

# TV Drama in China

*Edited by*

**Ying Zhu, Michael Keane, and Ruoyun Bai**



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— Britta Erickson, *The Art of Xu Bing*

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# Introduction

Ying Zhu, Michael Keane, and Ruoyun Bai

In the decade prior to China joining the World Trade Organization in December 2001, Chinese television producers began to measure success and failure, not so much from a political yardstick, but in comparison to market expectations. Foreign programs were feeding into the system, finding enthusiastic audiences, and challenging the style of local production. By 2001, moreover, the technological possibilities of the medium were becoming increasingly evident. Digital channels, multi-platform programming, new formats, niche channels and short message service (SMS) interactivity were creating new demands for more programming and greater variety. However, despite an increase in formats and genres — including reality TV, quiz, and game shows — drama has retained pre-eminence in viewing schedules. Research estimates that the “Chinese viewer” watches an average of fifty-two minutes of television drama per day — a diet constituting more than 30 percent of overall television consumption. The status of television drama is reflected in advertising: in 2002, 90 percent of all revenue from television advertising came from television drama.<sup>1</sup> Although drama’s domination of advertising is now challenged by reality and “factual” television formats, drama production remains central to the viability of China’s large but fragmented television industry.

## Chinese Television Drama as a Research Topic

The pre-eminence of TV drama consumption in China contrasts sharply with the scant academic attention accorded Chinese TV drama. Aside from a few studies of the distribution of Chinese videos in diaspora markets, and occasional book chapters and journal articles — many of which refer to television serial drama either within the context of social reforms or as cultural discourse and anthropological text — we know very little about Chinese television drama as a distinctive narrative form within the parameters of political economy and its role in sustaining Chinese television as a cultural institution.<sup>2</sup>

Some recent scholarship has begun the task of providing formal analysis — in this instance, the historical dramatic text — both from a comparative perspective and by examining this genre's role in cultivating Chinese prime-time drama as an economically viable and culturally significant enterprise.<sup>3</sup> Overall, though, the production and consumption of television drama in China has received only passing attention in the English-speaking academy.

The institutional and cultural contexts of television dramas, their narrative and stylistic intricacies, and the complex relationships between popular dramatic programs and their viewers have been at the center of television research in the West since the mid-1970s. Ethnographic studies have chronicled the different receptions of *Dallas* and *Dynasty* in Europe and the Middle East.<sup>4</sup> Television serials from the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Brazil, Mexico, and Venezuela have likewise attracted academic scrutiny.<sup>5</sup> Writers have further redefined drama within the hybrid forms of docu-soap, factual television, and *téléroman*.<sup>6</sup> In the past few years, however, the focus of attention has begun to recognize the importance of TV drama in East Asia. In 2004, the first critical anthology concerning Japanese drama appeared; this contribution to the field examined “trendy dramas,” arguing that they extended the nature of Japanese cultural power and influence in the East Asian region.<sup>7</sup>

The first international publication dedicated to Chinese television drama was an edited volume, *Television Drama: Chinese and US Perspectives* by Chunjin Qu and Ying Zhu.<sup>8</sup> Published in Chinese in 2005, with contributions from leading television scholars in China and the United States, this collection of essays approached television drama as a narrative form, as social discourse and as a tradeable cultural commodity. In addition, the volume adopted a comparative framework that foregrounded similarities and differences between both TV drama, and the study of TV drama, in the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the United States. The limited scope of this volume,

however, left little room for the discussion of the circulation of East Asia trans-border dramas from Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, and Taiwan; fashion and fads of particular genres against the backdrop of a Chinese television industry in transition; and the continued exploration of TV drama's story-telling and discourse-generating functions during an era of unprecedented social, cultural, and economic reform.<sup>9</sup>

### **Chinese TV Drama as a Narrative Form**

The lack of research on Chinese television serial drama is even more conspicuous considering the extensive literature on Chinese cinema. Writers have examined its ontology, the nature of authorship, generic conventions, and expectations in relation to Hollywood films, its particular stylistic traits, and ideological interpretations of texts. Such issues also pertain to our study of Chinese television drama as a distinctive narrative form, especially since Chinese TV drama has replaced Chinese cinema as the number one myth-making engine in popular culture. Despite this repositioning, Chinese television drama draws many of its codes, conventions, and narrative strategies from cinema. Indeed, many popular prime-time dramas are being made by prominent film directors and feature well-known movie stars. The cross-fertilization between Chinese film and television practitioners and critics/scholars is unprecedented due to reforms in media production that allow filmmakers to moonlight in TV and vice versa.

The close relationship between Chinese film and television, however, should not elide the specificity of television as a powerful story-telling medium and mode of address. Film criticism took the individual, autonomous cinematic text as its primary object of study — a practice that conforms to the economic logic of commercial cinema, wherein each individual pays to see a given feature film at a particular time and place. Yet the mode of viewer engagement with television and the economic logic of commercial broadcasting are different. In the West since the 1960s, and in China since the early 1990s, television has rarely organized dramatic programming in terms of a series of anthology dramas. Rather, the emblematic narrative form of television drama has been the episodic series of hour-long or half-hour programs featuring the same cast, setting, and dramatic tension; or the serial form, which develops multiple narrative lines across multiple episodes that might be broadcast over a period of time — long or short.

In both variations, however, the fundamental plan is to establish continuity. In the television series, continuity is maintained through building

familiarity with characters and their relationship to the environment, sometimes a domestic setting, at other times a hospital or a police station. In the second context — and this is more relevant to China — there is a strong sense of seriality that resonates with popular story-telling traditions, great tales of adventure and intrigue such as *The Dream of the Red Chamber* (*Honglou meng*, 1986), *The Water Margin* (*Shuihu zhuan*, 1998), and *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (*Sanguo yanyi*, 1994), to name a few. This organization of television drama as a recurrent set of multiple “moments” of textual presentation and audience engagement over periods of time has challenged television scholars to develop new analytical strategies for dealing with the unique textuality of television.

Television drama in China has developed in tandem with social reforms, embracing international ideas as well as celebrating tradition. In May 1958, Beijing Television broadcast the first Chinese television drama, a single-act play transposed to the small screen. *A Mouthful of Vegetable Pancake* (*Yikou caibingzi*) symbolized the television’s role as a new technology of political education.<sup>10</sup> While television was initially a curiosity confined to the larger cities, the Chinese TV audience immediately saw itself reflected as the new subject of TV drama; its members constituted an imagined community seemingly on the verge of creating the great society; their story was now available for domestic consumption. Compared with today’s multi-vocal dramas, this first teleplay was basic propaganda. At the time, however, it was a narrative close to people’s lives. The elder sister of a peasant family chides her younger sister for sharing food with a dog, telling her of an earlier time when they were younger, before the Communist triumph of 1949. The second daughter had asked a landlord for help, only to be set upon by his dogs. Returning home, the only food available was a single vegetable pancake, which the girls’ widowed mother refused to eat, insisting that the younger sister should have it. In keeping with the Communist Party’s development goals at the time, this was a lesson about frugality and class struggle.

From 1958 until 1966, Beijing Television and newly established stations in Shanghai, Guangzhou, Tianjin, Xi’an, Wuhan, and Changchun broadcast almost two hundred television dramas. Beijing Television alone originated ninety of these dramas.<sup>11</sup> Writers moved from stage plays to television plays. The first serial drama (*lianxuju*) appeared on Chinese television screens in February 1981, a time when overseas serials were finding their way into viewing schedules in China. *Eighteen Years in the Enemy Camp* (*Diying shibannian*) was a nine-episode action-thriller serial produced by the national broadcaster. It failed to win over the local audience. According to critics, this failure was not due to audience unfamiliarity with the serial form —

viewers already had tasted overseas dramas — but its rather clumsy attempt to imitate the overseas action genre. The stimulation for the TV serial format in Mainland China needs to be understood therefore in the context of successful imported dramas, such as *A Doubtful Blood Type* (*Xueyi*; Japan 1980), *Huo Yuanjia* (Hong Kong 1982), *Stars Know My Heart* (*Xingxing zhi woxin*, Taiwan 1988), *Last Night's Stars* (*Zuoye xingchen*, Taiwan 1988), *Isaura the Slave* (*Nünu*, Brazil 1984), *Slander* (*Feibang*, Mexico 1985) and *Frustration* (*Kanke*, Mexico 1986).

Sensing a need to reward local quality, the National Association of Television Drama, in conjunction with the Ministry of Radio and Television (hereafter, MRFT, predecessor of the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, or SARFT), instituted an annual award ceremony for outstanding television drama in 1982. By the third award ceremony, this had been proclaimed as the Feitian award. Nevertheless, there were already some indications of China's competitive advantage within Asia. In 1982, Shandong Television produced a highly acclaimed adaptation of the popular classic *The Water Margin* (*Shuihu zhuan*), stimulating television dramas based on popular legends. In 1986, a rendition of the Qing classic *The Dream of the Red Chamber* (*Hongloumeng*) was followed a year later by a dramatization of the popular tale *Journey to the West* (*Xiyouji*, 1987).

During the 1980s, narratives of social change were the dominant themes.<sup>12</sup> By the turn of the decade, however, the focus had turned from social injustices toward the more secular concerns of living in an increasingly competitive and less egalitarian society. Unsurprisingly, in the context of China's political struggles, there was a steady supply of historical dramas (*lishi tical*), dealing with epic themes and the lives of great leaders and patriots. During the 1980s and 1990s, such depictions were required to maintain an adherence to official historiography. However, other genres emerged as a result of social and economic reforms, expressing social conflicts. This social commentary category bore the weight of China's social reform agenda. An important and well-documented example of this category was the 1986 serial *New Star* (*Xin xing*), about cadre politics.<sup>13</sup>

These kinds of productions are sometimes referred to as realist drama. In the sense that they reflect social change in the tradition of socialist realism, Chinese television critics have made use of a musical term, the “main melody” (*zhuxuanlü*). The main melody is a synthesis of theme and CCP ideology. The official slogan, “propagate the main melody and uphold diversity,” was formulated at the 1987 National Conference for Cinematic Production and promptly taken up by propaganda and cultural departments, as well as by the literary establishment and television producers.<sup>14</sup> In the 1980s and 1990s, those

serials that “upheld” the main melody had more success in winning the coveted *feitian* award.

The early 1990s witnessed a short-lived period of innovation. The commercial impetus that coincided with the reduction of state funds for the media unleashed a wave of new money in television and film, often from multiple sources: non-media organizations, advertising companies, personal loans, and *guanxi* networks (personal contacts and favors). Themes of authority emerged, highlighting class reversals in the new society in which people could prosper. The power of the home-grown television serial to stop a nation was demonstrated in 1990. Guangdong Television’s *Public Relations Girls* (*Gongguan xiaojie*) beat out even its Hong Kong competitors, peaking with a market share of 90 percent.<sup>15</sup> In the same year, the Beijing Television Arts Center’s *Yearning* (*Kewang*) created an unprecedented response (see Chapter 5, this volume). This fifty-episode serial was conceived by a group of writers including novelists Zheng Wanlong and Wang Shuo, script editor Li Xiaoming and Beijing Television Arts Center director Chen Changben.<sup>16</sup> The impetus for this production reportedly came from the success in China of the Japanese drama *Oshin*.

Following the broadcast of *Yearning*, Li Ruihuan, the Politburo member responsible for culture and ideology, praised the serial for providing a new model of social relations which represented “socialist ethics and morals.” Li’s commendation was subsequently taken up by Ai Zhisheng, the Minister for Radio, Film and Television at the time, who asserted that the success was due to the producers having an awareness of the needs of Chinese viewers.<sup>17</sup> With *Yearning* receiving official endorsement and attention from overseas Chinese, television drama began to attract a new kind of critical attention. In 1991, *The Enlightenment Daily* (*Guangming Ribao*), China’s “intellectual” newspaper, published *The Shock Wave of Yearning* (*Kewang chongjibo*), which contained forty-seven articles about the serial as well as interviews with the producers and writers, letters from viewers, and comments from officials.<sup>18</sup> In a forum held in 1993 to discuss the effect of the new popular dramas on the established morality of audiences, Lu Xiaowei, the director of *Yearning*, was direct about the educative role of television drama:

What kind of thing is it that can put bums on seats? It’s something that doesn’t need a lot of effort or attention, something not too dense. But does this necessarily lack intellectualism, taste or a pedagogical component? I don’t see it this way. We tend to look at things too seriously. If you think you could include everything from the dawn of time to now in a television serial, you’re full of yourself! You think yourself so elegant, so good, but nobody watches. This is just bullshit!<sup>19</sup>

The following years saw a change in direction and the emergence of several new genres.<sup>20</sup> The dominant genre was undoubtedly costume drama: in which characters are dressed in pre-modern costumes and tell stories that purportedly occurred in pre-1911 China. Although historical drama was produced as early as the 1980s, in keeping with the need for educational propaganda, the costume drama rapidly gained momentum after 1993. In this year a Hong Kong-produced drama *Tales About Qian Long (Xishuo qianlong*: Hong Kong, 1991) was broadcast. This serial depicted Emperor Qianlong's encounters with several beautiful courtesans during his "undercover" royal visits to South China. In the eyes of historians it was scandalous, a perverse distortion of history. However, its enormous popularity indicated to Mainland drama producers that there was a market in the Chinese past. In 1996, another costume drama followed, set in the same Qing Court of Qianlong. *Hunchback Liu, the Prime Minister (Zaixiang Liu Luoguo)*, seized the popular imagination with tales of the valiant prime minister of the day cleverly fighting against court corruption. In 1998, *Princess Huanzhu (Huanzhu gege)*, a co-production between Hunan TV (the provincial television station of Hunan Province) and Zhongjie Cultural Communication Co., a Taiwan-based talent agency, became the hit of the year. The story concerns the identities of a real and a fake princess. The fake princess named Huanzhu, played by Zhao Wei whose popularity soared following the broadcast, is a pretty, free-spirited girl with no formal education, and her clumsy encounters with the imperial family provide an unfailing source of entertainment for many viewers. The following years witnessed a steady stream of both costume and historical dramas. In 1999, historical dramas (all stories set in pre-1911 China) accounted for 10.7 percent of all productions. In 2000 this had risen to 21.6 percent; the following year it was 24.8 percent.<sup>21</sup> In the broadcast schedules, historical dramas made up the largest proportion of content between 7.00 pm to 9.30 pm. Provincial and city stations, seemingly unrestrained by quota regulations, broadcast considerably more historical dramas than the national broadcaster, CCTV.<sup>22</sup>

The pre-eminence of historical content on Chinese television can be attributed to several factors. First, official censors apply different standards to these dramas, in comparison with contemporary stories. As their narratives are ostensibly distanced from the modern history of the Chinese Communist Party, they are inclined to use comedy and satire to expose bureaucratic absurdities in the imperial government. Viewers are quick to see the resemblance between the realities of the twenty-first century and times past. Some historical dramas play on nationalism: connecting the grandeur and glory of ancient China to current-day fascinations with China's emergence.

Importantly however, historical dramas are usually laced with conspiracies and power struggles, themes that hold strong appeal for a large segment of viewers. Historical dramas interweave the past with the present; in the process they create complex scenarios that produce multiple levels of identification. Their role in the innovation of Chinese television content should not be underestimated: they have absorbed and nurtured creative and critical talent. In this sense, it can be argued that they have acted as a buffer zone for Chinese television, a kind of an incubator of critical discourse.

