

■ Redefining Taiwan New Cinema as Borderless Transcultural Cinema from Taiwan

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Abstract

When one is looking to understand a people's culture, researching its cinema is a very good place to start. Ever since I came to live in Taiwan almost ten years ago, I have been trying to understand culture in Taiwan and especially to find a vocabulary for my experience as a Dutchman living in Taiwan. It was only when I stumbled upon the concept of transculturality that I realized I had been mistakenly taking culture as something homogeneous and typical for a specific nation or group. In this paper, I will explore a better way to understand culture in Taiwan by arguing that society in Taiwan is a community that evidences a sense of non-nation-ness through the workings of the process of transculturality, and that this can be shown foremost in its New Cinema, first and second waves, from the 1980s through the early 2000s. By taking examples from Taiwanese New Cinema feature films, I will examine the major cultural element of language and analyze the development over some time in Taiwan. To build my argument in this, I will first introduce the concept of transculturality as described by Wolfgang Welsch. Subsequently, I will discuss the phenomena of language in Taiwanese society and elaborate on how the Taiwan cultural outlook as presented in Taiwan New Cinema can be explained by the concept of

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transculturality. For this, I will bring forward several feature films from the Taiwan New Cinema waves from which I will draw examples that support my argument. With this paper, I will suggest redefining Taiwan New Cinema as Transcultural Cinema marked by borderlessness and made in Taiwan. And as such this paper contributes to the discussion on how to define Taiwan New Cinema, as well as the study of Taiwanese culture and society, through the research on its cinema and through the lens of transculturality.

Keywords: Taiwan Culture, Taiwan New Cinema, Transculturality, Borderlessness, Borderless, Transcultural Cinema

Introduction

When one is looking to understand a people's culture, researching its cinema is a very good place to start. In this paper, I will argue that Taiwan society is a community that shows traces of being formed by the process of transculturality and that this can be seen in Taiwan New Cinema (TNC) from the 1980s through the early 2000s. I will take the main cultural element of language and analyze the development over some time in Taiwan, as is shown from several feature films of the TNC movement. To build my argument in this, I will first introduce the concept of transculturality as described by Wolfgang Welsch in his "Transculturality: The Changing Form" (hereafter as "TCF") which was his reaction to the national culture idea that has been predominant for a long time. Subsequently, I will argue how the idea of monist culture that was introduced by Johann Gottfried von Herder more than two centuries ago does certainly not apply in modern society, and maybe even was never an accurate model for how people established their ways of life to start with. From there, I will discuss the phenomena of language in Taiwanese society and elaborate on how the Taiwan cultural outlook as presented by TNC can be explained by the concept of transculturality. I will introduce the concept of "Borderless Transcultural Cinema" to describe this. And I will examine several feature films from TNC from this particular perspective, with the films providing examples that support my argument.

It is important to mention at the outset of this study that I have selected films for discussion on two main grounds: firstly, because these films are generally considered to belong to the canon of Taiwan cinema in general and TNC in particular, rendering conclusions based on their content easily verifiable, and secondly, because in my opinion, they clearly show the influence of the process of transculturality on culture in Taiwan. The relevant films are chosen over a period of two decades in recent history of Taiwan for indication of the fact that the process of transculturality leaves its traces over time. From these films I will select one or two scenes or highlight certain elements from the narrative and read them from the perspective of transculturality. Some of these films have been subject to extensive scholarship from cinematographic and cultural historic perspectives so I do not seek to add new views in that respect. But what I will add to the scholarship is the transcultural perspective on them and the role these films play in the bringing to the light of its process. I will focus on how (scenes from) these films open windows onto the transcultural nature of the development of culture in Taiwan, to expose what is hiding in plain sight: transculturality at work. I will also argue that this perspective is more profound than

just another interpretation of the process of hybridity that is currently generally considered to be a characteristic of Taiwan cultural formation, and that it will lead to a redefinition of TNC and its role in the development of Taiwanese society and sense of borderless community by people in Taiwan.

This argument is also placed against the backdrop of the discussion that is ongoing within the academic community that directs its attention to cinema made in communities where people speak any form of Chinese language. It is a discussion about how to define such cinema, especially where the longstanding nomenclature of a national cinema seems to have become outdated. As the cinematic language in films made in Taiwan features several different Chinese-type (or Sinophone) languages and the cultures that they function in, cinema made in Taiwan undergoes various efforts of definition: from Chinese cinema, to Chinese language cinema, to Sinophone cinema, to Transnational cinema (Lu; Berry and Farquhar, "From National Cinemas"; Lu and Yeh), to cinema of the Sinosphere (Berry, "What Is?"). These various definitions are then invariably linked back in one way or another, to a certain effort to categorize these films as part of the movement of creation of a sense of nationalism or national identity either Chinese or Taiwanese. I will however argue that TNC as my focus of this paper, cannot be captured within these frameworks and transcends such attempts at nationalist boxing-in. It is exactly in its redefinition as non-nation bound and therefore borderless and transcultural cinema that TNC can be appreciated for its true characteristic, that of transcendence of national identity-ness and search for a sense or identity of Taiwanese-ness, without the confines of the concept and structure of nation. Therefore, with this paper, I will contribute to the discussion on how to define TNC and propose to do this through the lens of transculturality, as well as to the study of Taiwanese culture and society, through the research on its cinema.

The Concepts of Culture and Transculturality

Ever since the concept of "national culture" was brought into the world of Western thought by Herder (1744-1803), culture was taken to be more and more a phenomenon that was defined by a clear group of people contained within certain borders, also called nations. In his *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, Herder champions the organizational form of the nation-state based on the culture of a people. The concept that nations are defined by the culture of their people has become predominant in the thought on culture worldwide and how people interact with each other, even in the Asian region where traditional concepts like an "empire" uniting all subjects under

the emperor have been let go in favor of the idea of nation defined by territorial boundaries (Anderson 20-28). The concept of national culture is hereinafter also referred to as "Culture". This concept is persistent to this day, even though the idea that Culture can be transcended has gained much terrain since it was launched by Fernando Ortiz (1881-1969) who coined the term transculturation.

As expounded by Daniel G. Koenig and Katja RaKow, the term transcultural has come to cover several different phenomena (93-95), including phenomena that occur in between various cultural spheres (for example the concept of "the contact zone" introduced by Mary Louise Pratt). The most recent approach to culture requires the observer to break down pre-twenty-first century concepts like nation, culture, or any other concept that is based on the idea of boundaries. It is the latter approach that I will take for the purpose of this paper. And in this, I will particularly focus on the redefinition of the concept provided by Welsch who coined his thought on the issue under the term "transculturality," as explained by him first in the German language in 1992 ("Transculturalitaet" 5-20) and later in English in 1999 and more elaborately in 2001. I will expand on Welsch's ideas based on his last paper of 2001. I chose this theory to base my study upon, because firstly, to me, his approach to the concept is the most interesting one, exactly because of the basic assumption that cultural phenomena are not bound to closed systems like group, local community, society, or Culture. Even concepts that seem more modern like Pratt's contact zone are very often based on Herder's thinking in separate cultural spheres and how they can overlap in some way. Secondly, in the introduction to the edited volume *Transcultural Identity Constructions in a Changing World*, Welsch is called a "leading theoretician in the field of transcultural studies" while the text involved is said to be "highly influential" (Nordin et al. 13), rendering the choice of touchstone theory obvious and engagement with his theory pertinent.

