

**Political Correctness and Asian Films Industry:
The Perspective from Wenzao's Student and Professor**

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Abstract

This study explores the dynamics of political correctness in the film industries of China, Taiwan, and South Korea, focusing on its influence on box office performance and societal impact. The research addresses three main questions: how political correctness is utilized in films to reinforce mainstream values, whether it affects box office outcomes, and how audiences' awareness of these themes influences their film preferences. Through a quantitative approach, including the analysis of six prominent Asian blockbusters, data were collected via surveys and literature analysis. Results reveal that while there is a significant understanding of political correctness among audiences, it does not directly correlate with box office success. However, public discourse is notably shaped by the portrayal of politically sensitive topics, reinforcing or challenging societal norms. The storyline, rather than political correctness, emerged as the primary factor influencing audience preferences. The findings suggest that although political correctness plays a role in shaping cultural narratives in Asian cinema, its impact on commercial success is less significant than initially hypothesized. Future research could further examine its nuanced effects on different audience demographics and across various genres of film.

Keywords: political correctness, box office, mainstream values

政治正確與亞洲電影產業：

文藻學生與教授的看法

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摘要

本研究探討了中國、台灣和韓國電影業的政治正確動態，並著重於其對票房表現和社會影響的影響。研究解決了三個主要問題：電影中如何利用政治正確性來強化主流價值觀，它是否影響票房結果，以及觀眾對這些主題的認識如何影響他們的電影偏好。透過量化方法，包括對六部著名的亞洲大片的分析，透過調查和文獻分析收集數據。結果顯示，雖然觀眾對政治正確性有很大的了解，但它與票房成功並沒有直接關係。然而，公共論述主要受到政治敏感話題的描述、強化或挑戰社會規範的影響。故事情節，而非政治正確性，成為影響觀眾偏好的主要因素。研究結果表明，儘管政治正確性在塑造亞洲電影文化敘事方面發揮重要作用，但其對商業成功的影響並不像最初假設的那麼重要。未來的研究可以進一步研究它對不同觀眾群體和不同電影類型的微妙影響。

關鍵字：政治正確、票房表現、主流價值

TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTION	1
Research Motivation	3
Research Purpose	3
Research Questions	3
Contribution	3
Limits	4
Delimits	4
LITERATURE REVIEW	5
Introduction to political correctness.....	5
Definition and Origins of Political Correctness.....	5
Global Perspectives on Political Correctness	6
Political Correctness in Media and Entertainment.....	7
Factors Influencing the Levels of Ingraining Political Correctness in Film.....	8
Socio-political Factors	8
Economic Factors.....	11
Cultural Factors.....	13
Asian Film Industries and Political Correctness.....	16
Overview of Asian Film Industries	16
Political Correctness in Asian Film Industries.....	17
Overview of the Selected Films.....	21
Demographic Suitability of the Selected Films	24
Cultural and Socio-political Representation	24
Examination of Socio-political Factors	27
Government Policies and Censorship	27
Public Sentiment and Social Movements	28
Analysis of Economic Factors	30
Market Forces and Audience Demographics	30
Production and Distribution Dynamics.....	32
Exploration of Cultural Factors	32
Cultural Sensitivities and Values	32

Representation and Stereotyping	34
Overview of Related Studies	35
General Trends in Research Methodologies	35
Evaluation of Methodological Approaches	37
The Pros and Cons of quantitative Methods	37
Analytical of Quantitative Method	38
Methodology Justification for Current Study	38
Selection and Adaptation of Methods.....	38
Implementation of Proposed Methods	38
Comparative Analysis and Methodological Validation.....	39
Challenges and Mitigation Strategies	39
Conclusion and Implications.....	39
Summary of Methodological Insights.....	39
Implications for Future Research.....	40
METHODOLOGY	41
Research Design.....	41
Source of Data.....	41
Instrument and Data Collection	42
Tools for Data Analysis.....	43
DATA ANALYSIS	43
The Utilization of Political Correctness, Asian Films	44
Box Office and Political Correctness.....	45
Social Influence and Moviegoing	47
CONCLUSION.....	49
Appendix.....	52
BIBLIOGRAPHY	56

LIST OF TABLE

Table 1 the production company and the funding..... 32

INTRODUCTION

Recently, political correctness has become a popular word in the film industry. Compared to the past, political correctness is now considered a negative word, especially in the film industry. Take the classic fairy tale "The Little Mermaid" as an example, the main role Ariel has beautiful bright red hair, white skin, and a fishtail with green scales. Regardless, the appearance of Ariel has already set an impression on everyone's childhood. However, the live-action Little Mermaid released by Disney recently had a huge impact around the world.

In the film industry, the most impactful on political correctness is Disney Company. The Disney Company stands as one of the most influential entities in the film industry, wielding considerable power over shaping societal norms and values, particularly regarding political correctness. However, this influence, while often lauded, can have negative implications, perpetuating homogenized narratives, stifling diverse voices, and promoting sanitized versions of reality. One of the most concerning aspects of Disney's approach to political correctness is its tendency to prioritize profit over authentic representation. In its quest to appeal to the widest possible audience and maintain a squeaky-clean image, Disney frequently waters down complex themes and characters, sacrificing depth and nuance for mass marketability. This not only leads to formulaic storytelling but also reinforces a limited and often idealized view of the world, devoid of the messy realities of human experience. While Disney's influence on the film industry cannot be denied, its approach to political correctness has significant drawbacks. By prioritizing profit over authenticity, perpetuating stereotypes through cultural appropriation, and displaying inconsistency in its commitment to diversity, Disney's brand of political correctness

ultimately hinders progress rather than facilitating it. As consumers and creators, it is imperative to critically examine and challenge the impact of Disney's sanitized worldview, advocating for more inclusive and authentic representations in the films we consume and create.

Political correctness also affects in Asian film industry. From cultural sensitivities to government censorship, the Asian film industry grapples with its own set of challenges when navigating the complexities of political correctness. political correctness in the Asian film industry is frequently intertwined with government censorship and regulation. In countries with authoritarian regimes or strict governmental control over media, filmmakers face stringent guidelines dictating what can and cannot be depicted on screen. This can range from explicit censorship of political dissent to more subtle forms of ideological conditioning, where films must align with state-sanctioned narratives and values. As a result, filmmakers are forced to tread carefully to avoid repercussions and ensure their films receive approval for distribution.

Research Motivation

Most of the news about political correctness is all from the West. However, we seldom hear about this news happening around Asia. Thus, we would like to research a comparative content analysis study on six Asian blockbusters which are from China, Taiwan, South Korea and to discover if political correctness and box office performance are relatable.

Research Purpose

This study aims to explore the relationship between political correctness and box office performance. To understand how themes of political correctness affect the market performance of films in the Chinese, Taiwanese, and South Korean film industries.

Research Questions

Question 1: How do Asian films utilize political correctness to strengthen, and promote mainstream values?

Question 2: Can political correctness affect the box office?

Question 3: How does awareness of political correctness affect the audience's choice of Asian films, and what genres or themes do they prefer as a result?

Contribution

This research aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by conducting a quantitative study focusing on Asian films. This study aims to contribute to the existing knowledge base by conducting a comparative content analysis of six

Asian films. By examining their box office performance through the lens of political correctness, we address gaps in the literature and challenge current theories. By exploring the potential impact of political correctness on box office success, we introduce a novel analytical variable, offering a fresh perspective on the success of six Asian market films.

In summary, this research adds to the existing body of knowledge by addressing a gap, challenging existing theories, and offering a new perspective on the relationship between correctness and box office performance in Asian films.

Limits

The research's limit is that it only focuses on Asian movies, especially China, Taiwan, and Korea. Because these three countries share similar cultures, such as Asian culture, they both have a long Asian cultural heritage, including language, literature, art, religion, and traditional customs. Also, the historical connections, there are complex historical connections between them, including wars, cultural exchanges, and trade. Moreover, they are important representatives of regional political forces and have a certain influence on international affairs. Thus, this is the reason to choose these country's movies.

Delimits

The population for this study will consist of students and professors at Wenzao, with an age range of 18-60. This range is chosen to gather and analyze opinions primarily from the younger generation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction to political correctness

Definition and Origins of Political Correctness

According to the “Washington Post”, the New York Times used the word “Political Correctness” for the first time in 1934 when describing that “Nazi Germany” required the media to report the news “according to the government's position”. For the next 30 years, the usage of this word was similar.

At the beginning, everyone was talking about “political correctness”. In fact, they were emphasizing the need to “reunify the ruling consciousness of the totalitarian government” and facilitate the control of the people's thoughts. In this sense, it was originally neutral, that is, the proposition that meets certain standards in political value, which can be called political correctness. However, since the 1980s, the use of “politically correctness” has been different! Although the concept is to “pursue a specific norm”, the goal pursued later became “social justice” or a certain moral standard. What contemporary “political correctness” emphasizes is to respect the disadvantaged or minority groups and avoid tangible and intangible “oppression or discrimination” of others through further “reflection and empathy”. However, political correctness is indeed demeaning now, that is, after overcorrecting, the claim of value has become a subversion of truth, morality, and beauty. According to Wikipedia “Political correctness” is an ambiguous and multifaceted term. According to American scholars, the first recorded usage of the adjective “politically correct” occurred in the judicial ruling of the case *Chisholm v. Georgia* in 1793. It stated, “Toasts using 'America' instead of 'American People' are not politically correct,”¹ implying that the

¹ Hughes, and Geoffrey, *Political Correctness: A History of Semantics and Culture* (John Wiley & Sons, 2011).

authority of America lies with the people rather than the nation-state. At this time, "political correctness" was used in a literal sense without ideological connotations and was subsequently forgotten.