The only development comparable to costume drama was a surge of interest in tales of corruption and crime. Since the late 1970s, the Chinese government has worked to build a legal system to meet the needs of reform. Television, by then the dominant media, became the means of promoting the powerful image of law enforcement institutions, together with promoting legal consciousness among the audience. Dramas about public security officers pursuing criminals began to appear in the 1980s. During the 1990s these stories took a back seat to historical dramas. After 2000, however, crime dramas rocketed. Some crime dramas blended detective elements with sentimental love stories in order to attract more female and young viewers. The writer Hai Yan was instrumental in creating this subgenre of crime drama. His work includes *A Romantic Story* (*Yichang fenghua xueyue de shi*, 1997), *I'll Never Close My Eyes* (*Yongbu mingmu*, 2000), *How Can I Save You, My Love* (*Na shenme zhengjiu ni, wode airen*, 2003), *Jade Buddha* (*Yu guanyin*, 2003). Other crime dramas are more conventional detective stories. The theme of corruption was also linked to the surge of crime drama. In 1995, CCTV broadcast *Heavens Above* (*Cangtian zaishang*) during its prime-time evening slots. This drama was purportedly the first television drama about high-level official corruption to appear in China. The political imperative of fighting corruption provided the backdrop for huge audience appeal. The so-called “anti-corruption drama” genre established its credibility. Anti-corruption dramas and crime dramas forged ahead, arm in arm as it were, although the former never became an official category.

A penchant by producers to feature gory and violent crime scenes eventually forced the SARFT in 2004 to adopt a radical measure. It removed the entire crime drama genre from prime-time television. The ban aroused a great deal of criticism and resistance. Several months later, however, the SARFT adopted a more conciliatory approach, arguing that the ban was targeted at dramas that contained “violence, sex, gore and horror.” By this time, crime dramas were making a comeback, albeit disguised under different designations such as “suspense drama” and “anti-espionage drama.”

Aside from these two dominant drama genres, there are a number of other noteworthy developments. Since the late 1990s, dramas about everyday life have gained enormous followings. While small in number, these dramas are very influential. The most successful have been *Holding Hands* (Qianshou, 1999), *Garrulous Zhang Damin's Happy Life* (Pinzui Zhang Damin de xingfu shenghuo, 2000), *Mirror* (Kong jingzi, 2002), *Elder Brother* (Dage, 2002) and *Love Tree* (Qinqing shu, 2003). Evoking a melodramatic turn, these are tales of ordinary people braving life's vicissitudes. A dominant motif is that life is hard, but with love, patience and perseverance, there will be a better tomorrow.

In 2001, *Those Days of Passion* (jiqing ranshao de suiyue), a story about a retired army officer and his family life spanning more than three decades was a smash hit. This was quickly followed by several other popular dramas about army officers of the People's Liberation Army: *Soldiers' Secrets* (Junren jimi, 2004), *Brothers* (Lishi de tiankong, 2004) and *Draw Your Sword* (Liang jian, 2005). Of all the dramas on CCTV in 2005, *Draw Your Sword* was the most popular, with an average audience share of 10.3 percent.<sup>23</sup> Compared with earlier conventional military-theme dramas, this subgenre strives for entertainment value, breaking away from conventional images and storylines about military heroes by combining spectacles of war with the hero's personal life and interpersonal relationships.

Despite the persistent push of the government for more portrayal of rural life on Chinese television, drama producers and television stations (excepting CCTV) have generally avoided dramas in rural settings. These are considered ratings-killers. This presents an enduring problem for a government that regards television as a crucial means of reaching farmers, the majority of the Chinese population. Despite audience aversion to peasant stories, a series of rural drama serials attracted hundreds of millions of viewers across the nation between 2002 and 2006. The creative force was Zhao Benshan, a leading Chinese comedian who produced, directed, and acted in these dramas: *Liu Laogen* (2003) and *Ma Dashuai* (2004). Both of these had sequels. *Liu Laogen* is about a retired party secretary of a rural village who has started a tourism business that transforms the poverty-stricken but beautiful village into a money-spinning tourist spot. *Ma Dashuai* is about a former village head and his adventures in a city where his daughter, who escaped from an arranged marriage on the wedding day, works as a waitress at a hotel. The stories are ultimately about encounters between rural backwardness and urban modernity. By cleverly incorporating humour, narratives about farmers become acceptable to the urban market.

## Regulatory Issues, Uncertain Development, and Internationalization

In the latter half of the 1990s and beyond, Chinese television drama production has been subjected to an increasingly intense control by the market and by the government. Intensified commercialization is driven by two related factors: first, private capital now dominates television drama production by accounting for 80 percent of the total annual investment in drama production nationwide; second, television stations primarily — if not entirely — depend on their drama programs for advertising revenue, which in turn accounts for about 90 percent of the total annual revenues for the stations. Therefore advertisers, television stations, production companies, and to some extent the SARFT share common ground in television drama commercialization.

The expanded role for the market by no means leads to a reduced regulatory power of the state. In fact, what we have witnessed in the last few years has been the reassertion of content control by a combination of legal and administrative means supplemented now and then by personal intervention from the top leadership. The current regulatory regimes are largely defined by the Broadcast Regulations (*Guangbo dianshi guanli tiaoli*), enacted in 1997, the Provisional Regulations on Television Drama Censorship (*Dianshiju shencha zanxing guiding*) of 1999, and the Television Drama Regulations (*Dianshiju guanli guiding*) of 2000.

The net effect of these regulations is that the state maximizes control over television drama production from the initial stage of conception to screening. Very briefly, a television drama script has to pass an initial proposal review by SARFT, be produced by a licensed television drama unit, pass the end-product censorship by SARFT or its local affiliated bureau, and receive a distribution licence. Licences to produce television drama have only in the past few years been granted to private companies. However, initial screening does not necessarily guarantee that a drama will continue — if it incurs the displeasure of the party leadership, it runs a real risk of being taken off the air or at least being subject to major revisions.

Since the mid-1990s, within the terms set by the state and the market, Chinese television drama has experienced strong growth and great transformations. Annual drama production steadily grew and genre dramas flourished. The following categorization of genres adopted by industry analysts provides evidence of how much Chinese television drama has diversified in this period. CSM, a CCTV audience research joint venture with the French company SOFRES, has identified three major categories of television dramas: pre-modern, modern, and the Republican era. Pre-modern dramas include “legendary tales,” “martial arts,” “historical events,” “law and justice,” and

“gods and ghosts.” Modern dramas encompass “urban life,” “crime,” “ordinary folks,” “reform,” “military revolutions,” “trendy drama,” “sitcoms and dramas in local dialects,” and “children’s drama.” Finally, in the category of Republican dramas there are “sentimental love drama,” “action drama” and “drama that reflects the vicissitude of the Republican period.”

These are useful industrial classifications that capture the evolution of drama since the mid-1990s. However, we are not endorsing or adopting any specific methodology of genre classification in this study; when individual contributors discuss genre dramas, they will establish rationales for naming such genres. Therefore, instead of dwelling on individual genres in this introduction, we highlight several major drama events of the past ten years. In addition, we have chosen to provide readers with a broad range of perspectives, including essays by scholars working on East Asian drama. For this reason, the contributions are concise and linked by thematic commonalities.

### **Tradition, History, and Politics**

The chapters in this book are arranged into four sections. Part I looks at dramas that reflect ideology and continuity with the past. Ying Zhu’s chapter examines history retold in revisionist Qing drama. This genre has dominated dramatic programming in prime time since the mid-1990s. Zhu examines factors conducive to the rise of the revisionist Qing drama and the ideological positioning of such dramas. She argues that the revisionist Qing drama is informed by post-1989 Tiananmen Square intellectual debates concerning the current state and future direction of China’s march toward modernization and the ramifications of the march. Zhu uses the popular serial *Yongzheng Dynasty* (*Yongzheng wangchao*, 1999) as a case in point to illustrate how dynasty dramas have responded to the political and cultural ethos of the time.

Janice Hua Xu’s chapter looks at popular “big family” serial dramas, analysing their themes and cultural significance in the context of China’s modernization drive. Xu identifies several major lines of conflict in these dramas — between individual desire and family interest, between modernity and tradition, and between family life and national political turmoil. In these conflicts, the pursuit of romance and maintenance of family social status are often polarized and intertwined in the story development. Xu argues that such stories, situated in early twentieth-century China, actually address the concerns of contemporary viewers.

In the third chapter Ruoyun Bai examines a more contemporary canvas,

anti-corruption dramas (*fanfu ju*). Through a context-sensitive textual analysis of an anti-corruption drama, *Pure as Snow* (*Daxue wuhen*, 2001), she demonstrates how a traditional Chinese cultural icon, Judge Bao (a fearless judge who pits himself against politically powerful criminals), is reinvigorated in contemporary dramatization of corruption scandals to create an emotional moral community. The emotion of anger is the hallmark of this fictional community. By appropriating the ownership of this community, the Party (represented by upright Party cadres and officials in the drama) attempts to reconstitute its moral leadership. In the meantime, as anger of the upright challenges the status quo, the text of the anti-corruption drama is not without tension. This chapter draws attention to the complexity of Chinese political dramas that can be easily dismissed as too propagandistic to be interesting.

Li Zeng then describes a “transnational period” in the 1990s. Several dramas captured popular attention by featuring either Chinese in a foreign country or foreigners in China. This chapter examines the emergence of this particular television program and its unique way of representing cultural encounters and foreign images. Li Zeng argues that the genre is the outcome of the Chinese media’s adjustment to competition from the global television market, to the Chinese audience’s desire to know the world beyond the national territory, to a new sense of gender and sexuality, and to the state’s shifting ideology and concerns under the influence of globalization.

## **Gender and Domestic Sphere**

In their pioneering 1978 book on television criticism, John Fiske and John Hartley refer to television as a medium for consensus-building.<sup>24</sup> They argue that television communicates “a confirming, reinforcing version” of a national culture. This notion of television as a vehicle through which a culture’s collective values and concerns are reprocessed and reproduced through narrative depends on the centripetal force of a highly centralized national system of broadcasting bringing individuals together as “the” television audience. Echoing Raymond Williams’ important legacy in television studies, Fiske and Hartley argue that television has become one of the central institutions of modern society — not only due to commercial monopoly or government control, but also because television has responded to a cultural need for a common center. In Williams’ terms, television was a medium that brokered and maintained “structures of feelings.” Its portrayal of social reality showed how aesthetic standards were influenced by political realities as well as by the mores, values, and rituals of everyday life.<sup>25</sup>

The explosion in channel capacity, however, has effectively decentralized the experience of television. Particularly in the mature media markets of the West, cable channel economics are frequently predicated upon social fractions and audience fragmentations. Entire channels can be organized around appeals to particular demographic groups, taste cultures, or other sub-audiences constructed around religion, ethnicity, or language groups. VCR and DVD players further inhibit the centripetal pull of television by separating the moment of broadcast from the moment of reception. In this new technological environment, TV drama presents a multiplicity of meanings, responding to real social events and shifts in cultural attitudes and values. Television drama in China functions as a “cultural forum,” to adopt Newcomb and Hirsch’s term, for millions of Chinese viewers to make sense of the rapid evolving culture.<sup>26</sup> As Newcomb and Hirsch put it, “contemporary cultures examine themselves through their arts”: television drama in contemporary China provides a space for the society to engage in cultural debates about its citizens’ most prevalent concerns and deepest dilemmas.<sup>27</sup>

The essays in Part II examine clashes of values in Chinese society. Shuyu Kong examines prime-time series that deal with love and marriage in the contemporary urban middle class family. She argues that family life and sexual relationships represented in these family dramas usually adopt narratives of mid-life crisis, extramarital affairs and marriage break-ups, and mirror a reality of moral collapse and unstable human relationships in a rapidly changing and morally ambivalent Chinese society. The chapter illustrates how gender relations and women’s issues are expressed in popular culture via such family dramas. Wanning Sun’s chapter gives us a different image of contemporary reality. She is concerned with public representations of private lives as they unfold in the urban family. Using the maid — a ubiquitous yet “invisible” figure in many television dramas — as a point of entry to modern family life in the city, Sun argues that, although peripheral in most narratives of urban life, the figure of the maid offers important clues to unravelling the dark side of the modern city in China.

Following this theme of gender, Ya-chien Huang looks at “pink dramas,” a new subgenre reflecting the social empowerment of single women in modern Confucian societies. Huang explores elements of post-feminist irony in perplexing modern relationships, representations of the changing politics of femininity, as well as tensions between modern and traditional gender values faced by young single women. One style of pink drama in China and Taiwan closely follows the *Sex and the City* format (Home Box Office), portraying the friendships and relationships experienced by four single young female professionals. These programs are *Falling in Love* (*Haoxiang haoxiang tan lian'ai*)

(Beijing, 2003), *Mature Women's Diary* (*Shunü riji*) (Taipei, 2003), and *Pink Ladies* (*Fenhong nülang*) (Shanghai, 2003; Taipei, 2002). The discussion also follows the reception of *Sex and the City* in China and Taiwan.

Overall, textual analysis of a particular drama or a group of dramas in this section points to the density and complexity of contemporary Chinese television drama in its active engagement with pressing cultural and political issues. The dramas covered in this section are by no means a comprehensive collection, but the examples used offer glimpses of the significant role Chinese TV drama assumes in social and cultural debates in contemporary China.

### Production, Reception, and Distribution

Part III examines how international genres and styles have exerted influence on the production of local content and export markets; the essays in this section also investigate how audiences have chosen to consume TV drama. Di Miao looks at the development of the Chinese sitcom from the highly satirical *Stories from an Editorial Office* (*Bianjibu de gushi*, 1992) in the early 1990s. Miao looks closely at two sitcoms, *I Love my Family* (*Wo ai wo jia*, 1993) and *Chinese Restaurant* (*Zhongguo canguan*, 1998) produced by Ying Da, who came into contact with the sitcom format while studying in the United States during the early 1990s. Miao argues that low-cost situation comedies have potential to be prime-time programs yet regulatory restrictions and quality issues associated with low budgets have prevented the sitcom from gaining a prime-time slot.

Rong Cai's chapter poses the timely question of what happens when TV dramas are consumed on DVD, tackling both the ideological and commercial significance of the DVD market of TV drama for contemporary society. Her chapter focuses on the DVD market for TV drama in China since the mid-1990s from the perspective of political economy. While TV drama remains the most popular item in contemporary Chinese television programming, another well-spread venue of its consumption is the multimedia market. According to official estimates, sales of VCDs and DVDs of TV drama generated approximately RMB 2.7 billion (US\$346.2 million) annually in recent years, not including those of pirated versions estimated at ten times the volume of legal sales. Cai's chapter canvasses issues relating to state regulations and censorship, and in particular how these impact upon publication of multimedia versions of TV drama. She also addresses TV drama in VCD and DVD formats as commercial ventures, including DVD sales of domestically produced TV drama versus imported drama.

