

Such a logic is in fact fully at work when it comes to Han Han (chapter five) in terms of his version of “commercialization of rebelliousness.” Recognizing that Han’s “cultural rebellion has been called into question due to his cultural entrepreneurship,” Hunt focuses mainly on how Han “deliberately explores experiences of postsocialist masculinity” and the extent to which “his rebellion replies upon, and is therefore curtailed by, his repeated return to a conservative understanding of gender” (p. 103). It is interesting to note, however, a blind spot on the part of Hunt, who downplays the political economy of Han’s “rebellion” as somehow less important than his conservative understanding of gender. One wonders if, had Han Han been less “conservative” in his understanding of gender, his version of rebellion would necessarily be more “progressive” in class terms. The lack of a clear class perspective may explain why, when it comes to reading Xu Zecheng (chapter four), the discussion of “floating men” feels less assured, especially in terms of the kind of “marginality” that Xu’s works tend to focus on. Indeed, compared with Zhu Wen, Feng Tang and Han Han, Xu Zecheng has often been recognized as one of the “*diceng*” literature writers known for their attention to migrant workers and migrant population “floating” – on the margins of the urban society and trying to make a living sometimes as small-time criminals – in big cities. In Xu’s writings, while the marginality of his male characters is in fact often shown to be both gendered and classed, the chapter in question feels a bit constrained by the need to highlight the gendered – maleness and its problematics – dimensions.

The book ends with a conclusion in which the author summarizes and highlights the “great paradox” (p. 125) in representations of seeming resistance of “certain hegemonic values of masculinity and in disavowing the idea of an innately ‘true’ experience of manhood” when “heterosexuality, virility, fraternity, and a man’s privileged position as agent are all vital parts of the texts” (p. 125). And “whether consciously or not, narratives of rebellion and doubts about certain elements of mainstream masculinity irresistibly become narratives about the rehabilitation, rather than the refutation, of the masculine” (p. 125). “It is for this reason,” the author concludes, “that the repeated cries of a ‘crisis of masculinity’ in postsocialist China rarely ring true” (p. 125). The conclusion could add a sharper point to this well-written and clearly discussed book by noting that the postsocialist pushback against women’s liberation in the context of the rise and coming to dominance of a petty-bourgeois anti-revolutionary ideology makes a progressive gender-equality male consciousness less likely to attract male intellectuals who are bent on claiming the postrevolutionary centre, whether through conformity or through performative rebelliousness.

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Wang Bing’s Filmmaking of the China Dream: Narratives, Witnesses and Marginal Spaces

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Wang Bing is arguably China’s pre-eminent non-fiction filmmaker. Since the release of his three-part epic *Tiexi Qu: West of the Tracks* in 2002, his work has featured regularly at festivals, in gallery spaces, and on television. Often positioned as a proponent of slow cinema due to the extended duration of his



films, he also shares a predominantly observational approach with contemporaries – ranging from those working at the Harvard Sensory Ethnography Lab to Nicholas Geyrhalter – who have retooled this previously unfashionable mode of filmmaking for the 21st century. In her book, Elena Pollacchi takes a slightly different tack. While insisting both on the auteurist integrity of Wang's oeuvre and on his place in the world filmmaking canon, she argues that his cinematic signature is neither temporal nor observational, but spatial. For her, it is Wang's interest in marginal social spaces, combined with the spatial poetics of his style, that lends the director's body of work its coherence.

Pollacchi lays out this structuring logic in her opening chapters. A brief introduction argues that Wang's aesthetics cannot be separated from his subject matter, and that while certain issues recur throughout his films – the relationship of individual and collective, the tension between style and narrative form – the monograph's focus is on space. The latter's significance is further elaborated in the first chapter. Here, Pollacchi maps the geography of Wang's shooting locations in China to illustrate his interest in marginal spaces that lie outside state-approved narratives of economic and historical development (the China Dream of the title). This interest in spaces of underdevelopment connects Wang's work to broader global dynamics. Pollacchi suggests it also translates into a recurrent diegetic focus on particular representational spaces: spaces of labour, of history and memory, and of collective and individual narratives.

