

Chapter Two
Disciplinary power of Media and Transnational Corporations
in *Hotel Rwanda* and *Sometimes in April*

Based on Rwandan genocide, Terry George's *Hotel Rwanda* and Raoul Peck's *Sometimes in April* both focus on relations between the West and genocide.¹ *Hotel Rwanda* is based on a real story of Paul Rusesabagina and it is often compared with *Schindler's List* by most film critics.² It describes the heroic action of Paul Rusesabagina who saves 1,200 lives in the hotel he manages after the Western countries evacuate from Rwanda. *Sometimes in April* depicts the breakup of two brothers, Augustin Botera and Honore Botera, and their reunion in a criminal tribunal. Using flashbacks to represent genocide in 1994, this film emphasizes intervention and withdrawal of the Western countries in the mass killing.

Both films indicate that Rwandan genocide is caused by the Western countries. Firstly, it is the colonial policy of Belgium that inaugurated conflicts in Rwanda. The Belgians had ruled Rwanda for three decades and they preferred the Tutsis to the Hutus. They gave the Tutsis higher social status and political power that arouse rage of the Hutus and then resulted in the feud between two tribes. Secondly, the United States intervenes in the peace talk between two tribes. Its engagement had made the Hutu army uneasy, resulted in the assassination of the Rwandan president whose plane was shot down by a rocket launcher of the Hutu army, and brought the following genocide.³ Thirdly, the Western countries supply Rwanda with military equipments that make genocide unable to be stopped. In *Sometimes in April*, the

colonel Bagasora appreciates military supply from France: “Thanks to the support of our French friends, we have Kalashnikovs from Albania. Israel Uzis. Czech grenades. M-16 rifles from the U.S.A. Guns and ammo from Egypt. Machetes are from China.” At least one million civilians are massacred by these weapons in genocide. And fourthly, the evacuation of the Western countries leaves civilians unprotected and to some extent it encourages the militias to massacre civilians. In *Hotel Rwanda*, Paul is told that the militias will take over the Hutu army and the Western army soon. In *Sometimes in April*, the militias appear immediately to massacre civilians after the UN convoys disappear at the end of the road.

Instead of identifying political and military factors of the genocide, this chapter is to investigate how Rwandan genocide exposes disciplinary power of the Western countries in both films. Disciplinary power is a Foucauldian term referring to a power of manipulation that is “a policy of coercions that act upon the body, a calculated manipulation of its elements, its gesture, its behaviour” (Foucault 138). I argue that disciplinary power of the West is transformed at the end of the twentieth century. Instead of manipulating one’s actions, new disciplinary power advances to change one’s daily life and perspectives.

In the films, new disciplinary power of the West is accomplished in two approaches: the media and the transnational corporations. The media displays more omnipotent surveillance power than space of panopticon does. With the media, the West is not only able to supervise all the incidents taking place in Rwanda but also

able to influence the Rwandans' perspectives of their own sufferings. On the other hand, the transnational corporations satisfy the need of Rwandans in their economic development and they cross the geographical boundaries. I will focus on the Belgium-invested hotel, the Mille Collines in these two films, because hotel represents a capitalist mode of production and space. As seen in the films, hotel introduces a global imagination, the idea of capital accumulation, and a concept of service to Rwanda. All of these (re)shape Rwandan' understanding of capitalism, power and privilege. Investigating new disciplinary power, I advance to discuss its contradictions to show how the media and transnational corporations expose their own ignorance and dilemma when they deal with warfare in Rwanda. These two films, which represent contradictions of disciplinary power, are to condemn the role of the West rather than war violence itself.

This chapter is composed of four parts. The first part is to discuss transformation of disciplinary power of the West. In the films, the Rwandans are awed by the Western countries. I suggest that the Western countries exhibit a disciplinary power in their manipulations of Rwanda and such disciplinary power has been transformed. From the colonial period to the twentieth century, the Western countries penetrate into daily life of the Rwandans, influencing their life style and thinking in different ways. In the second part, I will examine the roles of the media and transnational corporations to suggest that these two objects help the Western countries to maintain its ruling in life of the Rwandans and even make their influences more

pervasive in the local life. My purpose is to address contradictions of disciplinary power in the next section to show dilemma of the West. I think that *Hotel Rwanda* and *Sometimes in April* draw our attentions to the role of West and help us to contemplate warfare itself. In the last section, I would like to reread poem of Martin Luther King, Jr. quoted in *Sometimes in April* to explain new relations between the West and the genocide.

Exhibitions of Disciplinary Power

Disciplinary power is a power to discipline an individual by internalizing disciplines into one's thinking and his behaviors. It first appeared in Michael Foucault's *Discipline and Punishment: The Birth of the Prison* when he discussed the concept of discipline.

