

# **Boys' Love, Cosplay, and Androgynous Idols**

Queer Fan Cultures in Mainland China,  
Hong Kong, and Taiwan

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# Introduction

Jing Jamie Zhao, Ling Yang, and Maud Lavin

Chinese-speaking popular cultures have never been so queer as in this digital, globalist age. In mainland China where entertainment media products with explicit homosexual themes have long been banned from public screening, its contemporary media industry is nonetheless eager to ride the wave of queer connotations and sentiments. In December 2015, *Go Princess Go!* (*Taizifei shengzhiji*, LeTV, 2015), a thirty-six-episode, lighthearted comedy peppered with gender flips (*xingbie fanzhuang*) and elements of BL (Boys' Love, a fan subculture narrating male homoeroticism) and GL (Girls' Love, a fan subculture narrating female homoeroticism) became one of the most popular web-based TV dramas in mainland China. The show had been viewed 2.4 billion times before it was pulled offline by government regulators for revision because of its explicitly sexual and indecent content in January 2016.<sup>1</sup> In Hong Kong and Taiwan, queer cultures not only have permeated offline consumerist societies, social media uses, and cyberspaces, but also have appeared in political movements.<sup>2</sup> In the 2014 Hong Kong Umbrella Movement (*Yusan yundong*, a prodemocracy political protest initiated by Hong Kong students), online BL fans and student protestors creatively paired two male student leaders, Alex Chow and Lester Shum, as gay lovers and produced a variety of fan art devoted to this couple.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, earlier in 2014, during the Sunflower Student Movement of Taiwan (*Taiyanghua xueyun*, a Taiwanese civic protest), two male student leaders, Chen Wei-ting and Lin Fei-fan, were also "rumored to be lovers."<sup>4</sup>

In response to this proliferation of queer representations, productions, fantasies, and desires, especially as manifested online, *Boys' Love, Cosplay, and Androgynous Idols: Queer Fan Cultures in Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan* (QFC hereafter) explores extended, diversified, digitized, and transculturally informed fan communities and practices that have been devoted to and that have cultivated various forms of queerness. The focus of this volume travels among fans of transnational androgynous celebrities, such as Hong Kong idol HOCC (Denise Wan-See Ho, see chapter 7), mainland Chinese superstar Li Yuchun (Chris Lee, see chapter 8), Taiwanese actress Joe Chen Chiao-En (chapter 6),

and the American actress Katherine Moennig (chapter 4); the carnivalesque BL matchmaking of two Chinese-speaking male celebrities performing in CCTV's *Spring Festival Gala* (*Yangshi chunwan*, see chapter 5); the online and offline gendered performances of an all-male cosplay<sup>5</sup> group whose members mimic the girlish cuteness of Japanese ACG (anime,<sup>6</sup> comics, and games) characters and the Korean singing group Girls' Generation (chapter 2); mainland fanzines dedicated to the Japanese ACG series *Hetalia: Axis Powers* (chapter 3); fan-made videos (fanvids) starring a well-known Sinophonic transgender media character, Dongfang Bubai (Invincible Eastern, see chapter 6); transnational production and distribution networks of mainland *danmei* (the Chinese version of BL, see chapter 1) fandom; and the multidimensional Japaneseness of Taiwanese female BL fandoms (chapters 9 and 10).

In *QFC*'s investigations of such diverse Chinese-speaking fan communities, "queer" is employed as a productive analytical lens that "defines itself diacritically not against heterosexuality but against the normative,"<sup>7</sup> including any perspectival norms and ideals in both contemporary public cultural and scholarly discourses surrounding nation-states, linguistics, geopolitics, ethnicities, genders, and sexualities. Therefore, it serves as an umbrella term used in this volume to loosely refer to all kinds of nonnormative representations, viewing positions, identifications, structures of feelings, and ways of thinking. Accordingly, the range of queer fandoms *QFC* highlights includes explicitly homosexual-themed narratives and, beyond such categorization, a greatly diversified matrix of nonheteromartial, nonnormative sociocultural, sexual, and gender representations as well.

Despite the fact that queer fan practices have enjoyed a long local tradition in China,<sup>8</sup> contemporary Chinese-speaking queer fan cultures have also been shaped by the incessant and complex transregional, cross-cultural, and transnational cultural flows among East Asian cultures and between the East and West—as well as positionings vis-à-vis official culture and traditional norms. Most queer fantasies and narratives in Chinese-speaking fandoms are created either in the style of BL or GL. Both terms are borrowed directly from Japan and have their roots in Japanese manga (comics). In terms of transnational cultural flows and their influence, consider, for instance, that many Chinese-speaking queer fans playfully describe themselves as *zhai* (宅), *ji* (基), *fu* (腐), or a combination, meaning respectively staying at home all day and relying on the Internet to connect with the outside world; having close same-sex friends or same-sex desires; and harboring a strong interest in BL, GL, or both. The words *zhai* and *fu* derive, in that order, from the Japanese terms *otaku* (people with obsessive interests) and *fujoshi* (rotten women) and were introduced to the Chinese-speaking world by way of Taiwan. The former refers to obsessive ACG fans, mostly male, whereas the latter, passionate female BL fans. The word *ji* is the Cantonese transliteration of the English word "gay" and is now widely used in Mandarin-speaking regions to refer to homosociality and homoeroticism

as well. This complex translingual *mélange* of fan identities gives a clear signal of an unabashed devotion to digital culture; to communicating via social media; to creating narratives that circulate digitally; to embracing the multiple participatory roles of fans in fandoms, particularly those involving queer sensibilities, codes, and socialities.

In response to these specificities of contemporary Chinese-speaking fan cultures, in analyses rooted in *QFC*'s major locations—mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan—issues of cross-border consumption and borrowing of materials are traced by all of our contributors in relation to local contexts. Most of them also delineate fans' extensive use of digital technology and the uncertainty, fluidity, and performativity of subjectivity, identity, and desire in cyberspace. Since localized issues of censorship and different if closely related histories of gender and sexuality traditions are paramount in such considerations, *QFC*'s geographic organization helps to illuminate cultural differences among locations and the competing forces and factors influencing geocultural dissimilarities within Chinese-speaking queer fandoms, even at this time of global digital currents. To right an imbalance in the scholarly literature on queer East Asia, this volume is weighted toward an exploration of queer elements of mainland Chinese fandoms that have been less often written about than more visible, queer-influenced, public cultural aspects in Hong Kong and Taiwan.<sup>9</sup> Notably, because of the stringent censorship regime in mainland China, belonging through participation to queer fandoms involves some risk—and it arguably offers a strong alternative to public spaces marked as more normative and officially sanctioned.

## Researching Chinese-Speaking Queer Fan Cultures

In analyzing contemporary Chinese-speaking fan cultures through a queer and transcultural perspective, *QFC* has engaged in a productive dialogue with a wide range of academic inquiries, filling gaps, contributing theoretical insights, and expanding horizons. The inception and organization of the volume have been greatly influenced by queer Asian studies, queer China studies, and queer Sinophone studies.<sup>10</sup> We share with those studies a common focus on non-normative genders, sexualities, and desires; a complex understanding of the hybrid and heterogeneous nature of Chinese-speaking sociocultural practices and experiences; and a strong commitment to decenter Western gender and sexuality knowledge and theories. Yet, unlike those studies that “have tended to cluster around ethnographic approaches to specific sites of queer social life, on the one hand, and critical interpretations of queer-themed literature, films, and other media, on the other,”<sup>11</sup> *QFC* is oriented toward studies of digitized fan subcultures combining ethnographic approaches and other critical analyses, to both reflect the changing face of Chinese-speaking popular cultures and further broaden the scope of these existing fields.

