Cross-Cultural Appropriation: *Seven Wolves* and Its American Sources (Levels of Imitation in Popular Chinese Cinema)

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One of the more interesting aspects of intercultural communication occurs at the cultural level in the impact that a transmitting culture has upon a receiving one. These impacts may be of positive, negative, or mixed natures, dependent upon the contextual dynamics of the cultural relationships. Thus, within the same recipient culture, we might see examples of exploitative Western imperialistic orientalism *and* humanitarian transmissions of improved methods of hygiene and medical treatment.

No matter how we might define the nature and value of these cross-cultural impacts, they are there. It is interesting to examine just how they are manifested in a recipient popular culture and through what contexts. There has been an obvious and quite pervasive impact made by Western films (particularly American) upon the Chinese movie industry. In this paper, we will explore how this influence (which seems to be actively sought by the Chinese filmmakers) is exhibited. The Chinese, while using modern approaches, are employing procedures and conventions which are most definitely descended from the long-standing traditional influence patterns of classical Chinese literature when they are imitating Western films. As most readers well understand, such a manifestation of "serious" literary conventions in a "popular" literary form—since they do tend to complement one another as Jungian Shadow—is not all that uncommon. The unique aspect of this Chinese phenomenon is the context of this manifestation, particularly when we recall the traditionally ethnocentric and xenophobic nature of Chinese culture. So, we will see in the discussion to follow that the local creators or "writers" of a popular modern literary form—as I would consider filmmakers—are using the influence conventions of a traditional serious literary form—the Chinese classical literature—while imitating a popular modern foreign literature—Western films.

Harold Bloom, in his theory of influence, posits that "strong poets" undergo an anxiety in which they attempt to use various revisionary ratios to "cover up" their indebtedness to precursors (Bloom, *Anxiety of Influence* et al.). Stuart H. Sargent applied Bloomian theory to Chinese literature with mixed results in 1982 ("Can Latecomers Get There First?..."). I would suggest that rather than experiencing Bloom's anxiety of influence, popular Chinese filmmakers seem to be quite content in indulging themselves by freely "borrowing" from their Western and Chinese predecessors. I will demonstrate this thesis through an examination of a Taiwan-made Mandarin film, *Seven Wolves* (**Ch'i-pi-lang**), directed by Chu Yen-P'ing, and its relationships to three American films: *Flashdance*, *The Goodbye Girl*, and *Streets of Fire*[1] (see Fig. 1).

The impact on Taiwan and Hong Kong society and culture made through Western influence has been quite pervasive. There is almost no aspect of modern Chinese life which has not been in some way touched by the West. For even the simplest illustration of this, we need only turn to teenagers: their music, their clothing, and where they eat (McDonald's tends to be one of the most popular hangouts for Chinese junior and senior high school students) are all Western in source and style.

The West has had an enormous impact upon the Chinese, both for good and for bad (I suspect for more good than the "**Meikuo**[2] bashers"

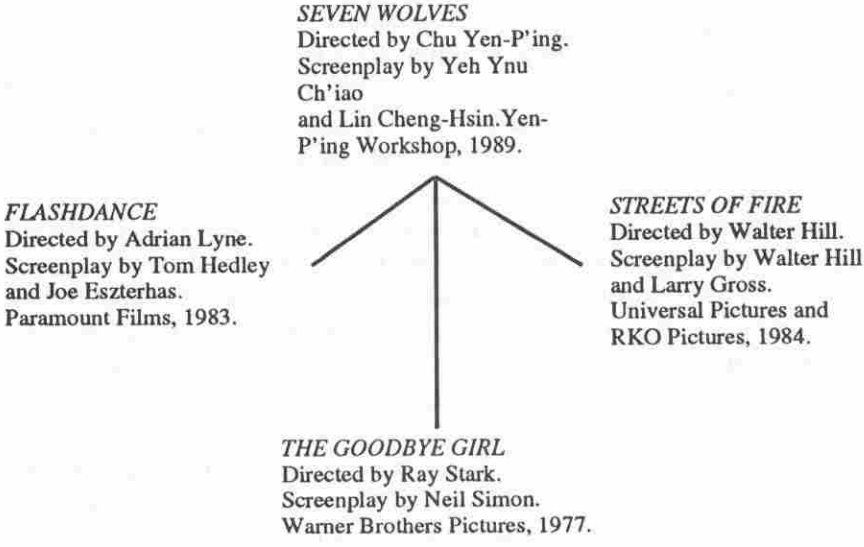

Figure 1: *Seven Wolves* and its American source films.

