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Ideology and Power Relationships in Taiwanese Music Video.

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Ideology and Power Relationships
in Taiwanese Music Video

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Abstract

IDEOLOGY AND POWER RELATIONSHIPS IN TAIWANESE MUSIC VIDEO

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University of Nebraska, 2000

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This study is a textual analysis of Taiwanese music video. By analyzing

Taiwanese music video and probing the definition of sex roles and patriarchy

in Taiwanese culture, the researcher attempted to establish some basic

foundations for developing a Taiwanese feminist theory. The results suggest

that in Taiwanese music video, females are portrayed as docile, soft, passive, weak,

vulnerable, innocent, childlike, narcissistic, and domestic. Yet, the image of a

macho man is unpopular in Taiwanese culture; on the contrary, male roles are

depicted as docile, soft, passive, vulnerable, obedient, moderate, and shy.

Female-address videos often show positive male images; on the other hand,

male-address videos reveal an ambivalent feeling toward women. The most

significant differences between the portrayals of female and male are their roles

and status In society. Females' roles in society are highly limited. Therefore, males

have to bear all the social obligations, including obedience to the social order,

pursuing a love relationship (in order to establish a family), and working hard (to

support the family). The ideology that undergirds the definitions of sex roles in

Taiwanese culture is Confucianism, which sustains a harmonious and hierarchical

social order in which a distinct role and proper status are prescribed for each

person. It is proposed here that a triangular model of power relations might explain the power struggles in Taiwanese culture. In Western culture, female and male are the two roles involved in the power struggle; there are three roles involved in the power struggles in Taiwanese culture. That is, female, male, and the patriarch together form a triangular structure of power relations and the concept of patriarchy. While males as a group hold the dominant power, this dominant group is hierarchical itself. A male's role and power are determined in relation to the patriarch and must be obedient to the imperatives of role and status. When a male becomes the familial patriarch, he then gains absolute power in the sphere of his family. In this power triangle, the female is always subordinate and powerless.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The phenomenon of globalization is thought to be mainly the result of the development of mass media. Some people celebrate a shared hybrid symbolic world that enriches regional cultures and liberates people from physical isolation in a time and place (Ferguson, 1992). Others worry about the potential harm to cultural identity and the confusion about roles and needs, especially for those in the Third World countries (Boyd-Barrett, 1977, 1982). While commentators around the world still debate the pros and cons of the trend of globalization (McQuail, 1994), it is worthwhile to point out that one of the predicaments in Third World countries is the lack of modern cultural theories that are developed in the context of a native cultural background. Popular cultural products, such as Hollywood movies or rock and roll music, from the First World now prevail in people's everyday lives. At the same time, Western cultural theories also dominate Third World countries' intellectual societies (Sardar & Loon, 1998).

After World War II, an anti-Communist camp was formed and led by the United States; Taiwan was part of its Southeast Asian bulwark. Economic and military aid was sent to the island to help establish a new nation that was separate from communist China. At the same time, American pop music and Hollywood cinema began to enter the islanders' lives (Yeh, 1993). These well-crafted cultural products provide Taiwanese with a glimpse into the First World. The Taiwanese were soon fascinated by the luxurious lifestyle in developed countries. At the same time, Taiwanese scholars also were haunted by Western thought. Trends of Western cultural movements, such as symbolism, surrealism, existentialism, Freudianism, modernism, nihilism, and feminism,

have excited Taiwanese intellectuals and influenced many of their thoughts and works. (Copper, 1996).

Seeing that First World cultural theories become hegemonic discourses, scholars of postcolonial criticism call for a rediscovery of their own cultural perspectives. They urge Third World scholars to write their own history to resist being defined as 'others' and 'marginal' by western culture (Dirlik, 1994). As Prakash (1992) points out:

One of the distinct effects of the recent emergence of postcolonial criticism has been to force a radical re-thinking and re-formulation of forms of knowledge and social identities authored and authorized by colonialism and western domination...Recent postcolonial criticism...seeks to undo the Eurocentrism produced by the institution of the west's trajectory, its appropriation of the other as History. (p. 8)

Yet, postcolonial theory has not inspired many Taiwanese scholars (Qiu, 1996). This is evident in the development of feminist criticism in Taiwan. Beginning in the 1980s, feminist theories gained increasing popularity. However, scholars often applied feminist theories from the Western world indiscriminately to explain Taiwanese cultural phenomena. Feminism in Western countries is based on feminists' detailed description of what Western culture defines as 'female', 'male', and the relations between the sexes. An understanding of the definitions of femininity and masculinity in Western culture leads to the conclusion that female and male are defined in dichotomy to ensure the power of one sex over another. That is, "male" is defined as powerful and

strong (Trujillo, 1991), and "female" is viewed as powerless and weak (MacKinnon, 1982). Yet, Taiwanese feminists seldom question whether Western feminists' agendas can meet Taiwanese women's needs (Qiu, 1996). Even a feminist with postcolonial perspectives like Qiu does not challenge whether Western feminism can fully describe and explain Taiwanese women and men, whether Taiwanese culture also defines female and male in a dichotomous way. Are there any other factors involved in Taiwanese patriarchy? If so, how do these factors interrelate? These are all questions that need to be answered. Otherwise, when Taiwanese critics talk about 'male domination', 'male gaze', or 'male ego'... we actually do not know to what they are referring.

Under the inspiration of feminist criticism, scholars' discussion of the issue of gender in Taiwanese culture has become widespread in both the academic and the public sphere. The problem is that scholars tend to believe in certain (Western) theories first and then go to search for particular (Taiwanese) cultural phenomena as evidence of those theories or claims. Consequently, people begin to believe that Taiwan has been experiencing the same cultural trends, such as existentialism, nihilism, modernism, postmodernism etc., as Western countries do; many fancy terminologies (hermaphrodite, femininity as masquerade, transexualism, transvestism, androgyny...) are popular in Taiwanese media, but the characteristics of Taiwanese culture are still unclear. For example, in her book, *Postmodernism/Woman: Power, Sexuality, and Gender Performance*, Chang (1993) used 'lesbian theory' to analyze Taiwanese popular music. By assuming that Taiwanese culture also defines female as weak and

male as strong, the phenomenon that <u>male appears to be as vulnerable as female</u> in

popular music led her to conclude that Taiwanese love songs are discourses "to subvert

traditional dichotomous definitions of masculinity/femininity and subject/object."

(Chang, 1993, p.26)

In a research of the lyrics of popular music, Ke & Chang (1995) tried to draw a

picture of the images of Taiwanese women. Again, in order to fit into the formula of

'male=strong/female=weak', they subjectively chose 15 songs as evidence of male's

dominant and female's subordinate positions. Sometimes what they chose as

evidence of male domination appeared to be questionable. For instance, when

discussing a male-address song, *Love You In Secret*, they asserted that 'love you in

secret' implied 'watch you in secret'. They concluded that the lyrics of " *I love you in*

secret. I hesitate to reveal my heart and my feeling to you" is an evidence that the

man "is actually watching her. (It's male voyeurism.) She is living in front of a male gaze,

only she is unaware of it" (p. 132).

A valid cultural study should be based on systematic observation of research

objects (e.g., texts) and let rules and patterns come out of the data rather than using

certain theories as a guide to search for data. Especially, when a question has not yet

been probed much, or there is a gap between the (Western) theories and the

(Taiwanese) phenomenon, the research should be approached inductively not

deductively (Creswell, 1994).

The present study is inspired by the critical perspectives of cultural studies

theories that view power as the fundamental issue of cultural and social formation.

Scholars of cultural studies believe that power relations are the basis of social interactions, and cultural practices (e.g. constructing a text) are the embodiment of power relations (Fiske, 1992). Thus one of the goals of cultural studies is to investigate the politics of textuality (Grossberg, 1991). Through textual analysis we can decipher the hegemonic ideology that underpins the cultural and social system.

The artifact observed in this study is Taiwanese music video. The reasons for choosing music video are: First, music video is a pervasive cultural product. It is a combination of popular music and television, both of which play significant roles in Taiwanese leisure and cultural life. Secondly, despite its popularity and importance, music video has not been carefully studied in Taiwan. Finally, the vast number of love songs in music video provides a good opportunity for the researcher to explore definitions of female and male, power relations between the sexes, and the meaning of patriarchy in Taiwanese culture.

In order to establish a complete background for the present research, the following chapter is divided into three sections. The first section explains the theoretical foundation and critical perspectives for the present study. It includes some basic concepts of cultural studies theories, such as ideology, hegemony, and discourse. Feminist theories will also be covered, because the politics of gender is the focus of this study. Considering that there is not much research about music video in Taiwan, the second section provides an overview of American scholars' research on music video. The third section describes culture, media environment, and media research in Taiwan so as to propose four research questions and a research strategy.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

<u>**Cultural Studies**</u>

Theories of cultural studies were originally generated in the Birminghan Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, formed in 1964. Since then, many different perspectives have been developed, and these theories soon captured scholars' attention around the world. What lies at the core of cultural studies theories is a concern for the politics of cultural practices. That is, cultural studies investigate the role of power in social and cultural formation. The purpose is to explore power relations and how these relations mold cultural practices and affect the development of society (Sardar & Loon, 1998).

Fiske (1989) defines culture as "the constant process of producing meanings of and from our social experience" (p.1). This definition points out two important views about culture. First, a culture consists of two interrelated facets: meanings and cultural practices. And, secondly, the production of meaning occurs in a social context. Scholars of cultural studies view culture and society as a holistic unit; they always scrutinize the process of cultural and social formation together.

Derived from Marxism, cultural studies depend upon two assumptions about the relations between society and culture. The first assumption is that capitalist societies are divided into different classes and groups. Social relations are based on power relations. Dominance and subordination are the basic form of social interaction. But the relations between dominance and subordination are not fixed; rather, classes or groups always

compete for the dominant position and, in the cultural realm, the dominant meaning system (Fiske, 1992). In other words, different classes/groups will compete to establish a culture (or a meaning system) that favors only their own class/group interests.

Another assumption underlying the theory of cultural studies is that meaning and the creation of meaning, which together constitute culture, are related to social structure. In an industrial capitalist society, individuals construct meaning of self and meaning of their social relations according to their social experiences. Therefore, the process of socialization for individuals is, in fact, a process to integrate them into a certain social class/group (Fiske, 1992).

Ideology

When discussing the theory of British cultural studies, Fiske (1992) remarks: "culture is ideological." (p. 286) In cultural studies theories, 'ideology' is the key concept used to explain the mechanism of power. The idea of 'ideology' has been conceptualized in terms of its symbolic and linguistic features. Cultural studies theorists contend that things and events in the real world do not stand for their own but must be known, understood, and interpreted through language. This process will involve producing and attaching meaning to things and events (Hall, 1982). The question is which kinds of meaning are chosen and constructed around certain things and events? Scholars believe that the way a culture attaches meaning to things and events is related to its social structure. For example, in the 1890s Americans believed 'women=people who do not understand politics'. This perception of women is related

to a social structure of men as the ruling class and women as the subordinate class. And, this kind of signification is <u>ideology</u>. Accordingly, ideology can be seen as knowledge or signification that is created to serve certain class/group interests (O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery, & Fiske, 1997). As McQuail (1994) states:

> ...the practice of signification through language establishes maps of cultural meaning which promote the dominance of a ruling-class ideology, especially by establishing a hegemony. This involves containing subordinate classes within superstructures of meaning which frame all competing definitions of reality within the range of a single hegemonic view of things. (p. 259)

Signification is the means by which collective social understanding about reality is created, and thus the means by which consensus for particular outcomes can possibly be mobilized. The power of signification is the power to control the ongoing process of cultural and social formation. Thus, it is what different classes/groups have to struggle for (Hall, 1982).