Apart from well-made classic tales, what has stopped Chinese drama from achieving international success? This important question needs to be considered in the context of what is now being termed China's "cultural trade deficit."<sup>28</sup> Since 1996, China's copyright imports have increased 57 percent annually, while cultural exports have struggled to make their mark even in culturally proximate regions such as Taiwan, South Korea, and Singapore. China's television dramas are illustrative of this trade deficit, a point taken up by Michael Keane, who argues that the deficit in terms of trade in television drama rights is symptomatic of a larger problem: how to produce "good content." China's domestic market is both large and fragmented, and this had led to an over-reliance on a supply model of production, in which cultural producers seek to replicate genres and formats rather than target lucrative export markets with imaginative content. Prior to China's accession to the World Trade Organization in 2001, critics of cultural globalization joined with cultural nationalist voices to express concerns about an impending "cultural invasion," arguing that market opening would seriously weaken China's audio-visual industries.<sup>29</sup> While openness to "foreign" content is more of a concern in cinema than in television, nevertheless this watershed event helped to focus attention on deficiencies in television market structure and the lack of outward sales of television content.

The final chapter in this section looks at how nostalgia for the revolutionary past functions to provide ideas for the contemporary TV drama market. The term *Red Classics* (*hong se jing dian*) has appeared with regularity in Chinese media. These "classics" were created in the modern era, a conscious endeavor by the Chinese State to promote a revolutionary culture which would mold the socialist subject. Gong Qian's chapter looks at this re-versioning of socialist history — from film, literature, and operatic traditions to television drama. Invariably, the austere socialist role model characters receive a makeover in order to appeal to a new generation raised on a diet of popular television, and more recently reality shows. Villains and tyrants likewise appear more human. Well-known stories receive injections of new life and more modern fashionable settings, in the process drawing criticism from traditionalists and those who "lived" the past.

## Co-productions and Pan-Asian Markets

Television drama worldwide has shown a propensity to move within and across national boundaries, a process of cultural exchange made even more profitable during the past decade by globalization, technology, market

liberalization, normalization of trade in culture, and commonalities of tradition. Part IV turns to the East Asian marketplace and its relationship to the future of Mainland Chinese TV drama. In a discussion of Taiwan's terms of TV drama trade with China, Yi-Hsiang Chen examines the background to the Taiwanese TV drama industry, including historical and cultural perspectives, political and policy concerns, and economic inducements. She discusses changes in audience tastes and the search for new markets, illustrated by profitable dramas that have utilized linguistic and cultural affinities. The chapter also looks at recent co-productions in China and the interaction among TV professionals from related audio-visual industries.

In Chapter 13, Dong-Hoo Lee examines the very important topic of South Korean drama and its rapid penetration into regional markets. Since the late 1990s, Korean popular culture has established a presence in Mainland China, Hong Kong SAR, Taiwan, Vietnam, and Japan. Korean television dramas have been at the forefront of the so-called Korean Wave, or *hanliu*, which has diversified the media and cultural landscape in Asia, in turn challenging the unilateral, top-down flow of globalization.

The somewhat unexpected popularity of Korean TV drama in Asian countries in recent years has impelled producers to re-examine the kinds of appeal that their cultural products have for transnational audiences. The Korean Wave also allowed them to reflect on the "transnational cultural identity" of their cultural products. Lee examines the impact of the Korean Wave on Korean domestic drama productions, and how Korean producers have responded to the popularity of Korean culture in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. The kinds of efforts which the Korean producers have made to meet both their local and international audiences are also discussed.

The final chapter looks at a different kind of co-production, which Carol Chow and Eric Ma call "trans-border production." The border between the Mainland and the "special administrative region" (SAR) of Hong Kong is less rigid than before 1997. However, Hong Kong has been outsourcing its production in more cost-efficient locations. Chow and Ma examine how, when, and why Hong Kong producers have moved their TV drama production to the Mainland, and discuss the impact of the "trans-border production" on the rescaling of Hong Kong, particularly TVB's output. They also look at the mutual exchanges of knowledge and creative ideas that have serendipitously taken place in the process of co-producing drama.

All the essays in this volume reinforce the impression that a high level of uncertainty exists in the production of television drama. Of course, some might say nothing is ever certain in China. The consumers of television are given more choices. Is television drama therefore losing its appeal to younger

audiences? Will genres splinter and target niches, as has been the case internationally to varying degrees? Will Chinese television drama embrace the challenges of the multi-platform media era and the fragmenting mediascape of abundance? Can Chinese drama seek out international markets? In the discussions that follow, we hope to offer a better understanding of the future of Chinese television drama, first by examining its past and then by observing its present. We cover a great deal of territory, and in doing so hope to set out an agenda for further research in this important topic.

# Notes

## Introduction

1. See *China Television Drama Report, 2002–2003* (Beijing: CSM Publishing, 2003).
2. For diasporic use of media, including TV drama, see John Sinclair, Audrey Yue, Gay Hawkins, Kee Pookong and Josephin Fox, “Chinese cosmopolitanism and media use,” in Stuart Cunningham and John Sinclair (eds.), *Floating Lives: The Media and Asian Diasporas* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001). Discussions of Chinese TV drama serials have appeared periodically. For a selection, see James Lull, *China Turned On: Television, Reform and Resistance* (London: Routledge, 1991); Lisa Rofel, “‘Yearnings’: Televisual love and melodramatic politics in contemporary China,” *American Ethnologist* (1994) 21 (4): 700–722; Yin Hong, “Meaning, production, consumption: The history and reality of television drama in China,” in Stephanie Hemelryk Donald, Michael Keane and Yin Hong (eds.), *Media in China: Consumption, Content and Crisis* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), pp. 28–40; Michael Keane, “Television drama in China: Engineering souls for the market,” in Timothy J. Craig and Richard King (eds.), *Global Goes Local: Popular Culture in Asia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002), pp. 120–137; Geremie Barmé, “The graying of Chinese culture,” in Kuan Hsin-chi and Maurice Brousseau (eds.), *China Review 1992* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1992) (13): 1–51. See also Sheldon Lu, “Soap opera in China: The transnational politics of visibility, sexuality, and masculinity,” *Cinema Journal* (2000) 40 (1): 25–47 and Wanning Sun, “A Chinese in the new world:

- Television dramas, global cities and travels to modernity,” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* (2001) 2 (1): 81–94.
3. Ying Zhu, “*Yongzheng Dynasty* and Chinese primetime television drama,” *Cinema Journal* (2005) 44 (4): 3–17.
  4. For a discussion, see Ien Ang, *Watching Dallas: Soap Opera and the Melodramatic Imagination* (London: Methuen, 1985); Robert C. Allen (ed.), *To Be Continued . . . : Soap Operas Around the World* (London: Routledge, 1995).
  5. Ana Lopez, “The melodrama in Latin America,” in Marcia Landy (ed.), *Imitations of Life: A Reader on Film and Television Drama* (Detroit, MC: Wayne State University Press, 1991); John Sinclair, “Mexico, Brazil and the Latin World,” in John Sinclair, Elizabeth Jacka and Stuart Cunningham (eds.), *New Patterns in Global Television: Peripheral Vision* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Nico Vink, *The Telenovela and Emancipation: A Study of Television and Social Change in Brazil* (Amsterdam: Royal Tropical Institute 1988); Robert C. Allen (ed.), *To Be Continued . . . : Soap Operas Around the World*.
  6. John Corner, “Framing the new,” in Su Holmes and Deborah Jermyn (eds.), *Understanding Reality Television* (London: Routledge, 2004); Jon Dovey, “Confession and the unbearable lightness of factual,” *Media International Australia* (2002) 104: 101–119.
  7. Koichi Iwabuchi (ed.), *Feeling Asian Modernities: Transnational Consumption of Japanese TV Dramas* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2004).
  8. Qu Chunjing and Ying Zhu, *Zhongmei dianshi bijiao yanjiu* (A comparative anthology of Chinese and US television research) (Shanghai: Sanlian Press, 2005).
  9. Ying Zhu’s *Television in Post-Reform China: Serial Dramas, Confucian Leadership, and Global Television Market* (London: Routledge, 2008) explores the political, economic, and cultural forces, locally and globally, which have shaped the evolution of Chinese prime-time television dramas, and the way that these dramas have actively been engaged in the major intellectual and policy debates concerning the path, steps, and speed of China’s economic and political modernization during the post-Deng Xiaoping era. The book also provides cross-cultural comparisons that parallel the textual and institutional strategies of transnational Chinese-language TV dramas with dramas from the three leading centers of transnational television production, the US, Brazil and Mexico in Latin America, and the Korean-led East Asia region.
  10. Zhong Yibin and Huang Wangnan, *Zhongguo dianshi yishu fazhanshi* (The history of television arts) (Zhejiang: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 1994), p. 8.
  11. Zhong Yibin and Huang Wangnan, *Zhongguo dianshi yishu fazhanshi*, p. 7.
  12. In 1982, CCTV broadcast a total of 220 episodes of television drama: 14 percent of these focused on rural life, 8 percent portrayed the work style of CCP cadres, 31 percent concerned topics such as young workers, love, marriage, and criticism of society, while 16 percent were about children’s

- lives. See Yu Jinglu, “The structure and function of Chinese television 1978–89,” in Chin-Chuan Lee (ed.), *Voices of China: The Interplay of Politics and Journalism* (New York: Guildford Press, 1990), p. 80.
13. James Lull, *China Turned On: Television, Reform and Resistance*.
  14. Zhang Jiabing, “Strike up the music of the times: On the main melody and television drama,” *Chinese Television* (1994) 9: 2–5.
  15. Cai Xiang, “1982–1992: Woguo tongshu dianshiju de huigu yu qianzhan” (1982–1992: Chinese television drama — looking back and to the future), *Dianshi yishu* (Television Drama Art) (1993) 4: 7.
  16. For a discussion of the making of *Kewang*, see Jianying Zha, *China Pop: How Soap Operas, Tabloids, and Bestsellers Are Transforming a Culture* (New York: New Press, 1995); also Geremie Barmé, “The graying of Chinese culture,” p. 2.
  17. See Feng Yingbing, “Li Ruihuan deng lingdao tongzhi yu Kewang juzu tan fanrong wenyi zhi lu” (Li Ruihuan and other leaders talk with the production team of *Kewang* about the road for the flourishing of literature and art), *Renmin Ribao* (People’s Daily), overseas edition, January 9, 1991, p. 1.
  18. Yang Wenyong and Xie Xizhang (eds.), *Kewang chongjibo* (The shockwave of *Yearning*) (Beijing: Guangming ribao chubanshe, 1991).
  19. Zhong Yibin and Huang Wangnan, *Zhongguo dianshi yishu fazhan shi* (The history of the development of Chinese television arts) (Zhejiang: Zhejiang People’s Publishing, 1995), p. 370, quote translated by author.
  20. The following survey of the dominant Chinese drama genres is taken from Ruoyun Bai’s dissertation, *Anticorruption Television Drama: Between Propaganda and Popular Culture in Globalizing China* (2007).
  21. Lijuan Wang, “Thoughts on the popularity of historical dramas” (Guanyu lishiju zouhong de sikao), *Zhongguo dianshi* (Chinese Television) (2002) 10: 18–24.
  22. Jianmin Gao, “Several issues concerning domestic television drama production” (Guanyu guochan dianshiju zhizuo de jige wenti), *Zhongguo guangbo yingshi* (Chinese Radio, Film and Television) (2000) 24: 62–65.
  23. Yuanyuan Luo, “*Draw your sword* drew the highest ratings of all CCTV television dramas” (Yangshi daxi shoushilü Liangjian duokui), *Huashang bao* (Chinese Business News), December 9, 2005.
  24. John Fiske and John Hartley, *Reading Television* (London: Methuen, 1978), reproduced in Horace Newcomb (ed.), *Television: The Critical View*, third edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 496.
  25. Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961).
  26. Horace Newcomb and Paul Hirsch, “Television as a cultural forum,” in Horace Newcomb (ed.), *Television: The Critical View*, sixth edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
  27. Newcomb and Hirsch, “Television as a cultural forum,” p. 564.

28. “Lack of savvy behind cultural trade deficit,” *China Daily*, April 19, 2005.
29. See, for example, Michael Keane, “Facing off on the final frontier: China, the WTO and national sovereignty,” *Media International Australia* (2002) 105: 130–146.

## Chapter 1 *Yongzheng Dynasty and Authoritarian Nostalgia*

1. Dramas with an anti-corruption theme set in contemporary times appeared in the early 2000s, with endorsement from the CCP leadership. For detailed discussion, see Chapter 3 in this volume.
2. The book is adapted from Eryue He’s 1998 novel, *Yongzheng Dynasty*.
3. For detailed discussion, see Joseph Fewsmith, “The emergence of neo-conservatism,” in Joseph Fewsmith (ed.), *China Since Tiananmen: The Politics of Transition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 75–100.
4. See Wang Chao-hua’s introductory chapter to his edited book, *One China, Many Paths* (London: Verso, 2003), p. 11.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 16–17.
6. Joseph Fewsmith, “The emergence of neo-conservatism,” in Joseph Fewsmith (ed.), *China Since Tiananmen: The Politics of Transition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 87.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 93. He Xin attended the conference.
8. His view on late Qing’s Kang-Liang Reformation was endorsed in another drama series, *Marching towards the Republic* (*Zouxiang gonghe*, 2003).
9. Wang Chao-hua, 2003.
10. Wang Hui is now a political science professor at Tsinghua University.
11. See Wang Hui’s essay, “Dangdai zhongguo de sixiang zhuangkuan yu xiandaixing wenti” (The circumstance of contemporary Chinese thought and the problem of modernity), *Wenyi zhengming* No. 11 (1998): 20.
12. Wang’s own work draws on a wide range of Western thinkers, from the French historian Fernand Braudel to the globalization theorist Immanuel Wallerstein.
13. See the English translation of Wang Hui’s essay, “The 1989 social movement and the historical roots of China’s neoliberalism,” in Hui Wang, Theodore Hutters and R. Karl (ed.), *China’s New Order: Society, Politics, and Economy in Transition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2003), pp. 112–114.
14. Joseph Fewsmith, “The emergence of neo-conservatism,” pp. 75–100.
15. It is the bill that both foreign investors in China and Chinese businessmen had been lobbying for. The bill was eventually passed in March, 2007 at the National People’s Congress, the annual two-week gathering of the Communist Party-controlled legislative body.
16. See Pankaj Mishra, “China’s new leftist,” *New York Times*, December 15,

2006. Available: <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/15/magazine/15leftist.html> [accessed April 15, 2007].
17. Intellectuals advising the state have been part of an old Chinese tradition.
  18. See Pankaj Mishra, “China’s new leftist.”
  19. Joseph Fewsmith, “The emergence of neo-conservatism,” pp. 125–126.
  20. Hu Mei, “Yige mingzu de shengsheng sisi” [Life and death of a nation], *Dianying dianshi yishu yanjiu* (1999) 3: 83–86.
  21. His alliance with the government earned him the lasting enmity of the Chinese intellectual circle. Hu’s desire to disassociate herself with He is understandable.
  22. Zhu himself is reportedly an ardent follower of the show. See Alexandra A. Seno, “High-ranking hit,” *Asiaweek Online*. Available: [www.asiaweek.com/asiaweek/99/0226/feat8.html](http://www.asiaweek.com/asiaweek/99/0226/feat8.html) [accessed February 26, 1999].
  23. See an interview with the actor published in *China TV (Zhongguo dianshi)*, December 25–28, 2001.

