

**Watching Foreign TV in an Age of Online Sharing:
The Cultural Implications of Cross-border
Television Experience**

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2016

Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy to
the Department of Media and Communications

Declaration

I hereby declare that this submission is entirely my own work and that any information and/or material derived from other sources has been indicated and duly acknowledged in the thesis.

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Acknowledgements

I wish to express my greatest gratitude to my supervisor Professor David Morley for always giving me invaluable, rigorous and insightful advice over the years. His supervision helped me to develop the abilities I needed for my PhD study. It is only through his continuous encouragement, support and guidance that I was able to finish my PhD program at Goldsmiths and keep my research interest in examining the media's roles in our lives. His painstaking corrections and comments throughout his reading of the several versions of this dissertation have been essential for its completion.

I would also like to thank Professor Nick Couldry, who was my co-supervisor in the early stage of my study. His comments inspired me to develop my PhD research project into its present form. He was also instrumental in helping me to explore different research interests beyond my dissertation.

I am incredibly fortunate to have Dr. Rayna Denison and Dr. James Bennett as my examiners. They generously gave me their invaluable, intelligent and inspiring remarks and feedback, while providing me with the guidance and confidence that helped me to improve my work. I truly appreciate their encouraging messages and support.

Professor Marianne Franklin and Professor Natalie Fenton rendered me the opportunities that helped me to participate in and substantially benefit from various academic activities within and outside the department. I deeply appreciate their kindness and generosity. Meanwhile, I am also grateful to Dr. Shinji Oyama, Dr. Hsiao-Wen Lee and Dr. Dawei Guo for being not only good mentors but also good friends to me throughout these years.

This dissertation would not have been completed without the help from all my interviewees. I thank them for being so willing to spend their time and share their stories with me. They provided me with the most significant and interesting insights I could ever ask for. I am also truly thankful to the friends who kept helping me to find interviewees when I had difficulty in recruiting research subjects.

To my copy-editor Tadgh O'Sullivan, who helped me tremendously in improving my writing and always provided me with insightful comments on my work, I am immensely grateful.

My friends played an important role in making my PhD life more colourful. The friends I met in London made London much more homely to me than it was when I first arrived. My friends in Taiwan also gave me their generous support and the warmest welcome whenever I was back there. I am grateful to all of them.

I owe my parents and my brother immeasurably for providing me with their endless and unconditional love and support over the years. They never stop believing in me. I would not have been able to gather the courage and strength to complete my study without their warmest love and encouragement. I am incredibly lucky to have them as my family members.

Abstract

In recent years, unofficial and/or illegal forms of online file sharing have been increasingly used by audiences worldwide to consume foreign TV programmes which would not previously have been available to them at the time when such shows were first broadcast in their original regions. This form of consumption shortens the time-and-space gap between foreign broadcast and local consumption, highlighting audiences' desires for borderless, transnational viewing. Taking Taiwanese audiences as an example, this research studies the implications which transnational foreign television consumption via online sharing may bring. Based on in-depth interviews with thirty-six audience members conducted from 2010 to 2011, I focus on two issues:

1. The meaning of television for its audiences:

This research examines how and why audiences employ online sharing to bypass temporal, spatial and legal constraints on consuming foreign programmes, and elaborates the ways in which such consumption is becoming an emerging norm of television experience. It sheds light on how our existing understandings have changed, regarding what is meant by "watching TV", and what television's role is in providing a sense of liveness, shaping audiences' sense of social togetherness and their cultural identity.

