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THE ROUTLEDGE COMPANION TO ASIAN CINEMAS

Balancing leading scholars with emerging trendsetters, this *Companion* offers fresh perspectives on Asian cinemas and charts new constellations in the field with significance far beyond Asian cinema studies.

Asian cinema studies – at the intersection of film/media studies and area studies – has rapidly transformed under the impact of globalization, compounded by the resurgence of a variety of nationalist discourses as well as counter-discourses, new socio-political movements, and the possibilities afforded by digital media. Differentiated experiences of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic have further heightened interest in the digital everyday and the renewed geopolitical divide between East and West and between North and South. Thematized into six sections, the 46 chapters in this anthology address established paradigms of scholarship and viewership in Asian cinemas like extreme genres, cinephilia, festivals, and national cinema, while also highlighting political and archival concerns that firmly situate Asian cinemas within local and translocal milieus. Underrepresented cinemas of North Korea, Bangladesh, Laos, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, and Cambodia appear here amid a broader cross-regional, comparative approach.

An ideal resource for film, media, cultural, and Asian studies researchers, students, and scholars, as well as informed readers with an interest in Asian cinemas.

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THE ROUTLEDGE COMPANION TO ASIAN CINEMAS

Edited by Zhen Zhang, Sangjoon Lee, Debashree Mukherjee, and Intan Paramaditha

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CONTENTS

List of Figures *xi*
List of Tables *xiv*
Acknowledgments *xv*
List of Contributors *xvii*

Introduction: Trans-Asian Cinemas at Home in the World 1
Zhen Zhang, Sangjoon Lee, Debashree Mukherjee, and Intan Paramaditha

SECTION I
Cine-activism and Feminist Aesthetics **15**

Introduction 17
Zhen Zhang

1 A Screen in the Crowd: Film Societies and Political Protest in Bangladesh 21
Lotte Hoek

2 Genres of Ecofeminism: Women Filmmakers in India and the Environment 32
Sangita Gopal

3 Riding the Waves: An Interview with Yim Soon-rye 41
Chi-Yun Shin

Review Copy – Not for Redistribution
File Use Subject to Terms & Conditions of PDF License Agreement (PLA)

4 Through the Lens of South Korean Cine-feminism: *House of Hummingbird* (2018) and *Moving On* (2020) 52
Hyun Seon Park

5 Rewriting History, Changing the Story: An Interview with Anocha Suwichakornpong 62
Graiwoot Chulphongsathorn

6 Transnational Women's Cinema in Southeast Asia: Mouly Surya's *Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts* 70
Intan Paramaditha

7 Taiwan Queer Cinema, Marriage Equality, and Homo(trans)nationalism 82
Shi-Yan Chao

8 Love in Pacific Time: Asian Screen Culture in Vancouver 94
Helen Hok-Sze Leung

SECTION II
Mediating Place: Colonial, National, and Trans-Asian Imaginaries 105

Introduction 107
Debashree Mukherjee

9 What Is "Asian Cinema" in Japan?: Film and Political Economy in the 1940s 111
Daisuke Miyao

10 Filming Taiwan Between a Quest for Artistic Purity and Propaganda in the People's Republic of China: The Case of *Taiwan Wangshi* (*My Bittersweet Taiwan*, 2004) 123
Zhuoyi Wang

11 In the Name of Love: Screen Representations of Taiwan Indigenous Peoples (1920s–1940s) 133
Ting-Wu Cho

12 Desiring Nanyang, Nation, and Home: Fictions of Belonging in Two Rediscovered Postwar Films from Singapore 144
Elizabeth Wijaya

Review Copy – Not for Redistribution
File Use Subject to Terms & Conditions of PDF License Agreement (PLA)

13 Where Is Shangri-La? Imagining Kathmandu in Film 156
Dikshya Karki

14 Affective-Scape/ing in Zhang Lu's Inter-Asian Quartet 165
Ran Ma

15 Postcards from Russia: Left Discourse and Telugu Cinema 176
C. Yamini Krishna

SECTION III
Trans-Border Connections: Infrastructures and Desires 187

Introduction 189
Debashree Mukherjee

16 Media Topographies of East Asia: Cinema, Cables, Wirelessness, and the (Somewhat) Material Imaginaries of Territory 193
Alexander Zahlten

17 Looking Out and On the Move: Aesthetics of Infrastructure in Recent Singapore Cinema 202
Gerald Sim

18 North Korea's International Co-production Ventures: Nation and the Post-national 212
Hyangjin Lee

19 Trans-Asian Circuits of Cinema and Media Exchange Between Australia and Asia 224
Olivia Khoo

20 Global Stories, Local Audiences: Dubbing Netflix in India 233
Tejaswini Ganti

21 Webtoon-Based Korean Films on Netflix: Shifting Media Ecology in the Digital Platform Era 243
Dal Yong Jin

22 Exile at the Edges: Donald Richie at the Pinch Point Between Japan and the World 253
Markus Nornes

Review Copy – Not for Redistribution
File Use Subject to Terms & Conditions of PDF License Agreement (PLA)

