

Analysis of the Differences Between the Novel and Film Adaptations of "Lust, Caution"



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2024.7.25



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1. The Difficulties of Adapting Eileen Chang's Novels

Li Shuhan

Eileen Chang



- **Extensive use of metaphors, hyperbole, and other rhetoric.**
- **Delicate psychological portrayal.**
- **Complexity of Imagery.**

metaphor

She glanced at her watch. She felt a kind of chilling premonition of failure, like a long snag in a silk stocking, silently creeping up her body.

她又看了看表。一种失败的预感，像丝袜上一道裂痕，阴凉的在腿肚子上悄悄往上爬。

metaphor

A pair of Yanli's embroidered slippers were lying in the middle of the floor at cross angles, one a bit ahead, the other a bit behind, like a ghost that was afraid to materialize, walking fearfully, pleadingly toward him.

地板正中躺着烟鹂的一双绣花鞋，微带八字式，一只前些，一只后些，像有一个不敢现形的鬼怯怯向他走过来，央求着。

psychological portrayal

Pedestrians and vehicles flowed on by, as if separated from her by a wall of glass, and no more accessible than the elegant mannequins in the window of the Green House Ladies' Clothing Emporium – you could look, but you couldn't touch. They glided along, imperviously serene, as she stood on the outside, alone in her agitation.

车如流水，与路上行人都跟她隔着层玻璃，就像橱窗里展览皮大衣与蝙蝠袖烂银衣裙的木美人一样可望而不可即，也跟她们一样闲适自如，只有她一个人心慌意乱关在外面。

psychological portrayal

She stood alone on the sidewalk staring at people, the people staring back at her, and beyond the dripping bus windows, on the other side of those blank glass shields, were strangers, an endless number of them, all locked inside their own little worlds, against which she could slam her head till it split - and still she'd never manage to break through. It seemed that she was trapped in a nightmare.

她独自站在人行道上，瞪着眼看人，人也瞪着眼看她，隔着雨淋淋的车窗，隔着一层层无形的玻璃罩——无数的陌生人。人人都关在他们自己的小世界里，她撞破了头也撞不进去，她似乎是魔住了。

complexity of imagery

Marry a red rose and eventually she'll be a mosquito-blood streak smeared on the wall, while the white one is 'moonlight in front of my bed.' Marry a white rose, and before long she'll be a grain of sticky rice that's gotten stuck to your clothes; the red one, by then, is a scarlet beauty mark just over your heart.

娶了红玫瑰，久而久之，红的变了墙上的一抹蚊子血，白的还是“床前明月光”；娶了白玫瑰，白的便是衣服上沾的一粒饭黏子，红的却是心口上一颗朱砂痣。

complexity of imagery

When the huqin wails on a night often thousand lamps, the bow slides back and forth, drawing forth a tale too desolate for words — oh! why go into it?

