

# What is the Cultural Cost of Cultural Creativity Enterprises?

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The media industry, one of the sectors that the *Cultural Creativity Enterprises Development Law* is designated to promote, is facing protests from residents in Wanhua District (*Wanhua is Báng-kah*, rendered as “Monga” in Taiwanese) in Taipei, owing to their once dominant “radical” gangster culture being vividly depicted in the movie “*Monga*.” They worried that the movie's violence and pornography plots will stigmatize Wanhua.



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The worldwide hit *Avatar* has brought in huge revenues for the United States. For how many bicycles manufactured can Taiwan beat that record of output value? Still, such calculation leaves the numerous commercial opportunities evolved from the total cultural impacts (such as lifestyle and consumer behavior change) induced by exporting commodities from the strong culture unaddressed. From this instance, we can infer that the cultural creative enterprises can produce huge revenues, and hence, contrary to the declining traditional industries, their logic of using culture and creativity as economic elixirs is being more appreciated nowadays.

The *Cultural Creativity Enterprises Development Law* was passed a few days ago. Apart from its prospect to catalyze enterprise development, we are more concerned with how this Law actually regards culture. The phrase “cultural creativity enterprises,” under closer inspection, reveals that both “culture” and “creativity” are merely adjectives to “enterprise.” Moreover, culture, in this case, seems regarded as material and cost for enterprise development. Inevitably, one doubts whether enterprises will unduly influence cultural development? Which is more important, culture or enterprise?

In this regard, the newly passed Law leaves the above questions unanswered. Moreover, it does not elucidate a cultural vision for Taiwan. The Law is like a blank check, with only nominal categories of various cultural creativity enterprises, and no words are said about the essence of cultural creativity. Does the authority just view “culture” and “creativity” as a new engine for Taiwan's enterprises? Can culture be reduced as a means to economic development and transmogrified accordingly?



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Photo credit: [www.mongathemovie.com](http://www.mongathemovie.com)

Wanhua. Apparently, they worry if the fictional drama is sucking their folk culture, and leaves the community stigmatized with pornography and violence.

To take digital content industry development as another instance, in this digital era, the computer and video game *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, or *Sangokushi*, has served as the (con)text for more to learn about the ancient characters than the original *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* and *Records of the Three Kingdoms*. The Japanese video game company's interpretation of these characters could improperly change our culture. In fact, the Japanese animation style generals' faces, or the curvy-figured heroines, might have substituted the chivalrous characters pictured in the ancient books. Therefore, one must ask while promoting the digital content industry or other cultural creativity enterprises, what will be the “cultural cost” we are obliged to pay? Regretfully, the newly passed Law also leaves this question unanswered.

The above instances demonstrate that along with the development of cultural creativity enterprises, it is very likely that they will reversely shape and define cultural content. If cultural discourses are deprived of their right to lead, would culture be martyred by those “cultural creativity artists” and “cultural creativity enterprises”? Moreover, in a liberal cultural creativity market, confronting globalized and capitalist cultural impacts, or the “united front” powers exercised by mainland China and foreign capitals, what is Taiwan's cultural consensus? Where should our national cultural policy move? Upon the passing of the Law, while celebrating the promising future of the cultural creativity enterprises, still, many questions are left unanswered.

Unfortunately, during the legislation process, Taiwan did not conduct in-depth search and dialogues on cultural content and values and seize this opportunity to construct cultural consensus. Again this reflects the habitual neglect of cultural affairs of the economy driven authority. This is the high time to address the questions mentioned above, and we must use this high tide to conduct comprehensive and in-depth discussions. By doing so, we can prevent the cultural creativity enterprises from reversely destructing our culture. In the end, it is “better late than never.”

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