

回顧系列四
編+導

The Writer/Director
in Focus IV:

李萍倩

LI PINGQIAN



康樂及文化事務署
Leisure and Cultural
Services Department



香港電影資料館
Hong Kong Film Archive



《一代妖姬》(1950)
A Strange Woman

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前言

〔編+導〕回顧系列自 2014 年起，先後舉辦程剛、岳楓及莫康時三位集編劇與導演於一身的電影工作者的專題，期望增加觀眾對香港電影歷史和電影工作者的認識，電影研究工作者則可藉系統觀摩，作深入探討。是次回顧聚焦國語片巨匠、長城公司（即長城影業公司及長城電影製片有限公司）元老李萍倩導演（1902-1984）的電影事業。

二十年代默片時期，李萍倩即在上海開始其電影生涯，是中國電影的拓荒者。四十年代後期來港，成為國語電影製作重鎮永華影業公司和新舊長城公司的中堅棟梁。一生作品近百部，題材豐富，類型多樣，上海時期包括《豐年》（1933）、《現代一女性》（1933）、《時代的兒女》（1933）、《少奶奶的扇子》（1939）等，擅長高格調的娛樂類型，亦時有先鋒批判之作。遷港十多年間，執導《春雷》（1949）、《一代妖姬》（1950）、《說謊世界》（1950）、《寸草心》（1953）、《都會交響曲》（1954）、《望夫山下》（1957）、《笑笑笑》（1960）、《三看御妹劉金定》（1962）等許多香港電影經典。李萍倩的作品多合乎潮流，技藝精巧瀟灑，具有現代美感和人情趣味，道理寓意寄托於流麗摩登的光影；而古裝和越劇電影，製作考究，氣韻秀雅，乃怡人的古典佳構。他面對不同時空的電影工業、政治文化環境及諸種要求，游刃其中，妙手調理，發展出靈活多變、舉重若輕的風格，可謂達到傳統片場導演事業和品味的高境界。

李氏前期身處巨變中的內地，作品並無極端的政治或社會改革傾向，五、六十年代卻在比較安穩的香港，一直擔當左派電影創作的中流砥柱。在商業大環境和自由社會的條件下，掌握政治動向，摸索娛樂宣傳之道，參與建立香港左派電影的據點。由於成果豐碩，李萍倩電影是香港左派電影的重要範本和研究題目。

是次回顧放映 18 部李萍倩作品和一部參考電影，分四個主題，配以座談會和映後談。香港電影資料館多年來搜集、保存李氏香港時期不少作品，是次精選多部。他的前期作品雖

多散佚，幸可從中國電影資料館借得數部名作，均經數碼化處理，其中陳雲裳在上海影壇大紅時主演的《費貞娥刺虎》（1939），近年才公開重映。還有來自海外的支持，長期愛護中國電影的法國前輩紀可梅女士（Ms Marie-Claire Quiquemelle Kuo）和其夫婿郭鈞亮先生，借出其巴黎中國電影資料中心收藏的《一代妖姬》，更為此製作新拷貝，重現一代女星白光的艷影，而此片已闊別香港多年。

為配合是次回顧展，資料館特別編輯此冊場刊，邀請羅卡、盧偉力、游靜、李鎮等學者和筆者撰文，回溯李氏創作生涯，分析其作品風格要旨。李導演生前，羅卡先生與他頗有交流，1994年，羅卡先生為香港國際電影節策劃節目「香港—上海：電影雙城」，特辦「李萍倩紀念展」，選映多部佳作，這次撰文綜論他的藝術成就，詳析其力作《春雷》和現已不得見的《望夫山下》。盧偉力博士分析李氏作品的情慾主題和女性角色的主體性，看到其鏡頭有情韻，左派文藝群體的變遷亦見反映。游靜博士認為李氏是中國文人電影的異數，時作抽象出格的處理及反省，但不拘囿於西方現代性，自具視野。李萍倩南來前已經經驗老到，李鎮先生梳理大量民國時期的資料，條分縷析，介紹其前半生創作及各方評譽。李萍倩風格靈巧深厚，筆者則試論其作品中的多人物敘事結構和超越寫實的形式。

感謝借出影片的機構和人士、賜文的學者及座談會和映後談講者的襄助，包括李焯桃先生和舒琪先生。1985年的第九屆香港國際電影節，李焯桃先生策劃「李萍倩紀念特輯」，同時編輯論文和資料，紀念當時離世不久的名導。

冀望觀眾和電影研究工作者，藉此回顧展欣賞一位華語電影巨匠的作品，認識三、四十年代中國電影及五、六十年代香港電影的歷史，觀照兩地電影的互動及變遷。年初去世的資深電影文化工作者黃愛玲女士，生前推動華語電影研究不囿於地域語言，感謝她鼓勵筆者策劃岳楓和李萍倩等影展及堅持研究工作，謹此致敬。

客席策劃
劉嶽



Since the 'Writer/Director in Focus' series debut in 2014, three writer-directors including Cheng Kang, Griffin Yue Feng and Mok Hong-si have been featured. The series aims to enhance the audience's understanding of Hong Kong cinema history and its visionary filmmakers, while film researchers would be able to explore systematically and discuss the works in-depth. The current instalment will feature director Li Pingqian, master of Mandarin cinema and one of the founding figures of Great Wall (referring to both Great Wall Pictures Corporation and The Great Wall Movie Enterprises Ltd).

A pioneer of Chinese cinema, Li Pingqian began his film career in Shanghai during the silent film era in the 1920s. After coming to Hong Kong in the late 1940s, Li became the backbone of Yung Hwa Motion Picture Industries Ltd and Great Wall, where both specialised in producing Mandarin titles. Li had made nearly 100 films over his career, covering a wide range of themes and genres. Features made during his Shanghai period include *A Year of Harvest* (1933), *A Modern Girl* (1933), *Children of the Times* (1933) and *The Young Mistress' Fan* (1939). There he excelled in making refined entertainment films, sometimes with forward-looking criticisms. In the decade and more after moving to Hong Kong, Li directed a number of classics including *Our Husband* (1949), *A Strange Woman* (1950), *Awful Truth* (1950), *Parents' Love* (1953), *Tales of the City* (1954), *Forever Waiting* (1957), *Laugh, Clown, Laugh* (1960) and *The Princess Falls in Love* (1962). Most of his films conformed to the trend; yet they were made with such refined and elegant techniques that they carried modern aesthetics and sense of humanity, imparting morality through fluid, modern visuals. Meanwhile, his period and Yue opera films were sophisticated, elegant, and delightful classics. Faced with challenges from the film industry within an ever-changing political and cultural environment, Li remained at ease and developed a versatile style, handling heavy topics with certain lightness. He was truly a master among traditional studio directors.

During his early days in the Mainland, Li's works did not champion any radical political or social reform even amidst an era of tumult. However, in the relatively peaceful Hong Kong of the 1950s and 60s, Li was continuously a mainstay of leftist cinema. In a flourishing economy and a free society, Li kept his finger on the city's political pulse, exploring ways of providing entertainment but at the same time solidifying Hong Kong as a stronghold for leftist cinema. Li's films are exemplars of and serve as good research topics of leftist cinema in Hong Kong due to their popular success.

Divided into four sections, this retrospective features 18 of Li Pingqian's works and a reference film, as well as seminars and post-screening talks. Hong Kong Film Archive has collected and preserved a great number of Li's works in Hong Kong over the years, many of which will be screened in this programme. Many of his early features have been lost, but the Archive is able to borrow several of them that have undergone digitisation, from China Film Archive. *The Imperial Maid Fei Zhen'e* (1939) that featured Nancy Chan Yun-shang during her heyday in the Shanghai film industry, can finally be screened publicly in recent years. This programme also received support from overseas, especially



Foreword

from Ms Marie-Claire Quiquemelle Kuo and her husband Mr Kuo Kwan-leung, who have been involved in the preservation of Chinese cinema for a very long time. They generously agree to loan out *A Strange Woman*, now a collection of CDCC Paris, where a new print of the work has been made to restore the splendid grace of Bai Guang on the screen. This film has not been seen in Hong Kong for many years.

To pair with this retrospective, the Archive published this house programme and invited scholars such as Law Kar, Lo Wai-luk, Yau Ching, Li Zhen and I to review Li's career, as well as to examine the styles of his works. Mr Law Kar interacted quite frequently with Li when the latter was still alive. In 1994, Law curated the 'Cinema of Two Cities: Hong Kong-Shanghai' programme for the Hong Kong International Film Festival, in which a retrospective titled 'Remembering Li Pingqian' was especially organised to showcase a selection of the director's masterpieces. This time, he will be reviewing Li's artistic achievements, analysing the magnum opus *Our Husband* and the now lost *Forever Waiting*, through his writing. Dr Lo Wai-luk will be examining the works of the director which feature themes of erotic desires and subjectivity of female characters. These films exude a particular kind of sentiment, and also reflect the changes that leftist art collectives underwent. As for Dr Yau Ching, she believes that Li is an anomaly among Chinese literary filmmakers, who often turns to abstraction and reflection, while maintaining his unique point of view without being limited by Western modernism. Li Pingqian was already an experienced veteran before relocating to Hong Kong. Through an in-depth examination of materials from the Republican period, Mr Li Zhen will introduce us to the works that were made during the first half of the director's life, and share insights into people's perception of him. I, on the other hand, will explore the multiple-protagonist schema and surrealism featured in Li Pingqian's ingenious and profound works.

Special thanks to the institutions and individuals who have loaned films to the Archive, as well as the scholars who have contributed essays and agreed to speak at the programme's seminars and post-screening talks, including Mr Li Cheuk-to and Mr Shu Kei. For the 9th Hong Kong International Film Festival in 1985, Mr Li curated 'A Tribute to Li Pingqian', and also edited articles and compiled materials to commemorate the renowned director who had passed away just a few months prior.

I hope this retrospective will help audiences and film researchers in relishing the works of this Chinese film veteran, whilst comprehending the history of the 1930s and 40s Chinese cinema and the 1950s and 60s Hong Kong cinema, as well as the interactions and changes of both Chinese and Hong Kong cinema. I would also like to pay my respects to Ms Wong Ain-ling, a veteran film critic and researcher who left us earlier this year. She pursued research into Chinese-language cinema irrespective of geographical or dialect barriers. I would like to thank her for encouraging me to curate programmes dedicated to Griffin Yue Feng and Li Pingqian, as well as to conduct research into these esteemed directors.

Lau Yam
Guest Curator

雅俗皆入鏡 悲喜盡成章 ——李萍倩早期電影藝術探尋

李鎮

一

李萍倩 1902 年生於杭州，祖籍安徽桐城，出身於歷代為官的世家，因祖父在浙江做官，遂「杭縣籍之」。¹他的童年不算幸福，滿月時生母去世，後母「並不管事」，祖父和父親相繼離世之後，李萍倩遭受性情乖戾的繼祖母「苛待」，「日常責令勞役，一不如意，就要橫施打罵」。²李萍倩在少年時代接受了新式教育，據他的中學同窗陸亞生回憶，李萍倩「生性活潑」、「酷嗜戲劇」，但「讀書不十分聰明」，中學時因為一次「數學不及格，而被校方退學」。³輟學後，因無法忍受繼祖母的虐待而隻身來到上海。

早年人情冷暖、世態炎涼的經歷，可能是李萍倩心智早熟的重要原因。他在後來的作品中，對於封建舊家庭多持嚴厲批評的態度。在他的故事中，因家庭各種矛盾導致未成年子女被迫離開家庭的情節常有出現；可能是出於代償心理，母親在他的作品中總是被表現為至真至善的存在。

二

李萍倩從影起點約在 1922 年左右。自 1922 至 1949 年間，李萍倩在上海可統計參與的電影作品近八十部。他從影時間早，創作精力旺盛，年紀輕輕就名聲在外，被看做是電影界有資歷的「前輩」。

在從影最初的十年間，他輾轉於「神州」、「天一」和「大中華百合」三家電影公司之間。1924 年，他在神州影片公司擔任演員和化妝主任，⁴不久因演技出色而成名；尤其是 1925 年主演《花好月圓》，表現不遜於女明星丁子明。⁵李萍倩成為導演的過程似乎是水到渠成。1926 年，他編導的處女作《難為了妹妹》轟動一時，有人認為此片是「中國影片中絕無僅有之作品。抗衡歐美。開國產電影之新紀元」。⁶李萍倩曾坦陳自己從影最初的心態是「為藝術而藝術」，⁷稱自

己是個「沉醉於藝術的『迷戀者』」。⁸但「可愛的神州」因「不會迎合社會心理」而導致「營業竟到不堪回首的地步」。⁹神州影片公司的破產給李萍倩深刻的教訓，隨後他進入邵氏兄弟的天一影片公司。天一在當時專心經營商業片，李萍倩把自己投奔天一比喻為「上梁山」，可以看出他的無奈，就這樣「委曲求全地幹了三年」，「不如人意的事一天一天的增加」。¹⁰但不可否認，他在天一作品較多，且逐漸融合了藝術性和商業性的要求，已經顯示出不俗的個性和才華。《女律師》（1927）「手腕之敏捷。心緒之精密。分幕層次之緊湊。鏡頭地位之美觀。在國產諸導演中。當首屈一指」。¹¹《花木蘭從軍》（1927）「雋永耐味。得未曾有」，「尤注意於小動作」。¹²在天一發生工潮時，李萍倩曾加入大中華百合影片公司，但不久再次因為「麵包問題」選擇回到天一，¹³歸來的李萍倩受到重用，他有機會導演中國最早的片上發聲電影之一《歌場春色》（1931）；他也使天一改進了不少地方，例如 1932 年的《東北二女子》（又名《戰地二孤女》）以「九·一八」和「一·二八」事變為背景，是天一為數不多的關注現實題材的作品。



《歌場春色》（1931）：中國最早的片上發聲電影之一，由李萍倩導演。

Pleasures of the Dance Hall (1931): Directed by Li Pingqian, it is one of the earliest sound films of China.

三

三十年代初興起的左翼文藝帶起了現實主義創作的風潮，也促使電影觀念和樣式發生變化。李萍倩認識到「藝術會與社會有密切的關係，是跟時代轉換的」，¹⁴ 決定「再不會盲目的專門在『為了藝術而藝術』的口號之下用功了」。¹⁵ 1932年是李萍倩職業生涯和藝術創作的重要轉折。他離開相對保守的天一，進入環境更為開明和自由的明星影片股份有限公司。這一年，他為自己定下新的發展路徑，即「今後所走路線，要在影戲中指示出人生的矛盾」，¹⁶ 「在這大時代的前夜，盡可能地為新興的電影而努力，以期促進這大時代的來到。」¹⁷

李萍倩「在業餘之暇，也處處在探求新的智識」，以期實現其「『開拓中國影業新的局面』底理想」。¹⁸ 他將政治傾向融入到藝術觀念中。1934年7月，他在上海青年會做了《電影與現實性》的演講，提出「影片的現實性，並不是看表面的，虛空的、文飾的、外形的輪廓，要看本質」，而做到這一點，首先要從題材入手，「電影題材要抓住一般人感覺到痛苦的現實。例如世界各國都市和農村的失業問題」，¹⁹ 1933年，李萍倩導演的《豐年》描寫了經濟破敗的農村，遭遇長時間的審查，更名《黃金穀》獲准上映時，被電影審查機構修剪得面目全非，即便如此，左翼影評人凌鶴仍將此片譽為「明星公司甚有價值的作品，也是李萍倩先生的創作中最好的一部」。²⁰ 他導演的《琵琶春怨》（1933）、《人倫》（又名《無家可歸》，1935）、《桃李爭艷》（又名《情書》，1936）、《夜會》（1936）等電影均沿著這條創作思路展開。

李萍倩在接受新的創作觀念的時候，沒有拋棄自己原有的創作習慣和個人風格。為了「營業的盛衰」，他沒有僅僅「依照了我們的理想而攝製」。²¹ 他將浪漫抒情加入到這些故事中，增強了故事的觀賞性，實現了左翼文藝陣營努力想實現的「大眾化」目標。《人倫》有意將愛情故事的觀賞性和社會嚴肅主題結合起來，「把人生種種的險惡，都盡量地描寫出來」。²² 《桃李爭艷》是在「時間的限制和營業的目標下」創作的「戀愛糾紛的故事」，²³ 「描寫青年男女的苦悶，戀愛的糾紛，並反映出社會的經濟不景氣，指出青年們的正當出路」。²⁴

李萍倩堅持「戲劇是人生簡練的速寫，所以戲劇不能離開真實性」。²⁵ 在孤島時期，這種觀念轉變為一種鬥爭意識。他在這個時期的作品流露出的民族意識並不隱晦，他甚至在一些地方高調地表達：「困在『孤島』上的藝人，也是中國人，他們並沒有喪失良心，不過處境卻有不同，除



《女兒經》（1934）：李萍倩聯同明星公司旗下另外八位導演合作拍成。

Bible for Girls (1934): A film made by Li and eight other directors from Star Motion Pictures.

了攝製純文藝作品外，還能作別的吼聲嗎？——我不願說這話，但我忍不住了」。²⁶ 1938年，李萍倩對《茶花女》（*Camille*）的改編加入了寫茶花女的慘死，他公開說明其目的就是「教人應當堅強起來」，性格方面，把主人公描寫成「一個要反抗而無勇氣的女子，也就是現中國一般的女性」。²⁷ 1939年的《費貞娥刺虎》借明末亡國的故事，批評了國人不顧國家利益的自私行為，塑造了犧牲自我刺殺叛軍首領的「新女性」。

淪陷時期，他的愛情片「初以『風流寡婦』（1941），奠定地位，後以『蝴蝶夫人』（1942）一劇，給予影迷美妙哀怨的深刻印象，善以悲劇型姿態作品問世」，《桃李爭春》（1943）「除明朗輕快外，兼具戀情纏綿」。²⁸ 李萍倩在一篇文章中描繪過理想的世界：「每個人都不需要過分的享受；不想爭取一切，不想霸佔一切——換句話說，就是凡在日光照耀下的人類，都能生活平等……」²⁹ 戰後，李萍倩因淪陷時期在中華電影聯合股份有限公司的工作經歷而失業，狀態低迷，「生路缺缺」，「大有被新陳代謝的樣子」，³⁰ 「收入毫無，窘不可言」，「平日不事積儲」，³¹ 還得了腸胃病，被迫出賣住房。身體恢復後為國泰影業公司導演了四部電影，重執導筒時「感覺生疏」，「手足無措」。³² 此時，由於生存需要，他的電影觀念更具娛樂性，堅持「具有現實性，以及富有生意眼」，³³ 他在國泰的影片《兇手》（又名《夜茫茫》，1948）因公司分家而未完成，一度想加入北平的中央電影攝影場三廠，最終決定赴香港發展。

四

李萍倩的電影悲喜交集，情感充沛，卻很少意氣磅礴；他講求雅俗共賞、精緻趣味、輕鬆明快。

他傾向於使用「樸素的手法」，³⁴他認為「電影切忌對話多」，³⁵不喜歡「玩無謂的花巧」。³⁶《難為了妹妹》中有「自然滑稽之穿插，文雅的浪漫之襯託」。³⁷為了突出主要人物，他使用了眾星捧月式的人物塑造法。《花木蘭從軍》「結構精純，描寫細微」，「笑料和劇中穿插極適宜，又極文雅」。³⁸《人倫》（又名《無家可歸》）雖為悲劇，但富有「美麗的深含詩意的畫面，和輕鬆細膩的技巧」，³⁹並「以輕鬆明快的手法，而表現出充滿刺激性的故事」。⁴⁰《桃李爭艷》節奏輕鬆，「噓頭調和得恰到好處，是在不停的笑意裡展開了一個曲折複雜而動人的故事」。⁴¹

李萍倩常被稱作「言情片導演聖手」，⁴²「他處理戀愛故事生動活潑，明朗輕快，緊抓住現代青

年男女的一顆熱情的心，有時以悲劇的姿態躍於銀幕，戀情纏綿，此恨綿綿」。⁴³他擅長展開人與人之間情感的豐富性，探索男女之間微妙的情感心理，無論是精神之愛還是生理欲望，利益誘惑或是名譽保全，他都能挖掘到人性的深處。就像他在《少奶奶的扇子》（1939）中，他對人的虛榮心、墮落和情慾表達出寬容的態度。他擅長在世態人情中表達人性的本質，暗示命運在某個瞬間可能走入的各種路徑。李萍倩作品給觀眾的感覺輕鬆，還因為他表達出獨特的人道主義關懷，對於不同人虛妄的驕傲和沉淪中的善意，均能理解和原諒。

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Portraying Sadness and Joy to the Fullest Through the Coexistence of Refinement and Popularity: Li Pingqian's Early Exploration of Cinematic Art

Li Zhen

1.