胡琴咿咿哑哑拉着，在万盏灯的夜晚，拉过来又拉过去，说不尽的苍凉的故事——不问也罢！

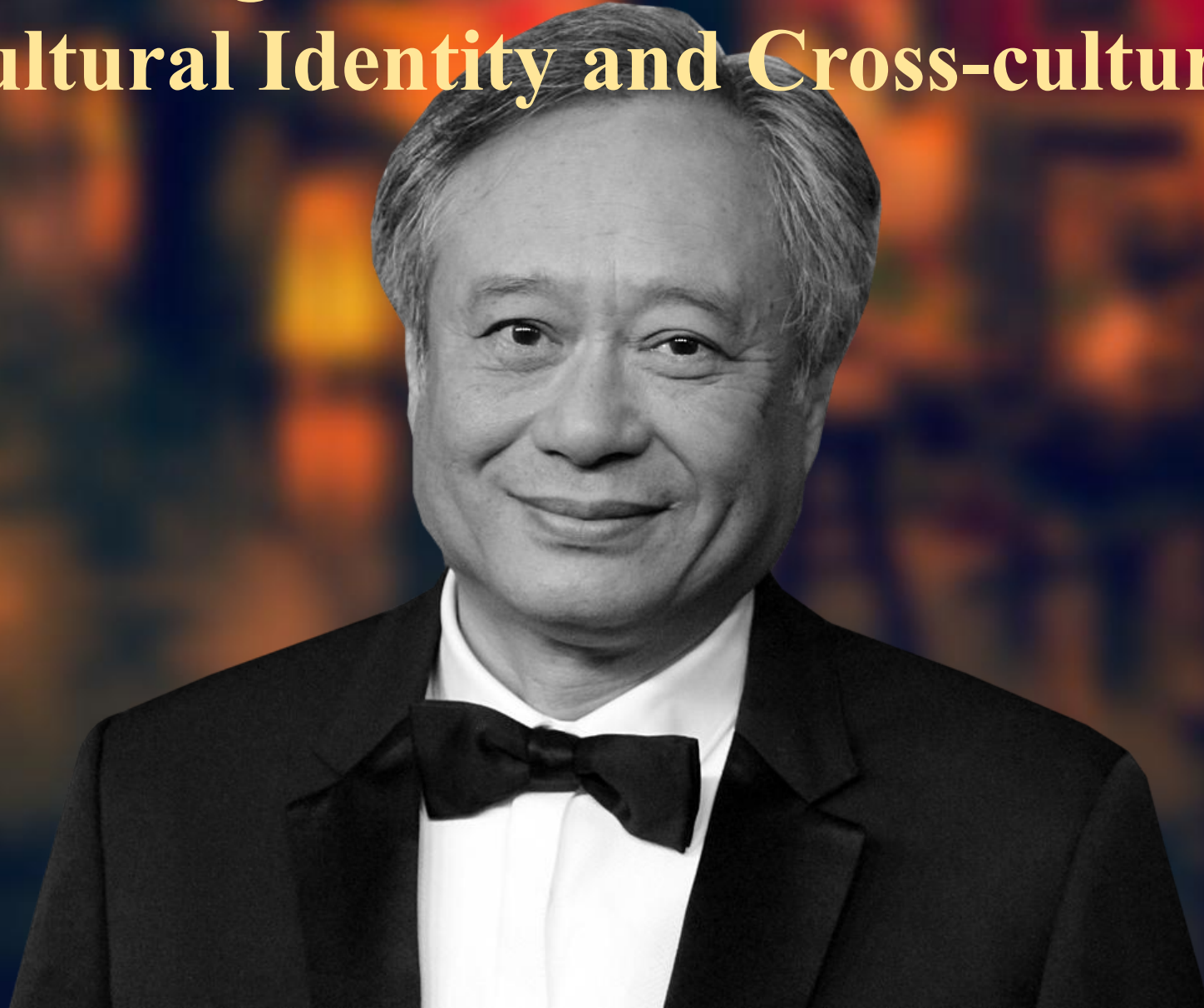
complexity of imagery

For thirty years now she had worn a golden cangue. She had used its heavy edges to chop down several people; those that did not die were half killed.