*QFC* also bridges the gap between the well-established Anglo-American tradition of media fan research, the increased academic attention to celebrity fandoms in fan studies,<sup>12</sup> and the more recently emerged studies of transnational fandoms with Japanese origin, such as *otaku* culture and BL fandoms, in a concrete transcultural Chinese-speaking fannish context. Existing Western queer fandom studies, particularly the scholarship dedicated to slash/femslash (fan writing practices that explore male/female homoerotic romances), has flourished since the late 1980s.<sup>13</sup> Yet, this cluster of queer fan research in the main overlooks the existence of non-Western queer fandom and does not explain the contextual intricacies and particularities of diverse groups of global queer fans.<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, contrary to the growing body of literature on the local, transnational, and cross-cultural consumptions of Japanese BL,<sup>15</sup> only a few recent English-language scholarly works have briefly covered BL/GL fandom and ACG fan practices in mainland China, Hong Kong, or Taiwan.<sup>16</sup> Through extensive and multimethodological research, our contributors proffer unique insights that make this volume both a disruptive force to any simplistic, if not ignorant, understandings of non-Western queer fandom and a significant alternative to the Anglo-American model of fandom studies. For instance, chapter 7 powerfully illustrates the differences between androgyny in Western contexts and the Sinophonic notion of neutrosexuality (neutral gender or sexual identities); while chapter 2 delimits a Chinese-specific transgender performance of an East Asian feminine cuteness. And chapters 9 and 10 demonstrate and contextualize the subjectively constructed Taiwanese fantasies surrounding “Japaneseness” in dissimilar ways.

*QFC* delineates, highlights, and complicates the existence of some disquieting ambivalence toward a wide array of gender, sexual, racial, sociocultural, and political identities within fannish spaces. Its essays bring particular pressure to bear on key issues of online fan negotiations with cultural strictures (chapters 4, 6, 7, and 8); media censorship (chapters 1, 5, and 10); political identities (chapters 3 and 8); and historical legacies (chapters 7 and 9), particularly in the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Arguments emphasize the complexities and transgressiveness of these interfaces rather than easy polarities between general resistance and capitulation (chapters 2, 3, and 4). Some of our contributors also explore nondichotomous intricacies between grassroots production and top-down, profit-driven mass media industries (chapters 5 and 6). Thus, we see fandom itself as queer in essence, as it has positioned itself as a “heterotopia”<sup>17</sup>—a social and communal space that has been in constant exchange and contestation with mainstream society and cultures. Fan communities and networks in general afford fecund grassroots playgrounds for seeking of alternative “temporalities” and active “place-making practices” that are disruptive to and reinscribing of mainstream, hegemonic orders.<sup>18</sup>

Research involved in *QFC* mostly focuses on queer fannish fantasies and activities produced mainly by women for women. This gendering not only corresponds to the demographics of Chinese-speaking queer fandoms but also points



to the key role of these sites as countering the evident gender hierarchy in the sweep of active fandoms in general. Such hierarchy has been integral to patriarchy and misogyny in fan cultures—as has long been recognized in previous fan studies.<sup>19</sup> While web-based Chinese-speaking queer fandoms engage a surprising range of participants of diverse genders and sexualities (for instance, see chapters 4, 7, and 8), they provide particularly valuable spaces for women—as well as others—to exercise agency, public communication, and creativity, partly as a result of the recent wave of feminist and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) movements and influences; the increasing power of women consumers; the relative gender leveling of digital technology; and conversely the enduring lack of power women—and minoritarian subjects—still experience in other publics in the regions. Hence, the question of how these fandoms might signify and appeal to women remains a key issue that we address throughout the volume. However, we are not claiming that these and other queer fandoms in general are exclusively female, as online (fannish) identity is always performative and fictional,<sup>20</sup> and the nonnormative images, gazes, identifications, and imaginaries in cyber fannish spaces have the power to disturb the more conventional aspects of the “heterosexual matrix”<sup>21</sup> by “dramatis[ing] incoherences in the allegedly stable relations between chromosomal sex, gender and sexual desire.”<sup>22</sup> In fact, some of our essays (see chapters 2, 4, and 6) specifically examine the explicit play with cross-gender and cross-sexual-orientation identities greatly evident in the fandoms in question. Others (see chapters 4 and 7) implicitly suggest a renegotiation of certain virtual, imagined relations along homosocial lines, at time blurring, at times contesting rigid boundaries between fans who define themselves as LGBTQ people and those who do not.

## Contextualizing Today’s Chinese-Speaking Queer Fan Cultures

The Chinese-speaking entertainment media industry’s high profiling of androgyny, homosociality, cross-dressing, and queerness has not only been met with an enthusiastic if controversial reception and extraordinary economic success but also in recent decades created a boom in Chinese queer fandoms.<sup>23</sup> Although *QFC* focuses on contemporary fandoms, particularly digital ones, there are pertinent historical precedents, of course.

In the realm of pop music, one can provide a long list of “suspected LGBT pop artists since the 1980s.”<sup>24</sup> The late Hong Kong star Leslie Cheung Kwok Wing was a Chinese celebrity well known internationally for his androgynous persona, frequent cross-dressing media performances, and real-life bisexual relationships during the 1980s and 1990s. Further, the nonconformist gender performances and real-life romances of the Chinese–Hong Kong female singer Faye Wong has made her a Cantopop legend since the 1990s.<sup>25</sup> In the 1980s and 1990s Taiwanese music industry, a few tomboyish female singers, such as Jessey Lin and Eagle Pan, also experienced huge success. The Taiwanese female music

group S.H.E., famous for its members' female masculinity and same-sex intimacies, has enjoyed a long and prosperous career since its debut in 2001.<sup>26</sup> In 2011, a self-identified *zhongxing* (neutrosexual) female music group MissTER made its debut in Taiwan and has since then gained significant popularity in Hong Kong and Taiwan. The group is composed of five tomboyish girls, some of whom are grassroots lesbian celebrities and have been out of the closet for years in cyberspace. In the early 2010s, the public coming-out of Denise Ho and Anthony Wong in Hong Kong and the team leader of MissTER Jin Dai in Taiwan further stimulated the growth of their queer stardom in Chinese-speaking regions.

Because of the PRC government's "no encouraging, no discouraging, and no promoting" attitude toward LGBTQ communities, few high-profile mainland pop stars have come out in public. Nevertheless, the visibility of queer gender performances and personae has risen remarkably in mainland China since the advent of globally formatted reality television. In 2005, the sudden surge in the number of androgynous female celebrities in one of the most influential and successful Chinese reality TV singing contests, *Super Girl* (*Chaoji nüsheng*, Hunan Satellite TV) helped the show gain more than 400 million viewers for its final competition episode that year<sup>27</sup>—not to mention the sudden proliferation of male homosocial and homoerotic images in its later copycat shows, *Happy Boy* (*Kuaile nansheng*, Hunan Satellite TV, 2007, 2010, 2013) and *My Hero* (*Jiayou! Hao nan'er*, Dragon TV, 2006–2007).

