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Going Beyond (Cultural) Soft Power: The Political Economy of Hollywood in Cold War

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Abstract

The notion of cultural soft power has always been addressed as the use of one film industry for the sake of a state's soft power in international politics. However, the idea of a state–film industry combination omits and treats the two entities with identical and similar interests or powers. Confronting this conceptualization, this research uses an inductive methodology in its conceptual paper, which criticizes the existing concept and provides a new framework for analysis. This research offers a new conceptual framework to understand the seemingly combined nature of the film industry and state in world politics and to treat them as two distinct entities with different logics and interests. To do so, this paper proposes the use of the political economy approach to the film industry and Foucault's governmentality for state rationality. Taking the case of Hollywood during the Cold War, this research argues that the combination of the state and film industry could only be realized in terms of industry profitability and the enhancement of the state's images toward the international population. In other words, while the film industry will only want to propagate the state's images in its international market because it is profitable, the state is equipped with various tools to create such conditions.

Key Words

Hollywood, cold war, cultural industry, governmentality

1. Introduction

Since its inception by Joseph Nye, the term “soft power” has been widely discussed and received academic attention. Its emergence was a response to the obvious decline in U.S. power after the Cold War (Nye, 1990). Contrary to the declining camp, Nye insisted that U.S. power was not declining but was changing from mere coercion to persuasion (Nye, 2021). Nye, thus, famously argued about the significance of soft power as the capacity to force people to do what they want without using force, coercion, or manipulation. The source of capacity then comes from one's state culture, political system value, and multilateralism (Nye, 2023). Each of these sources, according to Nye, mostly but not limited to, refers to Hollywood (culture), democracy (political value), and the US-led international liberal order (multilateralism).

In the context of cultural soft power, at least two general patterns of discourse can be observed. The first theme is the effective transformation of film into a state's soft power. The central idea driving the discussion of this theme is the burgeoning literature that indicates that

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the film industry, even Hollywood, cannot necessarily make one state image in other countries become significantly positive or become a mere tool of the state's ideological transmission (Nelson, 2022). At this point, most studies have attempted to explain how a state's cultural product (film) can become a soft power. In this case, the question what need to be done for streamlining the growing of soft power transmission growth or the need to systematically count on consumers' perception becomes the central question (Boissou, 2012; Otmazgin and Ben-Ari, 2013; Song Hwee Lim, 2021). The second theme is more strategic. This refers to an academic attempt to explain and connect what state policy can best promote and boost its cultural industry in world politics. This line of research then mostly digs into the national and international cultural policy of one state in world politics (Section 3 of Otmazgin and Ben-Ari, 2013; Peichi Chung, 2017). At the level of international politics, as a consequence of state intervention in the cultural industry, culture has become a site of contested interest among nations where Hollywood, through heavy US intervention, has become the most dominant actor (Vlassis, 2016).

However, despite its significant and substantive criticism from the prior literature, the blatant yet unresolved problem in cultural soft power literature has never been discussed seriously. The problem refers to a great omission and tendency of the literature to conflate the state's logic and capitalism's logic, which leaves the cultural industry as a dependence entity whose main purpose will always serve the state's interest. As a start, it is crucial to underscore that this omission has nothing to do with state-capital nexus at the material level where one cultural industry expansion in the international market definitely needs state foreign policy intervention. Most of the literature on production-level analysis has fundamentally posed a convincing and substantive argument on this (Section 3 of Otmazgin and Ben-Ari, 2013; Vlassis, 2016; Peichi Chung, 2017). The Hollywood international reach in its initial phase was a direct result of US state intervention to open the film market abroad (Guback, 1985).

What's more problematic is the treatment of the cultural industry as a mere state's transmission of an ideological tool without independent logic, such as capital accumulation. After all, state intervention at the level of international cultural policy does not necessarily subjugate cultural industry interest into state's interest. Contrary to this implicit assumption, the cultural industry has always had its own logic, as indicated by its market-driven operational logic. Hollywood's global dominance, for example, has always been driven by its international market customers, which change its film content or strategy to accommodate the international market (Miskell, 2016). Another case, Hollywood was also reluctant to produce heavy ideological American films in postwar Germany, which aim to build an antifascist imaginary due to its lack of profitability (Guback, 1968). In its contemporary form, tempted by the Chinese film market, Hollywood's strategy turns to employ Chinese actors or cooptate its cultures (Homewood, 2021).

In response to this situation, there is an urgent need to rethink the relationship between the state and the cultural industry. Consequently, this paper argues that the main question is how and in what condition do the film industry (Hollywood) and state logic coincide and meet each other's needs? This question directly demands a demarcation between the respective logics of the two entities while highlighting the condition of intersection for both entities. It is this exact point that this study aims to accomplish.