Welsch came to his thinking while being confronted with the observation that the ways in which people form their lives, or people's cultures, are not really in accordance with more traditional thought on "one people, one culture." In his analysis, Herder's concept of Culture has three defining constituents which are all to be refuted: social homogenization, ethnic consolidation, and intercultural delimitation ("TCF" 62). In a world that is increasingly inter-wired, a concept of Culture that is normatively separatist seems dangerously unsuitable for the job. No tribe lives on its own island (anymore).

Transculturality According to Welsch

Transculturality, according to Welsch then, is the phenomenon of culture structurally and over time, being formed by “mixing and permeations”; it is by nature trans-cultural, because the shaping of culture is a process that goes “beyond” the pre-twenty-first century concepts of culture and also “passes through” the traditional boundaries (“TCF” 67). Transculturality indicates a dynamics of cultural formation. Culture is not a static phenomenon (anymore); it is not only in a constant state of flux, it is also in itself a fluctuant denominator. It becomes a space upon itself, a space in between, where people and events meet. According to Welsch, this process of cultural intermixing takes place on both the societal macro-level and the individual micro-level. Even though Welsch argues that the concept of transculturality seems particularly suited to describe the state of culture today, he also warns against the assumption that it is a wholly new thing. Welsch points out that in his view, culture has always been historically a product of hybridization; every national culture that one may think of will bear the traces of mixing (75). As it were, the whole structure of Culture as nation bound is therefore nothing but a construct that never really fitted the reality of how people make meaning and shape their ways of life, and in fact does not still.

In Welsch’s view then, the societal transculturality is marked by four main elements: networking, hybridization, comprehensiveness of cultural changes, and dissolution of the foreign-own distinction (68-70). Firstly, culture today does not stand on itself, as separate from one culture to another. Culture has become an extremely interlinked body of information. Secondly, when Welsch talks about hybridization, he means that cultural elements that may have been specific to one group in the world have become available to all other groups and communities, making these elements what he calls “inner-content” (68) everywhere, in actuality or potentiality. It is very often the most obvious element to grasp. Thirdly, the cultural changes and exchanges through mixing are comprehensive. With this, Welsch points out that the exchange takes place on all levels of culture. And fourthly, most importantly to the concept, through the first three phenomena, people have lost the sense of distinction between own or national on the one hand, and foreign on the other hand. What once was an unknown cultural element easily becomes part of one’s own culture after networking and hybridization. Such assimilated cultural elements will be considered parts of the original culture. It is this disappearance of the “selectivity between own-culture and foreign-culture” (70) that marks the completion of the transculturality process.

According to Welsch, transculturality has become the norm increasingly also for individuals. People individually make cultural connections from many varied sources. They also work with plural doctrines, identities, and social realities or communities at one and the same time (71-72). Nationality becomes a concept that increasingly takes the backseat to the idea of personal identity: a personal identity that is a work in progress through the linking of the various cultural elements that people find all around them (73). Individual transculturality is furthermore very much interwoven with societal transculturality, in the sense that the only way to function in a society that turns transcultural is by “the individuals’ discovery and acceptance of their transcultural constitution” (79).

There is one crucial point that Welsch makes that will complete this overview of the theory of transculturality and that is the following. It is essential for the understanding of the concept that one accepts a new mode of thinking. This comes to the fore very clearly when discussing the issue of cultural diversity. It is true that cultural diversity in the traditional sense of each culture its ownness is disappearing and also has no function in transculturality. Instead, a new diversity arises, which is no longer based on separation of spheres, but which appears as an elaborate patchwork of transcultural permeations and transformations which form a worldwide network of individualized webs of cultural elements and connections, shaping individual and group identities. These identities are marked by the diverse personal choices of which elements to combine and throw into the mix and are therefore no longer “bound to geographical or national stipulations” (81). This type of variety among individual and societal networks in fact favors peaceful coexistence as it is free from separatism (82). In this manner, the new worldwide simultaneous trends of globalization and cultural similarity on the one hand and new tribalism on the other hand can be very well explained: “transculturality people combine both” (84). More philosophically speaking, Welsch calls transculturality a forming of culture being “beyond the contraposition of own-ness and foreign-ness” (64).

Going Beyond the Observation of Hybridity in Taiwan New Cinema

As noted above, and I as will reiterate here, hybridity or hybridization is only one of the parts that constitute the concept of transculturality. Hybridity or fluidity of culture seems to have become a household word used in academia at will whenever one refers to a mixing of cultural elements, for example in the medium of cinema. In our globalized world, it is generally also easy to note that people mix cultures on a day-to-day basis. I want to clarify that whether or not there is hybridization in Taiwan is not the issue of discussion here. What

I propose to explore is whether the process of cultural formation in Taiwan has moved beyond that level into a more profound state of cultural awareness that is most dominantly marked by a sense of loss of distinction between own-ness and foreign-ness, where the origins of cultural elements are no longer of importance in valuing cultural expressions. This is a search that only starts at the point where hybridization is a given. And this is the viewpoint that I will take to analyze TNC as representative of cinema made in Taiwan.

This paper sets out to engage with Welsch's theory on transculturality specifically, as I argue that in a time of dealing with effects of globalization, understanding the transcultural processes involved is a pertinent purpose in itself. It should be acknowledged however that the concept of mixing cultural influences, or hybridity of culture, has been brought forth by other writers before Welsch incorporated this element in his theory of transculturality. Very prominently, this concept is introduced by Homi Bhabha in his landmark study *The Location of Culture*. Bhabha argues that the most essential element of culture is its hybridity and that its mixing takes place "in the realm of the beyond" (1). The great difference between Bhabha's theory and the theory of transculturality by Welsch, however, is that Bhabha does not posit hybridity as a characteristic that culture has in itself, but he actually claims that the hybridity of culture has come about as a function of colonial (or post-colonial) anxiety experienced in a "place between the unhomeliness of migrancy and the baroque belonging of the metropolitan" (18). By doing so he makes cultural hybridity subject to processes of structural imbalances of power in the world: "It is significant that the productive capacities of this Third Space have a colonial or postcolonial governance" (38). Even though it is evident that colonialism and the tectonic postcolonial shifts in global power have had great impact on the processes of migration and the mixing of cultural elements that follow from that, including in Taiwan, I argue that it is nevertheless an inherent limitation of this theory to link the phenomenon of cultural hybridity to this context alone. This contextualising into the domain of (post-) colonialism anchors the theory deeply in the marshes of dualism (colonialist v. colonized) and Herderian monist foundations for a perspective on culture (the culture of the powerful v. the culture of the powerless). It furthermore reduces the validity of this theory for the twenty-first century discussion on how culture forms when the world community needs to find ways of moving beyond the paralyzing effect of the continuous oppositional nature of nation-thinking and its historicity, as well as duality as a mode of thought itself.

