

NEW WOMAN

CHUK-HAU RITA TSE

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
OF MASTER OF FINE ARTS**

**GRADUATE PROGRAM IN FILM
YORK UNIVERSITY
TORONTO, ONTARIO**

August 2016

© Chuk-Hau Rita Tse, 2016

Abstract

New Woman is an experimental film that investigates the look of New Woman in Chinese silent screen. Through the use of archival film footage, derived from twenty-eight Chinese silent films made from 1922 to 1935 (see Appendix A), the film explores patriarchal perspectives in the portrayal of women in Chinese silent cinema, and deconstructs their appearances in order to reveal the impressive talent and outlook of the New Woman, which have been largely ignored and forgotten. The film features four thematic sections, which are Virtue, Modeng Woman, Unbound Feet and New Woman, with intertitles taken from the Chinese silent films. The footage of each section has been manipulated differently by using various hand processing techniques and artisanal forms of manipulation on celluloid. A specific effect has been used for each section in relation to its theme. The film is accompanied by low-keyed sound effects, which allow viewers to concentrate on the silent film footage. By editing the archival film footage into a consistent sequence with a narrative logic, and reinterpreting the footage with different visual effects, the film discloses the unique image of the New Woman of the Chinese silent cinema.

Acknowledgments

First, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Philip Hoffman, for his inspiring feedback and motivation, and for his patience and continuous support, which guided me throughout the numerous challenges as I worked on my thesis film. I really appreciated his vast knowledge and skill in experimental film, process cinema, and hand-processing and manipulation techniques. Without his supervision and support, this thesis film would not have been possible.

A very special thanks goes to Michael Zryd for his insightful comments, encouragement and valuable advice.

I am indebted to John Greyson for his constant support and help.

I am also grateful to Kuowei Lee for his tireless and considerate assistance.

To Marcos Arriaga, Jon Hedley, Gilbert Kwong and Stephanie Adamson, for their wonderful guidance.

To Kotama Bouabane, for his tremendous assistance when I worked in the dark room.

To the staff of the China Film Archive and Hong Kong Film Archive, for their great help when I worked on my thesis research.

Finally to my family, for the endless encouragement throughout my years of study and through the process of researching and making this thesis film.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
Evolution of the Project	1
Chinese Silent Film Era and Historical Background	4
Thesis Film – <i>New Woman</i>	6
Artistic Process – Visuals	11
Artistic Process – Sound	15
Related Films and Artisanal Practices	16
Conclusion	21
Bibliography	22
Filmography.....	24
Appendices.....	25
Appendix A: List of Chinese Silent Films.....	25
Appendix B: Chinese Silent Films Shown in China Film Archive	27
Appendix C: Reticulation Effect	28
Appendix D: Solarization Effect on Reversal	29
Appendix E: Contact Printing.....	30
Appendix F: Coffee Processing for Negative.....	31

Evolution of the Project

I have been collecting any Chinese silent films that were available for many years since I have always been interested in silent film, especially Chinese silent film. Some of them were on VCD and DVD as others were downloaded from YouTube. I have also visited China Film Archive in Beijing and Hong Kong Film Archive for doing research for this thesis film. During the visit at China Film Archive, I was allowed to watch four Chinese silent films that I had not been able to access before (see Appendix B). When I was in Hong Kong Film Archive, I had a chance to get some useful documents about Chinese silent cinema. However, I was not able to collect any archival film footage from these visits.

New Woman began as an experimental film that examined women's roles of Chinese silent film with six thematic chapters, which were Virtue, Modeng Woman, New Woman, Free Love, Unbound Feet and Bonding. The major change of the film was that six chapters have evolved into four thematic sections, which are Virtue, Modeng Woman, Unbound Feet and New Woman. During the process of selecting and editing shots from the archival film footage for a rough cut, I realized that the theme of Free Love could not fit into the film. The images related to the idea of Free Love mostly show a man and a woman together. Having a man shown on screen for an almost entire section could have taken attention away from the image of a woman, and it could have looked inconsistent with other sections of the film in terms of content and form. Therefore, I decided to remove the section on Free Love from the film. For the section on Bonding, I planned to explore only a scene taken from a film called *Big Road* (1934). The scene shows two sisters sharing their secrets in a living room. However, after I had analyzed and edited the selected shots and clips into a rough cut for a 16mm shoot, I felt that the individual section on

Bonding could not go well with other sections in the film. Instead, in the section on New Woman, I present shots and clips taken from other Chinese silent films, which are related to the idea of Bonding. Since the female characters in the section on New Woman are patriotic, and willing to help each other, the shots of Bonding work well with other shots in the section on New Woman. Finally, the film has evolved from six chapters into four thematic sections.

I planned to present the name of each chapter as an intertitle in the beginning of each section. However, I felt that showing the names of the sections could be a bit literal. I have decided to use intertitles derived from the Chinese silent films, and to intercut them with the archival film footage in a symbolic way. Showing the intertitles taken from the Chinese silent films also relates to the idea of using archival film footage in this thesis project.

