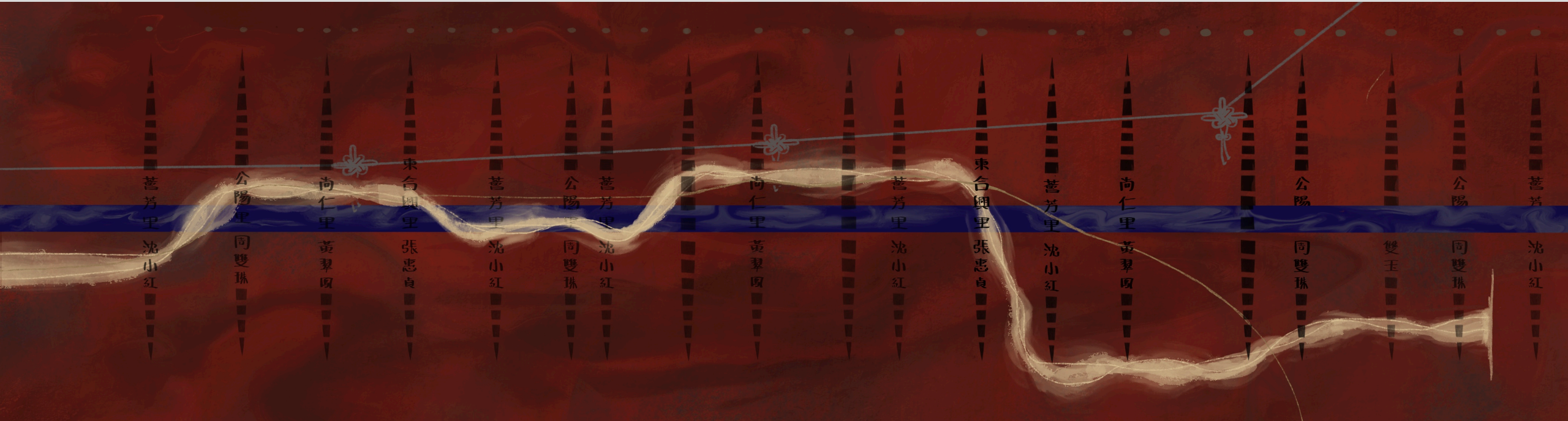
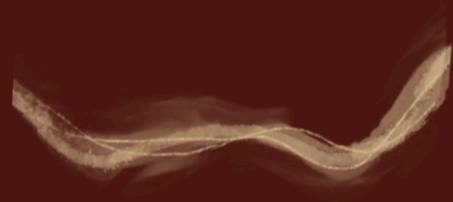


TY LOK YI: " THE FOLDING SCREEN (PICTOGRAM FOR HOU HSIAO-HSIEN: *FLOWERS OF SHANGHAI* (1998))"

PICTOGRAM



MAP LEGEND



Wang and Crimson



Hong and Pearl



Emerald



Enclave of the courtesans

party



times that the camera change



Jasmin

THE MAP

Flowers of Shanghai is a film directed by Hou Hsiao-Hsien, adapted from a book which translates by Eileen Chang. The film is about the life of courtesans and their relationship with their patrons Shanghai. The film shows the beautiful traditional Chinese elements by long shot, which is a unique way of shooting film. All the shots are shot indoor in different houses of the courtesans and a dissolve in between each shot as if a book is turning to another page or a landscape unfold in front of our eyes. Therefore the map is in a landscape form to match the slow rhythm of the movie from start to the end. The ordinary act by long shots in a restrained manner and the oil light lighting presents an ambiguous, quiet atmosphere in the film, with the exquisite visual setting making the whole film like a Chinese painting. But under this calm atmosphere and the dreamy visual contains the power struggle and tentative undertone. The relationship between courtesans and patron is not only fun and love. The courtesans seem pampered but everthing are in fact based on the economic support of the patron. On the other hand, this relationship base on money may turn to jealousy and the courtesans can use these feelings to manipulate the patron. Therefore the relationship is complex but weak like the castle in the air. I try to use a dark traditional Chinese style color to be the background of the map with liquid flow pattern to represent these intrigue beneath the surface and the depressed undertone. Therefore the background looks like some thick, slow-flowing substance.

The relationship between Wang and crimson are represent by a light color smoke and two crossing lines. As their relationship are the main plot in the movie, they are conspicuous on the map. Their relation is illusory but entangled. Wang cannot get the love from crimson and his emotion are dominated by her. While crimson don't love wang but needs his love and money until wang found that Crimson is cheated on him and stops the economic support for crimson.

We can see both of them dominate part of the relationship and their love is a mirage. The line represents their relationship going up and down in the film and eventually end as Wang are leaving Shanghai. In their line, we can see a humble dim golden line as it represents Jasmin in the movie. Jasmin is just a bargaining chip in the Wang and Crimson relationship. Wang uses Jasmin to call attention from Crimson and try to make her angry. But it does not mean Jasmin is doing no trick, she successfully triggers Wang to find out Crimson being unfaithful. However, she has been abandoned by Wang as she is cheating too and drop out of the map.

The blue straight line would be Pearl and Master Hong. They are both the mediator in their group of people. Both of them are being tranquil and appease the conflict in the movie. They are clever and have a more peaceful relationship among others. They interspersed everyone in the whole movie therefore they are in the middle of the map cross everyone lines and the middle position also represents an equilibrium metaphor. Also, their line is straight and clear with calm blue color.

The pale blue knot would be Emerald, she is a clever woman which help herself to be free, every scene of her is how she negotiates with her 'auntie' without getting fooled. Step by step she successfully buys herself freedom and every shot you can see she get closer to her goal so that I use a knot to represent her steadily step and each knot represents her scene. At last she leave the flower house so her line also leave the map.

There is some black line on the map as it represents every time the film change to a different room of the courtesans as I think this is an important element of the film. Every room has its own story under the clam ordinary move. The women are always in the room waiting for the men to come and their trick physically limited in the house while emotionally crossing the whole film and connected the different places and time. The golden dot on the top would be the times that the director changes his shot. The shot is close as if the viewer is part of the movie looking at the people's life, dissolves in the environment of the film.

The title of the pictogram is the folding screen, as Eileen Chang has claimed that women are just like the embroidery on the folding screen. They are exquisite and glamorous but can never leave the folding screen. The film is just like the folding screen capture the women with poetic beautiful visual, unfolding the story softly to the viewer. But the character on the folding screen cannot leave their delicate house and can only be elegant inside this little space.