In the contemporary film industries of mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, directors with major queer-themed works showcase a diversity of ways to represent Chinese male homosexuality and fashion, female masculinity, homoeroticism, and lesbianism.<sup>28</sup> Even under mainland China's complex media censorship regulations, queerness has become a unique selling point. Although since 2008, the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television in mainland China has categorized images of homosexuality in mass media as vulgar or obscene content that needs "to be cut or revised,"<sup>29</sup> the connotations of nonheterosexuality can still be seen in some mainland Chinese TV dramas and movies. The well-received Chinese TV series *Palace of Desire* (*Daming gongci*, Li Shaohong, CCTV8, 2000) and the Chinese New Year's blockbuster *If You Are the One* (*Feicheng wurao*, Feng Xiaogang, 2008, China), for example, both contain nonheterosexual characters. The Thai transsexual celebrity Rose became famous among Chinese viewers after starring in the 2012 Chinese New Year's film *Lost in Thailand* (*Renzai jiongtu zhi taijiong*, Xu Zheng, China), which generated RMB 1.26 billion (USD 230 million) in revenue and has been ranked as "the highest-grossing" Chinese-language domestic-released movie in history.<sup>30</sup> In addition, the most profitable film series produced by the mainland Chinese film industry, *Tiny Times* (*Xiao shidai*, Guo Jingming, 2013–2015, China),<sup>31</sup> is famous for its constant deployment and marketing of female and male homosociality and homosexuality to a predominantly female fan audience. One shot in the series features the two female leads kissing each other's lips

as a sign of intimate same-sex friendship, while another shot shows a male character carrying another male character like a lover. While nonmainstream male masculinities and cross-dressing performances have often been enacted by comedians or in traditional opera characters on Chinese Central Television (CCTV), transgender celebrities and performances recently have also appeared in Mainland entertainment shows produced by provincial TV stations, such as *The Voice of China* (*Zhongguo haoshengyin*, Zhejiang TV, 2012–), *Your Face Sounds Familiar* (*Baibian dakaxiu*, Hunan Satellite TV, 2012–2014), *Day Day Up* (*Tiantian xiangshang*, Hunan Satellite TV, 2008–), and *Jinxing Show* (*Jinxing xiu*, Dragon TV, 2015–).

In Hong Kong media history, transgender subplots have rendered both the famous martial arts novel *The Smiling, Proud Wanderer* (*Xiao'ao jianghu*, Jin Yong, 1967–1969) and its adapted film series in the early 1990s (Tsui Hark, 1992–1993, Hong Kong) unprecedentedly successful. In the past decade, the Taiwanese TV industry has also witnessed a general trend of an enhanced presence of queer images. Adapted from the far-reaching Taiwanese queer novels written by Hsien-yung Pai, the TV shows *Crystal Boys* (*Niezi*, PTV, 2003) and *Love's Lone Flower* (*Gu lian hua*, CTS, 2005) have received great media and public attention. Some of the most popular Taiwanese TV talk shows, such as *Mala tianhougong* (Star TV, 2004–) and *Kangxi laile* (CtiTV, 2004–2016), have also featured transgender or gay hosts for more than a decade. One of the most popular Taiwanese variety TV shows, *Guess* (*Wocai wocai wocai*, CTV, 1996–2011), has frequently produced segments with transgender and nonheterosexual themes since 2007. In the first season of the TV show *Super Girl's* Taiwanese counterpart, *Super Idol* (*Chaoji ouxiang*, SET, 2007–), the female contestant Jing Chang's notably androgynous persona drew overwhelming audience support and helped her eventually win the competition in 2008.

Furthermore, in the past several years, the information surrounding Thai queer entertainment has been imported and widely circulated within online Chinese-speaking fan networks. Because of their enormous public appeal among the Chinese-speaking audience, a few Thai celebrities who have starred in LGBTQ-themed movies or are famous for their transgender/transsexual appearances, such as Mario Maurer and Witwisit Hiranyawongkul featured in the teenage gay romance *Love of Siam* (*Chookiat sakveerakul*, 2007, Thailand), Sucharat Manaying and Suppanad Jittaleela featured in the teenage lesbian romance *Yes or No* (*Sarasawadee wongsompetch*, 2010, Thailand), and the butch lesbian singer and actress Zee Mattanawee Keenan, have been invited to perform in various TV shows and film festivals in mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

In addition to this increasingly “queered” media milieu, Chinese-speaking queer fan cultures have also been profoundly shaped and diversified by the developments of the Internet and digital cultures. Both Hong Kong and Taiwan were connected to the Internet in 1991, while mainland China became a country with Internet access in 1994.<sup>32</sup> The Internet in Taiwan and in mainland China was

initially used only for academic purposes. As a result, college students in these two regions became the privileged few who could explore online. In the early 1990s, some student fans took this opportunity to launch a manga and anime section on university bulletin boards. National Tsing Hua University, National Chiao Tung University, National Sun Yat-sen University, and National Taiwan University were among the first to set up university bulletin boards, and their manga and anime sections used to attract a great many users.<sup>33</sup> Since 1996, manga and anime sections also began to appear on the bulletin boards of prestigious mainland Chinese universities. The University of Science and Technology of China was the first to set up a “cartoon” section on its bulletin board, followed by Tsinghua University in Beijing, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, and Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou. In 1998, anime and manga fan clubs began to turn up at Peking University, Tsinghua University, and Renmin University.<sup>34</sup> With this preliminary establishment of online and offline fan networks, Chinese-speaking queer fandoms soon entered into a stage of rapid growth.

Around the early 2000s, many Chinese-speaking netizens started gaining easy access to unreleased and censored Western, especially American, queer-themed media, translated and redistributed via peer-to-peer (P2P) networks by Chinese fan translation (fansubbing) groups. Since then, Chinese fans’ queer reading of Western celebrities and popular culture has been enjoying a growing diversity and complexity. High-profile Western media franchises like *Harry Potter*, *Sherlock Holmes*, and *The Avengers* series have all spurred a great amount of Chinese-speaking fan productivity.<sup>35</sup> The tropes, jargon, and conventions of Western slash fandom have also been imported via the Internet and begun to merge with those of the Japan-originated BL fandom in the Chinese-speaking cyberspace.

As Mark Duffett has observed, the spread of affordable broadband services offers fans “increased access to information, a greater speed of social interaction, and a new means of public performance.”<sup>36</sup> The access to information is particularly important to queer fan cultures, as their fan objects are often deemed inappropriate or offensive by mainstream society. In the case of Mainland BL fandom, before the advent of the Internet, fans generally had very limited access to BL content. They had to take great trouble to go to particular trading places to purchase pirated print BL manga or BL anime CDs. Since the passion for BL was not a hobby they could discuss openly in school or at home, it was difficult for fans to meet and talk with like-minded fellow fans.<sup>37</sup> To enrich their knowledge about homosexuality, for instance, some heterosexual female BL fans would befriend gay male classmates and a few daring ones would even visit gay bars, but most could only resort to gay websites and gay porn circulated on the Internet. In addition to providing an anonymous and secure place for fans to search for the information they need, the Internet also enables fans to unleash their creativity and to build global fan communities. As a matter of fact, some queer fan cultures in mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan have already carved out an interconnected and interdependent cyber, Chinese-speaking

fannish world through common written languages, a shared set of fan lingo, and, most importantly, a collective passion for their fan objects.

