

**The Reception of Global, Regional and Local TV Dramas in Hong Kong—
Rethinking Cultural Proximity**

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ABSTRACT

Inspired by the concept of cultural proximity, which was used to explain the local and regional cultural booming by Latin American scholars, a study was conducted in Hong Kong, a former British colony, to examine audiences' preference for local, regional and global TV dramas, with an emphasis on the prosperity of regional products.

We detect a hybridized choices pattern of TV dramas in Hong Kong. In general, local TV dramas gain an incomparable advantage over the imported ones and attract people across age and social status spectrum; compared with Western TV dramas, those imported from the regional countries are more preferable because of the cultural proximity. However, by virtue of the “symbol distancing”, American TV dramas also seem to be attractive, especially for those with greater economic and cultural capital.

We would suggest that such hybridized choices are rooted in the hybridized character of Hong Kong culture. On one hand, Hong Kong audiences strongly identify with Chinese traditional cultural values and local consciousness, which provide the base for the affinity of cultural proximity; on the other hand, the long colonial history also provides them with the numerous opportunities to contact Western world and helps them develop the inclination to American dramas. The hybridized choice and preference for TV dramas therefore is a reflection of the contradiction of these two aspects. Furthermore, this also demonstrates that the process of localization, regionalization and globalization interweave with each other rather than engaging in a zero-sum game.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURE	vi
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Research background	1
1.2 Significance of This Study	7
1.3 Structure of This Thesis	8
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.1 Audience Research	11
2.2 Regionalization and Cultural Proximity in the Trade of TV Programs	15
2.3 Multiple Levels of Prosperity of Television Programs in Asia	22
2.4 Other Factors Influencing Audiences' Choice of Television Programs	27
CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	32
3.1 Research Methodology Overview	32
3.2 Research Design of Quantitative Survey	36
3.3 Research Design of Qualitative Interview	42
3.4 Data Analysis Strategies	44
CHAPTER IV FINDINGS OF QUANTITATIVE SURVEY	47
4.1 Overview of Hong Kong Audiences' Viewing Pattern of TV Dramas	47
4.2 Predicting the Effects of Demographics on Audiences' Preference	48
4.3 Relationships between Dependent Variables and Other Predicting Factors	53
4.4 Predicting Audiences' Preference for TV Dramas	55
CHAPTER V FINDINGS OF QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW	67

5.1 Consuming the East: Resilient Appeal of Cultural Proximity-----	68
5.2 Differing Preference for Regional TV Dramas-----	76
5.3 Consuming the West: Fantasy of the Cultural Distance-----	83
5.4 From Local to Global: Globalization and Hybridization of TV Dramas-----	86
5.5 Where the East Meets the West-----	91
CHAPTER VI DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION-----	94
6.1 Discussion-----	94
6.2 Conclusion-----	101
6.3 Contribution-----	102
6.4 Limitation & Suggestion for Future Studies-----	103
REFERENCES-----	106
APPENDIX I -----	117
APPENDIX II-----	121
CURRICULUM VITAE-----	123