2. Transnational media flows and cultural power relationships:

This research looks at the implications of this cross-border Taiwanese consumption of television for transnational media flows in the post-colonial East Asian contexts. It examines cultural power relationships between East Asian countries, as well as those between the East and the West. Furthermore, by elaborating how audiences' sense of co-temporality with (and understanding of) other cultures develop via their consumption, this research analyses how such consumption shapes the direction of media flows and cultural power relationships of Taiwan with other countries and thus offers a contemporary understanding of what television means as a cultural form, and what features television audiences have, in the post-network era today.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

I. Preamble

In the past fifteen years, along with a rapid growth of use of the Internet (International Telecommunication Union, 2015), media digitalisation and convergence (Jenkins, 2006) and the emergence of personal mobile devices, television forms – both in terms of distribution and consumption – are increasing in number and diversity. For example, in many countries, national television networks have just launched online viewing services in the first decade of the twenty-first century (e.g. BBC’s iPlayer in the UK).¹ Online streaming subscription services that provide on-demand TV programmes and films such as Netflix and Amazon Instant Video have also been gaining popularity. These online services are accessible not only through smart TV sets, but also through computers, tablets and smartphones. We are more likely to watch different things, at different times, via diverse media technologies other than a TV set. In the context of the emergence of diverse forms of viewing, this research began with my question as a television viewer and a user of mobile devices and the Internet: what does “watching television” refer to today?

In particular, I am interested in how practices of “watching foreign television” have changed. While satellite and cable systems remain important in providing

¹ Television networks’ launching online streaming video services is not only limited to the United Kingdom and the United States but is also happening in other countries, including Taiwan, Japan and other East Asian countries. However, in contrast to the UK, the US or Japan where the television networks have gradually placed full episodes online, television networks in Taiwan tend to only make clips such as trailers, or a short part of whole shows (e.g., one or two minutes of a one hour drama) available on video services. Examples of television networks officially putting whole episodes of their shows online are still rare.

programmes from other territories, there are more ways through which audiences can access programmes across the globe. Specifically, in recent years unofficial and/or illegal forms of online file sharing are increasingly used by worldwide audiences to consume foreign TV programmes which would not previously have been available to them at the time when such shows were first broadcast in their original regions. This kind of circulation of television programmes shortens the time-and-space gap between foreign broadcasts and local consumption, shaping the notion of television in various ways relating to how it challenges various cultural, legal and technical limitations on audiences' freedom – in terms of time and space, for instance geo-blocking – to watch television shows from other countries and territories. This form of consumption also highlights audiences' desire for borderless, instant transnational viewing, in the context of TV broadcasting still based principally on national borders.

For instance, roughly beginning from 2004 to 2005, more and more Taiwanese audiences started to download the latest Japanese and South Korean dramas or American TV series via peer-to-peer² networks and then discussed them via online forums. In most cases, these dramas or series were on air in Japan or the United States just a few days before the Taiwanese online discussions came out. They had not yet been either legally broadcast on local channels or illegally released by pirate DVD publishers in Taiwan. Moreover, these foreign contents were commonly “fan-subtitled”³ (in Chinese) by unknown, anonymous drama/series

² Peer-to-peer is one of the most popular data distribution protocols on the Internet, commonly abbreviated as P2P.

³ Fan-subtitling (or fansubbing) is a term coined by amalgamating two words: “fan” and “subtitles”. Generally speaking, it refers to a fan-oriented activity and is usually voluntary and nonprofit. Lambert (2006) argues that fansubbing describes the voluntary, fan-driven action of digitally recording television shows, movies, their translation into another language and subsequent distribution in countries where the originals cannot be purchased.

fans, meaning that the linguistic barriers the audiences might encounter were filled in. Since this form of unofficial and/or illegal consumption was likely to be accused of copyright infringement, on public, and open-access online social networking sites, most people only discussed the plots of the dramas without mentioning exactly how they managed to access the content. Thus, for audience members who had not yet used online file sharing methods, it was not easy to know, from those online discussions, how and why some of their fellow Taiwanese were able to watch certain foreign dramas within such a short time-gap with a sense of “coevalness” (Fabian, 1983) with foreign cultures. It was common to see questions such as “Why can you watch the latest foreign dramas in real time? Do you all live in that country?” circulating on networking sites.