Born in Hangzhou in 1902, Li Pingqian came from a long line of court officials originating from the former county of Tongcheng in Anhui Province. It was because of his grandfather's posting in Zhejiang that he became 'registered under Hangzhou County'.¹ He did not exactly have a happy childhood. His mother passed away when he was just one month old, while his stepmother 'could not care less for anything'. With the passing of his grandfather and father, Li was subjected to 'mistreatment' by his ill-tempered step-grandmother. 'I slaved away at her behest every day. If anything displeased her, she would yell at me and hit me.'² Li received a new kind of education in his youth. According to his high school classmate, Lu Yasheng, he 'had a lively personality' and 'was extremely fond of drama'. However, he 'wasn't really an academic' and was 'expelled from secondary school for failing mathematics'.³ After dropping out of school, Li came to Shanghai alone as he could no longer stand his step-grandmother's abuses.

Having experienced the fickleness of human relationships at a young age might be an important reason why Li matured psychologically ahead of his peers. In his later works, he heavily criticised the conservatism of traditional families. His stories often feature plots where children who have not yet come of age are ousted from their households due to various familial conflicts. The mother is always portrayed as the sincerest and most altruistic figure, perhaps as a form of psychological compensation.

2.

Li began his cinematic career in around 1922, taking part in the production of nearly 80 films in Shanghai between 1922 and 1949. His early start in the industry gave him an abundance of creative energy. He made a name for himself at a young age, leading people to see him as a highly qualified 'veteran'.

During the first decade of his career, he drifted between three film companies, namely Shenzhou

Film Company, Unique Film Productions, and Great China-Lily Film Company. He joined Shenzhou in 1924 as an actor and as the Head of Makeup,⁴ and soon rose to fame because of his outstanding acting. His leading performance in *The Night with the Full Moon* (1925), which was on par with that of his co-star, the renowned actress Ding Ziming, is particularly noteworthy.⁵ Li's transition to becoming a director seemed to take a natural course. His 1926 directorial debut, *Embarrassing Sister*, was a huge sensation. Some people think this film was 'one of the few Chinese works which rivalled their European and American counterparts and ushered in a new era of domestic cinema'.⁶ Li once confessed that he originally entered the film industry 'for the sake of art'⁷ and that he was 'an aficionado obsessed with art'.⁸ Nonetheless, the 'adorable Shenzhou brought about its own demise due to its refusal to cater to the social psychology of the time'.⁹ Shenzhou's bankruptcy taught Li a profound lesson and he joined Unique Film Productions, which was run by the Shaw Brothers, shortly afterwards. At the time, Unique devoted itself to making commercial films, which led Li to liken his experience there to being forced into a 'camp of rebels', a comment that shed light on how helpless he felt. And so, he 'bent to the studio's will for three years', during which 'frustration mounted day by day'.¹⁰ However, it was undeniable that he made far more films at Unique and he gradually learnt to find the right balance between art and commercialism, displaying his extraordinary personality and talent. *The Female Lawyer* (1927) featured 'agile camera work, calculated precision, tight pacing, and aesthetically pleasing visuals, making Li stand out among all local directors'.¹¹ *Maiden in Armour* (1927), meanwhile, was 'an unprecedented timeless classic which focused particularly on subtle movements'.¹² When a strike occurred at Unique, Li left to work for Great China-Lily Film Company at one point, but soon returned because he 'had to put food on the table'.¹³ Unique put Li to good use upon his return, and he had the opportunity to direct one of China's earliest sound films, *Pleasures of the Dance Hall* (1931). He also helped Unique improved in various aspects. For

example, *Two Daughters of the Northeast* (1932) which was based on the Mukden and January 28 Incidents, was one of the company's few works that showed concern for real social issues.

3.

The left-wing literary movement which emerged in the early 1930s gave rise to a trend of realist creation, while also transforming film concepts and styles. Li recognised that 'art and society have an intertwining relationship, and both change with the times'.¹⁴ Consequently, he decided to 'never blindly expend his efforts solely "for the sake of art" again'.¹⁵ 1932 marked an important turning point in his career as well as artistic style. He left the relatively conservative Unique for the more open-minded and liberal Star Motion Pictures. That year, he set a new course for his future, which was 'to illustrate the contradictions of life through motion pictures',¹⁶ and 'to do as much as possible for a new generation of films in order to help usher in a grand era'.¹⁷

Li 'sought out new knowledge in different places during his spare time' to realise his 'dream of writing a new chapter in Chinese cinema'.¹⁸ He began fusing his political tendencies with his artistic conception. In the speech he gave at a seminar titled 'Films and Realism', which was held at the Shanghai Youth Association in July 1934, he suggested that 'the realism of a film is not conveyed through superficial, abstract, or decorative outlines of a work, but by the work's very own nature'. To achieve this, one must start with the subject matter. 'The topic of a film must be related to something that the general public find upsetting in real life, such as unemployment problems in urban and rural areas around the world'.¹⁹ *A Year of Harvest*, which Li directed in 1933, depicted a farming village which was in economic ruin. It underwent a long period of censorship and had to be renamed *Golden Valley* before approval for release was given. Moreover, the censorship agency edited the work to such an extent that it resembled nothing like the original version. Despite this, left-wing film critic Ling He still hailed it as 'one of Star's most valuable releases, and also Mr Li Pingqian's best work to date'.²⁰ Features such as *The Spring Dream of the Lute* (1933), *Human Being* (1935), *Rivals in Love* (1936), and *Rendezvous* (1936), which he also directed, all followed this creative direction.

While Li embraced this new creative philosophy, he did not abandon his original habits and personal style. In order to 'keep the business profitable', he did not merely 'make films according to one's ideals'.²¹ He added romance to these stories to make them more entertaining, realising the goal of 'popularisation' which the left-wing literary movement was arduously trying to achieve. *Human Being*, intentionally combined the entertainment of a love story with the

gravity of social issues, 'describing the various vices of life without restraint'.²² Meanwhile, *Rivals in Love* is 'a story about romantic rivalry' created 'under the constraints of time and business considerations'.²³ 'It depicted the troubles and romantic rivalries of the younger generation, while also reflecting the dire economic situation of the time and showing young people the correct path'.²⁴

Li insisted that 'drama is a concise sketch of life, which is why drama cannot be distanced from realism'.²⁵ Throughout the Orphan Island period, this way of thought turned into a combatant mindset. Nationalist sentiments were clearly prevalent in the works he created during this time. He even blatantly expressed, here and there that 'the artists trapped on the "Orphan Island" are also Chinese. They have not lost their conscience. It is only that the situation is different. Apart from producing purely literary works, how else can they make themselves heard? I don't want to say this, but I can't stand it anymore'.²⁶ Li's adaptation of *Camille* in 1938 included the titular character's tragic death. He publicly stated that the purpose behind this was to 'teach people to toughen up'. In terms of personality, he portrayed the protagonist as 'a woman who has to resist, but does not have the courage to do so. In other words, she is today's average Chinese female'.²⁷ With *The Imperial Maid Fei Zhen'e* (1939), Li made use of the demise of the Ming dynasty to criticise Chinese people's selfish behaviour and disregard of national interests, and create a 'new woman' who sacrificed herself to assassinate the rebel leader.

During the Japanese occupation of Shanghai, 'he established himself as a master of the romance genre with *The Merry Widow* (1941), and went on to leave a beautiful yet melancholic impression on his fans with *Madame Butterfly* (1942). He was particularly adept at creating tragic works'. *Struggle for Spring* (1943), meanwhile, 'is steeped with romance in addition



《費貞娥刺虎》(1939)：借古喻今，塑造出勇於捨身救國的「新女性」。

The Imperial Maid Fei Zhen'e (1939): Taking the old to allude to the present, the film depicts the 'new woman' who is willing to sacrifice herself to save the country.



《蝴蝶夫人》(1942): 拍於淪陷時期的一部愛情悲劇片。
Madame Butterfly (1942): A love tragedy filmed during the Japanese occupation of Shanghai.



《湖上春痕》(1947): 戰後為國泰公司拍攝，娛樂至上。
Spring over the Lake (1947): An entertaining feature made for Guotai Film Company after the war.

to being bright and brisk'.²⁸ Li once described his ideal world in an article: 'Nobody needs excessive enjoyment. We do not want to seize everything, nor do we want to dominate anything—in other words, every human being under the sun should be able to live in equality...'²⁹ After the war, Li became unemployed due to his work at the China United Film Holdings Company Ltd during the occupation period. He hit rock bottom and 'met with dead ends at every turn'. It was as if 'he had been expended by the industry and spat right out'.³⁰ 'Not one to save for a rainy day, he had no income and became dirt poor.'³¹ As if that was not bad enough, he also contracted a gastrointestinal illness and was forced to sell his home. Upon his recovery, Li directed four films for Guotai Film Company. When he first resumed his role as a director, he was 'rusty and at a loss'.³² At the time, he put greater emphasis on the entertainment aspect of his works due to the need to survive, and insisted on 'business-oriented realism'.³³ *The Murderer* (1948), which he was making at Guotai, remained incomplete due to the company's decision to rationalise its business. He once considered joining Central Motion Picture Company in Beijing, but ultimately chose to further his career in Hong Kong.

4.

Joy and sorrow interweave in Li's works. While filled with emotions, they are rarely overdramatic. He put emphasis on the coexistence of refinement and popularity, as well as delicacy, amusement, light-heartedness, and briskness. He opted for 'simplicity',³⁴ believed that 'excessive dialogue should be avoided',³⁵ and did not like 'superfluous gimmicks'.³⁶ *Embarrassing Sister* is 'sprinkled with natural comedy and embellished with literary romance'.³⁷ For this particular work, Li surrounded the protagonist with

a host of characters in order to make her stand out. *Maiden in Armour* has been described as 'an extremely elegant feature, well-structured and with detailed depiction, interspersed appropriately with humour'.³⁸ Although *Human Being* is a tragedy, it is replete with 'beautiful, poetic visuals, as well as relaxed yet refined techniques',³⁹ and 'delivers an electrifying story in an effortless and lively manner'.⁴⁰ The gently paced *Rivals in Love* 'has just the right amount of gimmicks, unfurling a complicated and touching story amidst constant laughter'.⁴¹

Li is often referred to as 'the supreme director of melodrama'.⁴² 'He imparts vivacity and briskness to his love stories, and has a firm grasp of the passion between young men and women. Sometimes, these tales are told on the silver screen as tragedies, leaving behind yearnings which will forever remain unfulfilled.'⁴³ He was adept at unfolding the abundance of emotions between individuals and exploring the subtle psychological exchanges between men and women. Whether it is spiritual love or physical desire, the lure of personal gain or the will to protect one's reputation, he always found a way to tap into the depths of human nature. In *The Young Mistress' Fan* (1939), for instance, he showed a tolerant stance on vanity, depravity, and lust. He was skilled at portraying human nature in its most natural setting, hinting at the various paths that fate can steer us down at any given moment. Li's works make audience feel at ease and, more importantly, exhibit his unique concerns for humanistic issues. His acceptance of people's unfounded pride and indulgence in depravity enabled him to understand and forgive.

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《少奶奶的扇子》(1939):對人的虛妄、沉淪表達出諒解的態度。

The Young Mistress Fan (1939) shows a sympathetic attitude to the falsity and depravity of people.

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李萍倩的大家風範 ——淺談他香港時期的四部佳作

羅卡

李萍倩自上世紀二十年代中已從事電影，經歷默片、聲片的初生、發展期，作為先行者，肯定有其貢獻。然後穿越中國電影輝煌的三、四十年代，抗戰、淪陷期間仍不斷創作。1948年南來香港前已執導了影片72部。來港後18年間又執導了28部。我只看過其中的20部，現就印象最深的幾部加以評介；其中《說謊世界》（1950）、《笑笑笑》（1960）已被公認為他的傑作，已有不少評論；本文多談比較少人注意的《春雷》（1949）、《望夫山下》（1957），我認為是很有特色之作。

李萍倩由上海來港的確實日期尚有待考證，有說是1947年底，亦有報導1947年底他仍在上海為國泰影業公司趕拍《春歸何處》（又名《尋夢記》，1948）。¹而據香港電影資料館館藏的永華影業公司「總經理室會議錄」顯示，他到1948年4月21日才首次出席製片委員會會議，看來應是在1948年初而不遲於4月來港。²他是應永華之邀來港參加製片委員會，和執導《春雷》的。據永華的文獻記載，此片於1948年7月至1949年1月拍攝，³1949年2月5日在港首映，同年3月起在內地公映。這是永華繼《國魂》（1948）、《清宮秘史》（1948）後首部當代背景的「摩登富麗」大製作。據報，片中上流社會的一個社交舞會場面動員了香港、廣州各大舞場的名舞女參加演出，「鶯啼燕叱，花枝招展」，有如「時裝展覽」會。⁴

《春雷》確是滿有氣派。一開場寫民航機飛滬途中遇上惡劣天氣，要在香港停降，逗留一晚，為此搭出民航機艙，製造遇氣流震盪搖晃效果，男女主角（嚴化、孫景路）因身體碰撞而首次相識，其後兩人都入住香港一間豪華酒店。是夜，春雷乍響，工於心計的交際花藉口受驚走到嚴化的房間，引誘他結下一夕之緣。他回滬後與新婚妻子（李麗華）度過一段美好時光，不久往海外

公幹，遇上海難，妻子以為他已死。然後交際花出現，表示懷有他的骨肉，借此交換利益。妻憤妒之餘仍接受她留下待產。期間兩人感情起了微妙變化，由互妒漸而互助，嬰兒出生後兩人更生好感。此時丈夫劫後歸來，三人關係再起波瀾。最後，交際花不忍拆散別人幸福家庭悄然引退。

兩女鍾愛一男，為愛或為利而互鬥苦纏，更為了撫養男的嬰孩而互助互諒，如此有愛有恨的情節在李萍倩之前的作品已有出現，荷里活片《情謊記》（*The Great Lie*, 1941）亦有類似情節，姑勿論李氏是否有「偷橋」／借用，巧妙之處是把兩女爭風的主調中途變調為兩女都以為男的已死，為保存他的骨肉兩人只好互諒互助，如此加強了倫理奇情，更符合國人口味。只是當年正值內戰最後期，民生困苦不堪，本片渲染上流社會生活的美麗與哀愁未免不合時宜，可能因此得不到評論／輿論的關注。今天看來，全片視覺上華美，題材通俗而格調高雅，製作認真，寫情寫景都滿有大家風範。



《春雷》（1949）：男女主角在機艙邂逅，展開一段霧水情緣。
Our Husband (1949): The leading characters have a meet-cute in the plane cabin and begin their short-lived relationship.



《說謊世界》(1950)：多線劇情推展層次分明，情景活現，深具諷刺與反省。

Awful Truth (1950): The multiple storylines progress distinctly, with life-like scenes full of sarcasms and reflections.

1949年李氏轉投張善琨主政的長城影業公司，1950年長城改組張退出，李則留下為當權的袁仰安繼續執導，就在青黃不接之際，李氏推出了他香港時期的傑作之一《說謊世界》(1950)。

此片由戰後在上海已嶄露頭角的陶秦編劇（根據吳鐵翼的原著改編），以戰後國民政府接收時期經濟大混亂的上海為背景，寫出那個大氣候下社會道德的淪喪，人性的乖張；投機取巧、經濟犯罪、偷呃拐騙大有人在，流風所及，小市民也難自保。劇作上採取多線發展，連環套式結構，一環緊套一環卻又首尾相接，全劇大小角色人物各有典型又各有獨自的性格。導演處理甚有分寸，對表演的操控、空間的調度、節奏的把握滿有信心，多線進展得層次分明，緩急有致。最為難得的是編導表現都從實際出發，並非主題先行，因此人物有血有肉，情景活靈活現，成就了一齣深具諷刺與反省的悲喜劇而非鬧劇；在惡劣的大環境下，人性弱點特顯，人人自危自保而被捲入俗流，都成為受害者。

李氏一向喜愛移居美國後的德國大師劉別謙（Ernst Lubitsch）的作品，可說是私底下「師承」了劉的悲喜交集筆觸，和對人性世情的「黑色」針刺。李氏因此往往被批評為玩世不恭，不夠嚴正投入。即使作為左傾長城公司的主將，他帶領推行的亦是對冷暖世情的諷刺多於批判，擺脫意識形態教條的框框，走關懷倫理、諷喻人生的溫和路線。這在長城他的早期作品《禁婚記》(1951)、《百花齊放》(1952)、《白日夢》(1953)、《寸草心》(1953)、《都會交響曲》(1954)中已顯露無遺。

李氏另有一部少為人評論的傑作是如今已難看到的《望夫山下》(1955年完成，57年公映)。

這是李萍倩和編劇朱克的第三度合作（在此用「丁可」化名），有莫千的原著故事根據。家庭教師（夏夢）從南洋應聘來到沙田望夫山下的古老大宅中當家庭教師。男主人進了醫院養病，女主人（李嬌）沉默寡言，老太太終日躲在房中念經，一切家務交由惟命是從的管家（李次玉、馮琳）去辦，全家了無生氣，只有兩個孩子活潑可人。不久夏夢發覺李嬌受丈夫冷落、老太太操縱的委屈，也漸了解到她和丈夫的往事。原來他一直記掛著某個女人，以致精神失常。夏夢為她不值之餘，亦因替她代筆與夫通信而逐步追查此人正是自己當年在南洋被他愛上又拋棄的負心郎，他回港後音訊全無，就連和他生下的孩子也給強奪去。後段是丈夫（傳奇）出院，見到心愛的夏夢並向她解釋以前的負心全因自己的懦弱不敢違抗專橫的母親所造成。李嬌經不起刺激倒下去了，專橫的老太太氣得半死，夏夢決絕地帶著兒子離開軟弱多病的「丈夫」，遠離充滿壓力又死氣沉沉的豪宅，大步走過望夫山下。

《望》片使人聯想到曹禺的《雷雨》（朱石麟1961年曾以此拍成同名影片）和史特林堡（August Strindberg）的《夢幻劇》（*A Dream Play*），但結構比較精簡，戲集中在三個女人（老太太只聞其聲，到最後五分鐘才出場）和一個男人（他出場也只有十多分鐘，之前只在夏夢的回憶中短暫出現）身上，寫四人之間的畸情糾葛。全劇主要追隨著夏夢的視點開展，層層解開懸疑勾起回憶想像，也解開了兩個女性的心結。最後是弱者倒下（包括老太太、丈夫和妻子），感情與理性的



《笑笑笑》(1960)：戲中戲諷喻時艱，笑諺中言之有物。

Laugh, Clown, Laugh (1960): The *xiangsheng* performance in the plot mocks the bitter social realities through laughter and sarcasms.

