

Asian Stereotypes: Asian Representation in Hollywood Films

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Abstract

Asian stereotypes in Hollywood films is a topic that always discussed by the public. For decades, the leading roles in Hollywood films are always played by white actors, and the criminal roles are played by actors with colour, such as Asians. Asians are always lack of representation or being portrayed negatively in Hollywood films. However, as time pass by, the representation of Asians started to improve in the 21st century. The purpose of this study was to analyse about the stereotypical images of Asians, understand the relationship between Asian and American characters in Hollywood films, and to explore about how the Asians representation have changed in Hollywood films from 1960s till now. The data was collected by using qualitative research method. Textual analysis was used to conduct the findings, which comprised six selected films namely, *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961), *Sixteen Candles* (1984), *Rush Hour* (1998), *Shanghai Noon* (2000), *The Hangover* (2009), and *Pitch Perfect* (2012).

Keywords

Asian, Stereotypes, Hollywood, Film

Introduction

“Hollywood” is a district in Los Angeles, California, located in northwest of downtown Los Angeles. It is famous as the historical centre of movie studios and movie stars (UKEssays, 2018). Hollywood films are an important medium to dominant culture of the United States and the Western. Hollywood films act as a kaleidoscope that reveals American culture and ideas about the adoption and exclusion of other different cultures. Hence, Hollywood had inclusion of a diverse cast of characters who are come from different backgrounds of race and sexuality in their films. This is the reason why Hollywood films can impact American’s adoption and exclusion of other different cultures. However, the major concern is the inclusion of racial diversity cast had caused a way that people of colour are persistently being misrepresentation and stereotyped on screen, and this had become a topic that always discussed by the public. Actors from minority groups who play roles in films and TV shows are often asked to play stock characters, including maids, gangsters, and side-kicks with no lives of their own (Nadra, 2019). Such racial stereotypes of various ethnicities continue exist from Arab to Asians. Arabs were often depicted as belly dancers, harem girls, and oil sheiks. These stereotypes about Arabs had caused persecution to the Middle Eastern community in United States. *Aladdin*, a Disney movie that is hit in year 1992, have faced protests from Arab groups due to the film depicted the Middle Easterners as barbaric and backward. Besides that, natives American are a diverse racial group with a range of traditions and cultural

backgrounds. However, in Hollywood films they are portrayed as primitive and savage. A movie produced by conservative evangelical Christians, *Alone Yet Not Alone*, promoted the classic “savage” stereotype of native culture, but it featured a white cast in red face for its native characters, instead of casting Native American actors. *The Ridiculous Six*, a Netflix film in 2005 had considered offensive to native women in general and Apache culture in particular, because of Netflix made fun with native female character’s naming, called “Beaver’ Breath” and “No Bra”. It also portrayed other characters as stereotypically uncivilized, squatting and urinating while smoking a pipe (FaxModem1, 2002). Furthermore, Blacks face both positive and negative stereotypes in Hollywood films. If African Americans are depicted as good on screen, it’s usually as “Magical Negro”, such as the character of Michael Clarke Duncan in *The Green Mile*. Traditionally, these character are wise black men with no concerns of their own or desire to improve their status in life. Instead, these character are to help white characters overcome adversity. When if African Americans are not playing second fiddle to whites as maids, best friends, and “Magic Negros”, they are portrayed as gangsters, victims of racial abuse, or people with behavioural problems. Moreover, Latinos may be the largest minority group in the United States, but Hollywood still depicted Hispanics in a narrow way. Viewers of American TV shows and films are more likely to watch Latinos play as maids and gardeners than lawyers and doctors. Hispanics men and women had also been sexualized in Hollywood. Latino men been stereotypes as “Latin Lovers”, while Latinas been characterized as exotic and sensual vamps. Hollywood also portrayed Hispanics as recent immigrants, gang-bangers, and criminals. Lastly is the Asian Stereotypes in Hollywood. Although Asian Americans had lived in the United States for generations, but Hollywood still portrayed Asian speaking broken English and practice “mysterious” customs. Asian women are mostly depicted as “dragon ladies”, dominant women who are sexually attractive for the white men. If is war movies, Asian women will then portray as prostitutes. Asian men, meanwhile, are regularly portrayed as geeks, math whizzes, techies, or as a non-masculine characters. The only time Asian men are depicted as physically threatening is when they are presented as martial artists. Therefore, in this study, the researcher decided to only focus on the Asian Stereotypes happened in Hollywood films.