What was then being formed was a policy of coercions that act upon the body, a calculated manipulation of its elements, its gesture, its behaviour. The human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it. A "political anatomy," which was also a "mechanics of power," was being born; it defined how one may have a hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines (Foucault 138).

Foucault regards disciplinary power as a power that will manipulate one's body and will. It was originally to train the individuals to make them work efficiently and then to achieve purposes of controlling the will of the individuals who "may not do what one wishes but operate as one wishes" (138). Disciplinary power is such an imperceptible force that changes one's behavior and thinking unconsciously. We can

only detect it in one's reliance or awe to something or discover it in strategies of manipulation.

In the films, the Rwandan's awe and reliance to the Western countries reveal that the West has disciplined civilians' thinking. To civilians, the Western countries are not only a supervisor but also a protector. In *Hotel Rwanda*, Paul persuades his wife's brother and his family to stay in Kigali where the Western armies encamp, "The United Nations are here now. The world press is watching. The peace has been signed. Let this process work." In *Sometimes in April*, Augustin's neighbor also comforts his wife by saying, "At least the UN is here." To civilians, the West symbolizes a surveillance power that will cease conflicts and ensures the safety of most civilians. They are convinced of the effectiveness of intervention from the Western armies which can impose sanctions to stop rebels and protect victims. So in *Sometimes in April*, Augustin seeks for his white neighbors' help because his family feels safer with them. In *Hotel Rwanda*, the militias do not dare to attack the UN soldiers even when they learn that soldiers will not shoot them. To civilians, they can never challenge the Western countries no matter they are western inhabitants or the western armies.

Like civilians, officers are also awed by the Western countries. In *Sometimes in April*, the U.S. minister Bushnell asks colonel Bagasora to stop genocide. She warns Bagasora, "If you do not stop the killing, there will be consequences." But he answers provokingly, "Really? You will send the Marines? We have no oil here, we have no

dams, we have nothing you need in Rwanda. Why would you come?” Bushnell’s words silence him and force him to agree with the decision, “If you do not cease the killings...I promise you, you will be held personally responsible.” The warning, “you will be held personally responsible,” threatens Bagasora because it targets at his life. The fear to be targeted at is also shown in *Hotel Rwanda*. Like Bagasora, the General Bizimungu in *Hotel Rwanda* is warned that he is “marked” by the West. Paul tells him that “You are on a list. The Americans have you on their list as a war criminal.” To officers, their greatest fear is to be regarded as an enemy or a problem by the Western countries. Their anxiety towards the West is related to the fear towards political sanctions which is able to deprive them of their rights of self-defense and is hosted by the Western countries. In *Hotel Rwanda*, Paul tells Bizimungu that he is the one who can help him:

Are you stupid, General? How do you think these people operate? You sit here with five stars on your chest. Who do you think they are coming after? Who will tell them? You need me to tell them how you helped at the hotel. They blame you for all their misfortunes. They say you led the massacres.

Paul’s argument banks on the power of civilians’ testimony in the trial. To the western countries, civilians will be easily regarded as victims whose words are more trustworthy than the others. Political leaders and officers have to bear all the accusations whether they have been involved with wars or not. In addition, Paul’s remarks reveal the strategy of the Western countries in dealing with warfare, that is, one’s political identity will decide his relationship with wars. Like what Paul says to Bizimungu, “You sit here with five stars on your chest. Who do you think they are

coming after?" the Western countries will target at those with political status rather than common people.

Officers' anxiety towards the West is carried out not only by political sanctions but also by civilians. In *Hotel Rwanda*, it is Paul that convinces Bizimungu of surveillance of the Western countries and then terrifies him. Paul's success in persuasion indicates disciplinary power of the West that has permeated into civilians' life and influenced their thinking deeply. Disciplinary power is to make one "not do what one wishes but operate as one wishes" (Foucault 138). In the film, the Western countries do not impose threats by themselves. Instead, civilians will do the job for them. The reliance on the Western authority disciplines civilians unconsciously and makes them regard the West power as the only solution to the problems. To convince Bizimungu of surveillance of the United States, Paul tells him that the Americans will use satellites to watch everything in Rwanda. But after Paul tells his wife about his trick, her first response is, "Satellites?" Then Paul explains, "What was I going to say, that the Americans were hiding in the trees?" Paul's conversation with his wife expresses that the name of the Western countries are more threatening and powerful to the Rwandans than the technology. It is not surveillance of satellites that haunts Bizimungu; instead, it is the authority of the United States that threatens him. To Bizimungu, Paul, and Paul's wife, satellites are something they can't identify or see by their naked eyes but the Western countries are something they shall be afraid of. Their fear to the West power is intensified by each other. In awe of the Western

countries, civilians not only believe in political manipulation of the Western countries but also convince the officers of the West. Officers who have been uncertain and anxious about the West are persuaded by civilians to yield to the West to avoid any possible sanctions. Instead of imposing threats on their own, the Western countries display a disciplinary power in the films that they can make the Rwandans not do what they wish but operate as they wish.