would care to admit). The degree of this influence has been so great that it is oftentimes no longer noticed, for the once-Western has been accepted as Chinese in the popular consciousness—even the most traditional old-timer may greet you at his doorstep wearing the telltale Western-cut suit and tie without the slightest thought that these are anything but Chinese apparel. There is a tendency in Chinese society (and arguably other oriental societies) to imitate directly from the West and in that very imitative process to transform what is being imitated and make it Chinese.

Just as the Sung poets were identifying themselves with and imitating the T'ang literary tradition, today's filmmakers are identifying themselves with and imitating the Western filmic tradition. The patterns of imitation are the same, merely the source has changed. They are identifying themselves as a part of a line of poets and demonstrating their facility and understanding of the "canon" of common works by imitation, and through their appropriations, they are "rewriting the past." Yet, while we might agree with Sargent that there may be a kind of anxiety in this (165), it may be of another kind—the filmmakers (and perhaps the poets) are not "hiding" their sources, but using them and leaving that use unveiled to those who are familiar with the "canon" of the tradition in which they work. We can also see that for the mass audience, the Western source is irrelevant, the Chinese filmmaker has made a Chinese film which is accessible to the Chinese moviegoer.

In the Chinese entertainment industry, we can see that popular tastes have had a strong receptiveness towards appropriating Western forms. The spoken or modern drama is a Western form, as is the television soap opera. In central and southern Taiwan, the traditional Taiwanese folk opera troupes, which were once the main attractions at temple, wedding, and funeral ceremonies, have all but given way to the flashy Music Cars with their bright lights, blaring music, gaudy singers, poorly skilled striptease artists, and the odd sex show (of course, these **dian-tzu-hua-che** can also be traced back to the Chinese traditional medicine shows which are still found today [a bit like the old-time "snake medicine" shows of the American Old West]). All of these demonstrate a degree of Western influence, but the imitation of the West has been appropriated and absorbed into the Chinese mainstream. It becomes no longer Western, but Chinese.

In all fairness, there are many more possible reasons why Chinese filmmakers imitate Western films as much as they do than those which I have so-far discussed. These range from artistic to practical reasons. It

can be to demonstrate skill and knowledge of the Western filmic tradition. Possibly, they are transforming the Western stories into a form which the Chinese audience can better enjoy (this avoids the alienation effect experienced when watching a film from another culture). They may simply be providing their audience with visual tropes which they are familiar with and enjoy seeing repeatedly. It could also be that these "weak poets" have no originality themselves and so are overly dependent upon their more creative Western counterparts. And, there is the most common reason for the behavior which has been supplied to me by both Chinese and Western observers of the phenomenon: they're just lazy and want to make some "fast money"—obviously, it is easier to copy from someone else and sell the copy than to create something original by oneself. No matter what the reasons behind the imitation are, it is still there and can be critically dealt with in terms of the various revisionary ratios (not an anxiety of influence, but of imitation and appropriation). In this discussion, I will not venture which of the above motivations drives Chu in his creation of *Seven Wolves*, that would require a more in-depth examination of his corpus and not the mere discussion of only one film.

Before we begin discussing the specific influences by Western films on *Seven Wolves*, I need to make one point perfectly clear: borrowings in the Chinese film industry are in no way limited to American or other Western films. Chinese films also borrow quite heavily from other Chinese films or literature. It is merely because the American influence is so great and the primary form of borrowing found in the film we will discuss that I seem to privilege it here.

In a Bloomian sense, Chu is not a "strong" poet (for purposes of this analysis, we will assume the director to be the "author" of his films, although Yeh Yun-Ch'iao and Lin Cheng-Hsin technically are the screenwriters of *Seven Wolves*). Not only in *Seven Wolves*, but in other films, Chu depends heavily upon Western sources for his stories and scenes. He does not attempt to "hide" this influence. His audience is well aware of it. And, his films make a reasonably large profit at the box office. This would seem to exclude his films from a strict Bloomian analysis. We may see, though, that a misreading of Bloom may still help us to better understand Chu's films in particular and other Chinese films in general. While Chu may not be experiencing "anxiety," he does seem to be employing the revisionary ratios which Bloom provides us with. The imitation by the Chinese filmmaker seems to occur at various levels which might roughly correspond to Bloom, but without the anxiety.

