwan-metait-conte-2018-07-31-1200958923>

2.3 The Related Films and Relevant Studies of *On the Happiness Road*

There are already several examples of animated film to blend in with the serious issue of political situation and socio-historical condition of a country. *Persepolis* and *The Breadwinner* are similar cases with *On the Happiness Road*. Also, the director Sung Hsin-yin stated that she was inspired by *Persepolis* to create *On the Happiness Road* (Chang, 2017).³⁰

The followings are the brief introduction of these two animated films.

Persepolis (2007) (茉莉人生)

Persepolis is adapted by Marjane Satrapi's comics *Persepolis*. *Persepolis* is a black-and-white animation film directed by Marjane Satrapi and Vincent Paronnaud. It depicted Marjane's life story and reveals the social change in Iran after 1978. Marjane is a 9-year-old girl who lived in Tehran. After the Islamic Revolution in Iran, Islamic regime took power and implemented the system of administrative and religious integration. The whole social atmosphere was conservative. The government forbade people drinking alcohol or doing any activities related to western culture. Women were forced to wear headscarves and regulated particular wearing. There were religious police on the street supervise the citizens. Many supporters who against the government were killed. All of these oppressions made Marjane feel extremely depressed. Thus, she went to Europe. But her identity of being Iranian also made her feel unacceptable by

³⁰ 張益勤 (2017.12.22)。〈38 歲轉行做導演，《幸福路上》宋欣穎：追逐夢想，別怕浪費時間〉。取自「親子天下」網頁 <https://fipeedu.parenting.com.tw/article/4265>

the western society. She is faced with the dilemma between integration into the society and her identification of her own country. After a series of struggles and incidents, she realized what she needs. In the end, she decided to pursue her dream and finally identified herself as Iranian.

***The Breadwinner* (2017) (戰火下的小花)**

The Breadwinner is based on the best-selling novel by Deborah Ellis and directed by Nora Twomey. The main character was Parvana who is an 11-year-old girl living in Afghanistan. Under the control of the Taliban regime, female in Afghanistan was not allowed to go out without wearing headscarves or without the accompany of a male. After Parvana's father was unjustly arrested into prison, she decided to disguise herself as a boy to make a living. She took on hard labor jobs to save money and hoped to save her father. At the same time, Parvana's sister was arranged the marriage with one of her younger cousins in exchange for shelter and protection. Even Parvana was under this tough situation, she still didn't lose the courage to rescue her family.

Overall, *On the Happiness Road*, *Persepolis* and *The Breadwinner* are considered to be in the genre of adult animated film which is mainly targeted towards adults and older adolescents to explore political, or social issues. *On the Happiness Road* presented the historical development after Martial Law in Taiwan. *Persepolis* dealt with the situation after Islamic Revolution in Iran, whereas *The Breadwinner* reflected the difficulties that female faced in Afghanistan. Also, it happened to be that three animated were created by female directors and with the female protagonists to depict the story. Meanwhile,

female directors decided to utilize animation as the tool to present the history. In spite of not filming in live-action to confront with the authority, they chose to present complicated historical background in a gentle way to narrate the story from the female perspective. Moreover, it's crucial to emphasize on the identity of animators or directors with their animated works. The self-representation of animators establishes a privileged association between the artist and the animated film. The figures in animated film represented the attitude of creator and embedded with its cultural background. (Hernández & Carmen, 2010).

After looking into the similar cases of *On the Happiness Road*, I tried to look back to the past studies of *On the Happiness Road*. Firstly, I used *On the Happiness Road*, Taiwanese animated film and modernization as keywords respectively to search on the National Central Library (國家圖書館) and Taiwan Communication Survey (台灣傳播調查資料庫). However, due to the reason that *On the Happiness Road* just released on 2018, there is not plenty of past studies analyzing this film for now. But there are already some film reviews online or analysis on blogs of *On the Happiness Road* which is worthy to be referred. Most of film reviews and analysis recalled their personal memory and reflection after watching *On the Happiness Road*.

Scholar Hsieh Kuo-Hsiung(謝國雄) published an article on Street Corner Sociology³¹ and took theory in sociology to analyze *On the Happiness Road*. Hsieh (2018) analyzed

³¹ Detailed article of scholar Hsieh Kuo-hsiung discussed about *On the Happiness Road* in sociology: <https://twstreetcorner.org/2018/01/26/shiehwoshyong-2/>

On the Happiness Road from the sociological perspective. He considered that the idea of ‘sociological imagination’ is demonstrated in this animated film by linking Chi’s life with social changes in Taiwan. Sociological imagination is proposed by Mills which is to connect personal difficulty with public issue. In order to connect these two concepts, it was often analyzed by the concept of ‘power structure’. It means that people’s experience is not only specific personal condition, but also connected with the whole social power structure. In this film, the social structure of home, nation and capitalism were censored in the participation in the social movement. This action inspired Chi’s point of view of home, the possibility of changing the society and its influence on behavior.

In addition to power structure, the sense of presence is another important issue discussed in sociology. Hsieh (2018) considered that the sense of presence embodied in Chi’s process of self-searching. The sense of presence is often reflected in the daily life of individuals and becomes the power that drives people moving forward. In this film, it comes with Chi’s doubt and questions of who she is and what is she looking for. In the end, Chi decided to settle down in the place she was born and finally recognized herself in the sense of presence. He further emphasized that animation and sociology are both the representation of society. Through the process of watching these animated films, the audience reflect their subject position in society, also bring out meaning of presence in the society.

Apart from Mill's sociological imagination, Anderson (2006) proposed the concept of 'imagined community'. He further defined nation as imagined community. People in one area read newspaper and accept same message from the media. They imagined themselves as the citizen under one nation. Anderson indicated that even members of the community probably never know each of the other members face to face; however, they may have similar interests or identify as part of the same nation. Imagined community is the foundation of social democracy and it is not the illusion manipulated by the politicians. It is rooted with the mental construction inside people's consciousness and associated with the historical and cultural changes (Anderson, 2006). *On the Happiness Road* also tried to construct the condition of imagined community in the film through a series of important events happened in the past. Although not every person was involved in these situations, people still received the information of events from the mass media. Therefore, it is worth to discuss whether Taiwanese identify themselves in the imagined community of Taiwan in this film.

From the opinion of *The Atlantic*, *On the Happiness Road* is considered as a 'poignant portrayal of how fantasy and memory shape identity'³². Another film review of *On the Happiness Road* regarded this animated film as 'a Taiwanese to trace her roots. After the long-term oppression, Taiwanese are lack of national identification and further look

³² Irene, Hsu. (2019/01/21). On Happiness Road Is a Playful Yet Profound Coming-of-Age Story. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2019/01/happiness-road-playful-profound-coming-age-film/580852/?fbclid=IwAR0dpGIwncSsOwlglkPWV6MiJDbKuZ3ru71xUBuWLOuJq6DHK2s5P-vNkJqo>

out for the belongingness. Some people had the American dream in the past and the Chinese dream nowadays. But when will people be proud of being a Taiwanese?’³³



³³ 張玉伶（2018.01.16）。〈《幸福路上》——我未曾參與的「幸福年代」〉。取自「放映週報」網頁

http://www.funscreen.com.tw/fan.asp?F_No=1263

2.4 The Meaning of Collective Memory and Its Influence in Taiwan

After years, with the different political parties, Presidents and various social movements, Taiwanese have experienced the complex growing experience and shared the similar collective memory. ‘Collective memory’ is a concept proposed by the Maurice Halbwachs, which is differentiated with individual memory. Halbwachs (1992) believed that each individual belongs to numerous groups such as families, neighborhood, political parties, associations and up to nations and form collective self-images and memories. Assmann (1995) defined collective memory as groups of people who conceive themselves through a common image of their past, and also a connective structure of societies to be nostalgic to the past. Collective memory is kept and passed on to people in representational forms of reproducing texts, images and videos. In this digitized generation, history is recorded and reconstructed by amounts of second-hand memories to pass on the memory to offspring. He also proposed ‘transitive memory’ which means people learn and obtain the past memories by another people’s description.

McDowell (2016) also believed that collective memory can be materialized into fixed points, such as text, buildings or monuments, such as Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin, Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, and 228 Memorial Museum in Taipei. Memorials played the role as buildings or construction to represent people’s collective memories.

On the Happiness Road represented the collective memory of details such as buildings in the setting in different times of Taiwan as well as in the music and the characters’

behavior. There is also the film review of *On the Happiness Road* commented that he recalled lots of personal memory from these important historical moments after watching this film. For example, it reminded him the past of his first vote, the perplexed feeling after graduation and the songs often sang by his mother.³⁴

However, different generations have their own life experience. Each generation shares similar childhood memory and growing experience under the same historical background. Thus, in this section, I would like to throw back to several cultural products affected by the social development from the globe to Taiwan in different times. Because the cultural or the entertaining aspects of different period of Taiwan is also one of the important elements that composed of people's collective memory to the past.