## Chapter 2 Family Saga Serial Dramas and Reinterpretation of Cultural Traditions

1. David Thorburn, “Television melodrama”, in Horace Newcomb (ed.), *Television: The Critical View*, 7th edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 438–450.
2. Robert C. Allen, *Speaking of Soap Operas* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985).
3. David Thorburn, “Television melodrama”, pp. 438–450; p. 439.
4. Horace Newcomb, “‘This is not Al Dente’: Sopranos and the new meaning of ‘television’,” in Horace Newcomb (ed.), *Television: The Critical View*, pp. 561–578.
5. Arvind Rajagopal, “Mediating modernity: Theorizing reception in a non-Western society,” in James Curran and Myung-Jin Park (eds.), *De-Westernizing Media Studies* (New York: Taylor and Francis, Inc., 2000), pp. 293–304; p. 293.
6. Anne McLaren, “Chinese cultural revivalism: Changing gender constructions in the Yangtze River delta,” in Krishna Sen and Maila Stivens (eds.), *Gender and Power in Affluent Asia* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 195–221.
7. Sheldon H. Lu, “Postmodernity, popular culture, and the intellectual: A report on post-Tiananmen China,” *Boundary 2*, 23, no. 2 (summer 1996): 139–169.
8. Guo played a significant role in the birth of Chinese New Wave films as the Art Supervisor of Guangxi Film Studio in the early 1980s. He encouraged new film school graduates like Zhang Yimou and Zhang Junzhao to explore

- new filmmaking methods and guided their “youth production team,” facilitating the creation of a groundbreaking work of the fifth generation, *One and Eight*. It is no coincidence that *Grand Mansion Gate* managed to gather many Chinese film celebrities to play supporting roles, among them, Zhang Yimou, Chen Kaige, Tian Zhuangzhuang, and He Qun.
9. The focus of this school was romance and urban life. These writers were widely denigrated as commercial and ideologically backward during an age when literature in China was dominated by the leftist politics and European aesthetics of the New Culture Movement in the 1920s. Writers of the “Mandarin Duck and Butterfly” never accepted the belittling label themselves.
  10. Lin Yutang, *Moment in Peking: A Novel of Contemporary Chinese Life* (New York: The John Day Company, 1939).
  11. David Thorburn, “Television melodrama,” p. 440.
  12. John Fiske, *Television Culture* (London: Routledge, 1987).
  13. Other serial dramas with Chinese entrepreneurs as heroes include: *The Big Dye-House* (*Da ranfang*), a rags-to-riches story about the dyeing industry in Shandong Province in the Republican era; *White Silver Valley* (*Bai yin gu*), which depicts the Shanxi banking industry in the late Qing dynasty; *Top Restaurant under Heaven* (*Tianxia diyi lou*), about the history of Quanjude Restaurant, which is famous for its Beijing Roast Duck; and *Shattered Jade* (*Yu sui*), about an antique dealer during the Japanese expansion in China in the 1930s.
  14. For a study of contemporary representations of masculinity in Chinese cultural industry, see Sheldon H. Lu, “Soap opera in China: The transnational politics of visibility, sexuality, and masculinity,” *Cinema Journal* (2000) 40:1, 25–47.
  15. Chris Berry reviews Kam Louie’s *Theorising Chinese Masculinity: Society and Gender in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), in *Intersections: Gender, History and Culture in the Asian Context*, Issue 8, October 2002. Available: [http://www.she.murdoch.edu.au/intersections/issue8/berry\\_review.html](http://www.she.murdoch.edu.au/intersections/issue8/berry_review.html) [accessed May 22, 2006].
  16. David Ownby, “Approximations of Chinese bandits: Perverse rebels, romantic heroes, or frustrated bachelors?,” in Susan Brownell and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom (eds.), *Chinese Femininities, Chinese Masculinities: A Reader* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 226–250.
  17. The Boxers were a late nineteenth-century Chinese secret society rebelling against foreign influence in China during the final years of the Qing dynasty. In June 1900, thousands of Boxers occupied Beijing and besieged the foreigners and the Chinese Christians there. Hundreds died in the chaos. The siege was lifted in August by an international force of about 20,000 troops, consisting mainly of British, French, Russian, American, German, and Japanese, which occupied Beijing and ended the uprising. See Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co. 1990), pp. 231–235.

18. An article in *Beijing Youth Daily* on May 19, 2001 called *Grand Mansion Gate* “a museum of schemes,” attributing the high ratings partly to the variety of tactics and schemes demonstrated in the show. The article also warned of “the dangerous tendency” of admiring and beautifying these schemes through the creation of the drama. See Yu Jia’Ao, “Yifenwei’er kan Dazhaimen” (Divide one to two to look at *Grand Mansion Gate*). Available: <http://www.people.com.cn/GB/wenyu/64/130/20010519/468831.html> [accessed June 16, 2006].
19. Liu Jianghua, “Zhang Henshui’s descendent comment on *The Story of a Noble Family*: Idol actors hard to make either side happy.” Jin Yang Net. Available: <http://ent.sina.com.cn/m/2003-04-11/1239144362.html> [accessed July 24, 2007].
20. Ren Yan, “*Moment in Peking* is on, comparison of new and old versions causes controversies.” Beijing Entertainment Newsletter. Available: <http://ent.sina.com.cn/v/m/2005-10-31/0144880460.html> [accessed July 24, 2007].
21. Michael Schudson, “Culture and the integration of national societies,” *International Social Science Journal* (1994) 46: 63–81.

### Chapter 3 “Clean Officials,” Emotional Moral Community, and Anti-corruption Television Dramas

1. See Xueliang Ding, “The illicit asset stripping of Chinese state firms,” *The China Journal*, 43 (2000): 1–28; Ting Gong, “Dangerous collusion: Corruption as a collective venture in contemporary China,” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 35, no. 1 (2002): 85–103; Hilton Root, “Corruption in China: Has it become systemic?” *Asian Survey*, 36, no. 8 (1996): 741–757; Andrew Wedeman, “The intensification of corruption in China,” *The China Quarterly*, no. 180 (2004): 895–921; Yan Sun, *Corruption and Market in Contemporary China* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004).
2. “The Chinese Communist Party Center starts to investigate into the serious discipline violation of Comrade Chen Liangyu,” *People’s Daily* [online version, September 25, 2006]. Available: <http://www.people.com.cn>.
3. For the notion of hegemony, see Todd Gitlin, “Prime-time ideology: The hegemonic process in television entertainment,” *Social Problems*, 26 (1979): 251–266; Stuart Hall, “Culture, media, and the ‘ideological effect’,” in James Curran, Michael Gurevitch and Janet Woollacott (eds.), *Mass Communication and Society* (London: Edward Arnold, 1977), 315–345; James Lull, *Media, Communication, Culture: A Global Approach* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).
4. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991).

5. George A. Hayden, *Crime and Punishment in Medieval Chinese Drama: Three Judge Pao Plays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), p. 15.
6. Quoted in Hayden, p. 18.
7. See Ding Zhaoqin, *Suwenxue zhong de baogong* (Lord Bao in Popular Culture) (Taipei: Weijin Publishing House, 2000).
8. Ibid.
9. Wang Yi, “Mingdai tongshu xiaoshuo zhong qingguan gushi de xingsheng jiqi wenhua yiyi” (Qing guan stories in popular novels of the Ming period and their cultural meanings), in *Wenxue yichan* (Literary Legacy) no. 5 (2000): 67–80.
10. Guan Lianhai, “‘Pure as Snow’ won critical acclaim,” *Beijing Evening News*, February 20, 2001.
11. In imperial China, an official of the seventh grade was among the lowest levels of bureaucracy.
12. Episode 11, *Pure as Snow*.
13. Episode 2, *Pure as Snow*.
14. Episode 12, *Pure as Snow*.
15. Simon Cottle, “Mediatized rituals: Beyond manufacturing consent,” in *Media, Culture and Society* 48, no. 3 (2006): 411–432; 414.
16. Ibid, p. 422.
17. Ien Ang, *Watching Dallas: Soap Opera and the Melodramatic Imagination* (London: Methuen, 1985), p. 45.
18. Lawrence Grossberg, *We Gotta Get out of This Place: Popular Conservatism and Postmodern Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 255.
19. Patrick Hanan, “Foreword” to Hayden’s *Crime and Punishment in Medieval Chinese Drama: Three Judge Pao Plays*.
20. Cottle, “Mediatized rituals: Beyond manufacturing consent,” p. 412.
21. Ibid., p. 411.

#### **Chapter 4 Global Imaginary, Local Desire: Chinese Transnational Serial Drama in the 1990s**

1. This serial was adapted from Cao Guilin’s 1991 novel of the same name, which was published in the *Beijing Evening News* (Beijing wanbao) in October 1991. The English translation, *Beijinger in New York*, was published in 1994 (San Francisco: Cypress).
2. The popularity of this kind of television serial continues into the twenty-first century. *Farewell, Vancouver* (Biele, wenghua, 2004), *New York Beauty* (Niuyue liren, 2004), and *Dangerous Journey* (Tou du, 2003) are examples. My focus is the serials in the 1990s; thus only those produced in that period are included in this chapter.
3. Basically, the global corporate ideology refers to belief in free trade, no

- unnecessary government intervention and regulation, and privatization. For a detailed discussion of global corporate ideology, see Edward S. Herman and Robert McChesney, “The rise of the global media,” in Lisa Parks and Shanti Kumar (eds.), *Planet TV* (New York: New York University Press, 2003).
4. For this approach, see Armand Mattelart, *Multinational Corporations and the Control of Culture* (Brighton: Harvest Press, 1979); Herbert I. Schiller, “Transnational media and national development,” in K. Nordenstreng and H. I. Schiller (eds.), *National Sovereignty and International Communication* (Westport, CN: Ablex, 1979); Rohan Samarajiva, “Third-World entry to the world market in news: Problems and possible solutions,” *Media, Culture and Society* (1984) 6 (2): 119–136.
  5. Her empirical work suggests that the notion of exposure to an imperialist text producing an immediate ideological effect is naïve and improper, and that our understanding of global media should take into consideration of the critical sophistication of the ordinary viewer/reader. She highlights room for negation and possibility of local resistance.
  6. See Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994).
  7. Geremie Barmé, *In the Red: On Contemporary Chinese Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).
  8. See James Lull, *China Turned On: Television, Reform, and Resistance* (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 172.
  9. Lydia H. Liu, *What’s Happened to Ideology? Transnationalism, Postsocialism, and the Study of Global Media Culture* (Durham, NC: Asian/Pacific Studies Institute, Duke University, 1998), p. 39.
  10. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p. 35.
  11. Michael Keane, “Television and moral development in China,” *Asian Studies Review* (1998) 22 (4): 497.
  12. “White Babe in Beijing,” available: <http://goldsea.com/Features2/Dewoskin/dewoskin.html> [accessed October 10, 2005].
  13. Sheldon H. Lu, *China, Transnational Visuality, Global Postmodernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 230.
  14. For a discussion of gender representation in this television serial, see Zhong Yong, “Duokui Wang Qiming shi zai Niu Yue” (Luckily Wang Qiming is in New York), *Dushu* (Readings) (1995) 7: 85–87.
  15. Laura Mulvey, “Visual pleasure and narrative cinema,” *Screen* (1975) 16 (3): 6–18.
  16. Elisabeth Croll, *Changing Identities of Chinese Women: Rhetoric, Experience and Self-perception in Twentieth-century China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1995), p. 152 (emphasis added).
  17. I am not offering any judgment on socialist discourse of gender and the new reconceptualization of femininity. Although I hold the same opinion as many feminist critics that socialist ideology of gender masculinizes women

- by depriving them of choices, I do not completely negate the role of socialist ideology in enhancing women's awareness of equality. Similarly, although I emphasize the agency of women in constructing their body identity, I do not embrace the new femininity without restraint. In this chapter, I am mainly describing the new phenomenon of women's increasing awareness of their body and physical appearance.
18. *Broken Blossoms* (dir. G.W. Griffith, 1919) is a film about the love of a Chinese man, whose name is Cheng Hung, for a white woman. He is presented as a feminized character, feeble and fragile. He walks slowly like a woman, holding a lady's fan. He is played by a Caucasian actor, Richard Barthelmess, whose performance was praised as "very convincing" by a *New York Times* film review in 1919. Exotic and erotic image of Chinese women are very common on Hollywood screen. Anna May Wong, the first Chinese-American movie star, appeared in over thirty films and TV shows. Her name was synonymous with exotic, Asian-themed productions. For more detailed study of Chinese women in Hollywood films, see Dorothy B. Jones, *The Portrayal of China and India on the American Screen, 1896–1955: The Evolution of Chinese and Indian Themes, Locales, and Characters as Portrayed on the American Screen* (Cambridge, MA: Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1955); and Gina Marchetti, *Romance and the 'Yellow Peril': Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
  19. Rey Chow, *Primitive Passions: Visuality, Sexuality, Ethnography, and Contemporary Chinese Cinema* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 171. There are voluminous articles that criticize the fifth-generation directors' films for repackaging Chinese customs and rituals for the gaze of the West. For example, see Dai Qing, "Raise eyebrows for *Raise the Red Lantern*," *Public Culture* (1993) 5 (2): 333–336; Zhang Yiwu, "Quanjuxing houzhimin yujing zhong de Zhang Yimou" (Zhang Yimou in the global postcolonial context), *Dangdai dianying* (Contemporary Film) (1993) 54 (3): 18–25.
  20. Sheldon H. Lu, "National cinema, cultural critique, transnational capital: The films of Zhang Yimou," in Sheldon H. Lu (ed.), *Transnational Chinese Cinemas: Identity, Nationhood, Gender* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), p. 133.
  21. David Morley and Kevin Robins, *Spaces of Identity: Global Media, Electronic Landscapes and Cultural Boundaries* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 10.
  22. See Lisa Rofel, "The melodrama of national identity in post-Tiananmen in China," in Robert C. Allen (ed.), *To Be Continued . . . : Soap Operas Around the World* (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 301–320.
  23. For more details on the production of *Beijingers in New York*, see Lu, *China, Transnational Visuality, Global Postmodernity*, pp. 222–223.
  24. Barmé, *In the Red*. Particularly, see Chapter 10, "To screw foreigners is patriotic."

25. For example, see Pamela Yatsko, “Inside looking out: Books and TV dramas about life overseas reflect existing Chinese biases,” *Far Eastern Economic Review* (1996) 159 (15): 58.
26. Michael Keane, “‘By the Way, FUCK YOU!’: Feng Xiaogang’s disturbing television dramas,” *Continuum* (2001) 15 (1): 62.
27. Lisa B. Rofel, “‘Yearnings’: Televisual love and melodramatic politics in contemporary China,” *American Ethnologist*, (1994) 21 (4): 704.
28. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).
29. Critique of nationalism and embrace of the separation between identity and territory has been one of the most addressed issues in cultural studies, particularly in diaspora study. For a recent discussion, see Ien Ang, *On Not Speaking Chinese: Living Between Asia and the West* (London: Routledge, 2001).
30. Dai Jinhua, “Behind global spectacle and national image making,” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* (2001) 9 (1): 174.
31. Dai, “Behind global spectacle and national image making,” p. 175.