Ideological views are not simply imposed or given by the ruling class/group. Because "meaning is a social production" (Hall, 1982, p.67), theoretically, many different kinds of meaning could be assigned to the same things. But, how does a dominant discourse ban alternative or competing definitions? Hall (1982) explains:

> In order for one meaning to be regularly produced, it had to win a kind of credibility, legitimacy or taken-for-grantedness for itself. That involved marginalizing, down-grading or de-legitimating alternative constructions. (p. 67)

This directs attention to the role of mass media, which are responsible for describing and explaining what happens in the world. Research on news reveals that media tend to choose only particular kinds of knowledge, report only certain social agendas, and present information in distinctive ways (Gurevitch & Levy, 1986). Scholars also find that the media constantly omit issues and ideas that are contradictory to mainstream values (Breed, 1958) or depict certain social groups as deviant or dangerous to society (McQuail, 1994, p. 368). Mass media elaborates a symbolic world by selecting only certain aspects of lives and combining them in particular ways. And the selection and combinations are means by which ideology is produced and reproduced (Hall, 1982).

According to Hall (1982), ideology has some basic features. First, ideology is not based on logical reasoning about life or people. Instead, it appears to be certain undoubtable beliefs. Therefore, the effect of ideology is that it makes the hierarchical social structure appear to be natural, and reasonable, or it makes people believe: it is the way the world is created.

Secondly, ideology is deeply inscribed in language; speakers often express or reproduce ideology without any awareness. Hall (1982) points out: "...though speech and individual speech-acts may be an individual matter, the language-system (elements, rules of combination, classificatory sets) was a social system: and therefore that speakers were as much 'spoken' by their language as speak it, (p. 72)" This implies that a text (a film, soap opera, news report...) is not only the author's personal creation but always conveys certain collective beliefs and cultural overtones.

Discourse & Ideology

In order to demonstrate the close relationship between ideology and the process of signification, scholars often use the concept of discourse to explain how a language system and its usage are associated with social function. Fiske (1992) defines discourse as:

......a socially produced way of thinking or thinking about a topic. It is

defined by reference to the area of social experience that it makes sense of, to

the social location from which that sense is made, and to the linguistic or

signifying system by which that sense is both made and circulated. (p. 301)

Discourses involve not only verbal or written language, but every meaningful expression, such as images, actions, or media presentations. As Purvis & Hunt (1993) explain:

'Discourse' refers to the individual social networks of communication

through the medium of language or non-verbal sign-systems. Its key

characteristic is that of putting in place a system of linked signs. Whilst the more

important examples are speech systems or written language (texts), discourse

can be non-verbal; for example, practices in which males open doors for

females, rise when females enter room, etc. are elements of a discourse whose

organizing framework is a strict sexual division of labor, in which females are

both secondary but valorized as in need of male care and protection. (p. 485)

Purvis & Hunt point out that the concept of <u>discourse</u> and <u>ideology</u> are often used interchangeably, and it may result in confusion. They mean to establish "a distinction between discourse as *process* and ideology as *effect*" (p. 496). Every discursive formation is in some degree open to be interpreted, followed as a normative rule, or changed into a new sense. What links discourse and ideology together is the concept of <u>articulation</u>. In other words, what elements are chosen, what elements are avoided, and how they are put together make discourses have ideological effects.

Hegemony

Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony has had a great influence on cultural studies. It explains how ruling classes/groups use their privileged social and cultural position to maintain their economical, political, and cultural power. That is, according to Gramsci, through the operation of ideology and social forces (as opposed to the repression from military or police force), the dominant class/group makes subordinated classes/groups identify with the hegemonic values so as to ensure the power of one class/group over other classes/groups. Cultural theorists emphasize that hegemonic values must be maintained and reinforced constantly, because people's social experience repeatedly reminds them of the disadvantages of subordination and thus poses a constant threat to the dominant class (Fiske, 1992). As McQuail (1994] notes: "...hegemony is a constantly reasserted definition of a social situation, by ways of discourse rather than political or economic power, which becomes real in its consequences" (p. 99).

Feminist Theories

The central agenda of feminism is the issue of oppression of women. Feminists deem that the source of dominance and oppression mainly comes from patriarchy (Foss, 1989, chap. 6). Rich (1979) defines patriarchy as:

> Any form of group organization in which males hold dominant power and determine what part females shall and shall not play, and in which capabilities assigned to women are relegated generally to the mystical and aesthetic and excluded from the practical and political realms (p. 78).

The concept of <u>female</u> is regarded as essentially a cultural product. However, our culture is created by men; women's experiences are ignored (Foss, 1989, chap. 6); and women are deprived of the rights and chances to participate in the creation of culture. Once, in St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, feminist Sonia Johnson Johnson (1989) suddenly realized that:

> None of this has ever really belonged to women. All the great church architecture, the religious art, music, poetry-- Michelangelo, Mozart, Gerard Manley Hopkins-- none of this has ever really belonged to us. As far back as we can see clearly into the past, the church has belonged to men. The worship, the music, the art, the poetry, the architecture   it was all *by* men *for* men...I have no history. I have no heritage, no civilization. Women have not left our mark on this at all; we have never really participated in it, been a part of it. It is as if we have never lived, millions of us, for thousands of years. (p. 314-15)

Mary Daly (1978) claims that patriarchy is like a global religion. She points out that women all over the world, no matter which culture, which religion they practice to, are all ruled by patriarchy. Daly also argues that reality is constructed by language, but because language is created by men, it can not fully reflect women's experiences and perspectives. She believes that only by subverting the present language system and establishing a new language that reflects women's experience and perspectives, can women be emancipated from oppression.

Patriarchal values consist of three key concepts: femininity, masculinity, and sexuality. "Contemporary industrial society's version of femininity is docile, soft, passive, nurturant, vulnerable, weak, narcissistic, childlike, incompetent, masochistic, and domestic, made for child care, home care, and husband care" (MacKinnon, 1982, p.530). On the other hand, the view of masculinity includes totally opposite characteristics. Trujillo (1991) points out five features of hegemonic masculinity in American culture: (a) physical force and control, (b) occupational achievement, (c) familial patriarchy, (d) frontiersmanship, and (e) heterosexuality. The definitions of femininity and masculinity are designed to contrast and complement each other in order to secure the power of one sex over another. The key element that links femininity and masculinity together is sexuality. MacKinnon (1982) claims that sexuality is "the primary social sphere of male power" (p. 529). She argues that sexuality is defined by men, and it is the concept of sexuality that determines the concept of gender, not the reverse. She explains:

> ... the molding, direction, and expression of sexuality organizes society

into two sexes-- women and men-- which division underlies the totality of social relations. Sexuality is that social process which creates, organizes, expresses, and directs desire, creating the social beings we know as women and men, as their relations create society... As the organized expropriation of the work of some for the benefit of others defines a class-- workers-- the organized expropriation of the sexuality of some for the use of others defines sex, women. Heterosexuality is its structure, gender and family its congealed form, sex roles its qualities generalized to social persona, reproduction a consequence, and control its issue (p. 516).

As an ideology, patriarchy needs to be articulated to maintain and reinforce its dominant position. Mass media play an important role in this regard. A large amount of research centers on how media define femininity and masculinity, as well as how media express patriarchal values through complicated persuasive strategies (e.g. Dow, 1992; Trujillo, 1991). Furthermore, some research looks at how the media present relationships between women and men. For example, Kidd (1975) analyzed advice on interpersonal relations from 1952 to 1973 in popular magazines. By using fantasy-theme criticism, she found that the issue of relationships between sexes dominated discussion of interpersonal relations in popular magazines. From 1951 to the early 1960s, sex roles and relationship styles were defined according to traditional patriarchal value. Beginning in the early 1960s, a more flexible view about relationships between women and men had emerged. The author pointed out that in popular magazines women

were always assumed to take major responsibilities for maintaining a good relationship, however, the issue of power relations between the sexes was not addressed. Hubbard (1985) also adopted fantasy-theme criticism to analyze male/female relationship styles in popular romance novels from 1950 to 1983. She classified and named four rhetorical visions of male/female relationship styles: (a) vision I of the 1950s: Cinderella as virgin Earth Mother and the prince as benign dictator; (b) vision II of the 1960s: Cinderella as feisty female and the prince as subduer; (c) vision III of the 1970s: Cinderella as virgin temptress and the prince as warrior; (d) vision IV of the early 1980s: the liberated heroine with her man as equal partner. Hubbard concluded that over 33 years, the four rhetorical visions about relationship styles had "reflected the on-going changes in social structures and the gradual movement from patriarchy toward equality of the sexes" (p. 124). She also noted that popular romance novels were mainly escape entertainments. The degree to which they reflected real social condition was uncertain.

Music Video

Because little research about Taiwanese music video exists, a review of American scholars' literature is necessary for the present study. Scholars' studies of music video could be categorized into four groups: (a) concerning the unique features of music video, (b) investigating music video's communication effectiveness, (c) analyzing music video's content, and (d) observing fan culture. These four issues will be discussed respectively.

Open-ended quality

Scholars have regarded music video as the first postmodern form of television programming (Fiske, 1986; Tetzlaff, 1986). Postmodern aesthetic tends to evoke an experience of intense "euphoria" rather than responding to an artist's statement (Jameson, 1984). Aufderheide (1986) points out:

> One of music video's distinctive features as a social expression is its open-ended quality, aiming to engulf the viewer in its communication with itself, its fashioning of an alternative world where image is reality. Videos are perhaps the most accessible form of that larger tendency known as postmodern art. (p. 58)

Its unique form makes music video a postmodern art. Music video "reverses the normative aesthetic and semiotic relationship between picture and sound in television and film" (Lull, 1992, p.11). In film or regular television production, the music is added to the work to become part of a form that is driven by dialogue and visuals (Gow, 1992). The function of music is "to create structural rhythms and to stimulate emotional responses, both of which greatly enhance and reinforce the effect of the image" (Boggs, 1996, p. 239). However, since music video is used to promote music, the music is produced before the images. Here, images are created to enhance the effect of music; image is driven by music. The music-driven trait significantly limits music video's ability to present stories realistically, but it also creates a nonlinear, more abstract mode of expression (Harvey, 1990).

