



世界
The World

Simulacra & Flows: *The World* 《世界》

Jia Zhangke 賈樟柯

世界 THE WORLD

[SHIJIE] A FILM BY JIA ZHANGKE

01. WORLD PARK
02. ARRIVALS
03. DOWNTIME
04. PARIS IN BEIJING SUBURBS
05. A TOUR OF THE PARK
06. TAKEOFF
07. WASH
08. QUN
09. ANNA AND TAO

MENU NEXT

Main Idea:

The World juxtaposes in different spaces of flows and simulacra World Park's glamorous dances and skillful simulations of the world-famous sites with its materialist reality of surveillance, labor exploitation and the floating generation's sense of emptiness.

在其流動與擬象空間中

《世界》將「世界公園」的世界
景點縮影與

炫麗舞蹈與監視、剝削勞工與
北飄人民浮動空虛並列之。

[SHIJIE] A FILM BY JIA ZHANGKE

10. TWO WOMEN
11. ENTERTAINING
12. "YOU'RE MY WHOLE LIFE"
13. SUSPICIOUS
14. AN ACCIDENT
15. TOKYO STORY
16. LIFE CHANGES
17. HOUSESITTING
18. END CREDITS

BACK MENU

Outline

1. General Introduction:
 - A. Simulacra
 - B. Jia Zhang-ke
2. Questions for Group Discussion
3. Character Relations
4. Places and Spaces of Flows
5. Simulacra and Symbols: Animation, Costume & Others
6. Ending

Jean Baudrillard: *The Order of Simulacra*

(Baudrillard, 1994, 1-42)

The Four Phases of Images:

Medieval Period (Religious Art)

- The image is the reflection of a basic reality;

Renaissance and Enlightenment (Baroque Art)

- The image masks and perverts a basic reality

Industrialism (Mechanical Reproduction)

- The image masks the *absence* of a basic reality

Post-Industrial Society (electronic, genetic reproduction)

- The image bears no relation to any reality whatsoever: it is its own pure simulacrum

(256)

1-1. Jean Baudrillard: *The Order of Simulacra*

Post-Industrial World of Simulacra

- ◆ Simulacra = the hyperreal, whatever that can be reproduced; "... the generation by models of a real without original or reality: a hyperreal" (Baudrillard, 1994, 1).
 - ◆ We are living in a world dominated by images & signs in mass media, social media, banking system, digital reproduction, and many other orders of simulacra. It is a realm of hyperreality and simulations where truths no longer exist.

"We live in a world where there is more and more information, and less and less meaning"
(Baudrillard, 1994, 79)

Reference: Simulacra: Examples

A. the biological and scientific –

1. simulation of symptoms; 10. DNA model reproduction; 11. Nuclear deterrence

B. the religious -- 2. the simulacrum of divinity

C. museumification of culture -- 3. the return of the Tasaday; 4. the salvage of Rameses' mummy, 5. return of part of a Cloister to its origin,

D. popular culture -- 6. Disney; 9. the filming of the Louds

E. the political -- 7. Watergate; 12. Vietnam war, Algerian war

F. social crimes -- 8. all holdups, hijacks

Theme Parks

Disney World – presented as imaginary in order for the rest to be “real”

北京世界公園 -- Visit the World Without Leaving Beijing



FB, Instagram, news report & viralization,
cyber sex, robot, live video, etc.

ubiquitous computing

“The **medium** itself is no longer identifiable as such, and the **merging of the medium and the message** is the first great formula of the new age. There is no longer any medium in the literal sense: it is now **intangible, diffuse, and diffracted in the real**, and it can no longer even be said that the latter is distorted by it.

...the event filtered by the medium the dissolution of TV into life, the dissolution of life into TV — an indiscernible chemical solution: **we are all Louds [read: Kardashians]**, doomed not to invasion...**but...to their infiltration.**”

1-2. Jia Zhangke 賈樟柯 vs. The 5th Generation

NEW WAVE (6TH GENERATION)

賈樟柯 Jia Zhangke

北漂(Floating Generation),
chronicling post-socialist China's
changes

- 1) Hometown Trilogy → Shan-xi 山西汾陽
- 2) The World 《世界》
- 3) A Touch Of Sin 《天注定》