Moreover, there are signs showing that this queer fan world is expanding to embrace or intersect with other non-Chinese-speaking locations in the Confucian cultural sphere, such as Vietnam and South Korea. The popularity of translated mainland Chinese BL novels in Vietnam has prompted the Vietnamese government to issue a string of orders to ban publications that contain homosexual content.<sup>38</sup> The hit Chinese historical TV drama *Nirvana in Fire* (*Langya Bang*, Beijing TV/Dragon TV, 2015), based on an online mainland BL novel, has also attracted many Korean BL fans after it was broadcast in South Korea. Some of them even traveled to Shanghai to share their fan works with Chinese fans at a Nirvana fan convention in April 2016.<sup>39</sup>

## Chinese Fan Studies within Queer Sinophone Contexts

The English term “queer” has been reinvented in diverse Sinophonic LGBTQ minoritarian discourses to refer to *tongzhi* (gay), *guaitai* (weirdo), or *ku'er* (cool youth).<sup>40</sup> In turn, the English word “Chinese” has often been used globally to denote *zhongguo ren* (people with PRC nationality) or monolithically *huaren* (ethnic Chinese).<sup>41</sup> In contrast, we reappropriate and reposition both terms to refer to creative, significant, and intense diversification within regionally based fannish contexts. We do so to emphasize contemporary Chinese-speaking queer fan cultures’ “multiple, contradictory, and fragmented” characteristics.<sup>42</sup> Inherent in this emphasis is an uncovering, too, of localized linguistic innovations (see chapters 2 and 9, for example).

Directly and indirectly *QFC* builds on the productive ground of Sinophone studies, the growing interdisciplinary academic field that takes pains to examine, as Shu-mei Shih has articulated, “Sinitic-language cultures on the margins of geopolitical nation-states and their hegemonic productions”<sup>43</sup> by means of “foregrounding the value of difficulty, difference, and heterogeneity.”<sup>44</sup> In particular, Howard Chiang has argued that

a non-hegemonic subversive definition of “Chineseness” should pay closer attention to the cultural differences between Sinitic-language communities on the margins of China (Taiwan, Hong Kong, etc.) and those within the People’s Republic of China (PRC), rather than flattening out these unique cultural identifications with the bias of China-centrism.<sup>45</sup>

The ways performing Chineseness fueled by queer subjectivities are strategized enable us to decenter a univocal Chinese identity, tradition, and culture, and thus contribute to an understanding of the plurality, heterogeneity, multilingualisms, transregionality, and contextual specificity of Sinitic-language cultures and practices both within and outside continental China. These continuing debates over the meanings of China and Chineseness are immensely constructive for our analysis of marginalized (or even stigmatized) cultures, practices, and groups

produced within, outside, and across regional borders of mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. They compel us to examine more closely the different political, legal, and cultural contexts that have profoundly intersected with (if often indirectly) the scale, activeness, and texture of Chinese queer communities and their related activities and gatherings.

In mainland China, homosexuality, which had been defined as a kind of hooliganism (*liumang zui*) since 1957, was decriminalized in 1997 and later depathologized in the official definition of mental diseases in 2001.<sup>46</sup> The most influential Mainland-based gay website, *Danlan*, was founded in late 2000.<sup>47</sup> In 2005, the first mainland Chinese queer women magazine, *Les+*, was also started in Beijing.<sup>48</sup> Many gay- and lesbian-oriented public spaces and organizations have also developed in a few major Mainland cities.<sup>49</sup> Yet the cultural influences of these queer media and communicative spaces have still been small in scale. In the meantime, the social and political atmosphere for mainland LGBTQ-related activities and groups has remained turbulent and precarious. Although the annual queer cultural and film festivals and gay parades in Beijing and Shanghai were launched as early as 2004, the police have often called off the events for unknown reasons.<sup>50</sup> Meanwhile, some negative prejudices toward gays and lesbians endure, as do the diverse hierarchies that stigmatize and marginalize bisexual and transsexual people within both mainland heteronormative and LGBTQ communities. On the contrary, Hong Kong and Taiwan seem to have more queer-friendly ambiances. Hong Kong legalized homosexuality in 1991—six years before the Mainland did so.<sup>51</sup> The Hong Kong Lesbian and Gay Film Festival has been held annually since 1989, while the pride parade and queer-related social movements in Hong Kong have also received massive support as well as certain levels of controversy within its own queer communities since 2000s.<sup>52</sup> Yet various religious and social groups have consistently objected to the Hong Kong government's promoting acceptance of homosexuality in the 2000s.<sup>53</sup> Taiwan has often been assumed to be a liberal and democratic state in terms of gender and sexual equality because of its multiparty political system and post-martial law stage (post-1987).<sup>54</sup> The annual gay parade in Taipei started in 2003. In 2014, it attracted more than 65,000 participants and thus became the largest social activity for gay rights and equality in Asia.<sup>55</sup> Yet it has also been found that the sex-negative traditions and other conservative social and political forces in Taiwan have been persistent in supporting "virtuous custom" (*shanliang fengsu*) through negating homosexuality and also prostitution.<sup>56</sup> A recent stark example of this conservatism would be that, in 2013, one Taiwanese female BL fan writer was arrested at comic fan event for producing sexually explicit content.<sup>57</sup>

Moreover, the different legislation concerning pornographic or obscene articles in mainland China and Hong Kong have forced the sexually transgressive queer fandoms in those two locales to mobilize remarkably different survival strategies and countertactics.<sup>58</sup> Sometimes the legal cost has been dangerously high. Significantly, in 2011, thirty-two young female BL writers were arrested



by the police in Zhengzhou, China, on the charge of disseminating obscene articles.<sup>59</sup> Additionally, fan attitudes toward transnational queer cultural flows are also varied. Residing in the country that is the most friendly to Japanese culture in Asia, Taiwanese BL fans could access authorized Chinese translations of Japanese BL manga and openly profess their Japanophilia without fear of being censored. In mainland China, however, Japanese BL manga and novels can circulate only through piracy and with fan-made subtitles (fansubs), not only because they contain sexually explicit content but also because they are Japanese. Since Sino-Japanese ties deteriorated in the mid-1990s, the PRC government has systematically restricted the publication and broadcast of Japanese manga and anime. Chinese fans of Japanese popular culture may also be criticized for being unpatriotic by their peers.