Disciplinary power of the West can be traced back to the Rwandan history. During the colonial period, the Western countries bring their customs and manners into Rwanda and change its tribal life. In *Sometimes in April*, the film describes the arrival of colonists and their occupation of Rwanda in three continuous shots. In the first shot, the Germans arrive in Rwanda and shake hands with the king who looks bewildered and stretches his hand cautiously. Next, one Belgian is doing census of the Rwandans to identify if he is a Hutu or a Tutsi. He measures the nose and eyeball of a local inhabitant in order to give him a new identity card. In the last shot, a Belgian general is walking down the accommodation ladder and is welcomed by the Rwandan troops. The three shots not only introduce the colonial history in Rwanda but also indicate disciplinary power of the West. Rwanda has been ruled by Germany and Belgium for sixty years.⁴ Under governance of the West, the Rwandans are forced to learn the Western manners and customs that replace their own culture. The handshake, census, and parade inspection are “a policy of coercions that act upon the body, a calculated manipulation of its elements, its gesture, its behaviour” (Foucault 138). In

the film, the Rwandans are taught to shake hands forcibly. The colonist stretches his hand to the king who refuses to respond at first, and then the colonist grasps the king by his hand and presses him to shake hands. The colonist's body language reveals his intention of enslaving the Rwandans. Instead of courtesy, the handshake is a forcible gesture that compels local people to learn the Western manners and to be disciplined. The census is another strategy to discipline the Rwandans. In the film, the eyeball chart reveals an intention to standardize the biological differences of the Rwandans. The chart which makes a record of the forms and colors of eyeballs on it is used in the racial classification. It is a calculated manipulation that rebuilds one's identity and affects his self-identification. The parade inspection implies military disciplines which train soldiers to stand erect and make them obedient, and it also addresses the political governance of colonists.

Manipulation of the West still continues after Rwanda is independent in 1945. Western manners and customs penetrate into daily life of civilians and start to change their life styles. In *Hotel Rwanda*, Paul lives in a life similar to the bourgeoisie in Europe. He lives in a house of beautiful front courtyard where his children play hula hoop and the jump rope. He always wears in a formal suit and often gives chocolate to his children as a gift. At night, his children will draw pictures with crayons while he and his wife drink champagne with the guests. And in *Sometimes in April*, students are fond of the western culture. They either play soccer or listen to the hip-pop to dance with the music. Compared to colonial age, manipulation of the West becomes more

pervasive but less forcible. There are no policies to force civilians to change their life.

On the contrary, civilians take this new life style for granted and live happily. Like what Paul says in *Hotel Rwanda*, “Wine, chocolates, cigars, style...I swallowed it. I swallowed all of it,” the western culture becomes what the Rwandan desires for.

Disciplinary Power of Media and Transnational Corporations

In the films, the media and transnational corporations explain why the West can keep and expand its influences on the Rwandans. The media and transnational corporations are new disciplinary powers. Foucault considers that disciplinary power is done in a space with proper techniques. He takes the prison in the 19th century as an example to explain how a space works with techniques to discipline the individual. He describes the space as a cellular enclosure (156).

Its aim was to establish presences and absences, to know where and how to locate individuals, to set up useful communications, to interrupt others, to be able at each moment to supervise the conduct of each individual, to assess it, to judge it, to calculate its qualities or merits. It was a procedure, therefore, aimed at knowing, mastering and using. Discipline organizes an analytical space (Foucault 143).

The functions of disciplinary space are very similar to the media. Their aims are both to supervise, to assess, and to judge the communications. They are also able to locate the individuals, to set up or interrupt the communications, and to do the calculations.

Briefly, the media is also a kind of disciplinary power. In *Hotel Rwanda*, Paul tells the general that the Americans can watch everything taking place in Rwanda. “How?

They have gone, Paul,” the general says. “With their spies. Satellites,” Paul answers.

The satellite can discover what is taking place and help to assess the situations. New

media technology covers a more pervasive and omnipotent space. It can detect what one's naked eye can not see and deliver the messages immediately. In other words, the media declares a new disciplinary power that is going to discipline the individuals in new ways.

Like the media, transnational corporations are another new disciplinary power. In the films, transnational corporations refer to the Mille Collines which is a subsidiary hotel in Rwanda with its parent corporations is in Belgium. The hotel brings the concept of service to Rwanda and the service reveals many new disciplinary techniques. To Foucault, the disciplinary techniques include the use of time table, the temporal elaboration of the act, and the correlation of the body and the gesture (149-152).⁵ They are training skills, and their purpose is to keep the individual energetic and to enhance his efficiency in the works. Foucault considers that the concept of discipline is different from the service which is a master-servant relation rather than a disciplinary power.