THE FIFTH GENERATION

張藝謀 Yimou Zhang

- Red Sorghum 《紅高粱》 (1988年)
House of Flying Daggers 《十面埋伏》
(2004 年)
Raise the Red Lantern 《大紅燈籠高高掛》
(1991 年)
The Flowers Of War 《金陵十三釵》 (2011
年)

陳凱歌 Kaige Chen

- Farewell My Concubine 《霸王別姬》 (1993
年)
Yellow Earth 《黃土地》 (1984 年)

The
Past

Jia Zhangke 賈樟柯 vs. The 5th Generation

- 1) claims that he wanted to produce films after seeing *Yellow Earth* (黃土地)
- 2) While in Beijing Film Academy, “...after four years of watching Chinese films, I still hadn't seen a single one that had anything to do with the Chinese reality that I knew” (qtd in Tweedie 284).



2. *The World*: Discussion Questions

1. Simulacra, Places and Spaces

- 1) How is **The World Park**, together with its scale models of the most recognizable global landmarks, presented? Is it completely dissociated from reality? What are the focuses of presentation (spectacularization)?
- 2) *How about the spaces **outside** the World Park?
- 3) *What role does cell phone play in this film? And the animation?
- 4) *How heterotopia is reflected in the World Park?

2. Major Roles in the Park: 1) Guards; 2) Dancers -- The performers are usually dressed in exotic costumes. Why does Xiaotao wear wedding gown at one of the performances? Is it possible that it is just Xiaotao's imagination which shows her wish of marrying Taisheng?

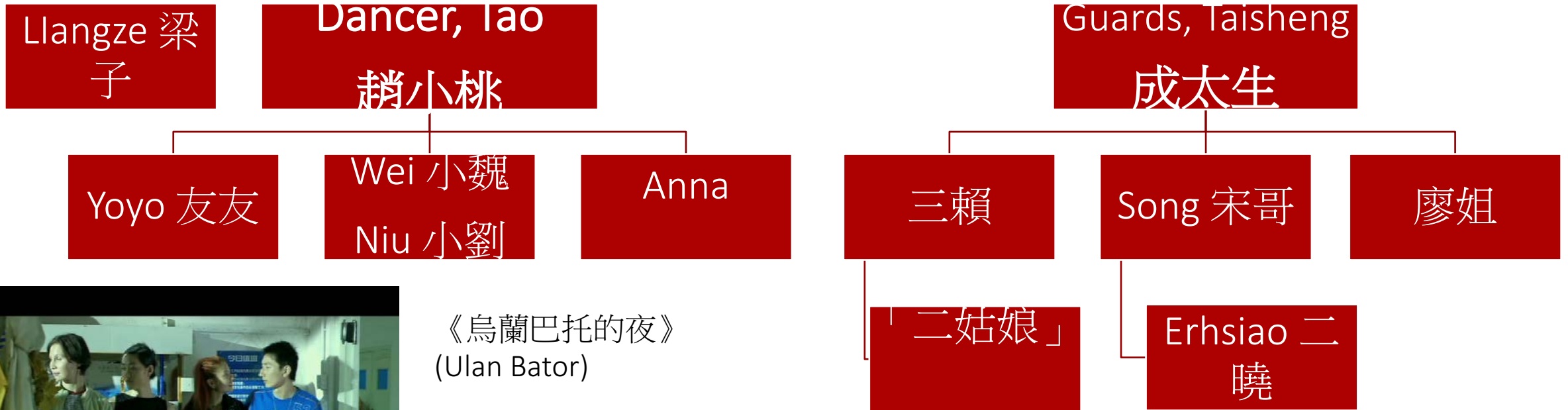
The World: Discussion Questions (2)

3. **Form** Any symbolic scenes (*Mise en scène*)? e.g. the junkman at the beginning of the film, scenes from the World Park.
4. **symbols: cell phone & white raincoat**: Xiaotao said she wore a raincoat when she stayed in a basement when she first came to Beijing, and later there is one scene that Xiaotao runs in the rain lifting a raincoat overhead. What is the meaning of the raincoat?
5. **Title cards**: What do the title cards such as Ulan Bator, Tokyo Story & Ever Changing World(一天一个世界), mean? What do you think is changing?
6. **ending**: Is their death an accident or do they commit suicide? Are Xiaotao and Taisheng dead in the ending? Is this film a completely pessimistic one?

3. Characters & Character Relations



“誰有創可貼？” Band-Aid?