Bloom provides us with six revisionary ratios which form the basis of his critical theory. These are **clinamen** (irony or reaction formation), **tessera** (synecdoche or condensation-catharsis), **kenosis** (metonymy or undoing-isolation), **daemonization** (hyperbole-litotes or repression), **askesis** (metaphor or sublimation), and **apophrades** (metalepsis or introjection-projection). For a clear summary of these ratios by Bloom, see his *Anxiety of Influence* (14-16). In his work, Bloom is primarily concerned only with the "strong poets" who experience "anxiety" and relegates the "weak poets" who do not seem to be undergoing this anxiety to the level of copier. Yet, this doesn't seem to be the only level of imitation in the Chinese cinema. Yes, there is mere copying, but there also seems to be other levels of imitation in the works of Chu and other Chinese filmmakers who Bloom would simply call "weak poets."

There are "strong" Chinese filmmakers, to be sure. One would be hard-pressed to find mistakenly obvious imitations or direct influences in such films as Hou Hsiao-Hsien's *A City of Sadness* (**Pei-ch'ing-cheng-shih**) or John Woo's *Bullet in the Head*[3] (**Tieh-hsieh-chieh-t'ou**). But these are the exceptions rather than the rule for Chinese filmmakers. It is the Bloomian "weak" filmmakers who dominate the market place. This is a manifestation of the cultural tendency in the literary past to emulate those who have succeeded before. It is a demonstration of one's own knowledge and skill to use those who are the recognized masters of the tradition in one's own work. It is interesting to note that the weak imitator and the strong original seem to go through similar revisionary ratios, but their groundings are different: one is indifferent to his influence (or even anxious to have a predecessor), and the other experiences an anxiety and tries to avoid influence (or at least it showing).

Forces seem to be at work in modern Chinese cinema which are similar to those of China's literary past when poets were expected to borrow lines from those who came before them (part of the pleasure of reading the poem was in recognizing the older[4] work and how well it was incorporated into the new). While many in the mass audience may or may not have seen the source films in the theaters, the film still stands as a work in its own right, but it may also gain force and power from its recognizable indebtedness to other films. The dynamics of these forces becomes quite complex.

In Chu's *Seven Wolves*, we find basically three levels of imitation and appropriation. Each level can be represented for us in how Chu uses each of his major source films (see Fig. 2). The first level is isolated non-plot-essential scene imitation. This occurs when scenes from the

LEVEL ONE	Isolated non-plot-essential scene imitation (scenes from parent film are used simply due to their visual impact and the pleasure they afford in isolation from any narrative purpose [whether that of the parent film or of the ephebe film]).
	Imitation/Clinamen *FLASHDANCE*
LEVEL TWO	Full appropriation, where the story and images of the precursor film are swallowed almost whole by the ephebe film with synecdochic transformations.
	Clinamen/Tesera *THE GOODBYE GIRL*
LEVEL THREE	Mixed imitation/appropriation in which selected individual shots, storylines, and other elements are borrowed from the parent film, but never in their entirety nor in the same contexts.
	Apophrades *STREETS OF FIRE*

Figure 2. Levels of Imitation in *Seven Wolves.*

parent film are used simply due to their visual impact and pleasure they afford in isolation from any story (whether that of the parent or the present film). We see this in *Seven Wolves* in the scenes borrowed from *Flashdance*. These scenes are not necessary to the plot of either film, but are so visually striking that the director includes them almost whole and uncut from the original—this is primarily a visual and not a narrative appropriation. There is almost no change from the source, and no narrative dependence. The second level is full appropriation, where the story and images of the predecessor film are swallowed almost whole by the present film. In *Seven Wolves* this occurs with the appropriation of *The Goodbye Girl*. In this appropriation, however, we see that the imitation must also make room for itself and that is through the revisionary ratio of clinamen, a swerve or correction of the American predecessor in order to make it palatable to the Chinese audience (but, we must note, this is not due to anxiety about the source but through a need on the filmmaker's part to transform the source into a Chinese context). The third level of imitation we will discuss is a mixed level in which individual shots, storylines, and elements are borrowed from the parent film, but never in their entirety. In *Seven Wolves*, we find elements of *Streets of Fire*, but not the entire film or even entire scenes. Chu seems to be performing some sort of apophrades with Walter Hill's original. He is imitating the source film, but on his own terms, allowing it to enter the work on his terms and not Hill's.