23 Trans-Pacific Connection and *Cine Nikkei* in Peru: A Conversation 265
Zhen Zhang, Jimena Mora, and Talia Vidal

SECTION IV
Beyond Genre: Modes, Motifs, Memories **275**

Introduction 277
Intan Paramaditha

24 The Melodramatic Mode in Asian Cinema: Usmar Ismail's *Lewat Djam Malam* (After the Curfew) 281
Stephen Teo

25 Bong Joon-ho's *Parasite* as a Remake of Kim Ki-young's *The Housemaid*: Creating an Aesthetic Genealogy Within South Korean Cinema 291
Christina Klein

26 Melting the Iron Curtain: Political Immediacy, Metal-morphosis, and the Caricatured Western Leaders in Agitprop Animation in Socialist China, 1949–65 301
Daisy Yan Du

27 The "Mirrored" Cultural Revolution – The Geopolitical Making of Apolitical Hero in Chang Cheh's *The Assassin* 312
Raymond Tsang

28 The Vernacular Sonorities of the Memory Film in Southeast Asia: *Mysterious Object at Noon* (2000) and *Big Boy* (2012) 323
Philippa Lovatt

29 Global Aspirations/Local Affiliations: Exploring the Tensions of "Post-Crisis" Thai Cinema, 1997–2004 335
Rachel Harrison

30 Revisiting the Face Veil in Post-Pandemic Times: The Humane Visual Ethics of Indonesian Islamic Filmmaking 346
Alicia Izharuddin

31 Karma-Image; Insight-Image: On Buddhism and the Cinema 355
Victor Fan

Review Copy – Not for Redistribution
File Use Subject to Terms & Conditions of PDF License Agreement (PLA)

32 Personality and Morality in Screen Performance: Hong Kong Film Criticism and Social Reform of the 1920s 365
Enoch Yee-lok Tam

SECTION V
Independent Practice: Networks, Labor, and Voices at the Margins 377

Introduction 379
Intan Paramaditha

33 "Still Doing It Themselves, with a Little Help from Friends": Independent Filmmaking in Malaysia Two Decades Hence 382
Gaik Cheng Khoo

34 Slippers Outside the Door: An Annotated Interview with Tan Pin Pin 392
Sophia Siddique

35 Let's Love Hong Kong: Hyper-Density, Virtual Possibility, and Queer Women in Hong Kong Independent Film 404
Arnika Fuhrmann

36 Care in Filming, Change by Love 413
Shuting Li

37 Domestic Temporalities and Film Practice: Los Otros, Quezon City, and Forum Lenteng, Jakarta 425
Jasmine Nadua Trice

38 Unstable Pixels, Modular Selves: Digital Subjectivity in Chinese Independent Animation 434
Jinying Li

39 Experimentation and Transnational Influences: Documentary Film in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia 446
Eric Sasono

40 Filming Resistance: A Conversation with Deepa Dhanraj 456
Fathima Nizaruddin

Review Copy – Not for Redistribution
File Use Subject to Terms & Conditions of PDF License Agreement (PLA)

SECTION VI
Archives, Festivals, and Film Pedagogy **469**

Introduction 471
Sangjoon Lee

41 Festivalizations and Cultural Constructions of "Asian Cinema" 475
Anne Ciecko

42 Curating the City: The Urban Lens Film Festival 489
Subasri Krishnan

43 To Be Continued: Women Make Waves International Film Festival 496
Beth Tsai

44 Film Festival Journeys – Past, Present, Future: A Conversation with Roger Garcia 508
Thong Kay Wee and Sangjoon Lee

45 Reflection on Film Restoration, *Acculturatie* and Democracy: The Case Studies of *Lewat Djam Malam* and *Aladin* 519
Lisabona Rahman

46 Thai Film Archive and Early Thai Queer Cinema 529
Sanchai Chotirosseranee and Atit Pongpanit

Index *540*

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26

MELTING THE IRON CURTAIN

Political Immediacy, Metal-morphosis, and the Caricatured Western Leaders in Agitprop Animation in Socialist China, 1949–65

Daisy Yan Du

Socialist China under the leadership of Chairman Mao was often regarded as a period of closure, isolated from the rest of the world due to Cold War ideologies. As Michael Berry observes, the West (mainly America) almost acted like an absence in socialist live-action cinema after the eruption of the Korean War (1950–53). In films like *Shanggan ling* (Shanggan Ridge, 1956) and *Yingxiong ernü* (Heroic Sons and Daughters, 1964), American soldiers only assume a phantom existence, appearing and disappearing quickly without uttering a word on the battlefields. In the model opera film *Qixi Baihu tuan* (Raid on the White Tiger Regiment, 1972), American officials, played by Chinese actors with heavy makeup, are more visible, but their characterization is very flat due to anti-imperialism discourse at that time. Even after China began its cultural interactions with America in the late 1970s and early 1980s, America was still framed by "tropes of absence, distance, and invisibility" in Chinese films like *Lushan lian* (Love on Lushan, 1980) and *Muma ren* (The Herdsman, 1982) (Berry 2012, 553). Berry suggests a practical and ideological reason for this strategy of absence: (1) Chinese filmmakers could not afford to pay the high cost of American actors and location shooting in America, and (2) America was regarded as the imperialist enemy in socialist China and there was reluctance to acknowledge its presence (Berry 2012, 569).