《烏蘭巴托的夜》
(Ulan Bator)

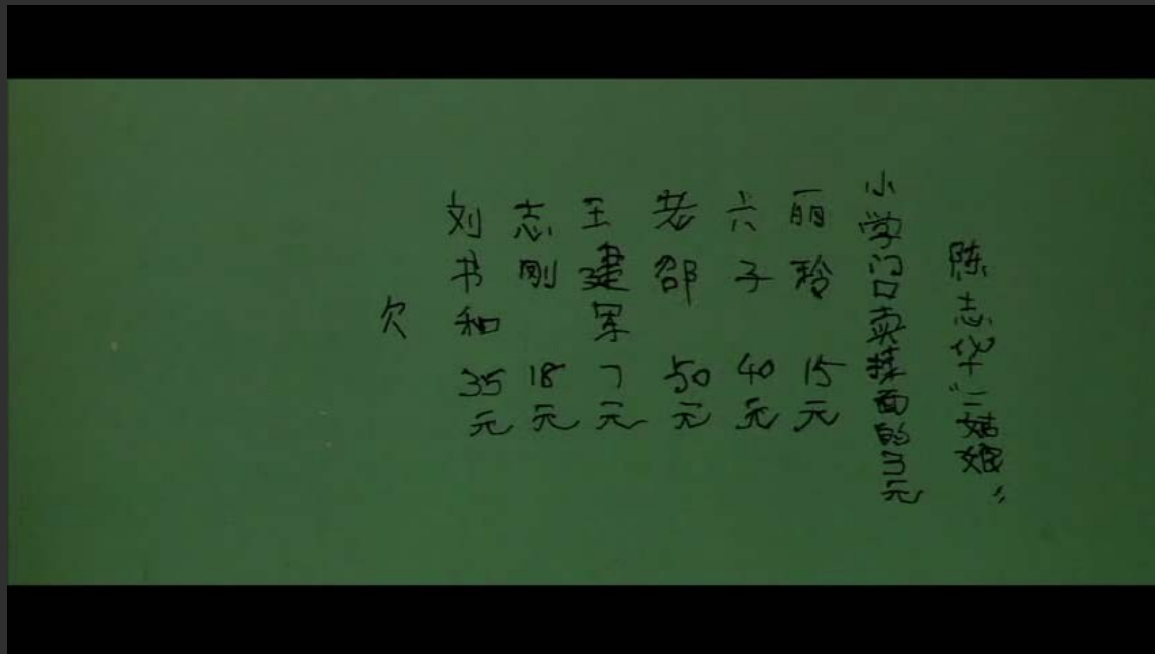
The World Park: **Power Relations**—Taisheng in a position of power and surveillance



Migrant Workers: Kind but controlled

ERH-GU-NIANG 二姑娘

ANNA – PASSPORT KEPT BY
BUSINESS MANAGER



PASSPORT, VISA ...SIGN OF
MOBILITY

Tao:
Kind and cheerful



00:58 w/ Anna

I'm leaving. I have another
job. I hate to do it.

Don't look so worried.

Christmas is coming.

Fireworks in the park.



Love Relations

LAI AND LIU

Lai: If you can't trust me,
we might as well break up.

Liu: Fine. But first,
tell me where you were.

“Motorola has a new one
with global tracking.”

01:26 TAO AND TAISHENG

Tao: Taisheng, You must never cheat on
me.

Taisheng: Impossible.

Tao: If you cheat on me, I'll kill you.

Taisheng: And chop me up for stuffing in
dumplings?

Tao: You're my whole life. If you're
unfaithful... I'll be left with nothing.

Taisheng: Don't have so much faith in me.
You can't count on anyone
that much these days.

Dancing Girls' Vision of "the World"

2:03

It's showtime, girls!

In honor of?

History's great beauties...

Yang Guifei, Pan Jinlian, Marilyn Monroe, Madonna!

For which cause?

World peace, women's rights and faces without freckles!

What shall we do?

Drink up!



Yang Guifei, Pan Jinlian,
Marilyn Monroe, Madonna!