To narrow the case down, the production of Hollywood films during the Cold War was examined. These actor and time settings were chosen on the basis of their crucial combination of state-capital interest. However, unlike most of the existing literatures, this study aims to uncover the logic behind this state-capital nexus. To do so, first, this paper will explain the research method of this article, which substantially draws on the conceptual paper model. Second, the logic of the Hollywood industry and its working mechanism as a capitalist enterprise are explained. In this case, this paper bases its argument on the work of the political economy of

the film industry, which focuses on understanding the drive, structure, and interest of Hollywood. Third, state logic and interest in the realm of culture. Drawing from Foucault's governmentality and Latour's social network concept, this paper extrapolates its concept to explain the state's intervention into the realm of culture at the domestic and international levels. Fourth, by combining all the conceptual tools, this paper employs prior analytical tools to analyze Hollywood's content-film production development during the Cold War. In conclusion, the paper's central argument is that Hollywood's logic is driven by capital accumulation, which results in a non-essentialist nature of its operation and the desire for a capitalist cultural order. Its intersection with the state's ideology was caused by the state's heavy involvement in creating and propagating its image (national subject) through its social networks. With this in mind, one can observe that, rather than treating Hollywood as a mere tool of a state, Hollywood's decision to promote U.S. values is driven, first and foremost, by profit accumulation.

2. Research Method

This research employs the inductive methodology in conceptual research model. As conceptual research, this research departs from a focal phenomenon that has not yet been adequately addressed in existing IR studies (Jaakkola, 2020). The authors identify different conceptualizations of that phenomenon and argue that the aspect of interest is best addressed with certain concepts or theories (Jaakkola, 2020).

In addition to a literature review, a conceptual paper can use meta-analysis (Jaakkola, 2020). Meta-analyses integrate insights from existing research to identify patterns, relationships, or gaps in knowledge. To collect the data, this research employs a literature review by collecting earlier research regarding Hollywood and US state cooperation and written sources about the industry's empirical data for its production, distribution, and exhibition. Subsequently, this approach offers a new or enhanced view of a concept or phenomenon by linking previously unconnected novel pieces (Jaakkola, 2020). Thus, this paper presents a form of theorizing that emphasizes narrative reasoning to unveil big-picture patterns and connections (Delbridge and Fiss, 2013).

Based on this method, this paper offers a distinct and novel theorizing of the prior notion of state and film industry relations, which is covered by soft power conceptualization. To do so, the political economy approach in the film industry combined with the Foucault concept of governmentality and Latour social network theory will be used to propose an argument of state-capital nexus in cultural soft power phenomenon.

3. Results

3.1. Hollywood's Capitalism and Its Logic: Risk Management and Capital Accumulation

This research uses a political economy approach to explain the logic of Hollywood as a part of broader system of capitalism (Wasko, 2003). Based on this approach, the first part of this analytical framework will explain and study the Hollywood industry with its oligopolistic nature in controlling the three key areas of industry operations: production, distribution, and exhibition—and how these major companies meet their main interest, the profit ends. In the end, the effect of these structures on the entire logic of Hollywood industry will be explained as well.

In the time of the Cold War, the Hollywood industry was characterized by a stable, oligopolistic structure. This indicates that the industry is dominated by a few major companies. The six major companies in Hollywood are Twentieth Century Fox, Columbia, Disney, Paramount, Universal, and Warner Bros (Wasko, 2003; McMahon, 2018). Under the stable oligopoly structure, major companies are vertically integrated into operations in the first half of each

year. Producing motion pictures, worldwide operations with distribution outlets, and owned chain of theaters (Huettig, 1985) (Balio, 1985). In the 1930s and 1940s, majors monopolized the industry, operating in such a semi-commissible cartel. With its extensive theater chains, majors could give preferential treatment to one another's pictures and closed important segments of the market outside the product (Huettig, 1985).

This allows them to secure financing for the bank institution because, by logic, the bank itself is always in a hurry to give loans to high-risk business operations with big money. In contrast, independent filmmakers must guarantee national distribution and access to better theaters. Thus, an oligopolistic situation can be said to succeed in placing independent filmmakers and studios at subordinate positions (Huettig, 1985). By sticking to these exercises, the majors are in a central position in the domestic and worldwide film industry, with control especially through the control of the distribution and exhibition of cinemas, since they have a chain of theaters in which ensure their movies play as the first-runners. However, after the Antitrust Law of 1948 and the binding of majors to stop monopolistic practices, some of the earlier five major companies dissolved and acquired (Huettig, 1985; Wasko, 2003).