The ideological connotations of "political correctness" were imbued by leftist movements in the 20th century. In the 1920s, the Soviet Communist Party began using the term "pravil'nyy" (correct) to denote adherence to the party line, signifying the necessity for "correct" thoughts and behaviors in politics. In 1953, Polish author Czesław Miłosz used the term "poprawny politycznie" (politically correct) in his work "The Captive Mind," which was translated to "politically correct." During the 1930s and 1940s, the usage of "political correctness" evolved within leftist circles to mock those who adhered too closely to the party line, making it difficult to endure. In the United States, "political correctness" was introduced as a borrowed term, although its continued meaning primarily stemmed from the leftist movements of the 20th century. The Frankfurt School, which integrated Marxist traditions, criticized Western cultural elements, thereby allowing "political correctness" to engage in social revolution and reconstruction since cultural Marxism. After the Nazi regime took control of Germany in 1933, some members of the Frankfurt School immigrated to the United States, widely disseminating leftist cultural ideas. Its critical influence directly impacted the concept of "political correctness" during the era of the civil rights movement, with countercultural and feminist issues becoming primary topics of discussion in American "political correctness."

Global Perspectives on Political Correctness

Political correctness in media and entertainment encompasses a range of practices aimed at promoting sensitivity and inclusivity. This includes avoiding

stereotypes, derogatory language, or insensitive portrayals of individuals or groups based on factors such as race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or socioeconomic status. It often involves the use of more neutral or respectful language and the portrayal of diverse characters and perspectives.

In recent years, there has been increased attention on political correctness in media and entertainment due to heightened awareness of social justice issues and calls for greater representation and diversity in popular culture. This has led to shifts in content creation, with many producers, writers, and directors making conscious efforts to incorporate more inclusive and socially responsible storytelling.

However, the concept of political correctness is not without controversy. Critics argue that it can stifle creativity, limit free speech, and lead to self-censorship, as creators may fear backlash or accusations of insensitivity. Additionally, there are concerns about the potential for political correctness to become overly restrictive or to prioritize surface-level representation over meaningful inclusion and diversity.

Overall, political correctness in media and entertainment reflects broader societal debates about language, power dynamics, and social norms. While it strives to promote respect and equality, its implementation and impact remain subjects of ongoing discussion and debate within the industry and among audiences.

Political Correctness in Media and Entertainment

Political correctness in media and entertainment encompasses efforts to create content that is sensitive, inclusive, and respectful towards diverse social and cultural groups. It involves representation of marginalized communities, avoidance of stereotypes, use of inclusive language, cultural sensitivity, addressing social issues, and accountability for messaging. While aiming to promote inclusivity and respect, it

also sparks debates about censorship, artistic freedom, and the balance between sensitivity and authenticity. As the media continues to shape cultural attitudes, responsible navigation of these issues remains crucial.

Factors Influencing the Levels of Ingraining Political Correctness in Film

Socio-political Factors

Government policies and censorship

The Chinese government tightly regulates the film industry, censoring content that may be deemed politically sensitive, socially disruptive, or morally objectionable. This control extends to issues related to political correctness, with filmmakers required to adhere to guidelines set by authorities to ensure that films promote positive social values and align with government narratives. However, censorship also happens in Taiwan and South Korea.

In Taiwan, the success of "Cape No. 7" was influenced to some extent by government policies and censorship regulations. Taiwan's government support and encouragement for the film industry, as well as investments in cultural and creative industries, facilitated the production and promotion of the film. Additionally, the relaxation of censorship regulations provided more room for development in the film industry, allowing for a greater variety of themes that could more accurately reflect social realities and historical events. However, the film still faced certain censorship restrictions and had to adhere to corresponding regulations and limitations to ensure that its content was not overly sensitive or controversial. The production and distribution of "Seediq Bale" were also influenced by government policies and censorship regulations, particularly concerning works that explore Taiwanese history and culture. However, since the film delves into historical events involving resistance

against foreign rule, it may contain sensitive and controversial content. As a result, the film likely had to undergo stringent censorship procedures to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations, as well as political requirements, and to avoid unnecessary controversy or political pressure.²

In South Korea, their government has also strictly regulated movies. Because global interest in Korean trends has significantly impacted the government's approach. Broadcasting was first introduced to Korea by Japanese colonialists in the 1920s as a tool to manipulate the Korean people. Furthermore, it has been forbidden to produce films that are war-related or that praise the United States, restricting directors from freely expressing their thoughts, ideologies, and political platforms.³ However, starting in the late 1980s, a series of changes began to make the TV industry more open and freer. These changes relaxed the rules on what programs could show, giving broadcasters more freedom to create varied and innovative content. Additionally, the government reduced its day-to-day management of TV stations, allowing them to operate more like businesses and compete with each other more effectively.

Public Sentiment and Social Movement

Some directors and actors have used their platforms to address social issues and challenge prevailing norms, albeit within the constraints of censorship. Despite government censorship, there have been instances of social movements and activism within the Asian film industry, particularly from filmmakers and artists advocating for

² Yanling Yang, "Film Policy, the Chinese Government and Soft Power," *New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film* 14, no. 1 (2016).

³ Ju Young Kim, "Rethinking Media Flow under Globalisation: Rising Korean Wave and Korean Tv and Film Policy since 1980s" (University of Warwick, 2007).

greater freedom of expression and more diverse representation in cinema. Their efforts have not only fostered important conversations but also inspired a new generation of creators to push boundaries and reshape the narrative landscape.

The Taiwanese movie "Cape No. 7" became more than just a movie—it evolved into a cultural phenomenon and social movement. Its grassroots marketing campaign, fueled by word-of-mouth and social media, galvanized people across Taiwan to support local cinema and celebrate Taiwanese identity. Viewers organized "Cape No. 7" screenings in their communities, turning the film into a symbol of resilience and cultural pride. Thus, the film's impact extended beyond the box office, inspiring a sense of unity and cultural revival among Taiwanese audiences. The release of "Seediq Bale" ignited significant public sentiment and sparked social movements in Taiwan. The film resonated deeply with audiences due to its portrayal of the indigenous Seediq people's resistance against Japanese colonization, a pivotal but often overlooked part of Taiwanese history. It stirred emotions of national pride, cultural identity, and historical remembrance among viewers. "Seediq Bale" became more than just a movie—it became a rallying point for indigenous rights and cultural recognition. It prompted discussions about Taiwan's colonial past, indigenous heritage, and the need for social justice. The film's themes of courage, resilience, and cultural preservation inspired solidarity and activism within indigenous communities and garnered support from the broader Taiwanese society. Social movements and advocacy efforts emerged, advocating for greater recognition and respect for ⁴indigenous peoples' rights, land rights, and cultural heritage preservation. "Seediq Bale" played a crucial role in raising awareness and fostering dialogue about these

⁴ Lin, Shih-Kun, "Analyzing the Taiwanese Film *Cape No. 7* from a Narrative Perspective.", (2009), <https://hdl.handle.net/11296/hqd8yr>.

issues, contributing to a broader societal understanding of indigenous rights and identity in Taiwan.

Economic Factors

Market Forces and Audience Demographics

The Chinese movie market is one of the largest and fastest growing in the world. Some key factors include government regulations, cultural preferences and national identity. First government regulations, the Chinese government plays a significant role in regulating the film industry through censorship and import quotas. The State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film, and Television (SAPPRFT) controls the content of domestic and imported films, ensuring they align with government policies and promote positive social values. Import quotas restrict the number of foreign films allowed into the Chinese market each year, giving domestic productions a competitive advantage. Second, cultural preferences and national identity, Chinese audiences have diverse cultural preferences influenced by factors such as regional differences, historical background, and cultural heritage. While Hollywood blockbusters and domestic productions dominate the box office, there is also demand for niche genres like historical epics, martial arts films, and romantic dramas that resonate with Chinese cultural values and national identity.

In terms of market forces, the film's success may depend on factors such as marketing strategies, distribution channels, and competition from other films.

"Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale" is a Taiwanese historical drama film that explores the indigenous Seediq people's resistance against Japanese colonization. Its market forces and audience demographics are influenced by various factors.

Additionally, its historical and cultural significance may attract audiences interested in Taiwanese history or indigenous cultures. Audience demographics for "Warriors of

the *Rainbow: Seediq Bale*" may vary depending on factors such as age, gender, cultural background, and interests. It may appeal to history enthusiasts, fans of epic dramas, those interested in indigenous cultures, and individuals seeking thought-provoking narratives. The film's themes of resistance and identity could resonate with a diverse audience, both locally in Taiwan and internationally among viewers interested in world cinema and historical epics.

In South Korea, the movie "Train to Busan" was a significant box office success, grossing over \$92 million worldwide, with the vast majority of its revenue, around \$90 million, coming from international markets. The movie's impressive performance at the box office also set a new record for Korean cinema in 2016, as it was the first to surpass 10 million theatergoers in South Korea for that year.⁵ The domestic market share of Korean films has hovered above 40% for three consecutive years since 2001.⁶ Since the Korean wave, people are more concerned about the Korean entertainment industry. Korean cinema has gained significant global attention in recent years, thanks to its achievements at major international film festivals and an increase in its distribution and viewership abroad. The remarkable rise of the South Korean film industry is particularly striking given that just ten years earlier, it was experiencing a sharp decline. The decision to open the local film market to foreign distributors in 1987 led to a surge in imported films, which, combined with already waning local interest, caused the domestic market share of Korean films to plummet, hitting a nadir in 1993.