After having taken Process Cinema and Hand Making Film, and participated in Film Farm Retreat 2015, I have been exposed to many avant-garde filmmakers and their works, and have experimented with different hand processing techniques and artisanal forms of manipulation on celluloid. These experiences have helped me to develop unique and relevant visual themes for each section of the film. In Process Cinema, I have experimented with organic processing, tinting, toning and contact printing. I have developed 16mm films with coffee, hydrangea, red wine and Coca-Cola. Through these exercises, I have had a chance to do tests for my thesis film. In Hand Making Film as a Directed Reading, I have written journals about some well-known avant-garde filmmakers. Through the assignments, I have learnt more about the filmmakers' intentions of making their works and their hand processing skills. In the Film Farm Retreat, I have explored further with hand manipulation techniques, which included tinting, toning, contact printing and chemical treatments on celluloid. I have also had a chance to stay with the talented filmmakers, who were also the participants in the workshop, for seven days. Working with the filmmakers and seeing their works have inspired me to conceive inventive

ideas for my thesis film. All these experiences from the classes of Process Cinema and Hand Making Film, and from the Film Farm Retreat have not only enhanced my knowledge and skills of hand processing film, but also encouraged me to develop the special visual themes for my film. Finally, I have decided to do toning, reticulation, solarization, contact printing and coffee processing for the footage of my film. The footage in the section on Virtue has been toned in copper and reticulated as the section on Modeng Woman has been solarized. The footage in the section on Unbound Feet has been contact-printed while the section on New Woman has been processed with coffee.

Chinese Silent Film Era and Historical Background

During the Chinese silent film era (1896-1936) when film was considered a new media, history, politics and society in China dramatically changed after the 1911 Revolution (Xinhai Revolution) and the May Fourth movement of 1919. These enlightenment movements increased the social status of Chinese women. Chinese intellectuals from the movements advocated education for women, free love and marriage, and the abolition of foot-binding, an advocacy dating back to the late-nineteenth century. The foot-binding tradition gradually died out in the early-twentieth century, when Chinese women began to have access to education and became emancipated. The influence of Western culture, a result of Western colonization in China, also sparked great changes in Chinese women's way of thinking, behaving and dressing. The Chinese women imitated the acts and the image of Western woman, becoming modernized and westernized. During this radical period, not only was the social standing of the Chinese women elevated, but also their public image was gradually enhanced. In the 1920s, the image of the Chinese women appeared in various advertisements, posters and calendars. The Chinese women also performed on stage and in film whereas the female leads were still played by men in the early-twentieth century. The rise of female performers heightened their visibility as public figures. As Zhang Zhen in "*An Amorous History of the Silver Screen: The Actress As Vernacular Embodiment in Early Chinese Film Culture*" says, "The cinema created not only a new vocation for women but also a significant social position and public image."¹ The involvement of Chinese women in cinema had considerable implications. After the Japanese bombing of Shanghai in 1932, the women's image on screen developed into that of a revolutionary character. Therefore

¹ Zhang Zhen, "*An Amorous History of the Silver Screen: The Actress As Vernacular Embodiment in Early Chinese Film Culture*," *Camera Obscura*, 48 (2001), 243.

women played an indispensable role in Chinese silent cinema, and their professional performances were a significant contribution to the Chinese silent film era.

During the Chinese silent film era, women were often presented as either a victim or a sexual object. The female characters in the films were usually naive maidens, abandoned wives, dancing girls, prostitutes or widows exploited by the patriarchal order of society although the directors, who were all male, claimed that by showing the stories of the Chinese women to the public, they were showing their sympathy for them, giving a voice to them and saving them from the unbearable situations. There were marketing concerns as well. The films served to sexually objectify women as a passive and negative model. As Laura Mulvey in “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” argues, the male subconscious has two ways to escape the fear of being castrated by the female figure. One is to punish or to save the female figure while another is to fetishize the female figure.² The women’s appearances described from the male perspective in the Chinese silent film were generally accepted by society. The intelligence and the acting abilities of these new women have been overlooked since the silent era.

² Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” *Screen*, 16.3 (Autumn 1975), 11.

Thesis Film – *New Woman*

“The New Woman was a feminist ideal that emerged in the late-nineteenth century”³ in Western countries. The “New Woman” phenomenon was popularized in China during the 1920s and 1930s as it was the Chinese silent film era. In China, the “New Woman”, Xin nüxing (新女性), was used as a figure, who was brave, independent, educated, confident, physically strong and patriotic. This feminist figure, primarily a male-created model, often appeared in film especially after the Japanese bombing of Shanghai in 1932. I used this term, “New Woman”, as my film title not only to criticize the figure of the “New Woman” portrayed by men in Chinese silent screen, but also to reveal my own vision of the “New Woman” of the Chinese silent cinema. Through the film, I also intended to stimulate viewers to think about the feminist ideal for Chinese women in the contemporary Chinese society since most of Chinese women are still expected to fulfill their cultural obligations.

My thesis film, *New Woman*, begins with a scene derived from a Chinese silent film called *New Woman* (1935). The scene without any hand manipulation effects shows a Chinese woman crying and looking towards two birds trapped in a birdcage. The scene shows a patriarchal condition of a Chinese woman on screen, which contrasts with the rest of the film. The scene acts as an introduction to the film.

