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A Cinema of Attachment: Individuality, Community and Authenticity

“Individualistic” capitalism perpetuates the malaise of disenchantment. Meanwhile as the individual broke free from any external sources of authority and emerged as a sovereign subject, the plights of meaninglessness and nihilism persist. This paper examines a “cinema of attachment”, films which focus on collective memory, instill a unique aesthetic of the calm, ordinary and local in their portrayals of everyday life and oftentimes depict the community as a significant source of empowerment. Through comparing these films with Pierre Nora’s idea of *milieux de mémoire*, I argue how they represent a contemporary yearning for attachment yet lack a critical reflection on the tension between individuality and collectivity. By drawing on Charles Taylor’s ethics of authenticity, I argue for a reenchantment account through establishing an individual self in the communal.

Films for discussion:

Ann Hui’s *The Way We Are* (2008)

Yojiro Takita’s *Departures* (2008)

Wei Te-Sheng’s *Cape No.7* (2008)

Mamoru Hosoda’s *Summer Wars* (2009)