Despite the antitrust laws, the strong oligopolistic structure in the American film industry persists for years. The merger and acquisition of some companies is a horizontal integration process that allows power to be concentrated among a few players. In addition, the established network with the theater and studios, despite the antitrust, makes the entrenched oligopoly remain the central player in industry and continues to spin the capital accumulation to these majors. All of these factors are crucial in two aspects: global dominance in Hollywood and its great capacity to generate profit.

First, the oligopolistic nature of Hollywood opened up its chances to expand to the international market as well. Coincident with the end of World War I, the European film industry weakened dramatically, putting them in a vacuum for a certain length of time (Guback, 1968; Wasko, 2003). Meanwhile, at this time, America's films produced many movies and flowed in a large amount to Europe. Hollywood instituted its distribution procedures abroad and established offices in various countries (Wasko, 2003). This continued during and after World War II, paving the way for Hollywood dominance in Europe.

However, regarding Hollywood dominance in Europe, the central role of the government-industry alliance should also be noted. The state department began to defend the motion picture industry through international trade policy, and it functions as the watchdog of international trade affairs for motion picture was the Foreign Department of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (Guback, 1985). The duty of the department was to keep foreign distribution channels open for US films and to inform the Hollywood regarding censorship policies (Guback, 1985). In addition, the government also assisted in global distribution, and the industry had a deal with it because it was congruent with their profit aims (Guback, 1985).

Second, the oligopolistic nature of Hollywood also provides it with a great advantage in terms of generating profit. Hollywood's massive ownership of film exhibitions grants them access and massive data to know the audience preferences. However, knowing the audience preferences is not enough. They need control of what can be predicted by the trend setter to ensure their earnings from their products and movies. In order to have control over it, Hollywood majors should pursue several strategies to reduce what is called 'risk'. Based on the conceptualization of risk, risk is considered the fundamental part of profit-earnings purpose. However, what does 'risk' mean in the film industry? What is the example? What will it affect? According to McMahon, risk is the 'degree of confidence' that the capitalists have to calculate for future movies' earnings. A larger risk indicates a greater probability of declining profits, resulting in lower confidence (McMahon, 2013, 2015, 2018). In short, 'risk' in the film industry can be understood as the ability

of a company to predict that its movies will be highly in demand by the audience. If not, it will greatly affect future earnings. This condition drives companies to pay high attention to 'risk management'.

Throughout history, Hollywood has employed several risk management strategies, such as depth, breadth, and saturation booking strategy (Nitzan & Bichler in McMahon, 2013). The depth strategy involves stagnant growth + inflation and cost cutting, whereas breadth seeks organizational increases in size e.g. Green investment, mergers, or acquisitions (McMahon, 2018). The scope of the strategy includes restructuring and realignment of financiers and investors. This later led to the merger and unmerge of various corporations as well as their subsidiaries, which were more intense at the end of 1980 and mentioned as the era of "frenzy of consolidation" (Wasko, 1994). One of the most recent examples is Disney's acquisition of Pixar, Marvel Studios, and Lucasfilm, which expanded its portfolio and market dominance.

An in-depth strategy, one example is increasing earnings per film during the period of film releases (McMahon, 2018). This strategy can be exploited in blockbuster movies to generate significant box office returns, profitable sequels, spin-offs, and merchandizing opportunities. An example of a depth strategy in the Cold War era is the Star Wars (1977-1991). The Star Wars franchise has succeeded in producing lucrative sequels. Star Wars was first produced in 1977, followed by *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) and *Return of the Jedi* (1983). Each sequel succeeded in theaters by employing the same characters and universe. The 20th-Century Fox through Star Wars also employed merchandizing and licensing, including toys, comics, and games. A depth strategy is a strategy that is popularly implemented by a company. Other tie-ins, such as the franchising strategy, could also be one step in risk management to reduce financial risk and increase stability.

Another strategy to mention to make it more predictable for capitalists in movie distribution is the saturation-booking strategy. This strategy refers to the wide release of movies projected as must-see or so-called blockbusters. This strategy meant not only to earn significant revenues but also to make faster capital accumulation because it is predicted to reap the bulk of its revenues just within its first week of release (McMahon, 2013, 2018). An example of this strategy is the release of *Avengers: End Game* globally in thousands of theaters simultaneously, earning over \$1.2 billion in its opening weekend.