三十年来她戴着黄金的枷。她用那沉重的枷角劈杀了几个人，没死的也送了半条命。

2. Director Ang Lee: Multi-cultural Identity and Cross-cultural Vision

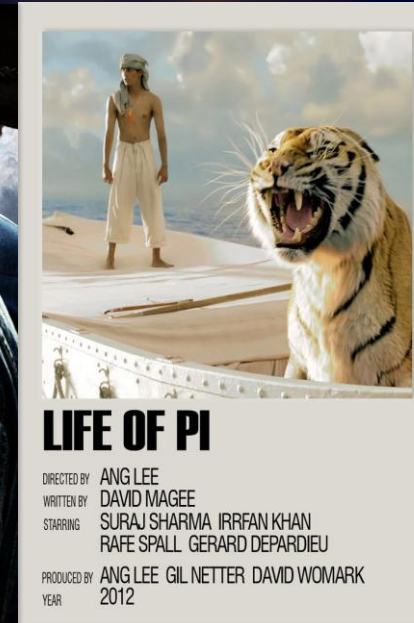
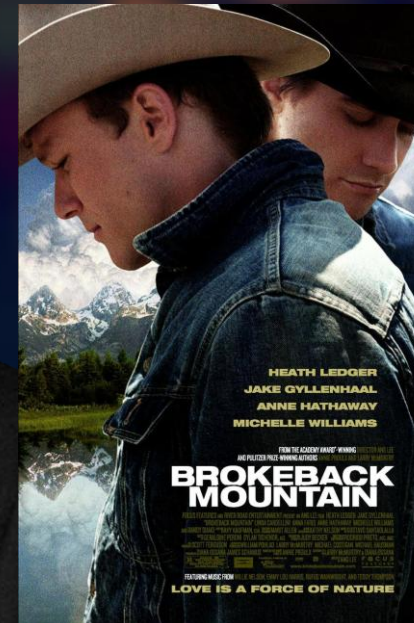
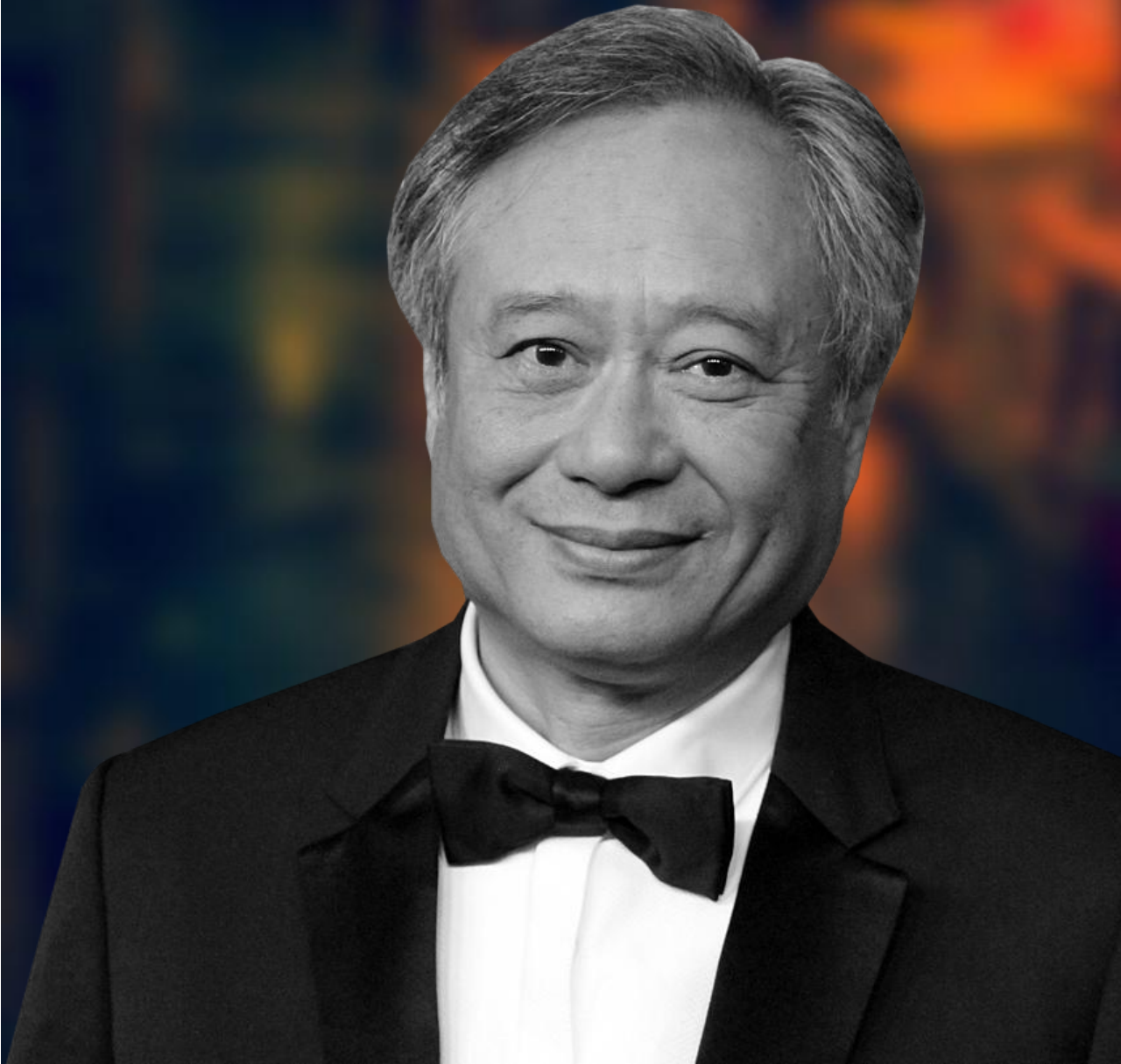
Marie