It can be manifested in different areas such as popular culture, film, music and literature. Whereas, popular music has commonly been studied as either a vital component of people's personal memory or a constitutive element in the construction of collective memory and cultural heritage. Musical memories become manifest at the intersections of personal and collective identity. Through embodied affection and cultural embedding, music becomes part of collective memory and by the same means as it gets settled into our personal memories at the same time (Van Dijck, 2006, p.358).

³⁴ 艾莫西 (2018.01.09)。〈【影涉人生】名為寬容的幸福：《幸福路上》(On Happiness Road)〉。取自「痞客邦」網頁
<https://almasylvlin.pixnet.net/blog/post/43886409>

Cultural products were mostly affected by the political environment at that time. Since 1947 the Cold War started, it created a series of impacts internationally. From 1951 to 1979, there were a massive number of American soldiers stationed in Taiwan for assisting to defend the threat from mainland China. Due to this factor, the American culture began to immerse in daily life among Taiwanese adolescents. Most of the Taiwanese people get to know American pop music from the radio which is the most common media at that time. With the establishment of American Forces Network Taiwan (AFNT) in 1957, it affected other radio broadcasts to play American pop music (Wang, 2010).³⁵

Director Edward Yang presented this phenomenon in his film *In Our Time* (1982) and *A Brighter Summer Day* (1991). Edward Yang stated that “at that time, there were three important things. The first one was the popular music billboard. We listen to AFNT, and other music radio broadcast have similar billboard such as Top 20 Countdown. Then there was the Japanese comics that released a new episode each month. Also, rock music came out with new things every week. The third one is Hong Kong's film, we go to see the movies. These three things are very important things during our growth, especially the impact of rock music on Taipei is very huge.” (Berry, 2005).

The setting of the film *A Brighter Summer Day* (1991) was in 1960 which referred back to the time that American military stationed in Taiwan because of the Cold War. In the

³⁵ Wang, S. (2010). Domesticating the foreign: How cultural imports are remade in Taiwan, *Conference Paper in Cultural Studies*, 1-8.

film, it also showed that American popular culture had influenced Taiwan under this historical situation. The fashionable and glamorous American pop culture had attracted Taiwanese adolescents and becomes their excuse to escape from the repression under the period of martial law. They started to copy and imitate the behavior of the rock singers. Thus, it strengthened another kind of admiration of Taiwanese young generation to the American culture at that time.

Before the 1970s, western pop music is the mainstream and the most favorite music for Taiwanese teenagers. Due to diplomatic setbacks, it stimulated the Taiwanese youth to have a realization on their own culture and triggered them to stop singing western music. In addition to campus folk songs were popular, Fong Fei Fei(鳳飛飛) was a renowned singer in that era. She would sing the Mandarin songs on TV programs and local Taiwanese songs as well such as *Flower in Rainy Nights* (雨夜花) and *Moonlit Night Sorrow*(月夜愁) in the show.³⁶

Also, television as a new mass communication medium developed in Taiwan in the 1970s. The *Five Lights Award* (五燈獎) is the most popular and well-known TV program which lasted for 33 years as the longest-running program. *Candy Candy* (小甜甜) is adapted by Japanese comics in 1979 and played an important role as the highest view rating cartoon. It also showed that the influence of Japanese comics from the

³⁶ 台灣流行音樂維基館 (2015.08.04)。〈台灣流行音樂發展史〉。取自「台灣流行音樂維基館」網頁
<http://www.tpmw.org.tw/index.php/%E5%8F%B0%E7%81%A3%E6%B5%81%E8%A1%8C%E9%9F%B3%E6%A8%82%E7%99%BCE%E5%B1%95%E5%8F%B2>

1960s was still expanding and had started to broaden its impact on television.³⁷

Cultural or entertaining products are the most effective ways for people to recall the emotions of collective memory and nostalgia in the past.



³⁷ 中華民國電視學會電視年鑑編纂委員編纂（1998）。《中華民國無線電視年鑑第十輯：民國八十五年至八十六年》。臺北市：中華民國電視學會。

Chapter 3. Research Method

3.1 Textual Analysis

Larsen (2002) pointed out that the text in media is not limited in a single meaning or ideology. Even though there is numerous information in the text, people can only understand these contents by analyzing and interpreting. According to Fairclough (1995), textual analysis is to deconstruct works and see how the parts fit together. Besides, textual analysis helps people understand the meanings and representations within a specific text in relation to society and culture (Clink & Kramer, 2007). Thus, textual analysis becomes a critical index for censoring social change.

Textual analysis is further divided into two sub-concepts as intertextuality and contextual analysis by Fairclough. Despite analyzing the meaning of texts, intertextuality focused on the interaction of different texts which aims to understand the relation of society and texts (Fairclough, 1995). Contextual analysis is to interpret the social meaning of texts in its context and social background. In the study of cinema and culture, the contextual analysis mainly focused on cultural, political or systematic influences toward cinema which more strengthened its process of cultural production. (Valdivia, 1995).

Matyas (2010) used textual analysis to discuss representations of race and gender of Disney princesses within its films. Through analyzing heroines in nine Disney princess films, it revealed the power relation in gender and conveyed the typical images of female. It found out that the influence of animated films of Disney gradually replaced

the traditional fairytales, it forced Disney to adjust its text according to the current social development. Thus, from the series of Disney princess works, it reflects the attitudes, values, and beliefs of society at different times.

Pan (2007) took textual analysis as a methodology to analyze four Taiwanese teenager-campus films in 1980s such as *KUO-HAO Crams For College* (飛越補習班, 1981), *The Campus Incidents* (校園檔案, 1985), *Lessons of the Playground* (風雨操場, 1989) and *Winter Break* (寒假有夠長, 1989). It discussed the construction of masculinity and national identity among young-adults. Through the narration of films, it revealed that the teenagers in the films identified themselves with their fathers who served in the military and constructed their masculinity from the peer group. This condition also reflected the comradeship between male teenagers, which represent the images of Mainlander male as well as gang, and further, extend the loyalty to the agnate and the nation in 1980s Taiwan.³⁸

Therefore, in my study, I apply the concept of textual analysis to analyze *On the Happiness Road* by firstly focusing on its narration structure and its themes such as gender, language, White Terror and global post-Cold War world situation on Taiwan. I classify examples in the text by different themes, then further conclude what *On the Happiness Road* referred to in Taiwan.

³⁸ 潘素慧 (2007)。〈解構八 0 年代校園學生電影：類型、性別、國族認同〉，1-112。

3.2 Semiology

Textual analysis is often implemented together with semiology to interpret signs and symbols. Semiology in cinema is to study how the films signify and what is being signified (Giannetti, 1999). Saussure firstly contributed to semiology and considered the written text is the representation of language. He proposed that sign is composed by signified and signifier under the convention of society. On the other hand, Peirce proposed three concepts of signs as icon, index and symbol. Contrast to Saussure, Peirce focused more on the process of signs being understood by the readers. He emphasized on the relations of the sign itself and what the signs represented to discuss the process of people interpret signs (Barthes, 1977).

According to *Understanding Movies*, Metz employed the concept of semiology into film study to construct signs and codes in cinema. He considered that the filmic language is symbolic. Music, mise en scene, framing, camera shots, camera movement, lighting, editing and colors in the cinema are the filmic elements worthy to be interpreted. Cinema is composed of the complex signs, whereas the audience can instinctively interpret these signs by themselves (Giannetti, 1999, p.509).

The following are examples of applying semiology to analyze films.

Liu (2014) discussed the camera movement in *Days of Being Wild* (阿飛正傳, 1990) as signs to interpret the relationship between the characters. For instance, in the fighting scene of two female characters, the different height of stairs they stood referred to their different attitudes in tense confrontation. He further indicated that stairs and corridor

are commonly used as a symbol for showing characters' emotion and relationship in films of director Wong Kar-Wai(王家衛).³⁹

Tseng (2010) analyzed the dining scenes in *Eat Drink Man Woman* (飲食男女, 1994) by director Ang Lee and *Still Walking* (橫山家之味, 2008) by director Hirokazu Koreeda. It discussed that both directors used foods and dining tables to construct the family relationship. The memory toward particular foods became the symbol of the memory of the family members.⁴⁰

Therefore, the idea of semiology played an important role to go into the deeper meaning of symbols and all kinds of signs in cinema. So, I apply this methodology to analyze *On the Happiness Road* by looking into its filmic language to understand how the director constructs the story style. By interpreting these signs further help this study to understand its hidden ideology, symbols, and metaphors inside *On the Happiness Road*.