⁵ Clara Hong, ""Train to Busan" Is the First Korean Film of 2016 to Break This Audience Record," soompi, 2016, accessed April 28, 2024, <https://www.soompi.com/article/884427wpp/train-busan-first-korean-film-2016-top-10-million>.

⁶ Jeeyoung Shin, *Globalisation and New Korean Cinema* (Edinburgh University Press 2005). <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/abs/new-korean-cinema/globalisation-and-new-korean-cinema/C745E4E3F0BCFA334426A676E6C314FF>.

Production and Distribution Dynamics

The Chinese government tightly regulates the film industry through censorship and content approval processes. Filmmakers must obtain permits from authorities like the National Radio and Television Administration (NRTA) to produce and distribute films. Content must adhere to strict guidelines regarding political sensitivity, social morality, and cultural values. Government control extends to co-productions with foreign studios, where Chinese partners ensure compliance with censorship regulations. Moreover, online streaming platforms like iQIYI, Tencent Video, and Youku Tudou play a significant role in film distribution in China. These platforms offer a wide selection of domestic and international films, including recent releases and classic titles. Streaming services also produce original content and acquire licensing rights for popular films and television shows, competing with traditional distribution channels like cinemas and DVD sales.

Cultural Factors

Cultural Sensitivities and Values

Cultural sensitivities and values play a crucial role in shaping the content and reception of movies in China. Patriotism and national pride are significant cultural values in China, often reflected in films that celebrate the country's history, achievements, and cultural heritage. Movies that promote patriotism and depict China in a positive light are generally well-received by audiences and supported by government policies. Otherwise, Chinese society traditionally values collectivism and social harmony over individualism and self-expression. Films often emphasize themes of teamwork, cooperation, and collective struggle, highlighting the importance of community and collective welfare. "The Wandering Earth" is the highest-grossing science fiction film in Chinese film history, it explores cooperation and competition

between different political entities. As Earth is forced out of the solar system, governments must come together to address common challenges. However, this cooperation is often interfered with by political ideologies and national interests, triggering political struggles and competition. This tension between political reality and the urgency of confronting disaster adds a political layer of complexity to the film. In the end, the film also touches on the decision-making process of leaders and the issue of trust in leaders. When faced with an existential crisis, people's trust and dependence on their leaders become crucial factors. The movie reflects the importance of political leadership and how leaders respond to challenges and pressures by showing the attitudes and behaviors of different characters towards leaders.

Sensitivity and respect towards Seediq Balai culture are fundamental in fostering positive relationships with this branch of Taiwan's indigenous people, whose history is marked by brave resistance against the Japanese. This entails honoring their traditions, language, beliefs, and way of life, as well as revering their ancestors, respecting their land and natural environment, and acknowledging their social organization and cultural heritage. Courage, resilience, dignity, and unity are essential elements of Seediq Bale culture's values, reflecting their pursuit of freedom and dignity, as well as their profound connection to their land and family. Understanding and respecting these values are crucial prerequisites for fostering positive relationships with the Seediq Balai community.

Representation and stereotyping

Traditional gender roles have been prevalent in Chinese cinema, with women often portrayed as submissive, nurturing, and sacrificing for their families. However,

there has been a growing demand for more diverse and empowering representations of women in recent years. Female characters are increasingly depicted as strong, independent, and capable protagonists, challenging traditional stereotypes and promoting gender equality. What's more, Chinese society is characterized by significant socioeconomic disparities, and these disparities are often reflected in film portrayals. Working-class characters may be depicted as hardworking but struggling to make ends meet, while wealthy characters may be portrayed as privileged and detached from the realities of everyday life. Efforts to portray a more diverse range of social classes and experiences have been evident in contemporary Chinese cinema. Despite efforts to promote diversity and authenticity, stereotypes and cultural tropes persist in Chinese cinema. These stereotypes may include portrayals of foreigners as exotic or villainous, or caricatures of certain ethnic or regional groups. Filmmakers must navigate these stereotypes carefully to avoid reinforcing harmful stereotypes and promoting cultural misunderstandings.

In Korea movie “The Host” uses the monster as a metaphor for environmental destruction. It serves as a wake-up call for the consequences of human actions on nature, challenging the stereotype of monsters as purely evil beings and instead framing them as victims of human irresponsibility. The film also touches on class issues, with the park family being from a lower socio-economic background. Their struggle against the monster and the government highlights the challenges faced by ordinary people in the face of adversity and systemic failure.

Asian Film Industries and Political Correctness

Overview of Asian Film Industries

Historical Context and Development

The collaborative efforts among China, Taiwan, and South Korea in producing internationally acclaimed films since 2005, including "The Wandering Earth," "Cape No. 7," and "Train to Busan," represent a significant integration of major East Asian film industries, celebrated filmmakers, renowned actors, and substantial budgets, serving as a central theme aimed at both regional and global audiences. Beyond their entertainment value, these productions showcase a notable evolution in the conceptualization of 'Asian Cinema,' presenting fresh and tangible expressions of cultural identity and creativity. This evolution encompasses not only the industrial and economic dimensions but also extends to film culture and aesthetics, contributing to the construction and reconstruction of Asian culture and identity. This paper undertakes an in-depth examination of these three films as a case study, analyzing their production and marketing patterns, narrative styles, and the portrayal of 'Asia' within the texts, offering insights into the multifaceted impact of collaborative filmmaking in the region.

Key Players and Markets

China has a booming film industry, with both commercial blockbusters and critically acclaimed art house films. Mainland China has seen significant growth in recent years, with a mix of domestic productions and collaborations with international filmmakers. The Chinese film market is one of the largest in the world, and its influence continues to expand globally. China's film industry has experienced rapid growth in recent years, becoming one of the largest film markets globally. Key

players include production companies like Huayi Brothers Media Group, Tencent Pictures, and Alibaba Pictures. Additionally, streaming platforms like iQIYI and Tencent Video have also emerged as major players in distributing and producing films.

The burgeoning growth of Taiwan's film industry has cultivated a rich tapestry of cinematic talent, including internationally acclaimed directors such as Hou Hsiao-hsien and Ang Lee. These visionary filmmakers have contributed significantly to Taiwan's cinematic landscape, garnering widespread acclaim and recognition on the global stage. Behind their success lies prominent production companies like Central Film Corporation and Atom Cinema, which have played pivotal roles in facilitating the creation and distribution of groundbreaking Taiwanese films. Central to the essence of Taiwanese cinema is its exploration of profound social issues and cultural identity, serving as a platform for introspection and dialogue on matters crucial to Taiwanese society.

In South Korea's film industry often referred to as "Hallyuwood," which has gained global attention in recent years, thanks to the success of Korean dramas and films. Key players include CJ Entertainment, Lotte Entertainment, and Showbox. Korean cinema is known for its diverse genres, including gritty thrillers, romantic comedies, and historical dramas.

Political Correctness in Asian Film Industries

Case Studies of Political Correctness in Practice

Gender Representation in Chinese Cinema has garnered increasing attention in recent years., with calls for more diverse and empowering roles for women. While female characters have traditionally been portrayed in stereotypical roles such as

wives, mothers, or damsels in distress, there has been a growing demand for more nuanced and empowering portrayals of women in Chinese films. For example: In "The Great Wall," the bold and brave General Lin Hai, the female character who ultimately defeats the monster and saves the country and its people. The heroine, occupying the center of the screen, is no longer a stereotyped virtuous wife, hard-working mother, or well-behaved daughter; instead, she is portrayed as an independent woman who pursues freedom and rejects dependency.

One prominent example of political correctness in Taiwanese cinema is the increased representation of indigenous peoples. Historically marginalized and underrepresented in mainstream media, indigenous communities in Taiwan have pushed for more accurate and respectful portrayals in films. In response, filmmakers have worked closely with indigenous actors, directors, and cultural consultants to ensure authenticity and cultural sensitivity in their portrayals. For instance, the film "Seediq Bale" directed by Wei Te-sheng received acclaim for its portrayal of the Wushe Incident, a historical event involving indigenous resistance against Japanese colonial rule, with a focus on cultural authenticity and sensitivity.

South Korean cinema has gained international acclaim for its bold and provocative storytelling, often addressing politically sensitive topics such as social inequality, historical trauma, and government corruption. Filmmakers like Park Chan-wook, Bong Joon-ho, and Lee Chang-dong have received praise for their willingness to challenge conventions and engage with contentious issues, albeit sometimes facing criticism or censorship domestically. Such as "The Host" directed by Bong Joon-ho, this film is also one of the few Korean films with a hidden "anti-American plot". At the beginning, South Korean assistants poured it all into the river under the instruction of the Americans even though they knew it was a highly toxic chemical substance. In

the middle, the glorious sacrifice of American soldiers was widely publicized by the Korean media, including the classified virus incident, regardless of the public. Demonstration, insisting on obeying the United States' projecting yellow bombs. It is a metaphor for the status gap between South Korea and the United States. Even today, South Korea is still the same. It also mocked the Korean government.

