

A cross-regional and cross-cultural study of Wong Kar Wai's films

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◆ Background:

- Wong Kar Wai (王家衛/ウォン・カーウアイ) is a famous Hong Kong film director. He grew up in the New Wave of Hong Kong cinema. However, his films are different from other Hong Kong films. Previously, researchers regarded his films as postmodern films. With the concept of postmodernism gradually withdrawing from the historical trend in the studies of cinema, his films need to be redefined.
- Now the studies on Hong Kong films have entered in a bottleneck stage. Traditional researchers who study the history of Hong Kong cinema use the methods of macro perspective. If we continue to apply the same methods, it is difficult to make a breakthrough. Through the studies of a certain director, I want to understand the position of Wong Kar Wai, as a Hong Kong director, in the context of Hong Kong cinema.

◆ Objectives:

- To deepen the master thesis which is about the influence of the New Wave on Wong Kar Wai and the French acceptance of his films. And to make a more in-depth and systematic study from the perspective of local, cross East Asia and Europe. At the end of the study, to achieve the results of "a cross-regional and cross-cultural study of Wong Kar Wai's films".
- To bring an innovation for the studies of Wong Kar Wai. To understand his position in Hong Kong cinema, and to find which characteristics of his films are developed from others, and which are his original styles.
- Furthermore, to create a new method for studies of Hong Kong cinema, through a micro perspective, through a certain director, and to complement the studies of Hong Kong cinema history.

◆ Contents:

three parts: Wong Kar Wai's films in Japan, France and China

first part: Wong Kar Wai's films and Japan

- acceptance in Japan
- adaptation from Japanese novels: e.g. adaptation of 『向かい同士』 (小松左京) into *In the Mood for Love*, quotation of 『斜陽』 (太宰治) in *2046*, kissing scene in *Days of Being Wild* from 『ソウル・ミュージック・ラバーズ・オンリー』 (山田詠美), similar characters in *Chungking Express* and 『伊豆の踊子』 (川端康成) ...
- influence of Japanese films: e.g., influence of 『女が階段を上る時』 (成瀬巳喜男) and 『夢二』 (鈴木清順) on *In the Mood for Love*, lines quotation of 『子連れ狼 三途の川の乳母車』 (三隅研次) and reference of female characters from 『殺しの烙印』 (鈴木清順) in *Ashes of Time*, relationship between 『東京流れ者』 (鈴木清順) and *Days of Being Wild*...