³⁹ 劉永皓 (2014)。〈分析王家衛的《花樣年華》 從第 275 個鏡頭到第 298 個鏡頭：上下樓梯的女人、走廊與迷宮、電影與它的皺褶〉，《藝術學研究》，15： 31-75。

⁴⁰ 曾曉玲 (2010)。〈飲食，諒解的起點——以李安《飲食男女》與是枝裕和《橫山家之味》為探討對象〉，《文化研究月報》，110：43-61。

Chapter 4. Analysis of *On the Happiness Road*

4.1 Creation of *On the Happiness Road*

On the Happiness Road is produced by the director Sung Hsin-yin as a partly autobiographical animated film. Thus, it is essential to look into her life before discussing this film. Sung was born in 1974 and grew up in Xinzhuang District, New Taipei City. Both of her parents were in the working-class. She studied at Taipei First Girls High School and determined to be a doctor. When she was sixteen, she got ill and went to the doctor frequently. Then, she realized that her emotions were easily influenced by facing the death of other people. Thus, she gave up her thought to be a doctor and turned down the expectation of her family. After this first rebellion, she graduated from the department of political science at National Taiwan University (Formosa TV Taiwan Lecture Hall, 2019).⁴¹

Sung became the reporter in the entertainment section of the *Liberty Times* after graduation. At that time, she participated in the Cannes Film Festival and finished her reports. It made her acquainted with many directors, actors or creators and started to be interested in creation. Therefore, she went to Kyoto University in Japan for studying cinema. Later, she got her master degree of School of the Art in Columbia College, Chicago and got married in the U.S. During her study at Columbia College, Chicago, the professor gave her the assignment to answer the question of who she is and where she came from with the reason that a good story always came from the personal

⁴¹ 民視台灣學堂 (2019.04.08) 。〈走上「幸福路上」【民視台灣學堂】台製日常 — 莊佳穎 X 特別來賓：宋欣穎〉。
取自「民視台灣學堂」網頁 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKGoRHDdGuc>

experience. It became the opportunity for her to look back on her life experience and inspired her to create *On the Happiness Road*. She surprisingly received the compliment and encouragement from her classmates and professor to finish this story. She learned to embrace herself in writing this story (Pan, 2018).⁴²

She went back to Taiwan and requested for the production team. Although Sung was not majoring in animation, she still chose animation as the form to present this story. She considered that animation was more suitable to present the fantasy scene of the characters as well as the long time-span of the film. Also, she was inspired by *Persepolis* and decided to throw back her childhood from the adult's point of view (Pan, 2018).

At first, Sung produced a twelve-minute short animated film and would like to develop it as animation series like *Chibi Maruko Chan* (櫻桃小丸子). However, even though she received recognition in Taipei Golden Horse Film Project Promotion, the cost was still too high. She turned to produce it as a feature film so that it would be easier to look out for funds (Huang, 2018).⁴³ There were lots of people suggested her not to produce an original animated film in Taiwan and told her it was too risky. She still believed that it is meaningful to record the Taiwanese story no matter it created profits or not at the

⁴² 潘乃欣 (2018.01.26)。〈《幸福路上》導演宋欣穎：想成為理想中的大人？你得先釐清「理想」的意義〉。取自「Cheers 快樂工作人雜誌」網頁 <https://www.cheers.com.tw/article/article.action?id=5087858>

⁴³ 黃衍方 (2018.01.06)。〈專訪《幸福路上》導演宋欣穎（下）：我們應該共同記得一些事情〉。取自「上報」網頁 https://www.upmedia.mg/news_info.php?SerialNo=32864

end (Lin, 2018).⁴⁴ It referred to the difficult situation on the making of animation in Taiwan which mentioned in Chapter 2.2. Sung further stated that the title ‘On the Happiness Road’ indicated the story of Chi’s family living on the Happiness Road in Xinzhuang and she further gave the double meaning of on the way to find happiness. It is not only the process of Chi to find herself, but also the process of whole Taiwanese society to find its own identity (Formosa TV Taiwan Lecture Hall, 2019).

In the process of creating the character design, Sung and her production team faced with the problem of finding their painting style. Due to the long-term OEM in the Taiwanese animation industry, as indicated in Chapter 2, some of the animators were more used to American or Japanese painting style. In order to make the audience feel intimacy with the characters in *On the Happiness Road*, she hoped to create own painting style for Taiwanese. Therefore, they collected many pictures of local Taiwanese mothers as reference materials. After continuous trying for one year, they finally figured a suitable image for the characters (Tsai, 2017).⁴⁵

⁴⁴ 林侑青 (2018.01.26)。〈宋欣穎，你對自己誠實了嗎？〉。取自「美麗佳人 Marie Claire」網頁
<https://www.marieclaire.com.tw/celebrity/story/34193?atcr=ce14b3>

⁴⁵ 蔡雨辰 (2017.11.29)。〈從人物、造型到配音，動畫片《幸福路上》如何磨出「台味」？—專訪導演宋欣穎〉。取自「博客來閱讀生活誌」網頁 <https://okapi.books.com.tw/article/10386>

4.2 Storyline of *On the Happiness Road*

Chi's life experience is deeply connected with the development of Taiwan. It strongly created the impact on the growth of Chi and further formed her identity and thoughts.

The director inserted lots of critical moments in different periods of Taiwan and complied with Chi's life stage.

In this section, it is categorized with the story plots and how two timelines correspond and interplay.

Basic Structure	Chi's Life	Taiwan's Situation
Set up	Chi went back to Taiwan because of her grandmother passed away. It reminded her childhood. Chi was born on April, 5 th , 1975. Chi's family moved to Happiness Road, No.168 in Xinzhuang from Kaohsiung.	Chiang Kai-shek passed away on April, 5 th , 1975. Taiwan Miracle: Taiwan became one of Four Asian Tigers.
Admiration	Chi's elementary school period (1981-1987). Chi became friends with Betty and Hsu Sheng-en. Chi's cousin Wen told Chi that he couldn't distinguish color because of getting caught in reading books.	White Terror Era: 1947 to 1987. Chiang Ching-kuo as president from 1978 to 1988.
Confusion	Chi's high school period (1987-1993). She realized that she didn't want to be a doctor and decided to study what she is interested in. Chi passed by Office of the President on her way to school and saw people protesting.	Martial Law was lifted in 1987. Chiang Ching-kuo died in 1988. Taiwan Independence Association Movement in 1991.
Realization	Chi's college period (1993-1997). She participated in protesting for labor rights. Chi's first job as a reporter in <i>Daily Times</i> (2000).	Chen Shui-bian won the election of Taipei Mayor in 1994.

	<p>Chi met her classmate Hsu Sheng-en who became the owner of a motorcycle shop.</p> <p>Chi went to the U.S. to work (after 911).</p> <p>Chi met Antony and got married.</p>	<p>921 Earthquake occurred in 1999.</p> <p>Chen Shui-bian was elected as President in 2000.</p> <p>U.S. September 11 attacks in 2001.</p> <p>Chen Shui-bian was elected as President again in 2004.</p>
Reflection	<p>Chi came back to Taiwan for Granny's funeral. Chi decided to give birth to the children and divorced her husband.</p>	<p>Ma Ying-jeou was elected as President in 2008 to 2016.</p> <p>Sunflower Movement in 2014.</p>

Table 4.1 Chi's Life corresponded to Taiwan's situation

It is the process of Chi pursuing happiness from an innocent childhood with daydreams and gradually admired to become a great person. She made efforts to follow the expectation of parents and faced with her struggle toward the future. But after her realization and reflection, she finally opened a new path for her life. At the same time, it is also the process of Taiwan to become a democratic society. There was the admiration of Chiang Kai-shek in the early period. After lifting Martial Law, people began to break out the oppression in White Terror and had the realization of social movements in the late period.

4.3 Education under White Terror





On the Happiness Road is with a strong political analogy starting from the birth of Chi. Chi was born at the same day as the death of former president Chiang Kai-shek which seemed to refer that the vanish of an autocratic political leader is the new birth of Taiwan. The director used lighting and composition to make the contrast. In the last shot at the scene of Chi's birth, Chi's father lifted the newborn baby in the bright window and people were lining up in the dark rain and mourning for the death of Chiang Kai-shek outside at the same time. It created the contrast of bright and dark as well as the gap of high and low image. The scene of Chi's father celebrated for Ch's birth was just like hailing for the death of the dictator (Figure 4.1).



Figure 4.1. The scene of Chi's birth
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

It showed how Chiang Kai-shek build his powerful image in front of people in Chi's elementary stage. The government took education as a tool to give people indoctrination. There is the statue of Chiang Kai-shek in the gate of elementary school (Figure 4.2) and the portrait of Chiang Kai-shek inside the classroom (Figure 4.3).