I therefore argue that the discourse on the workings of transculturality and any possible formation of transcultural identity should not be burdened by the

discussion on (post-) colonial issues or the search for traces of colonial legacy, if it is to succeed in reaching the goals of recognizing this in-between space of cultural non-opposition or freedom, and of moving beyond the inheritance of Herderian monist cultural thinking. After all, it has to be kept in mind that transculturality is exclusively concerned with how culture is formed on both societal and individual levels, how people form their ways of life through hybridization, and essentially, what their mindset is about that. In the transcultural discourse as proposed by Welsch and as I understand it, it is completely irrelevant whether or not a cultural element that is brought into the intermixing at any given point in time stems from colonial legacy. It suffices that the cultural element concerned is being made part of the mix and that people do not attach any feeling of own-ness or foreign-ness to it as to its origin for determining value. And it is also this dis-attachment to origin as value-base for cultural appreciation that is remarkably present in TNC and sets TNC apart for discussion here.

The theory of transculturality offers a perspective that goes beyond nineteenth and twentieth century concepts and will allow us to drop the baggage of ethnocentrism that so easily clouds the perspective on formation of culture, whether it is the Western view on Eastern practice or the post-colonial view on globalizing societies. After all, as Chris Berry has argued, “almost the whole world is postcolonial today, in the sense of either being colonized, having been a colonizer or having been colonized, whether literally, or ‘only’ culturally and economically” (“Heterogeneity” 48). As I understand the concept of transculturality as proposed by Welsch, transculturality suggests a focus on the process of how culture forms independently from notions of separated cultural spheres only. In this way, this theory can be used as method of inquiry equally into culture anywhere in the world, bound or unbound by the concept of nation or tribe. I think it is important to engage with this theory through (micro-) research and trace the marks of such a process in specific communities in order for scholarship to advance. For me personally, it happens to be that I seek to understand the nation-less culture in Taiwan specifically, so I bring this theory to bear on the analysis of the formation of culture in Taiwan through its cinema in order to establish whether the theory could be verified to apply for Taiwan culture, showcased by TNC. And I do so without any pretense of cultural ideology or judgment of value in this.

I want to expressly underscore here the importance of realizing that the concept of hybridity without context of dissolution of the distinction between own-ness and foreign-ness, meaning hybridity that has not progressed to the level of transculturality will by definition be limited to a two-dimensional

approach of intermixed culture. Such a concept is constrained by its foundation in dualism and will continuously dwell in a state of confused identity with respect to the relationship between the elements of culture that are involved. When we mix cultural elements with a mindset of distinction between these elements as to how we value them, we will remain in a space where we maintain separate spheres of appreciation and identification, a thinking quagmired in boundaries and nodes of interactions between separated cultural spheres across artificial borders. This will furthermore entail that the academic discourse on a phenomenon like TNC and the use of language in this cinema that rests on the concept of hybridity only, will lose itself in a house of mirrors of interchangeably used terms that actually mean different things. As an example of this, I can refer to the discussion of TNC by Wan-ju Wang. Wang refers to TNC as a product of transnational cinema, which he then defines as “a form of border-crossing” (25) that is “cross-cultural and intercultural” (23). In his conclusion, Wang describes the movement of TNC as “a gradual intercultural filmmaking practice” that has “historically demonstrated Taiwan’s ambivalence toward cultural hybridity,” and that is a “transnational movement” (358-59). So here we see concepts such as border-crossing or transnational, intercultural, cross-cultural, and cultural hybridity, used more or less as interchangeable or interdefinable, even though each of these concepts has its own role to play in the arena of meaning-making as to defining specific ways of cultural formation. I argue that this way of presenting only leads to more confusion. There is good reason that Berry has called for a “rigorous interrogation of the transnational” further to this tendency to tag all kinds of transborder cinematic phenomena as “transnational” without further elaboration (“Transnational”). For this exact reason therefore and to elaborately clarify the specific character of TNC as borderless transcultural cinema, I have similarly chosen to focus my discussion in this paper on the “rigorous interrogation” of the transcultural in TNC. And I present the result in this paper as an outcome of an exploration of borderlessness.

The Case of Taiwan New Cinema: A Cinema Marked by the Process of Borderless Transculturality

Some Essential Background: Taiwan Society Development in a Nutshell

Having given an introduction to the theory of transculturality, it is time to bring the discussion into focus on the main argument of this paper and examine whether the society in Taiwan as presented in TNC shows the traces

and nature of transculturality. This process of tracking will pre-suppose some awareness of the recent history of Taiwan. However, to avoid ennui to a Taiwanese readership, I will refer to other sources for any historical overview of the backdrop of this discussion and description of the main historical periods of Taiwan.

Generally speaking, however, it can be said that it shows from Taiwan's history that the people living in Taiwan over time and especially since five centuries ago, have received, absorbed, and brought with them, many different cultural impulses. It would go well beyond the scope of this paper to examine all aspects of culture in Taiwan. So I propose to focus on one major cultural element that is of great importance for culture in general and possibly even more so in Taiwan, which is the element of language. There are three major obvious reasons why I suggest this specific marker. Firstly, generally speaking the element of language is highly indicative to determination of culture. Language is one of the elements specified by Herder himself as such and to say that language and culture are extremely interconnected is surely kicking in an open door as one would say in Dutch phraseology. In many fields like anthropology, sociology, and linguistics, it is widely accepted that language is the foremost expression of culture and that culture is, in its turn, shaped by language. This makes language as a cultural element an easy choice to function as a yardstick for transculturality in Taiwan society. In modern day Taiwan, people speak a cocktail of languages. There are the official administration languages of Mandarin Chinese, Taiyu, Hakka and various indigenous languages. English is spoken to some extent in some environments. And with the recent influx of Southeast Asian workers and maids into Taiwan, languages like Malay, Indonesian, Thai, and other Southeast Asian languages have been on the rise. Language is a crucial cultural element in how people from their youth experience their world and develop their ways of life. The examination of this cultural element is particularly suited for Taiwan, as Taiwan shows a very fluid language use among all people. Secondly, language is extremely relevant in film naturally, and the more so in TNC where different languages are apparently used interchangeably, a phenomenon which is of great relevance for the argument of this paper. Thirdly and also more importantly for the specific situation in Taiwan, this cultural element has been in the center of the cultural struggle between the local language speakers and immigrated Han Chinese Mandarin speakers ever since the Kuomintang (KMT) established itself in Taiwan. The first thing the KMT did after taking over control from the Japanese was to make illegal all speaking and writing of Japanese in Taiwan and make Mandarin Chinese the official language. This affected mostly the educated elites of Taiwan, as the education during the Japanese colonial period