These questions imply a fundamental assumption regarding the consumption of foreign TV: If people were watching in real time (or almost in real time) a certain foreign TV programme which was exclusively being aired for its domestic audiences, they had to physically be in that exact foreign country or location as a prerequisite. This assumption has previously made sense for at least two reasons:

First, technically, the broadband speed at that period was much slower, so that the sharing of video files was not as prevalent as it is today. Second, and more importantly, legal TV networks and content providers (including online examples) that follow various broadcast regulations and licensing agreements have to restrict their content to be received exclusively within the allocated geographic territory. Most of the foreign shows the Taiwanese audiences talked about premiered on foreign countries’ national networks (e.g. ABC, NBC in the US, Fuji, Asahi of Japan, KBS of South Korea), rather than transnational ones. Therefore, in general,

these foreign shows could only be consumed in real time domestically when they were first on air.⁴ It was still rare for the Taiwanese to consume foreign programmes (especially domestically produced programmes like dramas, which were not usually premiered internationally) almost simultaneously as the original domestic audiences who were based in a foreign country consumed them. As a result, it was unsurprising that audiences who were not aware of online sharing methods or platforms assumed that other people consuming the latest foreign shows were located in these foreign countries or regions at the moment of broadcast. Nevertheless, as this form of consumption is becoming more prevalent as time goes on, this assumption is also increasingly being challenged. More and more Taiwanese audiences have started to regularly consume foreign TV via various online sharing methods as a taken-for-granted norm, without questioning how and why it is possible to attain such a near-simultaneity in their viewing of foreign shows. This presumption indicates that the audiences' conceptualisation of television experience has changed gradually.

Today, fewer audiences, either those from Taiwan or elsewhere, assume that the consumption of the latest foreign shows can only take place in these shows' original countries or regions. Rather, audiences who already know how to consume the latest foreign shows online are continuing to increase in number, and they tend to think that they can freely consume these foreign shows regardless of where they live, as if there were no temporal and spatial boundaries. This form of cross-border consumption is not only popular in Taiwan but also prevalent worldwide. Many programmes, especially American ones, are widely shared and consumed on the

⁴ Although more and more TV networks have started to put content (e.g. dramas, variety shows, animation) online as a form of on-demand service, many of them are still only available to domestic audiences.

Internet across the world. However, whilst to some extent cultural, legal and technical limitations that restrict audiences' freedom to watch foreign TV are changing, are the boundaries really gone? How easily can audiences access the overseas programmes they love? How do legal broadcasters and distributors respond to illegal and unofficial practices? These changes in the media environment and audiences' conception of television are significant because they raise issues such as to what extent transnational media consumption is possible, how television functions as a national broadcasting system, or what transnational cultural relationships and TV consumption between countries indicates. Of the various theoretical issues that relate to the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing, I am specifically interested in two: first, how this form of consumption helps us to understand the changing nature of television and television viewing; and second, what implications it has for transnational media and cultural flows.

Three more sections are included in this chapter. The following section (II) outlines at greater length two implications of this study's research questions based on theoretical concerns regarding television in transition, transnational media flows and cultural power relationships. Section III elaborates on the importance of examining media from a historical perspective and how this applies to this study. While the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing is a new form of viewing practice, it is by no means a brand new phenomenon completely different from previous viewing patterns of television. In order to properly examine how such online television experience sheds light on the notions of "watching television" and "what television is today", Section III emphasises the necessity of placing such an experience within the historical development of television (both as a technology

and a cultural form). Section IV is a brief description of the structures of the remaining chapters.

II. Research Questions

i. Television in Transition

The consumption of foreign TV via online sharing emerges in the so-called post-broadcast (Bennett, 2011; Boddy, 2011; Parks, 2004; Turner, 2011; Turner & Tay, 2009) or post-network era (Lotz, 2007), in which the norms and operations of the television industry are going through significant transitions.