For decades, leading roles in Hollywood have been played by white actors, whereas criminal film is mostly being dominated by people of colour, for example Chinese people. Asian character were often the villains, especially for Chinese and Japanese men from 1900s to 1940s (Mihori). Moreover, the raise of “yellow peril” images propaganda in United States had influenced American attitudes, and from print media it began to appear in films. Throughout the 1910s to 1940s, Hollywood films had created “Inscrutable Oriental” stereotypes. Asian characters mostly appeared as villains in crime thrillers and mystery films, and it were played by white actors, known as “whitewashing”. Asian American actors never had the chance to played leading roles, but supporting roles such as houseboys, laundry workers, cooks and other characters. Moreover, Hollywood always cast a white star when it came to an Asian leading role. They use exaggerated makeup “yellowface” to represent as Asian character, and it continued in Hollywood into the 1960s and 1970s, which consider as an example of Orientalism. Orientalism is a theory popularized by Edward Said in 1978, which is a term that Europe and Western culture defined itself by creating image of the Orient (Benshoff and Griffin 117). In Marvel’s *Doctor Strange (2016)*, Tilda Swinton plays the *Ancient One*, who is originally a Tibetan monk changed to a white woman for the film (Rose, 2016). Hollywood also had the habit of casting any Asian actor in any Asian role indiscriminately, for example a Chinese actor may play a Korean character, an vice versa. Furthermore, spoke in broken English, had narrow eyes and did evil acts, are also the common way of how Asian characters are portrayed in Hollywood films. Asians are stereotyped as “nerds,” donning glasses and an exaggerated accent, or as Kung Fu masters and killers (Rajgopal, 2010). Asian men are stripped of their masculinity and women are falsely portrayed either as a “dragon

lady” or as “china doll” in Hollywood film. All these stereotypes do not only stay on the screen, but instead spill into how Asians are viewed outside the media, causing cultural and social negative effects and contributing to feelings of inferiority. Thus, in this study, the researcher will cover about how Asian are portrayed in Hollywood films.

When Asians participant in Hollywood films, it always involved racial prejudices and orientalist thinking. Asians always portrayed stereotypically by Hollywood films for decades. Moreover, these stereotypes that portrayed by Hollywood films had influence the perception of American towards Asians. Thus, the researcher hope that this study will let more people to aware about the condition of Asians stereotype, and also the representation of Asians in Hollywood film can be fair and improved in the future.

- 1) To analyse about the stereotypical images of Asians.
- 2) To understand the relationship between Asian and American characters in Hollywood films.
- 3) To explore about how the Asians representation have changed in Hollywood films from 1960s till now.

This research was carried out through qualitative methods with textual analysis. The data was collected from six selected films that contain Asian stereotypes scene/dialogue, which is *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961), *Sixteen Candles* (1984), *Rush Hour* (1998), *Shanghai Noon* (2000), *The Hangover* (2009), and *Pitch Perfect* (2012).

Methodology

In order to satisfy the objectives of the dissertation, a qualitative research was held, and the type of qualitative research method that will be used is textual analysis. Textual analysis is usually used to analyse the content of articles, television shows, films, website or videos. By using textual analysis to analyse and understand the language, content, or structure in texts, it helps the researcher to gain information, describe and interpret the characteristics of the message in the text. Hence, the researcher can understand deeper on the stereotypes that apply on Asian character, and also the relationship between Asian and American character in Hollywood films.