When live-action films failed to represent the significant Other, animation seized the opportunity, represented the unrepresentable, and even dramatized it on screen. Prior, there had never been so many Chinese animated films portraying the capitalist West (especially America), which led to the rise of the international motif film genre (*guoji ticai pian*). As such, animation returned to its primitive role as special effects to achieve what live-action films could not do at the time.[1] The animated films that dared to show the Other allowed us to see how the capitalist West was imagined and visualized and to understand the Cold War culture from the unique perspective of animated cartoons.

Interestingly, the international motif film emerged almost simultaneously with the National Style in the late 1950s and early 1960s, when Chinese animation returned to traditional Chinese arts, folklore, and literature after emulating the Soviet style in the 1950s. While the National Style film featured folklore and legends rooted in the past, the international motif film captured contemporary international affairs like a snapshot. In terms of formal style, the National Style beheld a painterly quality, with elaborate background

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and meticulously designed characters inspired by traditional Chinese arts and aesthetics, while the international motif exhibited a modernist style, with minimal to no background, simplified and abstract cartoonish characters with just a few lines, and even still images, tables, and charts. Whereas the National Style film demonstrated a Chineseness, the international motif film tended to be de-Sinicized and exotic in both form and content (Du 2019, 125–28).

The international motif film has long been neglected in Chinese animation studies, which are preoccupied with National Style films, such as those done in ink-painting and papercutting animation that articulated a distinct Chinese aesthetics and identity. Foregrounding the genre of international motif film and the frequent caricature of Western leaders represented in these films, this chapter argues that the coldness of the Cold War ironically triggered an unprecedented, heated imagination of the West that melted the Iron Curtain, generating a Cold War Occidentalism, or the over-presence of the West in socialist animation.

Agitprop Animation

Many international motif films were agitprop animation, made quickly as propaganda in response to proximate international affairs. Animated filmmaking is labor-intensive and time-consuming; thousands of drawings with slight variations need to be photographed and animated frame by frame. As such, animation is often regarded as an unsuitable medium for portraying recent news and events as it takes too long to produce. In addition, animation is usually regarded as an art form of fantasy and thus a poor fit to portray pressing nonfiction events. Due to those factors, many Chinese animated films were about folklore, legends, fables, parables, and fairytales, fantastic and timeless stories that could be made without any urgency.

Chinese animation took on a new life in socialist China when animators began making many animated films in immediate response to current domestic and international political events, with the purpose of mobilizing the masses to participate in political campaigns and internalize communist ideologies. They called this new type of animation *zhengzhi gudong pian* (political agitprop animated film), *xuanchuan gudong pian* (propaganda agitprop animated film), or *manhua xuanchuan pian* (cartoon/caricature propaganda animated film). Often made with political urgency, these films usually adopted a minimalist style with simplified outlines and backgrounds. They frequently drew on the visual style of cartoons, caricatures, and posters and used many still pictures, photos, images, and even tables and charts to save time. Passionate voice-over narrations, slogans, mood music, and other sound effects were used to reinforce the direct political message. Although the contents, such as the characters, stories, and backgrounds, were based on recent events, they were frequently represented as exaggerated and distorted to such a degree that they became highly fantastic, magic, and satirical – a perfect combination of realism and fantasy. Collaged this way, many films lacked a coherent and well-crafted tight storyline, seeming more fragmentary and improvisatory. Likewise, commonly without clearly defined protagonists and antagonists, these films did not have the in-depth characterization that could lead to audience identification. Unlike the ordinary socialist animated films that targeted children, the target audience for agitprop animated films was adults who could understand the sophisticated political messages.

Agitprop animation was often regarded as a new genre that was born during the Great Leap Forward (1958–60), especially as the form emphasized speedy production, or a great

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leap forward, in animated filmmaking. With the making of a cel-animated film titled *Gan Yingguo* (Overtaking England, 1958), animators inaugurated a new genre in Chinese animation, including but not limited to *Bayue shiwu qing fengshou* (Celebrating the Harvest during the Mid-Autumn Festival, 1958), *Gechang zong luxian* (Praising the General Line, 1958), and *Da yuejin wansui* (Long Live the Great Leap Forward, 1959).