Spigel (2004) argues that social, economic and technological conditions – such as the commercialisation of public services and the innovation of digital television systems – all contribute to rapid changes in the concept of “watching TV”. While TV images become increasingly “multidimensional and fractured by different kinds of textual materials that coexist on the same screen”, audiences also have to learn how to interpret TV images from different media platforms. Given these circumstances, Spigel notes that if TV refers to a given technology, “we are now entering a new phase of television – the phase that comes after ‘TV’” (p. 2). Dovey and Lister (2009, p. 134) also argue that the cultural form which is recognised as television seems to be disappearing or transforming. As Lotz (2007) points out, while the TV industry, media scholars and audiences themselves know a lot about how audiences used to watch television, this understanding seems to provide little information about current and future television experiences. The above arguments do not mean that television has been replaced by newer technologies. Rather, they

indicate the importance of understanding the way in which television as well as television experiences have changed.⁵

As Parks (2004) argues, the term “postbroadcasting” is employed to study “how the historical practices associated with over-the-air, cable and satellite television have been combined with computer technologies to reconfigure the meanings and practices of television” (p. 134). Postbroadcasting, in turn, refers to “television’s current transformations as part of an ongoing set of historical struggles played out over and around the medium”(p. 134). In this regard, studying the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing entails looking at the contemporary role of television.

The consumption of foreign TV via online sharing as a new television experience that challenges the prevailing temporal, spatial and legal boundaries in TV viewing, raises crucial agendas concerning the changing norms of television that require close examination. For instance, as Bennett (2008a) points out, online catch-up viewing platforms launched by television networks (e.g. BBC’s iPlayer), remove television programmes from the linear schedule and store the programmes as on-demand content that allow audiences to decide what and when to watch at their convenience. In so doing, these platforms “remediate television’s ontology from flow to database” (p. 160). How audiences make sense of this remediation and how such sense-making practices can help understand television today is one of the research questions this study examines (see Chapter 5 and 6).

⁵ Television, as a technology and a cultural form, has been changing since its birth. For instance, in the mid-1980s, Drummon and Paterson’s (1986) edited book *Television in Transition* investigated how the introduction of cable and satellite television was in turn shaping the operation and aesthetics of television in different countries/cultures.

While the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing is gaining popularity worldwide, it is worth noting that, how such consumption emerges, on what cultural, technological and legal conditions it is based, or how audiences and industries respond to media convergence vary from location to location. While it is important to recognise how such consumption is becoming a global television experience in most developed and many developing economies, it is problematic to ignore heterogeneous consumption conditions in different parts of the world.

As Parks and Kumar (2003) point out, global transformations of television should be understood “through close examination of the television industries, programmes, technologies, and audiences in specific cultural contexts” (p. 6). Similarly, Pertierra and Turner (2013) argue that when it comes to studying television, it is necessary to acknowledge the worldwide diversity of television’s operation and experience. They propose the concept of “zones of consumption” with the purpose of emphasising the importance of locating television within particular spatial, cultural, industrial, geo-linguistic contexts and scales. According to their definition, a zone constitutes the various contexts in which television is located (e.g. a living room, city, or country). A zone can be as small as a room in a domestic space, or as large as a transnational or regional market. They regard the use of “zones of consumption” as an approach that “recognises that the actual construction of the location within which the consumption of television occurs is itself contingent, conjunctural and instantiated” (p. 26).

This study is based on the approach of “zones of consumption” in two senses. Firstly, this study examines the Taiwanese consumption of foreign TV via online sharing in order to illustrate how contemporary television experiences as well as

television's role have changed. The configuration of industrial and cultural contexts in which Taiwanese online and offline consumption of television emerges is the subject of particular attention (see Chapter 2). Regarding Taiwan as a zone of consumption and examining how relevant contexts are configured helps to illustrate: 1) to what extent the result of this study can be generalised; and 2) in what sense the existing scholarship on television, especially those on changing practices of television, can be recast and employed in different social and cultural contexts.