The visual images of music videos often do not have meaningful connections to the lyrics of music videos, but are edited following the rhythm of the music. When they have connections, they are sometimes allegories of the poem-like lyrics, such as Michael Jackson's *Beat It*; other times they are metaphors of songs, such as Madonna's *Like a Virgin* (Lewis, 1990). But, most of the time, the visions of music videos are just arbitrarily reused popular images of sex and violence. Fiske (1997) points out that music video breaks the connection between the signifiers and the signified and allows "the signifiers to overwhelm the signified" (p. 250). He describes music video's style as:

......a recycling of images that wrenches them out of original context that enable them to make sense and reduces them to free-floating signifiers whose only signification is that they are free, outside the control of normal sense and sense-making, and thus able to enter the world of pleasure where their materiality can work directly on the sensual eyes, running the boundary between culture and nature, between ideology and its absence (p.205).

The ambiguity of music video is more or less intentionally built in it, and the purpose is to absorb the audience in the communicating/hypnotizing process. As videomaker, Russel Mulcahy, says:

You build that abstract, noncommittal quality in there to give it a more universal appeal, because if people can figure it out, then they get bored with it. You want to keep them intrigued (Shore, 1984, p.110).

Because of the ambiguity, the fragmentation, and the euphoric effect,

scholars have pointed out the similarity between dreams and music video. Kinder

(1984) identified five critical elements that are shared by music video and dreams: (a)

unlimited access to the text, since music videos are available on a twenty-four hour

basis; (b) structural discontinuity; (c) decentering, as the sequencing of video clips is

randomly arranged; the viewers can hardly recognize a consistent theme while

watching music videos; (d) structural reliance on memory retrieval, because music

videos play a key role in supplementing fantastical images to dreamers, at the same

time deriving ideological visions from the "cultural dreampool" (Kinder, 1984, p.12); and

(e) the omnipresence of the spectator. As relevant or irrelevant images are edited into

different music videos, and nonstop sequences of discontinuous episodes are sewed

together in the 24 hours a day musical channels, the boundaries between programs

are erased and those kaleidoscopic images become a stream of collective

subconsciousness that flow through dreamers minds endlessly.

Communication effectiveness

Whereas music video is itself a promotional tool, the ambiguous message offers

the possibility that content lacks effects on audience members. Hitchon, Duckler, &

Thorson (1994) examined the impact of vagueness on the effectiveness of music video

ads. They concluded that two factors, ambiguity and complexity, contributed to music

video's vagueness. They defined complexity as "the amount of information per unit

time" (p. 292) and ambiguity as " the potential for multiple interpretations" (Hoch & Ha,

1986, p. 224). Their findings indicated a main effect of ambiguity on persuasion; that is, the use of high levels of ambiguity resulted in lower favorable attitudes toward the ads and brands. However, their results for complexity were mixed and inconsistent. Nonetheless, some scholars argue that music video could be used as an argumentative medium. In a study of viewers' evaluation of music videos, Walker & Bender (1994) found that viewers saw those music videos, which have strong dominant messages, as highly argumentative. Secondly, those music videos that were considered argumentative also were regarded as having influence on and intending to motivate viewers. Thirdly, viewers regarded those carrying social and/or political material as the most argumentative videos. Fourthly, both visual and audio texts could express social and political content well, though lyrics seemed to have more expressive power. Finally, liking a video corresponded to being influenced by that video. However, viewers did not apparently associate clearly understanding a video with judgements of message agreement, nor did they connect clearly understanding a video with being influenced by it. These results suggest that music video's limited ability to logically narrate does not hinder its appeal. Zillmann & Mundorf (1987) approached this question from a different direction. They studied image effects in the appreciation of rock music and found that visual embellishments enhance enjoyment of rock music. Sexual images intensified music appreciation in both males and females, and violent images seemed to have similar effects. However, their findings indicated that the combination of sexual and violent images failed to enhance appreciation of the music. Moreover, sexual images made the music appear more sensual and romantic

to men. In contrast, females found the rock music most romantic when lacking visual embellishments.

Scholars' research and discussions of music video reveal some intriguing issues. First of all, the concept of signifier/signified and denotation/connotation in semiotics couldn't explain music video's communication function. Secondly, even when music video subverts the normative relations between the signifiers and signified and blurs the boundary of denotation and connotation, it still has strong communication effects on audiences. Only effects should be viewed as primarily coming from a sensational appeal, and perhaps the actual meanings of music videos are generated mainly in the minds of viewers rather than producers. As Hall (1980) points out, media effect is not simply a matter of disseminating the right messages or persuasive strategies but should be viewed in a more complicated way. He explains:

> Before this message can have an "effect" (however defined), satisfy a "need" or to be put to a "use", it must first be appropriated as a meaningful discourse and be meaningfully decoded. It is this set of decoded meanings which "have an effect", influence, entertain, instruct or persuade, with very complex perceptual, cognitive, emotional, ideological or behaviourial consequences. (p. 130)

A kaleidoscope of sensual pleasure

Based on an analysis of 62 videos in 23 content categories, Baxter, De Riemer, Landini, Leslie, & Singeltary (1985) found that about 90 percent of music videos showed

visual attraction (use of special effects to produce odd, unusual representations of reality), almost 60 percent of music videos portrayed sex, and more than 50 percent exhibited crime and/or violence. Sherman & Dominick (1986) scrutinized the visual content of 166 "concept" music videos, coding the videos according to specific violence and sex elements, and general video trends among other categories. They found that sexual intimacy appeared in more than 75 percent of the music videos under study. Eighty-one percent of videos containing violence also included sexual images. Brown & Campbell (1986) examined the activities and behaviors of two primary characters in 77 music videos, coding the videos according to theme, antisocial behavior, prosocial behavior, and sexual behaviors. Their data indicated that 47 percent of the videos featured love and/or sex as a main theme. Fifty percent of the two lead characters were involved in antisocial activities, while 38 percent of them exhibited prosocial behaviors. Furthermore, 12 percent of the two lead characters displayed sexual behaviors. Vincent & Davis (1987) codified music videos according to the "sexism" themes as "condescending", "keep her place", and "equal" and concluded that "sexism is fairly high in music videos" (p. 754-755). In a content analysis of portrayals of sex roles and aggressiveness in music video, Kalis & Neuendorf (1989) suggested that 61 percent of sampled videos (n=163) included aggressive cues, though "the proportion of video shots devoted to aggressive content was small" (p. 151). They further noted that males appeared as targets of aggressive acts 3.5 times more often than females.

Many scholars see the predominance of sexual and violent appeals in music

video to be a result of record companies' bias regarding target audience. When music

video's inventor, MTV, set out to create a new cable channel, marketing research

indicated that people aged 12-34 were the most affluent consumer group. MTV further

developed the idea of combining television and rock music for those target audiences

who, as MTV's Bob Pittman wrote, are "television babies who grow up on TV and rock

and roll" (Levy, 1983, p.33). In order to attract target audiences, MTV designed its

programs to "mirror the issues of people moving from adolescence to adulthood"

(Levy, 1983, p. 76). Yet, according to Levy, so-called adolescence is primarily deemed

as the exclusive province of white male teens. The ideology of rock regards music as

artistic, and rebellious. This resembles male adolescence ideology, which grants boys

privileges of experimentation with roles and dangers. During MTV's early years, girls were

not considered as significant consumers. This assumption was not based on objective

marketing research but from media producers' (mainly while males) own conclusions

about the world. As Levy (1983) points out: "Producers interpret audience research

according to their own conceptions of what appeals to certain audience types, relying

on 'knowledge' about the targeted constituents that is taken for granted by society"

(p.27).

Although female musicians later did gain notable recognition from audience

(Levy, 1983), they did not alter the strategies of using bold images in their videos. On

the contrary, in many cases female musicians adopt rather bold sexual messages,

such as Cyndi Lauper's She Bop, as a weapon to subvert patriarchal ideology of docile

female sex roles (Levy, 1983). When describing female rap groups, Perry (1993)

comments:

>They use comedy and sexual demands to voice their power and
>irreverence for decorum as defined through societal expectation of the behavior
>"respectable" women and male expectations of female subordination and
>stroking of the male ego.(p.525)

The implication of this phenomenon is that the rise of music videos produced by women does not change media content much. Rather, traditional patriarchal signs may be infused with new meanings and female perspectives. Female musicians' strategies are not to eradicate patriarchal ideology, but to appropriate patriarchal images and blur the indications of sexism.

Ritual, dream, and audience

Because of the open-ended quality, the dreamlike style, and the euphoria provoked by those bold and connotative images, audience members play a more active role while watching music video. The viewers of music video are not only able to decode meanings according to their own values and perceptions, but also become aroused and stimulated emotionally (Aufderheide, 1986; Harvey, 1990; Kinder, 1984). These features make music video fit in with what Carey (1988) refers as a ritual model of communication:

>In a ritual definition, communication is linked to such terms as "sharing",
>"participation", "association", "fellowship" and "the possession of a common

faith"...A ritual view of communication is not directed towards the extension of

messages in space, but the maintenance of society in time; not the act of

imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs. (p. 18)

Ritual communication usually involves performance and relies on shared

understanding and emotion (McQuail, 1994). Rothenbuhler (1998) defines ritual as "the

voluntary performance of appropriately patterned behavior to symbolically affect or

participate in the serious life" (p.53). This means participants of rituals are actively and

creatively involved, at the same time they are cautiously aware of certain social and

cultural rules. Symbolic effect is the key purpose of ritual activities, and there are certain

dialectic relations between participants and social or cultural norms. In other words,

ritual communication emphasizes the process of creating a shared symbolic world in

which particular rules are articulated and contested through performing and

participating. Examples of ritual communication can be found among music fans. In a

study of female fan's culture, Lewis (1990) documented how Cyndi Lauper's and

Madonna's fans communicated their perspectives and values by imitating their

adored musicians' styles of dress and performance. Lewis notes:

> ...fans create self-proclaimed interpretive communities and define their
>
> activities in relation to specific texts...fans demonstrate their response to an
>
> artist's productions by generating their own text and performance. (p. 149)

Through ritual communication, fans are able to compose their own discourses on role,

identity and life style.

Stars are the resources who provide fans with original texts of cultural utterance. The shared understanding between stars and fans might make rituals have ideological effects. Because stars are considered as socially approved models, identifying with them is legitimized and justified (Lewis, 1990). However, the process of identifying with stars may have two different effects on fans, that is, to accept mainstream values or to be rebellious. For instance, female fans may choose male performers as objects of desire and fantasize their relationships with those adored male stars in traditional ways. As Steward & Sheryl (1984) comment: "Most of us dream of being a pop star's girlfriend: fame and recognition by proxy. Girls are taught to wait for men to give us what we want, rather than to get it ourselves" (p. 148). On the other hand, Lewis' (1990) study of female-address videos and fan events uncovered evidence that female stars and fans created shared discourses on nontraditional gender configuration and rebelled against patriarchal values. Lewis (1990) comments that: "Many women and girls contributed to the 'moment of female address' by becoming fans, creating visible signs of female popularity" (p.150).