In this case, the entrenched oligopoly structure control over the theaters becomes a crucial tool for the major company to be able to do so. Theaters have these data and are also in need of audiences to also bring more profit to the exhibition business. Meanwhile, major companies are also in need of knowing the ticket sales for a movie and the data of typical movies that audiences will see (McMahon, 2018). Other than that, firms consulting in this industry are conducted by Epagogix, Google, or another similar company on it, i.e. The worldwide Motion Picture Group, which can provide them with personalized data on people's references regarding film content, is also crucial (McMahon, 2015). Typically, they help by running databases and surveying the tastes of moviegoers, and later on, they offer advice for the final construction of Hollywood movies. For example, the World-Wide Motion Picture Group has once argued that it is risky for any film to have a bowling scene; or if you make a superhero movie, it is better for the bottom line that a protagonist is a "guardian superhero" and not a "cursed superhero" (McMahon, 2013).

All of the prior strategies substantially show how 'risk' or the 'degree of confidence' of the companies is obtained through the majors' tools on access of audiences' data in theaters, its oligopolistic structures, and its capacity to produce merchandise from its movie production. Table 1 summarizes the results obtained for each strategy. However, these profit-making strategies do not come without any negative repercussions for creativity in the so-called creative industry. Since Hollywood is an 'entertainment' industry, it is central to note that creativity is also seen as

part of 'risk' as well. Film's esthetics should not be overlooked by risk management of the industry since it affects greatly to industry's 'degree of confidence' in production. Every facet of movies' esthetics should be translated into a quantitative language to help predict future earnings. The consequence, thus, "art" in movie production is kept inside the border of capital-earning interest rather than maintaining or even developing "art" for social significance.

Table 1. The Hollywood's Strategies to Accumulate Profit

Name of Strategy	Definition	Example
Depth Strategy	A strategy involving stagnant growth, cost-cutting, and inflation control. It focuses on increasing earnings per film through methods like blockbusters, sequels, spin-offs, and merchandizing opportunities.	The Star Wars franchise (1977-1991): Produced profitable sequels like <i>The Empire Strikes Back</i> (1980) and <i>Return of the Jedi</i> (1983), along with extensive merchandizing (toys, comics, games).
Breadth Strategy	A strategy focused on organizational expansion through mergers, acquisitions, restructuring, and realignment of financiers and investors to increase company scale and reach.	Disney's acquisition of Pixar (2006), Marvel Studios (2009), and Lucasfilm (2012) expanded its portfolio and market dominance.
Saturation-Booking Strategy	A distribution-focused strategy involving wide releases for projected blockbuster films to generate rapid and high capital accumulation, often reaping significant revenues within the first week of release.	<i>Avengers: Endgame</i> (2019): Released globally in thousands of theaters, earning over \$1.2 billion in its opening weekend.

Source: McMahon (2013; 2015; 2018)

This is what McMahon mentioned in previous studies on esthetic overproduction (McMahon, 2013, 2015, 2018). Juxtaposing creativity and industry in Hollywood's case shows how art is antithetical to capital. The very condition that could powerfully force the movie industry to accommodate various explorations of esthetics (as from their styles, genres, directors, etc) depends heavily on the socio-political context. This occurred in the 1960s, during the era of so-called New Wave Cinema, when Hollywood enthusiastically embraces the 1960s student, civil rights, and anti-Vietnam war movements (McMahon, 2015). Consequently, the main interest of Hollywood is on social stability. Hollywood's financial model needs a predictable, formula-driven approach that best performs in terms of social stability. However, there is always a possibility that consumers are not interested in seeing more cinemas, or the aforementioned strategy is potentially engendering frustration with consumers (McMahon, 2018). Social stability provides Hollywood a solid foundation for long-term investments and planning and allows studios to manage risks effectively by producing motion pictures that align with what is popular, not only socially acceptable but also seen and considered as mass culture.

In the end, based on the prior argument, it is clear that the primary goal of Hollywood is profit-generating. Its initial oligopolistic structure, Hollywood's components, the dynamics interplay between majors, or the high commercialization of key areas are meant to generate financial returns. Interestingly, despite certain ideological traces in its movie, Hollywood's core interest is nothing to do with ideological division. Hence, Hollywood could not be seen in an essentialist sense as highly propagandistic. Through its established networks of theaters and distributors, its main focus and power lies only in analyzing what is socially and politically acceptable for its worldwide audience, which will help to lessen its movie's financial risk.

3.2. State Logic in Cultural Realms: Governmentality, National(ist) Subjects, and World Politics

If Hollywood is not essentially ideological, what determines its seemingly ideological nature? By narrowing the case in the context of the state interest, what makes it (re)produce the state's ideological interest through film production? The short answer will surely highlight the possible profit or incentive to produce such films. This is also why this research goes further by exploring the types of requirements that can make that profitability possible. This paper argues that the state's massive capacity to create and control mass culture, either domestically or internationally, is the key to understanding why, instead of producing contra-narratives, the cultural industry tends to adjust its narrative with the state's official discourse on certain issues. To explain this, this paper uses Foucault's governmentality to explain the state's capacity and power in the cultural realm and Latour's social network to extrapolate governmentality practice into the international context.