They (the disciplines) were different, too, from 'service', which was a constant, total, massive, non-analytical, unlimited relation of domination, established in the form of the individual will of the master, his 'caprice' (137).

The hotel the Mille Collines also provides services to its guests. But its services are not what Foucault recognizes. On the contrary, the hotel services are much like the concept of discipline. The hotel staffs are well-organized and hierarchical and each one is in charge of his job. The porters carry packages for customers; the catering prepares food and drink; and the manager makes small talks with customers to relieve

them. The hotel is like a beehive in which all the working bees are working diligently. Its purpose is to accumulate more capital and to seek for profit maximization. Rather than a master-servant relation, the hotel brings the concept of service to Rwandans and teaches them a new mode of production.

The films indicate manipulation of the Western countries which restrict the freedom of the press and intervene in the development of the transnational corporations. In *Hotel Rwanda*, the journalists have to be evacuated with the Western inhabitants when the massacre begins. They can not stay in war zones but acquire the war news from government. In *Sometimes in April*, the journalists can not interview Rwanda by themselves but learn the news from officials. The transnational corporations are also confined to the nation states. In *Hotel Rwanda*, all the Western staffs in the hotel are evacuated. David Harvey explains that nation-states will intervene in the industries when it is in emergency.

And, of course, when it comes to struggles over hegemony, colonialism, and imperial politics, as well as over more mundane aspects of foreign relations, the state has long been and continues to be the fundamental agent in the dynamics of global capitalism. (Harvey 92)

Transnational corporations are controlled by nation-states which are “the fundamental agent in the dynamics of global capitalism” (92). This possibly can explain why the Belgian investor can contact government officials and force them into actions in *Hotel Rwanda*. The media and transnational government are not independent from nation-states. On the contrary, they are under control of their own governments.

In *Sometimes in April*, satellite photos reveal strategies of surveillance and

manipulation of the Western countries in Rwanda. In this film, the U.S. officials get satellite photos which show the freshly dug mass graves in Kigali. Those photos show developments of media technology and its omnipotent surveillance power. By the satellite, the Western countries can detect what they want to see without being discovered or attacked. The satellite can have a close-up of any objects from the outer space and then transfer the images back to the Earth. So it is difficult to discover or shoot down the satellite because it is too high to be found. The surveillance strategy of satellite is similar to the central tower of panopticon for they both supervise in an imperceptible way. Foucault considers that the central tower of the panopticon presents a “visible but unverifiable” power:

Visible: the inmate will constantly have before his eyes the tall outline of the central tower from which he is spied upon. Unverifiable: the inmate must never know whether he is being looked at any one moment; but he must be sure that he may always be so. (201)

The central tower haunts the individuals because they will never know if they are looked at now. In the panopticon, “visibility is a trap” (200). Its purpose is to turn the individuals into self-discipline. Compared with the presence of central tower, satellite is absent and unable to be seen. The unseen satellite points out changed manipulation of the Western countries which conceal their direct threats to the others to further continue their dominance.

In addition to surveillance, the media can penetrate into civilians’ daily life to effectively influence their opinions. It has been argued that people in the underdeveloped countries have no access to the mass media. “The capacity for

distributing messages is severely limited and centralized” (Carruthers 202). Only the inhabitants in the developed countries have privileges of acquiring information. Those in the underdeveloped countries are alienated and unaware of their situations. But in the films, life of the Rwandans is deeply influenced by the mass media, especially by radio. In *Hotel Rwanda*, all the militias and civilians carry radios with them. The militias listen to the radio to massacre the next target while civilians escape from the militias according to the radio broadcast. Radio in *Sometimes in April* educates its audience about the colonial history and oppression of the Tutsi. It agitates the Hutus to eliminate the Tutsis and promises them of a Hutu sovereign, and it also controls the opinions of the Rwandans. It not only delivers the messages immediately and extensively but also stirs up emotions of its auditors.

The films emphasize the Rwandans’ reliance on the radio which spreads the messages effectively. Compared with the television, the radio is cheap, light and durable. It does not require the receiving aerial nor the transmitter as the television does. It can run with the batteries while the television requires an electronic socket. And it can be repaired easily even when it is broken. Therefore, in the films, almost every family keeps a radio with them whether they live in the city or in the countryside. In *Sometimes in April*, when the house is destroyed, the radio is the only equipment that can keep Augustin in contact with the others. Radio is not only affordable to poor Rwandans but also influential to uneducated people. Newspapers and magazines require one’s literacy, but radio does not. Radio addresses messages

orally that even the uneducated people can easily understand. In *Hotel Rwanda*, waitresses, porters, and cooks are all absorbed in radio broadcasts. In *Sometimes in April*, an old farmer is inspired to join the massacre after listening to the radio. Radio is therefore indispensable to the life of the Rwandans. It not only keeps the Rwandans informed but also gets rid of the illiteracy problem.