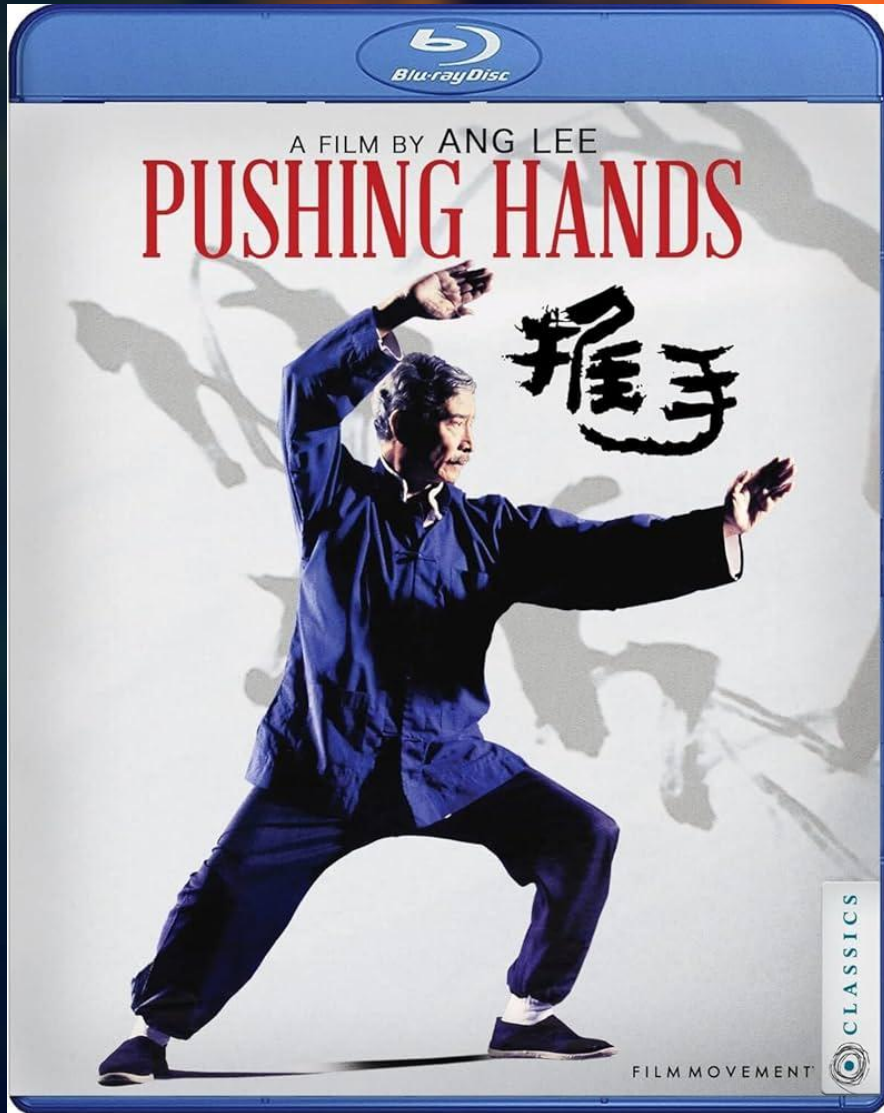
Born in Taiwan in 1954.

1980: New York University, Master's degree in film studies.

Ang Lee's graduation work The Line of Demarcation won best director Award and Best Film Award from New York University.



**1990: his first feature film,
The Pushing Hand — huge success!**



**“ A director is to a film what a
novelist is to a novel. ”**

**“ The unique cultural position gives
Ang Lee a unique cross-cultural
perspective, and the flow process
from novel text to film text also
reflects the phenomenon of cross-
cultural interpretation in his works. ”**
~ John Bryant

3、 Perspective **Shift** in the Tempo of Emotional Development

Wang Jiazhi vs Yi Mocheng

the emotional clues in
the novel



Development in the Film
Controlled by Mr. Yi



3.1. Wang Jiazhi's point of view presents the emotional clues in the novel

1) She is the hunter and the bait.