There were also lots of political slogan such as ‘Loyalty to leaders, defend for the country’(效忠領袖，保衛國家) (Figure 4.4) or ‘Being a good Chinese’(當個堂堂正正的中國人) (Figure 4.5).

	
<p>Figure 4.2 The statue of Chiang Kai-shek in the gate of elementary school (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.3 The portrait of Chiang Kai-shek behind the classroom with the slogan ‘Loyalty to leaders, defend for country’ (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>
	
<p>Figure 4.4 The slogan ‘defend for home’ on the notice board in the school (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.5 The slogan ‘being a good Chinese’ behind the door in the classroom (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>



Further, every student learned the story of Chiang Kai-shek watching fish swimming upstream in the textbook and was taught to learn his courageous spirit (Figure 4.6). Chi wanted to follow him as an example after learning this story. Chiang Kai-shek was portrayed as a great man and heroic image and made people admire him (Figure 4.7).

Chi's mother also kept the photo with former president Ma Ying-jeou and said he was her role model. Even this kind of idolization of politicians still exists nowadays (Figure 4.8).

	
<p>Figure 4.6 Story of Chiang Kai-shek in the textbook (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.7 Great man image of Chiang Kai-shek (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>
	
<p>Figure 4.8 Photo of Chi's mother with former president Ma (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.9 Chi's teacher with rattan whip (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>

In the White Terror Era, students in the school had a penalty for speaking in Taiwanese (also known as Hoklo) and only can speak in Mandarin. The teacher stopped Chi and Chi's classmate Hsu Sheng-en speaking Taiwanese and considered it as dialects when teaching the word 'sofa'. The teacher was the representation of authority who holding rattan whip and students could only listen to what she said (Figure 4.9). It created an ironic contrast between the smiley face of Chiang Kai-shek and the teacher's angry face

in the campus (Figure 4.10). She also warned Chi not to tell anyone about her cousin's story and not allow her to ask for a reason. It was just like the relationship between the government and the people. People can only do what is told and say the right statement.

	
<p>Figure 4.10 Teacher became monster and told students not to speak in Taiwanese (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.11 Chi's classmate Hsu Wen-yueh wearing with a black watch (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>

At that time, most of the government officials were mainlanders. They controlled more political power and had a higher economic status. Chi's classmate Hsu Wen-yueh who was the child of mayor spoke in standard Mandarin was an example of this background. He wore a black watch which most of the working-class family wouldn't buy at that time (Figure 4.11).

Under the policy of speaking in Mandarin, Chi was proud of learning how to speak in Mandarin but looked down on her father who couldn't speak in Mandarin. This policy resulted in that people were only able to learn what the governors' languages and forced to abandon their language. Some parents whose native language was Taiwanese, but they used Mandarin to communicate with their children, just like Chi's mother. The

television mostly broadcasted in Mandarin. Chi's grandfather couldn't understand Mandarin and asked Chi what was saying on TV. It further influenced that Chi nearly forgot how to speak in Taiwanese when she grew up and only used Mandarin. There was a strange phenomenon that the next generation speaks different native languages with their parents.

The education under the White Terror also implemented spoon-feeding education (Figure 4.12). It means that the teachers taught massive knowledge and demanded the students to memorize the contents in a short time. Students wrote answers in the test without thinking but only blindly reciting. The teacher even opened the cram school and the students who didn't join the cram school stand outside of the classroom (Figure 4.13). It hugely affected students' ability of critical thinking. However, the government utilizes this measure to achieve the goal of the educational assimilation so that people wouldn't pop out the thoughts to fight against the authority.



Figure 4.12 Spoon-feeding education.
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.13 Chi, Betty and Sheng-en stood
outside the classroom
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

On the other hand, education became the direct way for the working-class to create class mobility (Figure 4.14). The parents expected the children to enter higher-ranking and renowned schools such as Taipei First Girls High School (臺北市立第一女子高級中學), Taipei Municipal Jianguo High School (台北市立建國高級中學) or National Taiwan University (國立臺灣大學) which are considered as the top-ranking in high school and university in Taiwan respectively. There are many cram schools near Taipei Main Station to raise student's scores for entering these famous schools (Figure 4.15).



Figure 4.14 The teacher said “if he doesn’t study now, how can he become successful in the future?” (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.15 Cram schools near Taipei Main Station (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

In the film, Chi's parents celebrated for Chi entering into Taipei First Girls High School and even Chi's neighbors congratulated her (Figure 4.16). With the chance to receive higher education, people could have the ability to raise the social status by becoming a doctor, lawyer, and teacher. These jobs gradually turned into priority with a high and stable income. It gave great pressure for students to reach good scores and forced them to give up the opportunity of choosing what they interested in. For instance, Chi's parents hoped Chi to be a doctor in order to make more money (Figure 4.17) and

considered that literature and philosophy are useless. The condition of underestimated on humanities still exists in Taiwan after so many years. Education became the tool to make money. It constructed a competitive society that people care more about whose children score higher, who is more successful or who earns more money.



Figure 4.16 Chi entered in Taipei First Girls High School (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.17 Chi's parents expected Chi to be doctor (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

4.4 Democratization after Martial Law Lifted

When Chi entered high school, it was also the time of Martial Law lifted in Taiwan on 1987 and former president Chiang Ching-kuo passed away (Figure 4.18). The whole society finally liberated from past oppression. Even though the Taiwanese were tamed to admire the great man in the past, with the breakdown of an authoritarian regime, more and more Taiwanese people stood out to fight for their rights. The democratization of Taiwan finally took its first step.



Figure 4.18 President Chiang Ching-kuo's funeral
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.19 People protested at Presidential Palace
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

In the film, Chi saw protesters in front of the Presidential Palace (Figure 4.19). Crowds shouted for the slogan 'Fight political persecution' (反對政治迫害) (Figure 4.20) and the arrested students demanded the government to abolish the Betrayal Punishment Act (Figure 4.21). By their protesting statement on flags and slogan, the director indicated the Taiwan Independence Association Movement in 1991.⁴⁶ Chi found out that the protested students were arrested by reading the book *Taiwan's 400-Year History*. It reminded the story that her cousin Wen told her as a child.

⁴⁶ Taiwan Independent Association Movement can be referred in Chapter 1.2.



Figure 4.20 Crowds shouted ‘Fight political persecution’ (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.21 Students demanded to abolish Betrayal Punishment Act (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

Luckily, Chi’s cousin Wen gave her enlightenment to look at things in her own eyes. When Chi was little, Wen told Chi about his experience of being ‘invited to Garrison Command to drink tea’ by reading forbidden books. The director utilized the child’s imagination and depicted this story as a prince who lived in the no-book-reading kingdom. There were lots of roses on the way for the prince to reach the books. It seems to indicate that the roses are beautiful but thorny and dangerous, just like the analogy of roses as knowledge and truth.

The book which the prince read was *Taiwan’s 400-Year History* (Figure 4.22). Due to the White Terror, people didn’t really understand their past and most of the historical facts were concealed by the government. The book was an important reading about Taiwanese history which was written by independence activist Su Beng (史明). This book kept appearing in Chi’s life and influenced her profoundly. Chi used to be an innocent girl who was full of daydreams in her childhood. It was the first time she felt confused and wondered about the reason why people accusing the government and

demanding justice. It was a turning point for Chi as well to propose questions. She decided to read this book and figured out the truth. (Figure 4.23).



Figure 4.22 *Taiwan's 400-Year History* by Su Beng (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.23 Chi started to read *Taiwan's 400-Year History* (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

Instead of being a great man, she decided to become a person who fights for a better society. It influenced her to participate in the social movement such as demanding labor rights in her college (Figure 4.24). Also, it was the time that Chen Shui-bian was elected as Mayor of Taipei City in 1994 (Figure 4.25). Chen Shui-bian is a vivid representation of an ordinary citizen who grew up in the working-class family in Tainan and became a lawyer by studying hard.



Figure 4.24 Chi joined the labor rights movement in her college (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.25 Chen Shui-bian was elected as Taipei Mayor (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

People enable to express different opinions in society after Martial Law lifted. From Chi's first job as a reporter in *Daily Times* (每日時報) (Figure 4.26), it showed that the ban of newspapers no longer existed. The chief editor asked her whether she agreed with downsizing Taiwan province to ensure her political opinion. Although the director uses the *Daily Times* in the film, it referred to the *Liberty Times* (自由時報) with the Union Business Building (Figure 4.27). Due to the reason that the *Liberty Times* is the newspaper founded in 1980 at the Union Business Building and stayed the position of supporting the independence of Taiwan.