The Rwandans' reliance on the media makes their life porous. By controlling the mass media, the Western countries can penetrate their influences imperceptibly into Rwanda. *Hotel Rwanda* represents such porosity by showing penetration of the Western radios in darkness. The beginning of the film is in darkness but with the radio sounds. Audience hears the interference of radios at first. Then it is followed by a U.S. news report that addresses the evacuation from Sarajevo. The interference in the darkness shows an imperceptible penetration of the Western countries. The Western countries are able to deliver their messages through the radio even though they are on the other side of the ocean. In the darkness, radio breaks the distance to turn the absent into present, that is, to make the West viewpoints to be heard in Rwanda. Contrast to the arrival of colonists, the radio broadcasts are less forcible but more flexible. In the film, civilians can choose if they want to tune in the Western radios or not. Paul tunes in the Western broadcasts when he is driving. The hotel workers stay in tune to the U.S. news report during the massacre. By the media, the West power permeates through the Rwandans little by little rather than imposes direct oppressions.

Reliance on the media creates a new disciplinary relation between the Western

countries and the Rwandans. The Rwandans could accept the Western understanding of the genocide. In *Sometimes in April*, Augustin plays the video of the genocide rather than sharing his experiences in the class discussion. The video firstly helps to speak for survivors who are unable to speak by themselves. It also helps to describe the massacre for those who never experience by themselves. Video connects survivors with the next generation to construct their understandings about their history. But by the media, the Rwandans unconsciously and willingly receive viewpoints from the West. In the film, one student comments on the genocide, “They are in the past. Those bad things are in the past.” His response echoes the speech of Bill Clinton in the video in which Clinton clearly distinguishes “we” from “they” when he describes the genocide. To Bill Clinton, the genocide is an incident happening to “them” rather than “us.” But to Rwandan student, the genocide is also a story of the others, not their own memory. The Rwandans receive the Western viewpoints unconsciously and willingly. In the end of the film, all students watch a European silent film happily. In the laughter, the Rwandans gradually lose their ability of keeping independent thinking by the influences of the mass media power.

Besides the media, the films represent disciplinary power of hotel that prolongs manipulation of the Western countries to the Rwandans. In the films, hotel firstly reveals a changed relationship between the West and the Rwandans. As a Belgium-invested hotel, the Mille Collines in *Hotel Rwanda* indicates that domination of the Western countries has been transformed from political governance to economic

cooperation.⁶ Belgium has ruled Rwanda for thirty years until Rwanda was independent in 1945. By investing the hotel, Belgium not only makes profits on this investment but also imports its products to Rwanda. In the film, hotel serves Belgian beers rather than local beers. By serving Carlsberg and Heinken, the hotel emphasizes its connection with Belgium and its Western style.

It is necessary for the Rwandans to rely on the Western countries. First of all, Rwanda is in the Central Africa that depends on outside relationships to develop its economy. Located in the Central Africa, Rwanda is surrounded by Congo, Uganda, Tanzania, and Burundi. Compared with other African countries, Rwanda is a poor country without natural resources like oil or diamonds. Its geographical location makes its situation worse. Being surrounded by four countries, Rwanda has neither rivers nor coasts in its territory. The air transportation therefore becomes its main traffic tool. For example, Paul packages lobsters from the Kigali airport in *Hotel Rwanda* and the Rwandan president joins the peace talk in Tanzania by air in *Sometimes in April*. The airport replaces the highway, railway, and port to be the most important infrastructure in Rwanda. Air transportation does not only save time and energy but also avoid troubles of border-passing. In *Hotel Rwanda*, local market is built outside the airport by which the businessmen can unload their goods directly from planes and then sell in the market. The Rwandans deeply rely on the air transportation which helps to stimulate the market by promoting the flow of goods.

Economic development of Rwanda is based on the tourism. Rwanda has no

natural resources like oils or diamonds but has natural scenes and wild animals. The beginning of *Sometimes in April* shows the natural beauty of Rwanda. And in *Hotel Rwanda*, a signboard on the road shows the grasslands and a bull in Africa and it says, “So far yet so near.” The slogan “so far yet so near” indicates the air transportation which has shortened the distance between Rwanda and other countries. Hundreds of thousands tourists can visit Rwanda by air and their consumption will benefit economy in Rwanda by stimulating the tourist industries like hotels. In the film, the Mille Collines is supplied by local businessmen and many local people earn a job in this hotel. Hotel creates more job opportunities for both Rwandans and merchants to stimulate economic developments in Rwanda.

