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Mulan: An Exploration of Culture and Representation in Hollywood

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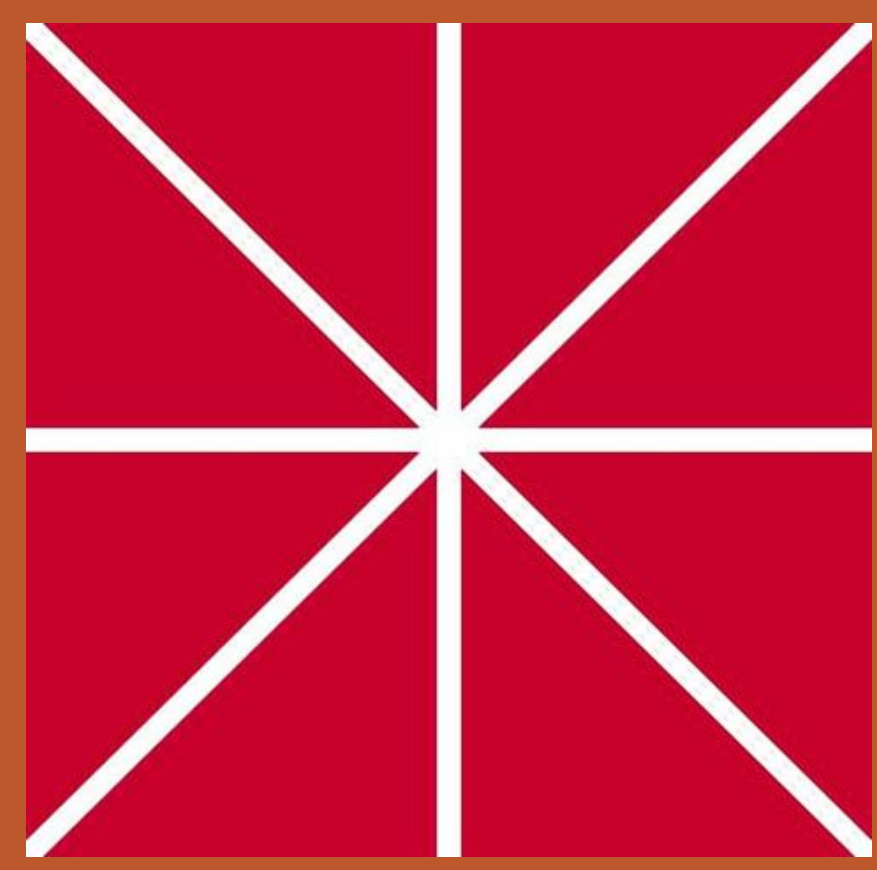
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Mulan: An Exploration of Culture and Representation in Hollywood

Annie Okuhara, Bernadine Cortina, Hung Le, Ryan Nakahara, Jerry Zou

LIU YIFEI BACKLASH

“What a shame for Hong Kong.”

- Many called out her ‘hypocrisy’ (#BoycottMulan)
- Counter-argument: Liu Yifei, victim of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) (#SupportMulan)
- “No matter how famous or important you are, nobody is safe from the Chinese Communist Party” - Stanley Rose, USC prof. of political science



CULTURAL MISREPRESENTATION IN HOLLYWOOD

- Asians have always been misrepresented and rarely do they get to shine and show the world true Asian culture in Hollywood.
- Asian roles would constantly be filled by a white actor or actress and this caused films to be “whitewashed”.
- With white actors as the protagonists, the interpretation of the film would turn into white saviorism.

FEMINISM & ASIAN WOMEN REPRESENTATION

Mulan 2020 follows a similar story to the Ballad

- Mulan fails to be a proper bride.
- Her father is ordered to serve in the war
- She decides to take his place.

With three critical differences:

- She is now a prodigy
- She is portrayed as “manly”
- She’s a submissive character that upholds the status quo

HOLLYWOOD’S PERFORMATIVE INCLUSIVITY

- Crazy Rich Asians, The Farewell, Black Panther, Mulan 2020: more representation = more POC voice?
- Reality: still overwhelmingly dominated by whites.
- Mulan 2020: producers, director, screenplay writers, composer, director of cinematography, and editor. Not a single Asian.



OBJECTIVE MISREPRESENTATION AND FALSITIES

Original 木兰辞 (The Ballad of Mulan): Hua Mulan is a simple person who trained harder, worked harder, and fought harder.

- Mulan 2020: has supernatural abilities or “chi.” Chi - not a supernatural ability, not Kung Fu, but something everyone has

Original 木兰辞 (The Ballad of Mulan): set around the Southern and Northern Dynasties (420-589 AD).

- Mulan 2020: sets (buildings, structures, costumes, etc.) from the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD), the Song Dynasty (960-1279 AD), the Yuan Dynasty (1231-1368 AD), and even the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 AD).

- - Mulan 2020: sword “忠勇真” engraved on it - not an actual phrase or proverb used by Ancient Chinese people but a literal translation of “Loyalty, Courage, and Honesty.”

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