

### **Abstract:**

This thesis participates in the development of an in-depth study of the nostalgic phenomenon in Wong Kar-wai's films. In this piece of research one of my aims is to show how the collective nostalgia is developed in Wong's and other Hong Kong film directors' works. A second aim of my study is to demonstrate that Wong's nostalgia is different from other Hong Kong film directors in terms of being more personal. My final aim is to examine the three kinds of nostalgia embodied in Wong's films. And to do these three areas will be discussed.

First, a historical research on the development of collective nostalgia in Hong Kong film industry will be conducted. I focus on the similarity and interactivity of the two cities (Hong Kong and Shanghai) from two major perspectives. One is related to the cities' history, geography and urban landscape. The other one mainly concerns three significant characteristics expressed in Shanghai culture (*hai pai wenhua*) which are gentle, receptive and layman orientated. In fact, the Shanghai immigrants did not only bring these Shanghai cultural influences to Hong Kong but also their wealth.

Second, the personal experience of Wong Kar-wai will be studied in order to distinguish Wong's nostalgia from those of the other film directors.

Lastly, three kinds of nostalgia - trying to return to a fixed origin, being skeptical to one's homeland and searching for one's (cultural) identity - will be exemplified through Wong Kar-wai's major works. The reason(s) why Wong includes these nostalgic elements in his films are also discussed.

I believe that we can have a better understanding of the nostalgic phenomenon in Wong Kar-wai's films through a thorough study on the collective nostalgia and the personal nostalgia embodied in his works.