Despite the seeming contradiction in its sources, *Seven Wolves* is first and foremost a Chinese film. However, it is a Chinese film which is heavily dependent upon American precedents. This apparent paradox is evident from the opening frames to the ending (and even spilling into the sequel, *Seven Wolves Two* [**Ch'i-p'i-lang-erh**]). The film opens with clips of various locations and personalities to be introduced in the story to come all of these images have their basis in the three films influencing this one: *Flashdance*, *The Goodbye Girl*, and *Streets of Fire*. Yet, the narrative technique of the opening sequence is typically Chinese. Just as in hundreds of other Taiwan films, we hear the voice-over of our narrator introducing his story, friends, and feelings. Films from the critically praised *A City of Sadness* (**Pei-ch'ing-cheng-shih**) to the pop-pulp *Boys in the Next Classroom* (**Ke-pi-pan-ti-nan-sheng**) have begun in this fashion. However, in *Seven Wolves*, our narrator, Hsiao Chi (Little Chicken), is seen as a lone rider riding his bicycle at dawn in the big city—an image which occurs more than once in *Flashdance*, only instead of Jennifer Beals it is Chang Yu-Sheng who we see (one of many transformations from one gender to the other evident in *Seven Wolves'* appropriations—something a Jungian alchemical transformationalist might find interesting). More obvious borrowed images occur in the opening sequence which includes a dance from *Flashdance*, the motorcycle gang street-riding shots from *Streets of Fire*, and the opening broken-heart scenes from *The Goodbye Girl*. All of these are packed into an opening series which lasts merely as long as the title song.

Anyone familiar with the original films—even those with little or no Chinese language ability—would be able to spot[5] the influences these precursors have on *Seven Wolves*. Film is such a visual medium, that one can actually see the precursor living in the present film. There can be no doubt that the director is aware that anyone who knows his "canon" will spot the precursor. If he is undergoing any "anxiety," it must be of another type. He must show that he has skill in using the past in his work. He is demonstrating a knowledge and ability quite unlike the Bloomian anxiety of hiding or keeping away from influences. He actually embraces his sources and lets them live again in his own film.

In our first level of imitation, we note that scenes are taken from the original film and repeated in the present film. Much of the appropriation from *Flashdance* by *Seven Wolves* is of this variety. There is slight clinimatic revision, but for the most part, the visual image is preserved intact. However, at this level, the filmmaker is interested only in the visual impact of the scene—it carries no substantial narrative

function. The audience will recognize it as coming from the predecessor and will enjoy it as a visual reminder of the former film. If considered in this way, it does serve as a kind of synecdoche for the precursor film, but in a careful and controlled way (if it is successful; although I have seen many instances where the first level appropriation does not work for the benefit of the borrowing film but disrupts its holistic qualities—this would be an instance of the precursor's psycho-emotional content being too strong for the ephebe poet's work to absorb).

For the most part, the *Flashdance* appropriations do work in *Seven Wolves*. They do not overpower the present narrative. An example of this sort of appropriation can be found in a solo dance performed by the character Tung Ting. She is alone in her home and places a tape in the cassette player (Western pop music, as I have been told Chinese don't often dance to this sort of Chinese pop music). We see a close-up of her leg and then the music swells and she does a series of quick running steps in her dance. Viewers immediately recognize this sequence from its source, *Flashdance*, even certain shots are from the exact same angle (for instance, the close-up on the dancer's foot occurs exactly the same way in the original as does much of the dance's choreography—especially the famous "running in place" steps). At the end of her dance, Tung Ting sits on her couch and drinks some bottled water, breathing heavily. In *Flashdance*, the dancer sits drinking water and breathing heavily. The scene provides no vital narrative information at this point. It is merely visually pleasurable for the audience, particularly if one is familiar with the original. Chu does make a few changes, but they are clinimatic swerves for context and not story (for instance, Tung Ting's apartment, like a typical Taipei resident's, is small rather than large and spacious).