Comparative Analysis with Western Film Industries

Comparing political correctness in Western film industries with those in Asian film industries reveals interesting differences shaped by cultural, historical, and social contexts.

To begin with, cultural values and sensitivities. In the Western film industries, political correctness often revolves around issues of race, gender, sexuality, and representation. There's a strong emphasis on avoiding stereotypes and promoting diversity and inclusion.

On the other hand, in Korea, the concept of "Hallyu" or the Korean Wave exemplifies the global impact of South Korean culture, particularly through K-drama and K-pop, which have gained immense popularity worldwide. This cultural export has increased the visibility of Asian cinema on global platforms like Netflix, which actively invests in regional content⁷.

Furthermore, government regulation and censorship. While Western countries have regulations and rating systems, there's generally a greater emphasis on freedom of expression. Censorship is often viewed skeptically and can lead to public outcry. And many Asian countries have stricter government regulations and censorship

⁷ Ray S, "The Rise of Asian Cinema," asian absolute, 2022, <https://asianabsolute.co.uk/blog/2022/07/29/the-rise-of-asian-cinema/>.

boards that oversee film content. This can lead to limitations on what topics can be depicted, particularly those deemed politically sensitive or culturally inappropriate. For example, China's State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film, and Television (SAPPRFT) imposes strict guidelines on film content, leading to censorship of politically sensitive topics.

Next, representation and diversity. There's a growing emphasis on diverse representation in Western films, with movements advocating for increased visibility of marginalized communities, including racial minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people with disabilities. While there's also a growing push for diversity and representation in Asian films, the focus may differ. For example, there's increasing attention to the representation of women in traditionally male-dominated industries like Bollywood. However, issues like LGBTQ+ representation may face more resistance due to cultural taboos in some Asian societies.

To sum up, social media and audience reception. Social media plays a significant role in shaping discussions around political correctness in western films. Audience reactions and criticisms on platforms like Twitter and Instagram can influence public perception and even impact box office performance.

Social media also plays a role in shaping discussions in Asian film, but the dynamics may differ. Cultural and linguistic differences can lead to distinct online communities and reactions. Additionally, in countries with stricter government control over online content, like China, there may be limitations on the extent of public discourse around political correctness in films.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMWORK

Overview of the Selected Films

Introduction to each of the six blockbusters

The Wandering Earth

"The Wandering Earth" is a 2019 Chinese science fiction film that has achieved significant commercial success and critical acclaim, highlighted by its substantial worldwide gross and positive reviews. The film was theatrically released in China on 5 February 2019. The film grossed \$701 million worldwide. It is China's fifth highest-grossing film of all time. It has received generally positive reviews from critics, with The Hollywood Reporter describing it as "China's first full-scale interstellar spectacular."

Set in a dystopian future, the movie revolves around a desperate plan to save Earth from an unstable sun that is expanding and threatening to engulf the planet. The solution involves giant thrusters to move Earth out of its orbit and transport it to a new star system. The story follows a group of astronauts and scientists as they struggle against time and unforeseen disasters to navigate Earth safely through space, dealing with both external cosmic challenges and internal human conflicts. As they journey through the cosmos, they encounter catastrophic obstacles that test the limits of their courage and ingenuity.

Ne Zha

"Ne Zha" is a 2019 Chinese 3D computer-animated fantasy adventure film that became a major box office success, achieving several records in both Chinese and global cinema. It was released in China exclusively in China Film Giant Screen theatres on 13 July 2019 which has been one of the biggest commercial successes in Chinese cinema, setting numerous records for box-office grosses: as of August 2019,

the film is the highest-grossing animated film in China, the worldwide highest-grossing non-U.S. animated film, and the second worldwide highest-grossing non-English-language film of all time at the time of its release. With a gross of over \$725 million, it was that year's fourth highest-grossing animated film and China's all-time fourth highest-grossing film.

The story of Ne Zha, a boy born with unique powers who is destined to be a demon. The story is set in a mythical world where the heavenly officials release the Spirit Pearl to be reincarnated as a force of good. However, due to a mix-up by the Dragon King, Ne Zha ends up being born from the Demon Orb, leading everyone to fear and shun him as a demon. Throughout the movie, Ne Zha struggles with his identity and destiny, trying to prove that he can choose his path and be a hero, rather than succumbing to the evil fate that everyone expects of him. The film combines action, humor, and heartfelt moments as Ne Zha fights to overcome his destiny and gain acceptance.

Seediq Bale

Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale is a 2011 Taiwanese historical drama film based on the 1930 Musha Incident in central Taiwan. The film was released on 9 September 2011 and was shown in competition at the 68th Venice International Film Festival and was selected as a contender for nomination for the 84th Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film in 2011. The film focuses on the Wushe Incident in 1930, when the Seediq, led by Chief Mona Rudao, launched a revolt against Japanese colonial rule. The movie depicts the fierce battle for dignity and freedom by the Seediq warriors, who were vastly outnumbered and faced with the advanced military technology of the Japanese. The film explores themes of cultural

identity, resistance, and the deep spiritual connection the Seediq have with their land, culminating in a powerful and tragic struggle.

Cape No. 7

Cape No. 7 is a Taiwanese romantic musical comedy-drama film released on 22 August 2008. The film has won 15 awards to date, including 6 at the 2008 Golden Horse Awards. Set in the quaint seaside town of Hengchun, the plot follows Aga, a frustrated musician who returns to his hometown after a failed stint in Taipei. Tasked with the seemingly mundane job of delivering a package of undelivered love letters written 70 years ago by a Japanese teacher to his Taiwanese lover during the colonial period, Aga becomes entangled in his own romantic pursuits. As he struggles to form a local band and prepare for a big concert, Aga's connection with Tomoko, the organizer, grows, paralleling the poignant, historical romance revealed through the old letters. The film explores themes of love, reconciliation, and cultural identity, culminating in a heartwarming conclusion that bridges past and present.

Train to Busan

Train to Busan is a South Korean action horror film that premiered in the Midnight Screenings section of the 2016 Cannes Film Festival on the 13th of May. On 7 August, the film set a record as the first Korean film of 2016 to break the audience record of over 10 million theatergoers. "Train to Busan" follows Seok-woo and his young daughter, Su-an, as they board a high-speed train from Seoul to Busan. However, their journey quickly turns into a desperate fight for survival when an infected passenger turns into a zombie, causing an outbreak within the confines of the speeding train. As the infection spreads rapidly among the passengers, Seok-woo, Su-an, and a diverse group of survivors must band together to fend off the relentless zombie horde, navigating their way through the chaos to reach the supposed haven of

Busan. The movie combines intense action and heart-wrenching drama, highlighting themes of sacrifice, family, and human resilience.

The Host

The Host is a South Korean epic monster film released on a record number of screens in its home country on July 27, 2006, and became the highest-grossing South Korean film in history upon its release. The film obtained critical acclaim, grossed US\$90 million worldwide, and won several awards, including Best Film at the Asian Film Awards and the Blue Dragon Film Awards. "The Host" is a South Korean monster film that combines elements of horror, drama, and social satire. The movie follows the Park family as they grapple with a monstrous creature that emerges from the Han River in Seoul after toxic chemicals are irresponsibly discharged into the waterway. The creature captures the young daughter of the family, and her relatives—ranging from a sluggish snack bar owner to an unemployed college graduate and a teenage archery medalist—embark on a desperate rescue mission. Throughout the film, the family faces not only the physical threat of the monster but also governmental incompetence and social stigmatization, adding layers of commentary on environmental neglect and societal failures.

Demographic Suitability of the Selected Films

Cultural and Socio-political Representation

Social Issues and Modernization and Tradition in “Ne Zha” The implication of social issues in the film. Nezha's story is crafted as a symbol for the marginalized in society, reflecting the labeling and discrimination against those perceived as "different." This exploration not only deepens the narrative but also touches on ongoing debates and discussions about inclusivity and diversity in the real world. Additionally, the film explores the tension between modernization and tradition.

Nezha's story reveals how Chinese society strives to respect and maintain traditional values while accepting and integrating new ideas and modern thinking. This tension is not only evident in Nezha's conflicts with his parents and society but also reflected in the broader cultural adaptation and transformation process within society.

Self-identity is a significant element in both movies "Seediq Bale" and "Ne Zha". "Seediq Bale" emphasizes the cultural characteristics of the Seediq tribe, such as the symbolic significance of hair, tattoo culture, and their religious beliefs and rituals. These cultural details not only enrich the background of the story but also highlight the indigenous people's commitment and pride in maintaining their cultural identity. As for "Ne Zha", the film is based on the classic Chinese mythological novel "Investiture of the Gods" and reinterprets the story of Nezha. Nezha is a famous hero and deity in Chinese folklore, symbolizing rebellion and courage. The film's reshaping of the Nezha character represents a modern interpretation of traditional culture, making it more relatable to contemporary audiences.

The movie "The Wandering Earth" also reflects a variety of cultural and socio-political representations. Such as the first Reflection on Technology, National and International Cooperation and Political Implications and National Pride. The film "The Wandering Earth" profoundly reflects on the impact of technological progress on human society, especially highlighting the dual role of technology in the face of global disasters. By showcasing massive engines and other high-tech devices designed to save Earth from impending solar destruction, the film reveals how technology can either be humanity's salvation or a force of destruction. Regarding international cooperation, "The Wandering Earth" emphasizes the necessity and importance of global collaboration. The movie portrays people from various countries and cultural backgrounds working together to confront a global catastrophe, reflecting

the real-world need for international coordination and unity to solve significant global issues. Additionally, the film showcases the achievements and aspirations of the Chinese film industry, particularly in the science fiction genre. By highlighting the roles and contributions of Chinese characters, the film not only boosts national pride but also serves as a symbol of China's growing influence in global affairs.