These representational spaces form the backbone of the chapters that follow. Chapter two uses *Tiexi Qu: West of the Tracks* as a point of entry for these discussions. Pollacchi interprets the film as a layering of all these spaces, both an archive of the decommissioning of the Tiexi district factories, and an attempt to narrativize this process. She locates the documentary in a long line of global factory films, from the Lumière Brothers to Terrence Malick's *Days of Heaven* – a tradition she believes Wang Bing is aware of, and which his style seeks to reference. Chapter three shifts to focus on spaces of labour in the films *Three Sisters*, *'Til Madness Do Us Part* and *Bitter Money*. The labour here is not simply of these films' subjects, but also the work of filmmaking, made apparent by the movement of the camera through spaces ranging from the Yunnan mountainside to the interior of a psychiatric hospital. Chapter four, the longest of the book, considers Wang's work on the Anti-Rightist Campaign. Using *The Ditch* and *Dead Souls*, and through comparisons to Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Salò*, Pedro Costa's *Colossal Youth* and Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah*, Pollacchi explores how Wang opens a space to address the history and memory of this campaign through tensions between re-enactment, witnessing and the indexical trace. A degree of camera reflexivity is again key to this process. Chapter five focuses on films and installations that largely feature individual protagonists, arguing that they foreground the relationship between spaces of collectivity and individual stories. Finally, a brief coda serves both as a conclusion and to highlight how the circulation of Wang's cinema through gallery and festival spaces has secured the director's global profile, facilitated the development of his style, and diversified the ways in which audiences might view and attribute meaning to his work. The book also includes a useful filmography detailing the works discussed, the awards they have received, and locations of Wang Bing retrospectives and exhibitions.

Wang Bing's Filmmaking of the China Dream makes a strong case for understanding Wang's work both as an integral whole and as part of the global canon. Pollacchi's close relationship with the director, a product of her time programming for the Venice International Film Festival, ensures interesting insights into both his production processes and his personal convictions (the latter necessarily not always referenced). However, the book's scope is on occasion its undoing. Intriguing as they are, the bases for comparisons with European and American feature films are not always obvious. Key concepts sometimes require more space for development. Pollacchi returns regularly to the idea that Wang creates narratives from documentary footage. Given that none of Wang's films adhere to classical narrative structures, the meaning here of "narrative" is ambiguous. Similarly, the spatiality of Wang's chosen subject matter is often clearer than that of his aesthetic choices.

Perhaps most intriguingly, though, what Pollacchi reveals about Wang Bing's production practice complicates the auteurist framing of her argument. Wang's willingness to work across TV, film and the art gallery hints at a more pragmatic filmmaker than his festival profile suggests, raising interesting

questions about his refusal to frame his television work as part of his oeuvre. Although Pollacchi stresses the primacy of Wang's sensibility in the editing suite, the impression of a collaborative practice that emerges from the book, which indicates the director works closely with other professionals both while editing and while shooting footage, is slightly at odds with this emphasis. Pollacchi clearly sees Wang's recognition at Cannes, Venice and Locarno as an acknowledgment of his inherently auteurist qualities. But it is clear that the increasingly rarefied spaces of exhibition through which Wang's work circulate have also helped shape his critical reception abroad, smoothing out the contradictions threaded through his spaces of production. It is these tensions that I personally would have liked to hear more about.

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Renegade Rhymes: Rap Music, Narrative, and Knowledge in Taiwan

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Meredith Schweig's monograph, *Renegade Rhymes*, is the first detailed English-language account of rap music in Taiwan. Using interviews with Taiwan hip-hop key actors, observations, song lyrics and a plurality of archival materials, Schweig brilliantly fills a gap in the literature about popular music in Taiwan and in the Sinophone world in general.

In her book, drawn from her PhD dissertation defended in 2013, Schweig interrogates the emergence of Taiwan hip-hop music and culture in the late 1980s, after decades of martial law imposed by the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT). Schweig's observations and interviews mainly focus on the early 2010s, an era politically dominated by Ma Ying-Jeou's KMT (2008–2016) which proved critical for Taiwan's rap community. Schweig's main argument moves away from traditional debates about hip-hop as a form of counter-hegemonic discourse to "position rap songs in Taiwan as synergetic efforts to imagine new forms of post-authoritarian sociality" (p. 1).

Schweig starts at the beginning – the introduction of rap in Taiwan – but as the rapper Dwagie warns her, "the beginning ... well, it depends how you define rap" (p. 19). Instead of imposing her own understanding of Taiwan's rap history, Schweig lets the actors recount their own subjective stories, a "dizzying array of timelines and wildly divergent ideas about which events have proven formative to the community" (p. 19). This story also depends on the emic term used to translate the English "rap," may it be the Hoklo *liām-kua* 唸歌 for "song with narration" (p. 20), the Mandarin *shuochang* 說唱 ("speaking-singing"), *xiha* 嘻哈, or even *raoshe* 饒舌 ("rhapsodizing tongue") (p. 20). Each of these terms has its own story and connotation, emphasizing for instance the American influence with *xiha* or Taiwan's own musical tradition with *liām-kua*.

Schweig carefully retraces the advent of rap in Taiwan, from the popularization of break-dancing with the release of *Flashdance* to "the island's first *xiha* teen idols" (p. 25), LA Boyz, a band of three Taiwanese American singers formed in the early 1990s. The author also pays attention to the first artists rapping in Hoklo, such as Blacklist Workshop or Jutoupi, who rose to fame after the lifting of martial law and the end of the restrictions on local languages (Hoklo, Hakka and other indigenous