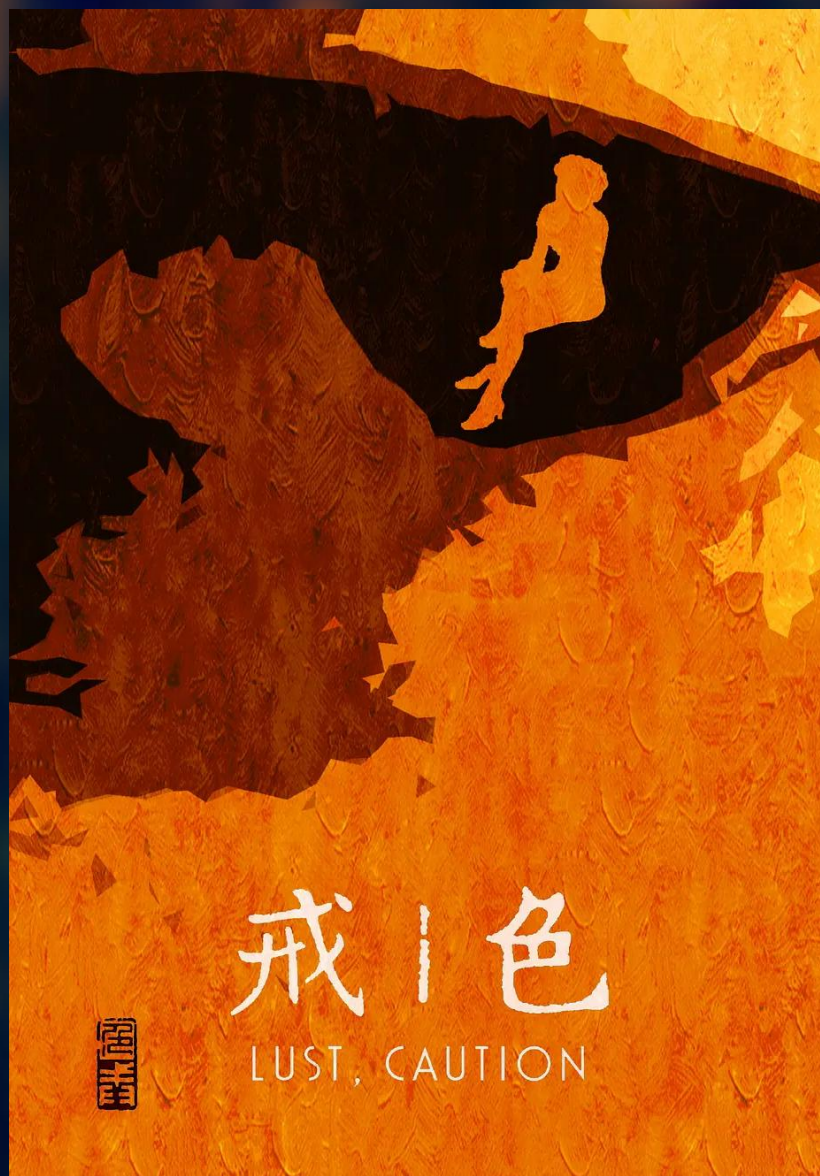
2) When did she start to realize that her feelings for Mr. Yee were different?

- in the jewelry shop
- two of them alone under the lamp
- ; so strong feeling of being loved -
- he 'really love me'.

3.2. The Rhythm of Emotional
in the Film Controlled by Mr. Yi



- 1) on the pretext that Mrs Yi has a headache, he has dinner with Wang Jiazhi
- 2) After three years, Mr Yi : 'It's good to see you here' in Shanghai.



四、电影主题： 对东方自我的审视

4. The theme of the movie:
the examination of the Eastern self

Weng Xiangxiang & Yuan Kaihan

4.1 “Country Issues” vs “Individual Identity”

WANG JIAZHII

改编一：家国历史
与个体身份的对立

Steve Weng Xiangxiang



Adaptation

Eileen Chang avoids involving politics & history in her novels. The description of national issues is overshadowed by the portrayal of female psychology.