The researcher has decided to use purposive sampling for this research. Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling in which the researcher selects participants that criteria relevant to the research which will help to answer the research questions. As for this research, the researcher had chosen six Hollywood films namely, *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961), *Sixteen Candles* (1984), *Rush Hour* (1998), *Shanghai Noon* (2000), *The Hangover* (2009), and *Pitch Perfect* (2012), based on the following criteria:

1. These Hollywood films should have Asians stereotypes content.
2. These Hollywood films must contain Asian and American characters.
3. These Hollywood films must be popular.

The reason of choosing these six films but not the other films is because these six films contain at least one or more Asian characters that being stereotyped; each of these six films, it contains scenes that American characters describe or speaking racist to the Asian characters; and also these six films contain scenes that had portrayed Asian characters stereotypically. Hence, the researcher decided to analyse these six films in order to get the data that can meet the research objective.

Data Gathering

First, the researcher will create a table to help with the categorization of the data. The table contained the following variables: the characteristics of Asian characters; the stereotypes scene/dialogue; and the relationship between Asian and American characters. These variables and concepts may help the researcher to analyse the Asian characters in each film and how they were portrayed. The table is included in the appendix.

After watching all the six Hollywood films namely, *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961), *Sixteen Candles* (1984), *Rush Hour* (1998), *Shanghai Noon* (2000), *The Hangover* (2009), and *Pitch Perfect* (2012), based on the data gathered, the researcher will compare and analyse the roles of the Asian characters and the Asian stereotypes happened in the films. Then, based on the data of 'stereotypes scene/dialogue' in every films, the researcher will analyse the Asian representation and the Asian stereotypes exist in the six films, then code them into several themes. Moreover, the researcher will also analyse the relationship and interactions of Asian and American characters and the changes of Asian representation in Hollywood films from 1960s till now.

Results and Discussion

Yellow Peril

The phrase "yellow peril" was the start of Asian stereotyping happens in American's media industry. Yellow peril stereotypes viewed Asians as social pariahs, a band of depraved, uncivilized heathens who less than decent and threatened to destroy the American way of life (Alan, 2014). Moreover, Kawai (2005) had stated that due to the large population size of East Asia in United States and the emergence of Asian imperial power, it had evoked a fear among White Americans that the yellow race, which refer to Asians, may overtake the White nation by outnumbering and overpowering the white race. Hence, the American definition of "yellow peril" was consider as a justification for banning Chinese immigrants stay in their country. With this concepts, the images of "yellow peril" propaganda had shape American attitudes, and "yellow peril" started to appear from print media to films.

The most well-known stereotypes are the Fu Manchu and Charlie Chan. This two character were the visual portrayal of East-Asians and it was constructed by orientalist thinking of American. Fu Manchu was presented as a Chinese man who had long mustache, darkly painted and upwardly sloped eyebrows, heavy eyeliner, and long fingernails (Fuller, 2010). Fu Manchu was always being shot in the dark with deep shadows to show his evil and mystery. He was also portrayed as someone who had committed in many monstrous crimes, such as drug smuggling, gambling illegally, raping whit women, and murdering white people. Another stereotype character was Charlie Chan, it was created by Earl Derr Biggers. In a series of film, Charlie Chan is a Chinese American detective and also member of Honolulu police force. He was portrayed as humble, intelligent, benevolent, and honourable, but at the same time Charlie Chan was presented as a model minority who reinforces certain negative Asian stereotypes, such as the so-called inability to speak fluent English, an excessively conventional and subservient existence. The common ground between this two character, which is Fu Manchu and Charlie Chan was never played by an Asian actor. A Swedish actor, Warner Oland was the one who played the roles not only for Fu Manchu, but also as Charlie Chan, and this is what we so-called "whitewashing".

