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## An Analysis of the Interactive Mechanism between Dissemination Power and Influence of Legal-themed Films in the Streaming Meida Era: A Case Study of the Korean Film *Silenced*

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**Abstract:** This paper selects the Korean film *Silenced* as a case study, situating the research within the context of global communication of digital media. It focuses on discussing how legal-themed films leverage streaming media platforms to achieve cross-cultural communication and construct social value. Based on communication theories, this paper analyzes the reshaping effect of streaming media technologies on film dissemination ecology systematically. Then take *Silenced* as a typical case to analyze its diverse dissemination pathways, from traditional theatrical releases to streaming media platforms. Finally, it provides an objective analysis of the current practical dilemmas in the dissemination of legal-themed films and puts forward suggestions, such as integrating dissemination channels, innovating technological applications, adopting localized narrative strategies and so on. The research results indicate that, in the era of streaming media, legal-themed films have gained unprecedented social mobilization capacity and global dissemination influence. Their dual positive roles in cultural communication and social transformation should be fully utilized.

**Keywords:** Legal-themed films; *Silenced*; Streaming media platforms; Communication theories

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**标题：**流媒体时代法治题材电影传播力与影响力互动机制探析——以韩国电影《熔炉》为例

**摘要：**本文选取韩国电影《熔炉》作为研究案例，立足于数字媒体全球化传播语境，重点探讨法治题材电影如何借助流媒体平台实现跨文化传播与社会价值建构。文章采用传播学理论，系统的分析了流媒体技术对电影传播生态的重塑作用。继而以《熔炉》为典型案例，剖析其从传统院线放映到流媒体平台传播的多元化传播路径。最终客观指出当前法治题材电影传播的现实困境，并提出整合传播渠道、创新技术应用以及本土化叙事策略等建议。研究结果表明，在流媒体时代，法治题材电影获得了前所未有的社会动员能力和全球传播影响力，应当充分发挥其在文化传播和社会变革中的双重积极作用。

**关键词：**法治题材电影；《熔炉》；流媒体平台；传播学理论

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## Introduction

Film is a kind of mass communication media which utilizes audiovisual language to artistically reconstruct social realities. Law and art, as different ways to understand the objective world, collectively constitute significant dimensions of the ideological superstructure. Consequently, legal-themed films, as an intersection between law and popular culture, typically employ a civilian narrative perspective to objectively portray the multidimensional conflicts involving justice, morality, and human nature, demonstrating distinct realist characteristics.

The evolution of media technology profoundly influences the discourse expression and the dissemination forms of films. As Kittler (1992) asserts, technology may constitute the foundational condition of discourse formation. Under the wave of digital transformation, the rapid development of streaming media technology is profoundly reconstructing the content production paradigm and dissemination ecology pattern of the film industry.

The Korean film *Silenced*, serving as a paradigmatic case study of cinematic works that combine artistic merit with profound social impact, is adapted from a real incident at a school for deaf-mutes in Gwangju, Korea in 2005. Through the narrative lens of art teacher Kang Inho, the film exposes systemic violence in school and institutional corruption within the educational system. The film culminates in a tragic resolution where the suspects escape lawful punishment, thereby delivering a potent societal indictment. Although the film was released over a decade ago, its continued influence in the streaming era still holds significant research value.

## **1. The Technology of Streaming Platforms and its New Applications**

As a fundamental material dimension of human existence, time and space constitute the most intuitive representational carriers of social structures and transformations. Technology changes, especially those involving communication technologies, accurately reflect the changes in time and space. However, in the broader context of these changes, the influence of technology does not play an isolated role. Castells (2014), in a study on the structure and dynamics of the network society, describes the emergence of new patterns or processes of space and time: flowing space and infinite time, which precisely capture the essential characteristics of the new spatiotemporal paradigm in the digital age. From this theoretical perspective, the evolution of technology and the reconstruction of time and space form a dialectical relationship between each other. Technology evolution is not only the explicit indicator of the transformation of spatial and temporal structure, but also the internal driving force to promote this transformation.

