

A Comparative Study on the Development and Present Status of the Study on Chinese and Western Film and Television

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Abstract

Under the development of economic globalization and information technology, cultural industries has gained rapid development, and the traditional economic model has been greatly influenced; as far as the developed countries are concerned, the benefits received by the culture industries has exceeded that by many traditional manufacturing industries and the culture industries have become the pillar industry of the national economy. In the context of globalization, the development level of film and television industry as an important branch of modern art directly reflects the strength of the national cultural industry. While China is rich in cultural resources, its development in the film and television industry is still lagging, and the quality of the film and TV series it produces is relatively low despite the great quantity and high box office. To solve this problem requires making a comparative study on Chinese and western film and TV industries. To this end, this paper firstly presents the differences between the development of Chinese and western film and TV industries, analyzes the factors influencing the development of such industries, puts forward reasons for such differences, and summarizes the problems and the relevant reasons of China's film and television industry.

Keywords: Film and Television Industry, Chinese And Western, Comparison.

1. RESEARCH OVERVIEW

1.1 Research background

1.1.1 Background of culture globalization

With the development of information technology, exchanges and cooperation among countries are becoming more frequent not only in economic fields but also in cultural aspects. At present, cultural industries have become pillar industries in the developed world. Take the U.S. for example, as a great cultural output power, it has succeeded in transmitting Hollywood, NBA, Grammy and other culture symbols to the whole world, not only displaying its national culture, but also gaining high profits, which plays an important role in promoting the economic development.

1.1.2 Background of the high development of film and television industry

Film and television industry is an important part of modern culture as well as the perfect fusion of modern and traditional arts. Film and television works not only spread such modern pop culture as literature, drama, photography, and music, but also embody the historical culture such as sculpture and architecture, which contains both enjoyment and ideological connotations. Meanwhile, as film and television technology becoming mature, the fantasy and magnificent world that cannot be presented in traditional film and television can be shown perfectly in modern film and television works, greatly promoting the development of the film and television industry.

1.1.3 Low development level of domestic film and television industry

China has a history of 5,000 years of civilization. With its numerous cultural allusions as film and television resources, it has enormous development potential in this industry. Meanwhile, China has paid enough attention to the development of culture industry and the strategy of promoting the state by culture has become an

important direction of the state. However, the level of development in the film and television industry of our country is still low. On one hand, many traditional Chinese cultural resources and historical allusions have not been given good play; instead, some of them are being developed in other countries, for example, the film *Kung Fu Panda*, where all subjects are derived from the Chinese culture, and it is a pity that China failed in making full use of these cultural resources. On the other hand, most of our own films and TV series have not been recognized by audiences, whether the "horrible series" satirized extensively or the films of low quality yet big budget in the market, which have exposed the problem of low development level of China's film and television industry.

1.2 Literature review

The financing mechanism of the American film and television industry is more perfect, its financing system is more mature, its division of labor is more detailed, and its film industry has more talents. At the same time, the development of the derivative industry of the American film industry is relatively high, and that of China's film industry is just in its infancy. As far as film companies are concerned, the U.S. has numerous film enterprises of strong comprehensive strength, which are distributed evenly; while China's film enterprises are relatively weak in their comprehensive ability and the vast majority of its film resources are collected in a minority of firms. (Lu and Wang,2006)To promote the development of China's film and television industry first requires reforming the philosophy of screen culture management. Limited by the film and television culture management system, many excellent films and TV series in our country are not able to be shown on the screen, which has greatly hindered the development of China's film and television industry. Secondly, China should establish a perfect system of film and television industry, attach importance to the business process, form a multi-mode trading model, build a tiered star system, take the development path of collectivization, and pay attention to the cultivation of talents. Thirdly, we should build a perfect industrial chain system, attach importance to the development of the derivative of film and television works, and promote the integration of industries. Finally, it is necessary to build a diversified financing mode, widen the financing channels of the film and television industry, and build a diversified financing investment model, so as to solve the problem of insufficient funds for the development of the film and television industry. (Li and Xu,2010) There are several problems in China's film and television industry: firstly, the design level of film script is low, most of the plots are boring and monotonous, and there are few attractive logical plots of twists and turns. Secondly, in the inheritance of traditional culture, most of our films and TV series just directly copy the existing plots, without making many changes. In contrast, foreign films often use traditional cultural allusions to express new stories. Finally, images in China's film and television works are not plump: good characters are always good and bad ones always bad, lacking the establishment of three-dimensional characters. (Wang,2016)

2. DEVELOPMENT STATUS OF CHINESE AND WESTERN FILM AND TELEVISION INDUSTRIES AND THE ANALYSIS OF IT

2.1 Chinese and western film box office

This study collects the statistics of the differences between Chinese and American film box office from 2010 to 2014, as shown in Figure 1:

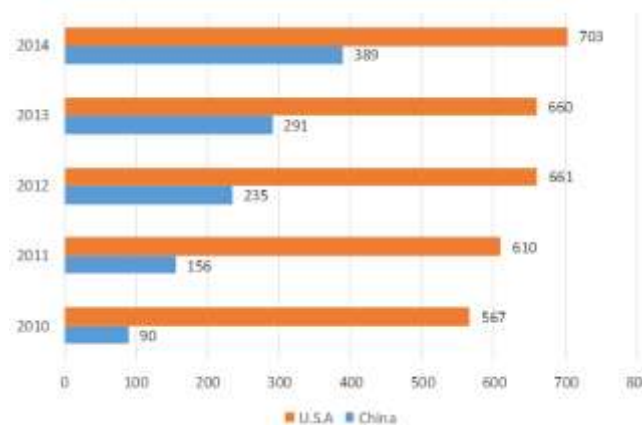


Figure 1. Box Office Receipts in China and America

From the above figure we can know that from 2010 to 2014, the American film box office was always better than Chinese film box office; even in 2014 when Chinese film gained the highest box office, the box office of the U.S. was still more than twice that of China. (Wang and Zhang, 2016) However, a problem rose in that period that the American box office did not change greatly, and the level of China's box office was in a period of rapidly rising, from one-seventh of that of the U.S. in 2010 to near one-second in 2014, which was a sign that China's film industry had made important achievements. (Li et al., 2010) In-depth analysis tells us that China's film and television industry has the following shortcomings compared with that of the United States:

First of all, although China is the world's most populous country, whose population is several times that of the United States, there is still a huge gap between China's domestic box office and that of the United States; although China's box office has developed into the world's second, the problem still exists that China's film industry is still lagged behind.

Second, China-made films are of poor quality. In 2014, for example, in the top ten films in box office in China, there were only four China mainland-made films, *The Monkey King: Uproar in Heaven*, one of the rest was shot by Hong Kong, and the rest five were all shot by the U.S.; while all of the top ten films in box office in the U.S. were shot by the U.S. itself. This is a good example for the wide difference between the quality of Chinese films and that of American films. (Wang and Zhao, 2013)

Finally, the American film industry's profits show the phenomenon of diversity, that is, only about one third of the profits come from the box office, and the vast majority of the profits are from film souvenirs or related videos. In contrast, 90% of the profits of China's film industry are from the box office of films, only a little proportion of them are from the derivative products, and there are few related video products, which reveals the problem that China's film industry relies too much on box office. At the same time, the copyright awareness of China's film industry is weak and there are many piracy problems. People can view most films online, without the need to purchase audio-visual products (Wu et al., 2013).

2.2 Circulation of Chinese and western films

The circulation of Chinese and western films from 2010 to 2014 are shown in Figure 2:

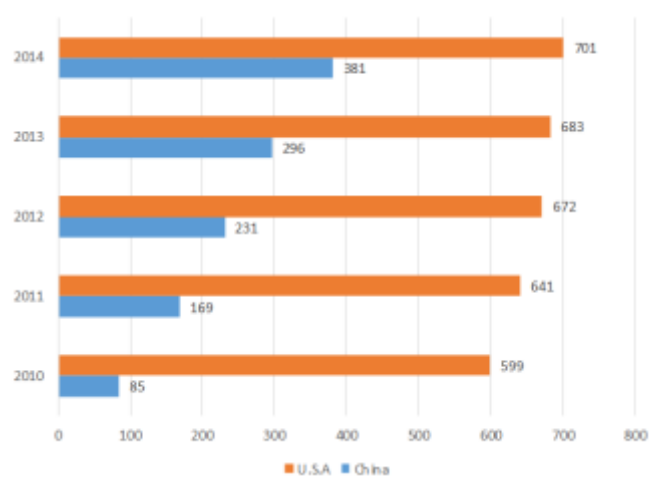


Figure 2. Film Circulation in China and The United States

The above figure shows that the circulation of American films was always above that of China's films. After the implementation of the movie rating system in 2014, the film circulation of the U.S. reached 701, the highest since it fell to the bottom in 2009; from 2010 to 2014, the American film circulation has been rising, which was due to the rapid development the U.S. economy regained after the economic crisis. In contrast, China's film circulation is developing at a rapid pace, with only 85 films released in 2010. By 2014, 381 films have been released and the development has been leapfrogging. But most of Chinese films are still unable to get qualifications of official release in the theater, and it is hard for them to obtain the appropriate income from box office. The United States, on the other hand, has independent theaters, enabling those films of low costs and not meeting the tastes of the public to be released in theaters, which prompts the American films to develop in the

direction of diversified flourish.