New Woman examines the diversity of women’s roles, evidenced by their dynamic performance. In different genres of the Chinese silent films, women play various characters, ranging from virtuous wives to modern girls to revolutionary women. These characters reflect the lives of the Chinese women in the society. Through using the archival film footage with hand

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Woman

processing effects, *New Woman* criticizes and deconstructs the patriarchal view of Chinese women's roles so as to reveal the significant and understudied image of the New Woman of the Chinese silent screen. The film includes four thematic sections, which present these three types of female characters in the same order as their appearances in the history of the Chinese silent film.

In the Chinese silent cinema, the virtuous woman is a victimized character, such as an abandoned wife or a widow, who is trapped and victimized as she struggles to fulfill Confucian virtues specific to Chinese woman. The Confucian moral model for Chinese woman consists of "three obediences and four virtues" (三從四德) - obedience to father before marriage, to husband after marriage, and to son after husband's death; morality, proper speech, modest manner and diligent work. The virtuous woman in the films is often punished and suffering as a result of abiding by Confucian moral standards. In the first section, *Virtue*, the film deconstructs these tragic roles so as to reestablish a tough, strong and determined character of the New Woman. Through toning the footage in copper and boiling it, I intended to create a decay and reticulation effect for this section in order to reveal a poetic and nostalgic feeling and to indicate the persistence of the virtuous women. This effect also implies the corrosive ideas of Confucian virtues. The film discloses the hard work of the virtuous women, their working hands and their faces. Through their gazes, facial expressions and gestures, these new women of the Chinese silent film reveal extraordinary patience, fortitude, self-sufficiency, courage and determination as they cope with miserable circumstances. Shown with the working hands of the new women, the hands of a Chinese woman, who holds a camera and takes a picture, signify the hand manipulation experiments and works that the filmmaker has done to the film.

Modeng woman, described as a bad, wicked and sexy figure by the male filmmakers, is often shown in the Chinese silent cinema. Modeng (摩登), meaning modern, transcribes the English pronunciation with radicals taken out of Chinese characters, and it was a common word to describe the modern Chinese women in the early-twentieth century. Modeng woman in the Chinese silent screen is often vain and leading a luxurious life. However, I think that the role of the modeng woman displays a confident and liberated spirit. Through using the hand processing technique of solarization, the film deconstructs the sexual image of the modern Chinese women, and conveys the subjectivity of the new women of the Chinese silent cinema. The solarization effect creates a sense of electric shock in visual as the negative-like images are coming in and out. The images with this effect constantly attract attention. In this section, the film reveals a spectacle of the modern women in an alternative way, and conveys their confidence and freedom. The way the new women perform not only presents their charm, but also displays their courage and independence. Through these images, they are depicted as a viewing subject rather than a viewed object.

The Chinese silent films, influenced by Western cinema, present the modern Chinese women as a fetish, such as a woman showing her stockinged leg and unbound feet. Having their legs and unbound feet exposed on screen, which was considered unconventional in Chinese society of the time, the modern women in the films represent an innovative and rebellious model. The image of their unbound feet not only signifies the liberation of Chinese women from the foot-binding tradition, but also reveals the characteristics of the character. In the section on Unbound Feet, the film uses the effect of contact printing to present the freedom of the new women. It reveals the unbound feet of the Chinese women, who walk towards different directions and finally move out of the frame. The images of the unbound feet wearing high-

heeled shoes gradually change to the images of the bare feet walking up and down a hill, and this suggests the liberation of the Chinese women from binding their feet into high-heeled shoes and from becoming a fetish. Also, having the sprocket holes of the frame appeared on screen makes viewers aware that they are looking at a frame. The new women are able to walk out of the frame freely rather than being trapped in the frame.

Following the rapid emergence of Chinese left-wing cinema after 1932, the image of the Chinese women transformed into a subversive figure in the Chinese silent film era. They are portrayed as “New Woman”, who is brave, physically strong, educated, patriotic, and willing to oppose oppression and improve the society while at the end of the films, she usually either has a tragic ending by sacrificing herself for the male protagonist and the patriarchal society, or is saved by the male figure. In this section, the film exposes the unique look of this new woman through using organic processing. The footage of this section was developed with coffee, which created many scratches on the images. This effect provides a feeling of fast pace, which corresponds to the action of the new woman and the idea of the revolutionary woman. The nature of organic processing also signifies the characteristics of the new woman, who is modest and natural. Through her resolute looks, convincing gestures and powerful body language, the new woman not only discloses her liberation, rationality, determination and assertiveness, but also presents her true competence in horseback riding and martial arts fighting in the Chinese silent cinema. This character is described as a revolutionary heroine rather than a subordinate object. Through bonding with her female comrades and helping each other, the new woman shows her special female bonding. In this section, a sequence presents a few continuous shots of the new women with freeze frame in order to emphasize the idea of female bonding. At the end of the section, the new women look and wave towards the left side of the screen, and that indicates the idea of Chinese left-wing cinema.

