



PROJECT MUSE®

Internationalizing "International Communication"

Lee, Chin-Chuan

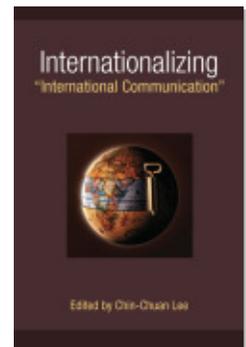
Published by University of Michigan Press

Lee, Chin-Chuan.

Internationalizing "International Communication".

University of Michigan Press, 2014.

Project MUSE.muse.jhu.edu/book/39747.



➔ For additional information about this book

<https://muse.jhu.edu/book/39747>

Access provided at 20 Oct 2019 11:27 GMT with no institutional affiliation



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

Conditions of Capital: Global Media in Local Contexts

Michael Curtin

Allow me to begin with an alternative proposition: the field of international communication studies doesn't need "internationalizing," at least so far as film and media studies are concerned. From the beginning, film studies has been thoroughly international, both theoretically and epistemologically. It conceived of cinema as a cultural phenomenon of modern nation-states and set out to delineate the distinctive features of national cinemas, comparing each against the others. Concerned about the intrusive impact of Hollywood exports on societies around the world, film scholars sought to counterbalance it with a profound and ongoing appreciation of French, Egyptian, and Indian cinemas, among others (Nowell-Smith, 1999). They celebrated the growth of international film festivals, supported national film policies, and developed an impressive ensemble of university courses and textbooks that sustained and explained the distinctive histories and practices of national cinemas worldwide. More recently, scholars have challenged and interrogated the national cinemas model (Hjort & Mackenzie, 2000; Vitali & Willemsen, 2006; Durovicova & Newman, 2010), but film scholarship nevertheless remains anchored to national points of reference.

Similar observations could be made about studies of publishing and electronic media. Harold Innis (1972), a founding figure, wrote expansive histories of communication from the very dawn of human history to the modern era, describing the communicative features of empires, theocra-

cies, and feudal regimes, but when it came to the modern era, his analysis focused on national media systems situated within an international context. He reflected on power imbalances and transborder flows, but largely he compared and contrasted the distinguishing features of national media. Others followed this lead, which is understandable given the significant influence of sociology on the field of communications. Sociological paradigms were built on the assumption that communication was largely a national systemic concern, and in those situations where it breached national borders it was explored as a disruptive or transgressive influence. This led to the most common and enduring conception of transnational communication as media imperialism, an insidious menace that raised the specter of cultural homogenization on a global scale. Even today, critics point to the ubiquity of American media products such as *Batman*, *CSI*, and Lady Gaga, and they portray the world's masses as vulnerable, even gullible, subjects in a circuit of culture that feeds corporate conglomerates and impoverishes national modes of expression and public life (Schiller, 1969; Guback, 1969; Miller et al., 2008). Many scholars and government policy makers have argued that national governments and international institutions are the best hope for containing the imperial tide, pointing to policies that limit imports, foster indigenous production, and promote responsible citizenship (McBride, 1980).

So perhaps we need not internationalize our scholarly endeavors so much as we should explore alternative approaches to the issues raised above. To what extent are national frameworks and perspectives useful, or to what extent do they obscure recent trends engendered by media globalization? Global studies researchers proceed from a different set of assumptions, acknowledging the enduring significance of national systems and expressing concern about the unequal distribution of economic and cultural power, but this school of thought moves beyond a foundational focus on national concerns to explore the interactive dynamics that unfold at a variety of levels. These scholars say media globalization has no uniform logic and no central command center but is rather a push-pull process with many unexpected outcomes (Tomlinson, 1999). The interactions between global, national, and local institutions are therefore radically contextual and complex. Researchers point to examples of local media competing with dominant global counterparts in many parts of the globe, and they pay attention to the ways that popular culture appropriates, reconfigures, and reinterprets global hegemonic texts. Although conscious of systemic patterns of power, global studies scholars are especially alert to local contingencies,

differences, and disjunctures (Appadurai, 1996). They see the world less as a mosaic of interlocking and discrete national entities than as a collage of diverse, layered, and transversal elements. They furthermore argue that national governments are not necessarily the best antidote to globalization, since they too are characterized by unequal structures of power that advance the interests of elites through the fabrication of supposedly indigenous values and cultural artifacts. With respect to China, these researchers are quick to point out the many internal differences that belie the fiction of national unity as promoted by the Communist Party (e.g., Pan, 2010). Global studies scholars therefore acknowledge that national political action can be a site for contesting cultural domination from afar but they also aim to uncover other important locations of cultural struggle and to explain them within the context of globalization.

Although the foregoing approaches differ in significant ways, they share a set of central research questions with respect to modern media: What are the relations between global, national, and local institutions? What are the patterns of dominance and subordination? Where are the centers of creativity and cultural power? How do these relations of power affect creative workers and media users? How do they affect the socio-cultural fortunes of human communities? What are the essential principles that inform the production, circulation, and social uses of modern media? Such questions are implicitly spatial, which helps to explain persistent concerns about boundaries and relationships. Yet it is curious that spatial concerns are not more explicitly foregrounded in communications research. If film and media scholars were to do so, they might place more emphasis on the study of cities, and in particular the study of port cities, rather than the study of nations. This might present us with different ways of thinking about cultural power in the contemporary global media environment.

In ancient and medieval times, imperial regimes exerted their influence across space by subduing local populations and building alliances with groups that controlled strategic fortresses, towns, and cities. This was superseded by the modern system of states that were predicated on the establishment of fixed political boundaries and the internal cultivation of national populations. Under both systems, political and cultural power often coincided so that centers of creative activity developed around the centers of political rule. But capitalism subsequently endowed many cities around the world with resources that grew from commercial and industrial activity rather than political power and military conquest. Especially important in this regard were seafaring cities—such as Bombay, Lagos, Beirut, and

Hong Kong—that functioned as centers of trade, finance, manufacturing, and culture.

Port cities often operated in between the grand empires or on the margins of powerful states. They were places where the *exchange* of goods, ideas, and cultural artifacts was the basis of metropolitan prosperity. As modern publications, movies, and sound recordings expanded the geographical range of popular media, these cities were especially well situated to facilitate the transversal circulation of cultural goods and influences. They became centers of regional media economies that transcended national borders and they furthermore served as launching pads for the circulation of cultural products even further afield—Bombay movies to the Gulf States, African high life music to the Americas, and Chinese *wuxia* (martial arts) novels to Southeast Asia. Such cultural flows accelerated in the latter part of the twentieth century with the emergence of satellite television, digital recordings, and Internet communication. At first, these new technologies seemed to serve the interests of Western media conglomerates based in Hollywood, New York, and London, but over time they facilitated counter-flows within and between regions, and from the margins to the centers. These circulations also enabled new ways of thinking about one’s affinities with others and about one’s place in the world. Some dreamed of life in Hollywood but many others looked to cities like Bombay and Beirut with respect to fashion, culture, and lifestyle (Mitra, 2010). For those that were politically disempowered within their material locale, such cultural centers provided imaginary alternatives to the constraints and indignities they suffered in everyday life.