Departing from the agitprop animated films of the late 1950s about domestic matters (the Great Leap Forward in particular), agitprop animation of the early 1960s revolved around international issues (international motif film), especially American imperialism. Some of these films include *Yuanxing bilu* (Showing True Colors, 1960), *Yazhou renmin nuzhu wenshen* (The Asian People Expelling the God of Plague in Anger, 1961), *Zhichi Duomi'nijia renmin fandui wuqi qinlue* (Support Dominicans' Struggle against Military Invasion, 1965), *Zhichi Yuenan renmin dadao meiguo qinlue zhe* (Support Vietnamese's Struggle against American Imperialists, 1965), *Jiechuan Meidi hetan pianju* (Exposing the Peace Talk Swindle of American Imperialism, 1965), and *Weida de shengming* (A Great Statement, 1968).

In China in the early 1960s, a fantastic art form (animation) was used in a realistic way to document immediate political events and feature the capitalist West. At this same time, in America, a realist art form (television documentary) was used in a fantastic way (the adoption of Hollywood narrative and filmmaking strategies) to portray the communist Other (Curtin 1995, 177–96). In both cases, the ideological Other existed not only as a material and political reality, but also as a construct manipulated by different representational mechanisms.

Metamorphosis and Metal-morphosis in Early Agitprop Animation

Although international-motif agitprop animation flourished in the late 1950s and early 1960s, there were already early experiments of it in the late 1940s – when the Communist Party started its own film industry at the Northeast Film Studio in Changchun. To mobilize the masses, especially the People's Liberation Army, to fight against the Nationalist troops under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, Chinese animators made *Huangdi meng* (Dreaming to Be an Emperor, November 1947) and *Wengzhong zhuobie* (Capturing the Turtle in the Jar, December 1948), which were based on Hua Junwu's political caricature. *Dreaming to Be an Emperor* was a puppet animated film that criticized Chiang Kai-shek for bartering away the sovereignty of China to obtain weapons and support from the American government. *Capturing the Turtle in the Jar* portrays how Chiang Kai-shek, empowered by American weapons, is finally captured like a turtle by the triumphant People's Liberation Army (PLA) during the Civil War. These films were often screened for the PLA soldiers to marshal their fighting spirits right before they launched the battles against the Nationalists.[2]

Both *Dreaming to Be an Emperor* and *Capturing the Turtle in the Jar* frame America as the evil backstage manipulator of Chiang Kai-shek and the Civil War in China. They severely criticize America for its military support of the Nationalist Party in annihilating the communists. The American leaders are always depicted in military uniforms, stamped with words like "Marshall" and "US" or the symbol of an eagle, which clearly marks them as American. They are usually fat and robust, dwarfing the thin and small-figured Chiang Kai-shek. Aggressive, arrogant, condescending, and greedy, they often dominate the timorous Chiang Kai-shek and usurp the sovereignty of China. Based on cartoonist Hua Junwu's drawings, the images of these American leaders are caricatured, exaggerated, and distorted with a comic twist.

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The American leaders are often metonymically associated with metals and machines, thereby giving them a privileged hard edge in international relations. In *Dreaming to Be an Emperor*, when Chiang Kai-shek is in the dressing room, Marshall brings him a gift basket filled with metal weapons (military aircraft, tanks, and cannons) and gold coins. In exchange, Chiang Kai-shek gives Marshall the Sino-US Friendship and Mutual Assistance Treaty, signed by him on November 4, 1946. The treaty grants the US many privileges and benefits at the cost of China's sovereignty and dignity. When the transaction is done, Marshall assists Chiang to dress up as an emperor. Marshall sprays a special perfume (Democracy Brand, made in USA) on Chiang and gives him a smiling mask, which has a metal quality as well. Masqueraded by George Marshall, Chiang Kai-shek is transformed into a Peking opera emperor who is to perform on stage.

It is in the cel-animated *Capturing the Turtle in the Jar* that American leaders transform themselves into metals and achieve metal-morphosis during the Cold War. The film begins with an American military leader smoking a pipe in front of the iron gated military camp, stamped with a "Sino-American Cooperative Organization" sign. He is obese, tall, and robust, with a murderous look. Chiang Kai-shek, who is overshadowed by the American leader, wears a black cloak and approaches him cautiously. He bows to the American official and presents a scroll of paper to him with both of his hands. The American leader grabs the paper condescendingly and impatiently. The paper is a map of China, written with the words "the sovereignty of China." The American leader happily shakes hands with Chiang Kai-shek and opens the gate for him. Chiang Kai-shek takes off his hat, bows to him, and squeezes himself into the military camp. Later when Chiang Kai-shek is about to be defeated by the People's Liberation Army, the American leader watches with his telescope, transforms himself into a transport aircraft (Figure 26.1), and drops military supplies with parachutes to the Nationalists. His metal-morphosis represents America's shift to an iron fist diplomacy to coerce communism in the world.

