

'Detective Chinatown' Series: Writing and Rewriting of Orientalism through the Lens of Culture Industry

Authors : Cai Yiting

Abstract : As China's globalization has accelerated, Chinese films have begun to explore and express foreign cultures with greater frequency while simultaneously disseminating Chinese culture. Films shot abroad, including Finding Mr. Right (2013), Somewhere Only We Know (2015), and Wolf Warrior 2 (2017), and others, can be viewed as a reflection of how Chinese cinema conceptualizes and represents foreign countries in the context of globalization. Furthermore, they facilitate the exchange of Chinese and foreign cultures in the context of China's 'going out' policy and the Belt and Road Initiative. Nevertheless, it is apparent that these films are primarily motivated by commercial considerations with regard to their initial release. The consistent placement of the Chinatown Detective' film series in the Chinese New Year slot is indicative of the significant influence of the cultural industry on the series' creation. Moreover, the series represents Chen Sicheng's inaugural venture into filming in a multitude of international locations. This paper examines the film series Detective Chinatown through the lens of the cultural industry, analyzing how its production and presentation cater to the demands of the cultural industry by presenting Orientalism and contributing new connotations to it. The series, a product of standardized mass production, commodification and global appeal, reflects Orientalist representations through the exoticization of Chinese culture and the stereotypical and commercial-oriented imagination of Bangkok, New York and Tokyo. This study provides an understanding of the film series' role in contributing to contemporary Orientalism in the context of the culture industry.

Keywords : orientalism, culture industry, Chinese globalisation, Detective Chinatown

Conference Title : ICCFMS 2025 : International Conference on Cinema, Film and Media Studies

Conference Location : Tokyo, Japan

Conference Dates : June 10-11, 2025