To begin with, this paper mostly refers to the state's interest and logic in the cultural realm as maintaining unity domestically and creating a positive national image internationally. In general, it refers to nationalism or a state's identity. This logic is closely related to the state's survival and its need to preserve its sovereignty. Some argue that this need is related to capitalism through hegemony concept (Jessop, 1983). However, even with the notion of hegemony, nationalism or a state's identity has never been directly related to capital accumulation logic and has always been the result of strategic calculation to maintain those in power. Thus, the notion of nationalism or the state's identity can arguably be categorized as the state's logic/interest, which is distinct from capitalism logic.

Moving forward, since the state's interest is to build its national image, the concept of centrality of governmentality comes to the fore to explain how state's build its images into its population. The concept of governmentality comprises two crucial terms: govern and mentality (Mudhoffir, 2013). These two terms represent how governmentality is fundamentally related to governing things, which are related to the psychological or biological aspects of an individual (Weidner, 2011). The aim of governing an individual is to create, regulate, and normalize a certain type of subject. At this point, subject should be defined as a possible way of self in a specific sociohistorical context (Heyes, 2010). Consequently, what needs to be investigated is not the definition of subject (what is) but the process where subject is formed, normalized, or regulated (how is) (Foucault, 2013).

In its initial emergence, governmentality refers to a changing nature of power practice from the state toward its population (Lemke, 2017). Rather than using sovereign power, which is mostly oppressive and involves a forceful power, governmentality signified a power where one state creates a code of conduct that focuses on limiting people's course of action (Rose, O'Malley and Valverde, 2006; Smith, 2014). At this point, the basic requirement for the emergence of this type of power is individual freedom. The state is not forcing people to choose something but rather gives people a set of choices (Smith, 2014). In this context, the Foucault term for liberal government should be understood.

Further, in order to create a code of conduct, state deploy technologies of power which heavily involves 1.) A person defines a subject through medicalization, stereotyping, and normalization, resulting in the inclusion and exclusion of certain kinds of identities. 2.) Scientific classification of the population using indicators such as age, productivity, mortality, birth, etc. 3) The mode of subjectification involves the active role of the subject to internalize and (re)produce a certain type of subject identity (Robertus Robert, 2014). In other words, all these processes engage a macro and structural process of subjectification, as well as a micro- and individual role for the subjectification process. In the end, one should always treat the population as a product of structural determination, normalization, control, or certain regulations (Mudhoffir, 2013).

In the context of the state's identity and images, through the governmentality lens, its process should always be related to creating nation(al) subjects with certain psychological traits (Zake, 2016). Central to this process is the role of discourse or knowledge, which functions through people's desires, aspirations, interest, and belief. On this context, citing Tonny Bennet, governmentality has a strikingly similar feature to what is generally called culture (Bennet, 2003). Consequently, the process of forming and building a state's identity is strongly connected to national culture. Certain technologies or methods of governance, such as inventing national history, language, and culture, are usually deployed (Zake, 2016). In its policy term, these whole substance manifest in the management of national museum, civic education, national law, cultural festivals, and etc; all can be included under the term of cultural policy (Bennet, 2003). However, in its implementation, a positive result is not a necessity. Rather than that, the active agency of the subject in internalizing or rejecting the cultural idea of the state, either individually or collectively, plays a determinant role (Barnett, 1999). Therefore, a state capacity to embed its identity into its population is not omnipotent and requires a massive micro agency engagement at the grassroot level. At this vantage point, the existence of civil society groups such as NGO can be treated, especially when it holds the same discourse with the state, as a supporting role in the state's power practice (Sending and Neumann, 2006). Consequently, the concrete possibility of state-private nexus in government practice.

However, even after all of the prior explanations, Foucault's accord about governmentality primarily focused on governing domestic populations (Leira, 2011). In other words, Foucault overlooks the practicality of governmentality at the interstate level. Hence, taking Foucault—citing Leira—beyond Foucault in the context of IR, some critical engagement should be conducted. In IR, scholarly efforts have been conducted to explain how governmentality relates to global governance or global problems (Fournier, 2012). The central argument of these scholarly works is the question of who governs and global problems addressed through some transnational governmentality. At first glance, instead of focusing on population per se, governmentality in IR treats states as its object of governance through a set of scientific criteria such as the democracy index, economic, or SDGs (Joseph, 2011). While this line of research is promising, this paper aims further by arguing that one state can also govern other populations, albeit mildly, through a particular set of policies for the sake of its interest; economic, ideological, etc (Umar, 2014). Foreign policies such as cultural diplomacy, development assistance, and even donations to NGO campaigns are worth noting in this context.