## **Chapter 5 Family Matters: Reconstructing the Family on the Chinese Television Screen**

1. BTAC’s production of *Yearning* serves as a good example of how Chinese scriptwriters and directors, in the early stages of making family dramas, searched for the keys to success from imported TV soaps, including Latin American telenovelas, and East Asian family dramas. See Jianying Zha, *China Pop: How Soap Operas, Tabloids, and Bestsellers Are Transforming a Culture* (New York: The New Press, 1995), pp. 35–38.
2. Lisa B. Rofel, “‘Yearnings’: Televisual love and melodramatic politics in Contemporary China,” *American Ethnologist* (1994) 21 (4): 706.
3. The genre classifications of Chinese TV drama are still unstable and controversial, with different critics and industry analysts offering quite different categorizations. While I follow the major categories identified in *China TV Drama Market Report 2003–04*, an authoritative industrial report by CSM, a joint venture of CCTV’s audience research department with the French company SOFRES, I do have certain reservations and have modified some of the categories in my own list here. For example, there is considerable overlap between CSM’s two categories of Urban Life and Common Folk, and other important trends, such as family values drama, can obviously cut across both those categories. I have therefore modified the overbroad subgenre of Urban Life to Urban Romances, as many of the examples deal with love and marriage issues. I also treat Common Folk drama and Family Values drama together since they are similar in style and content.
4. *Zhongguo dianshiju shichang baogao 2003–04* (Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe,

- 2004), p. 45. Broadcast ratings (*bochu bizhong*) means the percentage of each subgenre as a proportion of all TV dramas broadcast each year; reception ratings (*shoushi bizhong*) means the proportion of viewers watching each subgenre. Statistics on the market share of family dramas support this observation. In 2002, the market share of Ordinary Folk and Urban Life dramas was 12.5 percent and 11.6 percent respectively, ranking 2 and 3, just after Crime drama. See *Zhongguo dianshiju shichang baogao 2003–04*, p. 52.
5. Yin Hong, “Zhongguo dianshiju yishu chuantong” (The artistic tradition of Chinese television drama), in Qu Chunjing and Zhu Ying (eds.), *Zhongmei dianshiju bijiao yanjiu* (Comparative research on television drama in China and America) (Shanghai: Sanlian chubanshe, 2004).
  6. Much research has been done on the changes and crises facing urban families in contemporary China, and my description is based on both literary works devoted to this subject, as well as academic research such as Ding Wen and Xu Tailing’s *Dangdai zhongguo jiating jubian* (The great change in the contemporary Chinese family) (Jinan: Shandong daxue chubanshe, 2001). Various other statistics and surveys also support this general picture of “family crisis.” According to statistics from the Ministry of Civil Affairs, the divorce rate more than doubled from 1985 to 1995, and by 2005, the rate had more than tripled, to 1.37 divorces per 1,000 people. In 2005 alone, 1.79 million couples divorced. See Wu Zhong, “Divorce, Chinese style,” *Asia Times* online, July 18, 2007, available: <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/IG18Ad01.html>.
  7. In China, TV drama has built up a close relationship with literature both in terms of sharing creative resources and in its narrative tradition. Since the Chinese TV industry is a relatively new media industry and its exponential growth has led to a serious shortage of competent screenwriters, the potential for lucrative rewards and mass media exposure has attracted serious literary writers to venture into the film and TV industry in the 1990s. Many of them have subsequently become successful TV drama scriptwriters and even producers. On top of this, the scarcity of good scripts has also led to a trend of adapting literary works, especially bestsellers, into TV dramas. See Shuyu Kong’s discussion of “Television/film literature” in *Consuming Literature: Bestsellers and the Commercialization of Literary Production in Contemporary China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), pp. 172–176.
  8. For the promotion of urban romances by Chunfeng Publishing House, see Chapter 4 in Shuyu Kong, *Consuming Literature*.
  9. For example, in 2000, Chi Li, a popular writer who is famous for depicting romantic and family relationships set in the local surroundings of Wuhan City, wrote the screenplay for the TV serial *Lipstick (Kouhong)* on commission after her novel *Coming and Going* was successfully adapted for television in 1999. Similarly, Wan Fang, a Beijing writer, has frequently shifted between literary writing and screenwriting. The TV drama, *Mirror*, was adapted by

- herself based on her novel of the same title. She also wrote the screenplay for another series, *Empty House*, specially for television.
10. Besides the high broadcast and reception ratings reported in the industry survey in *China TV Drama Market Report 2003–04*, cited in n. 4, the reception ratings of TV dramas such as *Elder Sister*, *Mother-in-Law* and *Romantic Affairs*, which were all broadcast in prime time on CCTV Channel One, have all been very high, respectively 8.54%, 8.37% and 7.35%.
  11. For example, *Yearning* juxtaposed the lives of a poor working family with a rich intellectual family, obviously aiming to appeal to a broad range of viewers from different social classes.
  12. See the section on TV drama audience analysis in *China TV Drama Market Report 2003–04*, pp. 41–43.
  13. The recent official discourse of building a “harmonious society” explicitly articulated by the Hu Jintao regime can, however, be traced as far back as the Deng Xiaoping era with its discourse of “social stability.” In fact, for a long while, the state has admitted that China’s economic reforms have led to social stratification, and has therefore encouraged cultural producers to make sense of this issue “correctly.” Despite the potential criticism represented by the existence of urban poor such as Zhang Damin depicted in many TV dramas and fictional works about urban ordinary folk, the cultural officials consciously supervise and “guide” these kinds of works instead of simply banning or disregarding them completely. This “invisible guiding hand” works increasingly through regulatory and administrative means as well as through self-censorship and “social obligations” of creative personnel, and thus creates a kind of self-correcting mechanism through which socialist spiritual civilization is “voluntarily” built. I find the exchange between the creative personnel of this drama and its viewers to be particularly revealing in understanding the coalition between artists and the state in constructing a harmonious society. See “Interview with the *Happy Life* Crew,” from *People’s Daily* online edition, available: <http://www.people.com.cn/wsrmlt/jbft/2000/juzu.html>. For an overview of the new methods of propaganda control in the media and television industries in contemporary China, see Eric Kit-wai Ma, “Rethinking media studies: The case of China,” in James Curran and Myung-jin Park (eds.), *De-westernizing Media Studies* (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 21–34, and Yuezhi Zhao, “The state, the market and media control in China,” in Pradip Thomas and Zahoram Nain (eds.), *Who Owns the Media: Global Trends and Local Resistance* (London; New York: Zed Books, 2004), pp. 179–212.
  14. In April of 2004, the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television issued a special notice on regulating the adaptation of Red Classics, and then another notice on tightening the approval for broadcasting Crime Dramas, especially during prime-time. Recently, the government has often used such “industrial regulation” to “guide” cultural production.

15. As early as *Yearning*, cultural officials, the state-controlled mass media and state-sponsored artists had come out in force to extol the serial as representing a positive model of social relationships. They reinterpreted the family melodrama as a work of pure socialist morality. See a collection of media coverage and reader's response on *Yearning*, Yang Wenyong and Xie Yuzhang (eds.), *Kewang chongjibo* (The shock waves of *Yearning*) (Beijing: Guangming ribao chubanshe, 1991).
16. Because of its political importance, BTAC spent over a year producing *Year after Year*. One of the directors, Li Xiaolong, recalled that before the actual shooting started, the creative team spent a long time discussing how to insert the social and political messages into its plot while still retaining its "ordinary family" appeal. The solution was to produce "a chronicle of ordinary people, instead of a chronicle of political events." See Li Xiaolong, "Biaoxian lao baixing shenghuo de bianqian: 'Yinian you yinian' daoyan tan" (Representing the changes in ordinary people's lives: Director's notes on *Year after Year*), *Dianying yishu*, 2000 (01): 81–83.
17. Li Xiaoming, "Zuotian yu geshi: 'Yinian you yinian' chuangzuo suixiang" (Yesterday and another world: Notes on the creation of *Year after Year*), *Zhongguo dianshi*, 1999 (12): 19–21.

## Chapter 6 Maids in the Televisual City: Competing Tales of Post-Socialist Modernity

1. The *hukou* system (household or residential registration), since its introduction in the 1950s, has effectively differentiated the Chinese population along urban-rural lines and regional differences. Reforms in the *hukou* system in recent decades have made it easier for rural residents to enter the cities in search of work. However, they have by no means eliminated the discrimination against rural population. The large number of migrant domestic workers in the Chinese cities is closely related to the urban-rural gap and the continued salience of *hukou* that perpetuates that gap. The *hukou* system and its discriminatory impact are crucial to understanding the work and life of domestic workers. Rural *hukou* excludes rural migrants from claiming an entire range of urban entitlements, including education, housing subsidies, job opportunities, and medical care, thus effectively turning rural migrants into the city's second-class citizens. There is a growing body of literature on *hukou* system and its impact on rural migrants. See, for instance, Fei-ling Wang, *Organizing Through Division and Exclusion: China's Hukou System* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005); Dorothy Solinger, *Contesting Citizenship in Urban China: Peasant Migration, the State, and the Logic of the Market* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), and Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

2. See untitled news item from <http://www.cctv.com/news/financial/20020612/274.html> [accessed February 2004].
3. “Beijing baomu shichang duandang” (Beijing Baomu market supply too low). Available: <http://www.cctv.com/news.society/20031126/100610.shtml> [accessed February 2004].
4. Personal communication with Dr Li Tianguo, senior research fellow of the Institute for Labor, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, China, February 2004.
5. This estimation comes from unnamed experts, quoted in Yang Jie, “Jiazheng ye chengwei Zhongguo xina laodongli de zhongyao qudao” (Domestic work is becoming an important means of absorbing labour). Available: <http://www.cctv.com/news/financial/20020612/274.html> [accessed May 2005].
6. This figure is provided by Li Dajing, the deputy director of Beijing Domestic Service Association. See Gao Youxin and Wu Wenjie, “Jiazheng fuwu zhiyehua zhi lu haiyou duo yuan” (How far is the road to the professionalisation of domestic work?), *Jingji Ribao* (Economic Daily), May, 2, 2005, p. A11.
7. At the time of writing, one US dollar was equivalent to approximately eight yuan.
8. Wanning Sun, “The invisible entrepreneur: The case of Anhui Women,” *Provincial China* (2002) 7 (2): 178–195.
9. Haiyan Lee, “Nannies for foreigners: The enchantment of Chinese womanhood in the age of millennial capitalism,” *Public Culture* (2006) 18 (3): 507–529.
10. James Donald, *Imagining the Modern City* (London: Athlone Press, 1999).
11. See Michael Keane, “TV drama in China,” in Tim Craig and Richard King (eds.), *Global Goes Local: Popular Culture in Asia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2002), pp. 176–202. Also see Sheldon Lu, “Soap opera in China: The transnational politics of visibility, sexuality, and masculinity,” *Cinema Journal* (2000), 40 (1): 25–47.
12. Wanning Sun, “Semiotic over-determination or indoctrination: Television, citizenship, and the Olympic Games,” in Stephanie Donald, Michael Keane and Yin Hong (eds.), *Media in China: Consumption, Content and Crisis* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), p. 116.
13. See Lee Chin-Chuan (ed.), *Power, Money and Media: Communication Patterns and Bureaucratic Control in Cultural China* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2000); Yuezhi Zhao, “From commercialization to conglomeration: The transformation of the Chinese press within the orbit of the party state,” *Journal of Communication* (2000) Spring: 3–25; *Media, Market, and Democracy in China* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1997). Also see Zhao Bin, “Mouthpiece or money-spinner? The double life of Chinese television in the late 1990s,” *International Journal of Cultural Studies* (1999) 2 (3): 291–306, and Zhao Bin, “Popular family television and party ideology: The Spring Festival Eve Happy Gathering,” *Media Culture and Society* (1998) 20: 43–58.

14. Yin Hong, “Meaning, production, consumption: The history and reality of television drama in China,” in Donald, Keane, and Hong, *Media in China*, p. 33.
15. Yin, “Meaning, production, consumption,” p. 33.

## Chapter 7 Pink Dramas: Reconciling Consumer Modernity and Confucian Womanhood

1. Translation by author.
2. See Sarah Chaplin, “Interiority and the modern women in Japan,” and S. Munshi, “Marvellous me: The beauty industry and the construction of the ‘modern’ Indian woman,” in Shoma Munshi (ed.), *Images of the “Modern Woman” in Asia: Global Media, Local Meanings* (London: Curzon, 2001), pp. 55–94.
3. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1983).
4. Beverly Hooper, *Inside Peking: A Personal Report* (London: MacDonald and Jane’s, 1979); Jane Barrett, “Women hold up half the sky,” in Marilyn B. Young (ed.), *Women in China: Studies in Social Changes and Feminism* (Ann Arbor: Centre for Chinese Studies, The University of Michigan, 1973), pp. 34–67; Mayfair Yang, “From gender erasure to gender difference: State feminism, consumer sexuality, and women’s public sphere in China,” in *Spaces of Their Own: Women’s Public Sphere in Transnational China* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1999), pp. 35–68.
5. The Mandarin version of *ELLE*, *World Fashion Institute ELLE* (*Shijie shizhuang zhiyuan ELLE*) entered the Chinese market in 1988, followed by *Cosmopolitan* in 1998, *Harper’s Bazaar* in 2001, *Marie Claire* in 2002, and *Vogue* in 2005. More discussion on contemporary women’s fashion magazine in China can be found in “Vogue cruises into China,” *China Economic Net*, available: [http://en.ce.cn/Life/entertainment/fashion&beauty/EFBn/200509/10/t20050910\\_4645651.shtml](http://en.ce.cn/Life/entertainment/fashion&beauty/EFBn/200509/10/t20050910_4645651.shtml) [accessed September 10, 2005].
6. Kara Chan and Fanny Chan, “Information content of television advertising in China: An update,” *Asian Journal of Communication*, (2005) 15 (1): 1–15; and Conghua Li, *China: The Consumer Revolution* (New York: John Wiley and Son Inc., 1998).
7. The term “pink collar” was first used by Kapp Howe in his book, *Pink Collar Workers* (1978). Contrary to how the term is used in the Chinese context, in the Western literatures, “pink collar” is often linked to women with lower education or single mothers who take on secondary jobs such as administrative, caring and lower educational positions.
8. Yin Hong, “Meaning, production, consumption: The history and reality of television drama in China,” in Stephanie Hemelryk Donald, Michael Keane,

- and Yin Hong (eds.), *Media in China: Consumption, Content and Crisis* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), pp. 28–40.
9. Thomas Gold, “Go with your feelings: Hong Kong and Taiwan popular culture in Greater China,” in David Shambaugh (ed.), *Greater China: The Next Superpower?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 255–274.
  10. Thomas Gold, “Go with your feelings: Hong Kong and Taiwan popular culture in Greater China,” pp. 255–274.
  11. Michael Keane, “Send in the clones: Television formats and content creation in the People’s Republic of China,” in S. H. Donald, M. Keane, and Yin Hong (eds.), *Media in China: Consumption, Content and Crisis* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), pp. 80–90.
  12. John Sinclair, Elizabeth Jacka, and Stuart Cunningham, “Global and regional dynamics of international television flows,” in Daya K. Thussu (ed.), *Electronic Empires: Global Media and Local Resistance* (London: Arnold, 1998), pp. 179–192; Indrajit Banerjee, “The locals strike back? Media globalization and localization in the new Asian television landscape,” *The International Journal for Communication Studies* (2002) 64 (6): 517–535.
  13. Silvio Waisbord, “Mc TV: Understanding the global popularity of television formats,” *Television and New Media* (2004) 5 (4): 359–381.
  14. Michael Keane, Anthony W. H. Fung, and Albert Moran (eds.), *New Television, Globalization and the East Asian Cultural Imagination* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007).
  15. Michael Keane, “Send in the clones,” pp. 80–90.
  16. Michael Keane, “Television drama in China: Remaking the Market,” *Media International Australia* (2005) (115): 82–93.
  17. Ibid.
  18. For more discussions on conceptualizing an East Asian popular culture, see Beng Huat Chua, “Conceptualizing an East Asian popular culture,” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* (2004) 5 (2): 200–221.
  19. Amy Sohn, *Sex and the City: Kiss and Tell* (New York: Pocket Books, 2002).
  20. Broadcast in 2003, a Taiwanese series titled *Mature Women’s Diary* (*Shounü yuwang riji*), and a Hong Kong series, *Male and Female Dictionary* (*Nannü zidian*), were highly advertised in the media as “local versions of *Sex and the City*.” There was also another Hong Kong series titled *Women on the Run* broadcast on pay television in 2005.
  21. Perry Johansson, “Selling the ‘modern woman’: Consumer culture and Chinese gender politics,” in S. Munshi (ed.), *Images of the “Modern Woman” in Asia: Global Media, Local Meanings* (London: Curzon, 2001), pp. 94–122.
  22. Jane Arthurs, “*Sex and the City* and Consumer Culture: Remediating postfeminist drama,” *Feminist Media Studies* (2003) 3 (1): 83–97.
  23. Wei Hui, *Shanghai Baby* (London: Robinson, 2001).
  24. Canyin Luo, “Competing discourses on gender model: Discourse analysis