Figure 4.26 Chi's supervisor in *Daily Times* (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.27 The Union Business Building behind Chi (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

The entire story seamlessly incorporated the social and political changes in Taiwan as Chi's life progresses into the present day. From each term of the president such as Chiang Kai-shek, Chiang Ching-kuo, Chen Shui-bian elected as President in 2000 (Figure 4.28), Ma Ying-jeou after Chen in 2008 (Figure 4.29). Some are presented obviously, some are revealed from the radio's broadcast and television's news report or the flags on the street. For instance, Chi's father was listening to the radio about the DPP's primary election (Figure 4.30). Also, there were the voices of news report

speaking of the students occupying the Legislative Yuan indicated to the Sunflower Movement in 2014 when Chi lay on the bed in the end (Figure 4.31).

	
<p>Figure 4.28 Chen Shui-bian won the president election in 2000 (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.29 Ma Ying-jeou won the president election in 2008 (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>
	
<p>Figure 4.30 Chi's father listen to broadcast of DPP's primary election (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.31 TV's Voices of students occupied the Legislative Yuan (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>

Some of the indications were direct, but some only in the background voices with short screen time. The director didn't point out the time one by one directly, but the audience can understand the time by particular social events or political elections in Chi's life. As she becomes an adult, the Taiwanese society gradually grew up to be a mature democratic society. The director put the international incidents in the story too. Even the opportunity for her to go to the US coincided with major events such as the 9/11

attacks (Figure 4.32), which can make the plot a bit systematic or formulaic, but it works for the most part as the audience knows what to expect, creating a sense of order of all the underlying elements between each sequence. These important historical moments recalled the past memories of the audience.



Figure 4.32 The news report of 911 attack in U.S. (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

4.5 Global Post-Cold War World Situation on Taiwan

In addition to 911 attack, incidents triggered the chance for Chi to go to the U.S, there has been the admiration of American culture since Chi was little. Chi was fascinated by the appearance of Betty for the first time they met in elementary school (Figure 4.33). The director Sung stated that ‘Betty was like a beautiful doll. She symbolized the American culture that I long for.’ (Huang, 2018).⁴⁷

	
Figure 4.33 Chi saw Betty in the first time (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)	Figure 4.34 Betty gave Chi chocolate as gift (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)

In the film, Betty gave the chocolate to Chi as her birthday present (Figure 4.34). Chi took a bit with chocolate, imagining the fancy life in the U.S. The colorful Christmas lights, the statue of liberty and the magnificent skyscrapers came to her mind (Figure 4.35). She envied the experience of her classmate Hsu for going to Disney land in the U.S. (Figure 4.36) With these beautiful imaginations, she was attracted to the sweet parts of American culture and considered that America is awesome.

⁴⁷ 黃衍方 (2018.01.06)。〈專訪《幸福路上》導演宋欣穎 (下)：我們應該共同記得一些事情〉。取自「上報」網頁
https://www.upmedia.mg/news_info.php?SerialNo=32864

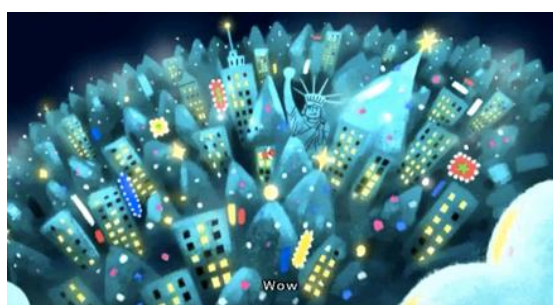


Figure 4.35 Chi imagined about the U.S.
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.36 Hsu went to the Disney land
in U.S. (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

The HISSHEY's chocolate in the film was referred to as the HERSHEY's chocolate. It was the biggest military chocolate supplier during WWII. At that time, chocolate was the solders' supply for intaking high calories to save energy in wartime. Some of the American soldiers gave the chocolate to female as a gift. There was the advertisement for chocolate stated that 'a woman who never forgets the man who remembers.' (Figure 4.37) (Jacobson, 2016).



Figure 4.37 Poster of chocolate in WWII
(Jacobson, 2016)



Figure 4.38 Betty's father who was an
American soldier
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

WWII made an impact on the development of the global situation with the political and military confrontation that lasted for decades. The Cold War gradually extended into the Asian region after the 1950s, first the Korean War in 1950, followed by the Vietnam War, and the Afghanistan War. No matter in the Philippines, Vietnam, South Korea, Okinawa, Thailand or even Taiwan, wherever the US military went through, it resulted in many American-Asian mixed-race children being born by American fathers and Asian mothers. The U.S. military proposed the Rest and Recuperation Program (R&R 休息復原計畫) in 1965 at Singapore, Hong Kong, Manila, and Taiwan to be their resting place during the war. The tourism industry became prosperous due to the reason. Some of young female worked in the bars to earn the higher payment and better livings, whereas they had a relationship with the American soldiers (Figure. 4.39) (Smith, 2006). Taiwan accepted the consequences after the Cold War. In the 1970s, Taiwan was not only the diplomatic orphan in the world, but also gave birth to many Asian mixed-blood orphans. Chi's classmate Betty Chuang whose father was an American Air Force soldier is the typical figure under the background of the post-Cold War (Figure 4.38). There is the bitterness of war behind the sweet taste of chocolate. Betty's American father never came back to her and her mother.



Figure 4.39 Betty's mother came back home after work
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

However, there were a group of Taiwanese intellectuals saw the terrible situation in Taiwan and faced with isolation in the world. They decided to escape from Taiwan. Taiwan was a drifting island. For instance, Chi's cousin Wen originally was an intellectual youth, but he decided to go to the U.S. afterward. As for Chi, she was trapped between the expectation of her parents and her personal will. At the time, parents hoped to cultivate children to study in a good school and some of them further offered their children to study abroad in the U.S (Figure 4.40). There was a prevalent saying of 'come, come to NTU, go go to USA' (來來來，來台大。去去去，去美國). It reflected the situation of the whole Taiwanese society's longing for higher education and the admiration toward western culture. Education practically assisted the children from working-class with upward social mobility. But Chi found out that the U.S. wasn't really as wonderful as she believed after she studied and worked there (Figure 4.41). She fell from her ideal dream after she was a grown-up.



Figure 4.40 Chi said that all her classmates went study abroad her graduation in NTU (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.41 Chi studied abroad in the U.S. (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

The second generation such as Chi who was influenced by the education policy in the White Terror Era and almost forgot how to speak in Taiwanese after grown-up. Some people just like Wen who settled in the U.S. and didn't come back to Taiwan. He had a job and got married there (Figure 4.42). The third generation their offspring took English as their native language and couldn't speak in either Mandarin or Taiwanese. Wen's mother complained that she couldn't communicate with her grandchildren by the different languages (Figure 4.43). In the long term, they considered themselves American and not identifying themselves toward the Taiwanese culture. At the beginning of the film, Wen's child Julia refused to eat dumplings and couldn't distinguish it with buns (Figure 4.44).



Figure 4.42 Wen reported news on TV in the U.S.
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.43 Wen's mother said she couldn't communicate with grandkids
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.44 Wen's child didn't want to eat dumplings
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

4.6 Ethnicity, Gender & Class

Besides the mix-raced child Betty, most of the population in Taiwan consisted of mainlanders, Taiwanese and indigenous people. According to the statistics of the Ministry of Interior, Taiwan currently has sixteen tribes. Amis is the largest tribe which accounted for 37.3% of the total, the Paiwan tribe accounted for 17.9%, the Atayal tribe accounted for 16%. These three tribes accounted for more than 70% of the total indigenous people until 2018 (Ministry of Interior).⁴⁸

Chi's grandmother is the indigenous people in the tribe of Amis. In the film, Chi's grandmother asked Chi to buy the betel nuts for her. However, betel nuts have the stereotype of the foods belonging to lower-class people which is vulgar and not decent. Betty's aunt told her that only the savages and the loose woman chew these things when Chi went to buy the betel nuts (Figure 4.45). Chi's mother also told her not to eat betel nuts when she came to Taipei (Figure 4.46).



Figure 4.45 Betty's aunt said that only savage chew betel nuts
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)





Figure 4.46 Chi's mother told granny not to eat betel nuts (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

⁴⁸ 內政部 (2018.01.20)。〈107 年內政統計通報〉。(檢索日期：2019 年 6 月 4 日)。取自「內政部統計處」網頁
https://www.moi.gov.tw/stat/news_detail.aspx?sn=13334

On the other hand, betel nuts are the symbol of mother in the Amis tribe. The Amis tribe has the story of two brothers that fall in love with the same girl and three of them turned into the betel nuts after the death. They imagined the appearance of betel nuts and connect it with the legend of the story. Betel nuts turned to be the symbol for blessings of the indigenous lovers to live happily ever after (Fu, 2016).⁴⁹

In addition to the stereotype of chewing betel nuts, Taiwanese society called the indigenous people as ‘huan-á’ (番仔) which contains the meaning of savage. It often overextended to indicate that the indigenous people are savage and their culture is inferior and not have too much education. The government once put the story of Wu-feng (吳鳳) in the textbook (Figure 4.47). The story depicted that Wu-feng sacrificed himself for the chopping head ritual of indigenous people (Figure 4.48). The government further strengthens the discrimination to the indigenous people and the impression of the savage.