was entirely focused on the Japanese language. Suddenly, scholars, writers, and reporters were left without a language. The need for expression by the people in their local language was brought to cinematic culture in the development of Taiyu film in the 1950s and 1960s, of which I will speak briefly later in the analysis of film. The KMT felt that the local culture and its language-scape were undesirable and that people in Taiwan were not Chinese (in the sense as considered expedient by the KMT) enough. Therefore, the KMT government developed a policy of “re-education” in the later 1960s and 1970s, promoting Mandarin Chinese language use and adoption of more Confucian values. So, language became one of the pillars of this so-called “re-education policy” for the express purpose of making Taiwanese people more Chinese.

And more to the point even, the KMT government decided to use cinema as a vehicle for this re-education. The government established major cinema production companies dedicated to produce and distribute feature films in Taiwan in the Mandarin language, which became a genre of Taiwanese cinema called Healthy Realism (Hong, “Historiography”; Horng): “Realism” because it was inspired by the new realism in cinema that had arisen from Italy; and “Healthy” because its purpose was to extol “the virtues of altruistic humanism, the fulfillment of civic duty, and the rectifying capabilities of Confucian propriety” (Horng 28). The development of TNC, of which Hou Hsiao-hsien (three of whose films I will feature in my analysis) is an important proponent, was for a major part a response to this healthy realism cinema. In a way, it could be questioned whether the re-education attempt by the KMT government has proven successful in actually transforming the people in Taiwan into Chinese. In hindsight, maybe it is more likely that the KMT has merely given the people in Taiwan a bigger palette to choose cultural colors from. This choice of cultural colors as to language has only been reinforced by the current Taiwan National Government. The government passed laws to recognize Indigenous Languages and the Hakka language as national languages in June 2017 and January 2018 respectively. It also passed a bill on December 25 2018 to do this equally for all local languages, including this time Hokkien (or “Taiyu”) and even sign language. On top of this, the government has announced that it wants to introduce English as second main language. This is a process of formalization of the development of the mixed culture in Taiwan that I have described above. And it is therefore the purpose of this paper to attempt to show this process more concretely through the analysis of language use in TNC as proposed hereafter.

Language in Connection between Taiyu Pian and Taiwan New Cinema

Before I enter into the analysis of use of language in TNC from a transcultural perspective, it is important to mention that the use of local (non-Mandarin Chinese) language(s) like Taiyu and Hakka is generally considered one of the main characteristics of TNC in general (Zhang; Wang Wan-ju 62). In particular Hou Hsiao-hsien, as one of Taiwan's main directors and one of TNC's founding fathers, is considered to be the outstanding example of this and, through his use of multiple languages in almost every one of his films, is said to "mark out Taiwan as a space crisscrossed by a specific and intricate network of nuanced and subtle differences" (Berry, "Nation" 57). It needs to be remarked a priori that the use of local language in itself is however not exclusively the domain of TNC. On the contrary, it is an essential part of early Taiwan cinema as well, the period from the end of the Second World War until the start of Healthy Realism, all the way through the 1950s and 1960s. In this first main period of Taiwanese cinema where, in fact, the use of language is also a constitutional element is the period in which local film production took its earliest flight. It is the era of what has been called the *Taiyu pian*, meaning films featuring the use of the local Taiyu language. This period could be called the springboard from which TNC took jump two decades later because of this main characteristic. Yeh Yueh-yu and Darrell William Davis also call this period "The Golden Age of Taiwanese Film" (19), or even two Golden Ages, as they make a distinction between the period from 1956 to 1959 with 176 Taiyu films made and the period from 1960 to 1969, with at least 800 films produced. The Taiyu films are generally characterized linguistically by the use of the Taiyu language, stylistically by a mix of commercial narratives from all over the world, and in scale by their small budgets and reasonably low production value. As Yeh and Davis point out, the fact that these films are made in the local language is indicative of the audience they were intended for, the local people who had just come out of fifty years of Japanese rule and were eager to learn about the world that was coming at them with the full speed of post-war development (17). The style and storytelling of the films draw heavily from varied sources, including Chinese opera, wuxia tradition, and Western literature and popular culture icons. For example, one of the first big hits of the genre was the film *Brother Wang and Brother Liu Tour Taiwan* (Hsin Lee, 1956) and this film was very much inspired by the then immensely popular American comic duo Laurel and Hardy. The story derives its comedy mostly from the typical funny mix-ups that Laurel and Hardy specialize in. The list of this type of films is long, including but not limited to *Tarzan and Treasure* (1965), *Laurel and Hardy 007* (1967),

and *Arabian Nights* (1963): the titles speak for themselves. There is also *The Bride from Hell* (1965), which is a remake of *Jane Eyre* with a twist of Hitchcock's *Rebecca* (Yeh and Davis 23). The film that more or less marks the end of the era of Taiyu films is also one of the genre's most pronounced examples: *Back to Anping Harbor* (Wu Feijian, 1972).

The story of *Back to Anping Harbor* is based on one of the Western tradition's archetype narratives, the *Madama Butterfly* theme, be it vehemently localized. In this case Tainan City's Anping Harbor replaces Nagasaki, Japan and a Dutch ship doctor, Dr. Daley, replaces Lieutenant Pinkerton of the US navy. The choice for the Dutch nationality of the foreigner (even though he looks very Taiwanese) is obviously historical, considering the Dutch presence in Tainan during the seventeenth century. Yet the choice of name remains dubious, as Daley is very clearly not a Dutch name and sounds indeed, again, very American. Dr. Daley and local girl Xiuqin fall in love, naturally against the wishes of her parents. Their happiness is however disturbed by a Japanese-looking official who orders Dr. Daley to leave. Not knowing that Xiuqin is pregnant, he obeys the order and leaves. Even though he promises his love to return, he does not. Xiuqin then gives birth to a daughter, Kim, whom Xiuqin raises by herself, before she dies early. In the film we see a scene in which Kim is teased by local boys for her "red" hair; they even throw mud at her. Yet Kim is not impressed and fights back. She is quite a strong character, it seems. When she grows up, she finds a boyfriend from Taipei who wants to leave for studies in America, bringing reoccurrence of theme to the story. The language used throughout the film is Taiyu, even though several of the characters are foreign. All the actors are Taiwanese, even Dr. Daley. The film was produced at the moment in time when Taiwan was in an international political crisis, with its ousting from the UN and the United States shifting its allegiance from Taiwan to the PRC. So even though the film seems to be just a family melodrama, it has a deeper layer of cultural meaning: what will be the position of Taiwan in the world? The mix of local elements (language, actors, meanings) with international narrative elements in the film points to what Hong Guo-juin calls "a hybrid nature of its generic genealogy" when he talks of the Taiyu film in general (*Taiwan Cinema* 9). Hong characterizes the Taiyu films by their "vernacular hybridization," a cultural mix.