In Chinese agitprop animated films of the Cold War, only men and powerful countries can achieve such metal-morphosis. Gender and nation interlock with each other in the discourse of power and domination. In a different context, Rosi Braidotti observes that in mainstream culture, the man is privileged to meta(l)morphoses into a machine, but "the woman seldom if ever metamorphoses into a machine," even in texts written by women themselves (Braidotti 2002, 234). This kind of literal and symbolic metal-morphosis can be

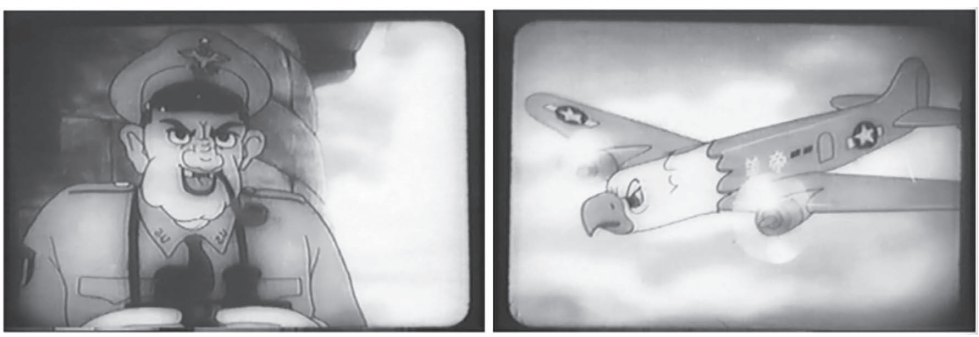

Figure 26.1 The American leader transforms into a transport aircraft, *Capturing the Turtle in the Jar*, 1948.

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dramatized in cel animation, a form that indulges in the violent transformation of outlines and body forms.

While the American leader's metal-morphosis suggests the hegemonic power of the American state, Chiang Kai-shek's metamorphosis into a degrading animal indicates the decline of the Nationalist Party. Metals and animals are thus positioned in a hierarchy of power relations. After the American leader, in the form of a transport aircraft, drops military supplies, Chiang Kai-shek and his soldiers eagerly grab these American weapons and try to fight back, but only to be defeated by the PLA soldiers. Chiang Kai-shek diminishes and transforms himself into a turtle, while the pillbox where he is hiding shrinks into his shell. A PLA soldier, whose size is now magnified and looks monumental, steps on the shell, and grabs him by the neck. By becoming a turtle, Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist Party are devalued into lesser beings. Only the PLA soldiers, what I call the "sublime figure of (in)animation," remain human and intact throughout the film. They cannot be over-animated with the animation principle of movement and plasmaticness, because to be animated means to be depowered. In contrast, America is becoming metal (metal-morphosis) and the Nationalist Party is becoming animal (metamorphosis). The violent bodily changes, whether elevating (metal-morphosis) or degrading (metamorphosis), are frequently channeled to the dehumanized and inhuman Other, whose political agency and power decrease with their increased physical movements and emotions (Du 2022).

The Metal-morphosis of American Presidents

American presidents frequently appeared in agitprop animated films in the first half of the 1960s. They were criticized for the oppression of their own people and their military aggression in the so-called Third World. They assumed unprecedented visibility in Chinese animated films, albeit, in reality, they were absent in China until President Richard Nixon's official visit in 1972. Among these international motif agitprop animated films, *Showing True Colors* (1960) was probably the most representative one. It was made in immediate response to President Dwight Eisenhower's Far East Trip (12–26 June 1960), which was conducted before he resigned in January 1961. Eisenhower planned to visit Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Taiwan, but he canceled his travel to Japan at the last minute due to the anti-American riots led by the Communist Party there. Eisenhower's Far East Trip, especially his state visit to Taiwan on 18–19 June, aroused great indignation in socialist China. *The People's Daily*, the mouthpiece of the Chinese communist government, published numerous essays to criticize Eisenhower's infringement of the sovereignty of China. As a special way to "welcome" and "see off" Eisenhower, dubbed by the Chinese Communist Party as the "God of Plague," Chairman Mao even ordered his armies in Fujian province to bombard Kinmen in Taiwan on the days when the American president came and left.

In this film, the American leader is again associated with metals and machines. At the beginning of the film, TV assumes a very prominent role for Eisenhower. In his office, Eisenhower is examining his military bases that surround the red communist areas on a world map. He then turns on the TV and sees footage from Asia in which many Asians are chasing an American soldier. He is soon surrounded by many red hands and cries for help. In Africa, local people are shown carrying two Western colonizers like pigs. Eisenhower turns off the TV in anger, and his face turns blue. He goes to sleep but is soon awoken, only to turn the TV on again and see the local people throwing tomatoes at Americans in Latin America. Eisenhower faints and collapses.