Whitewashing

Whitewashing is the practice of erasing people of colour either through replacing a minority character with a white character, or more commonly with a white actor replacing a minority actor in the portrayal of character of colour (Lowrey W., 2010). In Hollywood film, Asians are depicted mainly as minor or non-recurring character, often defined by their passive nature as traditional and

conservative. Asians character is typically having oriental characteristics such as speak in broken English and low social status. They can only be waiters, visitors, chefs, robbers, gangster, villains, etc. Hence, when it came to an Asians leading role, Hollywood usually cast a white star to replace Asians character. They used exaggerated makeup “yellowface” on a white star to feature in the role of Asians. In the movie *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, the character of a Japanese man was played by an American actor, Mickey Rooney. He wears yellowface makeup and fake teeth to pretend as a Japanese man in the film. The depiction of the character was very offensive and had poor representation of the Japanese and their culture. Moreover, one of the film in 2017 that had whitewashing was the movie *Ghost in the Shell*. This film was an adaptation of a popular Japanese manga (Starling, C.). Scarlett Johansson, who is a white actress played the lead role of a Japanese woman character who called Motoko Kusanagi. As usual, the casting of Scarlett Johansson was the traditional “whitewashing” pattern of Hollywood when it comes to the selection of actors for Asian lead roles.

“Dragon Lady” and “China Doll”

This two term is the stereotypes of Asian women faced in Hollywood film. “Dragon Lady” refers to Asian women who is scheming, seductive, but at the same time is untrustworthy. The first appearance of Dragon Lady stereotypes is in *The Thief of Baghdad (1924)*, a silent film directed by Raoul Walsh. Chinese American actress, Anna May Wong played the role of a Mongol slave to embodied the Dragon Lady stereotype. In the film, the character of Mongol slave girl was depicted as mysterious and inscrutable. Besides that, Anna May Wong also plays this monstrously “masculine” female figure in the film *Daughter of the Dragon*. Despite her love for the white man character, but her character still plots to kill him (Wang, H., 2012). Hence, in this film, the Asian women character was portrayed as scheming, murderous, and worldly beauty who kill coldly and mercilessly (Lee, J., 2018).

The other term “China Doll” refers that Asian women supposed to be sexually active, exotic, overly feminine and eager to please (mahdzan.com). A movie directed by Richard Quine, *The World of Suzie Wong*, had portrayed “China Doll” stereotype. The film was an adaptation of popular novel by Richard Mason. This movie seems like an international romance between Asian women and a white man, but the Asian women character Suzie Wong was depicted as prostitute who sexually attractive and pleasing to white people, and Suzie also portrayed as being submissive, because she gives priority to her man’s desire and is more feminine than an aggressive white woman. Therefore, the difference between “Dragon Lady” and “China Doll” was just Dragon Lady is selfish and brutal, but China Doll is selfless and serving. Both of this stereotype convey the audience that the body of Asian women are used to serve whites. Apart from the stereotype that Asian women faced in Hollywood film, Asian men also faced stereotype too.

Kung Fu Master

In 1970s, the success of Kung Fu film produced in Hong Kong started to enter United States, bringing a shifting perception of gender roles and further inclusion of Asian elements in the mainstream Hollywood. Bruce Lee was the first Asian American male who act as Chinese hero and played leading roles in Hollywood films, following by Jackie Chan, Jet Li, etc. (Yu Feng). *Enter the Dragon*, the first Hong Kong martial art film in 1973 produced in Hollywood studio. In the film, Bruce Lee depicted the leading character who was assertive, physically talented, and smart. This film is does not only introduce Chinese Kung Fu to Western audiences, it also reflected the nationalism and remasculinization of Asian men. It is because throughout that time China suffered institutional racism and imperialism in United States. So the release of *Enter the Dragon* had showed the underclass needs and values and the problem of social injustice. Bruce Lee reconfigured Chinese cultural stereotypes and redefined the effeminate representation of Asian

men in Hollywood films. Filmmakers then used the Kung Fu element in American film market and they used as the characteristics of Asian men character in majority Hollywood films.