Geographical restrictions and lack of natural resources make tourism particularly important to Rwanda. With the tourism, the Western countries bring a capitalistic mode of production and a global imagination for Rwandans through space of hotel. Hotel is a space that seeks for profit maximization, purposes to promote the market, and aims to accumulate the capitals (Urry 66). In other words, it is created to earn profits effectively and quickly. David Harvey calls this economic relationship as “space economy”:

...capitalism perpetually seeks to create a geographical landscape to facilitate its activities at one point in time only to have to destroy it and build a wholly different landscape at a later point in time to accommodate its perpetual thirst for endless capital accumulation. Thus is the history of creative destruction written into the landscape of the actual historical geography of capital accumulation (101).

Capitalism is concerned with space creation and destruction. It creates a space to

accumulate capitals and then destroys it for more capital accumulations. In the films, hotel is a multi-functional space that provides all the necessary services to accumulate capital. Specifically, the Mille Collines is a capitalistic space created for financial needs. Located in Kigali and close to the airport, it is able to move commodities and people quickly. As Harvey suggests, “The reduction in the cost and time of movement has proven a compelling necessity of a capitalist mode of production” (101). Mille Collines is run by capitalistic theory to promote profits efficiently. To deliver its function as a capitalist space, hotel is a center of information and communication. The interviews of journalist, the party to celebrate, the peace talk, and telecommunication (phone and faxes contacts) all take place in the hotel. But when the massacre begins, hotel is immediately abandoned by investors. “Some of our directors believe we should close the Mille Collines until this unrest is over,” the investor tells Paul. Hotel can be “destroyed” at any time to wait for the next time and hence to eliminate financial loss. Space of hotel represents a capitalist mode of production that has influenced on the everyday life of the Rwandans.

Efficiency of the hotel displays a global imagination. For Rwandans, hotel transgresses limits of national boundaries to further connect Rwanda to the rest of the world. In *Hotel Rwanda*, Paul can buy a Cohiba cigar straight from Havana or gives a call to his boss in Belgium. Commodities are transported quickly and messages are delivered immediately. Hotel to some extent becomes a window open to the whole world and absorbs everything because it gathers people of various occupations from

different countries. In the film, there are officers, journalists, tourists, the Red Cross volunteers and the staffs in the Mille Collines. Hotel is just like a global world. For tourists, the comfort of hotel also presents a global imagination. A good hotel is usually home-like. In the film, Paul will relieve the guests from responsibility and have a small talk with them. Waiters will open umbrellas for the guests when they leave. These behaviors express how hotel not simply serves the guests well but also breaks the borders between home and hotel.

To Rwandans, hotel embodies the capitalistic mode of production and concept of service. Their original intentions are for capital accumulations. But they gradually transform the Rwandans' viewpoints about capitalism and accumulation of profits. By making hotel home-like, the hotel staffs learn to treat guests as their friends or family members. This service is "intangible," that is, it requires one's emotional work (Urry 69). Its purpose is to store up emotional connections with customers to make them come back to hotel in the future. Such a concept of service distorts the Rwandans' understandings unconsciously. In *Hotel Rwanda*, Paul says, "All day long I work to please this officer, that diplomat, some tourist, to store up favors, so if there is a time when we need help, I have powerful people I can call upon." The interpersonal relationships are commercialized. They can be "stored up" for possible consumption. By transforming the interpersonal relationships into capitals accumulation, Paul's thinking style is capitalistic. He teaches refugees to ask for help, "But when you say good-bye, say it as though you are reaching through the phone and holding their hand.

Let them know that if they let go of that hand, you will die.” He teaches them how to manipulate one’s emotions to benefit from it. To Rwandans, the meaning of capitalism is changed. Instead of achieving economic development effectively, capitalism has already penetrates into life of Rwandans and then transform their perspectives.

Rwandans’ cognition about the word “style”, an exotic imagination of the Western life, is also changed in the film. In the film, the word firstly appears in conversation between Paul and his work partner, “If I give a businessman 10,000 francs, what does that matter to him? He is rich. But if I give him a Cohiba cigar, straight from Havana, Cuba...Hey, that is style.” The second time he uses the word is in the kitchen. By filling the dead lobsters with other foods, he regards this new dish as a style. The cigar and lobster symbolize the Rwandans’ fascinations with the upper class in the West because only the rich Europeans can afford such food. By consuming these commodities, Rwandans try to elevate themselves to the same place with the Europeans.