The rise and development of streaming media technology is the most representative material carrier of this shift in the spatiotemporal paradigm. It is a form of media that enables the real-time transmission of continuous information streams from content producers to end users through digital technology. When it is combined with broadband internet, streaming media technology has gradually overcome the technical bottlenecks related to receiving terminals and transmission channels. Today, it has been able to efficiently achieve the instantaneous transmission of high-definition audiovisual content, breaking the previous restrictions on data transmission quality and speed. (Chang Jiang, 2020, p. 4-10) In other words, through algorithm-driven content distribution networks, efficient information flow transmission is achieved, which has completely reconstructed the spatiotemporal coordinates of traditional audiovisual communication.

The arrival of the streaming media era has directly driven the comprehensive improvement of film and television production standards. In order to meet the demand for high-quality content from platforms, advanced production techniques, such as 4K or 8K ultra-high-definition production and the application of HDR technology, have become industry standards, leading to a substantial increase in the production costs of individual works. Furthermore, in terms of distribution and screening, streaming media platforms have broken the decades-long window period monopoly of traditional cinemas. The binary structure formed by the cinema space and screen time has been deconstructed, replaced by an algorithm-driven flowing space and flexible time. This change has not only brought about a shift in physical space but, with the support of digital infrastructure, has greatly altered the viewing experience. (Yun Ruijing, 2023, p. 27) Accordingly, the development of streaming media has reshaped the temporal and spatial dimensions of film aesthetics, shifting the fixed cinema's black-box space to a media-space viewing model primarily based on online platforms. It has eliminated the spatiotemporal barriers of traditional film dissemination, facilitated the high integration of film and digital technology, and achieved a deep mutual embedding and co-evolution of both.

At the same time, the dissemination effectiveness of streaming media platforms has undergone remarkable changes over the past decade. In terms of content ecology, through the technology and operational model, the platform has evolved from being solely on-demand services for film and television to comprehensive digital platforms that integrate entertainment, education, news and social networking, which

has greatly enhanced the reach rate and timeliness of the platform content and also realized the interactive transformation from passive acceptance to active participation in user experience. It further reshaped both the way of receiving and aesthetic experience of film as a cultural product. As a result, this multidimensional evolution has allowed streaming media to gradually establish its position in the contemporary digital communication ecosystem, becoming a core channel for cultural consumption and information dissemination today.

### **1.1 Expand the Audience Base**

With hundreds of millions of active users, streaming media platforms can provide a vast potential audience base for films. Take the U.S. streaming platform Netflix as an example. Netflix, with its extensive content and vast subscriber base, by 2024, had over 302 million paid subscribers across more than 190 countries and regions worldwide. It holds a 34% market share of streaming media viewing time in American households, significantly outperforming other competitors such as Amazon, Disney+, and Hulu. (Zhang Yan, Lai Ying, 2022, p. 80-89) Moreover, the platform's options for multiple languages in subtitles and dubbing make it easier for global audiences to understand the content and reflect more deeply on the social issues conveyed in the films. At the same time, Netflix's global promotional strategies differ from traditional theatrical releases. On one hand, it uses algorithms to offer personalized recommendations in line with user interest profiles. On the other hand, local operations can be carried out in combination with regional cultural characteristics. Based on this, the dual-track dissemination strategy of global localization is realized. For example, when promoting the film *Silenced*, Netflix would push it alongside similar themed films, documentaries, etc. This content overlap effect can deepen the audience's awareness of specific social issues.

### **1.2 Achieve Rapid Dissemination**

Relying on the immediacy of streaming media platforms, a global cultural phenomenon emerges where audiences can watch the same film simultaneously. Traditional theatrical releases must follow a standardized process that includes strict public screening permit approvals, scheduling plans, and distribution of physical copies, which results in a gradual release. Hence, this linear distribution system can lead to delays in the release of new films in marginal regions. On the contrary, streaming media platforms are not constrained by the need for physical copies and cinema scheduling cycles. They can release films globally at the moment of their premiere, enabling the borderless dissemination of the film content in the digital realm.

