



Karen Fang, *John Woo's A Better Tomorrow*

The New Hong Kong Cinema Series

《吴宇森的〈英雄本色〉》

新香港电影丛书

Hong Kong, Hong Kong University Press, 2004, 144 pp.

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Eric Sautédé

苏鼎德

THERE are already a lot of excellent books in the English language dedicated to Hong Kong cinema<sup>1)</sup> and its different genres, especially to what is often referred to as the "New Hong Kong Cinema" of the 1980s and 1990s. Cinematographic productions of these years have given Hong Kong "action movies" their *lettre de noblesse*, and creative minds such as Wong Kar-wai, Tsui Hark and John Woo now belong to the pantheon of worldwide viewers. As this new series published by the Hong Kong University Press rightly points out, the "New Hong Kong Cinema" can in many respects be compared to early Soviet cinema, neo-realism and the French *nouvelle vague* because it "came into existence under very special circumstances, during a period of social and political crisis resulting in a change of cultural paradigms."

The great novelty of this collection is that each book in the series focuses on a single film, thus allowing a multi-dimensional, in-depth analysis of a director's particular production: the filmographic influ-

关于香港电影及其不同流派，尤其是人们常常提到的1980及1990年代的“新香港电影”这个话题<sup>1)</sup>已经出版了许多优秀的英文书籍。近年香港电影的制作已经使香港“动作片”登上了大雅之堂。王家卫、徐克和吴宇森等具有创造力的人物，现在已经受到国际间广大影迷的景仰。作为新丛书，正如其出版者香港大学出版社所指出，从许多方面来讲，“新香港电影”都可以和前苏联电影、新现实主义电影、法国新浪潮电影相媲美，因为它“是在非常特殊的情形下形成的，它的形成时代是一个充满社会危机和政治危机的时代，因而也是一个导致文化模式变化的时代。”

这套丛书的创意之处在于每本书都只讨论一部电影，因而能够对一个导演的特定作品进行多维、深入的分析，包括导演的原创灵感及其对摄制的影响、审美处理、符号

1. Among these, one immediately thinks of / 我们首先想到的是 David Bordwell, *Planet Hong Kong: Popular Cinema and the Art of Entertainment*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2000; Stefan Hammond and Mike Wilkins, *Sex and Zen & A Bullet in the Head: The Essential Guide to Hong Kong's Mind-bending Films*, Fireside, 1996; Bey Logan, *Hong Kong Action Cinema*, London, Titan Books Ltd., 1995; Lisa Odham Stokes and Michael Hoover, *City on Fire: Hong Kong Cinema*, Verso, 1999; and Esther C. M. Yau ed., *At Full Speed: Hong Kong Cinema in a Borderless World*, Minneapolis, University of Minneapolis Press, 2001.

ences and original inspiration, the aesthetic, the semiology, the social context, the historical legacy, etc. Four books have already been published in the series: *Wong Kar-wai's Ashes of Time* by Wimal Dissanayake, *Wong Kar-wai's Happy Together* by Jeremy Tambling, *Tsui Hark's Zu: Warriors From the Magic Mountain* by Andrew Schroeder, and the one we are reviewing here, *John Woo's A Better Tomorrow* by Karen Fang.

Karen Fang's very vivid prose and highly documented chapters offer a detailed analysis of this "noir film" with a twist—redemption is possible—that gave rise to a genre in itself when it was released in 1986. This was the *yinglong pian*, or the "hero" film, derived from a better tomorrow's Chinese title, *Yinglong Pian*—"The Prince of Heroes". Ms. Fang's analysis of John Woo's series of *yinglong pian* and the *zhuangyuan* (charismatic action Hong Kong) sub-genre followed by an analysis of the main theme of the film has globally and again "regionally", as a reference work for all Greater China—from localisation to globalisation, and ultimately to "glocalisation". The author has also included a final appendix which is an original "virtual interview conducted by e-mail" with John Woo in January 2003.

The Hong Kong University Press has here to be thanked for filling a gap in the English language publications landscape in Hong Kong. Accessible and well researched, Karen Fang's book makes perfect reading for all reader-viewers, from the most casual to the most demanding. A publishing success, by all means... ■

喻义、社会背景及历史传承等等。丛书已经出版了四本：《王家卫的〈东邪西毒〉》(Wimal Dissanayake)、《王家卫的〈春光乍泄〉》(Jeremy Tambling)、《徐克的〈新蜀山剑侠〉》(Andrew Schroeder) 以及我们在此评论的《吴宇森的〈英雄本色〉》(方允蓉)。

在本书中，方允蓉活泼生动的语言和注解丰富的各章为我们详细分析了这部带有“有药可治”色彩的“黑色电影”——该电影在1986年发行时所取的名字“英雄片”本身就预示了一种新电影类型的诞生。这个名字来自电影本身的中国片名——《英雄本色》。在吴宇森的电影系列中，英雄片是“英雄本色”系列的第一部。方允蓉在书中详细分析了“英雄片”的起源，从“英雄片”到“英雄片”再到最后的“英雄本色”系列。此外，作者还和一个附录，是作者于2003年1月“通过电子邮件对吴宇森进行的虚拟采访”原稿。

通过本丛书，香港大学出版社填补了香港英文出版界的一项空白。方允蓉的这本书通俗易懂而且研究严谨，因而能够满足所有类型的读者——从最不经意者到最苛求者。诚然，这本书的出版是成功的…… ■

静也译