The period of time of the Taiyu film is also a period of what Yeh and Davis call "parallel cinemas," being the phenomenon of two linguistically diverse cinemas developing simultaneously in Taiwan (16). One of the reasons why the Taiyu films were so prolific was that the KMT government at first did not pay much attention to film as a medium of education. Even though the KMT

had an official anti-Taiyu language use policy and promoted Chinese Mandarin as the new official language, the KMT did not enforce this policy much when it came to people going to see movies. In the beginning, the few Mandarin Chinese language films that were made were meant mostly for the immigrant Chinese audience, consisting of the soldiers of the KMT army and their entourage, who fled to Taiwan together with the ROC Government in 1949. The Taiyu films served a totally different, local, audience. This all changed in the mid-1960s, when the KMT decided to push the production of Mandarin Chinese language films as a means of popularization of its policies of modernization and in particular, of its policy of re-education of the Taiwanese in traditional Chinese culture, as mentioned above. This move led to the demise of the Taiyu films and the arrival of the genre of Healthy Realism that would dominate Taiwan cinema and establish Mandarin Chinese as the main cinematic language for the two decades to follow. From a language perspective, this meant that the Taiwanese people were forced to accept a new foreign language as their official language, firstly in administration, and from there also on the screen.

The main reason why I elaborate here on Taiyu pian and its language use is that I suggest that the stage of culture formation in Taiwan that is marked by that era's cinema of Taiyu pian is truly a stage of hybridity of cultural elements that precedes and sets the stage for the arising of the profundity of loss of distinction between own-ness and foreign-ness that, in my argument, marks TNC. In my view, the Taiyu pian compare to TNC, as hybridity relates to transculturality. As Wang Chun-chi argues in his exploration of the affinities and differences between Japanese cinema and Taiyu pian in the period after the Second World War, "*Taiyu pian* did not ideologically intend to create a self-identity by strategically reversing European colonial discourse as in the case of the Brazilian Cinema Novo, nor did it emblemize the mimesis of otherness. Nevertheless, Taiyu pian fused and hybridized its native cultural specificities with foreign elements" (76). During that time, cinema in Taiwan was greatly influenced by the major cinema of Hollywood, Japan, and Hong Kong. The Taiyu pian films basically took themes, characters, and narratives from many places and experimented with localization thereof. But they did not seek to achieve or even depict a sense of loss of the distinction between the origins of these foreign elements and the local ones. This already is showed in the titles of these films, where they explicitly acknowledge the foreignness of the cultural elements that were put into the mix: Tarzan, Laurel & Hardy, 007, and Arabian Nights are just a few examples, which I refer to above. The way that cultural elements were hybridized in Taiyu pian is more like an experimentation: how would Tarzan look in Taiwan? Or Madama Butterfly if she

were Taiwanese? And it was done in this way from a commercial perspective, to arouse the interest of the Taiwanese audience in local cinema by putting curiosities from far countries on display, somewhat in the way of the cabinet of curiosities promoted by Phineas T. Barnum in the nineteenth century in the USA. This process of hybridization is characterized by the maintaining of a certain distance in observation, rather than dissolution in identification as would be the case in transcultural settings and as is shown in TNC, as I will argue below. And yet in its own way, this process of (early) hybridization contributed very clearly to a lowering of the threshold to the introduction of foreign culture into Taiwanese people's cultural awareness and formed part of the dynamics of the process of negotiation with Western-originated modernization that engulfed Taiwan after that. This process of experimentation with localization of foreign elements resulted in a cinema that is "more likely to be either local or transnational than national" (Hong, *Taiwan Cinema* 62).

The Transcultural Use of Language in Taiwan New Cinema

Let me now turn the discussion to the examples of the actual use of language in TNC. To show how a mix of languages is applied in the everyday life of people in Taiwan and to examine whether this mix is of a transculturality nature by examining whether or not there is also the loss of distinction in ownness and foreign-ness, I suggest analyzing the narrativization of the borderless and interchangeable language use in five feature films produced in Taiwan by Taiwanese and for the Taiwanese audience. These films are *City of Sadness*, *A Time to Live/A Time to Die*, *The Best of Times*, *YiYi/A One and a Two*, and *Three Times*.

City of Sadness (Hou, 1989) is a historical benchmark feature by Hou Hsiao-hsien. The film sets a story of how a local family is trying to survive against the backdrop of the famous 2/28 incident in 1947, when the KMT Government arrested, imprisoned, and shot many thousands of Taiwanese and ushered Taiwan into the age of martial law. James Udden in his book *No Man an Island: The Cinema of Hou Hsiao-hsien* calls the film a cultural event without parallel, although he thereby mainly aims at the cultural historical value of the film and of the timing of release. Yet, this film is also all about language and how people manage a linguistic landscape that is constantly fluctuating, networked, hybridized, and dissolved into a non-discriminatory space (speaking in terms of Welsch). As the Japanese imperial rule ends in 1945 and the KMT is not yet fully settled into power in Taiwan, the Taiwanese people are experiencing a transition time in which they freely speak their local language while also

continuing to speak Japanese, as this has become their second skin language due to the rigorous educational efforts by the Japanese. When the Japanese left Taiwan, more than 80% of the Taiwanese were literate (in Japanese). In the film we see scenes where people converse freely with each other in Taiyu and also Japanese. When the KMT comes in, they require people to learn and speak Mandarin Chinese, yet other forms of Chinese are also spoken and understood. The language that is mostly spoken by the characters in the film is Taiyu. As such *City of Sadness* became one of the earliest post-martial law era feature films released in Taiwan, and certainly the most famous also outside of Taiwan, to have more than 30% of its dialogue in Taiyu, which was formally against the law at that time (even though it was not very strictly enforced and a few other films had been released previously with some local language use). Hou Hsiao-hsien managed to get away with this because he had been allowed to send a print directly from a Tokyo film processing lab for submission to the Golden Lion competition of the Venice Film Festival, due to time restrictions (Zhang).