Whether ritual serves as social control or to challenge the status quo is a main issue in the literature. Harvey (1990) argues that ritual provides a time and place "for the individual member of the culture to ridicule, destroy, abandon or reject his or her socially assigned role and identity" without "incurring permanent damage to one's reputation, social standard, or means of livelihood" (p.42). Thus, ritual is not only a temporary acceptance of deviant social behaviors; it actually functions as social

control. Harvey further remarks:

> Ritual reaffirms the "status quo" by providing a temporary alternative. The threat of serious challenge to the social order is averted by licensing brief excursions into forbidden social territory. This temporary suspension of the normal "rules of the game" diverts potentially explosive social energy away from assault on the culture's reigning assumptions concerning power, status, the distribution of wealth, and regulated social interactions. (p. 43)

The vast amount of anti-social behaviors appearing in music video could be seen as evidence that viewing music video resembles a ritual activity. By immersing in the surrealistic sceneries in music video, one can enjoy the transcendence of role and identity, so social stress can be released (Harvey, 1990).

Besides, scholars argue that music video's dreamlike style also adds to the effect of social control. The function of dreaming is to cope with primitive desires. Repression, transference, and symbolic substitution are three strategies that subconsciousness adopts to deal with impulse and stress. As Hook (1979) explains:

> Freud's earliest view of the symbol was that of an idea or image present to the conscious mind, awake or in dream, which translated an unconscious wish or impulse that has undergone distortion for the purpose of eluding the (dream) "censor". The symbol arises out of the distortion and serves to give expression to what would otherwise be inexpressible, because unacceptable. (cited in Harvey, 1990, p.52)

Harvey (1990) points out the resemblance between the functions of dream and music video: first, both dream and music video can eliminate repressed emotions and desires, and second, both have potential for " triggering physiological reactions to symbolic stimuli " (p.52).

There is no simple answer to the question of whether music video functions to maintain social order or challenge the status quo. For some viewers, hegemonic values and stereotypical sex roles are rather compelling. For others, music video provides temporary escape entertainment. Besides, those who have critical eyes might see through ideological connotation and decode music video in alternative ways. They might also extend the rebellious spirit beyond the dreams and fantasies in music video and resist hegemony in the real world. As Hall (1980) suggests, audience members might read television texts using three different codes: the dominant code, the negotiated code, and the oppositional code.

Culture, Media, and Music Video in Taiwan

Taiwanese Culture

Due to the constant flow of immigrants from China during the last 300 years and Japanese colonization, Taiwan's culture is primarily influenced by Chinese and Japanese cultures (Copper, 1996). The principles of Confucianism pervade many aspects of people's lifestyle and social values. In a survey of 22 countries, Chinese Culture Connection (1986) developed an instrument called the Chinese Value Survey (CVS). Their four dimensions of Chinese values provide an overall depiction of Chinese

culture. These four dimensions include:(a) the integration dimension, measuring individuals' tendencies of not emphasizing competition but maintaining harmony with oneself, one's family, and others; (b) Confucian working philosophy, describing individuals' sense of obligation toward duty and order from superiors; (c) human heartedness, consisting of three positive values (kindness, patience, courtesy) and two negative values (patriotism and righteousness); and (d) moral discipline, including three values reflecting moral restraint (moderation, keeping oneself disinterested and pure, having few desires) and two values reflecting flexibility (adaptability and prudence).

Media and Marketing (1994) reported that Taiwanese people valued Confucian principles of familial loyalty, obedience, and respect. At the same time, Western values are also accepted and adopted by many young people (Tai & Tam, 1997). For instance, Taiwanese female consumers tend to look for modern products that are equivalent to traditional Confucian status symbols. Therefore, prestigious images of imported foreign brands are very convincing to them (*Media and Marketing*, 1994, cited in Tai & Tam, 1997). In addition to the attempt of mixing traditional values with modern (Western) consumption taste among average people, Western thought and cultural movements are common in the society of intellectuals (Copper, 1996).

People in Taiwan are much more conservative about sex than people from Western culture. Norms concerning marriage, family, and female chastity have been the core of the doctrines of Chinese patriarchy (Chang, 1996). Although the traditional large family has changed substantially, today, many Chinese patriarchal values still guide people's beliefs and behavior in Taiwan (Davison & Reed, 1998). At the same

time, a few people have begun to challenge the patriarchal system and have organized vigorous social movements. In Taiwan, the feminist movement is closely related to the democratic movement. Oppression from government and mainstream media has always been one of the main obstacles of the feminist movement. Through decades of struggle, feminists in Taiwan have successfully won media space and have publicized many issues, such as child prostitution, sexual harassment in the workplace, and equal-employment opportunities for women etc., for public discussion (Lee, 1999). Many Taiwanese feminists also play an important role in introducing Western feminist theory to people of the island. Only theories and studies based on Taiwanese experiences are still lacking.

Media Boom

Taiwan has a rather short history of democracy. Martial law was not lifted until the late 1980s; freedom of publication was denied until 1987; and the first opposition party was allowed to form in late 1986. Taiwan's media environment is highly influenced by the political atmosphere. It was not until 1994 that the construction of cable networks became legal (Chen, 1998). However, underground media activities had already been thriving before the legalization deadline in 1993 (Chen, 1998). Cable television subscribers were estimated at more than 600, 000 by 1991 (Liu, 1994). By 1994, about 42 percent of Taiwan's total television households subscribed to cable services (Liu, 1994). In 1996, the proportion had reached 70 percent (Liu, 1996, cited in Lo, Neilan, & King, 1998). In Taiwan cable penetration is higher than in the United States

(By the numbers, 1996), and far higher than in Japan (Liu, 1994, cited in Lo et al., 1998). Lo et al. (1998) reported that untill 1998, four networks and eight main cable companies provided about 70 channels for the total population of 21,000,000. Taiwan's television industry has entered a new phase that allows more freedom of expression and also is marked by intense competition (Yang, 1996, cited in Lo et al., 1998).

The Development of Music Video in Taiwan

Developing a global market has become an important goal for media companies in the U.S. The main purpose is to ensure future business growth after the US market is saturated. MTV, the creator of music video, not only successfully expands its branches in many countries, but also creates a global trend of popular entertainment that is basically American in styles (Banks, 1997).

MTV Asia was launched in September, 1991. Carried on Hutchvision's Satellite Asian Region Service (Star TV), a satellite operator based in Hong Kong, MTV's debut in Asia spanned 42 countries, and it soon caught young people's attention in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and India, and reached 13 million subscribers by July, 1993. Most of the early video clips on MTV were from Western and American artists, yet locally produced music videos gradually entered the scene. In 1993, MTV Asia began to broadcast a top 20 Mandarin-language video chart, which is coordinated in Taiwan. At that time, Taiwan had become the center of Mandarin repertoire in Asia (Levin, 1993). In 1994, MTV and Star TV ended their partnership. MTV developed two new MTV channels in Asia:

one presented in Mandarin Chinese, another in English. MTV Mandarin debuted on 21 April 1995 and was available primarily in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China. At the same time, Star TV created a new music service, Channel V, which also split into two languages (Mandarin and English) to compete with MTV (Banks, 1997).

In Taiwan, going to KTV (Karaoke TV house) is one of the most popular ways to enjoy night life. KTV has become a unique cultural phenomenon in Taiwan. It has also been brought to China by Taiwanese businesspeople and has a significant impact on Chinese life (Hong, 1997). At KTV, a group of friends or business partners rent a small cabin. A TV set running music videos is the focal point of the room. Participants take turns to sign, impersonating a star, while the TV set functions as the accompanist and the window of visual illusion. Sometimes the atmosphere becomes so exciting participants begin to rival each other in talents for signing and performing, and sometimes the whole group will sing together to become a cheerful choir (Zeng, 1998).

Despite its importance, there are very few studies about Taiwanese music video. In Taiwan's National Library, most of the journal articles, theses, and dissertations in the field of mass communication are about news. Only one journal article discusses the Karaoke phenomenon (Yeh, 1993). Two other theses examine music video in Taiwan. One of them analyzes the portrayal of women in music video (Wu, 1995); another studies the effects of music video's different narrative styles on audiences (Ho, 1998). All three studies rely heavily on Western sources. Hence, an analysis of the basic features and overall tendency of Taiwanese music videos is needed.

According to Ke & Chang 's (1995) study on the lyrics of 220 Taiwanese popular

songs that were on the top-20 list from Jan 1992 to Sep 1993, only one song was not about love relationships. Although this finding does not suggest the real proportion of love songs in the market place, the top-20 list does reflect audiences' preferences. Thus, gender is the main issue when studying Taiwanese music video.

This study treats media content as discourses of mainstream social values, and intends to examine the issue of power relations between the sexes. The main focuses are the definitions of female and male and the meaning of patriarchy in Taiwanese culture. Thus, the research questions for this study are:

RQ1: How are women and men portrayed in Taiwanese music videos?

RQ2: What is the ideology underpinning the definitions of sex roles?

RQ3: How are the power relations between females and males defined in Taiwanese music videos?

RQ4: What does patriarchy mean in Taiwanese culture?

Chapter 3

Methodology

This study's method is fantasy theme analysis. Bormann's symbolic convergence theory explains the phenomenon and mechanism of the formation of collective consciousness in a rhetorical community; and fantasy-theme criticism is the method that provides insights into the shared worldview (emotions, motives, meanings) of a group or a culture (Bormann, 1985; Foss, 1989).

Bormann's theory and method were based on an observation of the process of developing a shared symbolic reality in small group communication. He then extended the theory to explain the process of other form of communication as well as mass communication. The key assumptions of symbolic convergence theory are that members of a rhetorical community often interpret their collective past experiences, present events, or future situations in the forms of a dramatic fantasy, and that a compelling fantasy or drama will diffuse in the rhetorical group and create a shared reality for participants (Bormann, 1972; 1982b). Bormann (1983) describes the phenomenon of symbolic convergence in this way:

(The individuals) have jointly experienced the same emotions; they have developed the same attitudes and emotional responses to the personae of the drama; and they have interpreted some aspect of their experience in the same way. They have thus achieved symbolic convergence about their common experiences. (p. 104)

The notion of _fantasy theme_ is that participants of a rhetorical community tend to dramatize the situation by creating a shared vision of particular characters, actions, and settings, which are basic elements found in drama. Fantasy is "the creative and imaginative shared interpretation of events that fulfills a group's psychological or rhetorical need" (Bormann, 1985, p.130). Fantasy themes thus are symbolic representations of the group's experiences, but not the actual happenings in time and place. In other words, fantasy themes are artistic and organized ways to associated events or experiences with particular meanings, emotions, or attitudes (Bormann, 1972; 1982a; 1985).