強者卻能大步超越象徵著男性社會強加給女性負擔的「望夫山」。

李萍倩的香港作品甚少有像本片的壓抑陰沉，今番可說是異數。但壓抑陰沉得並不沉悶，這是由於他充分靈活地運用懸疑手法，吸引觀者追看下去，劇力內斂，到結尾才完全外泄。這方面，可見受著希治閣 (Alfred Hitchcock) 在荷里活早期拍製的心理懸疑片如《蝴蝶夢》 (*Rebecca*, 1940)、《深閨疑雲》 (*Suspicion*, 1941) 的影響。但轉換到中國傳統禮教家庭對人性的扭曲、情感的壓抑這樣的處境上倒非常貼切，絕無生硬模仿的痕跡。把劇中人孤立於郊外大宅中，要女主角靠自力追查、超越迷障，自我覺醒以找回身份信心，可說是本片的主題意識，在當年和今日都有其「現代性」。李萍倩也善用比興意象，大宅空間與氣氛的經營恰好，起到觸景傷情的作用。比方夏夢回憶中的南洋熱帶情調與現實中大宅的冰冷疏離對比；結局樓上樓下兩層空間的運用和演員的調度烘托出人物的權力關係和相對位置，都顯見李萍倩對形式的講究和技巧的精到把握。全片風格統一內斂，感情飽滿，是李萍倩集戲劇性與電影感的一次最佳結合，也是他創作歷程中一次獨特而精緻的風格表現。

至於被評價為他晚年傑作的《笑笑笑》(1960)，由於已有定評，亦常有選映，此處不贅了。想補充一下的是，類此父親失業瞞著家人去幹著被人瞧不起的工作，被發現後終於破涕為笑，一家人和解的故事，國粵語片常有套用，⁵卻遠不及本片處理倫理情的細緻深刻。特別是父親為謀生而表演的滑稽戲，集京戲、越劇、粵劇、蓮花落的程式，通過夫婦的吵架諷喻時艱，笑諺得言中有物。影片寫父女誤會而冰釋，寫民間說唱也是藝

術，把喜和悲、親情和義氣、通俗和高雅混融一體，推上更高的精神境界，彷彿就是李萍倩中晚年服膺的人生哲學：樂天知命，既入世又嚮往出世之道。

李氏 1965 年宣告退休，但仍留任當創作顧問。前此他積極起用由其培植的夏夢、石慧、傅奇等新秀。八十年代初電視出身的新浪潮健將方育平加入長城電影製片有限公司、鳳凰影業公司及新聯影業公司改組的銀都機構，拍出了繼承國粵語片社會倫理寫實傳統的《父子情》(1981)、《半邊人》(1983)，大受李氏賞識，聽說他對方育平的慢工出細貨作風亦多所維護。李萍倩在三、四十年代一向不屬於左翼／進步電影陣營，南來後由於香港形勢的特殊：五、六十年代左右派電影都淡化意識形態，加強戲劇趣味，以取悅觀眾爭取市場，李氏以其對人情世故的精到觀察和熟練的戲劇處理，為長城公司開出適應市場競爭的新路，也為香港國粵語電影留下多部感情豐滿但風格各異的佳作。

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註釋

1. 〈國泰攝影場參觀記——導演李萍倩大發雷靈〉，《青青電影》，復刊第 1 期，1948 年 1 月 1 日。
2. 見永華影業公司「總經理室會議錄」。
3. 《春雷》拍攝起訖月份載於永華影業公司的一份燈泡消耗紀錄上。
4. 徐瓊玉：〈香港航空通訊——李麗華主演《春雷》〉，《青青電影》，第 33 期，1948 年 10 月 15 日。
5. 比方嚴俊導演的《笑聲淚痕》(1958) 就出自同一故事模式，卻極力煽情搞笑，境界距李氏之作甚遠。

An Auteur of All Styles: Introducing Four Masterpieces of Li Pingqian During His Time in Hong Kong

Law Kar

As a pioneer filmmaker who had been working in the industry since the 1920s, Li Pingqian saw the primary stage of silent and sound films, and had undoubtedly contributed to their development. He witnessed the golden eras of Chinese cinema, the 1930s and 40s, and continued to film during the War of Resistance and Japanese occupation. By the time Li arrived in Hong Kong in 1948, he had already directed 72 titles and further directed another 28 features in the 18 years that followed. I have only watched 20 of his productions and am going to review several of them that impressed me the most. *Awful Truth* (1950) and *Laugh, Clown, Laugh* (1960) are publicly known as his masterpieces, with quite a number of reviews devoted to them. This article will focus on the lesser-known *Our Husband* (1949) and *Forever Waiting* (1957), which I think are remarkable.

The exact time of Li's arrival in Hong Kong from Shanghai remains sketchy. Some sources claim that he reached at the year-end of 1947, while some suggest that he was still filming *Catch the Dream* (1948) for Guotai Film Company, in Shanghai at the time.¹ According to the 'General Manager Office Meeting Minutes' of Yung Hwa Motion Picture Industries Ltd from Hong Kong Film Archive, Li attended a production committee meeting for the first time on 21 April 1948. It seems that he arrived in Hong Kong no later than April 1948,² at the invitation of Yung Hwa to attend that meeting and to direct *Our Husband*. Yung Hwa records also show that the film went into production from July 1948 to January 1949,³ and was released in Hong Kong on 5 February 1949 and in the Mainland since March of the same year. *Our Husband* was the first big-budget production of Yung Hwa with a modern backdrop, following *The Soul of China* (1948) and *Sorrows of the Forbidden City* (1948). According to press reports, the production crew scouted famous dancers from dancehalls across Hong Kong and Guangzhou, to shoot a ballroom scene in the film. It was described as a splashy 'fashion show' and 'bustling with chirping songbirds and splendid with flowers in full bloom'.⁴

Our Husband is a rather lavishing production. It opens with an airliner that is forced to land in Hong Kong and grounded for a night on the way to Shanghai, because of adverse weather conditions. An airplane set was built to simulate the stormy flight due to turbulence. The lead characters (played by Yan Hua and Sun Jinglu) encounter as they literally bumped into each other. The two later check into a luxurious hotel in Hong Kong. Later that night, the conniving courtesan goes into Yan's room, pretending to be frightened by the storm, and seduces him. Yan returns to his newly-wed wife (played by Li Lihua) in Shanghai after the one-night stand. Later during a business trip overseas, he encounters a shipwreck and his wife presumes him to be dead. Soon afterwards, the courtesan shows up at the doorstep of the new widow, claiming to be pregnant with Yan's child and demands money. Despite her anger and disgust, the widow allows the courtesan to stay until her baby is born. During this time, the relationship of the two women takes a surprising turn, shifting from antagonism to mutual support. After the baby is born, the two even become friends. At this time, the husband, who was presumed dead, reappears and the three's relationship hit the rocks. In the end, the courtesan quietly bows out of the picture as she cannot bring herself to destroy the happy family.

The dramatic plot of how two women fall in love with the same man, and struggle for love and benefits, but eventually forgive each other to raise the child—was seen before in Li's films. The Hollywood title, *The Great Lie* (1941), has also a similar storyline. Regardless of whether Li borrowed the idea, he tailored the story cleverly, by turning the two female characters from enemies into allies as they think the male lead was dead; in order to raise his child, they could only forgive and support each other. This strong ethnical sense better suited the taste of Chinese audience. Unfortunately, the film was released during the final days of the Chinese Civil War when the country was at a state of tumult. A story about the joy and sadness of the high society was also

inappropriate for the times, probably another reason why *Our Husband* lacked critical and public attention. Even by today's standards, the film is well-crafted, with sophisticated visuals, a popular subject matter and a classy style, an exemplar of Li's craftsmanship in the depiction of emotions and imageries.

In 1949, Li Pingqian left Yung Hwa to work for Great Wall Pictures Corporation that was under the helm of Zhang Shankun. Great Wall restructured in 1950 and Zhang left the company. Li stayed behind and continued to direct for Yuen Yang-an who was in charge. It was during this transitional period that Li produced one of his masterpieces, *Awful Truth* (1950).

Adapted from Wu Tieyi's novel, the script of *Awful Truth* was written by Doe Ching, an uprising screenwriter in post-war Shanghai. Set in post-war Shanghai when the Nationalist Government was in power and society was in a state of economic turmoil, it showcases the deterioration of social moral values and the worst extremes of human nature; surrounded by opportunists, financial criminals, hustlers and con artists, ordinary people can hardly protect themselves. The film features a number of storylines that are intricately woven together without becoming convoluted. All the characters are unique yet typical. The director was quite good at manipulating the performances, and confident in the use of space and pacing. The multiple storylines developed and unfolded naturally within the narrative. What's more remarkable is that both the screenwriter and the director approached the story realistically, instead of being led by the theme. The characters in the film are life-like and put in authentic social situations, making the film a tragi-comedy and not a farce, with both sarcasms and reflections. The film reveals how easily people fall victim to corruption to protect themselves and end up being victimised, during a time of social upheaval when 'it's every man for himself'.

Li was a longtime fan of the works that German director, Ernst Lubitsch made after moving to the US. One could even say that Li inherited Lubitsch's bittersweet sensibilities and 'dark' sarcasm in depicting human nature. Li was often criticised as cynical and not serious enough. Even though as a marquee director of the leftist Great Wall, he offered social critique through satires rather than criticisms, and without delving into ideological doctrines. Li opted for a more moderate approach in advocating ethics, embedded in allegories of life. These are evident in Li's early works at the Great Wall, such as *A Night-Time Wife* (1951), *Blossoms in the Heart* (1952), *Daydream* (1953), *Parents' Love* (1953) and *Tales of the City* (1954).

Forever Waiting (completed in 1955, released in 1957) is another masterpiece of Li that is rarely screened and talked about.

Based on a story written by Mo Qian, *Forever Waiting* marked the third collaboration between Li and screenwriter Chu Hak (with a pseudonym of Ding Ho here). The film begins with a governess (played by Hsia Moon) travelling from the Nanyang region to Hong Kong to work in a grand old mansion located below the Amah Rock in Sha Tin. The master of the house is away, undergoing treatment at a hospital. The mistress of the house (played by Li Tziang) is meek and reserved. The mother-in-law stays in her room all day long, devoting herself to Buddhist prayer. All housework is given to the two obedient housekeepers (played by Li Ciyu and Feng Lin). The entire family appears to be drained out of life except for two adorable children. The governess soon discovers that the mistress has been neglected by her husband and abused by her controlling mother-in-law. She also learns that the husband suffered a mental breakdown, pining for his former lover. Sympathetic to the plight of her female employer, the governess poses as the wife and begins a letter of correspondence with the husband, who turns out to be her long-lost lover. The two fell in love in Nanyang years ago. She lost contact of the man after he returned to Hong Kong and their child was taken away from her. Later in the film, the husband (played by Fu Che) returns home from the hospital. He sees the governess—his long-lost love, and confesses that he abandoned her because he lacked the courage to defy his imperious mother. The wife collapses when she learns the truth and her mother-in-law falls deathly ill. In the end, the governess takes her son and leaves the weak and sick 'husband' resolutely as well as the repressive and lifeless household, and strides away from the Amah Rock. *Forever Waiting* reminds people of Cao Yu's play *Thunderstorm* (adapted into a film by Zhu Shilin in 1961) and August Strindberg's *A Dream Play*, but with a simpler structure. It focuses on the entanglements between three women (the mother-in-law is mostly represented by her off-screen voice and only appears on screen in the last five minutes) and a man (he also only appears on screen for ten or more minutes and briefly in a few flashbacks of the governess). The story is told mainly from the perspective of the governess; the mysteries unraveled one by one through a series of flashbacks that ultimately clear the unspoken misunderstandings between the two women. In the end, the weak (including the mother-in-law, the husband and the wife) is defeated while the emotionally and rationally strong one transcends what Amah Rock represents—the burdens that the patriarchal society places upon women.

Li's works in Hong Kong are rarely so repressive and dark like *Forever Waiting*. Although repressive and dark, the film is not at all boring due to the director's clever use of suspense to keep audiences engaged. The restrained dramatic tension rewarded viewers with a well-earned catharsis at the end. Clearly influenced by Alfred Hitchcock's early Hollywood psychological thrillers, such as *Rebecca* (1940) and *Suspicion* (1941), the suspense genre turned out to be perfect vehicle for depicting the repressive emotions and human nature contorted by Chinese feudal traditions. There was nothing incongruous about such a transposition. Completely isolated in a countryside mansion, the female lead has to rely on her own wiles to uncover the truth; she must awaken to regain her confidence and sense of identity—the film's underlying themes are as 'modern' today as they were then. Li was also able to use a number of metaphorical imageries, such as the mansion's space and atmosphere, to heighten the emotional content within the narrative. The tropical aura of Nanyang in the governess's flashbacks are brilliantly juxtaposed with the cold and lifeless environment of the mansion in present day. The use of the two-storey space—upstairs and downstairs and the staging of actors at the closing scene effectively underscore the power dynamics between the characters, demonstrating Li's fastidious use of forms and techniques, as a testament to his craftsmanship. Though with a consistent restrained style, the film is nonetheless emotionally satisfying. *Forever Waiting* is a perfect fusion of dramatic content and cinematic techniques, demonstrating Li's delicate hallmarks as an auteur.

As for *Laugh, Clown, Laugh* (1960) that is frequently screened and revered as a masterpiece in his later years, I have little to add except for the following. The film tells the story of a father who hides the fact from his family that he has lost his job, and is forced to work as a performer that people despise. His secret is eventually revealed and ends in laughter as the family reconciles. Though quite a common trope in Mandarin and Cantonese cinemas at the time,⁵ the delicate treatment of the familial relationships in the film stands out from other features of the same period. For example, the skit that the desperate father resorts to perform draws on the forms of Peking opera, Yue opera, Cantonese opera and Lotus Rhyme, mocking the bitter social realities through his performance of a couple's quarrel. The film showcases the resolving of misunderstandings between the father and the daughter, and depicts folk singing as an art form—since it combines joy and sorrow, familial love and loyalty, and brings together high and low culture, striving for a higher state of consciousness. This is, perhaps, Li's philosophy of life in his later years: striving for self-contentment and being submissive

to the will of heaven, complying with the established world orders while maintaining independence.

Li announced his retirement in 1965 but continued to serve as a creative consultant. Before retiring, Li nurtured and actively starred up-and-coming talents, such as Hsia Moon, Shek Hwei and Fu Che in his films. In the early 1980s, Allen Fong, a New Wave filmmaker, who began his career in television, joined Sil-Metropole Organisation (the restructured company formed by The Great Wall Movie Enterprises Ltd, Fenghuang Film Company and Sun Luen Film Company) and filmed *Father and Son* (1981) and *Ah Ying* (1983). Li was very fond of Fong and was reportedly in defense of the young director when he was criticised for his slow pace of production. Li was never a part of the left-wing filmmaking group in the 1930s and 40s. When he relocated to Hong Kong, where due to its unique position, both left-wing and right-wing camps toned down the ideological rhetoric and amped up the entertainment quotient in their films to attract audiences and a bigger market share. Li's meticulous observations of human relationships and the world at large combined with his proficient craft of filmmaking, allowed Great Wall to forge a new path within the competitive market. He also contributed to the legacy of Hong Kong Cantonese and Mandarin cinemas with the varying styles and rich emotions in his many masterworks.

Translated by Sandy Ng

Law Kar, seasoned film scholar, former Programmer and Editor of the Hong Kong International Film Festival's 'Hong Kong Cinema Retrospective' from 1990 to 2000. Programmer of the Hong Kong Film Archive from 2000 to 2005.

Notes

1. 'Visiting Guotai's Film Shoot—Director Li Pingqian Flies into a Rage', *The Chin-Chin Screen*, No 1 (after relaunch), 1 January 1948 (in Chinese).
2. See 'General Manager Office Meeting Minutes' of Yung Hwa Motion Picture Industries Ltd (in Chinese).
3. The beginning and end of months in filming *Our Husband* were shown on a light bulb consumption record of Yung Hwa Motion Picture Industries Ltd.
4. Tsui King-yuk, 'Airmail from Hong Kong—Li Lihua Stars in *Our Husband*', *The Chin-Chin Screen*, No 33, 15 October 1948 (in Chinese).
5. *Humiliation for Sale* (1958), directed by Yan Jun, features a similar narrative but relies heavily on cheap laughs and melodrama, achieving far lesser results compared to Li's work.

對李萍倩香港時期電影的一些觀察

盧偉力

李萍倩二十年代中就參與電影製作，是中國電影文化產業開始時期的第一代電影工作者，早年嘗試當演員、編劇等崗位，不久主要當導演，先後參與「神州」、「天一」、「大中華百合」、「明星」、「藝華」、「光明」、「新華」、「華成」等公司製作。李萍倩一直在中國大陸，孤島時期、日軍佔領上海後都沒有離開，並參與了電影製作。抗戰勝利後，國民政府開始起訴「漢奸電影人」，嫌疑他「附逆」。1948年，李萍倩避走香港，為永華影業公司完成了一部電影之後，¹一直擔任長城影業公司（後改名為長城電影製片有限公司）主要導演，1965年退休前，為長城導演了27部不同類型的電影。

長城在五十年代初由袁仰安擔任總經理後，資本構成及管理與中國大陸有關聯，1952年，更與鳳凰影業公司、新聯影業公司一同連結為香港左派電影系統。後來，大概出現過一些內部暗湧，據說是1957年共產黨派人直接管理，袁仰安被迫離開「長城」。

三、四十年代的文化人在五、六十年代左派圈子的經歷和遭遇，是一個很有探討意義的大題目。這問題關乎香港左派文藝產業的所有權，以及左派文藝群體的主體性，應然與實然，究竟是社群自身主導、文化主導，抑或組織主導？另一方面，對於文化人來說，無論是原來就在華南活動，抑或因應時代變局南來的，在香港左派圈子中創作，涉及個性與群體認同的互動、文藝創作與教條主義的張力、文化認知與意識形態的辯證，當中專業技巧、藝術取向、個人性情與創作風格的關係，要用心於微地探討。

時代轉折再出發

李萍倩南來香港後第一套電影，是永華出品的《春雷》（1949），之後加入長城，拍攝《一代妖姬》（1950）、《說謊世界》（1950）。幾套電影的場面調度都很有氣派，鏡頭佈局以至題旨



《春雷》（1949）：以情慾為主軸，探索女性的自我意識。

Our Husband (1949) employs desire as the main narrative to explore female self-awareness.

體現不同的情態，部分場面甚至還有影像風格的探索。雖然三部電影的劇情都發生在大陸，但這只是創作人為拍攝自己熟悉的地域空間，或按演員氣質而選擇的藝術設定，可以看到一位壯年電影導演，在新的文化空間，躊躇滿志地要一展專業所長。

《春雷》由李萍倩編劇，這亦是她來港後唯一一部自編自導的作品。²情人、妻子二女爭一男故事，據1949年《青青電影》第六期，前此李萍倩已曾三度拍攝相類似故事，³第四次處理，或許可以說李萍倩借駕輕就熟的人物的情態，在新舊交替的中國，寄托自己的情懷。

李萍倩銳意在《春雷》中探索女性的自我意識。他以情慾為主軸，塑造了兩位性格截然不同的女性。一位是情人（孫景路），一位是妻子（李麗華），她們都是行動者。為了所愛的男人（嚴化），一位不顧對方已有未婚妻，仍然敢愛敢恨地採取主動；一位不顧禮儀，面對新派情慾女性的直接挑戰，由溫柔退讓轉為嚴厲決絕。兩位女性形象創造的突破，在於女性主體性的書寫，並

非在社會學層面（例如階級意識），而是在心理層面。二人發生關係後，情人竟然單刀直入與男方談判，毋須對方在物質上負責，或現實上完全佔有他，只要求維持一段確定的長久關係，間中短聚。女性作為情慾主體，在當時是非常新派的男女觀。另一方面，當丈夫沉船消息傳來，妻子要為所愛的丈夫留下血脈，忍辱負重與情敵修好，甚至照顧她，讓丈夫兒子出生，視為己出。

李萍倩的創作意圖不在於道德批判，戀愛與義務，平行交代。當中有一段優秀的蒙太奇，以鏡頭貫串三人，很有情韻。而沉船的消息，又連結著兩個女人（因為情人有了身孕），電影也把妻子與情人置放於同一畫框，並推近妻子成特寫。於是這電影的敘事結構可理解為象徵：男人消失後，情人也退場了，但妻子仍然生存著，並轉化為母親。美麗年輕的母親抱著嬰孩，跟兒子說：「你父親死得冤枉，你母親傷心，我們這一代無用，希望都在你身上。」片中又有一支搖籃曲，唱出同樣訊息。⁴這對白，是一代人的寄托，超越劇情，建立電影與時代的關係。

電影叫《春雷》，有三次各有意義的雷電。第一次烘托情人慾望，第二次彰顯妻子母性，第三次在影片結尾，情人醒覺，孩子呼喚：「我要我的媽媽！」是時代的春雷。

曾經有研究指出，李萍倩擅拍的愛情主題戲劇中，主要角色大都是一男兩女模式。⁵不過，這只是外部表層形態，若從戲劇行動或敘事框架的角度去看，則會對李萍倩的用心有更準確的把握。

譬如白光領銜主演的《一代妖姬》，也許最初是從主角本人放浪的社會形象切入而給電影起了這個片名，白光飾演的京劇紅伶小香水，愛著以醫

生身份掩護從事革命活動的男人（黃河飾），剛下場進後台，就與男人擁吻，不避閒人。紅伶是借革命之名維持二人關係，由上海到北京，甚至直闖男家，直面男人的妻子（龔秋霞飾）。白光在片中的形象與其銀幕下的形象互涉，但劇本寫下來，卻聚焦在小香水協助男人逃走，及情人與妻子合力營救被軍閥關押、行刑在即的男人，借捉革命黨情節來框構妻子與情人的對位關係，以戲劇行動調解兩個女人在情感與義理之間的張力。她們有怨懟、有寬容，有難堪懇求、有為愛忍辱。最後有誤解與殉情（也是殉義），可謂淋漓盡致。白光的演繹，嗔蠻有時，脆弱有時，情義有時，竟卸下妖姬之外套而以一個活生生的角色示人，是編、導、演高度合作與互相信任的成果。

跟《春雷》中的妻子與情人一樣，《一代妖姬》的妻子與情人都是行動者。妻子為了救丈夫，竟哀求情人犧牲身體，嫁給特務隊長（嚴俊飾）。對於妻子，這是難於啟齒的，要求情人以其對男人的愛，換取男人的生命；而情人為了所愛的男人，忍受凌辱，卻是愛的體現。李萍倩把焦點放在兩個女人身上，鏡頭佈局多變，以倍大特寫加上反差強烈的燈效展現內心，快速搖跟含著緊迫情緒，關鍵處配合大台位處理，是精彩的戲核。兩個女人在這場戲交了心，在平等的構圖中以「妹妹」、「姐姐」相稱。

歷時變化與藝術差異

在袁仰安主持長城時期，李萍倩與比他年輕的編劇合作，是得心應手的。他對不同題材與片段，在空間佈局、場面調度與電影語言上，會有不同設想，展現其對藝術專業的駕馭，也體現本人的情感傾向。



《一代妖姬》（1950）：以革命黨情節來建構妻子與情人的對位關係。

A Strange Woman (1950) uses the plot of revolutionary rebels to frame the inverse relationship between the wife and the lover.