- on reports of adult film event in the newspaper,” *Taiwan Social Studies Quarterly* (1997) 25: 169–208.
25. You Kou, “Shi haoxiang tanlianai haishi haoxiang jieren?” (Is it falling in love or falling for marriage?). Available: <http://life.people.com.cn/BIG5/8223/50801/50802/3671255.html> [accessed September 2, 2005].
  26. Ying Jiang, “Nüren xing de fengfan, bie guanyi Yuwang Chengshi de ming” (Capitalize on women and sex, do not use the name of *Sex and the City*). Available: <http://ent.tom.com/1030/1587/2003821-52458.html> [accessed August 22, 2003].
  27. See Fabienne Darling-Wolf, “Finding a place in the capitalist world order: Japanese women and the losses (or gains) of Western capitalism,” *Asian Journal of Women’s Studies* (2003) 9 (3): 46–77; Yachien Huang, “Thinking of Manhattan, living in Taipei: Female pleasure in watching *Sex and the City*,” paper presented in the Third MARG Conference: Media and Identity in Asia. Miri: Curtin University of Technology Sarawak Malaysia, February 2006; Youna Kim, “Experiencing globalization: Global TV, reflexivity and the lives of young Korean women,” *International Journal of Cultural Studies* (2005) 8 (4): 446–463.
  28. See Angela McRobbie, “Postfeminism and popular culture,” *Feminist Media Studies* (2004) 4 (3): 255–263, and Kristyn Gorton, “(Un)fashionable feminists: The media and *Ally McBeal*,” in Stacy Gillis, and Gill Howie (eds.), *Third Wave Feminism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 154–164.

## Chapter 8 A Brief History of Chinese Situation Comedies

1. John Hartley, “Comedy, domestic settings,” in Horace Newcomb (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Television*, second edition (New York: Dearborn, 2004), pp. 556–559.
2. For a discussion, see Michael Keane, “Television drama in China: Engineering souls for the market,” in Timothy J. Craig and Richard King (eds.), *Global Goes Local: Popular Culture in Asia* (Vancouver: University of Columbia Press, 2002), pp. 120–137.
3. Chen Yanni, *Meiguo zhihou: 50 wei lumei renshi de guiguo zhi lu* (After the US: Return Journeys of 50 Chinese Expatriates in the US) (Beijing: Writers’ Publishing House, 2000), p. 367.
4. This figure was mentioned by Wang Xiaojing, general manager of the Ying Co. See *21st Century Economic Herald*, September 28, 2003.
5. Zhang Jianzhen, “Yingxiang xianshi: meijie shidai de qingjing xiju” (Cinematic reality: Situation comedy in an age of media), *Xinwen yu chuanbo yanjiu* (Journalism and Communications Research) (2002) 2: 58.
6. *Beijing yule xinbao* (Beijing Entertainment Messenger), March 19, 2004.
7. See *ershiji shiji jingji daobao* (21st Century Economic Herald), September 28, 2003.

8. The statistics and information cited above were not publicly reported; they were obtained from the author's personal contacts with production team members, such as Ying Da, Liang Zuo, Xiao Feng (chief of the literature department of The Ying Co.), and Fu Si (chief of the Economic Television Program Center of CCTV).
9. "Ying Da: dianshi gaibian le 300 nian xinshang xiju de fangshi" (Television changes the 300-Year Tradition of Comedy), *Nanfang zhoumo* (Southern Weekends), December 19, 2002.
10. See *Beijing qingnian bao* (Beijing Youth Daily), November 5, 2002.
11. Personal interview with Xiao Feng, chief of the literature department of The Ying Co., a creator of the show.
12. *Jianghu* refers to an imaginary world in novels, films and dramas about knights errant. Inhabited by martial arts masters, this world is characterized by a blurred boundary between the good and the evil, and is governed by its own distinct set of rules.
13. See relevant reports in *Zhongguo guangbo ying shi* (Chinese Radio, Film and Television) in the first half of April 2006.
14. See "Ting daoyan Shang Jing jiangshu 'wulin waizhuan' chenggong de mijue" (Listen to how Director Shang Jing tells the secret weapons of *Tales of Jianghu*), available: <http://ent.sina.com.cn> [accessed January 25, 2006].
15. See relevant reports in *Zhongguo guangbo ying shi* (Chinese Radio, Broadcast and Television) in the first half of April 2006.
16. See *ershiji shiji jingji daobao* (21st Century Economic Herald), January 10, 2004, p. C4.

## Chapter 9 Carnavalesque Pleasure: The Audio-visual Market and the Consumption of Television Drama

1. By video in this chapter, I refer to video disks, not videotapes.
2. The WTO Secretariat's 1998 Background Note on Audiovisual Services notes difficulty in determining exactly the boundary between "services classified under telecommunications and those classified under audiovisual services." The document is accessible at [http://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/serv\\_e/w40.doc](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/serv_e/w40.doc).
3. "Regulations on the Administration of Audio-visual Products" (No. 341 Order of the State Council of the People's Republic of China), promulgated on December 25, 2001, available at <http://newmedia.gapp.gov.cn/Main/Articlex.aspx?cateid=H0102&artid=0000000374>. An English version can be found in Jesse T. H. Chang, Isabelle I. H. Wan, and Philip Qu (eds.), *China's Media and Entertainment Law (Vol. 1)* (Hong Kong: TransAsia Publishing, 2003).
4. China began to produce audio cassettes in 1979 and video tapes in 1980.

- See Wang Ju, “Zhongguo yinxiangye de chanye guimo yu jieoug” (The scope and structure of China’s audio-visual industry), in *Zhongguo wenhua chanye fazhan baogao, 2003* (Report on development of China’s cultural industry, 2003) (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2003), p. 157.
5. “2003 nian quanguo yinxiang chubanye jiben qingkuang” (An overview of the national audio-visual industry in 2003). The article is published by the General Administration of Press and Publication on its official website, available at <http://newmedia.gapp.gov.cn>. A different source puts the number of publishing companies at 302. See *Zhongguo hangye fazhan baogao, 2004: Chuanmeiye* (China industry development report, 2004: Media) (Beijing: Zhongguo jingji chubanshe, 2004), p. 67.
  6. “Profile of the audio and video market of China,” available: <http://www.chinaembassy.org/pl/pol/wh/Nw/t129222.htm> [accessed February 26, 2006]. Another source puts the number of audio-visual reproduction companies at 169. See *Zhongguo hangye fazhan baogao: Chuanmeiye* (China industry development report: Publishing), p. 67. See also “China to curtail audio-visual Market,” available: [http://english.people.com.cn/english/200103/15/print20010315\\_65055.html](http://english.people.com.cn/english/200103/15/print20010315_65055.html) [February 26, 2006].
  7. Wang Ju, “Zhongguo yinxiangye de fazhan xianzhuang” (Current status of the development of China’s audio-visual industry), in *Zhongguo wenhua chanye fazhan baogao: 2005* (Report on development of China’s cultural industry: 2005), pp. 151–152.
  8. Bruce C. Klopfenstein, “The diffusion of the VCR in the United States,” in Mark R. Levy (ed.), *The VCR Age: Home Video and Mass Communication* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1989), pp. 22–26.
  9. Wang Ju, “Zhongguo yinxiangye jingzhengli fenxi” (Analysis of the competitiveness of China’s recording and video industry), in Qi Shuyu (ed.), *Zhongguo wenhua chanye guoji jingzhengli baogao* (Report on international competitiveness of China’s cultural industry) (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2004), p. 198; Wang Ju, “Zhongguo yinxiangye de fazhan xianzhuang” (Current status of the development of China’s audio-visual industry), p. 154.
  10. Wang Ju, “Zhongguo yinxiangye de fazhan xianzhuang,” p. 154.
  11. Shuren Wang, *Framing Piracy: Globalization and Film Distribution in Greater China* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), p. 50.
  12. Wang, *Framing Piracy*, p. 52.
  13. Yin Hong, “Quanqiuhua Beijing xia Zhongguo yinxiangye de fazhan celie chutan” (Preliminary analysis of the development strategies of China’s audio-visual industry in the age of globalization), in Liu Yuzhu (ed.) *Zhongguo wenhua shichang fazhan baogao, 2004* (Report on the development of China’s cultural market, 2004), p. 236.
  14. Wang Ju, “Zhongguo yinxiangye de fazhan xianzhuang,” p. 155.

15. Ibid., 156.
16. Yang Lei, “DVD bofangji de zuotian, jintian he mingtian” (The history of DVD players in China: Yesterday, today, and tomorrow), available: <http://tom.yesky.com/data/279/2500779.shtml> [accessed August 14, 2007].
17. Video tapes were still used in some less developed areas in China.
18. Wang Ju, “Zhongguo yinxiangye de fazhan xianzhuang,” pp. 155–157.
19. *Zhongguo dianshiju shichang baogao, 2003–2004* (China TV drama report, 2003–2004) (Beijing: Shanghai TV Festival and CVSC-SOFRES Media, 2003), p. 220. One could surmise that the waning interest in Japanese TV series had something to do with the mounting tensions between China and Japan since the 1990s. Anti-Japan sentiments ran high among the Chinese populace who resented Japan’s unwillingness to fully accept its responsibilities toward the war crimes against China and its Asian neighbors.
20. It was reported that the award-winning American series *Desperate Housewives* did not fare well when it was debuted on CCTV-8 in December 2006. Critics reason that the reality in the series is too far removed from the lives of ordinary Chinese and that the dubbed series, with its convolute twists and turns and literary references, is too highbrow for the majority of Chinese TV viewers. See Raymond Zhou, “Why *Desperate Wives* flopped in China,” available: [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-12/31/content\\_508261.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-12/31/content_508261.htm).
21. Interview with an official of the General Administration of Press and Publication on June 28, 2005.
22. For an extensive study on piracy in China and Taiwan, see for example, Shuren Wang, *Framing Piracy*. But the statistics in Wang’s study were only current up to 2001.
23. IIPA (International Intellectual Property Alliance) 2001 Special 301 Report: People’s Republic of China (p. 25), available: <http://www.iipa.com/rbc/2001/2001SPEC301CHINA.pdf>.
24. IIPA 2005 Special 301 Report: People’s Republic of China (pp. 183–184), available: <http://www.iipa.com/rbc/2005/2005SPEC310PRCreview.pdf>.
25. USTR 2006 Special 301 Report, available: [http://ustr.gov/assets/Document\\_Library/Reports\\_Publications/2006/2006/\\_Special\\_301\\_Review/asset\\_upload-file473-9336.pdf?ht=](http://ustr.gov/assets/Document_Library/Reports_Publications/2006/2006/_Special_301_Review/asset_upload-file473-9336.pdf?ht=) [accessed May 23, 2006]. According to IIPA, countries or economies on the Priority Watch List do not provide enough IPR protection or enforcement of laws protecting IPR, or market access for persons relying on intellectual property protection.
26. “DVD yasudie chongji yinxiangye, shiyi jia faxingshang mimou duice” (Compressed DVD threatens audio-visual industry, eleven publishers strategize behind closed door), *Beijing yule xin bao* (Beijing Daily Messenger), November 5, 2004, available: <http://tech.sina.com.cn/it/2004-11-05/0735454018.shtml> [accessed August 23, 2005].
27. “Yasuo DVD dong le shui de nailao, xianjin jishu he bu weimin fuwu” (Whose interest did the HDVD harm, why not use advanced technology to

- serve the people?), available: <http://www.jrj.com.cn/NewsRead/Detail.asp?NewsID=962673> [accessed August 23, 2005].
28. “Zhengban HDVD nan zu daoban hengxing” (Legal HDVD cannot stop rampant circulation of pirated HDVD), available: [http://www.morningpost.com.cn/articleview/2006-1-27/article\\_view\\_6130.htm](http://www.morningpost.com.cn/articleview/2006-1-27/article_view_6130.htm) [accessed February 15, 2006].
  29. “DVD yasuodie chongji yinxiangye, shiyi jia faxingshang mimou duice” (Compressed DVD threatens audio-visual industry, eleven publishers strategize behind closed doors). See also “Yasuo DVD dong le shui de nailao, xianjin jishu he bu weimin fuwu” (Whose interest did the HDVD harm, why not use advanced technology to serve the people).
  30. “DVD yasuodie xianfan banfei tixi, chubanshang jujue zuochu tuoxie” (Compressed DVDs upset copyright fees, publishers refuse to budge), *Nanfang zhoumo* (Southern Weekend) (December 23, 2004), available: <http://tech.sina.com.cn/it/2004-12-23/1204482845.shtml> [accessed August 23, 2005]. “Wanneng DVD youmeiyou hefahua tujing” (Is there a way to legitimize the super DVD?), available: <http://www.njnews.cn/n/ca571464.htm> [accessed August 23, 2005]. See also “Yasuo DVD zhongchuang zhengban shichang, dianshiju banquanfei kuangdie yiban” (Compressed DVD ravages legitimate market, TV drama copyright fees plunge by 50 percent), *Beijing yule xin bao* (Beijing Daily Messenger), November 2, 2004, available: <http://tech.sina.com.cn/it/2004-11-02/0909452054.shtml> [accessed August 23, 2005].
  31. “DVD yasuodie tunshi wu cheng zhengban shichang” (Compressed DVDs gobble up 50 percent of legitimate DVD market), *Jingji cankaobao* (Economic Information Daily), November 22, 2005, available: <http://finance.sina.com.cn?review/obsere/20041122/10091170728.shtml> [accessed February 15, 2006].
  32. Ibid.
  33. “Guangdong yinxiang jutou lianshou, chizi wubai wan qingjiao DVD yasuodie” (Audio-visual biggies in Guangdong pooling RMB 5 million to stamp out HDVD piracy), *Nanfang ribao* (Nanfang Daily), November 12, 2004, available: <http://tech.sina.com.cn/it/2004-11-12/0943458185.shtml> [accessed August 23, 2005].
  34. “Zhanwang 2006: yinxiang hangye huhuan chungjie yundong” (Looking ahead to 2006: audio-visual industry calls for regulatory measures), available: <http://newmedia.gapp.gov.cn/Main/Articlex.aspx?cateid=H22&artid=0000003571> [accessed February 15, 2006].
  35. “Nanhai chahuo jinnian zui da pi feifa yinxiang zhipin” (The largest seizure of pirated audio-visual products in Nanhai this year), available: <http://newmedia.gapp.gov.cn/Main/Articlex.aspx?cateid=H06&artid=0000003416> [accessed February 15, 2006].
  36. “DVD yasuodie xianfan banfei tixi, chubanshang jujue zuochu tuoxie” (Compressed DVD upsets copyright fees and publishers refuse to budge).