### **1.3 Interactive Functions Enhance Audience Participation**

The interactive functions provided by streaming media platforms offer audiences a more personalized and immersive viewing experience. Through built-in social functions and the algorithmic recommendation system, a cross-regional and cross-cultural audience discussion wave can form during the golden time after a film's release, creating a globally influential cultural resonance. Up to now, most mainstream streaming media platforms have commenting and rating functions, allowing audiences to directly participate in the evaluation and discussion of films. These comments and ratings will also become an important reference for other potential viewers when deciding whether to watch this film. What's more, platforms have set up social interaction mechanisms, encouraging users to share contents related to the film, take part in challenges or topic

discussions. Audiences engage in the process of reinterpreting the film's meaning through comments, bullet screen interactions, and social sharing. This interactive ecosystem validates Henry Jenkins' concept of participatory culture in the digital age. Jenkins (2016) emphasized the mobility of fans in *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture* based on Desedoux's concept of "poachers" and the fan identity of "hunters". Because readers are free-floating agents, and the activities of fans within a community often go beyond interest in a specific text, even extending to many other works within the same genre.

This viewpoint has reached a new height in the current streaming media context, where streaming media platforms act as open cultural poaching grounds, and audiences are fans. Since media fan culture is not exclusive, the media fans will flow between different platforms. They rely on the network to establish connections between media, interact with other fans who have common interests in the streaming media platform, and form a fan community culture. It is possible to establish alliances between different fan communities. In the process of hunting, audiences will not only maintain cross-platform mobility, but also form temporary cultural communities through interactive functions. Therefore, this duality is the most distinct characteristic of participatory culture in the streaming media era.

## **2. The Dissemination Matrix and Reception of Contemporary Traditional Legal-themed Films**

The film *Silenced* undergoes a comprehensive transformation from "real-life case" to "novel creation" and finally to "film adaption", presenting the story through both literary and cinematic forms. Initially, the event is depicted in literary form, and later, through the audio-visual art form of the cinematic medium, the emotional depth and social significance of the story are more vividly conveyed to the audience, creating a powerful impact through the dual expression of literature and film. In consequence, since the release of the film, it has sparked widespread social discussions and received significant attention due to its profound social implications and intense topical relevance. In the current era of streaming media, its diversified dissemination pathways not only include traditional film distribution channels but also rely on multiple routes such as film festivals, social movements, and streaming media platforms, forming a three-dimensional dissemination matrix.

### **2.1 Traditional Theatrical Release**

Firstly, The *Silenced* is publicly released through traditional theater channels, attracting a large audience on account of its compelling social themes and high-quality production. The social realities revealed in the film, particularly the impact of issues surrounding disabled children being subjected to physical abuse, sexual assault, and bullying in school, catch the attention of society. This contributes to the rapid formation of a strong word-of-mouth effect, with many viewers recommending the film through word-of-mouth, social media shares, and other forms of communication.

### **2.2 Film Festival's Authoritative Certification and Cultural Capital Appreciation**

Film festivals, through the dual mechanisms of authoritative certification and the appreciation of cultural capital, can enhance a film's social influence and commercial value. The awards themselves serve as a form of quality certification, signifying that the film has reached industry standards in terms of artistry and technical

skill. Beyond that, the evaluations from professional juries also has the corresponding authority effect. As a result, when a film is selected for an international film festival or wins mainstream awards, it will help raise the film's visibility and exposure. It can also stimulate box office revenue and market sales, effectively expanding social discussions and cultural influence further.

*Silenced* got multiple nominations and won the Best Original Score award at the 32nd Blue Dragon Awards in Korea, in addition to receiving various nominations and honors at other Korean film festivals. This recognition from multiple awards has generated a prominent value-added effect, transforming professional recognition into public awareness. The exposure provided by these awards has notably enhanced the film's popularity, breaking through the limitations of the initial audience group and reaching a wider viewership. Audiences who have not yet seen the film develop higher expectations for its content, thus contributing to stimulating a secondary increase in box office revenue and prompting streaming media platforms to raise their copyright acquisition prices. Thus, this interaction between authoritative certification and capital appreciation makes film festivals a crucial intermediary that connects the art and commercial markets.