	
<p>Figure 4.47 Chi said the Wu-feng' s story in the textbook (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.48 Image of indigenous people chopping off people's head (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>

⁴⁹ 傅鳳琴 (2016)。〈戀戀情深連理枝：臺灣阿美族檳榔由來傳說之觀察〉，《有鳳初鳴年刊》，12：245-258。

But the stereotypes and misunderstanding generate from the lack of comprehension. Chi was afraid of her betel-nut-chewing grandmother at first. After spending time with granny, she realized that her granny was always there for her. Granny was the one who protected her from getting scolded by her mother and the person who supported her mentally to do whatever she likes.

Taiwan has a diverse ethnicity in society. Beside the child of mayor, Hsu Wen-yueh is mainlander, Chi's Taiwanese father and the indigenous Ami grandmother, there are also the mix-raced children like American-Asian Betty and the child of Indonesian mother Rusimi. However, they face the problem of their identity. They grow up in Taiwan with their foreign appearance, but hardly accepted by other people in society. Betty needed to dye her hair into black to find a job. Not only Taiwan has discrimination on outsiders, but Chi also has been shouted to go back to Asia by the Americans. Even they can speak the same language, others still think they are outsiders by their looking. It was a real sadness for the immigrant children that they are not admitted to be the local people and neither not knowing how to identify themselves.







Figure 4.49 Betty's child got in the fight with other kids because they mocked Rusimi (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

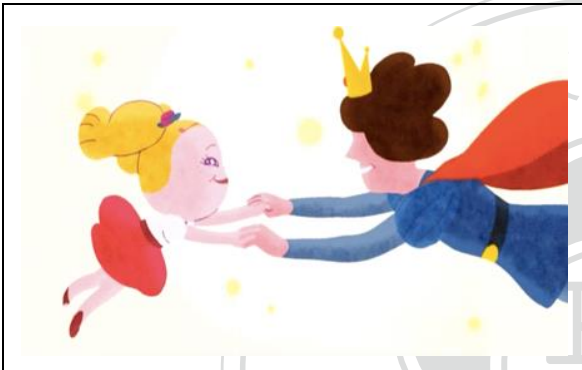



Figure 4.50 Betty dyed her blonde hair in black (Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

Despite discussing the ethnic issues of Taiwan, *On the Happiness Road* is produced by the director Sung with the female perspective. Chi watched the Japanese animation *Candy Candy* in her childhood and often dreamed of the story of the prince and the princess. The prince became the embodiment of ideal and justice. There is a close-up shot when Chi's father turned to be a prince when he rescued her from the furious dog (Figure 4.51). The director further used the low-angle shot to present the heroic image of her father (4.52). At the time, Chi admired the prince and waited for the rescue from the male in the fairy tale. Chi also likes to read the romance novel and fantasized about the love story in her high school (Figure 4.53). There is a short scene that there is the novel *How Often It's Red* (幾度夕陽紅) Sunset by Chiung Yao (瓊瑤) on Chi's desk (Figure 4.54).

	
<p>Figure 4.51 The close-up shot of Chi's father as a prince (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.52 The low-angle shot of Chi's father rescued her from a furious dog (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>
	
<p>Figure 4.53 Chi fascinated by the plot in romance novel (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.54 The novel <i>How Often It's Red</i> Sunset by Chiung Yao on Chi's table (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>

Chi once imagined both her cousin Wen who read the forbidden books (Figure 4.55) and her husband (Figure 4.46) to be the prince charming, but these heroic male characters collapsed in the end. Instead of always imagining the beautiful part of stories, she realized to change by herself and decided to divorce her husband to raise the children independently. Chi had the awakening on the aspect of both gender and knowledge in her life.

	
<p>Figure 4.55 Chi fantasied Wen as prince in the story (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.56 Chi said 'I want to find my prince, too' when her husband called on cellphone (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>

The music chosen by the director in the film is worthy to discuss. The only two songs inserted in the film are both sang by Fong Fei-fei who was the renowned Taiwanese singer in the 1970s. The song Chi sang on the truck at the beginning of the film is *the gift of love* (愛的禮物) in 1973. Another song that Chi and her parents sang at the end of the film is *I wish you happiness* (祝你幸福) in 1972 (Figure 4.57). Fong Fei-fei was the idol of the female workers at that time. It was the time that the economy in Taiwan went prosperous and built up lots of export processing zones. Female workers were part of the important workforce in the manufacture. Many female workers listened to Fong

Fei-fei's songs while they were working. She expressed the mind of the working-class and was called the labor's angel. In addition, she often wore unisex clothing like pants and had a free spirit. She attracted many females to regard her as their mental support. Also, Fong Fei-fei was a Taiwanese who tried to sing Taiwanese songs under the restriction of the White Terror as it was mentioned in Chapter 2.4. Fong Fei-fei is the representative voice and a symbol of Taiwan's popular culture in that era (Chen, 2009).⁵⁰

Moreover, the theme song of *On the Happiness Road* is the same title song *On the Happiness Road* sang by Jolin Tsai (蔡依林). Like Chi, Jolin Tsai was born in Xinzhuang. She was also mentioned in the singing contest TV program in the film (Figure 4.58). Jolin is one of the most popular Taiwanese female singers after the 2000s. She also includes part of the lyrics of Fong Fei-fei's *I wish you happiness* in the song of *On the Happiness Road*.



Figure 4.57 Chi's father sang the song *A Gift of Love*
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.58 The TV program said that Jolin Tsai was the next contestant
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

⁵⁰ 陳建志 (2009)。《流 years 華鳳飛飛》。臺北市：大塊文化。

On the Happiness Road presented the examples of the glamorous female in small details, but it also presented the female's voice in another way. Mostly females in Taiwanese society are outsiders that people neglected. Some of them play an important role in taking care of the family, but requested to stay silent or being tagged with the labels.

The director particularly mentioned the female figure Chen Hsing-yu (陳幸妤) who is the daughter of former President Chen Shui-bian (Figure 4.59). Most of the time people only know her from the mass media, and she was often presented with an angry face. The media blocked her way almost every day and tried to interview her for the opinions toward her father (Figure 4.60). The paparazzi chased her immoderately. She had nothing to do, but break down in front of the camera. Due to the reason, she was misunderstanding with this false impression for a long time. The director tried to sympathize with her situation that she was just an ordinary high school girl like the others. She was the victim between politics and the media.



Figure 4.59 Chen Hsing-yu in high school
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.60 *Daily Times* reported the news
about Chen Hsing-yu
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

Furthermore, except for the gender and ethnicity, the director implied the social power structure in the film. It presented several conditions of social mobility in the working class. The most typical example to have upward social mobility is Chi. She studied hard to go to a high-ranking school and have higher education than her parents. She went to study abroad in the U.S. and found a job there (Figure 4.61). Chi also had Wu Chuo-liu's (吳濁流) book on her desk (Figure 4.62). Wu Chou-liu had written *Orphans of Asia* (亞細亞的孤兒). Born in Japanese-occupied Taiwan, raised in the scholarly traditions of ancient China by his grandfather but forced into the Japanese educational system, the protagonist of *Orphan of Asia*, ultimately finds himself estranged from all three cultures (Wu, 2008).⁵¹ It is widely regarded as a classic of modern Asian literature and a groundbreaking expression of the postwar Taiwanese national consciousness. It offers a powerful depiction of the political, cultural, and psychological impact of colonialism. It may be the reason why Chi continuously questioned about who she is and her identity.



Figure 4.61 Chi studied abroad in the U.S.
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.62 Books of Wu Chuo-liu on
Chi's desk
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

⁵¹ Wu, Z. Translated by Ioannis Mentzas. (2008). *Orphan of Asia*. Columbia University Press.

Education is not the only way to have upward social mobility. Chi's classmate Hsu Sheng-en is the example of working hard in his industry without having a high education. He dropped off from the school, but still opened his store by his own efforts (Figure 4.63). He even bought his apartment. He is the figure that successfully turned to be the owner of a worker.