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Eisenhower's connection with TV comes as no surprise because his presidency witnessed the greatest growth of television in American history. When he became the president in 1953, the percentage of Americans who had TVs was around 30%; the number increased to almost 70% when he was reelected in 1956 and to around 90% when he resigned in 1961. Eisenhower regarded TV as a breakthrough in American enterprise and was deeply aware of the societal transformations being brought about by TV. Labeled as a "TV president," TV became Eisenhower's most important means of communication (Allen 1993, 189). In the animated film, it is through TV that Eisenhower learns what is happening in the Communist world. Although at that time, the Soviet Union surpassed America in terms of rocket technology with the launch of Sputnik in 1957, it lagged far behind America in TV technology and industry (Allen 1993, 167). Fascinated by it, TV was the new machine that Americans took pride in. Across the way, socialist China largely used sound and radio to disseminate its messages to the whole world.

In *Showing True Colors*, China is represented by a monumental radio tower with a shining red star on its top, shown in the background of Tiananmen Square brightened by glamorous firework displays. With its radiating light, the disembodied voice of China reaches the White House and shocks Eisenhower. Eisenhower then begins his metamorphosis in the restroom, the place where women apply makeup. Realizing that overt military coercion of communism with military bases might fail, he decides to change himself and his foreign policies. He picks up a brush and bottle of paint (Peace Brand) and paints himself until he is covered in white paint from head to toe. Like a woman, he powders his face and sprays perfume on his body. He examines himself in the mirror and learns that his face has become a blank sheet of paper without features, so, like a geisha, he picks up a pencil and draws his eyes, nose, wrinkles, hair, and a smile. Crying "*heping*" ("peace") with a high-pitched feminine voice, he happily dances in the restroom until he is disrupted by the China "we want real peace" broadcast by the red star on top of the radio tower.

Eisenhower metamorphoses into a lesser being, a peaceful womanish figure, similar to Chiang Kai-shek's transformation into a degraded Peking opera emperor in the dressing room in *Dreaming to Be an Emperor*. The difference is that while Eisenhower makes the transformation all by himself, Chiang Kai-shek achieves his metamorphosis only through the assistance of America. With this new face and identity, Eisenhower's foreign policy also changes into "fake peace, true war preparation" and becomes de-metalized and de-militarized. With an olive branch in hand, he flies gracefully like a dove over the White House and Wall Street and ties the olive branch with a white ribbon on American cannons (Figure 26.2). When he sees American tanks marching on the ground, he scatters white powder and they become immobile. He touches American ships and submarines and cries "peace," and they soon disappear and hide underwater.

However, Eisenhower's cries for peace soon end when he becomes "metal" again. Riding on an American plane with a telescope, he sees the red star on top of the tower radiating with white lights. He transforms himself into a black U-2 spy plane and keeps taking photos with his camera until he is intercepted by a red plane. This alludes to a historical event in which an American U-2 spy plane briefly and successfully invaded Soviet airspace, and was later shot down and the pilot was captured alive by the Soviet Air Defense Forces on 1 May 1960. Eisenhower falls to the ground and becomes a savage, ripping his shirt to reveal a skull on his chest and begins to fight back. At the same time, Soviet, Japanese, and African people are roaring and shouting, "Down with American imperialism." Eisenhower is then forced to flee back to his office, right in front of the world map. The film then ends

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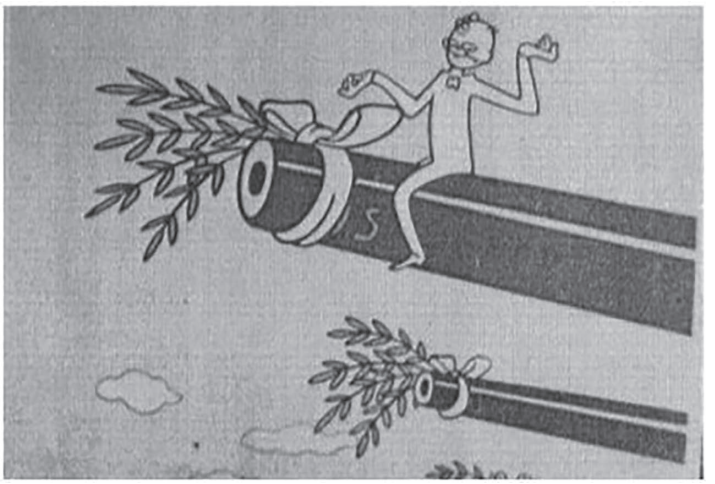

Figure 26.2 Eisenhower ties the olive branch with a white ribbon on American cannons, *Showing True Colors*, 1960.

with the red star radiating with white light, while the people in the world, such as Africans and Latin Americans, march forward arm in arm.