### **2.3 The Interactive Dissemination of the Social Movements and the Film**

Dennis Davis once proposed the theory of media invasion, which suggests that when political elites can no longer rely on local groups for support, they turn to the media to call for public backing. (Davis, 2004, p. 333) This theoretical framework is also applicable to explaining the penetration of the film medium into the socio-political realm. Films have played an undeniable role in the emergence and development of social movements. The release of the Korean film *Silenced* and the social effects it triggered provide a typical example of this. With the broadcast of this film, it caused different degrees of repercussions on the social level. The relevant resistance movement in Korean society also gained momentum, and a large number of civil activities, rallies, and petition campaigns gradually emerged. This bottom-up social force pushed the Korean government to reform laws and institutional policies regarding similar issues. On the sixth day after the film's release, an investigation was reopened into the case from that year.

Beyond that, the social impact of the film promoted the participation of more public nonprofit organizations and social groups, which began to carry out campaigns focused on the protection of victims of sexual assault, as well as the safeguarding of children's rights. Mass media played a crucial role in mobilizing the public, facilitating the rapid spread of movement-related information within specific social spaces and participant groups. This, in turn, led to the swift expansion of the movement in a short period of time, not only granting the movement a degree of legitimacy but also laying the groundwork for its broader political and social impact. Thus, it is evident that the release of the film and the social movement mutually reinforced each other, and their interaction effectively heightened societal attention to the issues highlighted in the film.

The film's influence on social movements and nonprofit organizations has also been observed in our country, particularly through its ability to spark public attention to social issues and motivate more people to engage in related charitable activities. For example, the 2021 film *Nice View*, a key film celebrating the centenary of the founding of the Communist Party, mobilized social organizations and enterprises across the country to hold public viewing events. Meanwhile, the film's promotional partner, *Qing Song Chou*, made

full use of an internet platform to pioneer a “star + charity” model, where celebrities leveraged their influence to attract fans to participate in charitable activities, contributing to igniting public enthusiasm for charity work. Similarly, Peter Chan’s film *Dearest* was based on real events, focusing on the protection of minors. The film raised awareness of abducted families. Besides, the national child searching league founded by the film’s real-life counterpart, Sun Haiyang, helped spur the establishment of more charity organizations focused on locating missing children.

#### **2.4 Achieve Cross-circle Dissemination through Streaming Media Platforms**

The dissemination of films through streaming media platforms has become an essential component of the modern film industry. With the advancement of internet technology, traditional ways of film distribution and promotion have gradually transitioned to the online sphere, where digital platforms provide innovative channels and strategies for film dissemination.

The development of internet technology has fostered the rise of streaming media platforms, which have transformed the production and consumption models of the global entertainment industry. Such as Netflix, Disney+, Tencent Video, and iQIYI and other platforms, have become crucial channels for film release. These platforms not merely provide global distribution opportunities for films, but also generate profits through subscription and pay-per-view models. For instance, the film *Silenced* takes advantages of the membership-based streaming platform Netflix, enhancing its distribution channels and extending its influence in international markets.

Participatory culture serves as a space where production, consumption, and content converge, thus requiring a perspective of collaborative creation and engagement in understanding film dissemination. (Ciszek, 2013, p. 187-213) With the rapid development of the internet and streaming media services, cyberspace has gradually emerged as a vital platform for people’s daily activities, including production, living, learning, and communication. Long-form and short-form videos have also become considerable components of daily media use, and even reshaping traditional social interaction methods and profoundly impacting the patterns of information dissemination, cultural exchange, and economic operations. Many users engage in the secondary creation of film content, producing and uploading clips, reviews, and analysis videos to platforms such as Bilibili, TikTok, and Kuaishou. This has given rise to a sizable category of “film-related secondary creation videos”, setting off a wide range of “secondary dissemination” boom.

In the era of traditional media, “secondary dissemination” held a subordinate position, serving as a complement to “primary dissemination”. However, in the streaming media era, “secondary dissemination” has changed from a subordinate position to a dominant position. This shift has invisibly strengthened the cohesion of the audience, accompanied by actions such as comments and sharing. It has facilitated interaction and discussion among viewers and has enabled audiences to view films from richer and more diversified perspectives, expanding the social influence and word-of-mouth dissemination of films. On social platforms Weibo, Twitter, Facebook, Douban and so on, various creative content, activity challenges, hashtag topics, celebrity interactions, and rating participation attract user attention and stimulate discussion, helping to build the film’s reputation. Furthermore, audience sharing and commenting are conducive to the rapid formation of

network effects. User-generated content (UGC) enhances the community sense and participatory experience of films as well, turning it into a phenomenon of collective creation and cultural sharing.