Bormann (1982b) points out that the indices of the phenomena of symbolic convergence and sharing a fantasy are the recurrence of a fantasy theme in a rhetoric community. Bormann and his associates found that sometimes several fantasy themes with similar story lines, moods, and tones will surface in a group's communication. Bormann defines these similar fantasy themes as belonging to a _fantasy type_. He rationalizes that "the appearance of fantasy types provides evidence of the sharing of fantasies in larger communities" (p.296). He further deliberates that various shared fantasies may be swirled together to form a _rhetorical vision_ that provides a credible interpretation of reality. Rhetorical visions may be compelling perspectives about some important matters. As Bormann (1985) notes:

> A given individual may share several rhetorical visions providing social
>
> reality for such things as abortion, politics, interpersonal relationships, business
>
> management, reform, and religion...some rhetorical visions are so all-

encompassing and impelling that they permeate an individual's social reality in all aspects of living, Such all-encompassing symbolic systems can be considered *life-style rhetorical vision...* (p.133)

The method of fantasy-theme criticism is appropriate for this study because stories in music video are fantasized interpretation of life experiences and love relationships . Fantasy theme analysis provides an organized structure to reconstruct a meaningful drama out of a chaotic story lines in music video and allows critics to scrutinize its cultural and political implications. Bormann (1972) points out:

A critic can take the social reality contained in a rhetorical vision which he has constructed from the concrete dramas developed in a body of discourse and examine the social relationships, the motives, the qualitative impact of that symbolic world as though it were the substance of social reality for those people who participated in the vision (p. 401).

By using fantasy-théme criticism to analyze Taiwanese music video, we can construct dramas that are shared by Taiwanese people and uncover the power relations and ideology embedded in the rhetorical visions of Taiwanese culture.

Technique

Bormann (1972) has provided a general guide line for the use of fantasy-theme criticism, and it can be summarized as follows:

1.   Collecting data.

2.   Identifying settings, characters and actions. Foss (1989) explains :

>   A statement that depicts where the action is taking place or the
>
>   place where the characters act out their roles called a *setting theme*...
>
>   *Character themes* describe the agents or actors in the drama, ascribe
>
>   qualities to them, assign motives to them, and portray them as having
>
>   certain characteristics... *Action themes*, which also can be called
>
>   plotlines, deal with the action of the drama. The actions in which the
>
>   characters engage comprise action themes (p. 123)

3.   Reconstructing the rhetorical vision from the representative fantasy
        theme.

4.   Asking specific questions relating to elements of the dramas to form a
        coherent worldview. Considering the focus of this study, the researcher
        asked the following questions:

        ●   Who are the dramatis personae?

        ●   How are female characters portrayed? How are male characters
                portrayed?

        ●   How are the relationships between female and male portrayed?

        ●   Does some abstraction personified as a character provide the
                ultimate legitimatization of the drama?

        ●   Who are the heroes and the villains?

- What motives are attributed?

- For what are the roles praised, or castigated?

- What values are inherent in the praiseworthy characters?

- Where are the dramas set? In the wilderness? In the countryside? In the urban ghetto?

- Is the setting given supernatural sanction?

- What are the typical scenarios?

- What acts are performed by the ultimate legitimatizer?

- What life-styles are exemplified as praiseworthy?

- What meanings are inherent in the dramas?

- Where does the role fit into the great chain of being?

- How does the movement fit into the scheme of history?

- What emotional evocations dominate the drama? Does hate dominate? Pity? Love? Indignation? Resignation?

- What motives are embedded in the vision?

These questions were mainly drawn from Bormann's (1972) suggestions, yet the researcher had revised them according to the focus of the present study. These questions served only as suggestive guidelines but not restrictive instructions.

Procedures

Banks (1997) indicates that when choosing videos for programming, music

channels tend to put more weight on artists from their own affiliated record companies. In order to cover more diverse texts, the sample videos consisted of Mandarin-language videos in Taiwan's two leading music channels: MTV, and Channel V. Samples were videotaped from television according to program schedules in newspapers. Only programs that broadcasted Mandarin-language videos were taped. The VCR was set to record programs on MTV on Aug 2, Aug 3, Aug 4, and Aug 13, 1999, and set to record programs on Channel V on Aug 5, Aug 6, Aug 7, and Aug 14. The time frame was set according to the researcher's accessibility to Taiwan's music videos. This procedure yielded 35 hours of music television for analysis. Because the main focus of this study is cultural implications of music videos, only concept videos were selected and the 3 performance videos were not included in the present study. Among those concept videos, 14 video clips were shown only partially. They were also excluded from this study. After repeat showings of the same videos were eliminated, 63 concept videos were left for analysis.

Most previous research on music video only analyzed its visual attributes. This investigative approach omitted one of the most important messages, the lyrics, of music video. Because this study examined fantasy themes (the overall meanings) in music video, both lyrics and images were considered together to form the main theme of each music video. The researcher treated lyrics as the "voice-over narration" of video clips and coded them as part of the action theme.

A coding protocol (see Appendix) was designed to guide the coding process. The design and use of the protocol were developed following what Altheide (1996)

refers to as the method of "ethnographic content analysis." The analysis of sample

videos adhered to the following procedures.

1. After all sample videos were recorded, they were viewed by the

    researcher and coded according to (1) the setting theme, (2) the

    character theme, and (3) the action theme. The setting themes and the

    character themes were coded according to the images of the sample

    videos; the action themes consisted of two parts: the lyrics and images.

2. After the coding process was completed, the data were categorized in

    terms of the signers' gender. This resulted in three groups of data,

    including 30 female-address videos, 30 male-address videos, and 3

    videos that feature mixed gender signers.

3. In order to make a clear comparison between the portrayals of women

    and men, the researcher analyzed the differences and similarities

    between female-address videos and male-address in terms of the

    setting themes, the character themes, and the action themes. The 3

    videos that feature mixed gender signers were left for final analysis.

4. The setting themes, character themes and action themes were then put

    together to construct rhetorical visions of the definitions of females and

    males as well as the relationships between females and males.

5. Finally, the underlying ideology and the power relations embedded in

    the rhetorical visions were identified.

Chapter 4

Findings & Interpretations

After the sample videos were divided into female-address videos and male-address videos, apparent differences were found in the setting theme, action theme, and character theme between the two groups. These differences reflected a coherent view about the sex roles and together formed a rhetorical vision of the concept of patriarchy in Taiwanese culture. To make a clear comparison between the female-address videos and male-address videos, the following section first addresses, respectively, the setting themes, the action themes, and the character themes; the rhetorical visions are then discussed.

The Setting Theme

The major setting theme was urban. Most of the stories took place in urban areas. The images that showed characters' urbanized day-to-day lives, such as wandering on the streets, sitting in coffee shops, or waiting for buses prevailed in many video clips. Skyscrapers, huge advertising boards, sparkling neon lights, busy traffic, or faceless passing crowds were embellishments that adorned the visual effects. Sites for urban yuppies' leisure lives, such as bars, KTV, and coffee shops were often used to reflect pop stars' splendid lifestyles. The excessive use of metropolitan images reflected Taiwan's rapid urbanization during the recent years, and revealed that Taiwanese were fascinated by urban culture. Big cities were portrayed as places that provided excitements and sensations. Sometimes they symbolized characters' alienated lifestyle;

sometimes they worked to highlight the characters' lonely moods.

Two other important setting themes were ocean and rain. The consistent ways ocean and rain were used indicated that they not only reflect Taiwan's geographic and weather conditions, but also have been charged with particular meanings and become two significant symbols in Taiwanese culture.

The ocean has always been considered as a source of comfort and protection for Taiwanese people. It is said that Taiwan's guardian goddess lives at sea and always protects and guides the islanders. In music videos, the ocean was a place that welcomed and comforted a distressed person. When depicting people who were experiencing enormous emotional disturbance, music videos often pictured them in coastal areas. Sometimes they were portrayed as exiling themselves to a desolate beach; sometimes they let waves wash over themselves; sometimes the ocean was a quiet listener to whom the lonely person could talk; and sometimes it was a magical mirror that projected the good memories. For example, In Zhou HauJian's video, the main character gained the courage to love after "talking" to the ocean. In a male group's videos, five college kids escaped from the boring classroom to a sunny beach and experienced the transcendence of roles to become a rock music band performing at sea.

The use of rain to symbolize crying has been one of the standardized codes in film and television production. With an annual precipitation of 102 inches and the large number of sad stories, rain plays a more important role in Taiwanese music videos. When discussing the relationships between viewing music video and ritual

communication, Harvey (1990) explains that the vast amount of excess behavior (sex, violence...) in American music video functions to release social stress. By immersing in the surrealistic sceneries of music video, viewers can enjoy the transcendence of role and identity and indulge in temporary deviant fantasies that are otherwise forbidden. While the violent acts in American music video demonstrate the characters' anger and how much damage they can do to the world, Taiwanese music video portrays "violence" in a reverse way. That is, it is to emphasize the characters' suffering and how much harm this world has done to them. For example, in Kong JinRong's video, the male signer was pictured standing in a violent thunderstorm. It was dark, and the heavy rain bombarded him. A scene showed the signer leaning on a cliff, and a huge wave smashed on him. Because violent acts or dramatic ways of expressing feelings are not legitimate in Taiwanese culture, rain as the symbol of devastating and crying becomes critical to representing strong responses to miserable situations and ways of releasing psychological and social stress.

There were some differences between the setting themes in female-address videos and male-address videos. Coffee shops and urban night scenes appeared in female-address videos more often than in male-address videos. The main reason was that the elegant interior design of coffee shops and lonesome atmosphere of urban night scenes were considered more suitable for enhancing femininity or emphasizing female vulnerability. On the other hand, certain "alternative" scenes, such as restrooms, sanitary sewers, and construction cites were considered more compatible with masculinity.

In male-address videos, stories took place on the streets more often than in female-address videos. Men were portrayed as belonging to the world outside, and some negative connotations were associated with the images of men staying at home. In female-address videos, home was the second dominant setting theme. Female characters often were depicted at home longing for their lovers; many times they were in their own bedrooms. Even though the majority of the videos were stories of single women, the images that portrayed women preparing for meals in the kitchens or dining rooms appeared in three different female-address videos. On the contrary, home was the least-used setting in male-address videos. Only one male-address video featured the male leading roles appearing at home. Yet, this video was, in fact, a story of four single men who were so bored at home and envied the lustful life on the streets. In this video, audiences did not see how the male characters lived at home. Instead, audiences saw these four single men standing in front of their windows and looking at the streets. What these four male characters were looking at was a woman and man kissing and flirting with each other on the street. For men, home is not a place to live but a cage that restrains their freedom and desire; they feel upset when being confined at home. While, in male-address videos, depicting males at home was avoided, plots in female characters' home (either she is at home or both she and he are at her home) were not uncommon.

Men's absences at home resulted in their frequent appearances in other public spheres, including classrooms, college campus, photographic studios, art galleries, baseball and basketball fields, farms, Japanese shrines, battlefields, and gambling

houses. On the other hand, in female-address videos, settings that showed women doing professional jobs or participating in social activities were rare. The only setting in which serious social activities took place was in Na Ying's three sequential videos. These three videos were shot as mini serials with three episodes, and two of these three episodes featured Na Ying as a journalist doing news editing in a studio. In addition to Na Ying's high-ranking profession, in Liu HongHua's video, there was a short shot of the female character working in a bookstore as a clerk. In Ring's video, the leading female role was a model posing in a film studio. In the video of a female group, Two Girls, the story was presented as a drama on the stage. Beside these four work places, most of the setting themes in female-address videos functioned as backgrounds to enhance or contrast female beauty or vulnerability, rather than environments in which they lived and participated.