New Woman uses intertitles derived from part of the intertitles of Chinese silent films to integrate into the footage of four thematic sections. The film re-edits the intertitles of the Chinese silent films so as to reveal a new meaning. The intertitles in the film correspond to the images in a symbolic way and also connect the sections together. The intertitle, “Let’s go to a dance hall, shall we?”, in the section on Modeng Woman, is answered by “Actually dancing is a corrupt way of life” in the section on Unbound Feet. Then it shows, “We all suffer from oppression”, which is replied by the intertitle, “That’s what revolution is for”, in the section on New Woman. The intertitles relate and connect to each other. In addition, the film uses Arabic numerals to separate each section as it is a basic system to organize chapters. Showing a successive number in the beginning of each section of the film as a central structural device allows viewers to look forward to each section, which appears one after another.

Artistic Process – Visuals

After having studied and analyzed all twenty-eight Chinese silent films that I have collected, I categorized the footage according to theme, content, action, gesture, facial expression, form, rhythm, resolution and so on. I selected shots and clips from the archival film footage and edited them into a rough cut for four sections. I shot the rough cut off a computer monitor with 16mm film. Since I wanted to show the facial expressions of the Chinese women clearly, I chose ORWO UN54 in addition to Kodak 3378. ORWO UN54 is a low contrast film stock with a less grainy look as Kodak 3378 is a high contrast film stock that I had experimented with for my thesis film in my first year of graduate program. I used these two film stocks for my thesis film depended on the effects for each section. Also, I processed the footage mostly with Kodak D76 developer, which gives a low contrast look while Kodak Dektol developer, which I usually used in my first year of the program, makes a high contrast image.

For the effect in the section on Virtue, I experimented with reticulation effect on different film stocks, which were ORWO UN54, Kodak Tri-X, Kodak 3378 and Kodak 3302. Each of them had different boiling times for reticulation on emulsion (see Appendix C). ORWO UN54 did not reticulate at all after being boiled for more than an hour while Kodak 3378 is the most fragile film stock for reticulation since it only took 10 minutes to get the effect. As boiling kept going once emulsion became reticulated, the emulsion was gradually peeled off until it was all gone. I also tested toning and boiling in different orders. The emulsion of the footage, which was boiled first and then toned, was easy to peel off while the effect of the footage, which was toned first and then boiled, was controlled easily. If the footage was toned first and then boiled, the toned color may have been washed off a bit. Therefore, I toned my footage at least for 10 minutes. Reticulation effect works easily on a brighter area of a positive image while it takes

longer to affect on a darker area of an image. When the dark area gets the effect, the emulsion of the bright area would probably be peeled off. If the dark area is expected to get reticulated, its negative footage should be boiled. After all these experiments, I decided to tone my footage in copper first and then boil it in a big pot. Since the scratches made from hand processing look a bit disturbing with the reticulation effect on an image, I decided to process the footage at a lab. The footage of this section was shot on ORWO UN54 and processed at Colorlab. The workprints, which were Kodak 3302, were toned in copper for 10 minutes as some parts of the footage were put in activator for 2 minutes before being toned in order to get different results. Then the footage was boiled for 25 to 45 minutes depended on the intensity of the effect that I wanted for each shot. Also, I boiled different parts of a clip for a longer time so as to get the effect worked more on a certain facial expression and action of a female character.

In the section on Modeng Woman, I did solarization effect with ORWO UN54 and Kodak 3378 and processed the footage with Kodak D76 developer as reversal. A tungsten light was set up on top of a cabinet and pointed towards a bucket of a developer. The distance between the tungsten light and the bucket was around 38 inches. I flashed the light at the footage quickly during the first developing in order to get solarization effect. The processing time and the timing for flashing light were different for each film stock (see Appendix D). For ORWO UN54, the footage could be solarized anytime between 1 minute 30 seconds and 2 minutes. The solarization effect worked much better and stronger on Kodak 3378 than on ORWO UN54. Also, fresh D76 developer and old D76 developer could affect the result differently. Fresh D76 worked better than old D76. I also solarized the footage of Kodak 3378 with Kodak Dektol developer. The solarization effect for this setup looked the strongest as compared to other groups, and some parts of the images looked almost transparent. I edited and superimposed the film footage of different results together for this section.

For the effect of contact printing in the section on Unbound Feet, I used Kodak 3378 film stock since it can work under red light in dark room, and I processed it with Kodak D76 developer. I put a fresh filmstrip on a piece of wood, which could stabilize the filmstrip, and placed an exposed filmstrip that I wanted to print from on top of the fresh filmstrip. Both filmstrips had emulsion up and were covered by a piece of glass, which made two filmstrips contact tightly to each other. Then I used a small flashlight to shine over them in order to contact-print the image. I processed the footage as negative when I contact-printed a negative image, then I got a positive image from contact printing. When I contact-printed a positive image and processed it as negative, then I got a negative image (see Appendix E). I also put two different exposed filmstrips on top of a fresh filmstrip in order to contact-print a superimposed image. This needed more light to shine through the images in order to make a contact print. Since the pieces of wood and glass that I used were about 67 centimeters long, the longest shot that I could contact-print was about 3.25 second. Then I slowed it down in post-production as so to make it longer.