Seven Wolves Two continues this appropriation level with *Flashdance*. One of the first shots in the sequel shows Tung Ting dancing in a bar. The choreography, camera angles, and even the song she dances to are straight from the opening dance in *Flashdance* (although here we don't have the famous "water splash" audiences know so well from the original).

At the first level of imitation, we are concentrated on the visual elements of the scene and the pleasure they afford the audience in recognizing their source, not in narrative development. In most of the scenes which *Seven Wolves* has taken from *Flashdance* there is no dialogue (or the dialogue is from a separate storyline within the film).

At the second level of imitation, we have the precursor restamped

almost whole into the present film. In *Seven Wolves* we find the storyline with Camel and Fang Jung to be basically a Chinese revision of *The Goodbye Girl*. Chu follows the plot very faithfully with only a few minor revisions for his characters to become themselves. Changes include: the absence of the daughter character in the first film (our Chinese performers are too young for children, plus a Chinese audience wouldn't accept a child character who gives such worldly advice to her mother—instead Fang Jung receives this advice from a friend on the telephone), Camel becomes a singer while Eliot Garfield in the original was an actor (this is probably because it's more believable and interesting to the new film's audience—after all, the actor playing Camel, Wang Chieh, is one of Taiwan's most popular male singers), and Fang Jung is a rock group manager and not a dancer (this is probably because we've already one dancer in the film and it allows a subplot to develop in which several of the performers in the film do sing together—the music in *Seven Wolves* is one of its strongest selling points). All of these changes are minor do not affect the narrative in a major way. They are simply instances of minor clinamen.

The one instance in which *Seven Wolves* does effect a major swerve from the original *The Goodbye Girl* occurs towards the end of the film (actually the end of the Camel and Fang Jung storyline within the film). This is the appropriation of the final scene from *The Goodbye Girl*. As in the original, the hero has received a job offer and must leave his lover behind—although in this instance Camel is leaving Taiwan for Hong Kong in order to record an album. The girl doesn't believe he is coming back (she's been deserted twice before). He leaves, going into the rain. The phone rings, she picks it up, and it's him. He is standing in the rain at a pay phone right across the street from her. He doesn't want to leave without her. He has cashed in his one first-class ticket for two economy-class ones. They have two hours. He tells her to change her clothes and come with him. Visually, our scene locates him down below in the soaking rain and her standing on the balcony talking to him excitedly on the phone—all very touching. Anyone familiar with *The Goodbye Girl* will recognize that this is very faithful to the original—visually it is even more striking in its debt. However, from this point on Chu performs an act of clinamen, he "corrects" the precursor. In the original film, the girl says she doesn't need to go now because all she needed was to hear him ask and she'd know he was coming back. He tells her to have his guitar restrung while he's away. She cries with joy, grabs the guitar, hugging it in the rain. He gets back into the cab. We roll end credits.

Chinese viewers of *The Goodbye Girl* tell me "no Chinese girl would have let him go like that." Whether that is true or not, Chu evidently also has some reservations. In *Seven Wolves*, the girl accepts the boy's offer to take her along. We roll the end credits knowing that she will be going with him to Hong Kong. Every one of my students who have discussed these two endings with me have told me that they prefer the Chinese ending, even though it contains a fatal flaw—no one can leave Taiwan within two hours, there's simply too much paperwork! Realistically, it's a bit naive, but emotionally it's more satisfying for the Chinese audience.[6]

While *Seven Wolves* does appropriate the whole of *The Goodbye Girl* into itself, it does not do so by copying each scene in itself. That would be too long and would not allow itself to do anything else which is original. Rather, it appropriates *The Goodbye Girl* as one of its sub-narratives, and yet that sub-narrative contains all of the original. This is accomplished through a process of synecdoche in which only key scenes from *The Goodbye Girl* are actually taken into *Seven Wolves* and yet they represent the whole of the former film. This is important to note, as this kind of tesseratic convention is quite common in Chinese films.[7] It allows the Chinese filmmaker to collapse time. Every scene in *Seven Wolves* which imitates a western precursor is shorter and faster than the original. This is why *Seven Wolves* can have within itself the makings of three American films and have room to develop original sequences of its own and yet take less time than any of its predecessors (an excellent example of this process occurs in *The Seven Warriors* **(Ch'i-fu-chiang)** which follows the Japanese and American appropriations of the same story: *The Seven Samurai* which is 3 1/2 hours and *The Magnificent Seven* which is 2 1/2 hours, yet the Chinese film is only 1 1/2 hours!).