《絕代佳人》(左)、《寸草心》(右)：同樣於1953年完成，一部為歷史巨構，一部為現代小品，對空間感的處理各有不同。

The Peerless Beauty (left), *Parents' Love* (right): Both made in 1953, one was a period epic and one was a contemporary feature; their approaches to space were completely different.

他於1953年同時導演了朱克編劇的《寸草心》與林歡（即查良鏞）編劇的《絕代佳人》，一部是當代香港小康家庭倫理劇，另一部卻是歷史宮闈政治戲。前者著重點染日常生活細節，泛現親情、友情及鄰舍關懷；後者交代英雄美人相知之心，卻為黎民忍辱負重，寄望未來。兩部電影的攝影師都是董克毅，對空間感卻有截然不同的處理，鐵路旁石屋的溫馨與宏偉宮廷的冷漠，各有畫面與鏡頭運動，李萍倩或許亦參與其中。兩部電影並置，在製作規模上，肯定是《絕代佳人》遠較《寸草心》大，但論場面調度、分鏡頭與鏡頭運用的用心，《寸草心》流動自如，較為優勝。導演把家庭倫理與室內空間混融，鏡頭近距離捕捉一家人的日常生活，天倫情韻，平淡中見真摯，小品中見天趣。

似乎李萍倩從《寸草心》中體會到相對狹窄空間的鏡韻，這或許跟其在香港的生活經驗有關。他與朱克在往後幾年間時有合作，拍出《都會交響曲》（1954）、《我是一個女人》（1955）、《逆旅風雲》（1957）等電影。在這些片中，沒有《春雷》、《一代妖姬》中的情慾女子，但女性依然是行動者，分別有背著母親接濟窮小子的小家碧玉、爭取參與社會工作的知識婦女，及為道義放棄人身自由不惜一死的歌女。

李萍倩與朱克合作緊密，可是，朱克亦在長城五十年代末的暗湧中被開除，這事在當時左派圈子或許都引起震動。⁶不知這跟李萍倩《笑笑笑》（1960）的製作有沒有關係，《笑》片中主角被公司突然解僱，這設定很有針對性，圈內人也許會感同身受。而這部電影拍於1958年，不知何故，要推遲兩年才在香港放映。

未完的結語

時代轉折，李萍倩借通俗傳奇故事中的女性，呈現倫理覺醒，調解道義與情慾的矛盾。在左派的長城公司，李萍倩以嫻熟的專業技巧，在意識形態，以及組織指令框架中展現了個性，呈現場面的同時流露情韻。但是，五十年代末的李萍倩在創作上似乎有點落差，他試拍的一些類型電影，例如《綠天鵝夜總會》（1958）、《新聞人物》（1960）、《佳人有約》（1960）等，都差強人意。直到六十年代，才從戲曲電影中找到藝術出路，拍出《三笑》（1964）等傑作。這些方面將來可繼續討論。

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註釋

1. 據說當時李萍倩亦有為永華拍由吳祖光編劇的《落難公子》，但影片沒有完成。
2. 李萍倩過去常常自編自導，但這是他來港後唯一一部自編自導的作品。
3. 〈永華新片「春雷」為李萍倩舊貨翻新！〉，《青青電影》，第17卷第6期，1949年3月5日；文中提及李萍倩第三次拍這類似故事的是《桃李爭春》，最早兩部片名則未有提及。
4. 該支搖籃曲歌詞為：「人生太匆忙／世界太緊張／我們來不及／我們趕不上／未來的事要你來擔當／你快快的大／你快快的長／乖乖的睡吧／媽媽來唱」。
5. 常菲：《李萍倩電影道路初探（1926年至1948年）》，中國電影藝術研究中心碩士學位論文，2010，頁45。
6. 朱克女兒朱穗平告訴我，她家原來與程步高導演一同分住在陸元亮廠長（清水灣電影製片廠）的樓中兩間房，後來不知怎的搬了出去。

Some Observations on the Films of Li Pingqian During His Hong Kong Period

Lo Wai-luk

Li Pingqian had been involved in film production since the mid-1920s and was among the first generation of filmmakers of the Chinese film industry. In early days, he had attempted to work as an actor, screenwriter, but soon took part as a director in productions for companies such as Shenzhou, Unique, Great China-Lily, Star, Yihua, Guangming, Hsin Hwa, and Huacheng. Li remained in the Mainland and participated in film productions during the Orphan Island period and the Japanese occupation of Shanghai. After the War of Resistance, the Nationalist Government began charging 'traitor filmmakers', and accused him of 'betrayal'. In 1948, Li arrived in Hong Kong to evade persecution. After completing one film for Yung Hwa Motion Picture Industries Ltd,¹ he became a prominent director for Great Wall Pictures Corporation (which was later renamed as The Great Wall Movie Enterprises Ltd) and directed 27 films of various genres for them until his retirement in 1965.

In the early 1950s, when Yuen Yang-an took over as the General Manager of Great Wall, its resources and management became connected with the Mainland. In 1952, it joined with Fenghuang Film Company and Sun Luen Film Company to become a chain of leftist film companies in Hong Kong. Later, there was probably some internal strife—rumoured to be the Communist Party sending a representative to directly run the company in 1957, Yuen was forcibly removed from Great Wall.

The experience and encounter of the cultural workers from the 1930s and 40s in the leftist circles during the 1950s and 60s, is a major topic worthy of exploration. It relates to the ownership rights of Hong Kong leftist cultural assets and whether, in fact and in theory, the collective subjectivity of Hong Kong leftist arts was self-driven, culturally- or party-driven. On the other hand, to the cultural workers, whether they had been active in South China or relocated southward due to political turmoil, creating works within the leftist circles of Hong Kong involved interaction approved by individuals and the social group, tension between artistic creation and dogmatism, as well as dialectics

of cultural recognition and ideology. We must examine in great detail the relationship among professional techniques, artistic direction, individual character and creative style within those works.

Time of Transitions and New Beginnings

The first film Li Pingqian made in Hong Kong was *Our Husband* (1949), produced by Yung Hwa. He then joined Great Wall and filmed *A Strange Woman* (1950) and *Awful Truth* (1950). All three films had majestic mise-en-scène, with framing that reflected the many different moods and themes. Some of the scenes even demonstrated explorations of visual styles. Although the plots of all three features were set in the Mainland, they were simply artistic decisions of the creator to tell his stories in a place he was familiar with, or based on the bearing and appearance of the cast. From these films, one can see a director in his prime in the midst of a new cultural milieu, confidently showing off his professional skills.

Our Husband was written by Li Pingqian. It was also the only film that he wrote and directed after his arrival in Hong Kong.² It was a story of two women, a lover and a wife, fighting over a man. According to *The Chin-Chin Screen* (5 March 1949, issue 6), Li Pingqian had already filmed three titles with a similar plot.³ In his fourth rendition, it could be said that Li used the sentiments of the characters that he was already familiar with, to convey his own sentiments for the China where old and new traditions intermingled.

In this film, Li undauntingly explored the female ego. With sexual desire as an axle, he created two women with distinctly different personalities: a lover (played by Sun Jinglu) and a wife (played by Li Lihua), both were women who acted. For the love of a man (played by Yan Hua), one woman boldly took action of her own accord, despite the fact that he already had a fiancée; the other woman ignored traditional courtesies and transformed from being gentle and demure to stern and coldly decisive, in face of direct challenges from the new-style sensual woman of desire. The

breakthrough in the creation of women's images came from subjective portrayal—on a psychological, rather than sociological (such as economic class differences) level. After having sex, the lover negotiated directly with the man: she neither needed him to be responsible for her material needs, nor to possess him outright in reality; she only asked for a long-lasting and stable relationship where they occasionally met. It was at the time a very new concept of gender roles with the woman being the sexually dominant one. On the other hand, when the wife heard of her husband's demise in a shipwreck, her wish to continue his bloodline forced her to mend the relationship with her enemy—the lover—even taking care of her until the birth of her husband's son and raising the child as her own.

The intention behind Li Pingqian's creation was neither moral criticism; nor the presentation of love versus obligation. There is an excellent montage in the film where the camera carries through the three of them with great sentimentality. News of the shipwreck linked the two women together again (because the lover is pregnant). The wife and the lover are set in the same frame, with the camera zooming into the wife for a close-up. The narrative structure of the film can thus be interpreted as a symbol: with the man gone and the lover backed out, the wife survived and turned into a mother. The young and beautiful mother holds the baby boy in her arms and tells her son, 'Your father died a wronged man. Your mother is sad. Our generation is useless. All hopes are on you.' There is also a lullaby in the film in which the same message is sung.⁴ These dialogues tell the wishes of a whole generation. They go beyond the plot, establishing a relationship between the film and the times.

The Chinese title of the film means literally 'Spring Thunder'. The thunder occurs three times in the course of the film, each at its significant moment. The first highlights the desire of the lover, the second shows off the wife's motherly instincts, and the third is at the ending of the film—the lover is enlightened and the child cries out, 'I want my mommy!' This is a spring thunderbolt of the times.

Studies have shown that among Li's specialty, films with a love theme, most are of the one-man-two-women format.⁵ However, this is only true on the surface. One must look at both the dramatic action and narrative framework to have a better grasp of Li's motives.

For example, for *A Strange Woman*, starring Bai Guang, its film title was probably created due to her unrestrained social image. Bai Guang plays the Peking opera star Xiao Xiangshui. The man she loves is a revolutionary who hides behind his other identity as a doctor (played by Huang He). As soon as she steps offstage, she hugs and kisses him, without thought of propriety. The opera star uses the revolution as an

excuse to maintain their relationship, from Shanghai to Beijing; even barging into his home to confront his wife (played by Kung Chiu-hsia). Bai's role in the film intertwines with her off-screen image. Yet the script focuses on how Xiao Xiangshui helps the man escape and how the lover and wife join forces to rescue the man who has been imprisoned by the warlords and is facing execution. The film uses the plot of capturing the revolutionary rebels to frame the inverse relationship between the wife and the lover, as well as the dramatic action to resolve the tension between emotions and justice of both women. They resent, forgive, beg embarrassingly, and suffer insults for the sake of love. In the end, there are misunderstandings and sacrifices for love (as well as for justice)—running the gamut certainly. Bai Guang's performance is filled with moments of aggression, of vulnerability and of sentimentality. She actually shed her 'strange woman' robe and presented herself as a vivid role—the result of impeccable cooperation and trust among the writer, director and actor.

Like the wife and lover in *Our Husband*, the wife and the lover in *A Strange Woman* are actors. In order to save her husband, the wife begs the lover to marry the head of the special agents (played by Yan Jun). For the wife, this is a difficult request to make; as it requires the lover, at the expense of her love for the man, to sacrifice herself in exchange for his life. The lover suffers insults and abuse for the man she loves—proving her love for him. Li Pingqian focuses on the two women, with varied framing such as extreme close-ups and high-contrast lighting to depict the characters' internal turmoil; quick follow-ups that reveal stressful emotions and key moments coordinated as stage sets constitute the brilliant climax scene. In this scene, the two women open up to each other, and within their equal status in the shot composition, they call each other 'sister'.

Going Through Changes and Artistic Differences

When Yuen Yang-an was in charge of Great Wall, Li Pingqian worked with younger writers, and achieved great success. He would present different subject matters and scenes in a diverse manner, in terms of space setting, mise-en-scène and film languages, to showcase his professional mastery of the art and to realise his personal emotional orientation.

In 1953, he directed both *Parents' Love*, written by Chu Hak, and *The Peerless Beauty* written by Lin Huan (aka Louis Cha). One is a family ethics drama, while the other is a historical political saga in a palace setting. The former emphasises the intricacies of daily life, showing family love, friendship and neighbourly care; the latter is about a hero and a beauty in love with each other but hold back their personal desires for the nation and pin their hopes on the future. Dong Keyi



《三笑》(1964): 六十年代, 李萍倩從戲曲電影中探尋出路。
Three Charming Smiles (1964): Li Pingqian found his breakthrough in Chinese opera films in the 1960s.

was the cinematographer for both films, yet he had an entirely different approach with space in the two films: the warmth of the little stone hut by the railroad tracks versus the coldness of the grand palace. The images and camera movements were completely different too, perhaps Li Pingqian had a hand in those. Comparing the two films side by side, *The Peerless Beauty* is without question grander than that of *Parents' Love* in terms of production scale. But for the mise-en-scène and motives of each cut and camera movements, *Parents' Love* is so fluid and natural, and therefore the better film. The director blended family ethics into his use of interior space, with the camera capturing the close-up of a family's daily life, depicting true familial love through the placidity of daily life, and showing something of universal interest through vignettes.

It seems that Li Pingqian internalised the effects of the camera in confined spaces in *Parents' Love* due to his experience of living in Hong Kong. He continued to work with Chu Hak for the next several years, making films such as *Tales of the City* (1954), *It So Happens to a Woman* (1955) and *Escape into Trap* (1957). These films do not feature a sexually motivated woman like in *Our Husband* and *A Strange Woman*, but the female characters still take the initiative, including a middle-class girl supporting financially a poor boy behind her mother's back, a female intellectual fighting to work in the real world and a songstress who gives up her personal freedom and ultimately her life for justice.

Li Pingqian and Chu Hak worked extremely well together, however Chu Hak was dismissed in the political turmoil that took over Great Wall in the late 1950s. This incident probably shook up the leftist circles at the time.⁶ It was unknown whether this incident was related to the production of Li Pingqian's *Laugh, Clown, Laugh* (1960), as the main character in

the story was also suddenly fired from his job. It was quite a targeting setting, and those in the film industry might feel it personally. Due to reasons unknown, the film's release in Hong Kong was delayed by two years.

An Unfinished Conclusion

At times of transition, Li Pingqian made use of women characters from popular dramas to depict moral awakening, and to resolve the contradiction between ethics and sexual desire. At the politically leftwing Great Wall, Li Pingqian, through his professional craftsmanship, displayed individuality within the ideological and organisational framework, depicting scenes with sentimentality. However, in the late 1950s, Li seemed to suffer from a bit of a creative setback. He tried to make films of the other genres, such as *The Green Swan Nightclub* (1958), *Girl on the Front Page* (1960) and *Rendezvous* (1960), but they were artistically disappointing. He found his artistic outlet in Chinese opera films only in the 1960s, when he made masterpieces such as *Three Charming Smiles* (1964), which may be discussed further in the future.

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Notes

1. It is known that Li Pingqian also directed *Mister in Distress*, written by Wu Zuguang, for Yung Hwa, but it was never completed.
2. In the past, Li Pingqian often wrote the films he directed, but this was the only film that he wrote and directed after his arrival in Hong Kong.
3. 'Yung Hwa's New Release *Our Husband* is a Redo Work of Li Pingqian!', *The Chin-Chin Screen*, Vol 17, No 6, 5 March 1949. While the titles of the first two films were not mentioned, Li's third feature with a similar plot, as noted in the article, refers to *Struggle for Spring*.
4. The lyrics for this lullaby are: 'Life is too rushed/The world is too tense/We can't make it in time/We cannot catch up/You will be responsible for everything in the future/Grow big soon/Grow up soon/Be good and sleep/Mama will sing for you'.
5. Chang Fei, 'A Preliminary Exploration of Li Pingqian's Film Journey (1926-1948)', China Film Art Research Center Master's Thesis, 2010, p 45 (in Chinese).
6. Chu Hak's daughter Chu Seoi-ping told me that her family and director Cheng Bugao used to live in two rooms in an apartment that belonged to the General Manager of Clearwater Bay Studio, Lu Yuanliang. Later they moved out but she didn't know why.

長城時期李萍倩 不一樣的現代風格

游靜



《都會交響曲》(1954)：以超現實的處理手法批判社會現實。

Tales of the City (1954) adopts a surrealist approach to criticise social realities.

跟很多人一樣，我第一部看李萍倩導演的作品是《說謊世界》(1950)。片末所有角色手扣著手如被綁上刑場的犯人，商人與警察同被清道夫掃進路旁的垃圾堆裡——這些視覺意象的運用，一方面跳出寫實敘事的框架，另一方面在結構上畫龍點睛，把電影中川流不息憑藉無盡謊言才能生存的人物串連起來，並具象地勾勒出新中國成立讓勞動人民把官商勾結的舊社會掃入歷史的塵埃這願景。¹牆上「抗戰勝利」四個大字在1948年的上海是諷刺也是寫實：日本侵略者終於走了，上場的卻是國民政府推出金圓券導致國家經濟崩潰，特權階級如「特派員」及其「乾兒子」等橫行霸道，窮人「孩子死了」、「老婆也死了」，卻換來總經理「死了省開銷」的冷血回饋，「抗戰」也許「勝利」了，人吃人卻從未竭息。七個人作為社會百態的代表——老闆王元龍、太太劉戀、交際花李麗華、情郎平凡、打字員韓非、偽特派員嚴俊及賽神仙蘇秦——圍著七條金條團團轉，最後被警局刮得一乾二淨。

「我讓人家在苦悶中樂了，我犯罪了?!」

跟他的左翼電影同儕，如朱石麟愛用推拉鏡頭緩慢展現層次豐厚的場面調度等不太一樣，李萍倩對社會的批判，多透過具體的諷喻與抽象的蒙太奇呈現。李萍倩善用定焦短鏡及跳接，節奏明快，寓悲憫於娛樂，使他成為中國文人電影傳統中的一個異數，而且，出奇地「現代」，這也是我以為李萍倩一直受中國電影研究冷待的原因之一。

寫實敘事，尤其以倫理通俗的類型出現，是老中國電影的主旋律，這與歐美電影持續地對各種電影視像語言的探索大相逕庭。我們只要把華特·魯特曼 (Walther Ruttmann) 導演的《柏林：都會交響曲》(Berlin: Symphony of a Great City, 1927) 與《都會交響曲》(1954) 並置就一目了然。前者是一部像散文詩式的紀錄片，歌頌德國的工業革命及城市文化帶來的繁華與便捷，捕捉都



《寸草心》(1953)：窮家女在遊樂場做「睡美人」一幕。

Parents' Love (1953): The scene with the poor daughter playing 'Sleeping Beauty' in the amusement park.