For the effect of coffee processing in the section on New Woman, I shot the footage with ORWO UN54 and Kodak 3378, and processed them with coffee as negative. The recipe that I used for coffee developer included hot water, which was over 40 degree Celsius, Tide laundry detergent, Vitamin C and Folgers Classic Roast Ground Coffee. They were dissolved in this order.

Recipe of Coffee Developer for 16mm B&W Film (100 feet)

Hot Water, 32oz	x 8
Tide Laundry Detergent, 50g	x 8
Vitamin C, 15g	x 8
Folgers Classic Roast Ground Coffee, 50g	x 8

Then I let the developer cool down to 21 degree Celsius before developing the footage. I processed 100 feet of 16mm film at a time, and the developing time with the same bucket of coffee developer took a bit longer for the second 100 feet of 16mm film. Also, the processing times were different for ORWO UN54 and Kodak 3378 (see Appendix F). The results from both film stocks looked similar. The footage of Kodak 3378 just looked a little bit contrasty than that of ORWO UN54. I edited them together for this section.

After I had done all the hand processing and manipulation effects for the film footage, I transferred it at Frame Discreet and Technicolor. The result at Frame Discreet was good. Then I edited the footage with different visual effects, such as slow motion, superimposition, freeze frame and so on.

Artistic Process – Sound

New Woman is accompanied by low-keyed ambient sound effects, which allow viewers to focus on the silent film images, which disclose the remarkable performance of the new women in the Chinese silent cinema. During the beginning of the Chinese silent film era, films were shown mostly with no sound. Then there were narrators explaining the stories to audiences during film screenings. There were also actresses, who came on stage to sing the theme song of a film during an intermission. In the late Chinese silent film era, live music was played during film screenings. Although Chinese silent films were not really shown in silent during the silent film period, the voices of the new women were never heard on screen. Their impressive facial expressions, gestures and body language became their only voices on screen. Therefore, I intended to have viewers concentrate on the appearances and performance of the new women as the low-keyed ambient sound effects create a meditative atmosphere for the film.

The section on Virtue with the reticulation effect is accompanied by a low-pitched drone with a slight record noise. The section on Modeng Woman is supported by a high-pitched drone with the sound of wind chimes as the solarized images are constantly coming in and out. The images of the unbound feet walking and moving freely in the third section are synchronized with a rhythmic sound effect of film surface noise. The images of the revolutionary women with scratches made from coffee processing are emphasized by the sound effect of cicada.

Related Films and Artisanal Practices

New Woman uses Chinese silent film footage, and hand processing and manipulation techniques to reveal the significant and understudied image of the New Woman of Chinese silent cinema. Its artistic approach has been influenced by Bill Morrison's *Decasia: The State of Decay* (2002), Peter Tscherkassky's *L'Arrivée* (1997/1998), Matthias Müller's *Home Stories* (1990), Gustav Deutsch's *Film ist 1-6* (1998) and *Film ist 7-12* (2002), in which forgotten archival footage is deconstructed and re-cut into a poetic and thoughtful film work. These filmmakers manipulate and reframe their found footage through various artisanal methods.

Bill Morrison's *Decasia: The State of Decay* (2002) explores the chemical death of cinema. It is composed of archival film footage of 35mm film that had decayed over time. He collects his archival footage at film archives, which include the Museum of Modern Art, the Library of Congress, George Eastman House, the University of South Carolina Newsfilm Library and the Cinematheque Suisse, in pursuit of particularly evocative examples of decay. He uses primarily films that had been originally shot on nitrate-based stock. The transformation of the image discloses the process of the emulsion deterioration caused by time. Unlike other found footage filmmakers who manipulate their footage with hand processing techniques and chemical treatments, Morrison simply selects shots and film fragments from the archival footage, and edits them into a new meaning of context. The deteriorated images are also optically printed in order to appear in very slow motion. The image of the film conveys not only a poetic and nostalgic atmosphere, but also a hallucinatory visual experience.

Although I could not access the deteriorated 35mm prints of Chinese silent films, I wanted to create this lyrical, deteriorated and nostalgic feeling for the section on Virtue in my film. Through using hand manipulation techniques of copper toning and reticulation with the

visual effect of super slow motion made in post-production, I intended to establish a meditative space for this section, in which viewers can concentrate on the facial expressions and gestures of the new women.

Peter Tscherkassky's *L'Arrivée* (1997/1998), homage to the Lumière brothers, is a short film about a train arriving at a station. The film is simple and intellectual. Through contact printing, *L'Arrivée* presents the arrival of the film itself, which shows the arrival of a train at a station. The images of the train coming at the station echo the Lumière brothers' *L'Arrivée d'un Train à La Ciotat* (1895). After the train collides with a second train, we see the arrival of a beautiful woman at the end. The film presents the footage taken from a feature film, *Mayerling* (1968), which features Catherine Deneuve in the role of Mary Vetsera. Through the use of contact printing, Tscherkassky is able to show the physical movement of the filmstrip, which arrives in the frame. As Alexander Horwath in "Singing in the Rain: Supercinematography by Peter Tscherkassky" says:

We see the sprocket hole "railway", a celluloid train jumping off the rails and hurtling against another one. And we see the incredible psychophysical LOCOMOTION that cinema must have had when it first appeared. In Tscherkassky's train of thought, the railway – industrial modernity's real means of transport – is mirrored by the birth of cinema – imaginary means of transport in cultural-industrial modernity – and mirrored once more by the present era (1998) which hands over the eternally "progressive" role of locomotive to the digital industries and offers the avant-garde a chance for "arrival".⁴

Tscherkassky contact-prints the filmstrip of a train's arrival in order to make it slowly glide across the screen and to convey a physicality of the medium with a different impact. Through this method, *L'Arrivée* not only reveals the arrivals of the train and the woman, but also indicates the arrival of the birth of cinema.

⁴ Alexander Horwath, "Singing in the Rain: Supercinematography by Peter Tscherkassky," *Peter Tscherkassky*, ed. Alexander Horwath and Michael Loebenstein (Wien: Österreichisches Filmmuseum, 2005), p. 44.

Tscherkassky's *L'Arrivée* has inspired me to do contact printing to display the liberation of the new women in the section on Unbound Feet. Through contact printing, I intended to show the women's feet walking out of the frame as a filmstrip gradually moves across the screen. I contact-printed the filmstrip placed on different parts of a fresh filmstrip so as to create the physical movement of the filmstrip, which shows the movement of the women's feet. It indicates the freedom of the new women. The method of contact printing allows me to realize my idea in an innovative way for the theme of this section.

Matthias Müller's *Home Stories* (1990) is a six-minute montage comprised of footage taken from Hollywood melodramas of the 1940s and 1950s. Müller selects images of the repetitive gestures, looks, actions, and facial expressions of many great actresses from scenes of the women waiting and being confined in a house, and edits the images together by using classical editing techniques, such as shot/reaction shots, eyeline matches and cuts on action. The images show the women struggling to get out of bed, turning on and off the lights, opening and closing doors, looking out windows, and moving through hallways and up and down staircases. Christa Blümlinger in "On Matthias Müller's Logic of Appropriation" says,

He shows, on the one hand, through the systematic repetition of similar materials, how strongly conventionalized these presentations in classical cinema are, and on the other hand, through a new suturing of heterogeneous materials, how the conventionalized forms of shots continually create and recreate sequences of movement and action. The essential here is that *Home Stories* makes visible the principle of the transparency of classical montage by locating the spectator position with the suture between the shots."⁵

The film reveals the effects of narrative through putting images of repetitive gestures, body movements, actions together.

⁵ Christa Blümlinger, "On Matthias Müller's Logic of Appropriation," *The Memo Book: Films, Videos and Installations by Matthias Müller*, ed. Stefanie Schulte Strathaus (Berlin: Vorwerk 8, 2005), pp. 71,73.

Müller's *Home Stories* and his other films have influenced me when I analyzed and categorized the archival footage of the Chinese silent films. I put shots of the female characters doing similar actions and gestures together, and also edited the clips with similar rhythm and form into a consistent sequence. In the section on Virtue, we see scenes of the rhythmic body movements of the hardworking women. In the section on Modeng Woman, we see a sequence of the modern women spinning as they are showing off their dresses. In the section on New Woman, we see a sequence of groups of soldiers coming one after another, and a scene of the new women giving a respectful salute to each other. Through showing repetitive actions, gestures and facial expressions of the new women, the film emphasizes the significant performance of the new women in the Chinese silent cinema.

Gustav Deutsch's *Film ist 1-6* is composed of film fragments taken from scientific, educational and industrial films while *Film ist 7-12* is an essay about the phenomenon of film. These feature films examine the question, "What is Film?" or "What is Cinema?". The films are divided into different thematic chapters, which are separated by an intertitle showing an Arabic number and a chapter's name. He uses this scientific system of giving a number for each section to organize and analyze the archival film footage for the films. Horwath in "Flash (Energy Transformation in Modern Cinematography)" says, "Deutsch respects the scientific method, while at the same time making a parody of it."⁶ Through using this method as a structural device for the films, Deutsch examines the history of cinema in a systematic way.

Like Gustav Deutsch's *Film ist*, *New Woman* is divided into four thematic sections, separated by an intertitle showing an Arabic number. But *New Woman* does not show the names

⁶ Alexander Horwath, "Flash (Energy Transformation in Modern Cinematography)," *Close-Up*, 31 July 2016 <https://www.closeupfilmcentre.com/library/documents/flash-energy-transformation-in-modern-cinematography/>

for each section. Through this way of organizing the sections, the film presents a clear and detailed study of the look of the New Woman of the Chinese silent cinema.

Conclusion

Through *New Woman*, I have been able to examine the women's roles of Chinese silent cinema, to deconstruct the patriarchal view of Chinese women in the Chinese silent screen, and to reveal the unforgotten appearances of the new women to contemporary viewers. Through making this film, I have been exposed to various hand processing techniques, process cinema and found footage filmmaking that I did not experience before. I have been able to realize my ideas for the themes of the film in a creative way. By working through process, I have gained some unexpected effects as I have experimented with different artisanal manipulation techniques. But some experiments have resulted in failures. Although some images in the film may not look as good as I expected, I treated this film as a development process of my filmmaking knowledge and skills. All the experiments and experiences that I have had for making this film have encouraged me to explore this field further for my next film project.