Desexualisation

In Hollywood film, White men is always the one who full with requisite romantic and masculine to attract women, but Asian men are always portrayed as threats. In fact, because of subservience to white men social influence, Asian men have been credited as non-masculine and effeminate characteristics. A film in 2009, *The Hangover*, the Asian character Leslie Chow played by Ken Jeong is a mysterious villain. One of the scene in the film, he wears white clothes and pants, a glittering gold track jacket, and glittering women's glasses, he also put some accessories on his finger that make him look mysterious (Mihori). Yet, these costumes made him looks feminine in the film. According to Mihori, Asian men were portrayed as feminine because that they are 'silent' and 'obedient'. They cannot fulfil their roles as 'real men' as white men due to they are 'weak', 'passive' and 'eunuch-like'.

Research Question 1: What are the stereotypes that attributed to Asian characters in Hollywood films?

Theme 1 – Asians cannot speak English

Based on the data collected, there were 4 films out of 6 films has portrayed Asians as they cannot speak English or they speak in broken English. For example, in *Rush Hour (1998)*:

Carter: "Please tell me you speak English."

"I'm Detective Carter! Do you speak any English?"

"Do you understand the words that are coming out of my mouth?"

When Carter (American character played by Chris Tucker) first meet Lee (Asian character played by Jackie Chan), the first thing is to ask Lee that does he speak English. The same scene appears in the film *Pitch Perfect (2012)* too:

Beca: "Hey, you must be Kimmy Jin. I'm Beca."

"No English? Yes English?"

"Just tell me where you're at with your English."

As we can see, in Hollywood films, American character always assume Asian as they do not speak English, but mostly Asian character do know how to speak English, for example:

Lee: "I'm policeman. I'm just showing him how to take a gun from a suspect."

Carter: "All of a sudden you speaking English?"

Lee: "A little."

Carter: "You lied to me."

Lee: "I didn't say I didn't. You assume so."

In *Rush Hour (1998)*, the Asian character played by Jackie Chan, Lee, refuse to answer annoying questions, so Carter automatically assume his Chinese partner as he cannot speak any English. Moreover, in *Pitch Perfect (2012)*, after Beca ask her Chinese roommate did she speak any English, her roommate Kimmy Jin (a cameo Asian character) just ignore her, the reaction of Kimmy Jin is as same as the character, Lee, in *Rush Hour*.

In *Sixteen Candles (1984)*, the Asian character, Long Duk Dong, is a foreign exchange student living with the American character, Samantha's grandparents. He always speaks in broken English and the American characters always like to laugh at him and correct his English:

Long Duk Dong: "Very clever dinner. Appetising food fitting neatly into interesting round pie."

Mike (Samantha's brother): "It's a quiche."

Long Duk Dong: "How do you spell it?"

Fred (Samantha's father): "You don't spell it, son. You eat it."

[LAUGH]

Long Duk Dong: "...pushing the lawn mowing machine so Granpa's 'hyena' don't get disturbed."

Mike (Samantha's brother): "Hernia!"

Theme 2 – Asians are clumsy and weird

When it comes to the negative representations of Asian, Asian character are mostly been portrayed as clumsy or weird in Hollywood film. In *Sixteen Candles (1984)*, the Asian character in this film, Long Duk Dong, has been portrayed negatively, and the American character described him as a weird person:

Mike (Samantha's brother): "He is totally bizarre."

Samantha: "There's a very weird Chinese guy up in Mike's room."

The character, Long Duk Dong in this film have the characteristics of clumsy, weird, and funny throughout the film. He always makes joke of himself every time when he tries to assimilate into American culture. The another example is the Asian character in *Pitch Perfect (2012)* called Lilly Onakuramara, played by Hana Mae Lee. Lilly is shy, quirky, and weird in the film. She speaks extremely soft throughout the film and her team member can barely hear her:

Lilly: "Hello. My name is Lilly Onakuramara. I have gills like a fish."

Aubrey (one of the team member): "I'm sorry. What was that?"

Lilly: "What happen last year?"

Chloe (one of the team member): "What are you saying?"

Lilly: "What happen last year?"

"And do you guys wanna see a dead body?"

Lilly: "Thank God. I asked to go to the bathroom three hours ago."

Aubrey (one of the team member): "Nothing. I hear Nothing."

Besides than speaking softly, what she speaks is also weird:

Lilly: "I set fires to fuel joy."