National governments were uneasy with cultural competition from afar, whether it came from Hollywood or Mumbai, cities that I refer to as media capitals. And they grew even more unsettled as it became easier to circulate popular music and screen media in the digital era. At the same time that cultural products were moving more fluidly across national borders, so too were capital, technology, and commercial goods, eventually tying countries into an interdependent global economic system (Harvey, 1990; Castells, 1996). As states saw their cultural and economic sovereignty eroding, their decision-making and administrative power were similarly constrained by forces from afar. They felt pressure from dominant Western powers to allow transnational media to flow freely and they felt exasperated by a rising enthusiasm among their citizens for cultural options from afar. If governments tried to set import quotas on movies, consumers would turn to black market video discs. If states banned satellite dishes, audiences would turn to the Internet. Such developments helped to heighten tensions between

global hegemons, national governments, and port cities from which many transnational media products emanated.

As suggested above, these dynamics are not simply (inter)national, they are truly global: multidimensional, intersecting, conflictual, and systemic. They demand attention to national institutions and international relations but they also require the investigation of agents, forces, and locations beneath and between the nation-state. My recent research attempts to address these global cultural dynamics through the analysis of “media capital,” a concept that at once directs attention to the leading status of particular cities and to the principles and processes that promote the concentration of resources in specific locales (Curtin, 2004, forthcoming, in progress). In this essay, I focus on the struggles between the Chinese state and Hong Kong film industry since the 1997 transfer of sovereignty, considering the spatial and power dynamics of their relationship in the past, present, and future. I inquire as to why the Chinese film industry has shifted its geographical center of gravity over time: from Shanghai to Singapore to Hong Kong, and most recently to Beijing. Rather than a nationally rooted commercial cinema, the Chinese film industry has been mobile, dynamic, and transnational for much of its history. This example raises intriguing questions about the contested relations between global, national, and local media. But before turning to this particular case study, I explain the principles of media capital and then describe the institutional characteristics and enabling conditions that encourage media resources to accumulate in particular cities. I offer Bombay as a fairly clear example of a successful media capital that operates relatively autonomously from the West. And finally, I turn to Chinese media, noting the rise and demise of Hong Kong as a media capital and exploring the Chinese state’s role in disciplining its cultural competitor, as it endeavors to exert its “soft power” aspirations abroad. Compared to Mumbai, the Chinese case offers a contrasting example of a strong state battling for cultural supremacy at home and abroad. Although the state has been arguably successful in many respects, the chapter concludes by explaining that the principles of media capital suggest why, under current conditions, Beijing is unlikely to become a media capital and unlikely to extend its cultural influence globally or even regionally.

What *Is* Media Capital?

Although the range of forces and factors at play are various and complex, one can nevertheless discern three key principles as playing a structuring role in screen industries around the world since the early twentieth cen-

ture: (1) the logic of accumulation, (2) trajectories of creative migration, and (3) contours of socio-cultural variation.

The logic of accumulation is not unique to media industries, since all capitalist enterprises exhibit innately dynamic and expansionist tendencies. As David Harvey (2001, pp. 237–66) points out, most firms seek efficiencies through the concentration of productive resources and through the expansion of markets so as to fully utilize their productive capacity and realize the greatest possible return. These tendencies are most explicitly revealed during periodic downturns in the business cycle when enterprises are compelled to intensify production or extensify distribution in order to survive, or both. Such moments of crisis call for a “spatial fix,” says Harvey, as capital must on the one hand concentrate and integrate sites of production so as to reduce the amount of time and resources expended in manufacture and on the other hand it must increase the speed of distribution in order to reduce the time it takes to bring distant locales into the orbit of its operations. These *centripetal* tendencies in the sphere of production and *centrifugal* tendencies in distribution were observed by Karl Marx more than a century earlier when he incisively explained that capital must “annihilate space with time” if it is to overcome barriers to accumulation (Marx, 1973, p. 539). As applied to contemporary media, this insight suggests that even though a film or TV company may be founded with the aim of serving particular national cultures or local markets, it must over time re-deploy its creative resources and reshape its terrain of operations if it is to survive competition and enhance profitability.¹ Implicit in this logic of accumulation is the contributing influence of the “managerial revolution” that accompanied the rise of industrial capitalism (Chandler, 1977). Indeed, it was the intersection of capitalist accumulation with the reflexive knowledge systems of the Enlightenment that engendered the transition from mercantile to industrial capitalism. Capitalism became more than a mode of accumulation, it also became a disposition toward surveillance and adaptation, as it continually refined and integrated manufacturing and marketing processes, achieving efficiencies through the concentration of productive resources and the extension of delivery systems (Giddens, 1990).

The second principle of media capital emphasizes trajectories of creative migration. Audiovisual industries are especially reliant on creative labor as a core resource due to the recurring demand for new prototypes (i.e., feature films or television programs). Yet the marriage of art and commerce is always an uneasy one, especially in large institutional settings, and therefore the media business involves placing substantial wagers on forms

of labor that are difficult to manage. As Asu Aksoy and Kevin Robins (1992, p. 12) observe, “Whether the output will be a hit or a miss cannot be pre-judged. However, the golden rule in the film business is that if you do not have creative talent to start with, then there is no business to talk about at all, no hits or misses.” In fact, attracting and managing talent is one of the most difficult challenges that screen producers confront. At the level of the firm this involves offering attractive compensation and favorable working conditions, but at a broader level it also requires maintaining access to reservoirs of specialized labor that replenish themselves on a regular basis, which is why media companies tend to cluster in particular cities.²

Geographer Allen J. Scott contends that manufacturers of *cultural* goods tend to locate where subcontractors and skilled laborers form dense transactional networks. Besides apparent cost efficiencies, Scott points to the mutual learning effects that stem from a clustering of interrelated producers. Whether through informal learning (such as sharing ideas and techniques while collaborating on a particular project) or via more formal transfers of knowledge (craft schools, trade associations, and awards ceremonies) clustering enhances product quality and fuels innovation. “Place-based communities such as these are not just foci of cultural labor in the narrow sense,” observes Scott (2000, p. 33), “but also are active hubs of social reproduction in which crucial cultural competencies are maintained and circulated.”