會生活各種視覺及速度上的刺激，充滿各種象徵「現代」的符號，如機器零件組裝、火車、報紙、時鐘等的大特寫及跳接，也有貧富、人獸間的對比，暗喻資源的不均；整體並沒有連貫的敘事。李萍倩在香港長城電影製片有限公司旗下拍的《都會交響曲》所指的「交響曲」並非來自線條與節奏，而是人物的多元及處境的起伏。但與同樣是批判香港社會現實的同期香港寫實主義電影如中聯電影企業有限公司的《危樓春曉》（李鐵導演，1953）、《父與子》（吳回導演，1954）、《金蘭姊妹》（吳回導演，1954）等相比，《都會交響曲》的處理手法顯得相對抽象及超現實。主人翁「余也人」（傅奇飾），開宗明義是一個代表「普通人」（everyman）的符號，故意強調角色的普遍性；一來就坐在宴會的餐桌轉盤上，顛覆了中國人「桌子不能坐」的基本禮儀，於是也叫敘事跳出了寫實的框架，鋪陳了片中接踵而來誇張得近乎「無厘頭」的人物塑造及情節；角色間如流水帳式的環環相扣，也繼承了《說謊世界》的結構。

這種以不寫實來批判現實、讓悲情盡付笑談的格調與胸懷，在《笑笑笑》（1960）中可謂發揮到淋漓盡致，也大大開展了中國喜劇類型片的論述格局。羅卡曾說：「中國電影中這樣一個結合儒、道精神而能適應社會轉變以求存的父親形象，實在少見。這是頗能體現李萍倩後期樂天知命，出世又能入世的生命哲學的圓通成熟之作。」² 儒道、出世與入世的結合，在電影中是透過對喜劇的自我反照來完成的，這大概也是李萍倩最夫子自道的地方，就是用最擅長的類型來論述這類型面對政治及商業壓迫下，特有的民主化意涵。

主人翁沈子鈞（鮑方飾）做了一輩子的銀行小職員卻因為年邁被突然辭退，只能如片中一句蓮花

落：「恨只恨日本人來把仗打，恨只恨這個世道全不顧窮人」，對帝國主義及資本主義的合流不無批判。但更獨特的，是李同時在電影中不斷反省「喜劇」的社會功能及將之論述化：「昨天死來今日生……人道生活苦，又說生活難，我說苦不苦來難不難，全瞧你把生活怎麼看？」、「一定要把醜的變成美，一定要把苦的變成甜」、「給生活迫緊的人輕鬆一下」、「我讓人家在苦悶中樂了，甚麼了！我錯了?! 我犯罪了?!」。沈反串演滑稽相聲，挑戰了中國電影以沉鬱悲情主導的文人傳統、家庭中的尊卑有序，更同時顛覆了女兒期待父親任商行白領，好加強她的相親籌碼，切合一家人講求面子、向上認同的都會現代性形象。最後女兒醒覺父親「您沒有老，比我們誰都勇敢！」，來回應貪新忘舊、重利輕義的1960年香港。「我自己也都不明白，我愛你們，我愛家裡每一個人，到頭來我錯了，這是從何說起……我受得住，你應該也受得住！」——這闕寫給喜劇悲欣交集的情詩，大概要再等三十多年，在周星馳及李力持的《喜劇之王》（1999）中才看到續篇。

批判資本現代

《寸草心》（1953）可以說是《笑笑笑》的香港本地版。廣東「鄉下仔」朱克的劇本被朱石麟認為「沒甚麼好拍」，³ 李萍倩卻獨具慧眼，拍出了香港電影中罕見的新界生活質感。電影本來以女兒江明（石慧飾）在初中畢業禮上發言的倒敘為結構，但前段三十多分鐘完全是生活瑣事的描寫：農田、火車的空鏡；鄰居幫忙把木瓜帶到市場去賣；姐姐替弟弟在屋外洗澡、洗至一半弟弟赤裸裸的跳到剛下班回家的爸爸（李次玉飾）身上；豬肉的價錢又漲了；叫鄰居同事一起來家中吃飯、拉二胡、唱曲；張伯伯帶來不倒翁，孩子沒見過，張伯伯扮不倒翁給孩子推倒；爸爸撥扇，孩子翻過身去睡，爸爸含笑抽煙……直至片長約38分鐘，父親從褲袋掏出銀行的薪水才展開電影的敘事命題：入不敷出，是否要犧牲女兒的學業？這樣的敘事風格直叫人想到意大利戰後的新寫實主義，中國左翼電影發展與意大利新寫實主義的關係實在需要更多的探究。⁴

片中有不少蒙太奇的運用，把一個本來在粵語片中常見的故事拍得相當風格化。如中段火車齒輪、遊樂場、飛船與江明在遊樂場做「睡美人」等相互溶鏡組成蒙太奇，把城市機械化與資本主義的階級壓迫直接扣連，跟對白上的吶喊：「為甚麼你不能讀書？為甚麼爸爸不能供你讀書？」、「都是我們這種人的錯！」呼應。根據朱克的回憶，片中關於車輪的視覺實驗，得朱克相助；雖說技巧借鏡粵語片，卻拍出另一種味道。⁵

下一代「新女性」

希望都在下一代。上一代犧牲了，讓下一代的路更光明，可能是李萍倩大部分電影的題旨。而下一代的「新」，往往是以女性作為典範（《寸草心》中女兒的名字喻意光明），這也繼承了中國左翼電影一直以女性作為中國現代性實驗場域的傳統。但在李萍倩的理想願景中，新女性的美善勇敢，往往超越自視過高、難以自控的男性形象。《我是一個女人》（1955）中愛面子的丈夫不讓太太出去工作，說：「我不能給人笑話！」，太太立即反駁：「你才是笑話！」。《寸草心》片末女兒體會到爸爸「太硬頸」，以為「單靠個人的力量」，結果適得其反，她卻憑藉親友街坊、老師同學的群策群力渡過難關，意味著以社會主義現代性來克服資本主義個體落單的困境，也把希望寄托在新一代（女性）的領悟上。今天翻看史料可見早期長城的成功確實是群策群力的結果，不但得力於如岳楓、陶秦、李萍倩、朱克等一眾編導人材，連袁仰安次女毛妹也立一大功。她在學校發現有位「高班姊姊驚為天人」，「就回家向爸爸媽媽報告」，從此發掘了「長城大公主」夏夢。⁶

毛妹拍處女作《三戀》（1956）（也是她在長城拍的唯一一部）時年僅16歲，與當時34歲的鮑方在片中談婚論嫁。跟小說《羅莉塔》（*Lolita*，1955年在巴黎出版，電影改編譯為《一樹梨花壓海棠》〔1962〕）相比，納博可夫（Vladimir Nabokov）把主人公亨伯特（Humbert）寫成像魔鬼一樣的人物，不惜在養女的飲料中下藥，要全盤操控羅莉塔以滿足一己的欲望，《三戀》中的殷兆宗（鮑方飾）卻是婉華的恩人，而且一直處



《三戀》（1956）：毛妹（前）與鮑方（後）演出一段香港電影罕見的跨代戀情。

The Three Loves (1956): Mao Mei (front) and Bao Fong (back) played a cross-generational couple that was rarely seen in Hong Kong films.

於被動，最後因誤解而鬧翻後更深深懊悔自己酒後的魯莽。難得的是電影在處理這段跨代戀情時不像小說《羅莉塔》般配以道德譴責的目光，反把二人的情感寫得相當可信，甚至肯定未成年少女婉華離家出走，追求自由幸福的勇氣和成熟，一曲〈哥哥你好胡塗〉盡訴「殷叔叔」這些成年男的愚蠢不濟。編劇林歡（即金庸）的貢獻自然功不可沒，但放在李萍倩的整體創作脈絡中看，《三戀》貫徹了李氏對人性深度的出格理解，挑戰西方現代框架的規範，冀望另一種現代性的勇氣與視野。

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註釋

1. 「它（長城）的出品可以在剛解放不久的中國放映，第一炮《說謊世界》（1950）是大堆頭製作，接下來的幾部影片都是主題正確，暴露舊社會的腐朽或黑暗，引起了當時嚮往中國擺脫以前的苦難而走上富強的海外僑胞的共鳴。」沈鑒治：〈舊影話〉，黃愛玲策劃：《香港影人口述歷史叢書（2）：理想年代——長城、鳳凰的日子》，香港：香港電影資料館，2001，頁256。
2. 〈《笑笑笑》〉（選映影片簡介），《香港電影八四及李萍倩紀念特輯》（第九屆香港國際電影節特刊），香港：市政局，1985，頁52。
3. 「鄉仔」是朱克的自況。「接著寫了《寸草心》（1953），寫家境困難的中學生，住在沙田，父親白天做工，晚上踩仔人單車載客，賺錢給女兒讀書。女兒不忍，偷偷去做工，父親誤以為她逃學，很是生氣，後來父女終於冰釋前嫌。寫了《寸草心》後，給朱石麟看，他說不太好，沒甚麼好拍，後來給李萍倩看，他說好，便拍了。這樣的事情真難說，兩個都是導演，一個說不太好一個說好。《寸草心》反應不錯，因為這類戲當時少有。」何慧玲撰錄，朱順慈、黃愛玲、郭靜寧、何慧玲訪問：〈訪談篇：朱克〉，同註1，頁178。
4. 《笑笑笑》的男主角鮑方曾在訪問中提到他受《單車竊賊》（*Bicycle Thieves*，第廿加〔Vittorio De Sica〕導演，1948）的影響，但至今沒看到關於李萍倩與意大利新寫實主義關係的資料。何慧玲撰錄，朱順慈、何慧玲、黃愛玲、盛安琪、阮紫瑩訪問：〈訪談篇：鮑方〉，同註1，頁104。
5. 「我和導演李萍倩合作較多，大家是非常要好的朋友。……李萍倩後來的戲，差不多都叫我來幫忙，他知我搞粵語片，我想到的他未必想得到。例如拍車輪的特寫，他不知怎麼拍，那我便說讓我來。你知啦，粵片古靈精怪的東西最多。我於是用一條繩拉著車輪，影機對著車輪，剛好繞了一圈，特寫最初一直看到車輪，接著看到車尾，然後看到整部車。」同註3。
6. 「『我爸爸想找你談談，你甚麼時候有空去看他一次？』……一個小女孩在我旁邊站著。她的臉好熟呀，突然，我想起，她便是我在長城片場門口遇到的小朋友。『你爸爸要找我？』『是的。』她對我笑著，『上次你不是見到過我爸爸的了？』『你爸爸是誰呢？』『他叫袁仰安。』『哦！』他是『監製』，他是長城公司的主持人……奇蹟降臨了，長城電影公司來找我了。」夏夢、傳奇、石慧等：《電影戲劇叢書之一：我的從影生活》，香港：長城畫報社，1954，頁23-24。

Li Pingqian of the Great Wall Era: A Different Modern

Yau Ching

Like many people, *Awful Truth* (1950) was my first encounter with Li Pingqian. The film ends with a scene showing the main characters arm-in-arm, like convicts about to be executed. Then the businessman and the police officer are powerfully brushed aside and buried in a pile of trash on the sidewalk. This emphasis on visual imagery pulls the film away from realism and enhances its structure by visually connecting a group of characters whose survival can only be maintained through lies, articulating a political vision of New China at the time in which the proletariat may swipe the old society of corrupt government officials and moneymakers into the dust of history.¹ The slogan ‘Victory of the Resistance’ that appears on a wall in 1948 Shanghai, is true, yet satirical at the same time: the Japanese invaders were finally gone, but the Nationalist Government’s policy of issuing Gold Yuan notes triggered the collapse of the nation’s economy; the privileged class like the ‘commissioner’ and his ‘godsons’ played the bully acts, while the poor, who suffered from the death of his child and wife received ice-cold remarks from the general manager—‘the dead alleviates the family burden’. The War of Resistance might have been won, but the weak continued to be preyed on. Representing different strata of the society, the seven main characters of the film—the businessman played by Wang Yuen-lung, his wife played by Liu Lian, the courtesan played by Li Lihua, her lover played by Ping Fan, the typist played by Han Fei, the fake commissioner played by Yan Jun and the fortune teller played by Su Qin—spend their entire time competing for the seven gold bullions, only to see them taken away by the police in the end.

‘Is it a crime to make depressed people happy?!’

Li Pingqian was not quite the same as his fellow left-wing filmmakers. While Zhu Shilin used slow camera movements to unveil his multilayered mise-en-scène, Li expressed his criticisms of society through overt sarcasm and metaphors, as well as abstract montages. Li excelled in using fixed focus shots and jump cuts in a quick tempo, to convey compassion

in the form of entertainment. These made him an anomaly, who was oddly ‘modern’, among traditional Chinese literary filmmakers. I believe this is why Li Pingqian has been overlooked in Chinese cinema research over the years.

Realistic narrative which appears in melodramas most often is the mainstream approach in classic Chinese cinema. This tradition is entirely different from the continuing exploration of the use of film language in European and American cinemas. This becomes evident when you compare Walther Ruttmann’s *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City* (1927) with Li’s *Tales of the City* (1954). The former is a prose poem-like documentary praising the prosperity and convenience brought on by Industrial Revolution and urban culture in Germany. Filled with symbols of modernity such as close-ups and jump cuts of machine parts, trains, newspapers and clocks, the film captures the visual and fast-pace thrill of urban living. But at the same time, it hints at the uneven distribution of resources through contrasts between the rich and the poor, as well as humans and animals. The film therefore lacks narrative coherence. On the other hand, the word ‘symphony’ in the Chinese title of Li’s *Tales of the City*, produced under the banner of The Great Wall Movie Enterprises Ltd, does not refer to the melodic lines or rhythm, but rather the diversity of characters and their ups and downs. Compared to realistic films that criticised the reality of Hong Kong society, and were made around the same time, such as The Union Film Enterprise Ltd’s *In the Face of Demolition* (directed by Lee Tit, 1953), *Father and Son* (directed by Ng Wui, 1954) and *Sworn Sisters* (directed by Ng Wui, 1954); *Tales of the City* handles its subject matter in a more abstract and surreal way. The main character of the film, Yu Yeren (played by Fu Che), represents an ‘everyman’, whose name underlines his normality; Yu arrives at a banquet and sits on the rotating tray of the dining table right away—subverting the Chinese code of manners that ‘the table should not be sat on’. It also breaks the film’s realistic narrative frame, paving the way for a continuous and almost exaggerated sense of irreverence in character design and plot development.

Characters in the story are interconnected, in the same way as *Awful Truth*.

This surrealistic approach to the criticism of reality and comedic treatment of tragedy is most exemplary in *Laugh, Clown, Laugh* (1960). The film also opened up the discussion of the comedy genre in Chinese cinema. Law Kar once said, 'It is rare to see a fatherly figure in a Chinese film that brings together Confucianism and Taoism, adapting to a changing society in order to survive. This is a mature work resulting from Li Pingqian's philosophy of life in his later days: striving for self-contentment and being submissive to the will of heaven, complying with the established world orders while maintaining independence.'² These philosophies were expressed through the self-reflexivity of comedy in the film—which is perhaps Li's self-reflection too. He examined how comedy, the genre that he excelled in, embodied democratisation under political and commercial oppression.

The film's protagonist, Shen Zijun (played by Bao Fong), spends his whole life as a lowly bank employee before being dismissed because of his old age. Yet, all he could do was like the Lotus Rhyme in the film, '*I can only blame the Japanese for bringing the war to our doorsteps; I can only blame the world for not caring about the poor*', an overt criticism of imperialism and capitalism. What's more unique was that Li repeatedly reflected on and theorised about the social function of comedies in the film: 'Yesterday's death brings about today's life...People say that life is bitter, life is tough. I'd say what life holds for you depends solely on how you see it?'; 'I have to turn the grotesque into beauty, and the bitter into sweet'; 'let those who are oppressed by life have a moment of relaxation'; 'What's wrong with bringing joy to those who are depressed? Is it a crime?!' The gender-reversed and comedic *xiangsheng* performance of Shen not only challenged the tradition of tragic compassion championed by intellectuals in Chinese cinema, but the hierarchy within families. Shen also subverted the social expectation of a daughter on her father's standing in the business world in raising her status when looking for a partner in marriage, as well as challenged the idea of saving face for the family and kowtowing to those who were superior perpetuated by the modern and urban society. The daughter's final awakening about her father that 'You're not old. You're braver than any of us!' was a slap in the face to the 1960s Hong Kong, which valued the new over the old and benefits over loyalty. 'I don't understand, either. I love all of you, I love every one of you in this family, but how is it possible that I'm the one in the wrong from the start...If I can bear it, then you can all bear it!'—this love poem that fused sorrow with joy and was dedicated to comedy, would only be echoed three decades later in Stephen Chow and Lee Lik-chee's *King of Comedy* (1999).

Criticising Capitalism of Modern Society

Parents' Love (1953) can be regarded as the Hong Kong version of *Laugh, Clown, Laugh*. The script, written by the Cantonese 'country bumpkin' Chu Hak, was regarded by Zhu Shilin as 'not much to make of'.³ However, it caught Li Pingqian's eye, and he captured the way of living in the New Territories that was rarely seen in Hong Kong films. The film originally began with flashbacks of the daughter, Jiang Ming (played by Shek Hwei) while giving a secondary school graduation speech. However, the first 30 and some minutes of the film depicts solely the bits-and-bops in life: scenery shots of farmlands and trains; scenes of neighbours helping to take the papayas to the market for sale; the sister helping the younger brother to bath outside the house, and the latter jumping naked into the arms of their father (played by Li Ciyu), who just reached home; the price of pork has once again gone up; neighbours and colleagues being invited to dine together, to play *erhu* and to sing; Uncle Zhang showing a roly-poly toy to the children who have never seen it before, and pretending to be a roly-poly toy to be pushed by the children; the father fanning his sleeping child whilst smoking a cigarette...Finally, at the 38-minute mark, the main story begins when the father takes his salary out of his pocket and realises that the family's spending exceeds what he brings in. Will he have to sacrifice his daughter's education? This narrative style reminds people of neo-realist films of post-war Italy; nevertheless, the relationship between the development of left-wing Chinese cinema and Italian neo-realism awaits further research.⁴

The film makes use of quite a number of montages to infuse style into a story that is frequently seen in Cantonese cinema. For example, shots of the train gears, the amusement park, the spacecraft and Jiang Ming playing 'Sleeping Beauty' in the amusement park dissolve to form montages, linking the notions of urban mechanisation and capitalist class oppression to the dialogues, 'Why can't you go to school? Why can't I afford your education?' and 'This is the fault of people like us!' According to Chu Hak, the visual experiment of the train gears in the film was done with his assistance. Even though the technique was borrowed from Cantonese cinema, the end result felt quite different.⁵

The Next Generation of 'New Woman'

Hope belongs to the next generation. How sacrifice of the older generation brightens the path of the younger generation is perhaps the theme of many Li Pingqian films. The 'new' generation is often symbolised by women (the daughter's name in *Parents' Love*, Jiang Ming, symbolises brightness), in line with the tradition of Chinese left-wing cinema in making women an experimental barometer of Chinese modernity. However, in Li Pingqian's ideal vision, the beauty,

kindness and courage of the new women often towered over men who lacked self-awareness and self-control. In *It So Happens to a Woman* (1955), the prideful husband does not allow his wife to go out and work, telling her that 'I can't be the subject of people's jokes!' The wife refutes immediately, saying 'You're the joke!' At the end of *Parents' Love*, the daughter realises that her father's stubbornness and insistence on relying only himself yielded the opposite of the intended result, and so she brings together the power of her neighbours, teachers and classmates to get over difficulties. It implies that modernity of socialism will overcome the plight of individualism in capitalism, and that hope is bestowed upon the enlightenment of the next generation (of women). History shows that the early-on success of Great Wall was a result of team efforts from writer-directors such as Griffin Yue Feng, Doe Ching, Li Pingqian and Chu Hak. Even Yuen Yang-an's second daughter, Mao Mei, contributed to it as she discovered 'a senior sister in school who is awe-inspiring' and 'went home to tell her parents'. This girl was the 'Crown Princess of Great Wall', Hsia Moon.⁶

Mao Mei made her screen debut with *The Three Loves* (1956) (also the only title she filmed at Great Wall). She was only 16 years old then and played the romantic lead opposite to the 34-year-old Bao Fong. In the novel *Lolita* (Vladimir Nabokov, published in Paris in 1955 and adapted into a film of the same name in 1962), the author describes the lead character, Humbert as a monster who would drug his foster daughter to fulfil his desires; whilst in *The Three Loves*, Yin Zhaozong (played by Bao), who saved Wanhua, is always in a passive position. Yin also regrets deeply of his alcohol-fueled and reckless actions after a fallout with Wanhua caused by misunderstandings. Instead of handling this cross-generational romance with moral judgment that was seen in *Lolita*, the relationship between the two protagonists in *The Three Loves* was made believable. It even justified the courage and maturity of Wanhua, a minor, in running away from home to pursue her freedom and happiness. The song 'Dear You Are Such A Fool' further satirises men like 'Uncle Yin' in the film, who are foolish and useless. Screenwriter Lin Huan (aka Jin Yong) of course deserves credits for all these. Yet when placed along with Li Pingqian's body of work, *The Three Loves* shows his thorough understanding of human nature. He challenged the norms of western modernity, in hopes of finding another kind of modern courage and vision.