Lilly: "I ate my twin in the womb."

Also, after the researcher analysed these six films, the researcher found out that when the Asian character act weirdly or clumsy, they always disliked by the American character.

Theme 3 – Asians are always disliked/disrespected by Americans

The researcher realise that no matter the Asian character is portrayed negatively or positively in the film, they are always disliked or disrespected by the American character. For example, in the film *Shanghai Noon (2000)*, the characteristics of Chon Wang is considered as positive, but still, there is a scene that his partner, Roy, had said the following dialog and bring out a message that there is a gap between Asian and American and both of them cannot be friend. Although is just a short scene, but it is racist:

Roy: "He's not my friend, you know. I mean, he's a Chinaman."

The other example is *Rush Hour (1998)*, the characteristics of the Asian character, Lee, is positive. He is persevering and honourable man in this film. However, during an auctions, his partner, Carter, had said the following dialog and disrespect the Asian culture:

Carter: "The Buddha would go good in my bathroom."

Lee: "Hey, this is the history of my country, priceless pieces of Chinese culture."

If the Asian character is portrayed negatively in the film, the American character will disrespect them even more. For example, ignore the Asian character:

Mr Yunioshi: "Miss Golightly, I protest! You cannot go on and keep ringing my bell. You disturb me!"

Mr Yunioshi: "Miss Golightly, once again, I must protest! If you don't stop that phonograph right this minute, I'm going to call the police department!"

Mr Yunioshi: "Miss Golightly, this time I am warning you. I am definitely this time going to calling the police!"

Mr Yunioshi: "Miss Golightly, this time I'm not only calling the police, but the fire department and the New York State Housing Commission, and, if necessary, the Board of Health!"

The Asian character, I.Y. Yunioshi, in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) keep complaining throughout the film, every time when he show up in the film is to warn the American character, Holly Golightly, that he will call the police. However, Miss Golightly ignore him every time and did not care about what he said. Moreover, in *Sixteen Candles* (1984), the Asian character, Long Duk Dong also disliked by the American character. Mike said the following dialog to his mom:

Mike: "I just hope you burn the sheets and mattresses after he leaves."

Besides than described Long Duk Dong as weird, the American character also disliked him and did not want to accept him. The other Asian character that disliked by the American character was Mr Leslie Chow in the film *The Hangover* (2009). Mr Leslie Chow is an antagonist and international criminal in this film. He acts like sissy and what he said in this film is very nasty. Hence, the American character disliked him:

Doug (one of the American character): "He is a mess."

After the researcher analysed the six selected films, these three themes are what the researcher had concluded about the Asian stereotype.

How are the relationships between Asian and American characters are portrayed in Hollywood films?

I.Y. Yunioshi and Holly Golightly

The relationship between the Asian character, I.Y. Yunioshi, and the American character, Holly Golightly, in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) is hostile. Mr. Yunioshi lives upstairs of Miss Golightly, together in a same apartment. Throughout the film, Mr. Yunioshi only appears a few times, and he is mainly a killjoy for Miss Golightly. Their primary relationship includes Miss Golightly routinely buzzing his door bell because she frequently forgets her keys. Also, Mr. Yunioshi is characterized as man who is either working or resting because when Miss Golightly buzz his door bell, he admonishes her with his Japanned broken English that do not disturb him, he is an artist and he need rest. The reason why he is a killjoy for Miss Golightly is due to every time she is enjoying life, Mr. Yunioshi will complain her. For example, he calls the authorities to break up the loud party in her apartment, because the party is too loud and it disturbs him. Mr. Yunioshi is portrayed negatively in this film, and each scene that he appears, he is mostly complaining Miss Golightly, but Miss Golightly ignore his complain. Hence, the relationship between I.Y. Yunioshi and Holly Golightly is bad.