Nevertheless, just like domestic practice, civil-society involvement is crucial for success. In this context, the Latour concept of social networks can be beneficial for sketching how the governmentality of one state into another state's population can be imagined. A social network, unlike a technological network, is significantly political and social (Kendall, 2004). It involves both human and non-human variables to ensure its operation. Taking an example of an MNC, its global reach is fundamentally related with human (managers, workers, policymakers, etc) and non-human connection (infrastructure, spatial context, etc). In this network, there are two types of relationships, namely, intra-relations, which refer to direct operational relations, and extra-relations, which refer to indirect relations. Intra-relations tend to be stronger in their connection and ordering processes than extra-relations. The nature of a social network is rhizomatic, which makes it difficult to break. However, because of its very nature, the main problem of this network is to ensure that the flow of information and order is in its place (Kendall, 2004). The order is a coincidence; what permanent is the ordering. With this in mind, the practice of state governmentality in other countries can be understood as a social network. The state's formal or informal foreign policy in the cultural realm can be classified as an intra-relationship with the state's network. Meanwhile, the positive engagement of the civil-society group, either from the

home country or the targeted country, which has no direct relation with one state's agenda, is the extra-relations. At the same time, it is also necessary to calculate the targeted country's logic of governmentality domestically, whether it aligns with the home country main discourse or not. With this in mind, one can sketch a more detailed process behind one state's capacity or influence in managing and creating its identity, either domestically or internationally, and its possible success in another country.

4. Discussion

Based on the prior conceptual arguments, this paper attempts to explain why, to a certain extent, during the Cold War, Hollywood produced films that seemed to promote and favor the U.S. image or values. The main argument of this paper is related to the US domestic and international capacity to produce and employ its technology of power to turn people's imagination to its favor. To do so, social networks between the US government and civil society groups are crucial variables that ensure success or failure. To strengthen this argument, this paper explains Hollywood film production during the Cold War and explicates its relation with the state-private connection.

As a starting point, this paper will classify Hollywood film productions based on Tony Shaw's classification. In his book called *Cinematic Cold War*, Hollywood types of Cold War films could be set into five periods, namely 1.) 1945-1953 which represent hard line-negative propaganda, 2.) 1953-1962, containing soft and positive propaganda and promoting the superiority of the capitalism way of life, 3.) 1964-1979 pro-detente propaganda, which represents the rise of the contested state's narrative on the Cold War, and 4.) 1980-86 which indicate the rise of New Right propaganda with a massive masculine and nationalist narrative (Shaw and Youngblood, 2010). All of the associated Cold War films, while never being on the most profitable list, did not do so badly financially (Shaw and Youngblood, 2010). Further, each period represents major themes of the films and, interestingly, according to Shaw, reflects the massive state intervention in the cultural realm and the contested or cooperative response of the civil society (Shaw, 2006). The same variable is also responsible for the changing nature of Cold War film narratives.

The first period (1945-1953) with hard-line tendencies occurred in a situation of heavy state intervention and propaganda of anti-communism under McCharty's influence. There are also a bunch of civil groups who have the same anti-communism stance, but with different ideological preferences. Some of them are Motion Picture Alliances (MPA), and externally, there are Catholic Legion Decency (CLD), American Legion, and International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees/IATSE (Shaw and Youngblood, 2010). While MPA and IATSE have been involved in self-controlling within Hollywood, CLD and the American Legion have generally operated in society. Crucial here is the distinct nature of CLD, as it brought a conservative narrative from a religious group that harshly rejected any socialist features that promoted total collectivism or critique of religious institutions (Black, 1998). With a massive number of members, CLD successfully suppressed and controlled Hollywood themes by providing Hollywood films with labels. Meanwhile, the American Legion also performs the same role as the CLD, but with military and national rhetoric. Some notable films of this period include *The Iron Curtain* (1948) and *I Was a Communist for The FBI* (1951) (Shaw and Youngblood, 2010).