Our third level of imitation is in many ways the most interesting. It goes will beyond the simple visual copying of the first level or the whole-story appropriation of the second. At this third level, the precursor film is copied visually and narratively, but never wholly. The director controls what comes into his film. It is a case of apophrades in which the precursor is allowed into the ephebe film, but on new terms set not by the precursor poet but by the new poet.

Streets of Fire can be found throughout *Seven Wolves*. It is the first film my students have mentioned to me when I've questioned them about the precursors which they can recall (although very few have seen all of them). Yet, nowhere in *Seven Wolves* can we find an entire scene or full narrative bit of information taken from *Streets of Fire*—it is all

controlled images or fragments of narrative, never does the entire precursor film invade the ephebe.

Examples of direct influence by *Streets of Fire* on *Seven Wolves* are numerous. The "bad guy" in the former film is named Raven, in the latter he is named Black Hawk. We have both heroes competing for possession of the girl, yet in *Seven Wolves* it is the bad guy who "gets the girl in the end" a major and unusual piece of clinamen as the *Streets of Fire* ending had the girl offering herself to the "good guy" who rejects her. Both films end at a rock concert (in *Streets of Fire* the actual singers are unknowns playing stars, but in *Seven Wolves* they are all very popular real-life singers playing unknowns). The hero in *Streets of Fire* wears slacks, suspenders, and a soiled undershirt; as does the hero in *Seven Wolves*. Some of the fight scenes are choreographed similarly, although within different contexts. Tom Cody from *Streets of Fire* has just left the Army; so has Hau from *Seven Wolves*. When threatened by a knife-wielding punk, Cody takes the knife away, gives it back, tells the punk to "try again," takes the knife away again, and slaps the punk several times in the face. The same thing happens in *Seven Wolves*, but it is Camel who performs the show of bravery and skill, under very different circumstances.

One problem many viewers might have with the *Streets of Fire* images within a Chinese film is with their seemingly alienness. Many of the images are of leather-clad bikers riding in huge packs down Chungshan North Road in Taipei. These images seem so American and cinema-mythic to most Western viewers (after all, *Streets of Fire* calls itself "a Rock-and-Roll fable" and plays homage to its own precursors—*The Wild One* and *Rebel Without a Cause*). Frankly, this was something which troubled me the first time I saw *Seven Wolves*. However, from conversations with a few of my students and one or two Chinese friends, I think it is probably safe to say that this is not a problem for the intended audience of *Seven Wolves*, because: (1) it's acceptable within the confines of the film's rules to believe in this kind of "subculture" and these events, and (2) there really have been a few such "motorcycle clubs" active on Taiwan (particularly in Peitou, a suburb community of Taipei).

What is important for us to keep in mind is that each time *Streets of Fire* is appropriated by *Seven Wolves* it serves a different (although oftentimes similar) purpose than originally intended. Yet, the appropriation is not "hidden" from the viewer. Those who have seen both films, know where the appropriations have come from. While it is a

form of imitative apophrades, it is not necessarily based on an anxiety of influence.

Unfortunately, one common effect caused by a discussion of the nature I have been presenting in this brief paper, is a skewing of the reader's perception toward the material discussed. There is a danger that anyone who has not first seen *Seven Wolves* may have an unfair sense that the film is just a copy of the three American precursors. This is not entirely so. Chu's film takes the three films we have discussed and incorporates them into his own film, to be sure. However, his blending is an original combination of these disparate elements and he adds to this mixture much which is his own and new for this film.

So often, a critic's analysis of a film has an unintended negative effect upon the reader's future response to that film. A critic should be aware of this and try to avoid a violation of the text he is working with. A critic is in many ways like an eager lover. He cannot force into the text meanings which it is not ready to receive. He must be aware of the danger of destroying the integrity of the text in his over-zealousness to find what is hidden underneath the surface coverings the author has draped upon the form of the text. Rather, the critic must be patient and coax from the text meanings which are already there. He must gently persevere until, the text freely opens itself to him and reveals what is underneath its surface structure. Only then can he be completely successful in his understanding of what aesthetic pleasure this text has to offer. By concentrating too hard upon one aspect of the text, the critic runs the risk of destroying his respect for the holistic unity of the piece, losing any real hope of a continuing relationship and repeated enjoyment of that text in the future.

