



HOW HAVE TV Dramas Legitimised China's Rural Neoliberal Transformation Agenda?

01 INTRODUCTION



China's market-oriented reform has created huge rural-urban gaps. In 2005, the Chinese state launched a new project – the **'Socialist New Countryside Construction'** project – to revitalise the countryside. This project indicates 'a massive infusion of funding and resources from the state onto the peasants and rural areas'¹. It has been argued that this project signals a change of policy orientation of the Chinese state towards **state neoliberalism**, one that enables the state to play a more active role in **moderating the negative impacts of marketisation**¹.

Soon, there emerge a number of **TV dramas depicting the changes** taking place in peasants' life since the entrenchment of the 'Socialist New Countryside Construction' policies. This research seeks to explore **why and how the TV drama industry gets involved in this rural neoliberal transformation process**.

1 Neoliberalism as a Governmentality

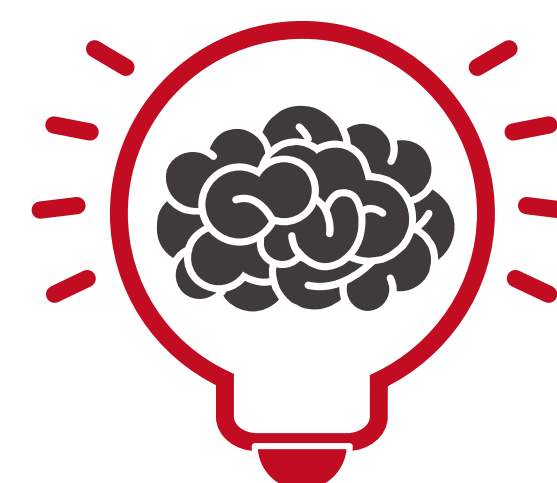
- The aim of neoliberal interventions is to produce ideal governable subjects²

2 Actually Existing Neoliberalism

- Neoliberalism manifests itself in various actually existing forms³

3 Neoliberalisation as a Mediated Process

- It intersects with media processes⁴
- Media plays an important role in the construction and entrenchment of the neoliberal logics⁴



02

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

03

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK



The Multi-dimensional Model of Communication Events⁵

Media Institution
- institutions, rules, practices, narrations, and 'political parallelism'⁶ (the links between the media and the Chinese Communist Party State)

Media Industrial Norms
- Party State principle, media professionalism with market awareness, and cultural tradition^{7,8}

Media Text

Audience Identity
- compliance and resistance



04

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Q1: What is the institutional context?



- Document analysis
- Semi-structured interviews with government officials working at the state media regulation institutions

Semi-structured interviews with professionals



Q2: What industrial norms have influenced the production, distribution and consumption of dramas?

Q3: How have the dramas affected peasant audiences?



- Semi-structured interviews with peasants in two villages: one represents the more developed villages, and the other represents the less developed cases

References

1. So, A. Y. and Chu, Y.-w. (2012) 'The Transition from Neoliberalism to State Neoliberalism in China at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century', in Kyung-Sup, C., Fine, B. & Weiss, L. (eds.) *Developmental Politics in Transition: The Neoliberal Era and Beyond*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, pp. 166-187.
2. Foucault, M. (2008) *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the College de France, 1978-79*. Translated by: Burchell, G. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
3. Peck, J., Brenner, N. and Theodore, N. (2018) 'Actually Existing Neoliberalism', in Cahill, D., Cooper, M., Konings, M. & Primrose, D. (eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: The Sage, pp. 3-15.
4. Phelan, S. (2018) 'Neoliberalism and Media', in Cahill, D., Cooper, M., Konings, M. & Primrose, D. (eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: The Sage, pp. 539-552.
5. Fairclough, N. (1995) *Media Discourse*. London: Edward Arnold, p.54.
6. Hallin, D. C. and Mancini, P. (2004) *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
7. Lee, C.-c. (2003) 'The Global and the National of the Chinese Media: Discourses, Market, Technology, and Ideology', in Lee, C.-c. (ed.) *Chinese Media, Global Contexts*. London and New York: Routledge Curzon, pp. 1-31.
8. Williams, R. (1977) 'Dominant, Residual, and Emergent', *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 121-135.