Because of its historical setting and the use of a plethora of languages, including various Sinophone languages and Japanese, *City of Sadness* has been generally described as a film that contributed to the idea of nation-building and as such is part of a national cinema. Curiously enough, this argument has been used on the one hand by authors who seek to argue that it contributed to the cultivation of Taiwanese consciousness and identity (Wang Wan-jui 73, 76), and as such could be seen as part of Taiwan national cinema, and on the other hand, by authors who sought to appropriate the film to a national community based on the Chinese language, as a film that through its use of supposed dialects, “reaches below and beneath the level of the national, fortifies a strong feeling of regionalism, and articulates an ambivalent relationship with the discourse of the nation-state” (Lu and Yeh 6). It is clear that *City of Sadness* apparently creates ambivalence about its positioning towards the idea of nation-state, either as object or sense of nation. As Benedict Anderson has argued, the concept of nation-state is one that is “imagined,” meaning that it is in need of continuous creation in the minds of its people. In this, I also refer to the work of Ernest Gellner and Eric Hobsbawm, who have explicitly posited the nature of nations as unnatural inventions (Welsch, “TCF” 62-63). Gellner argues in 1964 already that the biggest mistake that people who discuss nationalism in any way can make is that they might suppose that nationalism were somehow natural: “The truth is, on the contrary, that there is nothing natural or universal about possessing a ‘nationality’” (150), claiming that nationalism is not in fact an “awakening of nations to self-consciousness,” but in reality “*invents* nations where

they do not exist” (168; emphasis original). Hobsbawm later reinforces such thought in his Introduction to the edited volume *The Invention of Tradition* by arguing that “the national phenomenon cannot be adequately investigated without careful attention to the ‘invention of tradition’” (14). This confusion on the nature of nationhood is also the reason for Welsch to reject nationality as a valid basis for cultural identity-formation (“TCF” 73). To Welsch, an individual’s cultural formation should not be determined by her/his nationality and consequentially, someone’s passport does not decide one’s cultural affiliation; nor should it be assumed that someone without a passport has no fatherland. Welsch insists on the detachment between passport and/or nationality on the one hand, and cultural identity on the other hand, especially where he posits that “freedom in cultural formation belongs among one’s basic rights” (“TCF” 73). From the transcultural perspective on how culture forms, it is very clear that nationhood should not be accepted as a denominator of culture, or of cultural identity. Ann Anagnost has rightly argued that nation is “an ‘impossible unity’ that must be narrated into being in both time and space,” and that “the very impossibility of the nation as a unified subject means that this narrating activity is never final” (2).

The crucial question then arises, whether or not *City of Sadness* really does (intend to) narrate the nation-state into our imagination, either as object or sense, or is something else happening? I would posit that the film is not trying to narrate nation-hood and I agree completely with Berry and Mary Farquhar’s analysis, when they argue that “Hou’s film serves as a counter-history beyond the nation-state” (“Speaking Bitterness” 117). It is of course true that the film clearly portrays the history of an event that has left Taiwanese with a collective trauma. And even though, as the authors mention, “Recovering the memory of this trauma clearly has the potential to be narrated as a wound in an alternative national historiographical project, the origins of modern Taiwanese national consciousness and, depending on future events, the birth of a Taiwan nation-state” (135), they also establish that *City of Sadness* is not narrated in a way that it postulates such woundedness (135). The authors remark that the film was expressly criticized in the period after its release for its “failure” to “clearly and explicitly present a Taiwanese nationalist perspective” (qtd. in Berry and Farquhar 136). According to the authors, the film resists “appropriation into either a nation-state or proto-nation-state perspective” (136). It does in fact do quite the opposite:

Instead of constructing “the people” and “the nation” as homologous, the film makes the connection between them tenuous; in *City of Sadness* the politics of nation-states involve the people, intrude upon their lives, organize them, and destroy them, but

cannot be attributed to them in the manner of linear, progressive national history that narrates the people as its agents. (136)

The authors bring the film into a different perspective, that of the “bitter experience of modernity,” and conclude that the film points “towards a future where the cosmology of the modern and the nation-state is no longer taken for granted” (138).

I argue that what is happening in *City of Sadness*, and in other TNC films alike, is the narration of the transcultural space, the cultural state that goes beyond nation-state. Of course the film presents a diversity of Sinophone languages and a hybridity of language use, but this language use does not function as a catalyst for the imagination of a nation. Contrary to the use of one local language in *Taiyu pian* as a part of a mix of various other cultural elements, the use of language here creates a space in between in itself. It is the space where language no longer narrates nation, but a sense of community that is by definition borderless, as there is no sense of separateness of nations connected to the various languages. Through this type of borderless language use, Hou Hsiao-hsien moves the narrative from a hybrid space into the next level, a transcultural space.

One of the best examples where this encounter happens is given in a scene from *City of Sadness*. It is a full two minutes and thirty seconds, starting at the 1 hour and 15 minutes and 25 seconds runtime mark and it has a lot to say about the cultural backdrop of Taiwan society. In the scene we see a gathering of people from various localities speaking in as many Sinophone languages. There is of course the protagonist, First Brother, who is from Taiwan and speaks *Taiyu*. He has an assistant who is from Hong Kong and speaks Cantonese. They meet with three gangsters, one of whom is from Hong Kong as well, while the other two are from Shanghai and speak Shanghainese. Each speaks his own language: First Brother opens the talk in *Taiyu* and a brief exchange of words takes place where efforts are made to translate the essence of each other's talk, considering that people from different regions of China have gathered. But soon it shows that in fact people still seem to know what is being said and they grasp meanings even without the translation. Especially First Brother seems to know what is going on and what is said in Cantonese, without him needing translation, right in that crucial moment in the scene where First Brother tells his translator to shut up and proceeds to bring up his proposal to settle the matter at hand. And he does so again in *Taiyu*. And again it is obvious that the gangsters know what he is saying even though the assistant briefly translates his talk. In this scene we see the naturalness with which people in Taiwan handle various languages. They are comfortable with each other speaking their own languages and

knowing the meanings. The translation seems like a matter of formality only, a kind of back-up in case any misunderstandings might arise.

Another good example from *City of Sadness* of how people seem familiar with, and especially non-judgmental about, a mix of languages being spoken at the same time, is the second story line in the film which concerns the youngest brother of the family, who is a mute and converses in writing only, including with his wife to be, who is a nurse at the local hospital and is trained to speak in Japanese. The director shows here a very special mix of language use, including the language of silence. There are two scenes in the film where the youngest brother and his girlfriend are together with the girlfriend's brother and his intellectual friends, who talk about independence for Taiwan. They gather and speak in Taiyu, while he and his girlfriend attend silently, listening to music and conversing with each other in writing, likely using Japanese. One of the two scenes plays in a restaurant and ends with the friends standing up, opening the windows and singing a Chinese song in Mandarin about going back to the homeland, knowing that there are Chinese officials or soldiers in another part of the restaurant, who will be able to hear them. They seem at ease with conversing in Taiyu, but then singing in Mandarin Chinese. It is important to note that the film is released in 1989, two years after the lifting of the martial law in Taiwan. It is remarkable that, even though the KMT had tried all its efforts to replace Taiyu by Mandarin Chinese, as soon as there is some form of freedom to use their local language(s), Taiwanese people take it. Additionally, the mixed use of languages is shown here by both ordinary people and intellectuals, singing popular songs, making it clear that the foreign-ness of different languages has disappeared in all levels of society, and is comprehensive, as is proposed in the idea of transculturality.