However, Ang Lee's film significantly adds background on national history, creating a contrast between country issues and individual identity.



4.1 “Country Issues” vs “Individual Identity”



4.2 The Fable of Patriarchy & Collectivism

改编二：父权与集体主义寓言

A Shrewd "Spy Leader"

易默成



Idealism "Patriot"

邝裕民



ruthless "agent"

老吴



我相信邝裕民已经和你谈过了
I trust Kuang has already briefed you?

4.2 The Fable of Patriarchy & Collectivism

改编二：父权与集体主义寓言



Eileen Chang believes that Wang Jiazi's change of heart is an impulsive event, focusing on the female psychology.

However, Ang Lee sees a woman in a vulnerable position being absorbed by patriarchal discourse (父权话语) and how she breaks through that structure, using her awakened self to subvert the collective (颠覆集体).

4.2 The Fable of Patriarchy & Collectivism



4.3 Deconstructing Historical Discourse through Body Language



改编三：
以身体语言
解构历史话语

Joy Yuan Kaihan

Difference in Sexual Dimensions

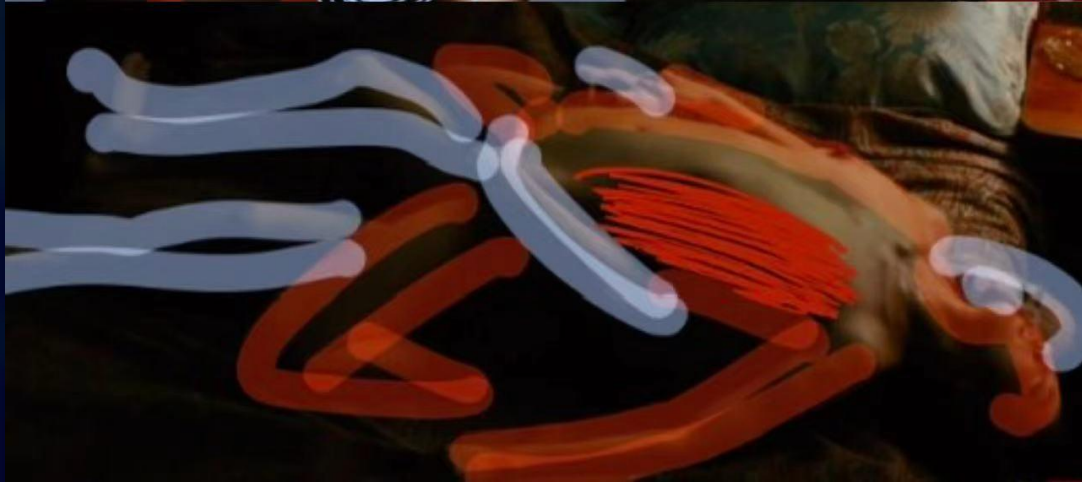
不去找他，他甚至于可以一次都不来，据说这样的事也有过，公寓就算是临别赠品。他是实在诱惑太多，顾不过来，一个眼不见，就会丢在脑后。还非得钉着他，简直需要提溜着两只乳房在他跟前晃。

Elieen Chang



你正见识到五千年性压抑的结果

Ang Lee



Three Erotic Scenes

Body language is used by Ang Lee as a visualization of the changing power relations and emotional states between the two men.

The metaphysical (形而上学的) sense of history, which should be solemn and dignified, is also deconstructed in metaphysical and physical behavior.

Movie Poster

Wang Jiazhi's body is in many cases stared at, transformed, and deprived of in this way, not only as a woman in a patriarchal discourse, but also as a metaphor for an individual who has lost her name and mind, leaving only a body behind, stared at in the collective socialist memory.