## Key Themes and Chapter Descriptions

*QFC* begins with a section of six chapters on queer fan cultures in mainland China. In quite different ways, each chapter deals directly or indirectly with the issue of government censorship and its impact on the development of queer fan cultures. Notably, in chapter 1, Ling Yang and Yanrui Xu examine the various tactics invented by Chinese *danmei* (BL) fans to evade censorship of sexually transgressive content and the building of a vast but vulnerable underground BL distribution network. Borrowing Hong Kong-based anthropologist Gordon Mathews's concept of "low-end globalization,"<sup>60</sup> they describe Chinese *danmei* fandom as "a form of low-end globalization that involves numerous semilegal or illegal transactions of information, works, goods, and money across the Taiwan Strait and in East Asia." Moreover, due to the intertwined, competing cultural, political, and economic factors in the mainland TV industry, some "queer-ish" TV content has been produced both despite and because of the strictures of this complex yet paradoxical censorship system. Both chapter 5 by Shuyan Zhou and chapter 6 by Egret Lulu Zhou discuss state regulations concerning TV production and reveal possible embedding of queer nuances in TV content—and show how queer connotations viewed through this lens could be considered, whether consciously or not, a sideways strategic step in the direction of gender and sexuality diversification while also avoiding direct confrontation with clear signs of homosexual and transgender identities in everyday life. These representations receive layered manipulations online that juxtaposed to one another can be seen as dancing closer to or away from officially approved gender and sexuality norms.

To say that these chapters and the fan practices they analyze represent an alternative to a polarized resistance/capitulation model of fandoms would be an understatement. Nor are official censorship practices clear and fixed in time in the PRC; thus, delving into specific moments of fan-official culture interfaces usefully reveals the complex fan mesh of reinscribing and reinterpreting official

acts and their potentials. Hence, in chapter 2, Shih-chen Chao mentions the government's intervention in a popular reality television show that featured a transgender contestant; she then analyzes how cross-gender cosplay can be read as implicitly embracing yet explicitly distancing itself from such moments. Besides extensive censorship of queer content, the PRC government has also established elaborate restrictions of foreign media and cultural content, especially Japanese manga and anime and Western television shows. Chapter 3 by Ling Yang and chapter 4 by Jing Jamie Zhao engage with this aspect of censorship as they each explore how Chinese fans manage to access and reinterpret Japanese and American media products through unlicensed fansubs in cyberspace.

The mainland China section is arranged in an order that reflects the various strands of national, transnational, and transregional cultural traffic that have inspired and shaped the formation of local fandoms. The first three chapters investigate the dissemination and localization of queer fandoms, practices, and works originating in Japan. In chapter 1, "Chinese *Danmei* Fandom and Cultural Globalization from Below," the authors map out a broad picture of the development of Chinese BL fandom in the past two decades. To highlight the localization of the Japanese BL genre, they employ BL's Chinese name *danmei* throughout the chapter, even though the term BL is also widely used among Chinese fans as well. Their chapter focuses on three key aspects of Chinese *danmei* fandom: grassroots distribution networks, major fan "circles" or communities, and the rise of a women-dominated online public sphere. While capturing the ongoing convergence of the Japanese BL tradition and Western slash culture in Chinese *danmei* fandom and claiming that *danmei* has been turned into "a vibrant global cultural commons," they also point out that this commons is riddled with tensions and conflicts, especially when it is involved in real-world politics.

Cosplay in mainland China, too, can be used as a starting point to astutely analyze gendered and queered dimensions of Chinese fan cultures. Opening to large, mass culture issues of trans-Asian cultural translation along lines of genders and sexualities, chapter 2, "Cosplay, Cuteness, and *Weiniang*—The Queered *Ke'ai* of Male Cosplayers as 'Fake Girls'," specifically explores the localized work and reception of the China-based Alice Cos Group. The author asks, "In what way can 'cute' be precisely contextualized in East Asian cultures?" She investigates the boundaries that the Alice performers push and pull as they perform an intricate, ultracute, nonparodic mimesis of feminine Japanese manga characters and Korean girl pop stars, even while ducking identifications with transgender personae and same-sex practices. Queered disjunctures with gender and disconcerting reinscriptions with mainstream sexual identifications are staged hand in hand, under the veil of a *ke'ai* (cute) virtuosity.

Chapter 3, "'The World of Grand Union': Engendering Trans/nationalism via Boys' Love in Chinese Online *Hetalia* Fandom," examines the online Chinese fandom formed around a Japanese manga/anime series *Axis Powers Hetalia*, a lighthearted parody of world history based on nation anthropomorphism.



Originally published as a web comic in 2006, the series has enjoyed worldwide popularity and a considerable amount of controversy in South Korea and China for its alleged national stereotyping and whitewashing of Japan's aggression in World War II. Although China is only a minor character in the series, its visual representation is nevertheless intriguing enough for Chinese fans to churn out a whole slew of fan works. Through a critical analysis of diverse fan discourses and two canonical fan texts, this chapter inquires about the intersections between gender politics and geopolitics, nationalism and transnationalism, and localization and globalization in the Chinese *Hetalia* fan world.

Apart from Japanese ACG culture, certain Chinese queer fandoms have also vigorously engaged with Western queer culture or, more accurately, imaginaries about it. Chapter 4, "Queering the Post-*L Word* Shane in the 'Garden of Eden': Chinese Fans' Gossip about Katherine Moennig," presents a critical analysis of Chinese fans' queer gossip discourse surrounding the American actress Katherine Moennig, most famous still for her breakthrough role as a butch lesbian character in the television series *The L Word* (Showtime, 2004–2009). Through a deconstructive reading of the gossip that imagines Moennig's real-life lesbian gender identities and homoerotic relationships in one of the largest cross-cultural fandoms in Chinese cyberspace, The Garden of Eden (Yidianyuan), the author reveals that, rather than simply assimilating or rejecting the normative understandings of the West as a civilized, queer-friendly haven and China as a backward, heterocentric nation, the fans' intricate fantasies about the Western queer world reflect their subjective, hybridized reappropriation and reinscription of the Chinese queer Occidentalistic imaginations. Ultimately, she argues that the queer Occidentalism exemplified in this cross-cultural gossip functions as a survival strategy for queer fans to interrogate the depressing, heteropatriarchal realities in contemporary mainstream Chinese society.

The Chinese-speaking world is of course rich in its own fan reference objects and incredibly layered, contradictory, engrossing readings of them in online fandoms. Chapter 5, "From Online BL Fandom to the CCTV *Spring Festival Gala*: The Transforming Power of Online Carnival," recounts the "Looking for Leehom" saga, that is, the publicity journeys of and celebrity gossip about trans-Asian pop singer Wang Leehom and classical pianist Li Yundi: first, as fans playfully and romantically paired the two men in online narratives after watching their 2012 CCTV duo performance; second, as the two appeared to appropriate this BL framing for their own commercial benefit; third, as humor about their shipping (fannish pairing of media characters or celebrities)<sup>61</sup> even appeared on the usually heavily controlled CCTV *Spring Festival Gala*; fourth, into the denial of homosexuality by Wang, earning him the derisive moniker online of the "No. 1 Straight Guy in the Universe"; and last, to official and offline mass media uncomfortable attempts to address the situation. Throughout, the author Shuyan Zhou explores the fraught fan spaces and critiques the tendency of some digital-culture scholars to oversimplify such spaces as ones of carnival,

developing instead a more nuanced approach that includes a consideration of carnival's conceptual limits.