Moreover, marriage is often considered as one way for female to have upward social mobility in society. Some elderly who has traditional thought believed that female does not necessarily need to have higher education and female's duty is to get married and take care of children. In the story, Chi has a cross-cultural romance with an American male. The condition of an Asian female gets married to the Western male is common. Chi's mother and Chi's other relatives pay lots of attention to whether Chi is going to give birth to children and considered that marriage is happier with the birth of a child (Figure 4.64).



Figure 4.63 Hsu Sheng-en's scooter shop
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.64 Chi's mother said 'A baby can bring you and your husband happiness.'
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Sadly, not everyone acquires the opportunity to transform into a new class. Betty is an example of class reproduction. Her mother once worked in the bars in Taichung, but died early. Betty also became the dancers who worked in the night club to make livings (Figure 4.65). She even had the affair with a man who already had a family, and she was pregnant and raised the child on her own. Her children were abandoned just like her father did to her.



Starting from the female perspective, the director gently told the story and implied many aspects in the detail of the story. However, there is no strong binary opposition in the film. Without the heroic story-telling, the director narrated the story in a soft tone. Unlike other male filmmakers that chose to approach the dark side of society, she uses fairy tales and animation as a shell to wrap up the cruelty of growth.

4.7 Modernization

Due to the long-time span of *On the Happiness Road*, it revealed the economic development of Taiwan as well as the process from a developing country to a developed country. In the beginning, Chi and Chi's family moved to Xinzhuang from Kaohsiung with lots of luggage and furniture in the truck (Figure 4.66). It revealed the situation that people gathered from the countryside to the big city to look for a better living. The economy in the northern part of Taiwan developed faster than southern Taiwan. Many youths decided to leave their birthplace to find jobs in the north. However, this condition is seriously worse years by years. After moving to Xinzhuang, Chi said there was the sweet smell of strawberry ice cream in the air. It was coming from the industrial factories nearing her home. The pink smoke was the smell of manufacturing the strawberry ice cream (Figure 4.67).

	
<p>Figure 4.66 Chi's family on the truck with their luggage and furniture (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.67 Chi loves the smell of manufacturing strawberry (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>

There were lots of factories in Xinzhuang at that time. Chi's father also went there and worked for at least twenty years. At that time, the manufacturing industry is the main strength of the economy in Taiwan (Figure 4.68). It advocated the Taiwan Miracle in the 1970s and the lands turned to build the apartment or mansion from the agricultural fields (Figure 4.69).



Figure 4.68 The workers in the factory put the products into boxes
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.69 Chi looked at the building apartments and mansions
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

There is one scene that Chi and her mother sat together in the living room to assemble the Christmas decorations. It comprehensively presented the saying of “living room is the factory” that female took part in workforce at home (Figure 4.70), whereas the male in the factory. It assisted Taiwan to create the economic boost in that era. Ironically, not many Taiwanese have the chance to look at the real Christmas tree. Chi saw the real Christmas tree in the U.S. (Figure 4.71) and her husband knew Taiwan by the tag of MIT on the Christmas ornaments.



Figure 4.70 Chi’s mother assembled the Christmas decoration to earn extra money
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

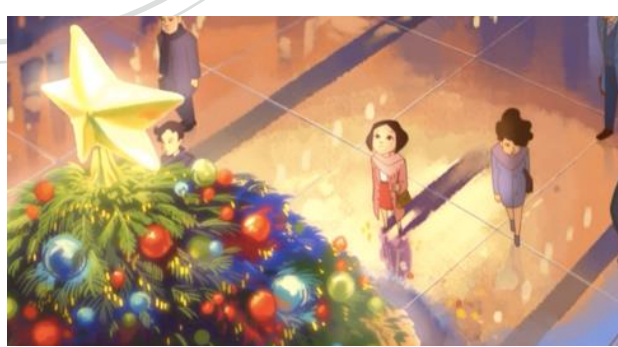




Figure 4.71 Chi looked at the Christmas tree for the first time in the U.S.
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

4.8 Collective Memory



The director inserted many Taiwanese elements inside the story of *On the Happiness Road*. She foreshadowed what is going to happen in the beginning in the items beside the waterway such as Chi's schoolbag, the furniture and the Christmas decorations (Figure 4.72). There are also many Taiwanese traditional cultural elements in the story to call up people's nostalgic feeling of that era.

	
<p>Figure 4.72 The Christmas decoration beside the waterway (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.73 Hsu Sheng-en was doing religious ritual (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>

For instance, Hsu Sheng-en was doing the religious ritual as 'tongji' (乩童) who was believed to convey god's will. In the film, people waited for the given numbers to buy the lottery from his message. It showed the traditional religion of the local people. People believed in spiritual mediums who would predict the Patriotic Lottery numbers (Figure 4.73). It was the activity that people like when they have extra money. Chi's father was also indulged in the lottery (Figure 4.74). Some people played the lottery, whereas some bet on the pigeon race (Figure 4.75). In those days, Taiwanese love gambling and believed it as a way to get rich. In the time of Taiwan Miracle, making money becomes easy and it's easy to get rich overnight or bankruptcy overnight.

	
<p>Figure 4.74 Chi's mother scolded Chi's father spent money on lottery (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.75 Hsu Sheng-en, Betty and Chi let go of pigeons (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>

The director arranged many items in the background to evoke the collective memory of the generation on purpose. In the following, I make the comparison of these nostalgic items and how it presented in reality. For example, there is the Tatung's doll in Chi's living room (Figure 4.76). Tatung is the most well-known manufacturer of household electronic appliances in Taiwan. Almost every Taiwanese's house has one electronic product of Tatung.

	
<p>Figure 4.76 The Tatung's Doll in Chi's living room (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.77 Tatung's doll and the automatic cooker (Screenshot from EBC news)</p>

The director also put various entertaining items in 1970s to 1990s such as is the TV programs *Five Lights Award* (Figure 4.78), the comedian Chu Ko-liang (豬哥亮) (Figure 4.80), the poster of music group Little Tigers (小虎隊) in Betty's room (Figure 4.82), Fong Fei-fei's songs and Chen Hsing-yu said she likes to watch the dramas of Hong Kong singer Andy Lau (劉德華)(Figure 4.83).

	
<p>Figure 4.78 <i>Five Lights Award</i> on TV's screen (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.79 <i>Five Lights Award</i> (Screenshot from udn)</p>
	
<p>Figure 4.80 The comedian Chu Ko-liang on TV (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)</p>	<p>Figure 4.81 Chu Ko-liang (Screenshot from TVBS)</p>



Figure 4.82 The Little Tigers' poster on the wall in Betty's room
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.83 Chen Hsing-yu said she likes to watch Andy Lau's drama
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)

Additionally, the director linked the audience's emotion by fully presenting the actual places in Taiwan. Most of them are the renowned places that people can recognize at once such as the Taipei Main Station (Figure 4.84& 4.85), the Presidential Palace (Figure 4.86& 4.87), Lotus Pond Lianchihtan in Kaohsiung (Figure 4.88& 4.89), Drainage ditch in Xinzhuang (Figure 4.90 & 4.91) and cram school street (Figure 4.92 & 4.93).



Figure 4.84 Betty passed through Taipei Main Station
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.85 Taipei Main Station
(Screenshot from Travel King website)



Figure 4.86 Chi and her classmate ran in front of the Presidential Palace
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.87 Presidential Palace
(Screenshot from travel Taipei website)



Figure 4.88 Chi's grandfather took Chi's father from Liuqui to Kaohsiung
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.89 Lotus Pond Lianchihtan in Kaohsiung
(Screenshot from official website of *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.90 Drainage ditch where Chi used to play near her home
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.91 Drainage ditch in Xinzhuang
(Screenshot from official website of *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.92 Chi walked through the cram school street near the Taipei Station (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)	Figure 4.93 Cram school street near the Taipei Station (Screenshot from official website of <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)
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In addition, the director invokes the concept of intertextuality in this movie. For instance, the scar left on Wen's forehead by the reason of against Garrison Command was in the shape of lightning (Figure 4.94). It referred to the renowned character who also had the lightning scar on his forehead was Harry Potter (Figure 4.95). Both of them were suffering from the pain by the name that couldn't be told.

	
Figure 4.94 Lightning scar on Wen's forehead (Screenshot from <i>On the Happiness Road</i>)	Figure 4.95 Harry showed the lightning scar on his forehead to Ron (Screenshot from <i>Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone</i>)

Chi had a psychological projection of herself in the end scene of *The Graduate* (1967)(畢業生) on TV(Figure 4.96). After she graduated from NTU, she was confused about her life in the future. Just like the main character Benjamin in *The Graduate* who was lost and didn't know what he should do after his graduation from the college. He just wanted to be different, but didn't know where to go. In the end scene of *The Graduate*, Benjamin and Elaine seemed not to be full of happiness even they ran out of the wedding together (Figure 4.97).