This centripetal migration of labor encourages path dependent evolution, such that chance events or innovations may spark the appearance of a creative cluster, but industrial development depends on a spiral of growth fueled by the ongoing migration of talent in pursuit of professional opportunities. Locales that fail to make an early start in such industries are subject to “lock-out,” since it is difficult to disrupt the dynamics of agglomeration, even with massive infusions of capital or government subsidies. The only way a new cluster might arise is if a dominant media capital were to falter or if a new cluster were to offer an appreciably distinctive product line.

Despite the productive power and structural advantages of media capitals, the symbolic content of media products attenuates their geographical reach. That is, the cultural distance between, say, Chinese filmmakers and Turkish or Indian audiences introduces the prospect that the meaningfulness and therefore the value of certain products may be undermined at the moment of consumption or use. Although the centripetal logics of accumulation and of creative migration help us identify concentrations of media capital, the centrifugal patterns of distribution are much more com-

plicated, especially when products rub up against counterparts in distant cultural domains that are often served, even if minimally, by competing media capitals.

Cities such as Cairo, Mumbai, Hollywood, and Hong Kong lie across significant cultural divides from each other, which helps to explain why producers in these cities have been able to sustain distinctive product lines and survive the onslaught of distant competitors. These media capitals are furthermore supported by intervening factors that modify and complicate the spatial tendencies outlined above. Consequently, the third principle of media capital focuses on contours of socio-cultural variation, demonstrating that national and local institutions have been and remain significant actors in the global cultural economy.

During cinema's early years of industrial formation, market forces and talent migrations fostered the growth of powerful producers such as Hollywood, but governments around the world reacted to Hollywood's growing influence by developing policies as early as the 1920s to limit imports and to foster local media production. Attempts to develop local filmmaking institutions often proved difficult, but many countries were nevertheless successful at promoting radio and later television (most of them public service broadcasters) that produced popular shows and attracted substantial audiences. Broadcasting seemed an especially appropriate medium for intervention, since many of its cultural and technological characteristics helped to insulate national systems from foreign competition. The ensuing parade of broadcast news and entertainment punctuated daily household routines, interlacing public and private spheres, thereby situating national culture in the everyday world of its audiences (Scannell, 1991; Silverstone, 1994; Morley, 2000).

It should also be pointed out that state institutions were not the only actors to organize and exploit the contours of socio-cultural variation. Media enterprises have for decades taken advantage of social and cultural differences in their production and distribution practices, especially by employing narratives and creative talent that resonate with the cultural dispositions of audiences within their spheres of influence. They furthermore made use of social networks and insider information to secure market advantages, and they invoked ethnic and national pride in their promotional campaigns. Contours of socio-cultural variation have provided and continue to provide opportunities to carve out market niches that are beyond the reach of powerful but culturally distant competitors.

Overall, media capital is a concept that at once acknowledges the *spatial* logics of capital, creativity, culture, and polity without privileging one among the four. Just as the logic of capital provides a fundamental structuring influence, so too do forces of socio-cultural variation shape the diverse contexts in which media are made and consumed. The concept of media capital encourages us to provide dynamic and historicized accounts that delineate the operations of capital and the migrations of talent, while at the same time directing our attention to socio-cultural forces and contingencies that can engender alternative discourses, practices, and spatialities. Such an approach furthermore aims to address the supposed tension between political economy and cultural studies scholarship—and between the media imperialism and global studies approaches—by showing how insights from each of these schools can productively be brought to bear on the study of film and television.

What Are Media Capitals?

Media capitals are powerful geographic centers that tap human, creative, and financial resources within their spheres of circulation in order to fashion products that serve the distinctive needs of their audiences. Their success is dependent on their ability to monitor audience preferences, tap the popular imagination, and operationalize resources within their cultural domain. A media capital's preeminence is therefore relational: its bounty flows outward while in turn it gathers and exploits the very best human and cultural resources within its sphere of circulation. Its preeminence is dynamic and contingent, for it is subject to competition from other cities that aspire to capital status. Dubai, for example, is self-consciously attempting to challenge the leadership of Beirut within the sphere of Arab satellite television and Miami has recently arisen as a transnational competitor to Mexico City. Thus, the concept of media capital encourages a spatial examination of the shifting contours of accumulation and dissemination, which both shape and are shaped by the imaginary worlds of audiences. Such research seeks to understand why some locales become centers of media activity and to discern their relations to other locales. Media capitals emerge out of a complex play of historical forces and are therefore contingently produced within a crucible of transnational competition. Cities as diverse as Hollywood, Mumbai, and Lagos operate as media capitals within their respective spheres of circulation. Although qualitatively different in

many respects, cities that become media capitals exhibit a shared set of characteristics with respect to institutional structure, creative capacity, and political autonomy.

Institutionally, media capitals tend to flourish where companies show a resolute fixation on the tastes and desires of audiences. In order to cater to such tastes, they adopt and adapt cultural influences from near and far, resulting in hybrid aesthetics. Such eclecticism and volatility is moderated by star and genre systems of production and promotion that help to make texts intelligible and marketable to diverse audiences. The bottom line for successful firms is always popularity and profitability. Although often criticized for pandering to the lowest common denominator, commercial film and TV studios are relentlessly innovative, as they avidly pursue the shifting nuances of fashion and pleasure. In the early stages of development, a media capital may be characterized by small businesses with an opportunistic outlook, many of them chasing the latest trend with abandon, churning out products on shoestring budgets and releasing them into the market with little promotion or strategic calculation. As media capitals mature, however, firms begin to formalize their institutional practices and in most cases they begin to integrate production, distribution, and exhibition within large corporations. Profitability is derived from structured creativity that feeds expansive (and expanding) distribution systems. Marketing considerations become woven into the conceptual stages of project development and financing. Media capitals therefore emerge where regimes of capital accumulation are purposefully articulated to the protean logics of popular taste. The mercantilist opportunism of an emerging filmmaking community gives way to industrialized modes of production and distribution.

Just as importantly, media capital tends to thrive in cities that foster creative endeavor, making them attractive destinations for aspiring talent. The research literature on industrial clustering shows that creative laborers tend to migrate to places where they can land jobs that allow them to learn from peers and mentors, as well as from training programs that are sponsored by resident craft organizations (Porter, 1998). Job mobility and intra-industry exchanges further facilitate the dissemination of skills, knowledge, and innovations. Thus a culture of mutual learning becomes institutionalized, helping to foster the reproduction and enhancement of creative labor (Scott, 2000). Workers are also inclined to gravitate to places that are renowned for cultural openness and diversity (Florida, 2005). It's remarkable, for example, that the most successful media capitals are usually port cities with long histories of transcultural engagement.