However, the “style” in the film is not just fascination for the West, it is more a power of acquiring and controlling the communication and transportation, a power to get rid of the boundary limits to connect to the outside world. The general praises Paul, “Fresh lobster in Kigali. You do us proud, Paul.” Paul shows his control of the transportation and communication through lobster. He can make friends with the pilots in the airport with the cigar to acquire more expensive goods. He also gives the cigar to local merchant as a gift to keep their intimacy and brings beer and other food

back to the hotel. The cigar and lobster are symbolic values.

In the film, the word “style” creates a privileged class, that is, the class of merchants. Merchant possesses a political power that is similar to what a politician does. Generally speaking, it is the power depends on one’s political identity. But in *Hotel Rwanda*, it is the control of the resources of communication and transportation that decides one’s political power. The merchant George Rutaganda becomes leader of the militias and leads the militias to massacre and rob on the streets. Without any political titles, Rutaganda shows political domination upon civilians like a general to his soldiers. His political power is due to his monopoly of food, goods, and weapons. Paul also has similar political power. His power derives from his ability of controlling the means of communication and transportation. He can immediately build connection between Rwanda and the Belgium when he needs help.

The control of communication and transportation also makes merchants more powerful than civilians. In *Sometimes in April*, Honore Botera fails to save his brother’s family by calling a general for help. As a popular radio host and a loyal Hutu party member, he can easily take his brother’s family pass the street blockades but can not ask for a general’s help. In *Hotel Rwanda*, Paul can save 1,200 people and his family with the help from Belgium, the UN army, and the Hutu police. Working for the radio station, Honore can deliver the messages to his brother and tries to save his family. But unlike Paul, Honore is unable to build relationships with officers by bribing them with special presents. In other words, Honore is a civilian, not a

merchant. He does not manipulation the transportation of the goods as a merchant does. So he will not enjoy the privileges that a merchant will have.

Contradictions of Disciplinary Power

The Western countries display disciplinary power by the media and transnational corporations and they simultaneously present contradictions of disciplinary power. The media changes relationships between the West and Rwanda by making messages flow easily. But its influences are ignored deliberately by the Western countries. For example, in *Sometimes in April*, one Washington official suggests that it is unnecessary to jam the Hutu radio station: "It is not the radio that kills people. It is people who kill people." Power of the media is reduced by the West. Besides, transnational corporations develop itself in the capitalistic mode of production which relies on creation and destruction of space for capital accumulation. Yet, the space can not be destroyed as easily as the Western countries would hope. In *Hotel Rwanda*, the Mille Collines is designed to provide services to earn profits and is therefore created to be a home-like space. Hotel is abandoned by the Belgians to reduce the loss of profits during the genocide, but it is more like a home. The home-likeness of hotel space is strengthened when it is going to be destroyed.

The media shows the Western countries' dilemma in their interpretations of images rather than images themselves. In *Sometimes in April*, the U.S. officials deliberately ignore the manipulating power of the media even though they get satellite photos about Rwandan genocide. Their responses indicate dilemma of the Western

countries which are unable to comprehend warfare by visual images any more. It has been suggested that war photos had been more comprehending than words did.⁷

Photos could convince its readers of warfare and push them into actions, but they will gradually dull the readers and hardly inspire them to think about the meanings of what they see.⁸ In *Hotel Rwanda*, a journalist addresses indifferences of the Western countries when they are presented with images of warfare. He says, “I think if people see this footage they’ll say ‘Oh, my God, that’s horrible,’ and then go on eating their dinners.”

Interpretations of war images detach the Western countries from warfare. If the media can bring the absent into present by showing people war, then interpretations of war will bring the present into absent. In other words, the media deliver images immediately for people far away but people can refuse to face war violence by interpreting what they have seen in their own way? *Sometimes in April* shows Bill Clinton’s speech on TV.

It is important that the world know that these killings...were not spontaneous or accidental. It is not an African phenomenon and must never be viewed as such. We have seen it in industrialized Europe. We have seen it in Asia. We must have global vigilance. And never again must we be shy in the face of the evidence.

Who is the “we” in Bill Clinton’s speech? Whom is Clinton talking to? They are not war victims but those who aware of the killing but unable to face it. Clinton says that “we must have global vigilance. And never again must we be shy in the face of the evidence.” His remarks imply dilemma of the Western countries that struggle between war facts and their understanding about war. The sentence “we must have global

vigilance” points out that the Western countries are able to detect the happening warfare. The media enables them to witness war as if they are in war zones. But the following sentence, “and never again must we be shy in the face of the evidence,” shows the inability of the Western countries to face the war.