### **3. The Connotation and Significance of Enhancing Dissemination Effects of Legal-themed Films.**

Because of the wide audience reach, film can become an effective tool for constructing and disseminating mainstream discourse, enabling even those who are uneducated or illiterate to comprehend and engage with this set of codes and symbolic systems. As an important genre within the cinematic arts, legal-themed films possess unique social influence. When studying Korean films adapted from real-life events, we should pay more attention to the social reality presented by the directors through the camera, as well as the deeper thoughts and emotions they try to convey. (Hao Jie, 2015, p. 33) Since the creation of legal-themed films is often closely tied to the real-world development of the rule of law, these films play a crucial role in showcasing social realities, promoting legal knowledge, transmitting rule of law concepts, and enriching the cinematic world.

#### **3.1 Draw Attention to Vulnerable Groups**

The collective issues addressed in this type of film are often extensive and even societal in nature, reflecting widely shared moral judgments and commonsense intuitions. Therefore, for the audience, the process of watching a film is not merely an act of entertainment consumption but rather a profound social experience that allows viewers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of and reflect on the struggles and challenges faced by vulnerable groups. By approaching the narrative from the perspective of these vulnerable individuals, the film conveys its deeper meanings better. This perspective is not limited to showcasing the suffering and predicaments of the vulnerable but rather emphasizes their strength, dignity, and the efforts they make to change their fate. In general, many Korean films attract international attention by revealing social phenomena, simultaneously demonstrating the filmmakers' strong sense of social responsibility and highlighting the unique role of cinema as an art form in reflecting reality and promoting social change. These works reinforce the social value of film as a cultural and artistic medium by providing profound analyses of societal issues.

The vulnerable group in the film *Silenced* consists of the school deaf students who unable to articulate the pain they endure because of their physical impairments. Even after experiencing severe abuse and violations, they cannot resist. Through the perspective of teacher, the film delves deeply into the students' predicaments and sufferings. Although he attempts to unite with a rights defender to seek justice for the children, owing to the deflections and corruption within various sectors of society, the perpetrators escape the rightful punishment. For both the teacher and the rights defender, they are another form of vulnerable group too, as they struggle to challenge the entire societal system by means of their individual efforts. This evokes a profound sense of helplessness and frustration in the audience, provoking the powerlessness of marginalized groups. So after its release, the film caused significant shock and reaction in Korean society, sparking increased attention to the rights of vulnerable groups and prompting reflection on the legal and institutional systems. The public called for stronger oversight of special education schools to protect the rights of vulnerable groups.

### **3.2 Promote the Popularization of Legal Awareness and Social Responsibility**

Under normal circumstances, legal-themed films present legal issues through real-life legal cases or fictional scenarios, highlighting the significance of law in social life. Within the context of film as a mass cultural form, these films, through specific narratives, make complex legal topics more accessible and understandable to general audiences. They recreate events that have occurred in real life and depict potential future scenarios. In this way, films can issue warnings, thus affecting our real lives and becoming a mechanism that exerts a counteracting effect on society. (Zhang Man, 2017, p.27) Hence, their impact on the public and society holds profound significance. The audience can understand the basic legal knowledge such as legal provisions and court procedures, and at the same time while stimulating societal discussions and reflections of these legal issues in the society, which can precisely reflect the emotional trends and value judgments generally recognized by the whole society.

The reason why *Silenced* can achieve high box office results is because of the cohesion of widespread social concern. It is driven by this high level of attention and concentrated focus that the film is able to transform the power of light and shadow from the abstract into the concrete, breaking the boundaries of dimensions and achieving the effect of reshaping reality. Through its visual representation, the film reveals the persecution a specific group may endure, raising greater awareness of the issue. The story encourages viewers to respect the law and trust in the rule of law, while fostering social awareness of legal principles. This is particularly significant in the everyday lives of ordinary people, motivating them to internalize the spirit of the rule of law as a conscious behavioral standard.

### **3.3 Promote the Improvement of the Legal System**

Legal-themed films can promote public awareness of the law by exposing the deficiencies within existing legal systems. They can also have a profound impact on legal reform, judicial independence, and social justice. Korean filmmakers often use this medium to extend artistic reflection on society to the judicial system for reflecting the phenomenon of judicial corruption and advocating for a more robust legal framework.