2.3 Penetration rate of Chinese and western films

Culture embodied in the film is abstract, and audiences of different educational level and cultural background may have very different understanding of film. Therefore, the development of the same film in different countries may vary to some extent. In the context of cultural globalization, however, this kind of deviation is getting smaller and smaller, and people of different countries have a certain understanding of other cultures and have a higher degree of acceptance. In the film industry, the penetration rate refers to the proportion of the films of exporting countries in the market of importing countries. The formula is as follows:

$$R_f = \frac{X_f}{M_f} \quad (1)$$

where, R_f represents the penetration rate of the exporting country's film to the importing country, X_f represents the total box office of the exporting country to the importing country, and M_f represents the total box office of the importing country's film industry. To compare the penetration rate of the films in China and the United States, it is needed to choose a third country, which is Japan in this paper. There are two main reasons for it: first, the development level of Japanese film is high, which is only lower than that of the United States and China; second, Japan's cultural environment is relatively open, and pluralistic culture can be accepted very well. The film penetration rates of China and the United States are shown in Figure 3:

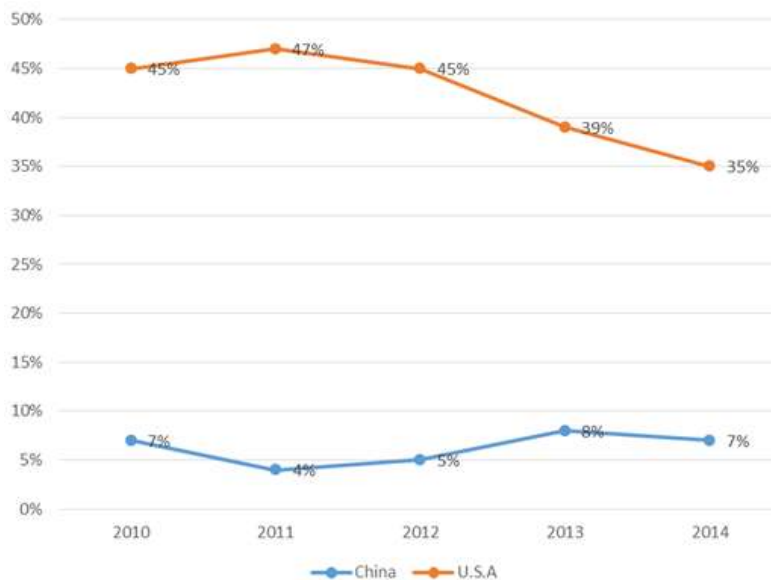


Figure 3. Film Penetration of China and The United States

Analysis of the figure shows that taking Japan as the standard, the penetration rate of China was below 10%, and that of the United States maintained at around 40%. Although the penetration rate of American films presented a downward trend after the year of 2012, as a result of the fact that Japan can accommodate multicultural and that it introduces films from a number of different countries, the United States remained the highest penetration rate in the film market of Japan.

3. INFLUENCE FACTORS OF THE DEVELOPMENT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHINESE AND WESTERN FILM AND TELEVISION INDUSTRIES

3.1 Building the influence factor model

3.1.1 Unit root test

In the unit root test, the input values are the mean, variance, covariance, etc. The formula is as follows:

$$\begin{cases} E(u_t = \mu) \\ Var(u_t) = \sigma^2 \\ Cov(u_t, u_{t-s}) = \gamma_s \end{cases} \quad (2)$$

According to the above formula, added a non-stationary time series, set as $\{u_t\}$; after d times of changes, $\{u_t\}$ becomes a stationary series, and it is known that the series $\{u_t\}$ is d-order integration. The PP testing equation formula is as follows:

$$\Delta Y_t = \alpha + \beta X_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t \quad (3)$$

Its statistical magnitude is:

$$t_{pp} = \frac{\sqrt{\gamma_0 t_\eta}}{\omega} - \frac{(\omega^2 - \gamma_0)}{2\omega\bar{0}} \quad (4)$$

The auto-regression consensus estimation formula is shown as below:

$$\omega^2 = \gamma_0 + 2 \sum_{i=1}^q \left(1 - \frac{j}{q+1}\right) \gamma_1, \gamma_j = \frac{1}{t} \sum_{i=j+1}^T \psi' \psi'_{i-j} \quad (5)$$

Suppose the variable H_0 obeys the unit root test and is non-stationary, and the variable H_1 does not obey the unit root test and is stable. When the value of t_{pp} is below the prescribed threshold, H_0 is accepted, and when the value of t_{pp} is higher than the prescribed threshold, H_1 is accepted.