The main issue of the movies "The Host" and "Train to Busan" is to uncover social class inequality and the government's inability. The movie "The Host" in which expired formaldehyde was poured into the Han River was based on the real incident in 2000 when the U.S. military in South Korea dumped formalin into the Han River. After the incident was revealed, the Korean people aroused strong protests and organized large-scale demonstrations. The glorious sacrifices of American soldiers, which were widely publicized by the Korean media in the movie, include the fact that the virus incident was classified as a secret, and they insisted on obeying the United States in projecting yellow bombs despite public demonstrations. It is a metaphor for the status gap between South Korea and the United States⁸. Even now, South Korea is still like this. It also mocked the Korean government. This movie is also one of the few Korean films with a hidden anti-American sentiment. And for the movie "Train to Busan," the characters showcase the different levels of Korean society, and how the upper class uses their resources and power to secure better chances of survival. This reveals issues of humanity in Korea, with the movie providing an in-depth exploration of the light and dark sides of human nature in desperate situations. The film also criticizes the Korean government, highlighting its hesitation and lack of transparency when dealing with the pandemic, reflecting real-world problems in bureaucracy.

⁸ Hye Seung Chung, "Monster and Empire: Bong Joon-Ho's the Host (2006) and the Question of Anti-Americanism," *Oakland Journal Number 20: Winter 2011* (2011).

Examination of Socio-political Factors

Government Policies and Censorship

Regarding the movie “The Wandering Earth”, China aims to seize international discourse power through science fiction films. In the realm of cinema, films that reflect the current realities in China and the history of the Chinese Communist Party are difficult to pass through ideological censorship. Even if they manage to get official approval and are well-received internationally, they may paradoxically increase Western viewers' antipathy towards China, which is clearly not in China's interest. Films showcasing traditional aspects of China, like those previously popularized internationally by directors such as Zhang Yimou, unfortunately sparked significant controversy domestically. They were criticized for pandering to the West with depictions of China's backwardness and ugliness, something the government obviously does not want to present to the world. Therefore, a preferable option is science fiction films, which not only avoid ideological entanglements but also portray a modern China exploring the future.

South Korea abolished movie censorship in 1984 and established a film rating system in 1988.⁹ It is also because of the permission of the system that Korea can produce such iconic movies. Although Korea had liberalized the movie censorship laws, in the movie “The Host” the portrayal and criticism of bureaucracy, especially through the representation of government roles in the film, reflects criticism of government officials as irresponsible and inefficient. This was still a relatively sensitive topic in Korean society at the time¹⁰. While it is basically a monster movie, it smartly uses the topic as a way to criticize how the Korean government has poorly

⁹ HONG EUNY, "Why Are Oppas Dominating? A Comprehensive Analysis of the Secrets Behind the Rise of Korea's Cultural Industry" (MacHouse, 2017).

¹⁰ Dan Ryan, "Anti-Americanism in Korean Films," *Colorado Journal of Asian Studies* 1, no. 1 (2012).

managed environmental pollution and public health. This way of using metaphors lets it talk about social issues without directly going against censorship rules. Similarly, the movie "Train to Busan" also challenges the existing censorship laws in Korea. Parts of the movie's plot can be interpreted as a metaphor for the Korean government's inability to handle public crises such as shipwreck disasters that happened in 2014. This indirect approach to criticism allows the film to avoid direct political sensitivity while still conveying the director's point of view to the audience.

The film "Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale" posed a challenge to government policies and censorship laws in Taiwan upon its release. It depicted the brutal oppression and resistance of Taiwan's indigenous people during the Japanese colonial period in a stark manner, potentially touching upon politically sensitive issues and historical narratives. Taiwan's censorship laws may require detailed scrutiny of films before release to ensure compliance with local laws and moral standards. However, the content and narrative style of "Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale" may have exceeded the restrictions of censorship standards, necessitating cuts or adjustments to certain scenes or dialogues to meet regulatory requirements. Despite this, the film was still released in Taiwan and garnered widespread discussion and acclaim locally and internationally. Its release may have challenged Taiwan's censorship laws to some extent, but it also reflected the director's commitment to historical truth and cultural memory.

Public Sentiment and Social Movements

Taiwanese cinema's influence on "Cape No. 7," is known for its classical narrative appeal. The incorporation of elements such as Taiwan-Japan sentiment, friendship, and romance allowed audiences to deeply understand and engage emotionally. Through witty dialogue, multilingualism, and animated flashbacks, the

film not only depicted relatable scenarios but also tapped into nostalgic emotions and memories, enabling viewers to experience a range of emotions. This approach not only resonated with audiences of all ages but also sparked the interest of younger viewers, playing an active role in public sentiment and social discourse.¹¹

The production style and thematic choices of the film "Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale" sparked extensive discussions in Taiwanese society. Firstly, the film's use of the Seediq language and the predominantly indigenous cast brought indigenous perspectives and language into the realm of film and television, which was relatively rare in Taiwanese cinema and caused a significant stir in society. The film's production highlighted indigenous subjectivity, prompting audiences to reexamine indigenous history and culture from different perspectives. Secondly, through director Wei Te-Sheng's interpretation of the Wushe Incident, the film stimulated reconsideration and discussion of the event. The incident was reinterpreted as an act of resistance against Japanese rule or as an expression of dissatisfaction with Japanese governance methods. This reinterpretation challenged traditional perceptions of the Wushe Incident, prompting a reevaluation of its nature and significance. Overall, "Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale" contributed to contemporary social movements and public sentiment by engaging in discussions and shaping understanding of indigenous history and the Wushe Incident, fostering deeper reflection and comprehension of these issues.¹²

Both movies involve social criticism, such as the exploration of government inaction. In the movie "The Host" The government characters in the movie are slow

¹² Lin, Pei-Ju. "The Historical Writing and Historical Consciousness in the Film *Seediq Bale*" (Taipei City University, 2015), Taiwan Thesis and Dissertation Knowledge Value-Added System., <https://hdl.handle.net/11296/tw89aq>.

to react to the monster's appearance and try to cover up the truth so as not to cause public panic. This reflects the reality of possible incompetence and evasion of responsibility by governments in handling crises. The movie uses exaggerated expressions to criticize the government's opacity and irresponsible attitude towards disaster management. For the movie "Train to Busan" the government and the media try to control information and avoid public panic. The film shows how in the face of disaster, official opinion and media reports can be manipulated to maintain social order or conceal the truth.

Analysis of Economic Factors

Market Forces and Audience Demographics

"Ne Zha" is one of China's highest-grossing animated films, and its success can be attributed to market trends and audience preferences. "Ne Zha" combines Chinese mythology, a rich vein of cultural heritage within a fresh and modern narrative technique that resonates deeply with local audiences and appeals to contemporary viewers. Rooting the narrative in traditional Chinese culture that not only advocates Nationalism but also leads to cultural resonance. Additionally, film ratings and high-quality content had also stood the most success in "Ne Zha". The family-friendly content and the animated movie attract families, particularly those with younger children. Recognizing this, the filmmakers crafted a narrative that combines humor, adventure, and moral lessons, making it appealing to both children and adults. This broad appeal helped the film achieve substantial box office success, as families often seek out entertainment that is suitable for all ages.

The reason why these two Korean movies succeed is because both directors combine market needs and audience demographics. In the movie "The Host", combining monster movies with family dramas, this hybrid genre choice caters to

young audiences who love thrillers and action genres, while adding family elements to expand to an adult audience looking for emotional resonance. Such a strategy allows the film to reach a wider audience. So as the movie, "Train to Busan", it combines the popular elements of zombie disaster and action thriller, capitalizing on the widespread global interest in the zombie theme, attracting the international market's love for high-tension and fast-paced narratives.

Diverse viewing experiences of the younger generation have expanded the audience market. Films blend emotions from different time periods, generations, and ethnic groups, allowing Taiwanese viewers to collectively experience unforgettable and beloved movie moments, which helps attract a wider audience. Additionally, changes in market demand also influence the direction of film production. Despite the long-term compression and neglect of local films, the success of "Cape No. 7" showcases a breakthrough approach. The film explores shared memories and emotions rather than just opting for a niche subject matter, enabling "Cape No. 7" to break out in the market and create box office miracles.

Production and Distribution Dynamics

Table 1 the production company and the funding

	<u>"The Wandering Earth"</u>	<u>"Ne Zha"</u>	<u>Seediq Bale</u>	<u>Cape No. 7</u>	<u>Train to Busan</u>	<u>The Host</u>
Production Companies	China Film Co., Ltd.	Beijing Enlight Media Co., Ltd.	ARS Film Production and Central Motion Picture Corporation.	ARS Film Production and Greener Grass Production.	Next Entertainment World (NEW)	Showbox And Chungeorahm Film
Funding	320M RMB	60M RMB	763.65 million NTD	530 million NTD	8.9 billion won (about US\$8 million)	11 billion won (about US\$10 million)

Exploration of Cultural Factors

Cultural Sensitivities and Values

"Cape No. 7" depicts Taiwan's ethnic diversity and reconciliation theme through diverse characters. "Representing various ethnic groups such as indigenous peoples, Hakka, Hoklo, and Japanese, the film highlights the diversity of Taiwanese society. Each character comes with their own background and story, showcasing the interactions and exchanges between different ethnic groups. Particularly, the character Yuuko represents the historical presence of Japanese people in Taiwan, echoing colonial history and relationships between different ethnic groups. Through her role,

audiences can see Taiwan's past as a society where multiple ethnic groups coexisted, as well as the interactions and integration between different ethnic groups.