For this reason, *Silenced* gained widespread societal attention and directly contributed to the enactment of significant laws such as the Sexual Assault Prevention Amendment and the Social Welfare Act Amendment. The promulgation and implementation of these laws symbolize a strengthening of human rights protections, profoundly altering the social structure and marking a transformative step forward.

Furthermore, the film exposes the corrupt practices and transactions between privileged groups, such as judges and prosecutors, as well as deeply ingrained judicial malpractices. These depictions offer a stark reflection of corruption and injustice within the Korean judicial system, eliciting public outrage over the absence of fairness in legal proceedings. People are deeply aware of the shortcomings of law enforcement in Korea, and in order to pursue a more just and perfect legal environment, and then promote social reform. This process has stimulated the public's extensive review and supervision of the functions of the existing rule of law institutions, hoping that relevant legal provisions, policies and regulations can be revised and improved to prevent future official corruption and power interference.

#### **4. Dissemination Dilemmas and Solutions of Legal-themed Films in the Streaming Media Era.**

##### **4.1 Superficial Treatment of Social Problems**

As an important medium for disseminating legal knowledge and reflecting social realities, legal-themed films primarily focus on legal cases to portray conflicting phenomena. However, they sometimes tend to present these issues in a superficial manner. This superficial treatment is often manifested in the simple recreation of legal cases and the superficial exploration of social contradictions, lacking a deeper investigation into the underlying societal issues. This approach makes the film's portrayal of legal cases appear shallow, preventing the audience from gaining a profound understanding of legal and social problems.

Given the educational nature of films, the storytelling in legal-themed films inevitably impacts the audience. However, unlike other genres, legal-themed films are subject to certain constraints in their narrative creation to avoid the propagation of harmful values. By analyzing the scriptwriting of legal-themed films, one can clarify how to better mitigate the potential risks arising from the specific nature of the genre.

From the creative perspective, as a form of art with a public education function, a film must have clear objectives starting from the creation of the script. This requires filmmakers to strike a balance between artistic expression and the depth of the legal theme, and this balance will ultimately determine the film's artistic quality and ideological depth. In legal-themed filmmaking, the balance between artistry and legal depth is not always an either-or situation. Directors can effectively integrate both through techniques such as character development, plot design, emotional engagement, and visual presentation. Whether by using characters' internal conflicts as vehicles for legal themes or employing non-linear narratives to enhance the artistic sense of the story, the most important thing is to maintain the depth of the legal subject matter without oversimplifying it, while ensuring the artistic aspects remain grounded in reality and avoid becoming too abstract.

##### **4.2 Rely on the Long-tail Effect and Word-of-mouth Dissemination to Save Investments**

In the era of digital platforms and streaming media services, the long-tail effect has impacted the film industry to some extent. In theory, the long-tail effect can enable lesser-known or less popular films to reach specific audiences through word-of-mouth and algorithmic recommendations. But with the diversification of film content and the rapid increase in the number of films available on platforms, audiences may fall into a choice paradox. More critically, in the practical operation of the long-tail market, niche works that lack marketing resources are often drowned in the vast content libraries of platforms, making it difficult for them to gain sufficient exposure.

In addition, the in-depth development of offline channels is equally essential. Activities like legal education programs and community screenings can reinforce the social educational function of the film, creating a positive feedback loop between online and offline channels. Emerging technologies such as VR or AR can offer innovative interactive experiences for legal-themed films. Virtual courtroom scenes built with VR technology allow viewers to participate in the full judicial process from a first-person perspective, effectively enhancing the impact of legal education. AR technology, which blends virtual and real elements, enables legal cases to move from the screen into reality, deepening viewers' understanding of legal knowledge

through interaction. This technology-powered, immersive communication is creating a new paradigm for legal promotion and education.