The second period (1953-1962) with soft and positive propaganda, indicated the changing theme of the Hollywood Cold War film. While the early Cold War period focused on disfiguring the Soviet Union and portraying anticommunism, this period focused on portraying the positive features of America, such as democracy, capitalism, and its way of life. At the international level, the Marshall Plan was implemented during this period. At the ideological level, the main purpose of this aid is to promote American ideals from various perspectives such as economics,

democracy, and so on (Fritsche, 2019). The social, political, and economic background of this period is the early period of the “capitalism golden age.” The rapid rise of middle class and the central role of the family (Ross, 2001). Again, civil-society movements such as religious and nationalistic groups significantly support the familial narrative, and the middle-class ideal basically provides the material condition in which the capitalism way of life flourishes (Black, 1998). Notable films produced during this period depict historical heroes, religions, and the glamorous life of US capitalism. Films such as *Quo Vadis* (1951), *Ben-Hur* (1959), and *Ten Commandments* (1956) are examples of religious nationalist films. Meanwhile, Marilyn Monroe’s appearance came to symbolize American glamor, sexiness, and the pursuit of happiness (Shaw and Youngblood, 2010).

The third period (1964-1979) mark a significant narrative shift in Cold War films. A large number of anti-Cold War films were being produced, and the simple black-and-white images of the McCharty era were gone (Shaw and Youngblood, 2010). At this time, US behavior at domestic or international levels has defused the tense relation with Soviet (*détente*). Meanwhile, a counter-cultural movement has also emerged. Their main concern, in connection with the Cold War, was protesting the US involvement in the Cold War, which specifically targeted the Vietnam War, resulting in great distrust in US heroic discourse. Together with this, Hollywood needs to play along by riding the wave of the counter-cultural movement by adjusting many young filmmakers’ bold and new ideas about film (McMahon, 2018). Some notable films of this era are *The Russians are Coming* (1966), *Fail Safe* (1964), *The Bedford Incident* (1965), and others. These films challenge the prior images of the Cold War, ranging from more humanizing Russian figures, anti-nuclear drama, and the madness of nuclear deterrence.

The fourth period (1980-1986) indicated by the election of Reagan and the re-deployment of old Cold War narratives. The massive masculine and nationalist discourse is central to this period. Reagan referred Soviet as ‘evil empire’ and ramped up confrontations with the USSR from ideological and military aspects. At the same time, Moral Majority, an American political organization and movement that championed conservative social values, opposed abortion, LGBTQ, and perceived moral decline (Curtis, 1996). In addition, many backlashes also occurred in response to civil movements in the prior period. Both events became general social and political backdrops for the rise and re-emergence of Reagan and his Cold War narratives. However, Hollywood in the time of Reagan realized that the remnants of the critical Cold War era could not be easily erased. Thus, most movies in this era attempt to resettle the situation by producing films that represent the exorcising of the shame and humiliation of Vietnam (*Missing in Action*, 1984), finding a scapegoat for the defeat in Southeast Asia (1987), and its superior military technology (*Top Gun*, 1986; *Rocky IV*, 1985) (Shaw and Youngblood, 2010). An outstanding movie that fused all three themes is the famous *Rambo: First Blood* series.

While Shaw’s description is highly illustrative in explaining the capacity of US government intervention in the cultural realm and the response of domestic civil society groups, it is also crucial to compare this explanation at the international level. This research collects some of the aforementioned Hollywood Cold War films with modest or high international reach. In this case, due to limited international data on every film earnings at the international level, only five films will be listed, and three of them will be explained: *The Ten Commandments*, *Ben-Hur*, and *Rambo First Blood Part II*. While the first two films are chosen because of their complete data on international reach, which refers to South Korea, the latter—despite having no complete data on international reach—is crucial due to its high international reach (rank 4th in 1985) and its light trace of popularity, which is recorded in Britain. Table 1 presents domestic and international film earnings. Based on these data, this research will delve into and analyze the complex relationship

between US governmentality, the targeted country governmentality (South Korea and Britain), and the role of civil society groups in both countries.

Table 2. The Performance of Hollywood Cold War Films in Domestic and International Level

No.	Movie and Year Releases	Domestic Box Office	International Box Office (BOE)	The Dominant International Source
1.	The Ten Commandments (1956)	\$85,400,591	\$30,863	South Korea (All)
2.	Ben-Hur (1959)	\$73,000,000	\$226,628	South Korea (All)
3.	Rocky IV (1985)	\$127,873,716	\$172,500,000	No Data
4.	Rambo First Blood Part II (1985)	\$150,415,432	\$149,984,568	No Data
5.	Top Gun (1986)	\$180,470,489	\$176,993,259	South Korea (0,1 %), Other Data is Not Available