37. Ibid. See also Min Yunshi, “‘Boda’ de dizhi daoban zhi lu” (Boda’s anti-piracy strategy), in Wang Yongzhang (ed.) *Zhongguo wenhua chanye dianxing anli xuanbian* (Chinese cultural industry: Typical cases) (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2003), p. 120; “Shoujie Beijing yinxiangjie shiyue di juban chaodi jiawei zhanxiao zhengban yinxiang zhipin” (The first audio-visual festival will sell legitimate audio-visual products at super low prices at the end of October), available: <http://newmedia.gapp.gov.cn/EJurnal/Article.aspx?cateid=E14&artid=0000003341> [accessed February 15, 2006].
38. “Wanneng DVD youmeiyou hefahua tujing” (Is there a way to legitimize the super DVD?).
39. Interview with an official of the General Administration of Press and Publication on June 28, 2005. See also Shuren Wang, *Framing Piracy*, p. 55.
40. According to one estimate, market demand for VCD in 2000 was 800 million discs, but the supply was only 200 million, 600 million short. See Shuren Wang, *Framing Piracy*, p. 56. The cost of a pirated HDVD is about two yuan and it sells for about seven yuan on the market. For every piece sold, the profit is about five yuan. See “DVD yasuodie tunshi wu cheng zhengban shichang” (Compressed DVDs gobble up 50 percent of legitimate DVD market).
41. *Zhongguo dianshiju shichang baogao, 2003–2004* (China TV drama report, 2003–2004), pp. 41–43.
42. “Yinxiang shichang huanjing quxiang haozhuan, dan daoban chuxian xin miaotou” (Audio-visual market environment improves, but new trend in piracy appears), available: <http://newmedia.gapp.gov.cn/Audio-visual/Article.aspx?cateid=A14&artid=0000003240> [accessed February 15, 2006].
43. “DVD yasuodie xianfan banfei tixi, chubanshang jujue zuochu tuoxie” (Compressed DVD upsets copyright fees and publishers refuse to budge).
44. “DVD yasuodie tunshi wu cheng zhengban shichang” (Compressed DVDs gobble up 50 percent of legitimate DVD market).
45. “Zhengban HDVD nan zu daoban hengxing” (Legitimate HDVD cannot stop rampant piracy).
46. Manuel Alvarado (ed.), *Video World-Wide: An International Study* (London: UNESCO, John Libbey, 1988), p. 5.
47. Laikwan Pang, *Cultural Control and Globalization in Asia: Copyright, Piracy, and Cinema* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 80–83. The quote appears on p. 83.
48. Ibid., 3, 98–106.
49. Pang mentions that economics was also a factor in movie piracy. It in fact plays a central role, as proven by the widespread phenomenon in Western countries where there is a different relationship between the film industry and the state, though in the West movie piracy in recent years takes the more hi-tech form of illegal downloading over the internet. High movie ticket price is a major reason for continual decline of box office in China. A ticket for the film, *The Promise* (*Wuji*, 2005) directed by Chen Kaige, cost

- more than RMB 70 when it was shown in Beijing. Historically movie ticket prices moved up 300 percent since 1989. It will take more than ideological relaxation to lure Chinese moviegoers back to theaters. Even if more foreign films are available, it is doubtful that people will choose theater over cheap pirated copies given the high admission fee. See Lin Qi, “Bie rang gao piao jia dang zhu guan zhong” (Don’t let high ticket price keep the audience out of movie theaters), available: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/focus/2006-01/09/content\\_4028295.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/focus/2006-01/09/content_4028295.htm) [accessed August 14, 2007].
50. “The Rules for the Administration of the Import and Broadcast of Foreign Television Programs,” promulgated by the Ministry of Radio, Film, and Television, February 3, 1994.
  51. Bi Jiangyan and Li Hongling, “Zhongguo dianshiju shoushi shichang panduan, 2004,” in *Zhongguo chuanmei chanye fazhan baogao, 2004–2005* (Report on development of China’s media industry, 2004–2005), pp. 273–274; *Zhongguo dianshiju shichang baogao, 2003–2004* (China TV drama report, 2003–2004), pp. 215–216.
  52. Yuan Fang, “Cong quan ma pao di dao jing geng xi zuo: Jinnian woguo dianshi meiti bianhua saomiao ji zhanwang” (From territorialization to careful cultivation: Development and trends in Chinese television industry in recent years), in *Zhongguo chuanmei chanye fazhan baogao, 2004–2005* (Report on development of China’s media industry, 2004–2005), pp. 273–274.
  53. Bernard C. Cohen, *The Press and Foreign Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 13.
  54. “Baogao xianshi: Neng zhuanqian de dianshiju buzu liangcheng” (Report indicates that only twenty percent of TV drama are profitable), available: <http://www.jschina.com.cn/gb/jschina/job/node1262/userobject1ai164702.html> [accessed September 27, 2005]. According to the trade magazine *Electronics* (Asian Sources) the 1997 sales of VCD players in China accounted for more than 80 percent of the world’s total consumption: cited in Laikwan Pang, *Cultural Control and Globalization in Asia*, p. 86.
  55. Laikwan Pang, 102.
  56. Paddy Scannell, “Radio times: The temporal arrangements of broadcasting in the modern world,” in Philip Drummond and Richard Paterson (eds.), *Television and Its Audience* (London: British Film Institute, 1988), p. 28.
  57. Wang Lanzhu (ed.), *Zhongguo dianshi shoushi nianjian, 2003* (Yearbook of TV Reception in China: 2003) (Beijing: Beijing guangbo xueyuan, 2003), p. 73. Of course, this is not unique to China. The major national news networks in the United States, such as ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, and Fox, are also where most Americans get news. The significant difference lies in that these news media are not controlled by the US government.
  58. The popularization of television in China has been spectacular since the late 1970s. By 2004 television transmission signals had reached 95.3 percent of the population. See Sun Xianghui, Huang Wei, and Hu Zhengrong, “2004

nian Zhongguo guangdian chanye fazhan baogao,” in *Zhongguo chuanmei chanye fazhan baogao, 2004–2005* (Report on development of China’s media industry: 2004–2005), p. 60.

59. John Ellis, *Visible Fictions, Cinema: Television: Video* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), p. 137. See also David Morley’s discussion of the “distracted gaze” in his *Family Television: Cultural Power and Domestic Leisure* (London: Comedia, 1986).

## Chapter 10 From National Preoccupation to Overseas Aspiration

1. In 2004, the total number of broadcast hours was 1,2591,569; of this television drama occupied 5,599,022 hours (Basic Statistics on Radio and Television Programs, State Statistical Bureau 2005). The national audience of a hit drama can extend to 400 million people, particularly if broadcast on China Central Television (CCTV). See *2006 nian Zhongguo guangbo yingshi fazhan baogao* (Blue book of China’s radio, film and television) (Beijing: CASS Publishing, 2006), p. 171.
2. “China’s cultural trade deficit on rise”, *People’s Daily Online*, April 15, 2005, available: <http://www1.cei.gov.cn/ce/doc/cenzq/200504151806.htm>.
3. See Michael Keane, *Created in China: The Great New Leap Forward* (London: Routledge, 2007).
4. For a discussion of cultural proximity in relation to television, see Joseph Straubhaar, “Beyond media imperialism: Asymmetrical interdependence of television programming in the Dominican Republic,” *Journal of Communication*, (1991) 41 (5): 53–69.
5. Translation costs, such as subtitling and dubbing, are usually undertaken by the buyer. In China, dubbing is the dominant model for broadcast TV; this process has the advantage of screening out ideological differences. In Korea, however, dubbing is seldom allowed for imports. For a discussion of transborder video economics see Benjamin J. Bates, “The economics of transborder video,” in Anura Goonasekera and Paul S. N. Lee (eds.), *TV Without Borders: Asia Speaks Out* (Singapore: AMIC, 1998), pp. 224–258.
6. Jorge González, “Understanding telenovelas as a cultural front: A complex analysis of a complex reality,” *Media International Australia* (2003) 106: 89.
7. Speech at the Second International Cultural Industries Conference, September 12–16, 2004, Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, China.
8. *People’s Daily*, August 22, 2005, available at *Peoples’ Daily Online*, [http://english.com.cn/200504/15/print20050415\\_181119.html](http://english.com.cn/200504/15/print20050415_181119.html) [accessed October 10, 2006].
9. Bruno Wu, head of Sun Media, Australia China Business Council, Stamford Plaza Hotel, Brisbane, August 4–5, 2006.

10. *People's Daily Online*, "China's TV series fair seeks cooperation between producers, broadcasters," August 22, 2007; available at <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90778/6245416.html>.
11. Indeed, these constraints also impact upon the sale of TV drama within national boundaries.
12. The number of TV stations in China varies according to sources. According to the most authoritative sources, the *Blue Books* series published by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the number of stations that originate content is between 314 and 347; see *Blue Book of China's Radio, Film and Television*, p. 171.
13. Colin Hoskins and Rolf Mirus, "Reasons for the US dominance of the international trade in television programmes," *Media, Culture and Society* (1988) 10: 499–515.
14. These include *Expectations* (*Kewang*), *Live Life to the Limit* (*Guo ba yin*) and *I Love You Absolutely* (*Ai ni mei shangliang*). For a discussion see Michael Keane, "Television drama in China: Engineering souls for the market," in Timothy J. Craig and Richard King (eds.), *Global Goes Local: Popular Culture in Asia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002), pp. 176–202.
15. For a discussion see Junhao Hong, *The Internationalization of Television in China: The Evolution of Ideology, Society and Media Since the Reform* (Westport: Praeger, 1998).
16. The literal translation of *shimin* is "resident of a city."
17. While Wang Shuo is often celebrated as the inspiration for several popular TV dramas produced by the Beijing Television Arts Center, other contributors included Li Xiaoming and Feng Xiaogang.
18. My own Ph.D. research "Television, the market and the state development of culture in Urban China" (Griffith University, 1999) examined readings of *Beijingers in New York* by Mainland and Diaspora audiences.
19. For a discussion of Hengdian World Studios, see Michael Keane, *Created in China: The Great New Leap Forward* (London: Routledge, 2007).
20. Also known as *Outlaws of the Marsh*.
21. For discussion of the Korean Wave, see Hae-Joang Cho, "Reading the Korean Wave as a sign of global shift," *Korea Journal* (2005) 45 (4): 147–182; Doobo Shim, "Hybridity and the rise of Korean popular culture in Asia," *Media Culture and Society* (2006) 28 (1): 25–44.
22. Yu Shu, Chen Minghui, and Li Li, "Zhongguo haiwaiju shichang bu leguan" (No optimism for China's overseas drama markets), *Yangcheng Evening News*, October 31, 2005.
23. Koichi Iwabuchi, *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).
24. Claim made by Pu Shulin, in Song Wenjuan, "TV dramas marketing in 2007: Import and export," *Zhongguo guangbo yingshi* (China broadcasting film and TV), March 28, 2007.
25. China Media Intelligence, December 22, 2006.

26. Xinhua 2005, “China launches satellite TV service in Asian region,” Xinhua News Agency online report, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2005-02/01/content\\_2536307.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2005-02/01/content_2536307.htm) [accessed 19 May, 2008].
27. Satellite packages of Chinese channels including Hunan Satellite are purchased from TVB Jade (Hong Kong).
28. Ning Ling, “Lanmu gongsihua tuisheng da gaige: yangshi changtu chanyehua” (Professionalising programming promotes a great revolution: CCTV’s attempt to make an industry from television drama), Xinhua News Agency, available at <http://press.gapp.gov.cn/news/wen.php?val=news&aid=4954> [accessed May 19, 2008].
29. Lucy Montgomery and Michael Keane, “Learning to love the market: Copyright, culture and China,” in Pradip Thomas and Jan Servaes (eds.), *Intellectual Property Rights and Communications in Asia: Conflicting Traditions* (Delhi: Sage, 2006), pp. 130–148.

### Chapter 11 A Trip Down Memory Lane: Remaking and Rereading the Red Classics

1. See Meng Yue, “Bai Mao Nü yanbian de qishi” (Inspirations from the evolution of the White-haired Girl), in X. Tang (ed.), *Zai jiedu: Dazhong wenyi yu yishi xingtai* (Rereading: Popular art and ideology) (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 68–89. Meng gives a fine-grained analysis of the transformation of *The White-haired Girl* (*Bai Mao Nü*) from a popular folk tale in Northern China to its varied propagandist versions as drama, film, ballet, and musical. For similar discussions on *The White-haired Girl*, also see Christopher J. Berry and Mary Ann Farquhar, “Shadow opera: Toward a new archaeology of the Chinese cinema,” in S. H. Lu and E. Y. Yeh (eds.), *Chinese-Language Film: Historiography, Poetics, Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2005), pp. 27–51.
2. Geremie Barmé, *In the Red: On Contemporary Chinese Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp. 316–344.
3. For detailed discussion of the “Mao Fever,” see Dai Jinhua, “Jiushu yu xiaofei” (Redemption and consumption), in Y. Wang (ed.), *Meijie Zhexue* (Media philosophy) (Kaifeng: Henan University Press, 2004), pp. 68–80.
4. Tao Dongfeng, “Hougeming shidai de geming wenhua” (Revolutionary culture in a postrevolutionary era), available: <http://www.frchina.net/data/personArticle.php?id=3651> [accessed February 8, 2006].
5. In 1993, for instance, the government initiated a series of large-scale events to commemorate the centenary birthday of Mao. The Pacific Video and Audio Publishing Company, seeing the opportunity to cash in on these events, came up with the idea to publish a cassette with thirty revolutionary songs sung by popular singers and with modern electronic accompaniment.