Unlike America which is often portrayed as a metalized threat, Great Britain is imagined with contempt and ridicule. The agitprop animated film *Catching up with England* (1958) was made by a group of young and relatively inexperienced animators in immediate response to the communist government's slogan of "Catching up with England in Fifteen Years" during the Great Leap Forward. To better capture the spirit of the age, animators watched numerous news documentaries about the Great Leap Forward (Xu, Yan, and Qu 1958, 28). The film begins with a young, robust, and energetic male giant worker, who wears a white shirt and a red overall, with the characters "China" written on his chest. He represents the Chinese people, who are roaring a song collectively and passionately: "Let high mountains lower their heads; let the seas make way; let iron and steel obey; let England lag behind! Let's catch up with England in 15 years!" John Bull, a fat and short English gentleman wearing a bowler hat printed with the national flag of England, enters the scene riding a cow. John Bull is old and extremely slow, even portrayed with gray, a color associated with sunset and decline, while the young Chinese giant is depicted mainly in red, a color linked with the rising sun and youth. When he hears the collective and passionate slogan sung by the Chinese people, John Bull panics but soon composes himself by humming a song to himself: "My industry has a hundred years' history; my products have both quality and quantity; if others want to catch up with me, they need at least 100 years!"

In comparison to how America is linked with metals and machines capable of metal-morphosis, Great Britain is associated with an animal, the bull, and is portrayed as incapable of metal-morphosis. The film depicts a fierce competition between the Chinese giant and John Bull, with the Chinese giant winning the game. John Bull first shows off some industrial products such as reactive dyes and tires, and challenges the Chinese giant, "Do you have this?" In the end, John Bull admits, "Oh, they have them all." He then shows off a map of coal production in England, and the Chinese giant responds by extracting coal,

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which piles up quickly and buries John Bull. After more arguing, a fearful John Bull sees the Chinese giant riding a big red horse and marching toward him. He packs up his stuff and slowly rides on his cow to escape. While shouting, "China is marching forward," the Chinese giant's horse is transformed into a motorcycle and then a rocket. Holding a red flag, he soon catches up with John Bull and leaves him far behind.

Here, China achieves metal-morphosis for its rapid progress in industries. Contrary to the American leaders who undergo metal-morphosis, the Chinese leader (the giant worker) does not change his human body form, because as a "sublime figure of (in)animation," he must keep his bodily inviolability, which stands for socialist integrity and dignity. It is his transportation vehicles that undergo metal-morphosis. While metal-morphosis is generally associated with empowerment, the American metal-morphosis is portrayed as a threat while the Chinese one as a positive and celebratory force. In sharp contrast, the British leader John Bull, metonymically associated with the extremely slow, old, and feminized cow, is incapable of metal-morphosis, suggesting the conservatism, inflexibility, and the stagnation of industrial progress in England.

A Feast of Metal: Cannibalistic Imperialism

In addition to the types of animated films discussed earlier, there emerged a new subgenre called *zhengzhi fengci pian* (politically satirical animated film) during the socialist decades. This new subgenre held similarities to agitprop animation except rather than depicting real political events and historical figures, it was more focused on fictional characters and stories, albeit they were set against the backdrop of current affairs. Consequently, the latter type of film, due to its fictionality, usually had a more coherent and complete storyline and clearly defined protagonists and antagonists and in-depth characterization that led to audience identification. While the former type of film demonstrated a political immediacy and was often made quickly, the latter indeed referred to current political events as well but was made with careful artistic and thematic planning and deliberation. This is because the functions of the two kinds of films were different: political agitprop animation aimed to create direct propaganda messaging to mobilize the masses into action using elements like slogan voice over narrators, and politically satirical animation focused more on exposure, satire, and criticism with veiled political messages. The two types of films both mainly targeted an adult audience. Many animated films featuring the capitalist West, such as *Longxia* (Lobsters, 1959), *Huangjin meng* (The Dream of Gold, 1963), *Gezi* (The Pigeon, 1960), and *Shei chang de zuihao* (Who Sings the Best, 1958), belong to the category of *zhengzhi fengci pian*.

The Dream of Gold (1963) is about international relations during the Cold War. The first half of the film is about the relations among capitalist countries in the West, while the second half is about the relations between the biggest five capitalist countries and the rest of the world. Based on the caricature style of Hua Junwu's political cartoons, *The Dream of Gold* was often called *manhua shi de donghua pian* (cartoon-like animated film), characterized by plasmaticness, exaggeration, distortion, and satire. It was cel-animated and therefore demonstrated much greater fluidity in terms of outlines, character images, the transformation of body forms, and storylines, with minimalized backgrounds.