#### **4.3 Global Dissemination and Audience Adaptation**

The smoothness of overseas distribution channels for films determines whether they can open international markets. Currently, Chinese films still face a notable gap in scale when compared to film distribution companies from other countries. Despite the presence of institutions such as the China Film Group Corporation's Film Import and Export Branch, North America's Huashi Films, and China Film Overseas Promotion Company that focus on promoting Chinese films abroad, their overall influence and market share still struggle to compete with top international distribution companies. Moreover, most filmmakers tend to choose third-party overseas distribution agencies, which usually possess richer international market experience and resources, enabling them to help films better cater to the needs of different audiences and effectively expand their presence in international markets. However, this reliance on third-party overseas distribution agencies inevitably results in a lack of control and participation for Chinese films in the cross-cultural communication process. Therefore, for China, whether in the context of films on the rule of law or new mainstream cinema, there should be an active exploration of new overseas distribution models. By formulating scientific and comprehensive distribution and marketing strategies, China can enhance the competitiveness of its films in cross-cultural communication.

In the light of international communication strategy, the success of Korean films is worth learning. In response to cultural differences and distinct modes of thinking in Western markets, Korean films have gradually moved away from the traditional "didactic" narrative approach and adopted a "story-driven" style that is closer to the preferences of Western audiences, thus improving the acceptability of Korean films across various cultural contexts. (Hua Ziqi, 2023, p. 97-100)

Netflix's global communication practices also demonstrate a higher-dimensional "transcultural" strategy where different cultures achieve creative transformation through collision, forming new cultural forms. Taking *Silenced* as an example, the film not only spread as a piece of film but also evolved into a global social and cultural phenomenon, drawing collective attention to child protection issues across countries. This creative insight of elevating local issues to a shared human concern provides valuable inspiration for the internationalization of Chinese legal-themed films.

Legal-themed films occupy an important position in the international film market. When Chinese legal-themed films draw on international experiences, they must pay attention to the cultural adaptation challenges of the audience. Taking China and Korea as examples, although the two countries are geographically close and confront similar social issues, there are obvious differences in how these topics are handled. China's traditional cultural concepts and current censorship system create barriers for works like *Silenced*, which confront dark social issues directly. Accordingly, Chinese filmmakers need to explore narrative approaches that can reflect social realities and evoke international resonance, while adhering to the national context. In recent years, there has been a new opportunity for the development of realist law-themed films, and the

concept of building a community of shared human destiny has provided a new dimension for cross-cultural communication. Respect for cultural diversity has become an important premise for upholding the idea of a community of shared human destiny. (Wei, 2023, p. 1-7) As a result, the increasing global attention to issues such as gender violence and social justice has led to a surge of realist legal-themed films in the market. From the nationwide discussion caused by the Korean film *Silenced*, to the reflection on medical policies prompted by the Chinese film *Dying to Survive*, to the revelation of campus violence in *Better Days*, the definition of justifiable defense in *Article 20*, and the Oscar-winning Hollywood film *Spotlight*, the global film market is witnessing the transformation of legal-themed films from the margins to the mainstream.

Although China has a long history of film festivals, events such as the Beijing International Film Festival and the Shanghai International Film Festival have not yet fully played their role as international bridges. In contrast, the Busan International Film Festival in Korea has become an important hub for Asian films to reach the world through differentiated positioning and international operations. So the Chinese film industry should integrate resources to create internationally distinctive film festival brands and build professional international platforms for genres like legal-themed films. At the same time, it should strengthen the deep cooperation between domestic Chinese film festivals and the global film industry chain to create a comprehensive international communication system that covers creation, distribution, and screening, thereby truly enhancing China's international discourse power in legal-themed films.

## Conclusion

The development of legal-themed films is closely associated with the progress of social rule-of-law construction, as their content is tightly linked to social realities. We can use the propaganda function of film to play the role of promoting legal awareness. However, legal-themed films possess a double-edged sword characteristic. Involving sensitive factors such as crime and violence, they may lead to uncertain social impacts. In the process of advancing the rule-of-law construction, it is crucial to carefully and prudently balance the effective use of films as a powerful medium while mitigating potential risks.

In the era of streaming media, the global dissemination of Chinese culture faces unprecedented opportunities and challenges. As an essential vehicle for cultural export, how to integrate humanistic spirit into the works through optimizing communication channels, innovative content and localization strategies, promote international cooperation and cultural exchanges, and then enhance the international discourse power and influence of Chinese films to show unique creativity and aesthetic style has become a critical issue to be solved urgently.

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