While *Seven Wolves* is not a great film (when asked to recommend films, my students have never ranked it in their top ten), it is also not a bad film (whatever these terms really mean). It does copy its precursors and by Western standards is not terribly original. However, it does work as a film in and of itself. It is entertaining and certainly has a high appeal for its intended audience (if box office receipts are a valid measure for that). No matter how much we have concentrated upon its relationship with its precursors, successful or unsuccessful, its relationship with its audience has been quite successful.

What we have seen in this short discussion of *Seven Wolves* is how one Chinese film has used American precursor films and performed revisions which seem to parallel those of Bloom's revisionary ratios but do not seem to be based upon an anxiety *of* influence. Rather, the

Chinese filmmaker seems to be either indifferent to his sources or experiencing an anxiety *for* influence—he seems more than willing for his audience to know that he is imitating his precursors. He is definitely not a strong poet, but he cannot be labeled as merely a weak poet who only copies, for his imitations also appropriate and transform the precursor into a new and oftentimes original context. This is a phenomenon which certainly seems worthy of further exploration.

Notes

I must express my appreciation to Lorraine Yuk-Lan Law Phillips for her help in preparing the English translations and Romanizations of the Chinese phrases and film titles within this paper. She has been a constant source of inspiration and support. We have used the Wade-Giles system of Romanization for Mandarin Chinese as it is one of the more widely used in the Republic of China on Taiwan. As is a common practice for texts of this nature, we have omitted the tonal notations in the paper.

[1]The original version of this paper discussed in more detail the patterns for imitation of Western sources generally found in Chinese films. To meet the limitations of *The Journal of Popular Culture*, much of that discussion and its theoretical explanations has been substantially excised from this presentation. I would therefore ask the reader to accept as a given that the influence is pervasive and that *Seven Wolves* is a fair representation of a Taiwan film which is part of this phenomenon.

[2]"**Meikuo**" is a Romanization of the Mandarin Chinese word for America. As I would call them, these "**Meikuo**phobes" have a tendency to over-emphasize the Orientalist nature of Western involvement in Asia. Opposed to the "**Meikuo**phobes" would be the equally blind-sided "**Meikuo**philes"—particularly common among the young—who go too far in over-idealizing the West.

[3]While there is none of the blatant imitation of Western sources in *Bullet in the Head*, there is influence. It is of a far more subtle, and by Western standards more original—from fifties style rock-and-roll music and dancing to an interesting final scene in which the hero brings the skull of his dead friend home to Hong Kong from the jungles of Vietnam (visually shades of *Hamlet* but narratively not so).

[4]As Charles Hartman explains in his essay on poetry in *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*, "The young Chinese scholar acquired...his poetic vocabulary...from memorizing a set corpus of prose and verse prescribed by educational custom or law. He shared this 'language' with others who had memorized the same texts and began poetic composition by

patching together small pieces of this memorization corpus...." (65). It would seem that the modern filmmaker is directly descended from this very poetic and literary tradition—only his sources are less narrowly defined and controlled.

[5]Most major-release motion pictures from Hong Kong and Taiwan do have English and Chinese subtitles (although I have found that quite a few of the videotape versions of Taiwan films do not have English—for instance, *City of Sadness* was released in the theatres with English subtitles while the local videotape only had the Chinese). However, one problem with relying on English subtitles when viewing Chinese films is that they are often incorrect translations (with misspellings, misuse of terms, poor grammar, and a variety of other ills).

[6]This is related to the one of the natures of traditional Chinese drama which Stephen H. West describes in his essay in *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*—plot is not of primary concern, but secondary to performance (25). That is why so many Hong Kong films can get away with plot twists which completely defy the laws of logic, as long as the films are fast-paced and pleasurable.

[7]The traditional dramas were often not performed whole, but were split into acts or scenes which would then be produced separately instead of the entire work together. This was particularly so for rather long works which had many subplots. An evening's program might consist ofpopular acts or scenes from several longer plays (West, "Drama" 20). Therefore, we are not surprised that Chu combines scenes and storylines from three popular Western films to make his own synthesis production of *Seven Wolves*.

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