Chapter 6, "Dongfang Bubai, Online Fandom, and Gender Politics of a Legendary Queer Icon in Post-Mao China," deftly analyzes the readings, rereadings, and gendered translations of the popular transgender character Dongfang Bubai (DFBB) as he/she has been interpreted by fans after the quite different incarnations in the modern Chinese writer Jin Yong's original Chinese novel *The Smiling, Proud Wanderer*; Hong Kong director Tsui Hark's film *Swordsman II*, where DFBB was played by the Taiwanese actress Brigitte Lin; and the mainland Chinese television producer-scriptwriter Yu Zheng's *Swordsman*, where DFBB is played as a "true woman" by the Taiwanese actress Joe Chen. The author Egret Lulu Zhou pays particular attention to fans' framing and reframing of DFBB and his/her loves, triumphs, defeats, and even self-mutilations variously as gay romance, heterosexual romance, or lesbian romance, but all through a queer lens. She also argues that fans' lesbian reading could coexist with homophobia and illustrates the notably awkward entanglements of queer- and nonqueer sentiments in this DFBB fandom.

The China section is followed by two chapters focusing on Hong Kong-based fandoms. Chapter 7, "Desiring Queer, Negotiating Normal: Denise Ho (HOCC) Fandom before and after the Coming-Out," analyzes the 2012 coming-out of Hong Kong lesbian star HOCC that has particular meanings for her Hong Kong fans who have over time ranged from speculating with titillation about her same-sex romances to masking any suggestion of these with heterosexual fiction or gossip about her. Through in-depth interviews and intricate cultural contextualization, Eva Cheuk Yin Li finds that before HOCC came out the ambivalence of her sexuality "was an important part of her stardom that allowed fans' playful speculation, evidenced by the vibrant queer fan culture." Yet, at times, HOCC fans remain self-disciplined by often culturally negotiating with "normal" ideals of female gender and sexuality during their queer readings. After HOCC's public coming-out, as Li reveals persuasively, "the tension between queer and normal has shifted from the heteronormative negotiation of a 'proper' female gender and accorded sexuality to the negotiation of a 'proper' lesbian embodiment" within her fandom.

Chapter 8, "Hong Kong-Based Fans of Mainland Idol Li Yuchun: Elective Belonging, Gender Ambiguity, and Rooted Cosmopolitanism," also explores fan responses to an androgynous female star of seemingly ambivalent sexuality—here mainland Chinese pop music phenomenon Li Yuchun—but from a different angle, focusing on how Mainland-born fans now residing in Hong Kong negotiate a sense of dual belonging with their affective fan articulations and activities. Maud Lavin raises questions about how Li's perceived cosmopolitanism and sexuality are used by a range of Hong Kong-based fans and followers.

Both Hong Kong chapters are rooted in its specific geocultural contexts and form some strong contrasts and connections to the mainland China chapters.

For instance, due to the relatively more room for freedom of speech and social activism in Hong Kong, a well-known entertainment celebrity like HOCC is able to perform a high-profile public coming-out, whereas Wang Leehom and Li Yundi had to forcefully deny any same-sex interest within the mainland media cultural context when rumors about their homosexual relationship threatened to get out of control in Chinese cyberspace. Similarly, on the one hand, the ambivalent fan response to mainland gender-bending pop star Li Yuchun reflects the increasingly strained relationship between the Mainland and Hong Kong, most notably in the Umbrella Movement; and, on the other, the deep identifications of mainland fans of Li Yuchun living in Hong Kong speak to a strategic use of the idol's androgynous gendering and its cosmopolitan connotations to negotiate everyday, affective life in Hong Kong.

Differences aside, the Hong Kong chapters and mainland China chapters also share some common themes. Chapter 8's concern of "the use of mass cultural consumption to negotiate border crossing and elective belonging in ways that are primarily separate from identification with local or national governments" is echoed by the discussion in chapter 3 of how Chinese *Hetalia* fans use this Japanese manga series to negotiate the tension between an imperialistic, backward-looking nationalism and a more forward-looking cosmopolitanism. Moreover, the two Hong Kong chapters, as well as the mainland China chapters 2, 4, and 6, all delve into the complexities of queer readings and performativities, and the multifaceted negotiations about genders and sexualities, and between queerness and normativity, in fan communities.

The cross-cultural and gender/sexuality themes continue as the book's focus moves to Taiwan with two closely related chapters on Taiwanese BL fandom and its engagement with Japan and Japaneseness. In chapter 10, "Girls Who Love Boys' Love: BL as Goods to Think with in Taiwan (with a Revised and Updated Coda)," Fran Martin revisits her substantive 2005 study of the BL scene in Taiwan. She traces the history of Taiwanese fans' involvement with Japanese BL manga and asks in essence what BL does for Taiwanese fans. Utilizing the idea of "worlding," Martin argues that Taiwanese fans have created two worlds with BL texts: "an imaginative geography of a 'Japan' that is characterized by sex-gender ambiguity/fluidity/nonconformity," and "a social subworld," or "community of readers, fans, and creators of BL narratives" where complex debates concerning gender and sexuality have been carried out. The chapter concludes with a brief reconsideration of the potential impacts of Internet regulation and censorship on the flourishing transnational worlds of BL fandom.

In chapter 9, "Exploring the Significance of 'Japaneseness': A Case Study of *Fujoshi*'s BL Fantasies in Taiwan," Weijung Chang explores the culture of Taiwanese *fujoshi* (female BL fans) to situate their affective investment in Japan and Japaneseness in the unique Japanophilic context of postcolonial Taiwan. Through looking back at the historical relationship between Taiwan and Japan and the lingering influence of Japan's colonial legacy in Taiwan, the author

points out that Japan is not merely a distant fantasy world to Taiwanese *fujoshi* but “a hybrid based on actual experiences with Japanese residents in Taiwan and imaginary concepts of Japan proper.” Thus, Taiwanese *fujoshi* are constantly negotiating the contradictory image of Japan as something both familiar and foreign. She also examines the various ways Taiwanese *fujoshi* integrate elements of Japaneseness into their everyday life and how those elements enhance their pleasures in BL fantasy.

Both Taiwan chapters speak directly to the three BL chapters (1, 3, and 5) in the mainland China section. As one of the most prominent forms of queer fandom in the Chinese-speaking world, BL has drawn dedicated followers in all three regions, particularly in Taiwan and mainland China. Yet Taiwanese and mainland BL fandoms have at least two remarkable differences. First, the consumption of Japanese BL manga and novels carries a special weight in Taiwanese BL fandom due to the general receptiveness of Japanese pop culture in Taiwan. In contrast, mainland BL fandom puts more emphasis on the production and consumption of PRC-original BL works. Second, while both mainland and Taiwanese BL fans have used BL as a transformative tool in discourses on genders and sexualities, mainland BL fans have also mobilized BL to build a public space that engages in alternative political expressions. Furthermore, Taiwanese *fujoshi*'s Japanophilia resonates well with the tactical use of Occidentalism in the postcolonial based queer fandom of Western celebrities and media discussed in chapter 4. The self-conflicting longings, pleasures, and hopes involved in the imagination of an idealized other remind us of the strategized “utopian dimension” of fandom and popular culture in general.<sup>62</sup>

## Conclusion

*QFC*'s essays analyze local and transcultural consumption and reinterpretations of queer cultural flows despite and in negotiation with different national censorship practices and varied gender, sexuality, and local category-trespassing identifications and belongings. And, in a larger sense, by presenting these ten pieces analyzing queer fandom contribution, we have highlighted the multivalence, plurality, and paradoxes of gender and sexual identities within Chinese-speaking, queer, fannish sociocultural contexts. In conclusion, we would like to sketch out a few promising areas of Chinese-speaking queer fan cultures for future research.