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《我是一個女人》(1955)：刻劃新女性的美善和勇敢。

It So Happens to a Woman (1955) depicts the beauty, kindness and courage of the new women.

Notes

1. 'Great Wall's progressive fare, marshalled by Yuen, turned out to be wonderful moneymakers, locally and on the recently liberated Mainland. Its first film *Awful Truth* (1950) was a big-budget operation, followed by a series of thematically correct movies that exposed the corrupt and evil ways of "old society".' George Shen, 'Filmdom Anecdotes' in *Monographs of Hong Kong Film Veterans 2: An Age of Idealism: Great Wall & Feng Huang Days*, co-ordinated by Wong Ai-ling, Hong Kong: Hong Kong Film Archive, 2001, p 296.
2. *Laugh, Clown, Laugh* (Programme Notes), *Hong Kong Cinema '84 and A Tribute to Li Pingqian*, the 9th Hong Kong International Film Festival catalogue, Hong Kong: Urban Council, 1985, p 52.
3. 'Country bumpkin' was how Chu Hak described himself. '...followed by *Parents' Love* (1953), about a poor family's struggles to keep the daughter in school. Zhu Shilin didn't like it, but Li Pingqian liked it and shot it. Both are directors but they had totally different views. *Parents' Love* was well-received because such films were rare.' Collated by Ho Wai-leng, interviewed by Donna Chu, Wong Ain-ling, Kwok Ching-ling and Ho Wai-leng, 'Interviews: Chu Hak', see note 1, pp 188 and 190.
4. Bao Fong, male lead of *Laugh, Clown, Laugh*, mentioned in an interview that he was influenced by *Bicycle Thieves* (directed by Vittorio De Sica, 1948), but there has not been any information with regards to the connection of Li and Italian neo-realism. Collated by Ho Wai-leng, interviewed by Donna Chu, Wong Ain-ling, Angel Shing and Yuen Tsz-ying, 'Interviews: Bao Fong', see note 1, p 104 (in Chinese).
5. 'I worked a lot with Li Pingqian. We were good friends too. He knew I had worked on Cantonese films and that I could think of things he couldn't. Like when he didn't know how to shoot the close-up of a wheel. I used a rope to pull the wheel, with the camera pointing at it. The close-up shows the wheel, then the back of the cart, then the entire cart.' Collated by Ho Wai-leng, interviewed by Donna Chu, Wong Ain-ling, Kwok Ching-ling and Ho Wai-leng, 'Interviews: Chu Hak', see note 1, p 190.
6. "'My father would like to speak to you. When will you have time to pay him a visit?'...a girl was standing next to me. She looked familiar and suddenly I remembered she was the child I met at the entrance of Great Wall studio. "Your father wants to see me?" "Yes." She said with a smile, "Didn't you meet my father last time?" "Who's your father, exactly?" "His name is Yuen Yang-an." "Oh!" He is the producer and the head of Great Wall...It was a miracle. Great Wall had come for me.' Hsia Moon, Fu Che, Shek Hwei and more, *Film and Drama Programme Volume 1: My Acting Life*, Hong Kong: Great Wall Pictorial Publisher, 1954, pp 23-24 (in Chinese).

出神入化的古典敘事和 保守的現代實踐

劉嶽



《費貞娥刺虎》(1939)：陳雲裳(右)飾演刺殺逆賊的女英雄。

The Imperial Maid Fei Zhen'e (1939): Nancy Chan Yun-shang (right) played the heroine who assassinated the rebel.

李萍倩四十年代後期南來後執導的電影近三十部，名作不少，其中《說謊世界》(1950)及《都會交響曲》(1954)，以諷刺喜劇營造貪鄙人性和剝削社會的戲劇，久享盛譽。當然，這也歸功於兩片的敘事方法。兩片均用上多個主要人物敘事的模式，串連人物和章節，人物份量比較平均。李萍倩不仰賴主次太分明、各角色細節和感染力具明顯差異的慣常作法，他在結構方面下工夫，於是戲劇順勢垂直發展時，亦有橫向的網絡在編織變化。情節複雜了，仍表達得清楚流暢，無疑對編和導都是挑戰，亦是李萍倩成功之處。他不少作品都傾向多個主要人物或多人物的敘事形式，這些影片設立多個角色，導引更多脈絡和情節，在電影中創造種種眾生相，予觀者一幅又一幅社會圖像的感覺。

人物眾多 貨如輪轉

現在能看到李氏來港前的幾部作品中的《少奶奶的扇子》(1939)和《費貞娥刺虎》(1939)，即使有主配角之分，如前者最主要的人物應是



《母與子》(1947)：固然以母子情為主線，但亦旁及其他支線。

Mother and Son (1947) has no doubt a main narrative that depicts the relationship between the mother and son; it also branches out to include other sub-narratives.

「少奶奶」的母親，後者是費貞娥，可兩片開始時分別以不少篇幅鋪敘家庭歷史和饑荒景象，主角過後才登場。《少》片中「少奶奶」的母親又將影片帶進十里洋場，通過多個角色的欲望眼神和蜚短流長，展示所謂上流階層的男女關係，後來母親救女的高潮戲反而略顯孤立。費貞娥從逃離家鄉至宮廷殉難，確有數場聚焦她的戲，也說了不少忠君愛國的台詞，但影片還有另外兩個主要人物，一是憤世嫉俗投入李自成營下的士子，一是亡國之君崇禎帝。崇禎帝尤其重要，他從費貞娥口中得知民間的真實苦況，竭力維繫國祚，卻被貪官瞞騙遺棄，最後孤伶自縊，留下「文武大臣均可殺百姓不可殺」的字句。崇禎帝佔影片中段頗多戲份，足以和費貞娥構成雙主角的格局。此外，飢民、流寇、宦官及後宮等不同身份的角色都有發言機會，說出追求名和求食求生的心底話，每每和費貞娥的身影與言辭對立，拼湊出一幅甲申之變的圖像。至於戰後的《母與子》(1947)，主要劇情固然是母子的離散重逢，但母親年輕時的經歷，後來話劇團的人事生活，同樣情節豐富，出現多個有功能及意義的人物。



《說謊世界》(1950)：拜金社會中的眾生相。

Awful Truth (1950) depicts the many scenes of a mammonistic society.

《說謊世界》和《都會交響曲》是最為彰顯李氏多人物敘事法的力作，而各有千秋。《說》片是戰後上海經濟紊亂，十個人物互相欺騙的故事。十人多為投機行騙、出賣色相的男女，沒有一個中心人物，但各人都有其行騙原因、心理背景及獨特形象。影片在開首點明時代背景後，即順時發展，李氏調度人物和戲劇的法寶之一是七根金條和二千美金，通過偷騙搶的手段，在各人之間轉手，翻來覆去。

利用物件如金錢、珠寶、彩票、甚至衣服的多次轉手流傳，串連多個人物和章回，《說謊世界》前後不乏例子，包括法國的《橫財一百萬》（*Le Million*，雷內·克萊爾〔René Clair〕導演，1931）、上海的《壓歲錢》（張石川導演，1937）、荷里活的《衣冠禽獸》（*Tales of Manhattan*，朱里安·杜維威〔Julien Duvivier〕導演，1942），後來中聯電影企業有限公司也拍了《錢》（吳回導演，1959）。李萍倩別出機杼，避免此類影片幾乎每一章或每一場都出現主題物件（加以獨立鏡頭或特寫）的做法，片中的金銀財帛不是給包起藏起，便是在投資市場輸掉，或成為人物口中的數字，鏡頭也不刻意強調，甚至於某段時間不見於銀幕。這樣的技法倒可以與魔術或騙術比較。

空間進出 回憶連接

物件時隱時現，佈景卻是時時可見。一般觀眾愛看故事，忽視人物所處的空間，李萍倩對此卻頗為經營，利用空間設計，推動多人物佈局的戲劇進展。因此，《說》片中每個辦公室、住家，幾乎都設立了幾重空間，讓各方人物進出匯聚，行騙後逃逸。交際花的現代公寓面積看來不大，但除了在不同的房間走廊拍攝外，鏡頭擺位和構圖亦多變化，常予人新鮮感，好像有不少間

隔，但很難整理出完整的版圖。這裡有多場戲發生，多個人物出入，有時你來我走，不時共處一屋而互不察覺，像是一張有罩的羅網。老情人的公司辦公室佈局倒是清楚，李萍倩用人物活動賦予生機。老情人叫已升為經理的打字員坐在他的總經理房外，派美金還給債主，同時有員工進總經理房，老情人給他一些美金，從房裡暗門走到走廊，再進辦公室正門，在眾人面前交給經理，說是某商號存入，經理著他送入總經理房。把戲如是玩了幾次，債主都以為此公司財政趨佳，紛紛把剛討得的美金投回。這場戲多數人物位置不變，僅一兩個職員來回穿梭辦公室內外三重空間，一樁騙案便歷歷在目，趣味橫生。此外，賽神仙的架步不見天日，並以布幔間隔空間，予人虛張聲勢的神秘感。飯館楓植樓，大廳邊緣是用布幔隔出的一間間廂房，面對像舞池的大廳，廂房布簾半掩，大廳和廂房的人物互相窺視猜度，說不清哪裡是表演區，哪裡是觀眾席。片末，各人物哄鬧著從警察局正門進去，鏡頭推往後門，見他們一個跟著一個垂頭喪氣走出來，估計金條美金都遭警察扣下。電影至此，鏡頭無須走進警察局描寫過程，不再營造人物的表演和譏諷的氣氛，這一鏡頭提煉了整體故事，也最真切地履行多人物敘事和進出空間的形式，抽離而有力，可見創作者頗成熟的藝術思考。

《說謊世界》像是刻意亂成一團的圈圈，梳理不來，片末一組鏡頭點明概念，《都會交響曲》則先居高臨下，將每個人物、每條脈絡交代得清清楚楚；《說》片順時敘事，密集緊張，《都》片則由一個人物於現在做多次倒敘，接著往前推進，兩片結構明顯不同。《都》片開首，失業窮人余也人以為中了馬票，設宴慶祝，逢迎者搶著坐他旁邊，余於是坐到圓飯桌上的轉盤，位處中心，像鐘錶的針臂撥動，逐一介紹圍桌賓客。這是非常形象化的設計，影片將自身的敘事方法和盤托出。《說》片可說是全知觀點敘事，而《都》片的余坐在轉盤上，擔當說故事的人，為每組人物說開場白，隨著影像閃回昨天。他的話先如橋樑，再引領過渡時空，後再變成倒敘場景的旁白。旁白有時與倒敘場景的聲音重疊，第一段介紹二房東，早上住客搶水，收音機播放粵曲，小孩玩玩具車，聲影統一，一片吵鬧，加上余的旁白：「取水需要排隊，隊員個個都像生龍活虎一樣。我呢？就住在這閣樓裡面。大人、孩子、無線電，好像一支大的交響樂。」第二段倒敘是余向冷漠的老同學求救，影像見余走入辦公大樓，在走進辦公室的一刻，余的旁白出現：「一進辦公室的門，茶房盯著我上下打量，問我：『你找誰？』我說我還是看錢經理，他向裡一望，紅燈亮著，他叫我坐著等一會兒……」逾一分鐘的倒

敘都是昨日辦公室的影像，並無現場聲音，和茶房的對話亦由余的旁白交代，直到鐘聲響起，余仰頭望上，接掛鐘特寫，才開始聲影同步。

幾場倒敘中，余也人作為敘述者並非一直在場，譬如茶房趕走他後，老同學和交際花在辦公室裡商量買他的文憑，或他即使在現場環境中也沒有察覺，像洋服店店員發現他穿上的西裝腋下穿孔。主觀敘述中插入隱形全知觀點，流暢無縫，這是現實中不可理解，卻是以古典電影（classical cinema）敘事角度足以理解的好例子。影片從余也人現在的角度，將四段倒敘接駁起來，便是一天內順時發生的事情，藉此勾勒幾個都會人物的輪廓，如失業者、二房東、小商人，及南來政客變身的地產商；並建立電影化的社會實體空間，如低下層擠迫的居住環境、國粵雙語都通行的店舖、可為客人免費加飯的小餐室、買來填海的牛皮，當然，還有一個中馬票的幻象。片長約九十分鐘，第四段倒敘從三十四分鐘開始，延續至片末前約四分鐘，前事是余赴宴途中隨手把藏有馬票的褲子扔進海，溶接他現在坐在桌中驚覺犯下大錯，這兩個鏡頭中間跳過的劇情，應是片首賓客在餐廳胡鬧，老同學和交際花挾著他來赴宴。如此看來，《都》片結構亦有其複雜跳躍之處。

點明本質 半個現代

眾人繼而從餐廳追逐往海邊，（除樂蒂外）跳海找馬票，找到後看清楚竟然是過期的，被捧起的余也人再跌進海中，大家呆看，好像沒頂了。鏡頭溶接到描繪此鏡頭的炭筆畫，畫家的筆仍在畫上揮舞，淡出，劇終。回溯片首，長城公司標誌後，先見報章上的馬票新聞，接著一男子（飾演余也人的傳奇「飾」）立於畫板前閱報，仰頭。接著片名和演職員名字逐批顯現，名字下的襯圖是一隻持筆的手，正速寫都市建築和一個個人物，與片末一樣是快鏡。這個首尾構成的框架，比《說謊世界》黑沉沉的表現主義結局輕鬆，但閱報男子／余也人／傳奇／畫家（的手）曖昧並存，揮舞的手無疑是「畫家」的，而沒有鏡頭呈現閱報男子／余也人／傳奇任何一人持筆作畫，何況全片還以簡約的速寫開啟和完結拍攝自現實的電影影像。如果認為《都會交響曲》或電影應該是寫實的，李萍倩的電影決定可能在指引我們瞭望更開闊的藝術境界。不論是寫實主義電影，或批判現實、觸動人心的戲劇，本質上仍是藝術的想像和創作。投射在銀幕四方格上的本來就是故事，觀眾可能看得入迷，而李萍倩在《說》和《都》兩片首尾的設計，便是在四方格裡再安置一副框架，指示戲中有戲。這樣，影片便不是直接地把觀眾吸進故事之中，若有政治宣傳，也

在融入抽象或形式轉換的藝術方法中顯得柔性順暢。必須一提，這種框架風格低調，終究沒有打碎觀眾的夢。

1965年，《艷遇》和《烽火姻緣》這兩部李萍倩四十年導演生涯的最後作品公映。後者是精美的越劇電影，《艷遇》的片名則讓人聯想，以為片中陳思思飾演的舞女和傅奇所飾的士司機有浪漫關係，其實不然。電影開首，一電影導演赴新加坡拍片前，囑咐電影編劇搬進他家，兩星期內寫成一部劇本，必須是喜劇，片名——《艷遇》。接著，舞女、的士司機、編劇及其他人物之間的故事，構成李萍倩導演的《艷遇》，而且是多人物佈局（舞女和的士司機並不特別突出），營造不少錯摸和誤會的情節。舞女正好住在導演家的對窗單位，編劇向人評論舞女在家的生活，片中也出現印有《艷遇》字樣的劇本封面，編劇又說劇本中不少材料，都是舞女「給」的。至於這本由片中虛構的編劇所寫的《艷遇》劇本到底寫些甚麼？李萍倩的《艷遇》是否有些劇情搬演自片中的劇本？甚或片中編劇於片首接下工作後的劇情是否也來自其劇本？影片沒有明顯的指示。頗見於六十年代新浪潮和荷里活電影的反照手法，李萍倩用以開局後，不做發揮。影片沒有為編劇角色設立明顯的創作者視角和距離，編劇很快投入李萍倩的《艷遇》中，與其他人物共生情節，缺乏抽離或出入於主敘事的鏡頭和情節，因此影片不見「劇本」和「電影現實」並行、對比的關係。

《說謊世界》和《都會交響曲》的多人物結構和首尾框架，自四十年代古典敘事電影以來已有長足發展，且兩片人物和場景的轉換比較節制、流暢，沒有人物走出故事的危險（令觀眾感到混亂），電影工作者和觀眾均熟悉怎樣拍和怎樣看。《艷遇》引入的後設敘事元素對當時香港觀眾無疑是一個挑戰，香港電影工作者也須在構思和技藝上掌握這種比較新穎複雜的敘事形式，豈可一蹴而得。《笑笑笑》（1960）與此相似，但人物身份是娛樂表演者，在舞台上藉台詞表達自我反省，並不突兀。李萍倩拍《艷遇》時，則僅淺嚐，未貫徹處理。李萍倩雖與歐美現代電影藝術的完整實踐失諸交臂，但他明顯對此有一定的理解，亦做了地域化的創作調適。這方面是探索李萍倩和其一代華語電影工作者的電影藝術的一個切入點。

劉鏃，從事電影研究，參與編輯書籍包括《香港影人口述歷史叢書之六：龍剛》和《異色經典——邱剛健電影劇本選集》等，曾為香港電影資料館節目「〔編+導〕回顧系列二：岳楓」擔任客席策劃。

Magical Rendition of Classical Narratives and Conservative Implementation of Modern Practices

Lau Yam

Li Pingqian directed nearly 30 films after relocating to Hong Kong since the late 1940s. Many of them are famous works, with *Awful Truth* (1950) and *Tales of the City* (1954) especially celebrated for the depiction of human greed and the mechanisms of an exploitative society through satirical comedy. The narrative approach of the two features undoubtedly played a key role in their success. Both films utilise the multiple-protagonist schema to connect the characters and plot, with the weighting of each individual remaining relatively even. Li did not rely on the usual practices of having clear-cut primary and secondary roles with each character's details and appeal being distinctly different. He put a lot of effort into structuring, so that while the main storyline progressed, changes were also taking place in the periphery. Maintaining clarity and fluidity as the plot became increasingly complex was obviously a challenge for both screenwriters and directors, and that was where Li excelled. Many of his works feature a multitude of characters or multiple-protagonist narrations, thereby giving rise to numerous contexts and storylines. The myriad of individuals created in his films gives viewers a sense that they are looking at the very reflection of society itself.