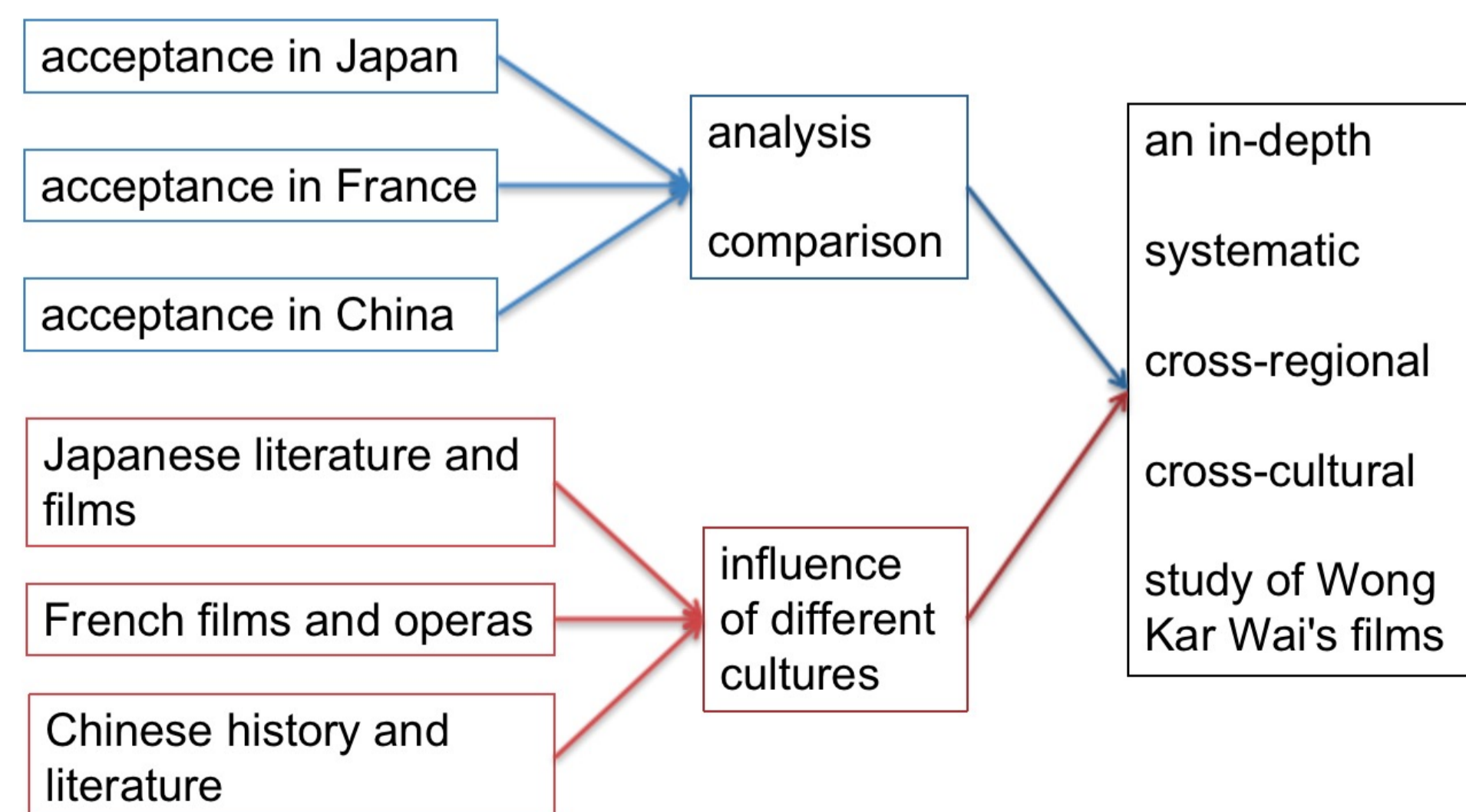
second part: Wong Kar Wai's films and France

- acceptance in France
- influence of French New Wave: Like the directors of the New Wave, Wong Kar Wai's good at making marginal characters the protagonists. The rootless life state of the characters is the very importance. E.g., similar scenes from *A bout de souffle* (Jean-Luc Godard) and *As Tears Go By*, lines quotation of *Bande à part* (Jean-Luc Godard) in *Days of Being Wild*...
- adaptation from French operas: e.g., relationship between *Carmen* (Georges Bizet) and *As Tears Go By* (original title: *Mong Kok Carmen*)...

third part: Wong Kar Wai's films and China

- acceptance in Mainland and Hong Kong
- inheritance and development from Hong Kong New Wave: Wong Kar Wai's early works showed similar bold visual expression in scenes and colors with Patrick Tam (譚家明), who is a representative of the Hong Kong New Wave, and regarded as the master of Wong Kar Wai.
- influence of Chinese literature: e.g., reference of characters from *Intersection*/對倒 (Liu Yichang/劉以鬯) into *In the Mood for Love*, adaptation of *Jiutu*/酒徒 (Liu Yichang/劉以鬯) into *2046*...

◆ Methods:



◆ Perspectives from other fields:

- literature theory,
- literature adaptation,
- opera appreciation,
- history rewriting...

◆ Main conclusions:

Wong Kar Wai's films are both local, modern, and international, which is the reason why he can get a high reputation in China and abroad.

Wong Kar Wai is very concerned about the living conditions and difficulties of young people in colonial Hong Kong. In that period, looking back is something everyone would do. But by looking back, he also presents the uncertainty of the future. His films are full of reflections on society and history. The influence of Japan and France is the key to distinguish his films from others. Under the influence of Japanese literature, the sense of destiny is stronger, and the personal struggle in society is more tragic. The influence of France on Wong Kar Wai is reflected in the artistic expression of his films. And the nostalgia of Wong Kar Wai's films comes from Chinese literature.