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Foreign Film 110

Section 01

Midterm Response-Question 2

Shanghai and Hong Kong are two of the largest metropolises in China today. Their development has expanded rapidly within the last few decades, and with it has come a blending of Asian and Western traditions and culture. Many of the movies we have watched in class show brilliant examples of this culture fusion. In Lou Ye's *Suzhou River*, Shanghai's inner-city resembles many outskirts and "dirty" districts of major Western cities. The night-clubs, dark bars, fast women, and illegal doings in the film are a reflection of what may be found in the dark, thug/gangster/mafia movies of Hollywood. The plot of a man chasing after a mysterious woman can be seen as a reflection from Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*. Another reflection can be drawn from the Hitchcock movie that is also seen in *Suzhou River*: the look-a-like women. In both films, there was a confusion of identities later on in the movies, with the main women appearing later under a different identity.

Western values can also be found in *Chungking Express*. One may find the most obvious reflection of the West in the film to be the pop song "California Dreaming." Like many young women in America, the snack bar lady has aspirations to go to California. Also seen is the ideal view of a "man in uniform" being attractive, and the movie centers around the stories of two young, handsome police officers. The bustle of the city: nightclubs, bars, fast-food stops, and again, illegal doings, are a third combination of Asian and Western culture that can be found in the film. While Asia and the West may seem to be two distinct cultures, it really is no surprise to find that both may draw cultural and urbanized aspects from each other. These combinations may be found in both Asian, Hollywood, and European cinema.