It's furthermore noteworthy that national political capitals rarely emerge as media capitals, largely because modern governments seem incapable of resisting the temptation to tamper with media institutions.³ Consequently, media capitals tend to flourish at arm's length from the centers of state power, favoring cities that are in many cases are disdained by political and cultural elites (e.g., Los Angeles, Hong Kong, and Mumbai). Successful media enterprises tend to resist censorship and clientelism, and are suspicious of the state's tendency to promote an official and usually ossified version of culture. Instead, commercial media enterprises absorb and refashion indigenous and traditional cultural resources while also incorporating foreign innovations that may offer advantages in the market. They do this even though such appropriations tend to invite criticism from state officials and high-culture critics. The resulting *mélange* is emblematic of the contradictory pressures engendered by global modernity, at once dynamic and seemingly capricious yet also shrewdly strategic. The choice of location is no less calculated: media capital tends to accumulate in cities that are relatively stable, quite simply because entrepreneurs will only invest in studio construction and distribution infrastructure where they can operate without interference over extended periods of time.

Mumbai as a Media Capital

Mumbai is a useful example of a prosperous port city that has grown to become an influential media capital. It is a city that has been a commercial nexus for centuries, enjoying transcontinental trading relations with Persia, Egypt, and Greece during ancient times and later becoming the central node of the British imperial shipping and railroad networks in South Asia. The expansion of the railroads in the late 1800s and explosive growth of the city's cotton industry made Bombay a prosperous mecca for merchants and job seekers. As a result, almost every Indian language and many foreign languages are spoken in Mumbai. Marathi, the state language, is dominant, followed by Gujarati, Hindi, Bengali, and Urdu. English is commonly used in commerce and government. Such diversity has brought periods of ethnic and religious strife, but Bombay/Mumbai nevertheless has long been considered one of the most cosmopolitan and tolerant cities in India.

Today Mumbai remains India's principal seaport, the railhead for two major trunk lines, and country's principal airport, handling almost two-thirds of India's international flight traffic. The stock exchange, established in 1875, and commodity markets make Mumbai the most important

financial center in South Asia. The local economy—initially renowned for banking, shipping, and textile manufacturing—has diversified since independence to include plastics, printing, and pharmaceuticals. Given the constant flow of people and goods, it’s not surprising that Mumbai is also an important center for illicit trade in currencies, gemstones, precious metals, and human flesh. Closely connected to mafia networks in Karachi and Dubai, the underworld societies of Mumbai have exerted a powerful influence on trade, real estate, and the movie industry. Mumbai is also an aspirational locale, where the wealthy live lavishly and the more modestly endowed can sample the ambiguous gift of cosmopolitan modernity. Both onscreen and off, the city has come to symbolize the attractions and trepidations of big city life, with many popular melodramas representing it as the quintessential urban locale of South Asia (Prakash, 2006; Mitra, 2010).

Mumbai’s status as a port city is intimately intertwined with its history as a cultural center. During the British Raj, Parsi migrants from Persia rose to become wealthy and influential players in the shipping, shipbuilding, and financial industries. They also launched the city’s popular commercial theater troupes that shrewdly intermingled a range of performance traditions, including Shakespearean drama, Persian lyric poetry, and Hindu folk dances. Lavishly staged, Parsi theater was renowned for spectacle and melodrama, often with historical or mythological themes. During the nineteenth century, these theater companies traveled throughout India and Southeast Asia, playing to appreciative crowds (Gupt, 2005; Ganti, 2004). Their appropriation of diverse cultural influences no doubt derived from Parsi awareness that, as a minority population, the commercial success of their theatrical endeavors would depend on their ability to negotiate differences.

Some of these theatrical troupes made the transition to cinema, which first arrived in Bombay in 1896, and as filmmakers they earned renown for borrowing from a broad range of sources in order to satisfy the growing demands of moviegoers. By the 1920s, the city was widely recognized as a leading center of Indian movie production and its accomplishments were all the more impressive given the fierce competition from Western imports. The arrival of sound technology in 1931 posed new challenges for Bombay filmmakers, since there existed no “natural” candidate for spoken dialog. Bombay itself was polyglot, and was surrounded by territories where Marathi and Gujarati prevailed. No doubt aware that language would affect the patterns of movie distribution, filmmakers gravitated to Hindustani, a mixture of Hindi and Urdu that was used by the trading

classes in north and central India. As the lingua franca of the bazaars, Hindustani was furthermore a fitting choice because Bombay was tied to these locales via historical trade routes and the Indian railway. Moreover, Hindi was the most widely spoken language in India and Urdu was a foundational idiom for populations in northern India and what is today Pakistan. The two share a common grammatical structure and much vocabulary. Hindustani was therefore accessible to Hindi and Urdu speakers, as well as somewhat accessible to speakers of other Indo-Aryan languages.

“This led to a peculiarity,” observes Tejaswini Ganti (2004, p. 12). “Bombay became the only city where the language of the film industry was not congruent with the language of the region. . . . The fact that cinema in the Hindi language developed in multi-lingual Bombay, rather than the Hindi-speaking north, disassociated Hindi films from any regional identification, imbuing them with a more ‘national’ character. As a result of circulating in a national market, Hindi cinema also developed its own idiom and style [that] does not necessarily correspond to any particular regional variant of Hindi.” Cinematic Hindustani was therefore a language that many could access, but none could claim, making Bombay films appear as transcultural as the theatrical tradition from which the city’s film industry emerged. The Hindustani language furthermore insulated against Western imports and spurred the development of a lucrative popular music industry (Punathambekar & Kavoori, 2008). These cultural characteristics helped Bombay movies to establish broad if haphazard circulation patterns across many parts of colonial India, including what is today Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. Their success allowed producers to invest in ever more lavish on-screen spectacles, which in turn enhanced their competitive edge over regional competitors from Calcutta, Hyderabad, or Madras. With their resolute focus on popular taste, film (and later television) companies incorporated diverse cultural influences while nevertheless disciplining their hybrid aesthetics to star and genre systems that rendered texts popular and marketable in various contexts. Distribution concerns were thoroughly integrated into the conception, financing, and production of products, ensuring a healthy circulation of popular fare.

Mumbai furthermore benefited from its reputation as a center of creative endeavor. Talent was attracted to the city not simply because jobs were available but also because it was renowned for a creative community that had institutionalized a system of mutual learning. The city was generally welcoming to diverse populations and, as a seaport, had a long history of cultural and economic exchange with outsiders. It was a stable and pros-

perous locale that became renowned as a trendsetter among the middle class and aspiring middle class of South Asia.