First, of course, is the participation of male fans in BL, GL, ACG, cosplay, and celebrity fandoms, such as the gay male fandom surrounding music diva Faye Wong in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore.<sup>63</sup> How do male fans, straight or nonstraight, engage in queer fantasies, narratives, and practices? How do they socialize with female fans in the same fandoms? Have queer fandoms fostered a more egalitarian style of communication between genders and more positive

group dynamics given the deep-rooted misogyny common in Chinese-speaking societies? How do the reading strategies of Chinese-speaking queer male fans resemble or differ from heterosexual male readers of BL, or *fudanshi* (rotten men), in Japan?<sup>64</sup>

Second, the complexity of gender and sexual identities of Chinese-speaking BL fans has been an issue that has aroused considerable interest among researchers.<sup>65</sup> Yet, instead of focusing on questions such as why heterosexual women are interested in male homosexuality, as if sexual identity was somehow fixed and unchangeable, it is probably more fruitful, like Fran Martin's chapter in this volume, to explore how fans navigate in the strange new world opened up by queer fandoms; how they play and negotiate with various nonnormative desires, identifications, and belongings; how they imagine, defend, and redraw their subjective gender and sexual boundaries.

Third, lesbian BL researcher Akiko Mizoguchi has spoken about a "yaoi (another term denoting BL in Japan) sexual orientation," pointing out that female *yaoi* fans "consider themselves a sort of sexual minority."<sup>66</sup> Similarly, Japanese psychiatrist Tamaki Saito has used the term "otaku sexuality" to describe male *otaku*'s attachment to fictional female characters, which is satisfying enough to replace emotional and sexual relationships with real persons.<sup>67</sup> How can we theorize this multiplication of sexuality imaginatively generated in conjunction with popular cultural practices in East Asia? Is it possible to add *fujoshi* and *otaku* to the now-conventional list of LGBTQ to refer to new forms of queer sexuality that challenge our traditional notions of sexuality, media consumption, as well as the dichotomy between fantasy and reality?

Fourth, the queer transcultural flows examined in *QFC* largely originate from Japan and the United States, two influential centers of global popular culture. Yet, as increasingly more non-Western queer celebrities and media products have gained followers in the Chinese-speaking world through the Internet and social media, as more multilingual and multinational digital platforms for fan production and networking have been established, it is necessary for researchers to trace interactions of Chinese-speaking fans with queer fans and fan objects from South Korea, Southeast Asia, and other non-Western geographical locations to further dismantle the East/West and Chinese/non-Chinese dichotomies and related hierarchies sustained by Euro-American and China centrisms as regards cultural representations of genders and sexualities.

In short, we would like to use *QFC* to invite and encourage further research to explore any queering of or queered frustrations, promises, pleasures, confrontations, and entanglements that result from and deconstruct all kinds of binarisms and normative ideals about identities and subjectivities within fannish participatory spaces and affective communities in the Chinese-speaking world and elsewhere.

## Notes

1. "Taizifei shengzhiji xiaxian le!" [Go Princess Go! Taken offline!], *Shandong shangbao* [Shandong Business Daily], January 21, 2016, accessed April 21, 2016, <http://news.163.com/16/0121/14/BDS1BL3R00014Q4P.html>.
2. Vera Mackie and Mark McLelland, "Introduction: Framing Sexuality Studies in East Asia," in *Routledge Handbook of Sexuality Studies in East Asia*, ed. Mark McLelland and Vera Mackie (New York: Routledge, 2014), 1–17.
3. Maud Lavin and Xiaorui Zhu, "Alexter: Boys' Love Meets Hong Kong Activism," *fnewsmagazine*, November 17, 2014, accessed July 20, 2015, <http://fnewsmagazine.com/2014/11/alexter-boys-love-meets-hong-kong-activism/>.
4. "Alexter," *Umbrella Terms*, accessed July 21, 2015, <http://www.umbrellaterms.hk/main/blog/keyword-alexter>.
5. Cosplay is a fan subculture during which fan-performers wear costumes to impersonate media characters or celebrities. For a detailed definition, see Nicolle Lamerichs, "Stranger Than Fiction: Fan Identity in Cosplay," *Transformative Works and Cultures* 7 (2011), accessed April 1, 2016, <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twvc/article/view/246/230>.
6. *Anime* refers to animated media.
7. Andrew Parker, "Foucault's Tongues," *Mediations* 18.2 (1994): 80.
8. For more details, see Andrea S. Goldman, *Opera and the City: The Politics of Culture in Beijing, 1770–1900* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012); and Wu Cuncun, *Homoerotic Sensibilities in Late Imperial China* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004).
9. Significantly, there is a substantial landmark scholarship on homoeroticism-related issues in Mainland China, such as Bret Hinsch, *Passions of the Cut Sleeve: The Male Homosexual Tradition in China* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990); Loretta Wing Wah Ho, *Gay and Lesbian Subculture in Urban China* (New York: Routledge, 2010); and Lucetta Yip Lo Kam, *Shanghai Lalas: Female Tongzhi Communities and Politics in Urban China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2012); Wenqing Kang, *Obsession: Male Same-Sex Relations in China, 1900–1950* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009); Tze-Lan D. Sang, *The Emerging Lesbian: Female Same-Sex Desire in Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003). However, this series of writings tends not to focus on fan studies or in-depth on digital culture and queerness in general. Our volume builds on this existing literature in ways that both unveil the variety and complexity of queer dimensions of fannish practices within contemporary mainland Chinese popular cultural ambience and divulge the historicity, futurity, and transformativity of mainland Chinese queer-related media cultures in a globalized world. For Hong Kong and Taiwan, there has been a broader scholarly and journalistic discourse on localized homosexual-themed cultures; and the cultures themselves enjoy more visibility than do their equivalents in mainland China. Influential texts include Hans Tao-Ming Huang, *Queer Politics and Sexual Modernity in Taiwan* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011); Helen Hok-Sze Leung, *Undercurrents: Queer Culture and Postcolonial Hong Kong* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008); Song Hwee Lim, *Celluloid Comrades: Representations of Male Homosexuality in Contemporary Chinese Cinemas* (Honolulu: Hawai'i University Press, 2006); Fran Martin, *Situating Sexualities: Queer Representation in Taiwanese Fiction, Film and Public Culture* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003); and Denise Tse-Shang Tang, *Conditional Spaces: Hong Kong Lesbian Desires and Everyday Life* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011). Some of this body of literature