4. Places and Spaces

Spaces of Flows: Hotels, train station, airport, Tienanman Square, Song's place, Liao's tailor shop, hometown; bus, car, cell phone

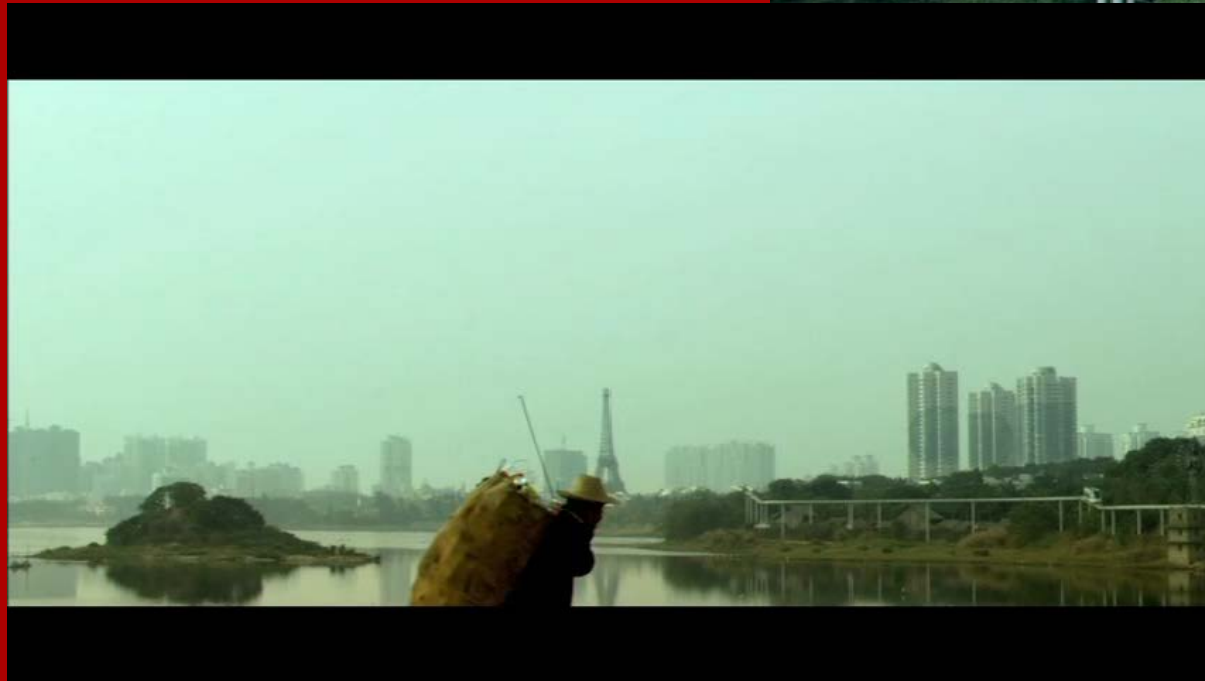
World Park

Paris, Italy, England

Japan, India

America, etc

Eiffel Tower, Pisa tower, London Bridge
World Trade Center, Stonehenge --decontextualized
Magic Blanket
Spectacular dances



World Park

Magic Blanket



Simulacra, Places and Spaces

Clip: chapters “Arrivals” (13:32) “A Tour in the Park” (31:00 → 45:00)