After India became in 1947, tensions between commercial filmmakers and the national government became an enduring feature of the industry (Jeffrey, 2006). For a variety of complex reasons, however, the Indian government eventually capitulated to the pervasive influence of Mumbai media, anointing it with official industry status in 1998, which opened the door to new financing opportunities from the private sector as well as government programs aimed at bolstering media enterprises. The state furthermore passed legislation that legitimized commercial satellite television, providing lucrative distribution channels for television programming, feature films, and popular music. Synergies among the three have fueled the fortunes of these industries, which most likely would have languished on their own. Although the term “Bollywood” raises the hackles of many industry insiders, Ashish Rajadhyaksha (2003) has quite correctly pointed out that the term at least provides a means of coming to grips with the complex interconnections among commercialized and globalized media institutions headquartered in the Indian city of dreams. Mumbai is the undisputed center of financing, production, and distribution, serving as a magnet for creative talent, a bazaar for media merchants, and a palimpsest for cultural influences from near and far.

As this very brief historical sketch indicates, Mumbai’s status as a media capital traces its roots to commercial circulations, human migrations, ethnic diversity, cultural hybridity, linguistic opportunism, and underworld machinations. Admired by the masses and disdained by the nation’s elite, the city matured at the center of India’s economy but on the margins of political power. Mumbai’s fortune as a media capital rests not only on its centrality but also on its marginality. It is in many respects the emblematic melting pot of the Indian nation and yet it is in many respects remarkably Western. It exists at the center of flows, yet it’s also on the periphery of both India and the West. Bollywood therefore must mark its distance from New Delhi and from Hollywood if it is to survive as a media capital. For the attraction of its screen media resides in their perceived distance from the disciplinary logic of the Indian state and the cultural logic of Hollywood.

Contested Capital in Chinese Screen Media

The commercial Chinese movie industry was, during its prime, a fundamentally transnational medium. Expansive and mobile, it emerged in the

1920s in Shanghai and Hong Kong, and soon expanded into export markets in Southeast Asia. During the 1930s, the mainland movie market was beleaguered by war and revolution, so the center of Chinese commercial cinema shifted south to Singapore, only to be buffeted yet again by waves of nationalist fervor on the Malay Peninsula during the 1950s. The industry then relocated to Hong Kong, where it matured and flourished, serving local audiences but also fashioning products with an eye to overseas markets (Fu, 2003, 2008; Uhde & Uhde, 2000; Zhang, 2004). Chinese movie executives pursued opportunities wherever they arose and the industry was therefore proto-global in orientation, even if its products were not ubiquitous worldwide. It was anchored moreover by a resident creative community that tapped talent and resources from near and far, making Hong Kong the central node in the intricate circuits of Chinese popular culture.

Although transnational in orientation, it was also quite local in many respects. In the latter decades of the twentieth century Hong Kong filmmakers shot most of their productions on the streets of the city and consciously fashioned their movies for local fans. Hong Kong's film culture was then renowned for midnight premieres, where cast and crew would mingle among the moviegoers, taking the pulse of the audience and sometimes adapting the final cut of the film accordingly (Teo, 1997; Bordwell, 2010). Movies were made for locals and their response was considered as a rough predictor of potential success in overseas markets such as Malaysia, Singapore, and Taiwan. The creative community made its home in a colonial city, among a population that had largely migrated from elsewhere and was then in the process of developing a distinctly indigenous but also cosmopolitan identity. Moviemaking was a local business with a translocal sensibility (Zhang, 2010). Aspiring Chinese talent moved to Hong Kong from many parts of Asia—and even as far afield as Europe and North America—seeing the city as the most promising place to build a career. Movie executives similarly saw it as the best place to raise financing, recruit labor, and launch projects.

The movie business operated outside the reach of national politics, sheltered by the benign neglect of the British colonial regime. Producers cobbled together feature films in a freewheeling fashion and at a ferocious pace, turning out popular products, occasional gems, and a good deal of rubbish. Nevertheless the tempo, scale, and diversity of production helped to foster a flexible ensemble of film companies that provided job opportunities to thousands of professionals as well as training for those that aspired to join the industry. Hong Kong became a magnet for talent from near and

far, and became an incubator for creative experimentation (Curtin, 2007). It was home to Tsui Hark, Maggie Cheung, and Leonard Ho. Home to Ann Hui, Peter Chan, and Michelle Yeoh. Home to Peter Pau, Wong Kar-wai, and Christopher Doyle. It was also home to a vibrant ensemble of newspapers, music labels, and broadcasting stations.

In 1997, the People’s Republic of China reclaimed Hong Kong after more than a century of British rule. The terms of transfer provided a fifty-year transition in which the city would operate as a relatively autonomous Special Administrative Region, but it was clear from the beginning that Beijing intended to exert its authority and many believed that government scrutiny of the media industries would increase. This posed a problem for Hong Kong film companies that were accustomed to producing satirical and ribald comedies, as well as fantasy, horror, and crime stories. The city’s creative class grew nervous as the deadline for transition approached, for the very genres that had proven most prosperous were likely to become targets of censors and propaganda officials. Consequently, many producers, directors, and actors began to explore job options abroad and even those that remained in place quietly began moving resources and families overseas in case of an official crackdown (Chan, 2009). The industry also entered into a cycle of hyperproduction, spewing out as many movies as possible, hoping to maximize profits before the fateful moment of transition. This flooded the market with low-grade products that alienated loyal audiences both at home and abroad. Hong Kong’s reputation suffered tremendously as a result, most tragically with its audiences, who by the late nineties had grown accustomed to cultural alternatives from Tokyo, Seoul, Europe, and Hollywood that were readily available at movie multiplexes, on video, and over the Internet. No longer willing to risk the expense of a theater ticket for a Hong Kong feature film, consumers bought (or downloaded) pirated Chinese movie videos that sold for only a fraction of the retail price (Wang, 2003). As audiences turned a cold shoulder to the industry, so too did media professionals in other parts of Asia. Distributors stopped buying, producers stopped collaborating, and directors declined to use Hong Kong talent on their projects. In the decade following the handover, the industry’s transnational network of audiences, distributors, and creative talent slowly dissolved (Curtin, 2007; Chan, Fung, & Ng, 2010; Bordwell, 2010).