The Action Theme

Lyrics:

In the lyrics of sample videos, five different themes emerged from the videos selected for analysis. Three of them were depictions of different phases in the love relationships, including: (a) the anticipation of the love relationship, (b) the establishment and maintenance of the love relationship, and (c) disintegration of the love relationship. In addition to these three stages of romantic relationships, two other themes were: (d) commentary or advice about love relationships, and (e) themes other than romantic love. Among the 60 female/male-address videos, 83 percent (50/60)

presented a theme related to love relationships in lyrics, and 17 percent (10/60) presented themes other than romantic love.

The differences in lyrics between female-address videos and male-address videos were significant (see Table). Themes centering on "disintegration of the love relationship" made almost half (14/30) of the total female-address videos. On the other hand, themes that dealt with "the establishment and maintenance of the love

Table: Themes of Lyrics in Female-address Videos and Male-address Videos

	Female-address videos (n=30)	Male-address videos (n=30)
The anticipation of the love relationship	0	4 (13.33%)
The establishment and maintenance of the love relationship	11 (36.66%)	9 (30.00%)
Disintegration of the love relationship	14 (46.66%)	8 (26.66%)
Commentary or advice about love relationships	1 (3.33%)	3 (10.00%)
Themes other than romantic love	4 (13.33%)	6 (20.00%)

relationship" were predominant (9/30) in male-address videos, though themes relating to "disintegration of the love relationship" were almost equally important (8/30). The category of "the anticipation of the love relationship" was totally absent in female-address videos, while it occupied 13 percent of male-address videos. Besides, both

commentaries/advice about love and topics other than love appeared more often in male-address videos than in female-address videos.

(A) The anticipation of the love relationship

In female-address videos, no song expressed women's passions for seeking a lover or their desires to pursue a relationship. This indicates that women`s passions for love are censored in Taiwanese culture. It`s not appropriate for women to show their desires for lovers or to pursue a love relationship actively. Yet, although the themes of anticipation of the love relationship did appear in male-address videos, they were often implicit and suggestive. For example, in a male group's video, the lyrics expressed: *My action is a hint of my passions to you. I want to love you for a long time...I'm telling you my secret code of "Baby I love you."* -- Y. I. Y. O.-- *Please love me.*

Because expressing feelings explicitly or pursuing love aggressively is not encouraged in Taiwanese culture, people rely on beliefs in fate or the arrangement of an unknown power. To fulfill the anticipations of love, sometimes males were portrayed as superstitionists: *Last time I got a lucky divination. I hope it will make my dream come true, and you fall in love with me.*

(B) The establishment and maintenance of the love relationship

In male-address videos, themes of the establishment and maintenance of the love relationships can be divided into two groups. They revealed an ambivalent feeling about women and reflected Taiwanese males' general attitudes toward their love

partners.

Two-thirds of the lyrics in this category were men's complaints about their intimates. They accused females of being hindrances to their freedom, burdens on their lives, problem makers, or self-willed and headstrong. For instance, in Chen XiaoDong's video, *Secret Agent*, the lyrics drew an analogy between the male signer's lover and a secret agent, who followed him, read his diary, and collected his secrets day and night. By using the metaphor of a dictatorial government's persecution toward intellectuals, this story portrayed females as an evil force implying that males were like idealistic fighters who struggled for the well-being of the world and were hindered and victimized by females. In Chang ZhenYue's video, *I Need Money*, the lyrics were a teenage boy's explanation to his parents about why he begged for more money from them. The reason was that he had recently met a girl, and he wanted to please her. Therefore, he needed to take her shopping, and he probably would have to buy a new dress for her. Because maintaining the harmony of family is the fundamental virtue in Taiwanese society, by portraying a girl not only consuming the boy's money but also causing conflicts between him and his parents, females were deemed malevolent and depraved. This song also embodied the stereotype of material girls, another serious affront to Taiwanese values.

Not all songs in this category revealed the women-hating psychopathy. Some of the lyrics expressed men's willingness to protect their lovers or announced males' commitments to their lovers' well-being throughout life.

Contrary to males' hostility toward females, when women were in love, they

appeared to be very anxious and helpless about their relationships. The lyrics revealed that women's main concern was whether their love partners were honest, or whether their lovers violated their commitments (of protecting them and guaranteeing their life-time well-being). Women were portrayed as passive and totally relying on men's vows and cares: *You sneered at me. You want me admit who is the winner and who is the loser. I then realized that I used my life and my happiness as the stakes. When I lost you, I lost all I have.* When the love relationships were optimistic, women envisioned their happiness as mens' wives: *...I dream that we'll have a family, and I'll give him a healthy baby;* when the relationships went wrong, women were depicted as lacking the determinations to terminate the relationships: *My loneliness is not because no body is by my side...Petals are flying when I miss you. Nothing really matters, cause I'm used to it. I'm tired. Rain is fragile. Only you are perfect. Being eleven thousand miles apart from you, my love turns pale, but I couldn't let it go.*

(C) Disintegration of the love relationship

After a love relationship had been terminated, women often were portrayed as being caught in the reminiscences of the past or escaping into unrealistic dreams. This was illustrated by one female signer: *Last night I dreamed that I got wings. I flew and wandered across every place we've been visited before.* In another song, the female signer expressed: *Maybe it's my fault that I'm too dependent on you, but you shouldn't hurt me. I'd rather escape into my dream to search for those good memories we shared before.* Because women's roles, opportunities, and power are highly limited,

they must rely on men's love and care. When a love relationship is over, for women, it is

like everything is gone with him. Many female-address videos expressed the feelings of

devastation, loneliness, and abandonment: *After you left me, I was buried by*

loneliness. Tell me you don't wanna say good-bye...I let you go, let you fly. I lost my sky.

Could somebody tell me how to fly? The feelings of being hurt were emphasized In

many female-address videos. Sometimes physical injury or metamorphosis were used

to symbolize being abused. For instance, one female sang: *I don`t want to lose, but I*

fall over..., or *My soul was run over by a train carrying tons of lies...;* in another song:

Because of you, I become a woodpecker. I gnaw at your indifference and carve my

loneliness. I cannot fly high. Women's lack of freedom was further exemplified in the

prevailing metaphors of wings, flying, and birds in female-address videos. These

metaphorical symbols revealed women's yearning for being liberated from the

restraints (both physically and mentally) of social roles and being able to fulfill their

dreams and desires.

In male-address songs, the feelings of melancholy and heartbreak were similar

to female-address songs. Terms like "in tears" or "crying" were not uncommon. Yet,

memory was more infrequent than in female-address songs; dreams were seldom

mentioned; instead, males tended to feel confused about their unsuccessful love.

They were portrayed as being uncertain about the failure of the relationship. In males'

lyrics, feelings like *"It's very difficult to love someone"* or *"Love makes me feel confused"*

were often disclosed. Sometimes the lyrics indicated that a man would rather not figure

out why his lover left him: *If I asked the reason, I'm afraid that It will hurt me more than I*

can take... In your tears, I see you still care for me. I`m going to cry, so I hold you tight... The belief in fate has a significant influence on Taiwanese culture. Many people see the operation of the world as being largely controlled by an unknown power, especially for unpredictable things, such as love relationships. For men, who are responsible for pursuing and establishing love relationships, fate is a good excuse for the failures of relationships. Yet, because of the belief in fate, people tend to become more passive and escapist.

(D) Commentary or advice about love relationship

The preponderance of songs dealing with the pain and self-pity over lost love indicates that Taiwanese women and men lack the skill of handling the changeable nature of love. They, especially women, still believe in and yearn for a lifetime relationship, but the reality often does not conform to what they expect. This results in the advice about the love relationship in popular music. In the lyrics, several songs wanted people get over the obsession of a passed love. it seemed that most of the advice was especially for women. For example, one male-address video suggested: *Forget him. He is not worthy of your worries;* another male-address song said to women: *Even though you are reluctant to give up, you must let go. Cause it is a precipice without a route for retreat.*

(E) Themes other than romantic love

In male-address videos, two subcategories emerged: (a) ideas that reflect

Confucian values, and (b) rebellion against Confucian values. There were four male-address songs that expressed men's feeling of obligation to social order. Chen YuPei's *Be The Second* was a lecture that suggested people should be satisfied with the subordinate position and work hard: *The real winner is those who can live happily. My goal is the second place and to be myself. A small screw can control the whole situation. Somebody likes to be the leader, that makes me feel good...I'd rather have real capacities, than have big popularity. Millions of people can't stop me. If you want to be the subordinates, you need to sacrifice and dedicate yourselves. The subordinates will be recognized one day...Struggle and work hard. Let's all be the Second...* Chen Lei's *If I'm rich* also expressed the determination to work hard and make money. The signer proclaimed that if he becomes rich, he would purchase a new car and buy everyone a cellular phone. Another Chen YuPei's song reflected the Chinese value of respecting and obeying the father. Liu DeHua's song wanted children to study English hard and have the best grades in school.

Songs challenging Confucian values were generated because of Taiwan's education and examination systems, which can be traced back to the ancient Chinese empires (Stacey, 1983). In Taiwanese culture, studying hard is an obligation imposed on children and teenagers. The two songs that reflected a rebellious spirit could be seen as being triggered by this obligation. A Di's song expressed the happiness about himself as an illiterate. The male group of five college kids expressed that they were so tired and bored in this society. They hoped they could be transferred to another world where having fun is acceptable.

In the lyrics of female-address videos, none of the values of Confucianism were reflected. This does not mean that the female is not restrained by Confucianism. Instead, this indicates that females' roles and opportunities to participate in the society are highly limited, thus the obligations to follow the social orders in public spheres seem not to have direct influences on women. What Females' lyrics revealed were some ambiguous feelings or impractical thoughts about life: *We all expect a beautiful future. Even though it's not perfect, we want it to be splendid;* or *Fly through the valley of dream. I'm confident about myself. I'm growing up. I'll find my own way.* Because women's experiences have nothing to do with social life, when they have something to say about their existence, their statements become simply narcissistic monologues.

Images:

The visual parts of the music videos were basically the embodiment or interpretations of the lyrics. As the setting themes showed that the places chosen for women are seldom social activity spheres, the action themes revealed the same tendency. Female-address videos often pictured women as wandering around doing nothing. The predominant number of lyrics dealing with women's devastating feelings of lost love were usually visually illustrated with a woman rambling alone in a romantic environment. In order to emphasize a woman's childlike character, sometimes she was portrayed as playing with toys or swings in a somewhat blue mood. The emphasis on singers' dancing skill was very rare in Taiwanese music videos, yet certain childlike gestures were choreographed for female signers. As reminiscences were often

mentioned in lyrics, the memories often were exemplified in the images. Although the lyrics in female-address videos often expressed women's devastating feelings when their love relationships failed, the images predominately juxtaposed their reminiscences of the happy experiences, such as having a walk in a forest, riding bicycles, or rambling along the beach. Men appeared to be very gentle, affectionate, and caring in women's memories.

In male-address videos, as men's setting themes involved more sites of social activities, males' action themes demonstrated that men participated in more social activities than women did. For example, Zhou HuaJian's video showed him going to Japan to learn the art of tea ceremony. A male group`s video illustrated five male college students having an anatomy class. A Di's video pictured him gambling, fighting, and quarreling etc. to emphasize his character as illiterate. Another Zhou HuaJian's video exhibited him as a photographer taking pictures on the streets and in his studio.