Bibliography

- Bean, Jennifer M., and Diane Negra, eds. *Camera Obscura*. Spec. issue of *Early Women Stars* 48 (2001): 1-227.
- . *A Feminist Reader In Early Cinema*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002.
- Bloemheuvel, Marente, Giovanna Fossati, and Jaap Guldemon, eds. *Found Footage: Cinema Exposed*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press: EYE Film Institute Netherlands, 2012.
- Conference: History of Early Chinese Cinema(s) Revisited*. 2009/12/15-17, Hong Kong University. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Film Archive, 2009.
- Farquhar, Mary Ann, and Yingjin Zhang, eds. *Chinese Film Stars*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2010.
- Horwath, Alexander, and Michael Loebenstein, eds. *Peter Tscherkassky*. Wien: Österreichisches Filmmuseum, 2005.
- . "Flash (Energy Transformation in Modern Cinematography)." *Close-Up*. Close-Up Film Centre. Web. 31 July 2016. <https://www.closeupfilmcentre.com/library/documents/flash-energy-transformation-in-modern-cinematography/>
- Kaplan, E. Ann, ed. *Feminism and Film*. Oxford, UK; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Li, Suyuan, and Hu Jubin. *Chinese Silent Film History*. Trans. Wang Rui. Beijing: China Film Press, 1997.
- MacDonald, Scott. *Avant-Garde Film: Motion Studies*. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Mellencamp, Patricia. *Indiscretions: Avant-Garde Film, Video & Feminism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Screen*, 16.3 (Autumn 1975), 6-18.
- . *Fetishism and Curiosity: Cinema and the Mind's Eye*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan on behalf of the British Film Institute, 2013.
- Reinke, Steve, and Tom Taylor, eds. *Lux: A Decade of Artists' Film and Video*. Toronto: Pleasure Dome, 2000.

- Rojas, Carlos, and Eileen Cheng Yin-Chow, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Chinese Cinemas*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Russell, Catherine, ed. *Camera Obscura*. Spec. issue of *New Women of the Silent Screen: China, Japan, Hollywood* 60 (2005): 1-231.
- Schulte Strathaus, Stefanie, ed. *The Memo Book: Films, Videos and Installations by Matthias Müller*. Berlin: Vorwerk 8, 2005.
- Tscherkassky, Peter, ed. *Film Unframed: A History of Austrian Avant-Garde Cinema*. Vienna: SYNEMA-Gesellschaft für Film und Medien, 2012.
- Van Ingen, Sami. *Moving Shadows: Experimental Film Practice In A Landscape of Change*. Finland: Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, 2012.
- Wang, Lingzhen, ed. *Chinese Women's Cinema: Transnational Contexts*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011.
- Wees, William C. *Recycled Images: The Art and Politics of Found Footage Films*. New York City: Anthology Film Archives, 1993.
- Wong, Ain-ling, ed. *Chinese Cinema: Tracing The Origins*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Film Archive, 2011.
- Zhang, Zhen. "An Amorous History of the Silver Screen: The Actress As Vernacular Embodiment in Early Chinese Film Culture." *Camera Obscura*, 48 (2001), 228-263.
- . *An Amorous History of the Silver Screen: Shanghai Cinema, 1896-1937*. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Filmography

Decasia: The State of Decay. Dir. Bill Morrison. 2002. DVD.

Film ist. (1 – 6). Dir. Gustav Deutsch. 1998. DVD.

Film ist. (7 – 12). Dir. Gustav Deutsch. 2002. DVD.

Filmarilyn. Dir. Paolo Gioli. 1992. DVD.

Hardwood Process. Dir. David Gatten. 1996. Film.

Home Stories. Dir. Matthias Müller. 1990. Online Video.

Instructions for a Light and Sound Machine. Dir. Peter Tscherkassky. 2005. Film.

Kristall. Dir. Matthias Müller. 2006. Film.

L'Arrivée. Dir. Peter Tscherkassky. 1997/98. DVD.

Light Is Calling. Dir. Bill Morrison. 2004. Online Video.

Outer Space. Dir. Peter Tscherkassky. 1999. DVD.

Sink or Swim. Dir. Su Friedrich. 1990. DVD.

The Emblazoned Apparitions. Dir. Phil Solomon. 2013. Digital Video.

The Hart of London. Dir. Jack Chambers. 1970. DVD.

Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son. Dir. Ken Jacobs. 1969. VHS.