Long Duk Dong and Samantha's Family

The relationship between Asian character, Long Duk Dong, and the lead American character in *Sixteen Candles* (1984) is not good. Long Duk Dong is an Asian foreign exchange student hosted by Samantha's grandparents. Within this film, Samantha's family treats him with contempt. Samantha's little brother said he is a bizarre person, and complains about he is sleeping under a Chinaman named after a duck's dork. Moreover, he was also portrayed in a humiliated position in this film, which he always makes jokes of himself and Samantha's family always laughs at him. There was a dinner scene in this film which all the family members staring at him as he eats. Long

Duk Dong feels afraid as they stared at him like he is an alien from another planet. In their conversation, it reveals how his host parents treat him. They treat him as a cheap labour, make him to mow the lawn due to grandpa had hernia, wash dishes, and do laundry. Hence, the relationship between Long Duk Dong and Samantha's family is full of disparaging and mocking.

Mr. Leslie Chow and Phil, Alan, Stu, and Doug

The film *The Hangover* (2009) is about four friends, Phil, Alan, Stu, and Doug going out to Vegas for bachelor party due to Doug is getting married soon. However, they end up forgetting what happen in the first night and they also losing their friend, Doug. They meet the Asian character, Mr. Leslie Chow when they are looking for Doug. Mr. Leslie Chow revealed that he had caught their friend, Doug, and warned them to find money, or Doug will be killed. But end up, Mr. Leslie Chow had taken their ransom money but the Doug caught by Mr. Leslie Chow is not their friend. Mr. Leslie Chow then tell them it was not his fault and insult them as he leaves. Hence, the relationship of Mr. Leslie Chow and those American characters are hostile.

Lee and James Carter

The relationship between Asian character, Lee and American character, James Carter in *Rush Hour* (1998) is changing from hostile to friendly. Lee is a detective inspector in Hong Kong. One day, the daughter of a Chinese council Han who is only 10 years old being kidnapped. Council Han would like to have one of his people to help, which is Lee. But FBI does not want help from other people, so they send Carter. Carter's assignment is to keep Lee out of sight and away from danger. Yet, Carter discontent with it and he act unfriendly to Lee when they first meet. Also due to the exclusion of FBI, they have common goal, and they want use their own strength to save the girl. Hence, they started to discuss about music and their father, and they started to be friendly. Moreover, in one of the scene when they intend to go into a restaurant that may have danger, Carter volunteers to take the lead. This action means that Carter wants to protect Lee. But Lee says he just waits for five minutes, which means Lee likewise worry about Carter. Eventually, with the happens of crisis over and over again, they slowly develop a tacit understanding, and even become partners.

Chow Wang and Roy

The relationship of Asian character, Chon Wang and American character, Roy in *Shanghai Noon* (2000) is also changed from hostile to friendly. Chon Wang is the imperial guard of the Forbidden city of China. One day, he follows his uncle as a baggage carrier together with three of the best imperial guards to rescue Princess Pei Pei that had been kidnapped to Nevada. The first meet of Chon Wang and Roy is on a train. The reason of their hostile relationship is because Roy rob the train and causes Chon Wang lost the gold that use as ransom to save Princess Pei Pei. Then, Chon Wang enters a small town and meets Roy again in a tavern and stirred up a brawl. Two of them are sent to prison, and they share stories with each other. Tempted by mention of the gold ransom, Roy offers to help Chon Wang to find the princess. Throughout the process of finding Princess Pei Pei, they become more friendly, Roy teaches Chon Wang how to become a cowboy, and they even play weird drinking contest while sharing adjacent bathtubs. End up, they found Princess Pei Pei who wish to stay in Nevada, and they were reward with some ransom gold.

Lilly Onakuramara and her team

The relationship between Asian character, Lilly Onakuramara and her team, the Barden Bellas in *Pitch Perfect* (2012) can be considered as friendly. In the film, Lilly was a new member of the Barden Bellas. During the audition, the leader of Barden Bellas, Aubrey constantly says that she cannot hear Lilly's voice, but end up Lilly was able to join the team. Moreover, although Lilly's

characteristics in this film is shy and quiet, but in one of the scene, the lead American character, Beca, was arrested for destruction of property after the semi-finals, Lilly together with other Bellas waited for her in her room. During the confessions, Lilly was one of the characters who revealed something to the group. Besides that, there was a scene that Lilly was the only one who attempted to stop the fought between Aubrey, Chloe, and Fat Amy, but she failed miserably and fell into a puddle of Aubrey's vomit. Hence, even though Lilly act weird in the team, but her relationship with the Barden Bellas are still friendly.