A similar use of language can be found in two other films that I briefly want to mention here, which are *A Time to Live, A Time to Die* (1985), again by Hou Hsiao-hsien, and *The Best of Times* (2002), by Chang Tso-chi. The film *A Time to Live, A Time to Die* is the second installment of the director's semi-autobiographical coming of age trilogy, in which he narrates his experience of growing up in Taiwan in a family that migrated from China to Taiwan when he was at the age of two. His parents spoke their original Hakka dialect exclusively, while he himself spoke Taiyu. The film describes part of his teenage period and tries to show us how the reality of a hybrid-lingual space feels, as it is pushed beyond a state of fluidity only. To exemplify again, there is a scene in the film that plays out the day before the oldest sister of A-ha (Hou Hsiao-hsien's counter-ego in the film) gets married. It is a scene that starts with an exterior shot of the outside view from their home's window on a rainy day. The sound of

raindrops falling then gives way to the sound of A-ha's voice as he is singing a song in Taiyu. We see A-ha staring out of the window. As A-ha is singing, his mother is inside reminiscing about the happy old days in China speaking Hakka. The older sister who is also there then shouts to A-ha to stop singing the song, and she does so in Mandarin Chinese. There is no doubt that the various family members know the meanings of what they each are talking about. It is a domestic scene that shows that the family members are comfortable speaking different languages while knowing that they will be understood nevertheless, at least basically.

In *The Best of Times*, Chang Tso-chi follows Hou Hsiao-hsien's tradition of focusing on "ethnic diversity, ordinary living experience and translanguaging practice" (Wang Wan-jui 117). Just as in *A Time to Live, A Time to Die*, we see protagonists who have different ethnic background and speak various Sino-phone languages, but still manage to understand each other very well and particularly treat this situation as the normal state of life. The film focuses on two care-free cousins, Wei and Jie, who want to escape their dysfunctional families living in a rundown urban neighborhood across from each other in a small ally. In the opening scene of the film, Chang Tso-chi shows us the ordinary domestic lives of these two youngsters. Wei comes from a family in which no Taiyu is spoken, only Hakka and Chinese Mandarin. Jie's father is an army veteran from China who is enraged with the government for having forgotten him. As the camera pans through the house, we meet all the family members as they hang out and interact with each other and do their small daily things in the house. They speak different languages and yet seem in perfect understanding of each other. Wang Wan-jui calls this use of language a "crossing of linguistic borders" (95), but in fact there are no borders to cross here. The domestic scenes that we are observing in these two latter films are microcosms representing the ordinary life situations that are common in Taiwan. People speak various languages to each other and still understand each other's meanings. They even practice translanguaging, as they mix several languages as they speak, notably Taiyu or Hakka, and Mandarin Chinese, and sometimes even English. This is why this type of language use in TNC is so easily recognizable and marks its transcultural character.

Another film that I want to discuss and analyze on its use of language, is *Yi Yi/A One and a Two* (2000) by director Edward Yang. The film is a family story set in Taipei, and shows how a middle-class small family goes through turbulent life events over a period of maybe six to eight months, caught between a wedding and a death. The film is a very good example of Taiwan's new realism in filmmaking. It shows ordinary people leading ordinary lives. The events and

the ways of life shown around those events are very much in accordance with how things are really done in Taiwan. Family and its traditions in the culture of Taiwanese people, including what language is spoken, is the major theme of the film. The original title also refers to this: in literal translation it says “One One” and this seems more correct than what the formal English title makes of it. The family that the story circles around is a standard modern family with parents, an older daughter and a younger son. They live together, but seem to be connected only by the shared living space, which they do not seem to share that much even. They function as one next to one. An important part of the theme of the film is the use of language by the family members. The father speaks Taiyu, even when spoken to in Mandarin Chinese. The others in the film speak Mandarin Chinese, except for a Japanese business partner the father meets with whom he speaks English. The story focuses mostly on the father figure and his struggle to keep his morality in business while trying to keep his family afloat.

I believe the same concept of simultaneous struggle can be applied to the use of language. Living with two or three different languages in various layers of society is the norm for the father and his children. There is a constant process of translation going on in his life and in the lives of the people around him. But it is a process of translation that is fluent and implicit. The protagonist does not halt the conversation at any time to deal with translating between what the other says and his responses, nor does his partner in conversation. Both partners in the conversation understand each other and respond to each other as if they are engaged in an exchange within the framework of one and the same language. So this space of exchange is by nature not a space marked by borders, but on the contrary, by openness and borderlessness. This is exactly the experience of dissolution between own-ness and foreign-ness related to language that marks transculturality as a state of cultural formation that goes beyond mere hybridity. For the children, the feeling seems mixed. At home, Taiyu prevails, but everywhere else, especially at school, but also at music lessons or dealing with a first tentative boyfriend, they use Mandarin Chinese. Such hybrid use of languages generally is a very common situation for the Taiwanese, not only currently, but also for several generations all through the time of the Japanese rule, when Taiyu was still spoken at home, again clearly showing how a transcultural and borderless hybridized mix of cultural elements works and how people from their youth grow into this naturally. In this way, “Yang’s *YiYi* can be understood on a much more global level” (Wang Wan-jui 335). The same is also shown in *A Time to Live, A Time to Die*, where A-ha more or less fluidly grows up to being present in a borderless linguistic space, a process which helps him to find his sense of community in Taiwan.

The last film that I want to discuss in this respect is *Three Times* (2005), by Hou Hsiao-Hsien. *Three Times* is a triptych about the promise of love, a theme that the director also works on in some of his other movies. Cut into three stories, spread over three different times in Taiwan history, the director lets the two protagonists dance around each other like two butterflies on a summer breeze. The first story is set in 1966 in the south of Taiwan and is called "Time for love," but it is left uncertain whether the two lovebirds will actually see their romance fulfilled. The end of the segment shows the two timidly clasping hands in the rain, waiting for a shared car that will take him to Taipei, so that he can resume his military service. Who knows if they will see each other again? The second story moves back to 1911, the time of the Wuchang uprising, showing the hard-to-fulfill love between a courtesan and her customer, a revolutionary activist. It is called "Time for freedom," both for the people and for Taiwan, but neither seem to be able to achieve actualization of the promise. The third story moves up to modern-day Taipei and shows young people lost in city life. The section is called "Time for youth," but it does not make it really clear what time youth is in for. Freedom? Love? Neither are seemingly achieved.