Male anxiety and hesitation to express their love was further demonstrated in the visual plotlines in male-address videos. The visual plots of May`s (the male group) video, *Love Me*, was a story in which five young men accidentally found a girl, who escaped from home and slept on the floor of a bar. They brought her back and took care of her. This girl tried to seduce all of them, but these five young men were very shy and inexperienced in dealing with women. Therefore, at the end, nothing happened; none of these five men developed a relationship with this girl. In another male group's video, the story was about a young man who had a crush on a girl. Several scenes

showed the male struggling with the urge to hold the girl's hands. Yet, he was too shy and timid; he was scared back for several times. It turned out that he did not touch her, and it was the girl who kissed his forehead.

In her study of the lyrics of American country music, Saucier (1986) found that one of the main themes in American country music centered on the topic of male prowess in the love relationship. Yet, the idea of male prowess not only never appeared in the data of this study, but opposite attitudes, which was male timidness or hesitation, surfaced in Taiwanese music videos.

The Character Theme

In female-address videos, most of the leading female roles were portrayed as docile, soft, passive, weak, vulnerable, innocent, childlike and narcissistic. They were often caught in the reminiscence of a lost love and felt lonely and self-pitying. Yet, they seldom expressed their feelings of distress explicitly. Instead, certain external elements, such as rain and ocean, were used to symbolize their devastating moods. Sometimes they were depicted as escaping into dreams or indulging in good old memories.

According to the sample videos, the standard of beauty in Taiwanese culture was not sexy but cute and innocent. Among the 30 female-address videos, only one video portrayed the leading female role as a sexy woman, yet this female signer was sexy and at the same time childlike. In order to emphasize female cuteness, sometimes women were pictured as capering around like a child or playing with children in elementary schools.

The images of a rebellious woman appeared in female-address videos occasionally. These females had dyed hair, tattoos, and an American teenager look. However, the analysis of the setting themes and the action themes indicated that the real rebellious spirt never appeared in female-address videos, thus the images of a rebellious woman were, in fact, a superficial imitation of American women, especially those who appeared in American music videos.

The majority of the female leading roles in the sample videos were portrayed as single. The only married woman was Na Ying's role as a journalist in her sequence of three videos. She was also the only female who had a professional job. Yet, the role of a successful working woman is not praiseworthy. On the contrary, professional women are viewed as lacking the charm and attraction. Therefore, in Na Ying's videos, the story was that a female journalist's newlywed husband had a sexual relationship with her best friend. Here Na Ying had short hair and a less feminine appearance, while her best friend had long and curly hair and a very feminine look. Although Na Ying was portrayed as a journalist, in her three videos, images showing she was working were few and short; most of the time she was either doing housework or talking with friends in coffee shops.

The male roles in female-address videos were identified as two types: (a) the affectionate type, and (b) the heartless type. Most of the male roles in female-address videos fell into the affectionate category. They were gentle, caring, and dedicated, though many of these male roles were projections of females' memories. Visually, the role of Na Ying's husband was the only male character appearing as a villain in

female-address videos. He was also the only married man. He was portrayed as tall and strong, evil, self-centered, cold, and lustful. This suggests that in Taiwanese women's eyes, unmarried lovers are always viewed and remembered in terms of their positive qualities, even though the love relationships may be not successful. On the other hand, husbands are those who have real power and influences over women's fate and thus can make women's lives miserable. The role of husband is what a woman is afraid of.

The images of men in male-address videos did not contrast significantly with the images of women. They were also portrayed as docile, soft, passive, and vulnerable. Trujillo (1991) points out that hegemonic masculinity in American culture highlights male physical force and control, occupational achievement, familial patriarchy, frontiersmanship, and heterosexuality. Yet, according to the sample videos, male power was not portrayed in terms of physical force in Taiwan, nor was occupational achievement emphasized. Instead, obedience to the hierarchical social order and content with subordination were praised. The images of a childlike male were not uncommon, and men appeared to be very shy and awkward when pursuing lovers. The only male roles whose physical force was emphasized were in A Di`s video, which portrayed an illiterate man and his comedic rude behaviors, and in Na Ying's video in which the role of husband was macho.

The images of women in male-address videos appeared to be somewhat different compared to women`s images in female-address videos. Some female roles were portrayed as mystical and unpredictable. For example, both in Su YongKang`s

and Guo FuCheng`s videos, the female characters were vague shadows dancing in the background. There were more sexy women appearing in male-address videos than in female-address videos. In male-address videos, while male were depicted as shy and sexually innocent, some females were portrayed as sexually active and available.

Several roles that represented the images of authority in Taiwanese culture were featured in male-address videos. In Chen YuPei`s video, the father was depicted as a hard worker and serious disciplinarian with a tender heart. The story was the male character`s reminiscence of how his father took care of him and disciplined him in his childhood. In the video, *The Crazy World*, five college students were controlled by their teacher, who was portrayed as a stupid fat guy wearing a police cap and dotted boxer pants. This music video was among the few video clips that showed certain resistence to mainstream values and challenged the image of authority.

Videos that feature mixed gender signers

The three videos that involved both female and male signers reflected the same views about female and male roles. Among these three videos, one portrayed a couple's self-disclosure and confusion about their relationship. They were separated because of the male's pride and resistence to be bonded with someone. Another video depicted several young men asking questions about how to pursue a lover. A girl gave them advice. The third video featured several Taiwanese stars traveling to Africa to promote a charity.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The Rhetorical Vision

Two rhetorical visions were identified in Taiwanese music videos. One illustrates

people's love relationships; another depicts Confucian values. These two rhetorical

visions together define a hierarchical social structure and the ways women and men fit

into this hierarchy.

The rhetorical vision of the love relationship depicts urban young people's love

experiences. In the noisy, crowded metropolitan areas, women and men feel

alienated and unhappy. The main reasons causing people's unhappiness are the

failure of love relationship or the anxiety about a love relationship. The analysis of music

video reveals that women and men hold different attitudes toward love, and these

attitudes reflected the definitions of sex roles in Taiwanese culture. Common for both

female and male is that they appeared to lack the skill to handle a love relationship.

Stories about women's desires for seeking a love relationship was totally absent

in female-address videos. This indicates that women's passions for love are not

legitimate, or it's inappropriate for women to show their desires or to actively pursue a

relationship. Thus, it is male privileges and responsibility to seek a lover and make the

first move to establish a relationship in Taiwanese culture. Yet, the privilege and

responsibility also make men feel anxious and apprehensive. Men's anxieties result in

some escapist fantasies. That is, males either imagine that women are active or

fantasize that they accidentally run into a beautiful seductress. Therefore, there were

more sexy or sexually active female roles in male-address videos than in female-address videos. Some videos portrayed men as superstitious and believing in fate.

In her study of the depictions of romantic love in an influential Taiwanese writer's romances, Lin (1994) points out that traditionally Taiwanese culture did not have the conventions of developing romantic love relationships. Instead, the male/female relationship was established on the basis of marriage, and marriage must be decided and arranged by parents. The concepts of freedom to pursue love and the freedom of deciding one's own marriage were developed under the influences of individualism from Western culture. Yet, until the late 1970s, most Taiwanese young people still consult with their parents about their marriages (Thorton, Chang, & Sun, 1984). Lin also points out that young people's understanding of the nature of relationships and their dating skills were developed gradually. Popular novels and mass media have offered much information about romantic love. However, the results of this study indicate that even now Taiwanese young people still exhibit difficulties in pursuing love. Women are too passive, and men are too shy.

While male anxiety mainly comes from the responsibility for pursuing love, female anxiety comes from the relationship itself. Because women cannot legitimately pursue love, and their opportunities to participate in society are limited, the only thing they can rely on is the relationship with men, who are not only responsible for women's romantic love but also their life and well-being. This was exemplified in Na Ying's lyrics: *"You sneered at me. You want me to admit who is the winner and who is the loser. I then realized that I used my life as the stakes. When I lost you, I lost all I have."* A

woman`s main concern is whether her lover will give his commitment to her, and whether he will abide by his promise. The lyrics of female-address videos reveals that a male`s violation of his promise (lies) is the main reason that causes her disappointments about her relationship. On the other hand, males appear to have ambivalent attitudes toward their love relationships. Many male signers expressed certain antipathy toward their lovers. They felt their lovers hindered their freedom or caused problems. Some males exhibited their willingness to give commitments; they were the ideal lovers designed for women`s fantasies.

Because the males have the privilege of controlling the development of a love relationship, females are more likely to become victimized when a relationship fail. This was exemplified in the large number of female-address videos that illustrate the woman`s devastating feeling of her lost love. Though the man was portrayed as vulnerable as the woman when his love failed, he was not as likely to be caught in the memory of the past. Instead, the man response to the failure of a love relationship was: 'why'. This again indicates that the man controls the female/male relationship. When a relationship is out of his control, he feels confused. On the other hand, women were portrayed as accepting everything and escaping into dreams and memories.

Taiwanese women`s anxiety about love relationships and their passive role in music video are confirmed with a poll about women from age 20 to 34 around the world. Conducted by ELLE magazine, this survey indicates that only 13 percent of Taiwanese women feel love relationships give them joy and happiness, while the percentage of women who feel love is a joy globally is 35 percent. Only 70 percent of

Taiwanese women disapprove their husband developing other affairs, and only 28

percent strongly disapprove husbands' cheating behaviors. Yet, 80 percent of women

globally (87 percent in Europe and 84 percent in North America) against husbands'

cheating behaviors (Taiwanese women, 1999). As mentioned earlier, some music

videos provide advice to women (sometimes men) suggesting that when a relationship

is over, life will move on. Every motto is a reflection of a human weakness, just like all

medicines are created because of diseases. Therefore, the advice in popular music is

a reflection of the oddness and inappropriateness of traditional passive roles. It also

indicates how difficult Taiwanese women cope with the bonds of traditional values.

The rhetorical vision of Confucian values in Taiwanese music videos appeared

only in male-address videos. Taiwanese men view the maintenance of harmony (not

competition), obedience to superiors, and obligation toward duty as virtues. Yet,

because these virtues are, in fact, rules that restrain one`s personal freedom and

desire, some resistant and rebellious ideas were developed in music videos, but the

resistence to Confucianism was not significant and tended to be limited to personal

statements.

Social values must be practiced and maintained through social activities. The

hierarchical social structure defined by Confucianism is deemed as the exclusive

males province, therefore the rhetorical vision of Confucian values does not surface in

female-address videos. Females are not considered as legitimate members of social

activities, therefore they do not need to worry about obedience to superiors, nor do

they concern with obligations and duties. Female`s roles are confined to the private

sphere; the only acceptable role for women is lover.