In retrospect, anxieties about the handover to Chinese sovereignty were somewhat exaggerated and the industry was therefore ill-served by the opportunistic mentality that prevailed throughout much of the 1990s and into the new century. In fact, it suffered less from censorship than it did

from a fear of censorship that fueled self-destructive cycle of overproduction. The Beijing leadership therefore didn't need to dip its hands directly into the messy mechanics of content regulation. Instead, it kept its distance and withheld assistance during a time when the Hong Kong industry was under tremendous stress. Interestingly, the Chinese leadership hatched numerous joint ventures with Hollywood partners while snubbing the Hong Kong industry, whose films were treated as foreign imports for seven long and turbulent years after the city's return to Chinese sovereignty. The PRC government essentially starved the industry at a moment of crisis and only opened the door to the mainland market slowly after it was sure it had the upper hand in its relationship with "Hollywood East."

In the years following the handover, movie companies started shuttering their operations, support services evaporated, and talent dispersed. To make matters worse, PRC policies regarding censorship remained cloudy, so that many producers urged caution with respect to content issues, fostering a culture of self-censorship that further alienated audiences, especially those in important overseas markets such as Taiwan, Singapore, and Malaysia. As the irreverent and innovative qualities of Hong Kong media products diminished, export revenues declined and producers were confronted with two options: focus on the tiny domestic market of the SAR itself or enter into projects (usually coproductions) with mainland media partners.⁴ The former would entail significant downsizing while the latter would require feature films that were fashioned as much for PRC censors as audiences. The Beijing government furthermore sent signals that it would brook no challenges to the supremacy of state institutions such as China Film and China Central Television (CCTV). If Hong Kong firms were to participate in the rapidly growing mainland media economy, they would do so within parameters established by the Communist Party (Yeh & Davis, 2008; Yeh, 2010; Davis, 2010).

Today, Hong Kong is but one node in a geographically dispersed circuit of deal-making and creative endeavor that is increasingly driven by the exigencies of the mainland market. Filmmakers must be attentive to government officials that explicitly make use of import policies, subsidies, and regulations to shape movie messages and to nurture the development of large national enterprises that they hope will someday compete with their Hollywood counterparts. They favor big movies with big stars. The themes and dialogue are cautious, even at times stilted, but the production values are growing more competitive with global standards and much of this has to do with the skills and insights that Hong Kong talent bring to

these coproductions. Indeed, the leading box office performers during the first decade of the 2000s were Hong Kong–PRC blockbusters. Most were historical dramas (e.g., *Hero*, 2002; *Red Cliff*, 2008; *The Warlords*, 2008), which were safe with censors because they displaced controversial issues onto a distant past and were furthermore acceptable to officials because they promoted the image of China as a grand and ultimately united civilization with a long and distinguished history (Wang, 2009; Zhao, 2010).

Audiences in East Asia outside the PRC seem to sense the caution and calculation behind these efforts, and many moviegoers consequently opted for Hollywood products, which are arguably no less cautious or calculated. The difference is that Hollywood filmmaking is periodically rejuvenated by sleeper films and independent features. It also has a film rating system that makes it possible for filmmakers to target particular segments of the audience and to explore mature themes and offbeat topics. These structural mechanisms have allowed innovative projects—such as *Juno* (2007), *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008), and *The Hurt Locker* (2009)—to break through the institutional inertia and the insider dealings of the industry. As currently constituted, the mainland movie industry has no such mechanisms. Instead, there is a yawning gap between state-sanctioned feature film extravaganzas (all of them G-rated) and sadly undernourished mid-range and independent movies (Zhang, 2010; Chan, Fung, & Ng, 2010; Song, 2010). Chinese independent films are micro-budgeted projects that are either destined for the international festival circuit or they are opportunistic features that are produced largely for the satellite television market. The former are seen as unprofitable art cinema that rarely make it into theaters while the latter tend to be “main melody” films that are subsidized by the state and conform to ideological guidelines that favor uplifting characters and pro-social themes (Song, 2010).

Television likewise suffers from various institutional constraints, so that mainland China—which has by far the world’s largest national television audience—remains a net importer of programming (Keane, 2010). Low-cost genres (talk, reality, and variety) flourish, but few are innovative and those that are find themselves quickly besieged by imitative competitors (Keane, Fung, & Moran, 2007). Drama and comedy—signature genres of the world’s most successful television enterprises—remain underdeveloped, largely because of the same caution and calculation that prevails in the movie business. Besides the constraints on content, mainland television enterprises also suffer from structural limitations. Shanghai and Guangzhou media have exploded in size and Hunan provincial television has

proven itself to be a shrewd innovator, but most TV companies are run by provincial or municipal units of government that are eager to maintain their authority and ownership status. This makes it difficult for companies to merge and makes it difficult to shake out the weakest performers (Diao, 2008). Provincial and municipal TV enterprises are hampered as well by regulations that favor the state-sanctioned national champion, China Central Television, which in a stunning conflict of interest is also the organization that oversees national television ratings. Provincial and municipal telecasters are furthermore discouraged from building overseas distribution channels, a privilege that largely belongs to Beijing-based institutions that nest snugly under the wing of the state, where they are closely monitored for content and tone.

If today there is a geographic center to Chinese media, it is within the Communist Party offices in Beijing, not because the party micromanages the day-to-day operations of television and film enterprises but rather because it systematically doles out favors and franchises to those that acknowledge its supremacy. The party leadership is quite successful at keeping a leash on domestic players and at exploiting joint venture partners from overseas.⁵ The PRC government has cagily manipulated both Western and Hong Kong movie companies to serve its own ambitions, which are to build a movie infrastructure that will ultimately be popular with national audiences and competitive with Hollywood, both at home and abroad. To the extent that it has succeeded, it is largely because China's moviegoing public is expanding at a breathtaking pace, with box office receipts of \$2.7 billion in 2012, making it the second largest theatrical market in the world ("China box office round-up," 2013). Television is undergoing a similar growth trajectory, with CCTV announcing that its 2010 annual advertising auction drew \$1.9 billion in revenue, rising more than 15 percent over the preceding year (Coonan, 2010b); by 2013, that figure had doubled.