In addition to the media, transnational corporations also indicate contradictions of disciplinary power from the West. Transnational corporations build on capitalistic mode of production which relies on space creation and space destruction to accumulate more capitals. In the films, the capitalistic space is hard to be destroyed during the genocide. Instead, space is transformed and its value is therefore consolidated. Before the genocide, hotel is a home-like space for customers. During the genocide, hotel becomes a real home to all customers and refugees. In *Hotel Rwanda*, hotel still keeps its division of labors after the genocide begins. Cooks are in charge of food: waiters serve the guests in uniform; and manager helps to order food for hotel. Hotel is not a hotel anymore. Room numbers are removed from the doors and name lists of customers are deleted from computers. People are having dinner together as a big family and children are singing and dancing by swimming pool. Hotel is transformed from a home-like space to a real home in the genocide.

Conclusion

Hotel Rwanda and *Sometimes in April* represent disciplinary power of the Western countries in Rwandan genocide. Its purpose is not to condemn war violence but to blame the Western countries for their ignorance about their influences.

Sometimes in April quotes the poem of Martin Luther King, Jr. in the beginning of the film: “In the end, / we will remember / not the words of our enemies, / but the silence of our friends.” In the poem, the word “friends” satirizes relationships between Rwanda and the Western countries at the twentieth century. Instead of the rulers in colonial age, the Western countries play the role of a friend in Rwanda. They continue their influences by the media and transnational corporations to further supervise and build an economic connection with Rwanda. They therefore penetrate into daily life of Rwandans and then change perspectives of local people about themselves. They are the closest “friends” to Rwandans because they already become part of local people’s life. But these “friends” are falling into dilemmas in their relationships with Rwandans and they are unable to face the warfare or conflicts by themselves. Like what the poem says, the silence of friends is more hurtful than words of enemies. Instead of addressing violence in the genocide, the two films help us to contemplate the role of the Western countries to think about the relation between warfare and the rest of the world.

Notes

¹ Rwandan genocide was the most dreadful event in 1994. In 100 days, 800,000 Tutsis and 200,000 Hutus were killed by military soldiers and the militias. More than one million civilians were either displaced after the massacre or turned to be refugees in the neighboring countries. This tragic event was caused not only by the feud between two tribes, the Hutu and the Tutsi, but also by indifference of the Western countries. During the genocide, only the UN peacekeeping army stayed in Rwanda and intervened in the mass killing. The other Western countries, especially Belgium and the United States, all evacuate from Rwanda and let the killing go on.

² Compared with Oskar Schindler in *Schindler's List*, Paul Rusesabagina presents a new heroism that exposes people's indifference to the atrocity. Richard Schickel comments that Rusesabagina is only "a sort of equatorial Oskar Schindler, an ordinarily selfish, not particularly idealistic human being" (54). He argues that *Hotel Rwanda* does not make any huge claims for Rusesabagina. However, Lasha Torchin points out new heroism that Rusesabagina presents. "While his actions are heroic, the film does not trumpet his accomplishments with grand speeches. This is an ordinary man...Rusesabagina's heroism lies in maintaining basic human decency in the face of this horror" (46). Rusesabagina's brave actions expose a problem of the contemporary society, "the inaction to the atrocity", and draw people's attentions to this (Torchin 47).

³ The Arusha accord aims to promote a multi-party government in Rwanda (Melvern 319). It has two appeals. One is to ask the Rwandan government to govern with the Hutu opposition parties and the Tutsi minority and the other is to help the exiled Tutsi return to Rwanda under the surveillance of the UN army (Power 336). The return of the Tutsi makes the Hutu army uneasy. Firstly, it is afraid of new political structure in which the Tutsis will share as much as the Hutus do. Secondly, the Hutu army is afraid of the revenge of the Tutsis "who would respond in kind if given the chance again to govern" (337).

⁴ Rwanda had originally been ruled by many tribes and its tribal society could be compared with those in European feudal states (Melvern 313). It was occupied first by Germany in 1885. But in 1916, the Belgian troops drive out the Germans and occupy Rwanda. Belgians organize a census and everyone is issued with an identity card classifying people as Hutu, Tutsi or Twa (314). This policy worsens the feud between the Hutu and the Tutsi and causes the genocide in 1994. In 1945, Rwanda was independent and transferred to a UN Trust Territory, and the colonial period ends

(314).

⁵ The correlation of body and gesture is to keep the individual non-idle and energetic. “In the correct use of the body...nothing must remain idle or useless: everything must be called upon to form the support of the act required” (152).

⁶ In the original film script, Terry George emphasizes economic connection between Belgium and Rwanda by the goods transported from Belgian, the flights Paul takes, and foods Paul favors. But in *Hotel Rwanda*, the director eliminates all these details but keeps the representation of the hotel itself.

⁷ “The photograph provides a quick way of apprehending something and a compact form for memorizing it” (Sontag 22).

⁸ “In a world saturated, no, hyper-saturated with images, those that should matter have a diminishing effect” (Sontag 105).