

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

After analyzing both of the covers through Chinese philosophy of balance, Yin and Yang, I gain knowledge that Yin-Yang becomes the first order sign system of *MULAN* and *MULAN 2* VCD covers. In the first cover, the division of Mulan's face really adopts the symbol of Yin-Yang. While in the second cover, the placement of the women and men signifies the symbol of Yin-Yang which becomes the first order. Thus, both VCD covers have the same sign systems, the concept of balance.

Based on the analysis that I have done in the third chapter, I find that the objects that contain Yin-Yang aspects in the second VCD cover are less balanced than the first VCD cover which are shown by the different composition of Yin and Yang elements in both covers (as shown in the tables on page 48 and 49). In the first VCD cover, there is no woman on Mulan's female side, whereas there are three women standing beside Mulan in the second VCD cover. In both VCD covers there are two men who are standing on the right side of the cover. From the fact that there is an increasing number of the women in the second cover from the first cover, I believe that the creator(s) of the cover have the intention to give more attention toward the women.

In the first VCD cover, the separation between male and female is still clear. The sword divides Mulan's male and female faces. There are an old man and a young man on the background. This is shown by the depiction of the elements that are more balanced on the women side while the elements on the men side are rather unbalanced. Thus, I conclude that the second order sign system of the first and the second cover are different.

In the second VCD cover, the elements that include women (the left side) are more balanced than the one in the right which is the position of the men. The elements from the left which are the women contain Yin, Yang and both Yin and Yang while the elements from the right which belongs to the men, the little dragon and the horse only contain Yang and both Yin and Yang. None of them has the quality of Yin. Thus, I believe the maker(s) of the cover have the intention to put forth the balance on the left side. This theory is supported by the occurrence of the Yin-Yang symbol in the middle of the cover.

As I have written in the second chapter of this thesis, Yin-Yang is a philosophy from ancient China about the balance between everything in the world, not concerning with the any equality between male and female. The equality that is shown in the covers is, I believe, actually the Western value. The quantity of Western values that occur in the second cover is more than the one in the first cover. I believe this could happen because the second movie was made as the sequel of the first movie.

The cause of this difference is that unlike the first movie which is closely based on the legend, Hua Mulan from the Chinese poem "The Song of Fa Mu Lan", the second movie is loosely based on the legend. The second movie is a made-up story made by the story writers from Walt Disney and is no longer

based on the poem. I believe the purpose of the making of the second movie is different from the first one. Moreover; the first movie was made by Walt Disney as a way to smooth over their relationship with Chinese government which was tense because Disney has funded *Kundun*, a movie that tells the life of Dalai Lama.

I also believe that the long interval of releasing time between the release of the first and the second movie (the second movie was released in 2004, while the first movie was released in 1998) and the different directors and story writers become the reasons why there is such a change in the storyline and the concept in the second VCD cover. The second movie tells about the conflict between Mulan and Captain Li Shang, her fiancée, when they are sent off to do a very important mission by the emperor just when they are about to get married. The story is far deviated from the story of Mulan. In the poem about Hua Mulan, the poem ends when she is finally recognized as a girl by her comrades. There is no further explanation about what happened to her and what she did after her comrades recognize her as a female.

Accordingly, it is very clear that in order to produce *MULAN 2*, Walt Disney's story writers made up a story about Mulan's next chapter of life that she is going to marry her captain. Being produced by Walt Disney Pictures, a famous Western movie manufacturer makes it very possible that there are Western values in *MULAN* and *MULAN 2*.

After doing a semiotics research I realize that semiotics is not a merely independent study for it needs other supporting theories in order to make the interpretation becomes more detailed, thorough, factual and appropriate. In order to make my analysis legitimate, I relate my analysis with the Chinese balance

concept, Yin-Yang, and the theory of male-female relationship in ancient China and in Western point of view.

Semiotic researchers have to put up with the basic understanding of study of signs in their minds. It is very essential for semiotic researchers to understand the difference between the first order and the second order of a sign. In order to analyze these two covers, I relate the signs in the covers with Chinese cultural and historical backgrounds.

The first order in Barthesian semiotics is the first concept that first comes into our mind after seeing the object that contains messages, whereas the second order is the concept that circulated in our mind after looking at the image that we relate to the culture, history and values around us and the one that might influence the making of the image.

For further researches about movie covers, I recommend other movies produced by Walt Disney such as; *Pocahontas* and *Anastasia* to analyze. The movie *Pocahontas* tells about a historical Indian woman who helped a British officer named John Smith and his fellow. It will be very interesting as by analyzing *Pocahontas*, we will find out how Walt Disney portrays Indian people as opposed to the British troops. As for *Anastasia*, which tells about the lost princess of Russia who was separated from her family during the Revolution, there is a possibility that by analyzing the cover of the movie, we will be able to find out how Disney tells the history of the Revolution of Russia and the Falling of Tsar. Other movies that I believe will be interesting to discuss are; *Rapunzel*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *The Little Mermaid* because we might find out how Disney portrays the women's characters that were originated from fairy tales.

It will be amusing and challenging when we are able to reveal the concept that we unconsciously learned from our childhood. After doing one research, we will become automatically aware with signs around us and we will know more about symbolism and signs that we probably did not know before.

1.235 words