In contrast, "Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale" intricately portrays the language, traditional attire, and religious beliefs of the Seediq tribe, presenting the uniqueness and diversity of the ethnic group. The protagonist, Mona Rudao, belongs to the Seediq tribe and is a leader of the Wushe Incident uprising, belonging to the Mahepo tribe. In contrast, the Dazayac tribe is in opposition to the Seediq tribe and later becomes allies of the Japanese army, led by Tetsuo Yaegashi. Through these depictions, the film demonstrates respect for Seediq tribe history and culture while presenting the complex relationships and conflicts between ethnic groups.¹³

In Korean culture, family is their priority due to the influence of Confucian¹⁴. This is also reflected in their performance of the movie. In the movie "The Host" the relationship and mutual support between the main character's family members is the core of the movie. The family members do whatever it takes to save the little girl who was kidnapped by the monster, illustrating the importance of family and the spirit of sacrifice in Korean culture. This emphasis on family and collective also reflects the collectivist values in East Asian cultures, in contrast to Western individualism. So as in the movie "Train to Busan" family responsibilities and parental roles are explored through the relationship between the main character Zong Wu and his daughter. This depiction of family reflects the strong emphasis in Korean culture on family bonding and protecting the next generation.

¹⁴ Tomasz Śleziak, "The Role of Confucianism in Contemporary South Korean Society," (2013).

Representation and Stereotyping

In "Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale," Mona Rudao embodies the heroic Seediq leader, demonstrating their leadership and courage. As the leader of the uprising against the Japanese colonial government, he plays a central role in the film. On the other hand, female characters typically fulfil supportive roles in family and emotions. While they may not directly engage in combat like male characters, their presence plays a crucial role in inspiring and supporting male characters, aligning with traditional expectations of women's roles in some stereotypes. Additionally, the film depicts inter-ethnic conflicts, such as the hostility between the Seediq and Dazayac tribes, reflecting tribal conflicts exacerbated within the context of the Wushe Incident. Overall, while the representation of characters and gender roles in the film may adhere to certain stereotypes, it also portrays the bravery and resilience of indigenous groups and the complexities of inter-ethnic relationships.

In "Cape No. 7," A-Chia and Yuuko play typical roles. A-Chia is a young man with musical talent but struggles with the conflicts between dreams and reality in everyday life, representing the struggles many young people face. His rebellion and impulsiveness challenge societal norms and reflect a typical teenage mentality. Yuuko embodies the typical image of a Japanese woman, disciplined and focused on work, but feeling lost and disappointed in the unfamiliar environment of Taiwan. The conflicts and misunderstandings between her and A-Chia reflect clashes of different cultural backgrounds and values, highlighting her discomfort in a foreign land. These characters represent specific gender and cultural concepts, exploring the complexity of these ideas through their interactions and development. Despite some stereotypical elements, these characters also exhibit a richness in personality and emotions, allowing the audience to resonate with them and understand their stories.

In these Korean movies, the directors provide a wealth of information that not only reflects Korean culture but also touches on common social issues. In the movie “The Host” the main character’s younger brother is a college student but cannot find a job in the highly competitive modern society. At the critical moment, he is like a monster throwing a petrol bomb behind him. The old man asked someone to help him run out of the hospital but was asked for a large sum of money. It nakedly shows that contemporary Korean masters lack practical ability but put money first. Then, this meaning behind the character was even more obvious in the movie “Train to Busan”. In the movie, those characters who are willing to actively help others are students, players, grandmothers, pregnant women, little girls, and homeless people; while those characters who only care about themselves are company bosses, train conductors, and celebrities with a certain status. Officials are important. The people at the top of the pyramid who hold a very high status in society and rise to the top by stepping on others are actually far less kind than the beggars at the bottom of society. This reflects apathy and self-centered self-interest in this society. In addition, “Train to Busan” had broken the image that women and children are relatively weak. In the end of the movie, the last ones who survived were the pregnant woman and the main character’s daughter. This is not common for our established impression; this makes the film transcend the scope of a pure zombie disaster film and become a work with rich cultural and social significance.

Overview of Related Studies

General Trends in Research Methodologies

In the previous literature review, we found out that the most common research methods used in the study are both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Specific Focus on Policy Perception Studies

Based on the previous research we refer to, “Movie Analysis Based on Role' Social Network”¹⁵, their research focuses on understanding how different groups perceive and react to various policies, especially those related to social, economic, and environmental issues and the influence of demographic factors such as age, gender, education, socioeconomic status, and geographic location on policy perception. The demographics and populations include age, generation, gender, education, and socioeconomic status. With the comparison of diverse populations, such as younger populations vs. older populations, studies focusing on younger demographics often emphasize their progressive stance on issues like climate change and technology policies, however, older adults tend to highlight their concerns with health care policies and social security. Another example is educational impact, higher education levels generally correlate with a more critical and informed perception of policies, leading to more nuanced opinions. By examining how specific demographics and diverse populations perceive policies, it provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing policy perception. This approach ensures that policies can be tailored to meet the needs and concerns of different groups effectively. In conclusion, prior research on policy perception has extensively covered various demographic factors, providing valuable insights into how different populations perceive policies. This analysis highlights the importance of considering these factors to develop more inclusive and effective policies.

¹⁵ Chung-Yi Weng, Wei-Ta Chu, and Ja-Ling Wu, *Movie Analysis Based on Roles' Social Network*, 2007 IEEE International Conference on Multimedia and Expo (IEEE, 2007).

Evaluation of Methodological Approaches

The Pros and Cons of quantitative Methods

The pros of the quantitative method:

- Results are quantifiable and comparable, allowing for precise statistical analysis and inference
- Relatively objective and not easily affected by the researcher's subjective factors
- Large samples can be used to improve the representativeness and reliability of research results
- The research results are highly reproducible and verifiable

The cons of the quantitative method:

- It is difficult to process non-digital data and cannot fully reveal the complexity of the research object
- Some important factors or variables may be overlooked
- Quantification fallacy may occur, which is the incorrect conversion of properties or attributes of the research object into numerical values
- It may be affected by sampling error, measurement error, modelling error, etc

Quantitative methods enable the use of surveys to collect data on audience demographics and their responses to political correctness in films. Analyze box office data and viewership statistics to quantify the relationship between political correctness and film success. However, the limitation of quantitative research is often rigid due to its reliance on structured instruments like surveys and questionnaires.

This rigidity can limit the ability to explore emergent themes and adapt to new insights that arise during the research process.

Analytical of Quantitative Method

The quantitative method provides our study with statistical analysis, generalizability, and objective measurement. Despite these strengths, quantitative methods often lack the depth and contextual understanding that qualitative approaches provide. They can miss the nuanced cultural and socio-political factors that qualitative methods can uncover. While qualitative methods face challenges in terms of subjectivity and generalizability. The success of these methods is often limited by the researcher's interpretive lens, which can introduce bias, and the typically small sample sizes, which limit the generalizability of findings.

Methodology Justification for Current Study

Selection and Adaptation of Methods

The rationale for adopting a quantitative methods approach in our study is rooted in the need to comprehensively explore the dynamics of political correctness in films from China, Taiwan, and South Korea. By using quantitative methods, the study aims to fully achieve its objectives, leveraging its strengths to complement its limitations. When it comes to the quantitative method, which examines how market forces and audience demographics affect the success of politically correct films, we conduct surveys and demographic analyses to quantify audience preferences and trends. The choice of quantitative methods is particularly justified given the characteristics of the Taiwanese college student population, who are the primary demographic for this study. With diverse perspectives and considerations, Taiwanese college students are highly engaged with digital media and streaming platforms.

Implementation of Proposed Methods

With the quantitative method, we are going to do the questionnaire. By doing the questionnaire, we aim to collect quantitative data on audience perceptions and

attitudes towards political correctness in films, and its impact on their viewing preferences and box office performance. With designing the sample, Taiwanese college students aged 18-22, given their relevance to the study's focus on younger demographics and cultural engagement, and structure. The quantitative methods approach is justified based on the study's aims to both explore and quantify the dynamics of political correctness in films.

Comparative Analysis and Methodological Validation

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

There are some potential challenges we might encounter when doing the quantitative method. Questionnaire responses can sometimes be limited by the inherent structure of the questions, potentially missing critical factors and variables. To address this limitation, our research will focus on carefully designing the questionnaire to cover a wide range of relevant topics, ensuring that we capture as much pertinent data as possible. By relying solely on a quantitative method, our research design will gather broad, generalizable data that can be analyzed statistically to identify patterns and trends in the portrayal of political correctness in films. This approach allows for objective measurement and ensures that the findings are applicable to a larger population, providing a clear, data-driven understanding of the issue without introducing the subjective biases that qualitative methods may bring.

Conclusion and Implications

Summary of Methodological Insights

Through the quantitative method, the use of questionnaire analysis and online data analysis conduct a nuanced analysis of political correctness in Asian blockbusters, providing a comprehensive understanding of complex phenomena such

as political correctness in movies, using a variety of methods to enhance Validity and reliability of research results.