- has explicated the multiplication of Hong Kong and Taiwanese queer politics, movements, and visual and literary arts along with the increasing popularity of Internet use and digital media in these two regions. The contributions to our volume further this previous scholarship by focusing specifically on Hong Kong and Taiwanese queer fan cultures and activities.
10. For example, see Howard Chiang, ed., *Transgender China* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Howard Chiang, "(De)Provincializing China: Queer Historicism and Sinophone Postcolonial Critique," in *Queer Sinophone Cultures*, ed. Howard Chiang and Ari Larissa Heinrich (New York: Routledge, 2014), 19–51; Petrus Liu, "Why Does Queer Theory Need China?" *positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 18.2 (2010): 291–320; Audrey Yue, "Queer Asian Cinema and Media Studies: From Hybridity to Critical Regionality," *Cinema Journal* 53.2 (2014): 145–51. For a detailed summary on this topic, see Fran Martin et al., introduction to *AsiaPacifiQueer: Rethinking Genders and Sexualities*, ed. Fran Martin et al. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 1–27; and Fran Martin, "Transnational Queer Sinophone Cultures," in *Routledge Handbook of Sexuality Studies in East Asia*, ed. Mark McLelland and Vera Mackie (New York: Routledge, 2014), 35–48.
  11. Martin, "Transnational," 45.
  12. Mark Duffett, "Celebrity: The Return of the Repressed in Fan Studies?" in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Fan Cultures*, ed. Linda Duits and Koos Zwaan (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2014), 163–80.
  13. See Camille Bacon-Smith, *Enterprising Women: Television Fandom and the Creation of Popular Myth* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 228–81; Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 190–227; Sara Gwenllian Jones, "Histories, Fictions, and Xena: Warrior Princess," *Television & New Media* 1.4 (2000): 415; Julie Levin Russo, "Textual Orientation: Queer Female Fandom Online," in *The Routledge Companion to Media & Gender*, ed. Cynthia Carter, Linda Steiner, and Lisa McLaughlin (New York: Routledge, 2014), 452.
  14. Some foundational works are Bacon-Smith, *Enterprising Women*; Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*; Constance Penley, "Feminism, Psychoanalysis, and the Study of Popular Culture," in *Cultural Studies*, ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula A. Treichler (New York: Routledge, 1992), 479–500; Joanna Russ, ed., *Magic Mommas, Trembling Sisters, Puritans & Perverts: Feminist Essays* (New York: Crossing Press, 1985).
  15. Some major works include Patrick W. Galbraith, *The Otaku Encyclopedia: An Insider's Guide to the Subculture of Cool Japan* (New York: Kodansha International, 2009); Mizuko Ito, Daisuke Okabe, and Izumi Tsuji, eds., *Fandom Unbound: Otaku Culture in a Connected World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012); Antonia Levi, Mark McHarry, and Dru Pagliassotti, eds., *Boys' Love Manga: Essays on the Sexual Ambiguity and Cross-Cultural Fandom of the Genre* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010); Mark McLelland et al., eds., *Boys Love, Manga, and Beyond: History, Culture, and Community in Japan* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2015); Timothy Perper and Martha Cornog, eds., *Mangatopia: Essays on Manga and Anime in the Modern World* (Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2011).
  16. See, for example, Jin Feng, *Romancing the Internet: Producing and Consuming Chinese Web Romance* (Boston: Brill, 2013); Katrien Jacobs, *The Afterglow of Women's Pornography in Post-digital China* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Fran Martin and Larissa Heinrich, eds., *Embodied Modernities: Corporeality, Representation, and Chinese Cultures* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006); Yanrui Xu and Ling Yang, "Forbidden

- Love: Incest, Generational Conflict, and the Erotics of Power in Chinese BL Fiction," *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* 4.1 (2013): 30–43; Ling Yang and Hongwei Bao, "Queerly Intimate: Friends, Fans and Affective Communication in a *Super Girl* Fan Fiction Community," *Cultural Studies* 26.6 (2012): 842–71.
17. Rhiannon Bury, *Cyberspaces of Their Own: Female Fandoms Online* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005).
  18. Jack Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 6.
  19. See, for example, Bacon-Smith, *Enterprising Women*; Jenkins, *Textual Poachers*; and Andrea Wood, "'Straight' Women, Queer Texts: Boy-Love Manga and the Rise of a Global Counterpublic," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 34.1/2 (2006): 394–414.
  20. For a more detailed discussion on this point, see Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse, eds., *Fan Fiction and Fan Communities in the Age of the Internet* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006).
  21. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990).
  22. Annamie Jagose, *Queer Theory: An Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 3.
  23. For related discussion, see Eva Cheuk-Yin Li, "Approaching Transnational Chinese Queer Stardom as Zhongxing ('Neutral Sex/Gender') Sensibility," *East Asian Journal of Popular Culture* 1.1 (2015): 75–95.
  24. Qian Wang, "Queerness, Entertainment, and Politics: Queer Performance and Performativity in Chinese Pop," in *Queer/Tongzhi China: New Perspectives on Research, Activism and Media Cultures*, ed. Elisabeth L. Engebretsen and William F. Schroeder (with Hongwei Bao) (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2015), 155.
  25. Anthony Fung, "Faye and the Fandom of a Chinese Diva," *Popular Communication: International Journal of Media and Culture* 7.4 (2009): 252–66.
  26. "S.H.E.," Baidu Baike, accessed July 20, 2015, [http://baike.baidu.com/view/3187.htm?fromtitle=SHE&fromid=10713083&type=syn#ref\\_\[1\]\\_3187](http://baike.baidu.com/view/3187.htm?fromtitle=SHE&fromid=10713083&type=syn#ref_[1]_3187).
  27. Audrey Yue and Haiqing Yu, "China's Super Girl: Mobile Youth Cultures and New Sexualities," in *Youth, Media and Culture in the Asia Pacific Region*, ed. Usha M. Rodrigues and Belinda Smaill (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 118; Lucetta Yip Lo Kam, "Desiring T, Desiring Self: 'T-Style' Pop Singers and Lesbian Culture in China," *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 18.3 (2014): 252–65.
  28. For more details, see Chris Berry, "East Palace, West Palace: Staging Gay Life in China," *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media* 42 (1998): 84–89; Chris Berry, "Wedding Banquet: A Family (Melodrama) Affair," in *Chinese Films in Focus: 24 New Takes*, ed. Chris Berry (London: British Film Institute, 2003), 183–90; Chris Berry, "The Sacred, the Profane, and the Domestic in Cui Zi'en's Cinema," *positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 12.1 (2004): 195–201; Lim, *Celluloid Comrades*; Martin, *Situating Sexualities*; Liang Shi, *Chinese Lesbian Cinema: Mirror Rubbing, Lala, and Les* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015); Alvin Ka Hin Wong, "From the Transnational to the Sinophone: Lesbian Representations in Chinese-Language Films," *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 16.3 (2012): 307–22; Audrey Yue, "What's So Queer about *Happy Together*? A.k.a. Queer (N)Asian: Interface, Mobility, Belonging," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Journal* 1.2 (2000): 251–64.
  29. Shi, *Chinese Lesbian*, 45.
  30. May Nimfa Idea, "Lost in Thailand Filmmakers Brainstorm with Audience to Ensure Movie's Success," *yibada*, June 18, 2015, accessed March 10, 2016, <http://en.yibada>.



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31. Clifford Coonan, "China Box Office: 'Tiny Times 4.0' Lead as Local Youth Flicks Dominate," *Hollywood Reporter*, July 13, 2015, accessed July 15, 2015, <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/china-box-office-tiny-times-808489>.
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