3.1.2 Co-integration test

This study mainly adopts the Johansen maximum likelihood method for the co-integration test. Suppose that there is a vector set as x_t , which is the vector composed of n potential endogenous variables, and that x_t is limited to the unconstrained laggard k-step vector autoregressive, its formula is as follows:

$$X_t = A_1 X_{t-1} + \dots + A_k X_{t-k} + \psi_t \psi_t \sim IN(0, \Omega) \quad (6)$$

where, A_t is the parameter matrix of $(n \times n)$. The formula is as follows:

$$\Delta X_t = \Pi X_{t-k} + \sum_{t=1}^{k-1} \Gamma_t \Delta X_{t-1} + \psi_t \quad (7)$$

and:

$$\Gamma_t = -I + \sum_{j=1}^i A_j (i = 1, \dots, k-1), \Pi = -I + \sum_{j=1}^i A_j \quad (8)$$

Next, estimate the cointegrated vector, and obtain two residual vectors of $(m \times 1)$, which are R_{0t} and R_{kt} respectively. Construct the matrix based on it, and obtain the vectors of the matrix and the eigenvalue equation as follows:

$$\beta: S_{ij} = T - 1 \sum_{t=1}^T R_{ij} R'_{ij}, i, j = 0, k$$

$$|\lambda S_{kk} - S_{k0s_{\infty}^{-1}} S_{0k}| = 0 \quad (9)$$

The maximum value of it is calculated as shown below:

$$LR_{max} = -T \ln(1 - \lambda_{r+1})$$

$$LR_{irace} = -T \sum_{i=r+1}^n \ln(1 - \lambda_i) (r = 0, 1, 2, \dots, n-1) \quad (10)$$

Put the results into the software to calculate and draws the conclusion: the film industry of China and that of the United States trade has a large deficit, and influenced by GDP per capita and other factors, there are still some major problems between the two sides (Jia, 2015).

4. ANALYSIS OF THE REASONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHINESE AND WESTERN FILM AND TELEVISION INDUSTRIES

4.1 Differences in the production factors of Chinese and western film and television industries

4.1.1 Cultural resources

China's cultural resources are abundant, historical allusions are numerous, and many cultural resources can be used in the film industry. Therefore, many of our films are based on history, such as Emperor Wu, the Three Kingdoms Period, detective Di Renjie, Water Margin, the Kangxi Dynasty, etc. At the same time, as China experienced the arduous and extraordinary war of resistance against Japan, there are numerous film and television works of the anti-Japanese theme, many of which are excellent works, such as *Drawing Sword*, etc. On the one hand, they can only be accepted by a minority of Chinese audiences; on the other hand, the rich resources also suppress the imagination of writers, which is not conducive to the development of the film and television industry (Wang and Zhang, 2015). In contrast, it has been only two hundred years since the establishment of the U.S.; the short history of America determines the fact that most of the film and television works are based on imagination and the future theme, such as The X-men, Transformers, Marvel, and the Super Heroes series, etc., which are all derived from the rich imagination of the screenwriter, and such culture can be more easily accepted by foreigners; that is why there is a certain gap between the cultural resources of film and television industries of China and that of the western countries (Huang, 2014).

4.1.2 Industrial development scale

The majority of the film industry of China is scattered, and most of them cannot support the shooting of large film and TV series independently. At present, China has more than six thousand television program production agencies, more than two hundred television series production agencies, more than 40 film studios, and more than 40 film feature sites; such a large industry is not inferior to many powerful countries in film and television industry; however, China is still relatively backward in film and television field in that the production units are lack of organic combination and are geographically dispersed, resulting that it often needs to find the shooting places and properties at many different places to shoot a film, which is against the development of film industry (Gao and Wang, 2014). In contrast, the film industry scale of the U.S. has been highly developed. A good example is Hollywood, which not only provides a talent market for people who want to be engaged in the film and television industry, but also promotes the cooperation among numerous producers, directors and actors and actresses, effectively enhancing the production level of film and television works. At the same time, Hollywood has excellent infrastructure, and all links can run like an assembly line, which is the proof that the American film and television industry has been fully mature, formed the brand effect, and become the holy land of the world's film industry (He, 2014).

4.2 Different market demands of Chinese and western film and television industries

4.2.1 Relatively weak competitiveness of China-made films

First of all, China's film and television works are less competitive. Take for example such popular TV programs in 2013 as *I Am A Singer* and *Dad, Where Are We Going*, whose audience rating was high and which have been transferred to the big screen and made good profits. However, the two programs essentially just imitated foreign programs or were made through the purchase of the copyrights of the original programs; they were less competitive in the market due to the lack of originality though they are legal (Zhou, 2008).

4.2.2 Lack of reasonable analysis of the receptivity of foreign audience

Most of American films do not contain distinctive political colors or thoughts that cannot be accepted by other cultures, which reflects the fact that the American film industry has made thorough analysis of the receptivity of foreign audience, enabling them to better balance the publicity of American culture and the acceptance of audience. In contrast, China's film industry is lack of the analysis of the receptivity of foreign audience and

many excellent domestic works cannot be understood by them; they can neither bring good profits from the box office nor attain the goal of cultural publicity, which is conducive to the development of China' film industry (Xue, 2016).

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