Has the Asians representation in Hollywood films changed over time?

For decades, Asians had faced different kind of stereotypes and the lack of representation in Hollywood film. Until the release of *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018), the representation of Asians had finally come to a success. Before *Crazy Rich Asians*, it had been 25 years since the world saw a predominantly Asian cast in Hollywood Films, *The Joy Luck Club* (1993). In the year 2018, there were a large increase in the amount of Asian representation, Hollywood's first movie with all Asian cast had release, which is *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018). *Crazy Rich Asians* (2018) is a moving, sweet, beautifully filmed romantic comedy depicting a modern Asian diaspora whose primary language is English. In addition, a Netflix film in 2019, *Always Be My Maybe*, is also a film that composed almost entirely of Asian characters. This film had marks another step pop culture representation of Asians, because the central tensions of the characters are not inherently related to their Asian backgrounds, and it may happen in any romantic comedy. But it does not ignore the Asian culture and heritage, this film had acknowledging their importance in the lives of the characters. Moreover, *Always Be My Maybe* (2019) contains some speciality, particularly in the use of food that will let Asian or Asian American audiences feel familiar, such as the kid versions of Sasha and Marcus eating Pocky while hang out. This film has subverted many of the stereotypes and tropes that applied to Asians, and it makes Asians feel seen in subtle yet powerful ways. In overall, the representations of Asians had been improving from 1960s until now, hopefully there will be many more diverse and stereotype-free films being produced in the Hollywood film industry in the future.

The objectives of this research was to analyse about the stereotypical images of Asians, to understand the relationship between Asian and American characters in Hollywood films, and to explore about how the Asians representation have changed in Hollywood films from 1960s till now. Based on the findings and analysis, it can be concluded as Asian stereotypical images in Hollywood films are changing, and the representations of Asian in Hollywood films are improving over time. But there are some Asian stereotypes still existing in current Hollywood films. Based on the findings that the researcher has analysed, the Asian representation in Hollywood films is improving over time. In the past, Asians are mostly being portrayed negatively in Hollywood films, such as I.Y.Yunioshi in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961), and Long Duk Dong in *Sixteen Candles* (1984). Yet in the 21st century, Asians are considered as respected "model minority", the representation of Asian in Hollywood films has finally got better, especially after the release of *Crazy rich Asians* in year 2018. It seems like Asians are finally getting to achieve the fair representation in the Hollywood film industry and also the media industry. However, the researcher does not think that way.

In the year 2019, United States and China had some conflict. The tensions have been mounting for some times, starting with carriers withdrawing from deals to provide Huawei phones, then escalating to full-blown trade bans, and the unprecedented revocation of Huawei's Android license. With the cut off of Huawei from Google's official Android licensing program, the company's future is lagging behind, and it had created uncertainty for Chinese business in US due to the US President Donald Trump's trade war. Furthermore, since the outbreak of Covid-19 in

the year 2020, Asians have been against and attacked throughout the United States. The Covid-19 virus originated in China, and many people blame the Chinese for bringing the virus to the whole world. Also, the US President Donald Trump use the term “Chinese virus” and “Wuhan virus” as the name of the pandemic, then it had encouraged the hate crimes, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and anti-Asian in the US society.

The reason the researcher mentions about these two incidents is because although the representation of Asian in Hollywood films is improving, but it may affect by the media anytime. The racial discrimination in US is being serious in these two years, hence the future of Asian in United States is still uncertain. It may be even serious or it may be better in the future. To conclude, the racial discrimination and Asian stereotypes will always be the drawback for Asians in America, the way of portray and the representation of Asian in Hollywood films will always affect by the media and also the society.

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