Yet despite these impressive figures, mainland media have little influence abroad, casting barely a ripple through media markets in Korea, Taiwan, or Japan, let alone Europe or the United States. This is due largely to the fact that PRC cinema has, since its inception, been an instrument of the state, a bridge between the Communist Party and the people. Since the 1980s, the government has reorganized and marketized the national economy so that media institutions now operate in a more decentralized fashion. They pursue audiences as they might pursue media consumers, but their overriding mission is to serve the party and media ownership remains squarely in the hands of the state (Zhu, 2003; Diao, 2008). This

system of control is fairly obvious to viewers on the mainland who commonly seek alternatives via the Internet and the DVD black market. Young people especially rely on Internet viewing, employing a host of strategies to circumvent the “Great Firewall” in order to acquire products that could never find their way into cinemas or onto the airwaves (Barboza, 2010; Chua & Iwabuchi, 2008). As for overseas markets, audiences seem occasionally interested in historical dramas that emanate from the mainland, but their tastes are quite diverse and they have access to a great range of media products and services. Mainland movies have therefore performed modestly overseas and television exports have proven to be of little interest to audiences in Hong Kong, Taipei, and Singapore. As for projecting soft power even further afield in Asia, state media products have enjoyed little success in Tokyo, Seoul, or Bangkok.

Conclusion

By breaking outside a national perspective and applying a global lens to the development of media institutions in East Asia, one begins to appreciate the pervasive tensions between national and cosmopolitan media, between state imperatives and the dynamic principles of media capital. Beijing’s apparent success at controlling its domestic film industry runs counter to what many critics and researchers see as the unrelenting global expansion of Western media conglomerates. It raises the prospect of a new center of cultural power based in the national capital under the watchful eye of the state, suggesting that, under certain conditions, state regimes may indeed be able to assert their cultural influence domestically, and may furthermore be able to tame the power of nearby competitors in cities such as Hong Kong. Yet the regime’s apparent triumph also constrains its explicit soft-power ambitions. For Beijing is unlikely to become a global media capital so long as it remains the seat of national government. This is because media capital flourishes at cultural crossroads, not at the centers of political power. Beijing may build and manage a vast domestic media infrastructure, but it is likely to struggle in its efforts to influence popular culture beyond its borders. This is because media capitals tend to prosper at a distance from state power—Mumbai vs. New Delhi, Lagos vs. Abuja, Miami vs. Mexico City. Although London has been successful as a media capital, that’s largely because its creative industries tend to be resolutely capitalistic and are insulated from state pressures by a common law tradition that sets limits on state power. Even the national public broadcaster,

the BBC, has a long tradition of creative independence and insulation from the political imperatives of the ruling regime. If Chinese media can someday achieve this level of relative autonomy, Beijing might indeed emerge as a transnational media capital, but until that time its creative cluster is perhaps more appropriately seen as a national center or media hub. London is an exceptional case—perhaps a rare historical accident—and one doubts, for example, that Washington or Riyadh or Moscow could ever be media capitals.

As for Hong Kong, the (soft) nationalization of its film industry helps to explain why its status as a media capital is declining. Once known for its rambunctious, reflexive, and visceral cinema, the city's creative community has shriveled and the talent that remains has capitulated to a system that is built around the cautious, calculated blockbuster feature film that will appease state censors, party officials, and major financial backers. Audiences matter, but not the way that they used to matter when the Hong Kong industry was in its prime, and not the way they continue to matter to filmmakers in Los Angeles or Mumbai. Hollywood and Bollywood both have been successful because of their ongoing fixation on audience preferences. Their popularity in large and diverse domestic markets has in turn translated into overseas profitability, so that both industries now place a premium on global audiences and routinely consider them during the conception and financing of new products (Schuker, 2010). Chinese commercial cinema has by comparison turned inward and one therefore wonders where (and if) a new center of gravity will emerge in the Chinese film industry. Will it remain a national industry nestled in Beijing under the watchful eye of the state or might a transnational media capital reemerge in one of the seaport cities along China's coast? For if China is truly to assert its soft power, it seems less likely to do so as a state-driven media regime than as a popular culture industry situated at a cosmopolitan crossroads.

REFERENCES

- Aksoy, A., and Robins, K. (1992). Hollywood for the 21st century: Global competition for critical mass in image markets. *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 16:1–22.
- Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Barboza, D. (2010). For Chinese, Web is the way to entertainment. *New York Times*, 18 April, p. B1.
- Bordwell, D. (2010) *Planet Hong Kong: Popular cinema and the art of entertainment*. 2nd ed. <http://www.davidbordwell.net/books/planethongkong.php>.

- Castells, M. (1996). *The rise of the network society*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Chan, P. (2009). A discussion with producer/director Peter Ho-San Chan on global trends in Chinese-language movie production. Interview, Taiwan Cinema website, Government Information Office, Republic of China (Taiwan), 2 April. <http://www.taiwancinema.com/ct.asp?xItem=58252&ctNode=124&mp=2>.
- Chan, J. M., Fung, Y. H., and Ng, C. H. (2010). *Policies for the sustainable development of the Hong Kong film industry*. Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong Press.
- Chandler, A. (1977). *The visible hand: The managerial revolution in American business*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- China box office round-up 2012: China becomes world's second biggest market. (2013). *Screen Daily*, 21 January. <http://www.screendaily.com/china-box-office-round-up-2012-china-becomes-worlds-second-biggest-market/5050843-article>.
- Chua, B., and Iwabuchi, K. (2008), *East Asian pop culture: Analysing the Korean wave*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Coonan, C. (2010a). Chinese B.O. totals \$1.14 bil. *Variety*, 19 October. <http://www.variety.com/article/VR1118025904.html?categoryid=1278&cs=1&query=china+box+office>.
- Coonan, C. (2010b). Ads auction up 15.5% for CCTV. *Variety*, 8 November. <http://www.variety.com/article/VR1118027181>.
- Curtin, M. (2004). Media capitals: Cultural geographies of global TV. In J. Olsson & L. Spigel, eds., *Television after TV: Essays on a medium in transition* (pp. 270–302). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Curtin, M. (2007). *Playing to the world's biggest audience: The globalization of Chinese film and TV*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Curtin, M. (Forthcoming). Global media capital and local media policy. In J. Wasko, G. Murdock, & H. Sousa, eds., *Handbook of political economy of communication*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Curtin, M. (In progress). *Media capital: The cultural geography of globalization*. Manuscript.
- Davis, D. W. (2010). Market and marketization in the China film business. *Cinema Journal* 49 (3): 121–25.
- Diao, M. M. (2008). Research into Chinese television development: Television industrialisation in China. PhD diss., Macquarie University, Sydney.
- Durovicova, N., & Newman, K., eds. (2010). *World cinemas, transnational perspectives*. New York: Routledge.
- Florida, R. (2005). *Cities and the creative class*. New York: Routledge.
- Frater, P. (2008). Hollywood weighs China yin-yang. *Variety*, 1 August. <http://www.variety.com/article/VR1117989939?refCatId=2520&query=yin+yang>.
- Fu, P. (2003). *Between Shanghai and Hong Kong: The politics of Chinese cinemas*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Fu, P. ed. (2008). *China forever: The Shaw brothers and diasporic cinema*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Ganti, T. (2004). *Bollywood: A guidebook to popular Hindi cinema*. New York: Routledge.