Implications for Future Research

The value of a quantitative approach lies in its ability to systematically investigate complex phenomena like political correctness in films by providing measurable, objective data. Future research should focus on leveraging quantitative methods to offer generalizable insights across larger populations, enabling researchers to identify patterns and trends with greater precision. Quantitative research enhances the validity and reliability of findings through statistical analysis, offering clear evidence that can be tested and replicated. By employing structured data collection tools such as surveys and experiments, this method ensures that the research remains consistent and scalable. In studying diverse cultural settings, quantitative approaches can account for variations across demographics, allowing for broader comparisons and cross-cultural analysis. This methodology provides a solid framework for future studies, emphasizing clarity, scalability, and statistical rigor, making it ideal for capturing the multifaceted nature of political correctness in films and informing both academic theory and practical applications with a strong empirical foundation.

METHODOLOGY

The research adopted a quantitative approach, combining questionnaire analysis with literature analysis. This integration ensures a comprehensive exploration of political correctness in film.

Research Design

The study aims to conduct a comparative analysis of the portrayal of political correctness in six Asian blockbusters from China, Taiwan, and South Korea and its impact on box office performance. The research method employs a quantitative approach to gather data from film scripts, scenes, dialogues, reviews, and audience feedback. These analyses contextualize the films within societal frameworks, incorporating observations on political correctness and engaging in intertextual analysis with discourse practices. The research compares findings across the three countries, highlighting similarities and differences in the portrayal and impact of political correctness. The research question addresses how political correctness maintains power structures, suppresses dissenting voices, affects freedom of speech, and defines the scope of public discourse.

Source of Data

In this study, the data sources include four parts. Firstly, the box office data, obtainable from box office statistics websites, official reports from film companies, or relevant industry reports. Secondly, reviews and ratings are available from film review websites, critiques by movie critics, as well as ratings and feedback from the audience. Thirdly, film scripts and dialogues are accessible from official film websites, script publishers, or relevant databases. Lastly, academic articles and books,

analyze scholarly articles, books, and previous research on political correctness, film studies, and cultural studies to provide theoretical and contextual background.

Instrument and Data Collection

To effectively collect data for our comparative analysis, we have employed quantitative methods. We have designed and validated a comprehensive questionnaire divided into several parts: demographic variables (collecting age, gender, education level), influence and awareness of political correctness (assessing perceptions via Likert scale questions), the impact of political correctness on society and politics (evaluating perceived effects), perception of film industry trends (gathering views on current trends), and a comparative study of films (analyzing selected films' portrayal of political correctness).

A content validity assessment has preceded the distribution to ensure the questions align with established indicators. Likert scale questions have been used to measure agreement with statements using a five-point scale from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree."

The theoretical and contextual background has been established through a literature review of scholarly articles, books, and prior research on political correctness, film studies, and cultural studies. Data collection procedures have included gathering box office data from verified online statistics websites and industry reports, using statistical software for analysis. Audience feedback and ratings have been collected from film review websites and social media, supplemented by surveys and sentiment analysis to evaluate the tone of the feedback. This methodological approach ensures a thorough examination of the portrayal of political correctness in films and its impact on society and box office performance.

Tools for Data Analysis

In this study, we will utilize SPSS to perform the statistical analysis of our questionnaire data.

DATA ANALYSIS

The research questions focus on how political correctness in the Asian film industry is used to uphold or challenge societal and political power structures, whether suppressing dissenting voices, leading to social conformity, limiting freedom of speech, and shaping collective identity. The hypotheses revolve around the idea that political correctness can impact the portrayal of mainstream values and potentially influence box office performance by either supporting or suppressing diverse narratives.

From July to October, we collected nearly 200 responses from the students in Wenzao through Google Forms. According to the data we collected, 67% of the population is female, and the rest is male. As for the age distribution, 21 to 30 age accounts for 70% and 22% are below 20 years old. The data we collected are based on our research questions including “How do Asian films utilize political correctness to strengthen, and promote mainstream values?” “Can political correctness affect the box office?” and “How does awareness of political correctness affect the audience’s choice of Asian films, and what genres or themes do they prefer as a result?” We will use the data we collected to analyze it.

The Utilization of Political Correctness, Asian Films

The results of the statistical analysis reveal differing levels of understanding and concern about political correctness among respondents. For the first question, "Do you understand what political correctness is?", the significance value was 0.001, which is less than the threshold of 0.05, indicating a significant difference in understanding between different groups. This suggests that perceptions of political correctness vary widely depending on the respondents' background or grouping. In contrast, the second question, "Are you concerned about political correctness in Asian cinema?", yielded a significance value of 0.089, which is greater than 0.05, indicating no significant difference between groups. This suggests that concerns about political correctness in Asian cinema do not vary significantly among the respondents. Similarly, the third question, which asked whether a director's personal identity influences audience perceptions of political correctness in Asian cinema, produced a significance value of 0.153, also greater than 0.05, showing no significant differences in views among the groups. Thus, while understanding of political correctness shows notable group variation, opinions on its influence in Asian cinema do not appear to differ significantly between the surveyed groups.

"In Asian cinema, political correctness often aims to avoid offending identities—do you think this influences the audience's thinking?" reveals that the significance value is 0.056, which is close to the threshold of 0.05, indicating a marginal significance. This suggests that while the differences in responses between groups are not fully statistically significant, they are approaching a level of notable divergence. The F-value of 2.355 supports this interpretation, showing a degree of variance between groups. In summary, while the first two questions showed no significant differences between groups, the third question suggests that different groups may

have somewhat varying perspectives on whether avoiding offense in Asian cinema influences audience thinking. Though not reaching full significance at the 95% confidence level, the results suggest a potential trend toward differing opinions.

Box Office and Political Correctness

The analysis reveals several key findings. For the first question regarding the impact of political correctness and social norms on Asian cinema box office results, the F-value is 1.486, and the p-value is 0.209, indicating no significant difference in box office performance related to political correctness. Similarly, the second question about political correctness and social values affecting movie-watching decisions shows an F-value of 0.431 and a p-value of 0.786, suggesting a minimal influence of social values on this decision. The third question, which explores political correctness's role in public debates and controversies, also returns a non-significant result, with an F-value of 0.526 and a p-value of 0.717. The fourth question, investigating the relationship between political correctness and the success of Asian films, has an F-value of 1.664 and a p-value of 0.160, approaching significance but still below the threshold. Lastly, for the question about support for political correctness in films, the F-value is 0.943 with a p-value of 0.440, showing no significant difference in audience support for political correctness. In conclusion, none of the five hypotheses reached statistical significance ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that factors such as political correctness and social values do not have a significant impact on the variables examined, including box office performance, movie-watching decisions, public debate, or audience support for political correctness.

The gender analysis results, presented through a table with the Sum of Squares, degrees of freedom (df), Mean Square, F-value, and significance (p-value), were used

to test the significance of each hypothesis. For the first question, which examined the influence of political correctness and critics on Asian film box office performance, the F-value was 0.370 and the p-value was 0.544, indicating no significant effect. Similarly, the second question regarding the impact of political correctness and social values on movie-watching decisions had an F-value of 0.194 and a p-value of 0.660, showing no significant influence from social norms on these decisions. However, the third question, which investigated the influence of films addressing social issues and cultural taboos on public debate, resulted in a significant F-value of 4.885 and a p-value of 0.028, indicating a statistically significant impact of political correctness on public discourse and controversy. The fourth question, which explored the relationship between political correctness and box office success, yielded an F-value of 3.416 and a p-value of 0.066, approaching significance but not quite reaching it, suggesting a potential but not definitive link between political correctness and box office success. Lastly, the fifth question concerning the level of support for political correctness in films produced a significant F-value of 5.436 and a p-value of 0.021, showing that there are significant differences in the degree of support for political correctness in films among respondents. In summary, two of the hypotheses (third and fifth questions) showed significant results, indicating that political correctness significantly influences public debate and the level of support for it in films. The remaining hypotheses were not statistically significant, suggesting a lesser impact of political correctness on factors like box office performance and movie-watching decisions. The fourth question, while close to significance, did not fully meet the statistical threshold, implying a potential but not confirm influence of political correctness in this area. Overall, the analysis shows that while political correctness has a marked influence in certain areas, its impact is weaker in others.

Social Influence and Moviegoing

The analysis of how awareness of political correctness influences audience choices in Asian films reveals that the impact of political correctness awareness on movie selection is not statistically significant ($F = 1.695$, $p = 0.153$), as the p-value (0.153) exceeds the standard significance threshold of 0.05. This indicates that within this sample, political correctness awareness does not have a notable influence on audience preferences. Additionally, other factors such as "actor background," "storyline," "film genre," and "film-related activities" were also analyzed, but none showed a statistically significant relationship, with p-values all greater than 0.05. Therefore, the results of this ANOVA suggest that political correctness awareness does not significantly impact audience preferences for specific types or themes in Asian films. Political correctness awareness has no statistically significant effect on movie preferences ($F = 0.142$, $p = 0.867$), as the p-value (0.867) is far above the typical significance level of 0.05. This indicates that, within this sample, political correctness awareness does not significantly impact audience preferences. In addition, other factors such as "reputation," "actors," "director," "storyline," and "film genre" were also analyzed. Notably, the "storyline" factor had an F-value of 4.947 and a p-value of 0.008, which is less than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant relationship between storyline and audience preferences. This suggests that audiences are more likely to be influenced by the storyline than by their awareness of political correctness. Other factors, such as "film genre" ($F = 1.060$, $p = 0.349$), did not show significant p-values, meaning that political correctness awareness does not appear to drive clear preferences for specific genres or other factors. In conclusion, the findings suggest that political correctness awareness does not significantly impact audience choices regarding Asian films or their preferences for specific genres, themes, or

related promotional activities. Further research may be necessary to explore other factors that could influence the audience.