- With a next-to-nothing production budget, six million copies of the cassette were sold. Many families, all by now equipped with hi-fi CD players, bought cassette players just to listen to this tape.
6. Vanke Film and Television Co. Ltd. was formerly Vanke Cultural Communication Co. Ltd. Established in 1992, the company specializes in film and television planning and production. It has branches in Beijing and Hong Kong. See <http://mt.vanke.com/>.
  7. Li Yan, “Xinban ‘Hongse Niangzijun’ gen hongse bu tiebian” (The new version of *The Red Detachment of Women* has nothing to do with “Red”), *Beijing Youth Daily*, July 3, 2006, p. B6.
  8. Cai Nan, “Youjian Qionghua: Daiying ‘Hongse niangzijun’ beihou de gushi” (The stories behind *The Red Detachment of Women*), *China Television News*, June 12, 2006, p. 42.
  9. Dai Jinhua, *Scene in the Fog: Chinese Cinema Culture: 1978–1998* (Beijing: Beijing University Press, 2000).
  10. State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, *Guanyu renzhen duidai “hongse jingdian” gaibian dianshiju youguan wenti tongzhi* (A circular regarding some problems in adapting “Red Classics” into television drama), May 2004.
  11. See Qiu Hongjie, “Zhongguo wenyi hanwei ‘Hongse jingdian’ ” (Chinese art circles defend “Red Classics”). Available: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2004-05/23/content\\_1485678.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2004-05/23/content_1485678.htm) [accessed April 10, 2006]; Li Yan, “Xinban ‘Hongse Niangzijun’ gen hongse bu tiebian” (The new version of *The Red Detachment of Women* has nothing to do with “Red”), p. B6.
  12. Anonymous, “Cehua: Dianshiju gaibian, ruhe chengshou ‘Hongse jingdian’ zhi zhong” (The unbearable heaviness of remaking “Red Classics”). Available: <http://www.people.com.cn/GB/yule/1083/2437692.html> [accessed April 9, 2004].
  13. Some of the heroes and heroines in the original works were heavily revised over time to keep in line with the political and ideological requirement of the state. For more detailed discussions of the sublimation of the revolutionary hero, see Ban Wang, *The Sublime Figure of History: Aesthetics and Politics in Twentieth Century-China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).
  14. Li Yan, “Xinban ‘Hongse Niangzijun’ gen hongse bu tiebian,” p. B6.
  15. For a detailed discussion of the strategies to popularize red songs, see Andrew Jones, *Like a Knife: Ideology and Genre in Contemporary Chinese Popular Music* (New York: Cornell University, 1992).
  16. Chen Yiming, “Cui Yongyuan: Zai ‘Hongse jingdian’ qian” (Cui Yongyuan on “Red Classics”) *Southern Weekend*, May 6, 2005, p. C14, 19.
  17. Zhao Yong, “Shui zai shouhu ‘Hongse jingdian’: Cong ‘Hongse jingdian’ ju gaibian kan guanzhongde ‘Zhengzhi wuyishi’ ” (Who is guarding the “Red Classics”: An analysis of the audiences’ “political unconsciousness” through the “Red Classics” remakes), *Southern Cultural Forum* (2005) 6: 36–39.

18. Stuart Hall, “Encoding and decoding,” in Stuart Hall (ed.), *Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972–1979* (London: Hutchinson and the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham, 1980), pp. 128–138.
19. Chantal Mouffe, “Hegemony and new political subjects: Toward a new concept of democracy,” in Cary Nelson and Larry Grossberg (ed.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), p. 94.
20. See Cheng Guangwei, “Ershi shiji liushi niandai de dianying yu wenhua shishang” (Film and cultural trends in the 1960s), *Journal of Xinyang Teachers’ College* (2002), January: 96–101. Cheng discusses various readings of the Red Classics films in the 1960s divergent from or against the dominant ideological operations. For example, anti-Japanese war films such as *The Tunnel War (Didaozhan)* and *The Mine War (Dileizhan)* did not attract children with its grand narrative of revolution, but through its depiction of the magic military tactics of the guerrilla war and farcical scenes where Japanese soldiers flee helter-skelter, which happens to cater to the juveniles’ need for playful games. Cheng’s observations should indicate the fact that film or television texts are open and offer a variety of interpretations to the audience.
21. To protect the identities of the participants, I use pseudonyms for the names of all interviewees quoted.
22. Lisa Rofel, *Other Modernities: Gendered Yearnings in China After Socialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p. 97.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 129–131.

## **Chapter 12 Looking for Taiwan’s Competitive Edge: The Production and Circulation of Taiwanese TV Drama**

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3. GIO (Government Information Office), 2005 ROC Yearbook, available: <http://www.gio.gov.tw/>.
4. Lai Tsung Pi, Vice President of Planning Department, Gala Television Corporation (GTV), Taipei, interviewed on April 21, 2006.
5. *China TV Drama Report 2002–2003* (Shanghai: Shanghai TV Festival and CVSC-SOFRES Media, 2003).
6. Koichi Iwabuchi, “Becoming culturally proximate: A/scent of Japanese idol dramas in Taiwan,” in Brian Moeran (ed.), *Asian Media Productions* (London: Curzon Press, 2001), pp. 55–74.
7. Koichi Iwabuchi, “Localizing Japan in the booming Asian media markets,”

- in *Recentring Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), Chapter 3, pp. 121–157.
8. Chua Beng Huat, “Conceptualizing an East Asian popular culture,” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* (2004) 5(2): 200–221.
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  10. Editorial, “An obstacle between Taiwan and China TV communication,” *Ming-Sheng Newspaper*, March 18, 2002, p. A2.
  11. Chen Yixiu, “Shaping the television audience: The historic analysis of the rise of Korea drama market in Taiwan,” Master thesis, Graduate Institute of Communication, Tamkang University, Taiwan, June 2004.
  12. Hanes Chin, section chief of the International Channel and Program Distribution Department, Sanlih E-Television Co. (SETTV), Taipei, interviewed on April 2, 2006.
  13. Youli Liu and Yixiang Chen, “Cloning, adaptation, import, and originality: Taiwan in the global television format business,” in Albert Moran and Michael Keane (eds.), *Television across Asia: Television Industries, Program Formats and Globalization* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 67–72.
  14. Robert Xue, assistant manager of Digital Contents Department, Sanlih E-Television Co. (SETTV), Taipei, interviewed on March 9, 2006.
  15. J. D. Straubhaar, “Beyond media imperialism: Asymmetrical interdependence and cultural proximity,” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* (1991) 8: 39–59.
  16. Xiancheng Liu, *Transborder Crossing: The Regional Competition of Chinese Media Industries* (Taipei: Asia-Pacific Press, 2004).
  17. Vincent Jiang, deputy director, International Affairs and Program Department, Formosa Television (FTV), Taipei, interviewed on March 16, 2006.
  18. Jessie Y. W. Shi, chief director of International Communications Planning Department, Public Television Service Foundation (PTS), Taipei, interviewed on March 29, 2006.
  19. Claire Young, planning/marketing manager, Zoom Hunt International Productions Co., Taipei, interviewed on April 6, 2006.

### **Chapter 13 From the Margins to the Middle Kingdom: Korean TV Drama’s Role in Linking Local and Transnational Production**

1. The term was first coined by the Chinese mass media in 2001 in response to the rising popularity of Korean pop culture products and stars. See Suhyun Jang (ed.), *Junggukeun wae Hanliureul suyong hana* (Why China receives hanliu) (Seoul: Hakkojae, 2004). It has since been actively adopted by the Korean mass media to refer to their unexpected popularity throughout Asia.

2. David Waterman and Everett Rogers, “The economics of television program production and trade in Far East Asia,” *Journal of Communication* (1994) 44 (3): 89–111.
3. Anura Goonasekera and Paul Lee, *TV Without Borders: Asia Speaks Out* (Singapore: AMIC, 1998).
4. Daya Kishan Thussu, *International Communication: Continuity and Change* (London: Arnold, 2000).
5. See Hyun Mee Kim, “Ilbon daejung munhwa ui sobiwa ‘fandom’ ui hyeongseong” (J-Pop consumption and the formation of “fandom”), *Hanguk Munhwa Inryuhak* (Korean Cultural Anthropology) (2003) 36 (1): 149–186; Jaesik Yoon and Yungyeong Jung, *Saeggye bangsongyeongsang contents yutong business* (World distribution business of broadcasting contents) (Seoul: Korean Broadcasting Institute, 2002); Jongwon Ha and Eungyeong Yang, “Dong Asia television ui jiyekhwa wa Hanliu” (Regionalization of East Asian television and *Hanliu*), *Bangsong yeongu* (Broadcasting Studies) (2002 Winter): 67–103.
6. *Hanliu* challenges the notion of unilateral globalization, cultural imperialism, and the dichotomy of Western dominance, and peripheral dependency in the international communication system. Studies on intra-East Asian cultural traffic have shown that Western dominance through cultural products and capital is not sufficient to explain the regionalization of TV program exchanges and the dynamic relationship between global convergence and local specificity. See Koichi Iwabuchi, *Recentring Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002). See also Koichi Iwabuchi (ed.), *Feeling Asian Modernities: Transnational Consumption of Japanese TV Dramas* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2004).
7. The introduction of new terrestrial and cable television channels in Korea in the 1990s resulted in an expanded market for foreign television programs, mostly from the United States. Total television program imports from foreign countries exceeded exports until 2001.
8. Hangjae Cho, “Oejujungchaui gonggwa” (Merits and demerits of outsourcing policy), presented at the Korean Association for Broadcasting and Telecommunication Studies seminar in 2003.
9. These do not include sitcoms and one-act dramas.
10. Yoon argues that the relationship between broadcasters and independent production companies is not equal; see Taejin Yoon, “Daejung munhwa ui saengsangju” (Production structure of popular culture), *Bangsong munhwa yeongu* (Studies of Broadcasting Culture) (2005) 17 (2): 9–44.
11. Jaebok Park, *Hanliu, geullobal sidae ui munhwa gyungjaengryuk* (Hanliu: A cultural power in the age of globalization) (Seoul: Samsung Economic Research Institute, 2005).
12. O-Dae Kwon, a content producer in the Global Strategy Team at KBS, was interviewed on October 21, 2005.

13. Interview with Jonghak Kim, *The Hankyoreh*, December 13, 2004, p. 13.
14. “Drama funds pour in,” *Korean Economic Daily*, June 15, 2006.
15. John Sinclair, “The business of international broadcasting: Cultural bridges and barriers,” *Asian Journal of Communication* (1997) 7 (1): 137–155.
16. Jean-Luc Renaud and Barry L. Litman, “Changing dynamics of the overseas marketplace for TV programming,” *Telecommunication Policy* (1985) 9 (4): 245–261.
17. Colin Hoskins, Stuart McFadyen, and Adam Finn, “International joint ventures in the production of Australian feature films and television programs,” *Canadian Journal of Communications* (1999) 24 (1): 127–139.
18. Stuart McFadyen, Colin Hoskins, and Adam Finn, “The effect of cultural differences on the international co-production of television and feature films,” *Canadian Journal of Communications* (1998) 23 (4): 523–538.
19. See “Anti-*hanliu* signs in China,” *Yonhap News*, January 16, 2006; “Will *Hanliu* be blocked by the Great Wall of China?” *Munhwa Ilbo*, June 21, 2006.
20. Although it had been planned to be broadcast in two countries at the same time in May 2004 after its completion, its final editing was not completed until the scheduled airtime, and the Korean broadcaster could not delay its programming. While it was broadcast in Korea from May 10 to July 13, 2004, it was broadcast in China from June 23, 2004, one and a half months later.
21. Internationally co-produced cultural products tend to search for transcendent and universal subject matter to serve the capitalistic logic of the market and to avoid cultural discounting. In fact, the co-produced dramas usually favor universal human relations and emotions as their subject matter. For example, see Serra Tinic, “Going global: International co-productions and the disappearing domestic audience in Canada,” in Lisa Parks and Shanta Kumar (eds.), *Planet TV: A Global Television Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), pp. 169–186.
22. “Korea used to be China’s dependency? KBS’s apology,” *Joongang Ilbo*, May 23, 2004.
23. It was released in China in 2005, but it was not released in Korea by 2007. It has been said that its revised version will be broadcast in 2008 in Korea.
24. Interviewed on June 19, 2006.

#### **Chapter 14 Rescaling the Local and the National: Trans-border Production of Hong Kong TV Dramas in Mainland China**

1. For example, see Amos Owen Thomas, *Imagi-nations and Borderless Television: Media, Culture and Politics across Asia* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2005); Anura

- Goonasekera and Lee Siu Nam (eds.), *TV Without Borders: Asia Speaks Out* (Singapore: Asian Media Information and Communication Centre, 1998).
2. W. Breitung, “Transformation of a boundary regime: The Hong Kong and mainland case,” *Environmental and Planning A* (2002) 34: 1749–1762.
  3. Chik produced his first trans-border production, *Fight for Love (Tantanqing lianlianwu)* in 2001, but the scriptwriter is Pao Wai-chung instead of Chow.
  4. For a discussion on the flexibility of the economy of space and signs, see Scott Lash and John Urry, *Economies of Signs and Space* (London: Sage, 1994).
  5. Ma Kit Wai, “Complex realism,” paper presented at the Hong Kong Cultural Politics Conference, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, November 2005.
  6. Michael Curtin, “Media capital: Towards the study of spatial flows,” *International Journal of Cultural Studies* (2003) 6 (2): 202–228.
  7. Jeremy Tunstall, *Television Producers* (London: Routledge, 1993).
  8. Three kinds of trans-border productions are adopted by TVB: trans-border production entirely financed by TVB (e.g. *War and Beauty*); co-production by TVB and a Mainland media institution, in which TVB finances half of the total cost of production and contributes its production teams as well as actors and actresses (e.g. *Blade Heart*); and similar to the second type, but differing in that TVB contributes only the actors and actresses but not the production teams (e.g. *Twin of Brothers*, or *Da Tang Shuanglong Zhuan*). In this chapter, we focus on the first two options. The third option of providing TVB’s actresses and actors for Mainland productions is not relevant to our research question of the effects of trans-border productions on Hong Kong TV producers.
  9. Toby Miller et al., *Global Hollywood* (London: British Film Institute, 2001).
  10. For a discussion of joint ventures in media industries, see Michael Keane, *Created in China: The Great New Leap Forward* (London: Routledge, 2007).
  11. There is no official English name for this drama.
  12. All trans-border productions needed to align with a Mainland broadcast station at that time.
  13. Lau’s popular trans-border productions such as *Plain Love (Qingnong dadi, 1995)*, *Plain Love II (Cha shi guxiang nong, 1999)*, *Dark Tales I & II (Liaozhaizhiyi I & II, 1996, 1998)*, *Journey to the West I & II (Xiyou Ji I & II, 1996, 1998)*, and *Country Spirit (Jiu shi guxiang chun, 2001)* were shot in the Guangdong and Guangxi Provinces.
  14. Joseph Man Chan, “Television Development in Greater China: Structure, exports, and market formation,” in John Sinclair et al. (eds.), *New Patterns in Global Television: Peripheral Vision* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 126–160; Joseph Man Chan, “Commercialization without independence: Media Development in China,” in J. Cheng and M. Brosseau (eds.), *China Review 1993* (25) (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press), pp. 1–19.

15. Candice Tsang, Sandy Wong, Emily Li and Steve Pang, “CEPA and its impact on the development of the telecommunications and media industries in China and Hong Kong.” Available: <http://newmedia.cityu.edu.hk/cyberlaw/index24.html> [accessed June 24, 2006].
16. *Ibid.*, for a discussion of CEPA’s impact on the TV industry in Hong Kong.
17. The title is expressed in Cantonese dialect instead of formal Chinese language.
18. Examples of successful productions produced by Chik and Chow include *Criminal Investigator I & II* (*O’ji shilu*, 1995, 1996), the epic drama serials *Cold Blood Warm Heart* (*Tiandi nan’er*, 1996), *Secret of the Heart* (*Tiandi haoqing*, 1998), and *At the Threshold of an Era* (*Chuang shiji*, 1999–2000).
19. John Agnew, “The dramaturgy of horizons: Geographical scale in the *Reconstruction of Italy* by the new Italian political parties, 1992–95,” *Political Geography* (1997) 16 (2): 99–121.
20. Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995).
21. In this context, Allen J. Scott has provided a strong thesis on the relation between the geographic specificities of a place and the cultural products produced in that particular place in his book *The Cultural Economy of Cities: Essays on the Geography of Image-Producing Industries* (London: Sage, 2000).
22. This is similar to what Benedict Andersons contends about the effect of print journalism on the formation of national imagination in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).
23. Features and commentaries can be seen in Hong Kong elite papers such as the *South China Morning Post* and *Ming Pao*, and very popular Mainland weeklies such as the *Southern Weekly* (Nanfang zhoumo).

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