The relationship among Western capitalist countries is characterized by fierce monetary competition, which is portrayed through violent metal-morphosis. The film takes place in the Empire of Gold Coins – the capitalist West. The beginning of the film shows a bag full of gold coins, which gradually metamorphoses into a fat gentleman, who wears black

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suit, a high bowler hat, and sunglasses, with a walking cane and a cigar in his mouth. He is the persona of the United States. Each capitalist country is represented by a gentleman who transforms from a bag of gold coins. They all drive a car and arrive at the Club of the Empire of Gold Coins, which is the life-or-death arena for them. They politely greet each other by patting their own stomachs, which are full of gold coins and thus produce a metal sound. To become a member of the club, they need to be of or over a certain weight, that is, if they have enough gold coins. If not, they will be thrown out immediately. The fattest and the heaviest one is the persona of the United States, who is so heavy that he breaks the scale. When these qualified gentlemen/capitalist countries enter the club in order, they begin to do warm-up exercises in the club's gym. When the clock strikes noon, Manager Egg (a caricature of President Kennedy), the boss of the club, blows the whistle and kicks off the duels among these gentlemen. This fighting sequence, although bloodless, is very violent. Using all kinds of weapons, such as swords, scissors, and boxing gloves, these gentlemen exert themselves in killing each other. If a gentleman is wounded and defeated by his rival, he dies and is transformed into metals, or a pile of gold coins in this case. Manager Egg throws away the victims' clothes and collects all the corpses/gold coins. When time is up at 6:00 p.m., only the five strongest kings remain. They are then qualified to have a sumptuous dinner, feasting on the dead gentlemen's bodies, or gold coins (Figure 26.3).

The cannibalistic metal dinner sequence depicts the greed of Western capitalist countries and the internal competition, strife, annexation, and uneven distribution of wealth and interests among them. The five strongest kings are served gold coins stir-fried by General Cannon and blood wine prepared by Mr. Mosquito in the kitchen. The gentleman in the middle, the persona of the US, has a lion's share of the food. The gentleman on the right corner of the table is served with the smallest amount of gold coins. He tries to steal some metal food from the plate of his neighbor but is intercepted in time by his vigilant neighbor. Although they are all gluttonous, they still have different table manners. One eats slowly and chews carefully, followed by a sip of blood wine, while others eat more quickly and

Figure 26.3 The winners are eating the gold coins, transformed from the killed ones, *The Dream of Gold*, 1963.

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greedily. The most impatient and wolfish eater is the king of the United States, who, not even bothering to use utensils, holds the plate with his hands and pours the gold coins directly into his big mouth. His voracious appetite symbolizes the super metal virility of the country he represents.

The five strongest kings/countries still feel hungry after devouring all the metals and blood wines, so they embark on the journey of colonization outside the Western world to acquire more metals and blood to gratify their gluttonous appetite. Manager Egg orders General Cannon to look for diamonds and Mr. Mosquito to collect more human blood. He also orders a scientist, Dr. Fuddle, to calculate the total number of stars so that they can be divided up by the five kings. Following this, the film becomes a journey of imperialism and colonization on earth and in the sky. The various missions demonstrate the wolfish greed of capitalist countries to colonize the earth and the sky with overt military aggression, secret schemes and exploitation, knowledge, and advanced science and technology; however, their imperialist agendas are doomed to fail. Mr. Cannon is frozen and buried by the snow while digging native land for diamonds. Mr. Mosquito is discovered by the native people and wounded. Dr. Fuddle flees. The five kings' cannibalistic desire to devour the diamonds/stars and gold coin/the moon turns out to be a dream.

Conclusion: Cold War Occidentalism

The Cold War did not mean the freezing, isolation, or delay of information between communist and capitalist blocks. Rather, the "cold" relationship ironically sped up the flow of information and heated up the imagination between the two camps. In the late 1940s and 1950s, there was a tremendous fascination with Asia in American middlebrow cultural productions, generating a kind of "Cold War Orientalism" (Klein 2003, 4). In the early 1960s, the "golden age" of American television documentaries emerged, featuring the communist Other prominently to promote Cold War ideology and awaken Americans to their "global responsibilities," ironically at a time when they turned inward by paying more attention to their immediate domestic surroundings (Curtin 1995, 2–3). In the other hemisphere across the Iron Curtain, indeed, the capitalist West seemed to be a remote, invisible, and abstract enemy far away from people's daily lives. When the West was almost absent in live-action cinema, it saturated socialist animation and imposed its over-presence in socialist China, generating a socialist Occidentalism, even as Chinese animation, conversely, turned inward by promoting the National Style in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The Iron Curtain during the Cold War was melted in socialist animation.

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Notes

1 In *Huoshao honglian si* (*The Burning of the Red-Lotus Temple*, Mingxing 1928–31), animation was used to portray swords automatically fighting with each other in the sky, which live-action film could not portray due to the technological limitations. See Zhang (2005). A similar case took place in wartime Japanese live-action film, in which Western enemies were almost absent due to practical and political reasons. When live-action film failed to portray the wartime Other directly, animation,

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indeed, represented the unrepresentable more directly. As a result, the West became more visible and prominent in wartime Japanese animated films such as *Momotarō's Sea Eagles* (1943) and *Momotarō's Divine Sea Warriors* (1945).

2 The two films were made by a Japanese animator named Mochinaga Tadahito. For discussions of this Japanese animator and the animation industry in early socialist China, see Du, *Animated Encounters*, 68–113.

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