The setting was the 1960s in *The Graduate* which was also the time Cold War and Vietnam War, and movement for women's rights happened in the U.S. On the other hand, Chi faced with the social movement in the 1990s in Taiwan. Both of them were eager to become a different person with their parents. Ben got the expectation and pressure from his family and said, “I have this feeling ever since I graduated. This kind of compulsion that I have to be rude all the time. They’re being made up by all the wrong people. I mean no one makes them up. They seem to make themselves up.” People are trapped by the rules and forced to follow the mainstream choices, in the end, they lost the ability to dream about the future. Chi also unconsciously tried to behave herself well under the expectation of her family and society.



Figure 4.96 Chi watched *The Graduate* on TV
(Screenshot from *On the Happiness Road*)



Figure 4.97 Benjamin and Elaine on the bus
after running away from the wedding
(Screenshot from *The Graduate*)

Overall, Chi’s early experiences encapsulate the era perfectly. From reconstructing these histories, politics, economy and cultural elements in Taiwan, the director expected the audience to recall their collective memory in the past. *On the Happiness Road*

connected with the growing path of Taiwan and Chi's life. The audience further identify a part of themselves in the story and rethink their relationship with the island they grow up.



Chapter 5. Conclusion

The director Sung Hsin-yin involved her life experience with Taiwan's history in the film *On the Happiness Road*. There are not many original animations with numerous political and historical elements in Taiwan. Most of the Taiwanese animation still faced with the difficulty of entering into the international film markets. But *On the Happiness Road* has already participated in several international film festivals and received good feedback overseas. And it further acquired the opportunity to release in the theatre for ordinary Japanese audiences in the fall of 2019. *On the Happiness Road* reversed the situation of the animation market between Japan and Taiwan. Most of Taiwan audiences are willing to go to the theatre for Japanese animation, but not many Taiwanese animated films were released in Japan theatre. According to this situation, it shows the potential of exporting Taiwanese culture and history to the world.

Due to this reason, I choose to discuss and analyze this animated film in English, hoping to let more foreigners who are interested in Taiwan's culture and history to observe Taiwan within the beginning of the easy accessibility in animation. In order to achieve this goal, there is not much discussion about the forms, painting style and camera movement of film in the research, but focus more on the contents of social and cultural issues being reflected in the film. Therefore, *On the Happiness Road* can broaden its influence on both calling up the nostalgic feelings of Taiwanese people and the starting point for the world to notice Taiwan's history and animation.

5.1 Research Findings and Reflection

In this section, I discuss the research findings of three questions I proposed in the section of Chapter 1.3. It could be sum up in three arguments as followings, first, Taiwanese animated films are strongly connected with the socio-cultural aspects of Taiwan and its historical development. Just as mentioned in the Chapter of Literature Review, most of the Taiwanese animated films reflected the cultural aspects in Taiwan. However, by the complicated reason that Taiwan hasn't been recognized as an official and domestic country in the world and being claimed to be part of the state by China, many works with too many political issues are shut out or oppressed by the threat and pressure by China. It becomes one of the reasons that the Taiwanese animators tended to choose soft cultural issues as themes and avoided the controversial political topics.

The renowned Taiwanese director Ang Lee (李安) even expressed the statement as “art is for art. I hope there is no too much discussion of politics” in the Golden Horse Film Festival. It revealed the awkward situation in Taiwan that even we can speak our opinions freely as we want, but sometimes we can only keep silent about the issues of Taiwan's independence under certain conditions. Or there may be some aftermaths from the power of China. For this reason, *On the Happiness Road* rejected the funds from China and chose to involve the complex democratization process in Taiwan in the form of animation, hoping to open its own way without the interference of China's political power.

Second, *On the Happiness Road* reflects the modernization traces of Taiwan and further brings out the identification problem of Taiwanese people. The director used the different presidential terms in the film as the timeline to give marks for the audience. Each term of President represents their distinct political status and displays their core value of the policy toward the country which further strongly affected the atmosphere in the society at that time.

In this film, the director mentioned the existence of the former Presidents of Chiang Kai-shek, Chiang Ching-kuo, Chen Shui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou by their death or the political elections to show how the society changes after these incidents happened and how it influenced Taiwanese people. Chi is the typical figure in Taiwan who faced with the question of asking who I am. Just like plenty of the first immigrant generation of Chinese mainlanders considered themselves as Chinese people. The second generation who were born in Taiwan was struggling with identity in both Taiwanese and Chinese people. Then, the third generation born after the democratization in Taiwan and tended to consider themselves as Taiwanese. Just like the youth of Sunflower movement in 2014 in the film were fighting against the economic pact with China. As time goes, their emotions of against the China regime become stronger by the continuous oppression from China nowadays. But most of the Taiwanese people are still finding the answers for themselves during the modernization process.

Third, the director not only used these political events to call up for the Taiwanese audience's collective memory, but also inserted in many representative items of

particular era such as the posters in Betty's room, the books Chi likes to read, the entertaining shows on TV, and the classic songs of Fong Fei-fei. The director also put lots of effort into the representation of the settings of the landmarks, streets, buildings, signboards in Taiwan. Using the voice actors in different accents and ethnicity so that the characters speak livelily and people may identify themselves well in this film.

Lastly, *On the Happiness Road* created the bridge for the children and youth to understand the history of the island they grew up. It also gives the parents the chance to tell their own growing story in the forbidden era. This further opens the conversation in different generations in Taiwan. For myself, I got the opportunity to go through Taiwan history again and realized the importance and the preciousness of democracy after years. Nowadays, we can choose to become the society we expected to be. We can express our opinions in public freely and argue with each other even we do not hold the same thoughts. But it cannot deny the fact that if we are not allowed to say out who we are or where we come from anymore, can we still acquire real happiness?

5.2 Suggestions of Future Studies

This research is the preliminary introduction of the past 40 years of Taiwan by using *On the Happiness Road* as an example. The film tried to go through the most important historical moments in Taiwan. There were four former Taiwanese Presidents mentioned in the film and arranged with the corresponding plots on purpose; however, there are some missing parts in Taiwan history. For instance, the film did not show any description of political figure Lee Teng-hui who was the President after Chiang Ching-kuo and before Chen Shui-bian. But in fact, he was one of the important political figures in advocating the process of modernization and democratization in Taiwan. Lee was the first local Taiwanese President and elected by the people on their own. At the time of his governance, there was an atmosphere of rising the political status of local Taiwanese in society. Later, he also made his statement of considering Taiwan as a domestic and independent country. But *On the Happiness Road* does not include this important political figure in the film. Moreover, the director touches upon many important issues in Taiwan, but she is not able to go deeper than the common understanding of these social issues by the reason of her limited personal perspective and experience. Therefore, it would be the future director's responsibility to develop a deeper discussion in this kind of animated film.

In addition to the absence of Lee Teng-hui, *On the Happiness Road* only depicted the Taiwanese people's American dream and the influence after the Post-Cold War period, but there is not much indication of the threat from China and their complicated relationship with Taiwan in the past. In fact, there has been the ambiguity in the

relationship between Taiwan and China for a long time. At that time, the KMT government considered that they had the sovereignty as a legal governance of mainland China. This statement is gradually denied after the democratization started. It resulted in the awkward situation of Taiwan is still the diplomatic isolated nation in the world.

However, *On the Happiness Road* is not a perfect story, but it remains its crucial meaning and value in presenting Taiwan's history. It triggered the Taiwanese audience and the society thinking over about the past of their birthplace and pay much more attention on the potential of producing local Taiwanese animation. *On the Happiness Road* did not include everything in this film so that the future animators may still work out new Taiwanese animated film in this direction. The film ended around in 2014, but there are still many events happened continuously after five years now in 2019. Taiwanese animators can also try to dig in the inspiration behind these social events in the Taiwan society, but focus on shorter time-span in order to depict the story deeper.

On top of that, there were other Taiwanese films using animation to represent Taiwan's history. For example, *Hand in Hand* (牽阮的手, 2011) is the documentary of Tian Chao-ming (田朝明) and Tian Meng-shu (田孟淑) who were the married couple and the activist in Taiwanese social movement. Another one example is *Taiwan History: I Am Not the Only One Seeing This!* (台灣史！不能只有我看到, 2018) which is the animation series about Taiwan history in short episodes. It was produced by PTS as well as Taiwan Bar and released on YouTube. Both of them chose animation as media to represent Taiwan's history. The future study may categorize these Taiwanese

animated films and further discuss the effects of using animation dealing with tough historical issues among the youth.

Last, the director put in various political, social and cultural elements to recall the audience's collective memory. But it was mostly my personal observation. Thus, it is worthy of for the future research to conduct the reception analysis of the audience with an interview in order to know how the audience in different generation interpret and feel after seeing this film.



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