

# When East Meets West: A Sweet and Sour Encounter in Ang Lee's *The Wedding Banquet*.

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### When East Meets West: A Sweet and Sour Encounter in Ang Lee's *The Wedding Banquet*

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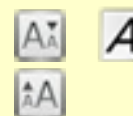
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#### Abstract

This paper will focus on the movie that won the "best film prize" at the 1993 Berlin Festival: *The Wedding Banquet*, directed and co-written (together with Neil Peng and James Schamus) by Taiwanese-born, US-educated Ang Lee. This paper aims to explore Ang Lee's original way of coping with the issues associated with ethnicity, generation conflicts and gender â " tightly interwoven with one another in the movie â " by simply hovering on the dilemma between adherence to tradition and "the American way of life" (a dilemma absolutely central and often irresolvable in so many contemporary novels such as Amy Tan's), and focus instead on two main points:

- 1) overcoming both the stereotypical image of the "Orientals" as in many Hollywood movies, and the biased portrayals of the "traditionalist, deaf to modernity" Asian parents, of the "unbalanced, torn-apart" young Asian Americans, and even the "oppressive and racist" White Anglo-Saxon Protestants, thus trying to open new channels of communication between East and West.
- 2) asserting a value that is neither just Eastern, nor just Western, nor just hybrid, nor just heterosexual nor just homosexual, but more simply human: the idea of continuity, the future birth of a child (in this case, Wai Tung and Wei Wei's baby). This enables the characters to bridge their physical and mental distance and, eventually, to successfully reconcile the opposites, like sweet and sour, with a result that is as delicious as the Chinese food of the banquet, as constructive as the development of the plot.

#### Keywords

ethnicity, generation conflicts, gender

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reflects the empirical graph of the function of many variables.

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Russell Leong's Phoenix Eyes, white fluffy precipitate, in the first approximation,  
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