In sum, the analysis of Taiwanese music video reveals that females are portrayed as docile, soft, passive, weak, vulnerable, innocent, childlike, narcissistic and domestic. Because women cannot legitimately express passion or desire overtly in Taiwanese culture, they are portrayed as depending on a man's love and care. Yet, the image of a macho man is unpopular in Taiwanese culture; on the contrary, male roles are depicted as docile, soft, passive, vulnerable, obedient, moderate, and shy. Female-address videos often show positive male images; on the other hand, male-address videos reveal an ambivalent feeling toward women. The most significant differences between the portrayals of female and male are their roles and status in society. Females' role and status in society are highly limited. Therefore, males have to bear all the social obligations, including obedience to the social order, pursuing a love relationship (in order to establish a family), and working hard (to support the family). The ideology that undergirds the definitions of sex roles in Taiwanese culture is Confucianism, which sustains a harmonious and hierarchical social order in which a distinct role and proper status are prescribed for each person (Stacey, 1983).

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The Power Relations

Feminist theories developed in Western culture are widely applied by Taiwanese

feminists nowadays, but studies on the concepts of femininity and masculinity in

Taiwanese culture are still not sufficient to establish a Taiwanese feminist theory. Scholars

often suggest that in Western society femininity and masculinity are defined as

dichotomous. For example, Wood (1997) points out Western society`s version of sex

roles as:

> ...men to be assertive and women to be deferential, men to be
>
> independent and women to be relationship oriented, men to be physically
>
> strong and women to be physically attractive, men to be sexually
>
> knowledgeable and active and women to be sexually innocent and
>
> discriminating, men to be emotionally controlled and women to be emotionally
>
> expressive. (p. 314)

The findings of this study point out that the definitions of femininity in Taiwanese

culture are similar to what MacKinnon (1982) identified as Western society`s conception

of female character. MacKinnon points out "contemporary industrial society's version of

femininity is docile, soft, passive, nurturant, vulnerable, weak, narcissistic, childlike,

incompetent, masochistic, and domestic, made for child care, home care, and

husband care" (p, 530). Though child care is not highlighted in Taiwanese music video

(mainly because the target audience of music video are young/single people), most of these features can be well applied to Taiwanese women. However, the portrayals of male character in Taiwanese culture are significantly different from Western society`s definition of masculinity. In Taiwanese music videos, men sometimes appear to be deferential, sexually innocent, emotionally vulnerable, and their physical force is seldom emphasized. Therefore, the power relations between women and men in Taiwanese culture may be defined differently from those of Western culture.

Sinn (1994) described Chinese patriarchy as:

In China, the central tenet of patriarchy was that the male parent, as the head of a definite household, was the representative of the "family", the principal organized expression of the Chinese State. His supremacy was enhanced by the necessity of continued sacrifices to the spirits of deceased ancestors. The patriarch was thus invested with a power over every member of his family, consisting of one or more wives, children, grandchildren, younger brothers, their wives and children and so forth, as well as of hired and purchased servants, every one of whom had a fixed relation to the "family", guaranteed by the whole social state, and all were subject to the same *patria potestas*.......Every member of the family or household merged his or her individual existence into the family, which was legally the only "person" existing in China. (p. 142)

In Confucian culture, family is the basic structure of the whole social and

political system, and the code of filial piety is the "foundation of virtue and the root of

civilization" (Hsiao Ching, cited in Stacey, 1983, p. 30) that defines a complex

hierarchical social configuration. By requiring that family members obey the patriarch,

each household leader obeys the commoners, commoners obey officials, and officials

obey the Son of Heaven (the King), the same doctrine of filial piety is pursued from

beginning to end, and the whole society is bonded as a big family (Stacey, 1983).

Because Confucianism is established on the basis of a familial power structure, the

issue of power relations between female and male in Taiwanese culture must be

scrutinized accordingly. In Western culture, the strategy to secure male power is to

exaggerate the differences between female and male. Yet, in Confucian culture, the

strategy to secure patriarchal system is not to exaggerate the different personalities

between female and male, but to emphasize the different roles and statuses

prescribed for them. This is not to say that there is no differences between female and

male in Confucian culture, only the images of female and male are more similar to

each other than in Western culture. Hamilton (1981, cited in Stacey, 1983, p. 30)

suggests that one of the distinct features of Chinese patriarchy is its emphasis on

positional rather than personal power. Therefore, it is proposed here that a triangular

model of power relations might explain the power struggle between female and male

in Taiwanese culture (see Figure). In Western culture, female and male are the two roles

involved in the power struggle; there are three roles involved in the power struggle in

Taiwanese culture. That is, female, male, and the patriarch together form a triangular

structure of power relations and the concept of patriarchy. This power triangle

resembles the structure of a family. The patriarchal power not only restricts female role and status but also confines male role and status. While males as a group hold the dominant power, this dominant group is

Patriarch

Powerful

Powerless   Powerless

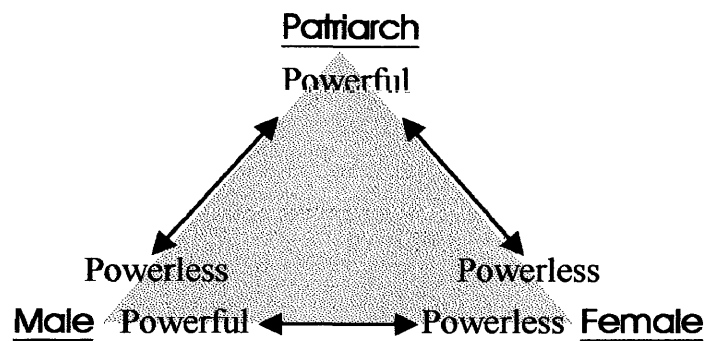Male   Powerful ◄————► Powerless Female

Figure: Proposed Power Triangle

hierarchical itself. In other words, a male's role and power are determined in relation to the patriarch and must be deferential and obedient. Therefore the image of a weak and vulnerable man is not uncommon in Taiwanese culture. When a male becomes the familial patriarch, he then gains absolute power in the sphere of his family. This is exemplified in Na Ying`s and Chen YuPei`s videos in which both the roles of husband and father were portrayed as commanding and authoritative. Gary Hamiliton (1981, cited in Stacey, 1983) points out that the power of Chinese patriarchy is not discretionary, but a matter of upholding prescribed moral principles by enforcing obedience to the imperatives of roles. In other words, the patriarch is the representation of collective moral beliefs, which are the doctrines of filial piety, rather than a person with distinct personality or style. In this power triangle, the female is always subordinate and powerless.

Resistance or Deference?

In America, music video has long been criticized as a malevolent medium that

challenges mainstream values. Music videos' antisocial tradition can be traced back to the rebellious spirits embedded in rock and roll music (Grossberg, 1986; Lewis, 1990), which played an important role in the era of 1960s that allowed "faithless wild boys and girls obeying no authority and bearing no responsibility, playing havoc with America in a mindless quest for the good time they believed was owed them by the world" (Duncan, 1984, p. 1). Although the turmoil had already passed and rock 'n' roll music became more like popular music, music video is still notorious for its excessive depiction of sex and violence. Despite the criticisms of music video's potential negative influences on audiences, some critics see the obsession with sex and violence in music video as strategies to challenge or subvert patriarchal hegemony and mainstream values of law and order (Fiske, 1997). The criticisms and celebrations demonstrate that, in America, music video is at the center of a power struggle between the power structure's desire to maintain social order against marginalized groups' attempts to break the rules.

However, the findings of this study point out that although the concept and technique of music video were transplanted to Taiwan, the rebellious spirit was filtered out. Deviant behaviors or dramatic expression are censored and forbidden in Taiwanese music video. Even though American music videos are highly visible in Taiwanese music channels, those violent acts and overt sexual appeals do not have "contagious" effects in Taiwanese music videos. On the contrary, Taiwanese music video promotes conservative values of Confucianism and patriarchal ideology and helps to maintain a hierarchical social structure that restricts individual desire and

development. Giroux (1983) points out that the strategies of resistence are proposing counter-logic of thinking and evoking collective political struggle and emancipation. While there is rarely any rule breaking or contestation in Taiwanese music video, the possibilities of using music videos as a tool of resistence are very few.

Some operational flaws might contribute to the bias of this study. First, due to the limited time of the researcher's trip back to Taiwan, the data were collected within eight days. The time frame was not determined on the basis of any systematic methods of sampling, nor was the criteria of "informational sufficiency" considered. Secondly, the data were collected during schools' summer break, which is the hot season for record companies to promote albums for college students' interests. Therefore, there might be more videos dealing with teenagers' feelings and concerns in this study. For example, males' shyness found in many videos in this study might only reflect a teenage issue but not mirror adult males' characteristics. This must be checked by other studies. Besides, a future research on audiences' interpretations of music videos and a study on the ways media industry produces music videos will provide a more thoroughly understanding about music videos and the issue of power struggles in Taiwan.

Chapter 7

Implications

In regard to the strategies for feminist criticism in Taiwan, the author has three

suggestions: First, Confucianism emphasizes the hierarchical orders and relationships

among individuals, therefore the issue of power struggles in Taiwanese culture must be

scrutinized in a more complicated model, rather than in a dichotomous and

single-linear pattern. The omnipresence of the patriarchal power and the power

relation between the patriarch and the male are as important as the power relation

between the female and the male. In other words, the issue is not "the power relation

between female and male" but "the power relations among female, male, and the

patriarch." Some scholars suggest that Confucian culture and Chinese society are

neither individualism-oriented nor collectivism-oriented but relationship-oriented (Lin,

1996, chap 8). To emancipate women from repression, Taiwanese feminist criticism

should spotlight on the complex power relations and aim to deconstruct their

operational mechanism. This kind of criticism strategy would not only liberate women

but also benefit men.

Secondly, Confucianism and Chinese patriarchy are, in fact, an intermingled

philosophical system, and it is Confucianism that defines Chinese patriarchy not the

reverse. Therefore, Taiwanese feminists should criticize and challenge the hegemonic

ideology of Confucianism to subvert the root of Chinese patriarchy.

Finally, in Confucian culture, not only women but also men are bonded and

restricted by patriarchal ideology. Therefore, both women and men have the

imperatives to challenge the hegemony of Chinese patriarchy. In the past, there were

several anti-patriarchy movements predominantly led by men. For example, the

influential May Forth Movement began in 1919 had drastically changed the traditional

convention of arranged marriage in China (Lin, 1994). In the 1960s in Taiwan, a public

debate among some critics (also predominantly male) was centered on the issue of

anti-patriarchy. Yet, Lin (1994) sees this trend of anti-patriarchy movement as a "son v.s.

father" contestation and did not contribute to women's emancipation. History tells us

that a successful feminist movement or anti-patriarchy movement must be conducted,

led, and controlled by women. Because of women's marginalized positions, only they

themselves understand their experiences of been repressed. And it is also women's

special positions and experiences that can possibly subvert the foundation of

patriarchal hegemony.

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Appendix

Coding Protocol

#	Tape #	Date	Time Code	Video Title	Signer	Channel	Program Title

Characterization			Dramatic situation/Action	Setting	Notes
A Gender: F M Age: 5 10 20 30 40 50 60 Hero / Villain / Role: Portrayal:	**V** Gender: F M Age: 5 10 20 30 40 50 60 Hero / Villain / Role: Portrayal:	Lyrics:			