- Giddens, A. (1990). *The consequences of modernity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Guback, T. H. (1969). *The international film industry: Western Europe and America since 1945*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Gupt, S. (2005). *Parsi Theatre: Its Origins and Development*, Calcutta: Seagull Books.
- Harvey, D. (1990). *The condition of postmodernity*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Harvey, D. (2001). *Spaces of capital: Towards a critical geography*. New York: Routledge.
- Hjort, M., & Mackenzie, S., eds. (2000). *Cinema and nation*. New York: Routledge.
- Innis, H. (1972). *Empire and communications*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Jacobs, J. (1984). *Cities and the wealth of nations*. New York: Random House.
- Jeffrey, R. (2006). The mahatma didn't like the movies and why it matters. *Global Media and Communication* 2 (2): 204–24.
- Keane, M. (2007). *Created in China: The great new leap forward*. London: Routledge.
- Keane, M. (2010). Keeping up with the neighbors: China's soft power ambitions. *Cinema Journal* 49 (3): 130–35.
- Keane, M., Fung, A. Y. H., & Moran, A. (2007). *New television, globalisation, and the East Asian cultural imagination*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Marx, K. (1973). *Grundrisse: Foundations of the critique of political economy*. New York: Vintage.
- McBride, S. (1980). *Many voices, one world: Communication and society, today and tomorrow; Towards a new more just and more efficient world information and communication order*. New York: Unipub.
- Miller, T., Govil, N., McMurria, J., Wang, T., & Maxwell, R. (2008). *Global Hollywood: No. 2*. London: British Film Institute.
- Mitra, S. (2010). Localizing the global: Bombay's sojourn from the cosmopolitan urbane to Aamchi Mumbai. In M. Curtin & H. Shah, eds., *Reorienting global communication: Indian and Chinese media beyond borders*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Morley, D. (2000). *Home territories: Media, mobility, and identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Nowell-Smith, G. (1999). *The Oxford history of world cinema*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Pan, Z. (2010). Enacting the family-nation on a global stage: An analysis of CCTV's spring gala. In M. Curtin & H. Shah, eds., *Reorienting global communication: Indian and Chinese media beyond borders*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Pang, L. (2010). Hong Kong cinema as a dialect cinema? *Cinema Journal* 40 (3).
- Porter, M. (1998). Clusters and the new economics of competition. *Harvard Business Review* (November): 77–90.
- Prakash, G. (2006). The idea of Bombay. *American Scholar* 75 (2): 88–99.
- Punathambekar, A., & Kavoori, A., eds. (2008). *Global Bollywood*. New York: New York University Press.
- Rajadhyaksha, A. (2003). The “Bollywoodization” of the Indian cinema: Cultural nationalism in a global arena. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 4 (1): 25–39.
- Scannell, P. (1991). *A social history of British broadcasting*. Cambridge: Blackwell.
- Schiller, H. I. ([1969] 1992). *Mass communication and American empire*. 2nd ed. Boulder, CO: Westview.

- Schuker, L. A. E. (2010). In depth: Plot change: Global forces transform Hollywood films. *Wall Street Journal Asia*, 2 August, p. 14.
- Scott, A. J. (2000). *The cultural economy of cities*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Silverstone, R. (1994). *Television and everyday life*. New York: Routledge.
- Song, T. (2010). Independent cinema in the Chinese film industry. PhD diss., Queensland University of Technology, Queensland.
- Teo, S. (1997). *Hong Kong cinema: The extra dimensions*. London: British Film Institute.
- Tomlinson, J. (1999). *Globalization and culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Uhde, Jan, and Uhde, Yvonne Ng. (2000). *Latent images: Film in Singapore*. Singapore: Oxford University Press.
- Vitali, V., & Willemsen, P., eds. (2006). *Theorising national cinema*. London: British Film Institute.
- Wang, S. (2003). *Framing piracy: Globalization and film distribution in greater China*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Wang, T. (2009). Understanding local reception of globalized cultural products in the context of the international cultural economy: A case study on the reception of *Hero* and *Daggers* in China. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 12:299–318.
- Wong, A.-L., ed. (2002). *The Cathay story*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Film Archive.
- Yeh, E. Y. (2010). The deferral of pan-Asian: Critical appraisal of film marketization in China. In M. Curtin & H. Shah, eds., *Reorienting global communication: Indian and Chinese media beyond borders*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press
- Yeh, E. Y., & Davis, D. W. (2008). Re-nationalizing China’s film industry: Case study on the China Film Group and film marketization. *Journal of Chinese Cinemas* 2 (2): 37–51.
- Young, D. (2010). News Corp sells controlling stake in China TV channels. *Reuters*, 9 August, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE67810L20100809>.
- Zhang, Y. (2004). *Chinese national cinema*. New York: Routledge
- Zhang, Y. (2010). Transnationalism and translocality in Chinese cinema. *Cinema Journal* 49 (3): 135–39.
- Zhao, Y. (2010). Whose *Hero*? The “spirit” and “structure” of the made-in-China blockbuster. In M. Curtin & H. Shah, eds., *Reorienting global communication: Indian and Chinese media beyond borders* (pp. 161–82). Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Zhu, Y. (2003). *Chinese cinema during the era of reform: The ingenuity of the system*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Notes

1. Monopoly rents are an exception, but as shown in this chapter, monopoly rents have proven less tenable in an era of changing technologies and increasing transborder flows.
2. Although it does not address media industries specifically, an extensive litera-

ture discusses the impact of human capital on the clustering of business firms in particular locations (Jacobs, 1984; Porter, 1998; Florida, 2005).

3. London, the national capital of the United Kingdom, is an exception, largely because of the residual advantages of empire that made it such an important maritime and financial center. Its importance as a center of media activity has been perpetuated largely because it has exploited its access to the wealthy global Anglophone market and because the state has exercised restraint in its oversight of creative institutions.

4. Recently, a third option has begun to present itself. The terms of the Closer Economic Partnership Agreement between the PRC and Hong Kong has made it possible for filmmakers to target the provincial Guangdong market (Pang, 2010). It is still too soon to know whether this possibility will provide greater autonomy to the Hong Kong industry.

5. News Corporation and Warner Bros. have both thrown in the towel after more than a decade of failed joint ventures, and the general consensus among Western executives is that India is a better bet for investment these days (Frater, 2008). Most prominently in this regard is News Corporation's decision to sell its ownership stake in Star TV, which generated a flurry of press coverage (e.g., Young, 2010).