Love. Freedom. Youth. 1966. 1911. 2005. The sequencing is non-linear, but if the acts were taken sequentially in time, they would very neatly reflect the development of the use of language by the Taiwanese over such a time period. The act from 1911 is treated like the early silent movies, with actors apparently speaking, but which language they use and what they say is left for the viewer to wonder about. The interludes with the written parts to explain the story are written in Mandarin Chinese. The singing that is done by the courtesan is also in Mandarin Chinese, yet adapted to Taiwanese style. During that time however, the official spoken language, especially by intellectuals and journalists, would have to be Japanese. Maybe the use of Chinese is explained by the fact that the male protagonist is a revolutionary, supporting the democratic uprising in China, hoping that a freed China would give support to Taiwan to oust Japanese rule. The second act in time, 1966, shows young people in the south of Taiwan, speaking Taiyu. Again this shows how the use of language has been hybrid, because people would still use Taiyu among themselves, even though during that time the KMT Government had already started its effort to re-educate the Taiwanese people in using Mandarin Chinese. Another interesting point is that the music that the protagonists listen to on the radio is the English popular music of the time. English language songs are also woven into the soundtrack, like "Rain and Tears" by Aphrodite's Child (1968) and "Smoke Gets in your Eyes" by the Platters (1958). As time moves on another fifty years, we find ourselves in 2005 Taipei. Now the young people in the film mainly speak

Mandarin Chinese. But when the time comes to express oneself creatively, it is done in English. The girl who is the main character in the act is a nightclub singer who writes her own songs. And does so in English. Does the film suggest a development over time of the impact of languages in Taiwan: from Japanese/Taiyu/Mandarin Chinese, to Taiyu/English, to Mandarin Chinese/English?

There is another important observation to make that arises from *Three Times* and how Hou Hsiao-hsien features the use of language to narrate the transcultural atmosphere in Taiwan. The structure of the film into three episodes, where each episode shows the same two people representing different characters in various milieus through time, can be argued to be representative for the phenomenon that for various people, the linguistic landscape within the same society can be different from other people. And that even for the same people, the use of language can be different in various situations. The characters in the film adapt their use of language to the people whom they interact with or according to the environment they find themselves in, as people in Taiwan would (try to) do all the time.

Naturally, Taiwanese people will have been influenced by the needs of modernization, including the need to include new languages in their cultural mix. It is however not just the learning of foreign languages as a kind of second language that can be used when meeting with foreigners or their culture. As is shown in the TNC films mentioned above, the use of different languages in Taiwan goes beyond this. According to Wang Wan-jui, “TNC’s director creates a new type of cultural space” (353) and I argue this is apparent from the examples that I have discussed here. It is a transcultural space that reflects the process of how people in Taiwan actually mix various languages into their culture, depending on where in society they move. As such, I argue that the use of language in Taiwan meets the elements that transculturality talks about. And as language is generally considered code for programming cultural awareness, people in Taiwan fluidly move into this culturally borderless space that is their transcultural community, and become aware of a sense of identity, or Taiwanese-ness even, that is not necessarily connected to the object or sense of nation. And is this not the true effect of glocalization?

Conclusion

Society in Taiwan is in a fast-paced development of finding out about culture and identity. People are seeking out cultural elements that they feel

constitute “Taiwaneseness,” without necessarily caring about where a cultural impulse was received from in particular, or the process of when and how it may have been integrated into the current mix. This process of hybridization is in fact not static and ongoing. For Taiwan, the hybridization process of cultural elements also applies. Whatever may be of the past or current political situation in Taiwan, however, and even though the role of the state in this process may be a good subject of further research, it seems already clear from the mere study of TNC as proposed here and as I have argued in this paper, that Taiwan society is a community that features a borderless linguistic space and bears the marks of the process of transculturality. As Welsch has theorized, it may be safely assumed that every society in this world develops in one form of hybridization or another and each to its own extent is a transcultural society. Yet as I have argued, such theoretical assumption cannot be definitely established for any society without prior engagement and verification of the theory with the actual process of formation of culture at hand. With this paper then, I hope to have convincingly established that based on the review of the cultural element of language as narrativized in several important films of TNC, culture in Taiwan as presented in TNC is determined through a process that goes beyond mere hybridization, a process of transculturality; a comprehensive cultural networking and hybridization of cultural elements originally foreign and own, as a result of which the people have lost the distinction between foreign-ness and own-ness of such elements, as prescribed by the theory of Welsch.

Having established the same, I acknowledge that there is still more to do on possible future research. For example, how would the process of transculturality in Taiwan compare to that in other international communities? How pervasive is the nature of transculturality in the culture in Taiwan, in the sense that one can question whether there can be any elements of culture found that do not bear the mark of transcultural hybridity? Or maybe historically within Taiwanese transcultural development, comparisons could be sought between nineteenth and twentieth century colonial and twenty-first century post-colonial Taiwan. For now however, I want to conclude with the assumption that it will suffice here that this paper has opened the view on the process of transculturality in Taiwan and that TNC can arguably be redefined as Borderless Transcultural Cinema from Taiwan. And it seems that this process has not just started in modern times, but precedes the trends of globalization and glocalisation, just as it is equally apparent that it is still ongoing.

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重新定義臺灣新電影： 臺灣之無邊界跨文化電影

摘要

欲了解一個民族的文化，研究其電影是個不錯的起始點。自從十年前左右來到臺灣居住，筆者即不斷試圖了解臺灣文化，尤其嘗試找到一個足以說明荷蘭人在臺居住經驗的詞彙。在偶然接觸到跨文化(transculturality)這個概念後，筆者才了解到自己一直以來將文化錯誤地理解為是特定國家、族群的同種、同質及典型的某些元素。筆者主張臺灣社會是一個社群，透過跨文化的運作，證明了非國家(non-nation-ness)的觀念，並從1980年代到2000年早期，率先展現在其第一波及第二波新電影的浪潮中。以具臺灣新電影(Taiwan New Cinema)特色的影片為例，筆者將檢視以語言為主要文化的元素，並分析臺灣這段時期的發展。本論文首先介紹韋爾施(Wolfgang Iser)所闡述的跨文化概念，接著將討論臺灣社會中的語言現象，並闡明呈現在臺灣新電影中的文化觀如何詮釋跨文化概念。筆者將從臺灣新電影中舉出幾部具代表性的影片為例子，藉本論文重新定義臺灣新電影為臺灣出品，且無邊界(borderlessness)之跨文化電影，並且透過對臺灣電影的研究及跨文化之視角，筆者欲在如何定義臺灣新電影，並在臺灣文化、社會之研究上，略盡綿薄之力。

關鍵字：臺灣文化、臺灣新電影、跨文化、無邊界、跨文化電影