Continuous Transfer of Key Objects Among Multiple Characters

In *The Young Mistress' Fan* (1939) and *The Imperial Maid Fei Zhen'e* (1939), two of the few of Li's works prior to his move to Hong Kong that can still be seen today, it is clear the mother of the 'young mistress' and Fei Zhen'e are the main roles but the films begin with a long, thorough background explanation—an introduction to the family history in the former and scenes of famine in the latter—before the protagonists make their first appearance. The mother in *The Young Mistress' Fan* also takes viewers to the glamorous metropolis, where relationships between so-called upper class men and women are conveyed through the desirous glances between various characters and the rumours that surround them. The climax, where the mother rescues her daughter, seems slightly out

of place by comparison. Meanwhile, *The Imperial Maid Fei Zhen'e* tells the story of Fei Zhen'e, who flees from her hometown and ends up in the palace, sacrificing her own life for the empire. Although a number of scenes do indeed focus on her while she delivers many lines of dialogue with patriotic undertones, there are actually two other important characters—one being the cynic scholar who joins Li Zicheng's camp, and the other the Emperor Chongzhen, the ruler of the defunct Ming dynasty. The latter is particularly significant. He learns of the people's suffering from Fei and tries to sustain the dynasty's ruling span, but is deceived by corrupted officials who hang him out to dry. Left on his own, he ultimately commits suicide, leaving behind the words 'all civil and military ministers can be killed, but the people must be spared'. Emperor Chongzhen is featured in quite a lot of scenes, putting him on an equal footing with Fei. Furthermore, other characters such as the starved commoners, bandits, court officials, and concubines all have the opportunity to make their voices heard. Some speak candidly about their pursuit of status and riches while others speak of their only wish for food and survival, in sharp contrast to Fei's words and what she stands for, adding up to a full picture of the Fall of Beijing in 1644. As for *Mother and Son* (1947), which was made in the post-war period, the main plot obviously revolves around the separation and reunion of the titular characters. However, the mother's experiences during her younger days and the goings-on in the drama troupe in the later parts of the film are just as detailed. There is a host of characters who serve certain functions and hold particular significance throughout the work.

Awful Truth and *Tales of the City* best illustrate Li's expertise in multiple-protagonist narration, with each having its own distinct merits. The former is a story of ten people cheating each other amidst the economic disorder in post-war Shanghai. The majority of them are opportunistic men and women who are willing to sell their bodies and souls. There is no central character; everyone has their own reasons for swindling, psychological backgrounds and unique

personas. The events play out in chronological order after the setting is made clear at the beginning of the film. Two of the devices which Li utilised in connecting the characters and moving forward the plot are the seven gold bullions and the US\$2,000 that constantly change hands through stealing, robbing, and cheating.

There are many films other than *Awful Truth* that use things such as money, jewellery, lottery tickets, and even clothing as travelling or recurring objects to connect multiple characters and the overall plot. Examples include *Le Million* (directed by René Clair, 1931) from France, *Lunar New Year Money* (directed by Zhang Shichuan, 1937) from Shanghai, Hollywood's *Tales of Manhattan* (directed by Julien Duvivier, 1942), as well as The Union Film Enterprise Ltd's *Money* (directed by Ng Wui, 1959) that came later. The key objects appear in most of the scenes in such works (shown in many individual shots or close-ups). However, Li exercised his creativity and refrained from doing so by having the valuables wrapped up and hidden away, lost in the investment market or just mentioned as a set of figures by the characters. They are not highlighted within the shot, and sometimes they even disappear from the screen. This technique is somewhat comparable to a magic trick or a con.

Utilisation of Spaces and Connection of Memories

While the recurring objects are kept out of sight every now and then, the backdrops are visible at all times. In general, audiences like to watch the story unfold and tend to overlook the spaces that the characters are in. Li, however, put quite a lot of effort into this aspect, using physical settings to facilitate the coexistence of multiple characters as well as plot development. Consequently, different spaces were created within almost every set, be it office or home, for the characters to move in and out of, serving as escape routes for the scammers and thieves. The escort's modern apartment does not seem that large, but it ends up looking rather spacious because the scenes are shot in various rooms and corridors. Moreover, changes in camera position and composition also give rise to new perspectives, making it difficult to figure out the flat's actual layout. Many scenes take place in the apartment, sometimes with one character entering and another leaving, and sometimes with several of them being there at the same time but without knowledge of each other's presence, much like a net encased in a shroud. The office layout of the escort's older lover, on the other hand, is very clear. Li injected life into the scene through the characters' coming and going. The lover asks the typist, who has been promoted to manager, to sit outside his room and pay back the money to the debt collectors. One of his employees then goes into his room, where he hands him some US banknotes. The employee exits via a secret door to arrive in the hallway, and walks

into the office again through the main entrance. He then hands the cash over to the manager in front of everyone, saying that it is a deposit from a certain company, after which the manager sends him back into the general manager's room. This charade is repeated several times and tricks the debt collectors into believing that the company is doing very well, prompting them to 'invest' all the money they have just collected back in the company. The blocking of most of the actors remains the same throughout this scene, with only one or two employees shuttling back and forth between the three different spaces inside and outside the office. This presentation of a scam taking place in plain sight adds much amusement to viewers.

Meanwhile, the shaman's lair never sees the light of day and is partitioned with drapery to give people a sense of pretentious mystery. As for the restaurant, the booths in the periphery of the ball-room like dance hall are partitioned using curtains, making them partially obscured. The people dancing in the hall and those inside the booths steal glances at each other, blurring the line between the observer and the observed. At the end of the film, all the characters enter the police station through its main entrance while causing a commotion. The camera then moves to the back door, where we see them walking out, one after another, with their heads hanging down. From this, viewers can deduce that the gold bullions and money have all been confiscated by the police. At this point, it is unnecessary to show audiences what happened inside the police station or create another stage for the characters to act out and be ridiculed. This shot takes the overall story to another level, and executes multiple-protagonist narration and space utilisation in the most authentic way. The ability to create impact while remaining detached is testament to the creator's mature artistry.

Awful Truth may seem like a deliberate mess that cannot be untangled, but the sequence of shots at the end clarifies the whole message. *Tales of the City*, on the other hand, begins with a clear overview presentation of each character and storyline. The structures of the two films are noticeably different. While the plot of the former unfolds in chronological order and is tightly paced, the story in the latter progresses as one of the characters recounts in the present time a series of events in the past one after another. At the beginning of *Tales of the City*, the poor and jobless Yu Yeren thinks that he is the winner of the sweepstake ticket and holds a banquet to celebrate. Opportunists jostle to sit next to him, and he ends up sitting on the rotating tray placed at the centre of the round table, introducing the guests one by one like the arms of a clock. This is a very visual representation of the first-person narrative. While *Awful Truth* tells the story from a third-person omniscient point of view, Yu, who sits on the rotating tray, acts as the first-person narrator of *Tales of the City*. His introduction



《都會交響曲》(1954)：一場馬票鬧劇，以多人物結構為框架，道出人生百態。

Tales of the City (1954) illustrates the vicissitudes of life through a multiple-character farce that revolves around a sweepstake ticket.

of each group of characters is followed by flashbacks to yesterday. His lines first serve as a bridge, taking viewers through time and space, and eventually become an oral account of the events that have transpired. The narration sometimes overlaps with the sounds in the flashbacks. For example, in the first of such sequences where the sub-lessor is introduced, we see the tenants scrambling for potable water in the morning and children playing with toy cars while Cantonese opera is heard broadcasting on the radio. Yu's narration comes in over the hubbub, 'We need to line up to get water. Everyone in the queue is like a ferocious beast. Me? I live in this attic. The adults, children, and radio are like one giant orchestra playing a symphony.' The second flashback is about Yu asking an unsympathetic old classmate for help, and we see him enter a commercial building. His narration begins the moment he sets foot in an office, 'As soon as I walked through the office doors, the janitor looked me up and down and asked, "Who are you looking for?" I said I was looking for Manager Chin. When he glanced inside and noticed that a red light was on, he told me to sit and wait for a while...' This flashback lasts for more than a minute and fills with images of the office as it was yesterday but without sound. Yu's conversation with the janitor is also simply explained in the voice-over. It is only until Yu looks up upon hearing the bell ring and the shot cuts to a close-up of the wall clock that the sound and image become synchronised.

Yu is not always present in the flashbacks despite his role as the narrator. The scene, in which his old classmate and the escort discuss buying his diploma after the janitor has driven Yu out of the office, is one such example. Sometimes, Yu is there but he does not keep check of all things, such as when the employee of the tailor shop discovers that there is a hole on the armpit area of Yu's suit jacket. The interspersed of an invisible omniscient viewpoint in the subjective narrative is smooth and seamless. This is incomprehensible in real life, but perfectly

fathomable within the narrative of classical cinema. The film uses Yu's current point of view to connect the four flashbacks, providing an account of the events that took place the day before in chronological order. Li uses the flashbacks to outline several of the metropolitan characters, such as the unemployed man, the sub-lessor, the small business owner, and the politician who moved south and became a real estate developer. A cinematic representation of the real society is also created, exemplified by the cramped living environment of the lower class, shops that do business in both Cantonese and Mandarin, small restaurants where free rice refills are offered, and land which has been bought for reclamation. Of course, there is also the fantasy of becoming the winner of the sweepstake ticket. The fourth flashback starts 34 minutes into the hour-and-a-half feature, and finishes around four minutes before the end of the film. It recounts how Yu casually threw the trousers containing the sweepstake ticket into the sea on his way to the banquet, and dissolves to the character sitting in the middle of the table in the present time, horrified by the realisation of what he has done. The parts that have been skipped between these two scenes are likely to be the guests' bantering at the restaurant and Yu's old classmate and the escort taking him to the banquet at the beginning of the film. From this point of view, the structure of *Tales of the City* also comprises some complex omissions.

Focusing on the Essence and Being Half Modern

Everyone then rushes out of the restaurant to the seaside and (with the exception of Betty Loh Ti's character) jumps into the ocean to look for the sweepstake ticket. After finding it, they discover that it is actually expired. Yu, who was originally lifted up, falls back into the sea. The characters look on, befuddled, as he seemingly drowns. The scene then dissolves to a charcoal drawing depicting that very

same shot. With the artist's pencil still drawing, the film fades out and ends. Recalling the beginning of the feature, the first thing that appears after the Great Wall logo is an article about the sweepstake ticket in the newspaper. Next, we see a man (Fu Che, who portrays Yu) reading the newspaper in front of a drawing board and looking up. The title of the film then comes onto the screen, followed by the names of the cast and crew in batches. Underneath the text is a hand holding a pencil which is sketching the city's buildings and the characters of the film. Just like the ending, it is shown in fast motion. This framing device, formed by the opening and the ending, makes *Tales of the City* more relaxed than the sombre expressionist conclusion of *Awful Truth*. However, much ambiguity surrounds the man reading the newspaper/Yu/Fu Che/the artist (the artist's hand). The drawing hand undoubtedly belongs to the 'artist', but the camera never shows the person drawing with the pencil. Moreover, the real images which have been shot on film are rendered as simple sketches at the beginning and ending of the film. If *Tales of the City*, or any given film, is considered to be realistic in nature, then the decisions Li made with regards to his works might be guiding us to look out to a broader artistic realm. Whether it is a realist film, a work that criticises reality, or a drama that touches the hearts of people, it is essentially an artistic imagination and creation. What is projected on the silver screen is the story itself, something which the audience may become engrossed in. But Li's treatment of the opening and ending of *Awful Truth* and *Tales of the City* puts another frame inside the screen, implying that there is a story within the story. This way, the work does not immerse the audience in the story directly. Even if political propaganda were involved, it would have come across as soft and natural because of artistic treatment such as abstraction or presentation style. It must be mentioned that this frame inside the screen is not obvious and never shatters the viewers' dream.

1965 saw the release of the two final works of Li's 40-year directorial career, *Romantic World* and *A Heroic Romance*, the latter of which is an exquisite Yue opera feature. The title of *Romantic World* is quite suggestive, and misleads viewers into believing that an amorous relationship will blossom between the nightclub hostess played by Chen Sisi and the taxi driver portrayed by Fu Che. In the opening, a film director, who is about to travel to Singapore for work, asks a screenwriter to move into his home and complete a script for a comedy titled *Romantic World* within two weeks. The subsequent story between the hostess, taxi driver, screenwriter, and other characters constitute the film. Again, an ensemble cast is deployed (the hostess and taxi driver are not particularly prominent), and many blunders and misunderstandings are scattered throughout the plot. The hostess's flat happens to be visible from the window of the director's home, and the screenwriter

talks to others about her domestic life. We also see a script with 'Romantic World' printed on the cover page, of which the screenwriter says that much of the contents were 'inspired' by the hostess. So, what exactly is in the script penned by the fictional screenwriter in the film? And did Li adapt certain scenes of that script to the actual film? Or are the events that transpire after the screenwriter takes on the job at the beginning also part of the fictional script? The film does not point this out clearly. It seems like a typical technique used in the New Wave cinema and Hollywood films of the 1960s called 'reflexivity'. After laying down the premise, Li did not further develop on this. The film does not clearly establish the screenwriter as the creator of the story or create a distance for the character. He becomes involved in Li's *Romantic World* very soon, furthering the plot alongside other characters. The character's lack of detachment from the main narrative, as well as the absence of shots and scenes illustrating his departure from it, make it practically impossible to distinguish the parallels and contrasts between the real and fictional scripts.

Much progress has been made in the use of techniques such as the multiple-protagonist schema and the opening and ending framing device—as seen in *Awful Truth* and *Tales of the City*—since the classical narrative films of the 1940s. Furthermore, the transitions in these two films of Li are relatively smooth and controlled, without the danger of certain characters disengaging themselves from the story (which might confuse the audience). Filmmakers have become more well-versed in using such techniques, while viewers now also understand how to read them. The introduction of the meta-narrative in *Romantic World* was undoubtedly a challenge for Hong Kong audience at the time. Hong Kong filmmakers also had to master, in terms of ideas and techniques, this relatively new and complex narrative style. *Laugh, Clown, Laugh* (1960) is similar in nature, with the exception that the protagonist is a performer. His self-reflection is done through the lines he delivers on stage, which makes it not at all awkward. When Li shot *Romantic World*, he only scratched the surface and did not carry it through. Although Li missed the opportunity to fully implement the narrative style of modern European and American cinema, he clearly had an understanding of the artistic concepts, and even made creative adjustments to cater to the regional market. This is a potential starting point for exploring Li Pingqian's artistry, as well as that of the Chinese filmmakers of his generation.

Translated by Johnny Ko

Lau Yam is a film researcher, and has contributed in editing books such as *Oral History Series (6): Director Lung Kong and Selected Film Scripts of Chiu Kang-chien*. He was also the guest curator for the programme 'Writer/Director in Focus II: Griffin Yue Feng' of Hong Kong Film Archive.



李萍倩

小傳

鳴謝李小如先生
Courtesy of Mr Lee Siu-yu

李萍倩原名李椿壽，原籍安徽桐城，1902年生於杭州的宦宦世家。據說少年時離家出走，在銀行、郵政局及縣公署工作，後赴上海，曾就讀滬江大學。李氏自小喜歡話劇和攝影，1920年考入明星影片股份有限公司的明星影戲學校，後任攝影助理，亦為汪煦昌的昌明電影函授學校翻譯及整理講義。1924年與汪等創辦神州影片公司，先擔任演員，他執導的首部作品為《難為了妹妹》（1926）。神州推崇電影「潛移默化」的功能，強調藝術形式，比較知識份子化，兩三年間便倒閉，李氏轉入天一影片公司。

三十年代至四十年代初上海孤島時期，李萍倩先後在天一、明星、藝華影業公司及張善琨旗下的新華影業公司、華新影片公司、華成影片公司等公司執導。他在以出品古裝傳奇和偵探奇情片為主的天一練就專業導技，亦以作品賣座著稱，並於1931年成功拍攝中國電影工作者在國內製作的第一部片上發聲影片《歌場春色》。受左翼人士影響的明星公司偏好拍攝社會倫理題材及營造都市小市民趣味的影片，李氏為其執導期間，不單培養出言情細膩、敘事明朗的特色，更拍出《時代的兒女》（1933）、《豐年》（1933）及《三姊妹》（1934）等批判意識較強的作品。華新時期，改編王爾德（Oscar Wilde）名劇《溫夫人的扇子》（*Lady Windermere's Fan*）拍成《少奶奶的扇子》（1939），以及寫實諷刺電影《金銀世界》（1939），在刻劃社會和人性百態及低調的幽默感方面自成一格。

抗日戰爭期間，李萍倩留守上海，導演作品包括李麗華早期演出的《英烈傳》（1941）、香港演員李綺年主演的《風流寡婦》（1941），及陳雲裳和白光合演的《桃李爭春》（1943）等。抗戰勝利後，李氏一度轉行求存，但最終還是重執導筒。其後南來香港，加入永華影業公司，導演旨意深長的《春雷》（1949）；不久轉往長城影業公司，首作是《一代妖姬》（1950）。長城改組傾左，他仍留下，至1965年公映的《烽火姻緣》，來港18年間作品近三十部，佳作迭出，乃其事業高峰。這些影片流露批判資本主義社會和殖民地的觀點，但整體緊扣香港的都市文化和節奏感。除個別外，多為諷刺喜劇、浪漫喜劇、悲喜劇，寓意佳妙，格調輕快抒情，保持中庸的人情世故。

李萍倩導演於1984年11月18日在香港離世。生前擔任長城電影製片有限公司藝術顧問，以及多屆華南電影工作者聯合會會長。李萍倩是戰後香港重要的電影工作者之一，對奠定戰後左派電影的風格影響深遠。

Biography *of* Li Pingqian

Born in Hangzhou in 1902 to a family of officials, Li Pingqian (with the original name Li Chunshou) was a native from the former county of Tongcheng, Anhui Province. He was rumoured to have run away from home during his youth, and worked at the bank, post office and county office. He then went to Shanghai and once studied at Hujiang University. Li was fond of drama and photography since young. He enrolled at the film school of Star Motion Pictures in 1920 and later worked as a camera assistant. Li also translated and compiled lecture notes for Wang Xuchang's Changming Film Correspondence School. In 1924, Li co-founded Shenzhou Company with Wang and others, where he first worked as an actor and then as a director with his directorial debut, *Embarrassing Sister* (1926). Shenzhou championed the function of films to subtly educate people and placed great emphasis on artistic styles, resulting in works favoured mainly by intellectuals. When Shenzhou closed down after just a few years, Li went to work for Unique Film Productions.

From the 1930s to the Orphan Island period in the early 40s, Li worked successively in Shanghai as a director at Unique, Star, Yihua as well as Zhang Shankun's Hsin Hwa, Huaxin and Huacheng. Unique's productions were mostly period dramas and detective thrillers. Li honed his directorial skills during his time there, with many box-office successes. In 1931, he shot the first sound film in China, *Pleasures of the Dance Hall*. To cater for the common folk, the leftist-inclined Star favoured producing works about social ethics. Li developed great sensibilities and a crisp narrative style that would become his trademarks, producing works with strong social criticisms, such as *Children of the Times* (1933), *A Year of Harvest* (1933) and *Three Sisters* (1934). While working at Huaxin, Li adapted Oscar Wilde's famous play *Lady Windermere's Fan* into *The Young Mistress' Fan* (1939) and made *The World with Money Colour* (1939), a satire on the society and human nature, with his unique understated humour.

During the War of Resistance, Li Pingqian remained in Shanghai and directed titles such as *The Brave Lady* (1941), starring Li Lihua early in her career; *The Merry Widow* (1941), starring Hong Kong actress Lee Yi-nin; *Struggle for Spring* (1943), starring Nancy Chan Yun-shang and Bai Guang. After the war, Li once attempted to change career, but eventually took the helm again. Subsequently he relocated southward to Hong Kong and joined Yung Hwa Motion Picture Industries Ltd, directing the notable *Our Husband* (1949). Soon he left to work for Great Wall Pictures Corporation and made *A Strange Woman* (1950). When Great Wall restructured and became a left-wing company, Li still remained. By the time *A Heroic Romance* was released in 1965, he was at the peak of his career and had filmed almost 30 titles over the course of 18 years including many classics. These films were critical of the capitalist society and colonial rule, and were overall closely linked to the metropolitan culture and pace of life of Hong Kong. Most of them were satirical comedies, romantic comedies or tragi-comedies, with deep underlying meanings and a light and lyrical pacing, reflecting Li's moderate view on the ways of the world.

Director Li Pingqian passed away on 18 November 1984 in Hong Kong. He had served as the artistic advisor for The Great Wall Movie Enterprises Ltd and the president of South China Film Industry Workers Union for years. Li Pingqian is one of the most prominent filmmakers of post-war Hong Kong and had a profound influence on the style of post-war left-wing cinema.

撰寫：劉嶽
Written by Lau Yam

李萍倩電影作品片目

Filmography of Li Pingqian

(以下電影均由李萍倩導演，有*標記者除外。)

(All films below were directed by Li Pingqian except for the ones marked with *.)