Appendices

Appendix A: List of Chinese Silent Films

<u>No.</u>	<u>English Film Title</u>	<u>Chinese Film Title</u>	<u>Director</u>	<u>Actress</u>	<u>Year</u>
1	Laborer's Love	勞工之愛情	Zhang Shichuan	Yu Yin	1922
2	The Pearl Necklace	一串珍珠	C. Y. Lee	Liu Hanjun	1926
3	Mother's Happiness	兒孫福	Shi Dongshan	Zhou Wenzhu	1926
4	Poor Daddy	兒子英雄	Yang Xiaozhong	Xu Jingzhen	1929
5	Don't Change Your Husband	情海重吻	Xie Yunqing	Yang Dandan	1929
6	The Orphan of the Storm	雪中孤雛	Zhang Huimin	Wu Suxin	1929
7	The Valiant Girl White Rose	女俠白玫瑰	Zhang Huimin	Wu Suxin	1929
8	A Spray of Plum Blossoms	一剪梅	Bu Wancang	Ruan Lingyu Lin Chuchu	1931
9	The Peach Girl	桃花泣血記	Bu Wangcang	Ruan Lingyu	1931
10	Two Stars	銀漢雙星	Shi Dongshan	Zi Luolan	1931
11	An Amorous History of the Silver Screen	銀幕艷史	Cheng Bugao	Xuan Jinglin Xia Peizhen	1931
12	Fate in Tears and Laughter	啼笑姻緣	Zheng Zhengqiu	Hu Die	1932
13	Pink Dream	粉紅色的夢	Cai Chusheng	Tan Yin Xue Linxian	1932
14	Spring in the South	南國之春	Cai Chusheng	Chen Yanyan	1932
15	Daybreak	天明	Sun Yu	Li Lili	1932
16	Wild Rose	野玫瑰	Sun Yu	Wang Renmei	1932
17	The Fishermen's Ballad	漁光曲	Cai Chusheng	Wang Renmei	1932
18	The Blood of Passion on the Volcano	火山情血	Sun Yu	Li Lili	1932

19	Little Toys	小玩意	Sun Yu	Ruan Lingyu Li Lili	1933
20	Greedy Neighbours	惡鄰	Ren Pengnian	Wu Lizhu	1933
21	Spring Silkworms	春蠶	Chen Bugao	Yan Yuexian Ai Xia	1933
22	Maternal Light	母性之光	Bu Wangcang	Chen Yanyan Li Zhuozhuo	1933
23	Sports Queen	體育皇后	Sun Yu	Li Lili	1934
24	Big Road	大路	Sun Yu	Li Lili Chen Yanyan	1934
25	National Winds	國風	Luo Mingyou Zhu Shilin	Ruan Lingyu Li Lili Lin Chuchu	1934
26	Goddess	神女	Wu Yonggang	Ruan Lingyu	1934
27	Song of China	天倫	Fei Mu	Chen Yanyan Li Zhuozhuo Lin Chuchu	1935
28	New Woman	新女性	Cai Chusheng	Ruan Lingyu	1935

Appendix B: Chinese Silent Films Shown in China Film Archive

<u>No.</u>	<u>English Film Title</u>	<u>Chinese Film Title</u>	<u>Director</u>	<u>Actress</u>	<u>Year</u>
1	The Cave of the Spider Spirit	盤絲洞	Dan Duyu	Yin Mingzhu	1927
2 *	Pink Dream	粉紅色的夢	Cai Chusheng	Tan Yin Xue Linxian	1932
3	Coming Home	歸來	Zhu Shilin	Ruan Lingyu	1934
4	Goodbye, Shanghai	再見吧，上海	Chung Kitak	Ruan Lingyu	1934

*After *Pink Dream* was viewed in China Film Archive, it was found from YouTube

Appendix C: Reticulation Effect

<u>Film Stock</u>	<u>Boiling Time</u>	<u>Emulsion Peeled Off</u>	<u>Reticulated</u>
ORWO UN54	1 hour	No	No
Kodak Tri-X	20 minutes	45 minutes	Yes
Kodak 3378	10 minutes	20 minutes	Yes
Kodak 3302 (Workprint)	25 minutes	55 minutes	Yes

Appendix D: Solarization Effect on Reversal

<u>Film Stock</u>	<u>Developer</u>	<u>Developing Time for Reveral</u>	<u>Flash Light</u>
ORWO UN54	Kodak D76	9 minutes - 1 st Develop 4 minutes - 2 nd Develop	@ 1 min 45 sec
Kodak 3378	Kodak D76	5 minutes - 1 st Develop 3 minutes - 2 nd Develop	@ 2 min 30 sec
Kodak 3378	Kodak Dektol	5 minutes - 1 st Develop 3 minutes - 2 nd Develop	@ 2 min 30 sec

Appendix E: Contact Printing

<u>Fresh Film</u> (Processed as Negative)	<u>Image/Exposed Film</u>	<u>Printed Image</u>
Negative	Negative	Positive
Negative	Positive	Negative

<u>Fresh Film</u> (Processed as Reversal)	<u>Image/Exposed Film</u>	<u>Printed Image</u>
Positive	Negative	Negative
Positive	Positive	Positive

Appendix F: Coffee Processing for Negative

<u>Film Stock</u>	<u>Developing Time</u>
ORWO UN54 - 1 st 100 feet	15 minutes
ORWO UN54 - 2 nd 100 feet	21 minutes
Kodak 3378 - 1 st 100 feet	10 minutes
Kodak 3378 - 2 nd 100 feet	15 minutes