Dancers on Stage and Underneath it



World Park: Tourists and Laborers

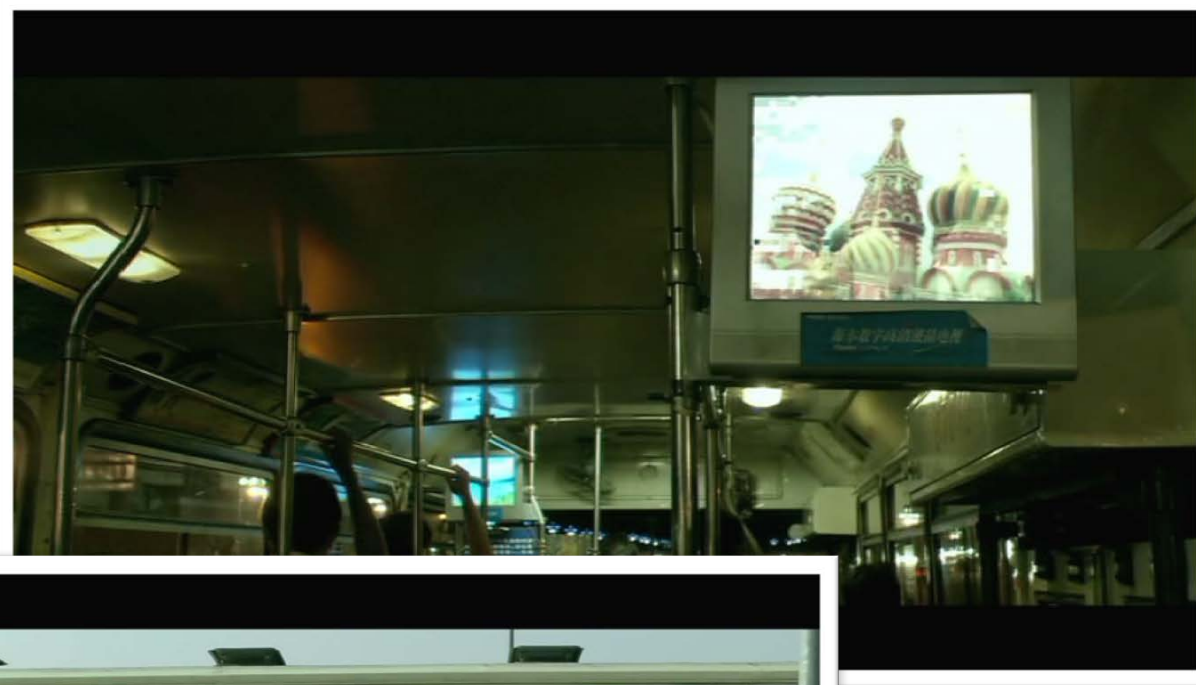
TOURISTS



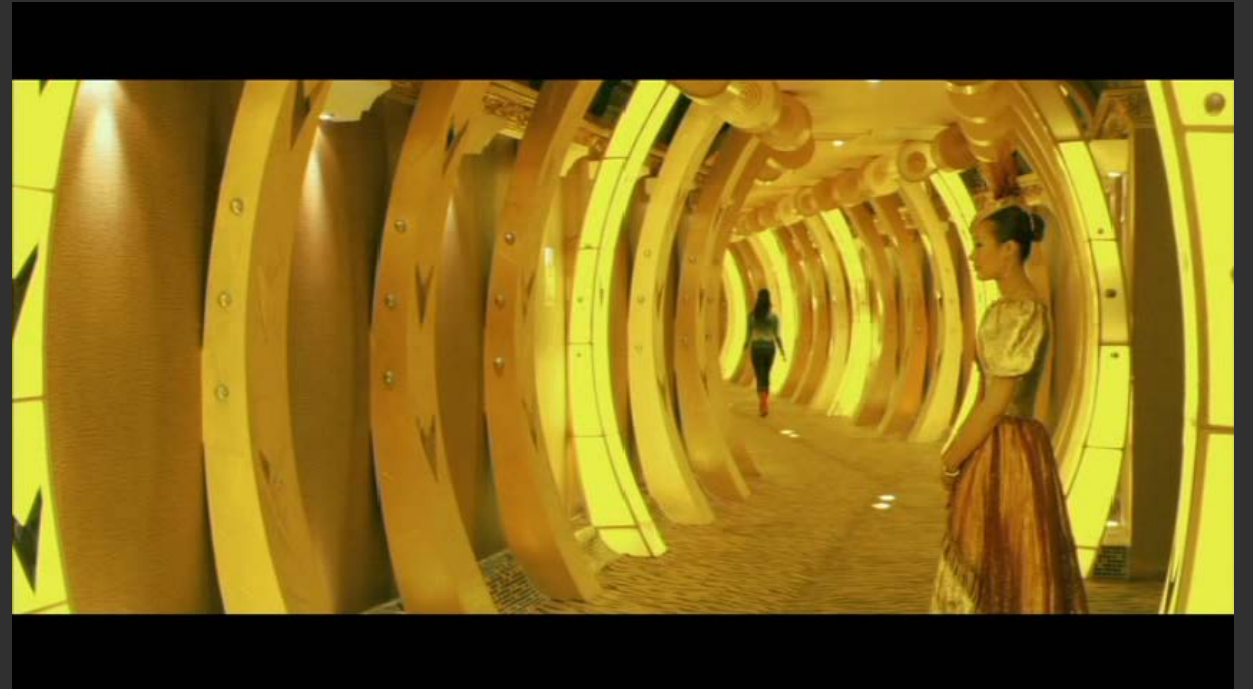
ERH-XIAO 二小



Outside World Park: Station, Bus and Bus Stop



Outside World Park: KTV Parlor, Tiananman



Outside World Park: Dressmaker's & Auditorium



Material Reality: Hotel



Material Reality: Outside World Park

LAI'S DORM



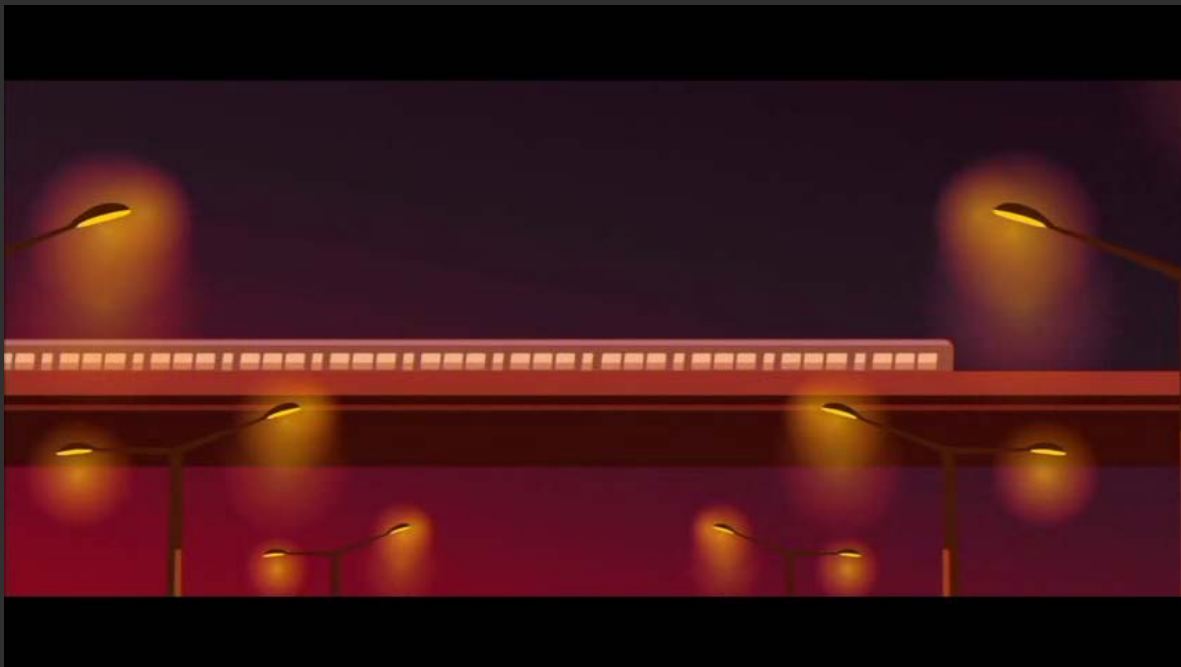
CONSTRUCTION



5-1. Animation as Fantasy (1) – connections to the outside world

AFTER A FIGHT WITH
TAISHENG

MESSAGE FROM CO-WORKER



Animation as Fantasy (2): Outings

TAO



Animation as Fantasy (3): Emotional

Astray

TAISHENG



Animation Revealing Reality –note the background of train and water (fish)

MESSAGE FROM TAISHENG



MESSAGE FROM LIAO



5-2. Xiao-tao and the white raincoat (1)



Xiao-tao and the white raincoat (2)



5-3. Xiao-tao and the white wedding gown (3)



5-4. Title Cards



5-5. Other Symbols

Ulan Bator 烏蘭巴托 (where both 梁子 and Anna will go)

「烏蘭巴托的夜啊／那麼靜 那麼靜／連風都不知道我 不知道／烏蘭巴托的夜啊／那麼靜 那麼靜／連雲都不知道我 不知道／」

-- quiet and unknown to me and to the wind and cloud

“東京物語” —the conflict between Yoyo and Tao, the marriage of Lai

6. The Ending

TAO—SELF-PROTECTIVE



NEWLY WED'S ROOM



The Ending: Two Kinds of Liberation –via confirmation of materialist reality and in death



Films set in Beijing –Comedies

独自等待 (伍仕賢
WAITING ALONG 2005)



北京爱情故事 (BEIJING
LOVE STORY 2014)



Reference

Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacra and Simulation*. U. of Michigan P, 1994.

Tweedie, James. *The Age of New Waves: Art Cinema and the Staging of Globalization*.