Our research found that different groups have significantly different understandings of political correctness, indicating that demographic factors, such as age or gender, influence people's perceptions of political correctness. However, concerns about political correctness in the Asian film industry do not show significant differences across different groups. Additionally, our analysis discovered that while the relationship between political correctness and box office success approaches significance, factors such as political correctness and social values are not decisive in determining box office success. As for how awareness of political correctness influences audiences' choices of Asian films, our analysis revealed that political correctness awareness is not the primary factor driving audiences' selections of Asian films. Instead, the storyline is a key factor that significantly influences audience preferences. Through our analysis, we identified a key finding worth discussing; political correctness has a substantial impact on public discourse, suggesting that films involving politically sensitive or controversial topics contribute to public debate by reinforcing or challenging mainstream social values.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to find out how political correctness affects mainstream values, box office, and audiences' thinking. To understand how themes of political correctness affect the market performance of films in Asian countries.

Referring to the existing literature, political correctness has caused great polarization in society, and the views on both sides involve important concerns and are reasonable in some respects. "PC culture's influence is particularly obvious in mainstream media. From 2016's all-female "Dead Man" to Asian representation in "Crazy Rich Asians," PC culture's influence on modern films and publications cannot be ignored." Supporters and opponents of PC culture are divided over its impact. Supporters believe that this helps create a more inclusive social environment, while opponents believe that PC culture limits freedom of speech and even affects creative freedom, suppresses discussion of certain social issues, and causes some important voices to be omitted or suppressed¹⁶. In addition, based on the "FoxGenovese-TwoViewsDebating-1995", Fox-Genovese critiques the imposition of norms, such as speech and sex norms, and their impact on academic freedom, arguing that they stifle debate, create a "cult of victimization," and foster an environment where free expression is limited¹⁷.

Comparing the existing literature to the key findings "political correctness has a substantial impact on public discourse". While limiting freedom of speech, it affects the public discourse, however, when movies such as "Seediq Bale" involve political correctness culture and have made a huge impact on the Asian film industry. It

¹⁶ Tahsin Tasnia Simi, "Political Correctness in Media: Necessary or Not?," The Financial Express, 2022, <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/lifestyle/others/political-correctness-in-media-necessary-or-not-1642591613>.

¹⁷ Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Larry Scanlon, "<Foxgenovese-Twoviewsdebating-1995.Pdf>," (1995).

doesn't seem "Seediq Bale" has restricted creative freedom and limits the public's freedom of speech by the political correctness culture. On the contrary, it successfully made a substantial impact on public discourse.

According to the data analysis, there are statistically significant findings that show the understanding of political correctness among different groups, indicating that different backgrounds can lead to the different aspects of political correctness (with a significance value of 0.001, which is below the threshold of 0.05).

In addition, political correctness has significantly affected the public debate and controversy, this can be shown from the F-value (4.885) and P-value (0.028). This means that films involving politically sensitive topics contribute to public debate by reinforcing or challenging mainstream values.

On the contrary, political correctness has non-significant findings on box office and the audience's decision to watch the film, as none of the analyzed factors regarding box office showed statistical significance (p-values such as 0.209 and 0.786). Also, the awareness of political correctness has non-significant findings on the audience's decision to the film or to a specific topic. Instead, the storyline of a film (F-value of 4.947, $p = 0.008$) was found to be a more important factor in influencing audience preferences.

Our study successfully achieved its objective by revealing the relationship between political correctness and box office performance, while also providing deep insights into audience behavior and public discourse within the film markets of China, Taiwan, and South Korea. The findings show that political correctness has no significant impact on box office performance (e.g., p-values of 0.209 and 0.786), highlighting that other factor, such as storyline ($p = 0.008$), play a more crucial role in attracting audiences. This indicates that successful films rely more on engaging

narratives rather than political themes. Furthermore, political correctness significantly influences public discourse (F-value 4.885, $p = 0.028$), reinforcing or challenging mainstream values and reflecting its importance in social and cultural contexts. Although political correctness has little effect on audience decisions to watch a film, audience behavior is clearly driven by the plot, emphasizing the central role of storytelling in a film's success. Additionally, our research found significant differences in the understanding of political correctness across various cultural backgrounds ($p < 0.001$), demonstrating how social values operate within different markets and enriching our understanding of the relationship between political messaging, audience reception, and public discourse. These multifaceted findings provide practical strategic insights for filmmakers, helping them effectively balance artistic expression, political messaging, and commercial success across diverse markets such as China, Taiwan, and South Korea.

Based on the results of this study, we propose the following recommendations: filmmakers should focus on enhancing the appeal of storylines, as they have a significant impact on audience preferences; the presentation of political correctness themes should be adapted flexibly for different markets. Although political correctness has no significant impact on box office performance, it plays an important role in public discourse. Further research on audience behavior could help refine market strategies.

Appendix

您好！謝謝您抽空填寫本問卷。這是一份學術論文的問卷，本問卷的研究主題為：

政治正確與亞洲電影產業：文藻人的看法

希望能借重您寶貴的經驗與知識，提出對於亞洲電影與政治正確之間關聯性的看法，您所提供之各項資料僅作為學術研究之用，絕不對外披露，敬請安心作答。感謝您對本研究的熱心支持。

私立文藻外語大學 國際事務系

指導教授：林建宏

學生：黃婷郁、鍾佳秀、林品宏

敬上

政治正確與亞洲電影產業：文藻人的看法

一、【基本資料】

1.您的性別:

男 女 其他

2.您的年齡:

20 歲以下 21-30 歲 31-40 歲 41-50 歲 Over 50 歲

3.您曾看過哪些電影？（複選）

《賽德克·巴萊》 《海角七號》 《流浪地球》

《屍速列車》 《漢江怪物》 《哪吒之魔童降世》

其他: _____

二、【影響力和認知度】

1.您理解什麼是政治正確嗎？

非常理解 大致理解 部分理解 有聽過但沒理解 從沒聽過

2.您有關注亞洲電影中有關政治正確（性別、種族、文化等敏感話題）的議題嗎？

非常關心 偶爾關心 無意見 很少關心 從不關心

3.考慮到政治正確對觀眾接受度和評論界好評的潛在影響，您認為政治正確會影響亞洲電影的票房表現？

會影響 不會影響 不確定

4.鑑於政治正確對社會價值觀和規範的描繪，政治正確會影響您觀看電影的決定嗎？

政治正確性會強烈影響我的決定

政治正確性會在某種程度上影響我的決定

不，這不會影響我的決定

5.您認為下列哪些因素對亞洲電影的票房表現影響最大？

政治正確性 演員陣容 故事情節 電影類型

預告片、電影推廣活動

6.您認為下列幾部電影中，有哪部有含政治正確因素？(可複選)

《賽德克·巴萊》 《海角七號》 《流浪地球》

《屍速列車》 《漢江怪物》 《哪吒之魔童降世》

三、【社會和政治影響】

1.政治正確在亞洲電影當中，往往以遵循社會身分的方式呈現，你認為是否會間接影響到觀眾的思想？

會 不會 不知道

2. 政治正確的概念在亞洲社會中對言論自由的限制程度有多大？

完全限制，禁止爭議性或異議觀點

部分限制，鼓勵自我審查

幾乎沒有限制

3.在有關處理社會問題和文化禁忌方面的電影當中，政治正確如何影響此類電影公共討論和辯論的範疇？

正面影響，敘述歷史等題材達到政治正確性口碑良好

負面影響，敘述歷史等題材達到政治正確性卻造成反彈聲浪

沒有影響

非常支持 支持 無意見 不支持 非常不支持

4.您支持政府用推廣國片的方式達成政治正確來鞏固自己的政權嗎？

5.您支持導演把政治正確性優先擺第一來避免爭議嗎？

6.在亞洲電影背景下，一部電影的政治正確性與其票房成功之間存在相關性
請問是否支持這個說法？

7.您對於電影中呈現政治正確性的支持程度如何？

8.您支持政治正確性有助於建立更多包容性和多元化的電影行業？

9.您是否支持政治正確性成為電影評論的一個重要標準？

10.您是否支持亞洲電影加入更多多元化的元素（少數族群，LGBTQ 等）

11.對於電影中角色的多元化（例如性別
、種族、性取向等）有何看法？

四、【觀眾觀影行為和偏好】

1. 您通常在哪裡觀看電影？

電影院 在線流媒體平台 DVD/藍光 電視 其他：

2. 您通常選擇觀看電影的主要原因是什麼？（可複選）。

口碑 演員 導演 故事情節 政治正確性 電影類型

3. 您認為電影製作人應該如何平衡政治正確性和創作自由？

優先考慮政治正確性 優先考慮創作自由 找到中間點

其他：_____

4. 您認為電影製作人應該如何平衡政治正確性和創作自由？

優先考慮政治正確性 優先考慮創作自由 找到中間點

其他：_____

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