Source: The data is taken from "The Numbers" and processed by the authors

First, in the case of South Korea's significant role as a US ally and even become one of the most heated proxy wars during the Cold War. Consequently, U.S. anticommunism and the notion of liberalism were spread widely (Chun, 2017). However, in closer historical inspection, the role of Christians individual and groups, either Korean or Western, is significantly dominant, especially after the Korean War (Armstrong, 2003). Christians are strongly anticommunist and have played a crucial role throughout South Korean nation-building (Dedominicis, 2023). At the time of Japanese colonization, the Catholic Church's decision to create a separate Korean diocese contributed to the appreciation and use of Korean culture, which ranged from language to certain customs. The religion of Kim Il Sung and Syngman Rhee is Christian (Dedominicis, 2023). During the Cold War, the US government also devoted significant funding to Christian organizations (Schafer, 2006). The reasons behind this lie in the strong anti-communist sentiment in the Christian community and its widespread network in social sectors, including education, health, and foreign aid (Schafer, 2006). Dominicis notes the deep and complex relationship between this US-South Korean the Christian network that result in the growing influence of Korean Christians in U.S. and South Korean politics (Dedominicis, 2023). These complex relationships between the US, Christian groups, and the South Korean state are the crucial factors behind the modest success of two Christian-related Hollywood films, such as Ben Hur and The Ten Commandments. While it does serve to strengthen the Christian faith with strong anticommunist sentiment, it is also quite profitable for Hollywood to produce and distribute such films.

Second, in the case of Britain, Rambo First Blood Part II achieved notable success by recording £1,1 million from 322 screens and was among the five most profitable films in Britain, 1985 (International, 1988). While this film contains blatant US propaganda, especially in Vietnam, its success raises a big question, making it a best case for applying the proposed framework of this research. To begin with, it is crucial to trace how US cultural policy has worked in Britain. In this context, three U.S. cultural efforts have been made: the use of the Congress of Cultural Freedom (CCF), labor diplomacy, and the Marshall Plan (Carew, 2003; Wilford, 2003; Fritsche, 2019). The CCF is an international intellectual network that promotes political freedom and abstract expressionism (Bartley, 2001). Even though backed by CIA funding, its main interest, logic, and method of rejecting the communist regime is distinct with US which result in state-private nexus (Shaw, 2001; Wilford, 2003). Meanwhile, labor diplomacy aims to distract the dominant concept of socialist labor and replace it with the United States, which emphasizes prosperity and labor productivity under Fordist capitalism (Carew, 2003). Together with this, the

Marshall plan provides economic assistance intended to demonstrate the American way of life (Fritsche, 2019).

While the result of this cultural campaign was, at best, highly fractious, it still had a significant impact on Britain's government. In general, the British government realized that its continuity and existence required the success of the US government (Gamble, 2012). At a specific level, U.S. intervention in the economic and cultural domains resulted in the rise of individualistic consumer culture which later contribute to the rise of Margaret Thatcher (Koseki, 2023). Under Thatcher (1979-1990), relations between Britain and the US under Reagan grew closer on many levels, ranging from economic, security, and ideological levels. One of the special cases was the Falkland War, in which the United States played a considerable role by permitting Britain's accession to the United States backyard (Gamble, 2012). This victory later granted Thatcher victory in domestic politics, where she gained a stronger position in her party and won majority support in the 1983 general election (Vinen, 2012). Further, at the domestic level, it is crucial to note how Thatcher infused individualistic discourse that denounced the hegemony of labor collectivism. This type of discourse has an extensive effect on popular culture, in which the story of individualism appears frequently (Tinwell, 2013). While all these complex historical events may not be the perfect explanation for the success of Rambo's film, they still have critical importance in leaving either a heavy or light trace on Britain's perception of the US image.

5. Conclusion

Soft power in IR is a term used in both academic and practical fields. However, many critics have highlighted its shortcomings as an analytical tool. It has also been the case in one of its derivatives—cultural soft power—which explains the seemingly united nature of the state and the film industry. Although most studies on the theme of cultural soft power have treated soft power as a mere reference of reality, they still implicitly assume the passivity of the film industry under state interest.

In response to this gap, this research endeavors to explicate the distinct logic and nature of the film industry vis-à-vis its state. While it might be true that the two entities have historically shown several convergences, what remains crucial is the question of how and under what condition these two entities' logic and interest coincide. By employing the political economy approach of the the film industry and Foucault governmentality, this research has argued and proven that film industry (Hollywood) only serves to promote US interest because it is profitable. The state's capacity and related social networks play critical roles in creating this condition. The case of Hollywood during the Cold War has demonstrated this very notion.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that the proposed framework of this research should be thoroughly examined in the future. Although it can provide a decent snapshot of the structural forces behind the referred phenomenon, it still lacks detailed historical records. Other than that, another case of the film industry and state unity should also be analyzed with the same framework to strengthen its analytical merits.

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