4.4 Materialistic, Powerful and Emotional Weakness Writing

WANG HIAZHI

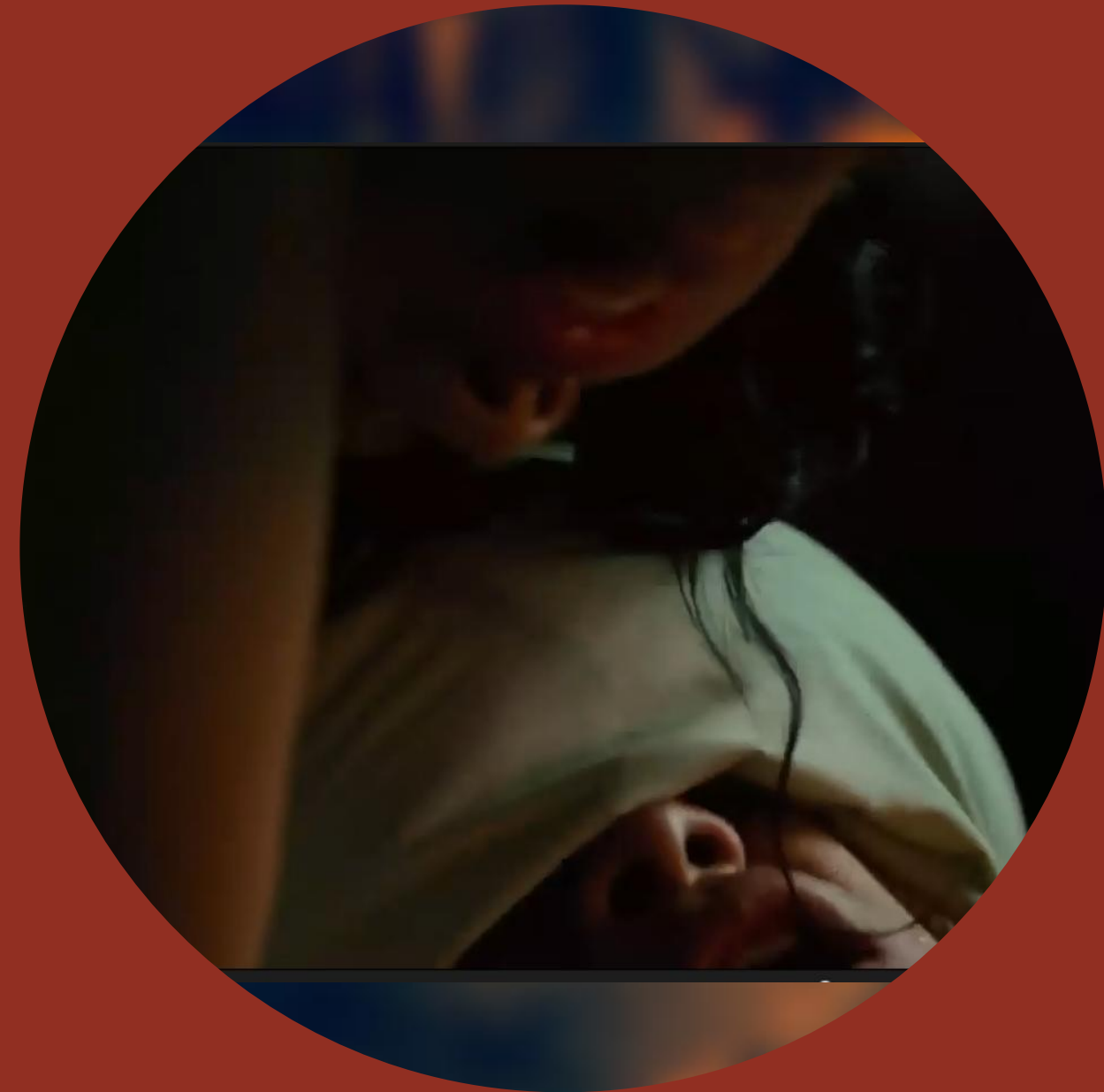


改编四：
物欲，权欲
与情欲的弱化书写



Materialistic

In the movie, the connection between Wang Jiazhi's last-minute transformation and the diamonds has been greatly diminished.



Powerful and Emotional

Mr. Yi is no longer a single power to seek the color of high-level officials, Mrs. Mak is no longer a single color to lure the power of the mistress of the machine, they broke the "color" "power" of the two clear rules of the transaction, the power relationship in the subtle changes in the subtle.



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Conclusion

One of the important transformations of Wang Jiazhi's character in Ang Lee's film is the weakening of the human weaknesses presented in the original novel, and even the weaknesses of the woman that Eileen Chang intended to show become her glittering points under Ang Lee's lens.



Thank you!