1925

不堪回首* Unbearable Memories*

出品：神州 導演：裘芑香
編劇：裘芑香、陳醉雲
演員：丁子明、李萍倩、嚴工上、趙靜霞
Prod Co: Shenzhen Dir: Qiu Qixiang
Scrs: Qiu Qixiang, Chen Zuiyun
Cast: Ding Ziming, Li Pingqian, Yan Gongshang, Zhao Jingxia

花好月圓*

The Night with the Full Moon*

出品：神州 導演：顧孝燾
編劇：裘芑香、陳醉雲
演員：丁子明、李萍倩、原俠綺、嚴工上
Prod Co: Shenzhen Dir: Gu Xiaojue
Scrs: Qiu Qixiang, Chen Zuiyun
Cast: Ding Ziming, Li Pingqian, Yuan Xiaqi, Yan Gongshang

1926

佳期* Wedding Day*

出品：五友 導演：裘芑香
演員：丁子明、李萍倩
Prod Co: Five Friends Dir: Qiu Qixiang
Cast: Ding Ziming, Li Pingqian

道義之交* A Moral Obligation*

出品：神州 導演：劉燾
編劇：汪煦昌、劉燾
顧問：李萍倩、萬籟天
Prod Co: Shenzhen Dir: Liu Shen
Scrs: Wang Xuchang, Liu Shen
Consultants: Li Pingqian, Wan Laitian

難為了妹妹 Embarrassing Sister

出品：神州 編劇：萬籟天
(李萍倩兼任演員)
Prod Co: Shenzhen Scr: Wan Laitian
(Li Pingqian also appeared as actor)

孫行者大戰金錢豹(又名《西遊記》)* Monkey King Conquers the Leopard*

出品：天一 導演：邵醉翁、顧肯夫
編劇：邵邨人、孟君謀 分幕：李萍倩
Prod Co: Unique
Dirs: Shao Zuiweng, Gu Kenfu
Scrs: Shao Cunren, Meng Junmou
Step Outline: Li Pingqian

唐伯虎點秋香(前後集) (又名《三笑姻緣》)*

The Flirting Scholar (Part One and Two)*
出品：天一 導演：邵醉翁、裘芑香
編劇：李萍倩、邵山客
Prod Co: Unique
Dirs: Shao Zuiweng, Qiu Qixiang
Scrs: Li Pingqian, Shao Shanke

1927

好兒子 My Good Boy

出品：神州 合導：顧肯夫
編劇：鄭劍秋
Prod Co: Shenzhen Co-dir: Gu Kenfu
Scr: Zheng Jianqiu

仕林祭塔(又名《白蛇傳》第三集) Wails to Pagoda

出品：天一 合導：邵醉翁
編劇：邵山客
Prod Co: Unique Co-dir: Shao Zuiweng
Scr: Shao Shanke

女律師 The Female Lawyer

出品：天一青年 合導：裘芑香
編劇：邵邨人
(李萍倩兼任演員)
Prod Co: Unique Youth Co-dir: Qiu Qixiang
Scr: Shao Cunren
(Li Pingqian also appeared as actor)

劉關張大破黃巾* A Crushing Blow*

出品：天一 導演：邵醉翁
編劇：邵醉翁、裘芑香
演員：胡蝶、裘芑香、李萍倩、顧肯夫
Prod Co: Unique Dir: Shao Zuiweng
Scrs: Shao Zuiweng, Qiu Qixiang
Cast: Hu Die, Qiu Qixiang, Li Pingqian, Gu Kenfu

西遊記·女兒國 Ladies Kingdom

出品：天一 合導：裘芑香
編劇：裘芑香
Prod Co: Unique Co-dir: Qiu Qixiang
Scr: Qiu Qixiang

新茶花* New Camellia*

出品：天一青年 導演：裘芑香、汪福慶
編劇：邵邨人 分幕：李萍倩
Prod Co: Unique Youth
Dirs: Qiu Qixiang, Wong Fook-hing
Scr: Shao Cunren Step Outline: Li Pingqian

花木蘭從軍 Maiden in Armour

出品：天一青年 編劇：劉豁公
Prod Co: Unique Youth
Scr: Liu Huogong

鐵扇公主(又名《孫行者三盜芭蕉扇》) Princess Iron Fan

出品：天一 合導：邵醉翁
編劇：邵邨人
Prod Co: Unique Co-dir: Shao Zuiweng
Scr: Shao Cunren

1928

蓮花洞 The Lotus Cave

出品：天一 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: Unique Scr: Li Pingqian

紅寶石(前後集)

Red Precious Stone (Part One and Two)

出品：天一 編劇：邵醉翁
(李萍倩兼任演員)
Prod Co: Unique Scr: Shao Zuiweng
(Li Pingqian also appeared as actor)

1929

乾隆游江南(第三集)

Emperor Qianlong Tours the South Part III

出品：天一 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: Unique Scr: Li Pingqian

火燒百花台(上下集)

Flowers Platform on Fire (Part One and Two)

出品：天一 編劇：邵邨人
Prod Co: Unique Scr: Shao Cunren

情慾寶鑑 Warnings for the Lovers

出品：大中華百合 編劇：朱瘦菊
Prod Co: Great China-Lily Scr: Zhu Shouju

劫後孤鴻

Lonely Swan After the Calamity

出品：大中華百合
編劇：李萍倩(李萍倩兼任演員)
Prod Co: Great China-Lily
Scr: Li Pingqian (Li Pingqian
also appeared as actor)

1930

大學皇后(上下集)(又名《新紅樓夢》) The Queen of College Students (Part One and Two)

出品：天一 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: Unique Scr: Li Pingqian

施公案(第二集)(又名《琴蕭緣》) A Collection of Shi's Part 2

出品：天一 編劇：姜起鳳
Prod Co: Unique Scr: Jiang Qifeng

楊雲友與董其昌

Yang Yunyou and Dong Qichang

出品：天一 編劇：邵邨人
Prod Co: Unique Scr: Shao Cunren

1931

福爾摩斯偵探案

Stories of Sherlock Holmes

出品：天一 編劇：邵邨人

Prod Co: Unique Scr: Shao Cunren

乾隆游江南（第八集）

Emperor Qianlong Tours
the South Part 8

出品：天一

Prod Co: Unique

乾隆游江南（第九集）

Emperor Qianlong Tours
the South Part 9

出品：天一

Prod Co: Unique

亞森羅賓 Yasen and Luoping

出品：天一 編劇：邵邨人

Prod Co: Unique Scr: Shao Cunren

歌場春色 Pleasures of the Dance Hall

出品：天一 編劇：姚蘇鳳

Prod Co: Unique Scr: Yao Sufeng

夫妻之間 Between Themselves

出品：天一 編劇：邵邨人

Prod Co: Unique Scr: Shao Cunren

1932

上海小姐韓綉雯

Han Xiuwen The Shanghai Beauty

出品：天一 編劇：姚蘇鳳

Prod Co: Unique Scr: Yao Sufeng

有夫之婦 A Married Woman

出品：天一 編劇：高天棲、

孟君謀、高季琳、季化

Prod Co: Unique Scr: Gao Tianqi,

Meng Junmou, Gao Jilin, Ji Hua

東北二女子（又名《戰地孤女》）

Two Daughters of the Northeast

出品：天一 編劇：蘇怡

Prod Co: Unique Scr: So Yee

芭蕉葉上詩 A Joan on Art

出品：天一 編劇：黎錦輝

Prod Co: Unique Scr: Li Jinhui

舊恨新愁 Old and New Hatreds

出品：明星 編劇：李萍倩

Prod Co: Star Scr: Li Pingqian

1933

琵琶春怨 The Spring Dream of the Lute

出品：明星 編劇：李萍倩

Prod Co: Star Scr: Li Pingqian

現代一女性 A Modern Girl

出品：明星 編劇：艾霞

Prod Co: Star Scr: Ai Xia

時代的兒女 Children of the Times

出品：明星 編劇：丁君吾

Prod Co: Star Scr: Ding Junwu

豐年（又名《黃金穀》）A Year of Harvest

出品：明星 編劇：李萍倩、阿英

Prod Co: Star Scr: Li Pingqian, A Ying

1934

三姊妹 Three Sisters

出品：明星 編劇：李萍倩

Prod Co: Star Scr: Li Pingqian

女兒經 Bible for Girls

出品：明星 合導：張石川、程步高、

沈西苓、姚蘇鳳、吳村、陳鏗然、

徐欣夫、鄭正秋 編劇：夏衍、鄭正秋、

洪深、阿英、鄭伯奇、沈西苓

Prod Co: Star Co-dirs: Zhang Shichuan,

Cheng Bugao, Shen Xiling, Yao Sufeng,

Wu Cun, Chen Kengran, Xu Xinfu,

Zheng Zhengqiu Scr: Xia Yan, Zheng

Zhengqiu, Hong Shen, A Ying, Zheng Boqi,

Shen Xiling

1935

人倫（又名《無家可歸》）Human Being

出品：明星 編劇：李萍倩

Prod Co: Star Scr: Li Pingqian

熱血忠魂（又名《民族魂》、《熱血英雄》）

Hot Blood and Loyal Spirit

(aka Nation's Soul/Loyal Heroes)

出品：明星 合導：張石川、

徐欣夫、鄭正秋、吳村、程步高、

沈西苓 編劇：明星影片公司編劇科

Prod Co: Star Co-dirs: Zhang Shichuan,

Xu Xinfu, Zheng Zhengqiu, Wu Cun, Cheng

Bugao, Shen Xiling

Scr: Star Motion Pictures Screenwriting

Department

1936

桃李爭艷（又名《情書》）Rivals in Love

出品：明星

Prod Co: Star

夜會 Rendezvous

出品：明星 編劇：姚蘇鳳

Prod Co: Star Scr: Yao Sufeng

1937

花開花落 The Flower Blossoms and Wilts

出品：藝華 編劇：潘子農

Prod Co: Yihua Scr: Pan Zinong

1938

茶花女 Camille

出品：光明 編劇：李萍倩

Prod Co: Guangming Scr: Li Pingqian

鳳求凰 A Pair in Love

出品：藝華 編劇：孫敬

Prod Co: Yihua Scr: Sun Jing

1939

生死恨 Regrets of Life and Death

出品：新華 編劇：李萍倩

Prod Co: Hsin Hwa Scr: Li Pingqian

費貞娥刺虎 The Imperial Maid Fei Zhen'e

出品：新華 編劇：李萍倩

Prod Co: Hsin Hwa Scr: Li Pingqian

少奶奶的扇子 The Young Mistress' Fan

出品：華新 編劇：孫敬

Prod Co: Huaxin Scr: Sun Jing

金銀世界 The World with Money Colour

出品：華新 編劇：顧仲彝

Prod Co: Huaxin Scr: Gu Zhongyi

1940

杜十娘 Du Shiniang

出品：華新 編劇：李萍倩

Prod Co: Huaxin Scr: Li Pingqian

紅線盜盒 Hongxian Steals the Case

出品：華成 編劇：魏如晦（即阿英）

Prod Co: Huacheng

Scr: Wei Ruhui (aka A Ying)

1941

地藏王（又名《日蓮救母》）

King of the Inferno

出品：聯美

Prod Co: Lianmei

英烈傳 The Brave Lady

出品：藝華 編劇：李萍倩

Prod Co: Yihua Scr: Li Pingqian

風流寡婦（又名《貞婦淚史》）

The Merry Widow

出品：藝華 編劇：葉逸芳

Prod Co: Yihua Scr: Yip Yut-fong

家 The Family

出品：中國聯合 合導：張善琨、

卜萬蒼、徐欣夫、楊小仲、王次龍、

方沛霖、岳楓、吳永剛 編劇：周貽白

Prod Co: China United

Co-dirs: Zhang Shankun, Bu Wancang,

Xu Xinfu, Yang Xiaozhong, Wang Cilong,

Fang Peilin, Griffin Yue Feng, Wu Yonggang

Scr: Zhou Yibai

生離死別（又名《魂歸何處》）

Where Will You Go?

出品：華成 編劇：李萍倩

Prod Co: Huacheng Scr: Li Pingqian

生路 The Living Way

出品：華成 編劇：李萍倩

Prod Co: Huacheng Scr: Li Pingqian

1942

貴婦風流 A Distinguished Lady

出品：華新、中國聯合 編劇：李萍倩

Prod Co: Huaxin, China United

Scr: Li Pingqian

歡喜冤家 Two Guys and A Girl

出品：中國聯合 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: China United Scr: Li Pingqian

蝴蝶夫人 Madame Butterfly

出品：中聯 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: China United Ltd (Zhonglian)
Scr: Li Pingqian

博愛之〈朋友之愛〉

Fraternity: Love of Friends
出品：中聯 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: China United Ltd (Zhonglian)
Scr: Li Pingqian

四姊妹 Four Sisters

出品：中聯 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: China United Ltd (Zhonglian)
Scr: Li Pingqian

1943

桃李爭春 Struggle for Spring

出品：中聯 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: China United Ltd (Zhonglian)
Scr: Li Pingqian

浮雲掩月

The Moon Hides Behind the Clouds
出品：華影 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: China United Holdings (Huaying)
Scr: Li Pingqian

藝海恩仇記 The Count of Art

出品：華影 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: China United Holdings (Huaying)
Scr: Li Pingqian

1944

惜花飛 Cherish the Flowers

出品：華影 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: China United Holdings (Huaying)
Scr: Li Pingqian

天外笙歌 Tune of the Above

出品：華影 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: China United Holdings (Huaying)
Scr: Li Pingqian

1945

萬戶更新 A Traveling Chicken

出品：華影 合導：卜萬蒼、楊小仲、方沛霖、王引、岳楓、馬徐維邦、張石川、何兆璋、朱石麟
編劇：卜萬蒼、楊小仲、方沛霖、王引、李萍倩、岳楓、馬徐維邦、張石川、何兆璋、朱石麟
Prod Co: China United Holdings (Huaying)
Co-dirs: Bu Wancang, Yang Xiaozhong, Fang Peilin, Wang Yin, Griffin Yue Feng, Ma Xu Weibang, Zhang Shichuan, He Zhaozhang, Zhu Shilin
Scr: Bu Wancang, Yang Xiaozhong, Fang Peilin, Wang Yin, Li Pingqian, Griffin Yue Feng, Ma Xu Weibang, Zhang Shichuan, He Zhaozhang, Zhu Shilin

1947

湖上春痕 Spring over the Lake

出品：國泰 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: Guotai Scr: Li Pingqian

裙帶風 Hang on to Your Relatives

出品：國泰 編劇：洪謨
Prod Co: Guotai Scr: Hong Mo

母與子 Mother and Son

出品：文華 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: Wenhua Scr: Li Pingqian

1948

春歸何處 (又名《尋夢記》)

Catch the Dream
出品：國泰 編劇：吳天
Prod Co: Guotai Scr: Wu Tian

兇手 (又名《夜茫茫》)

The Murderer
出品：國泰 編劇：劉滄浪
Prod Co: Guotai Scr: Liu Canglang

1949

春雷 Our Husband

出品：永華 編劇：李萍倩
Prod Co: Yung Hwa Scr: Li Pingqian

1950

一代妖姬 A Strange Woman

出品：長城 編劇：姚克
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Yao Ke

說謊世界 Awful Truth

出品：長城 編劇：陶秦
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Doe Ching

1951

禁婚記 A Night-Time Wife

出品：長城 編劇：陶秦
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Doe Ching

1952

百花齊放 Blossoms in the Heart

出品：長城 編劇：陶秦
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Doe Ching

方帽子 A Bachelor is Born

出品：長城 合導：劉瓊
編劇：陶秦
Prod Co: Great Wall Co-dir: Liu Qiong
Scr: Doe Ching

蜜月 Honeymoon

出品：長城 編劇：張弓
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Zhang Gong

1953

門 (又名：《鎖情記》)

Marriage Affair
(aka Story of a Chained Love)
出品：長城 編劇：馬國亮
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Ma Kwok-leung

白日夢 Daydream

出品：長城 編劇：汪崇剛
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Wang Chonggang

寸草心 (原名：《父母子女》)

Parents' Love
(Original title: Parents and Children)
出品：長城 編劇：朱克
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Chu Hak

絕代佳人 The Peerless Beauty

出品：長城 編劇：林歡 (即金庸)
Prod Co: Great Wall
Scr: Lin Huan (aka Jin Yong)

1954

都會交響曲 Tales of the City

出品：長城 編劇：朱克
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Chu Hak

1955

我是一個女人 It So Happens to a Woman

出品：長城 編劇：朱克
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Chu Hak

1956

三戀 The Three Loves

出品：長城 編劇：林歡 (即金庸)
Prod Co: Great Wall
Scr: Lin Huan (aka Jin Yong)

1957

望夫山下 Forever Waiting

出品：長城 編劇：丁可 (即朱克)
Prod Co: Great Wall
Scr: Ding Ho (aka Chu Hak)

逆旅風雲 Escape into Trap

出品：長城 編劇：朱克
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Chu Hak

1958

香噴噴小姐 Miss Fragrance

出品：長城 編劇：顏開
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Yan Kai

綠天鵝夜總會

The Green Swan Nightclub
出品：長城
編劇：周然 (即查良景)
Prod Co: Great Wall
Scr: Zhou Ran (aka Cha Liangjing)

1960

新聞人物 *Girl on the Front Page*

出品：長城 編劇：周然（即查良景）
Prod Co: Great Wall
Scr: Zhou Ran (aka Cha Liangjing)

笑笑笑 *Laugh, Clown, Laugh*

出品：長城 編劇：周然（即查良景）
Prod Co: Great Wall
Scr: Zhou Ran (aka Cha Liangjing)

佳人有約 *Rendezvous*

出品：長城 編劇：周然（即查良景）
Prod Co: Great Wall
Scr: Zhou Ran (aka Cha Liangjing)

1961

華燈初上

The Seaman and the Dancing Girl

出品：長城 編劇：顏開
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Yan Kai

迷魂陣 *The Dazzling Trap*

出品：長城 編劇：易方（即葉逸芳）
Prod Co: Great Wall
Scr: Yi Fang (aka Yip Yut-fong)

1962

三看御妹劉金定

The Princess Falls in Love

出品：長城 編劇：俞鏗
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Yu Ken

1963

雪地情仇

Between Vengeance and Love

出品：長城 編劇：周然（即查良景）
Prod Co: Great Wall
Scr: Zhou Ran (aka Cha Liangjing)

1964

三笑 *Three Charming Smiles*

出品：長城 編劇：易方（即葉逸芳）
Prod Co: Great Wall
Scr: Yi Fang (aka Yip Yut-fong)

1965

艷遇 *Romantic World*

出品：長城 編劇：高旅
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Ko Lui

烽火姻緣 *A Heroic Romance*

出品：長城 編劇：朱鏗
Prod Co: Great Wall Scr: Chu Keng

（編按：有資料顯示李萍倩在1941年曾導演短片《老子與石子》，該短片於動畫電影《鐵扇公主》上映時同場放映，詳情待考。）

(Editor's note: Record shows that Li Pingqian directed a short film, *Laazi yu Shizi* that was screened together with an animated film, *Princess Iron-fan* in 1941. The record awaits further checking.)

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編導 回顧系列四
The Writer/Director
in Focus IV:

李萍倩

LI PINGQIAN

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座談會 Seminars

拈花微笑觀世情——巨匠的香港歷程

Subtle Smile Towards the World—Hong Kong
Odyssey of a Great Director

14/7 (六 Sat) 4:30pm

講者：羅卡、劉鏃

Speakers: Law Kar, Lau Yam

說謊男女——李萍倩電影中的性／別

Deception by Him and Her—Sex and Otherwise in
Li Pingqian's Movies

18/8 (六 Sat) 4:30pm

講者：游靜博士

Speaker: Dr Yau Ching

在紅與灰之間——李萍倩電影中的個人與社會

Between Red and Grey—Individuals and Society
in Li Pingqian's Cinematic World

22/9 (六 Sat) 4:30pm

講者：盧偉力博士、劉鏃

Speakers: Dr Lo Wai-luk, Lau Yam



鳴謝李小如先生 Courtesy of Mr. Lee Siu-yu

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· 長城電影小說叢刊之五 ·



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