Secondly, as Petierra and Turner (2013) argue, how television is imbricated into the practice of everyday life and what social and cultural function it harbours has been studied less than issues such as the future development of production strategies or business models for the television industry. Employing the notion of zones of consumption as an approach helps to understand the uses of television as well as online platforms "within the structure of everyday life" (p. 27), in order to elaborate on how the online consumption of foreign television serves as audiences' everyday practice and what functions various forms of television perform.

Roughly starting with the publication of *Television after TV* edited by Spigel and Olsson (2004), more and more texts have examined the changing nature and practices of television in the post-network context. Other related work includes (but is not limited to) edited books such as *Television as Digital Media* (Bennett & Strange, 2011), *Television Studies after TV* (Turner & Tay, 2009), *Relocating Television* (Gripsrud, 2010b), or Newman and Levine's (2012) *Legitimizing Television*. Given that media industries in North America, Western and Northern Europe as well as Australia have been going through and responding to media

convergence relatively earlier than many other parts of the world, it is unsurprising that most of the relevant research is based on these countries. By comparison, relatively few studies have been conducted in other cultural contexts, such as East Asia, even though many East Asian countries and regions, including Taiwan, have also negotiated changes in local as well as transnational mediascapes. As a result, we have much less in media studies knowledge about transitions of television in the latter region.

As mentioned earlier, forms and experiences of television, as well as the conditions in which they develop, are different in different locations. Research on television based on other countries' social and cultural contexts is imperative if we are to understand television today, and this research project is shaped by this preoccupation. By scrutinising the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing, this study helps to understand what is meant by "watching TV", what "TV" is, and how television as a technological and cultural form changes in the international contexts of the post-network era.

ii. Transnational Cultural Flows

The consumption of foreign TV via online sharing as an emerging norm of transnational and cross-cultural practice is associated with important theoretical issues concerning contemporary media and cultural flows. The online sharing and subtitling efforts of amateur fans/audiences accelerate the transnational distribution and consumption of media and cultural content. When discussing the implications of new media for audiences' consumption choices, Bennett (2008a, p. 162) stresses the importance of scrutinising how such choices are structured and delimited by

legal conditions such as Digital Rights Management (DRM)⁶ and intellectual property law. The significance of this concern is manifested in the transnational context via which the online consumption of foreign programmes takes place. In most cases, these shared programmes are copyrighted materials that are not supposed to be consumed simultaneously by audiences overseas: copyright holders do not make their content available to be simulcast and consumed by foreign audiences. Legal business models of an instant, cross-border distribution and consumption of TV have not yet been widely established under current transnational legal and economic infrastructures.

Generally speaking, the licensing of online audio-visual content, similar to that of other forms of content distribution, is based on geographical location (in most cases it is defined by national territories). The online content of a given provider will only be legally accessible within the licensed territory. In order to implement this geographical licensing, it is common for legal broadcasters and content providers to apply Internet Protocol (IP) restrictions on their online content to block access from locations whose IPs are outside their broadcast/release footprints.⁷ As a result, if audiences find a certain video on online platforms (e.g. BBC iPlayer, Hulu or a given licensed channel on YouTube)⁸ when they are outside the licensed footprints

⁶ DRM is a set of technologies used by hardware manufacturers, copyright holders and individuals to control the use of digital content and devices, and is commonly employed to prevent content piracy.

⁷ Services capable of altering the actual IP address of a connected device to other addresses, such as virtual private networks (VPN), can be used to bypass geographically-based IP restrictions. For instance, if a person in the US uses a VPN which allocates a UK IP address to his connected device, s/he can access BBC's iPlayer as other users in the UK do, since the device appears to be located within the BBC's licensed territory.

⁸ YouTube, based in the United States, is the most popular and earliest video-sharing site in the world. It was founded in 2005 and sold to Google in 2006. At the initial stage of its services, YouTube only served as a platform for the distribution and consumption of user-generated content (UGC). It allows individual users to set up personal channels and share their own content. While it remains one of the most important platforms for UGC today, many media corporations such as

of those platforms they are usually greeted with messages like the following YouTube screenshot:⁹

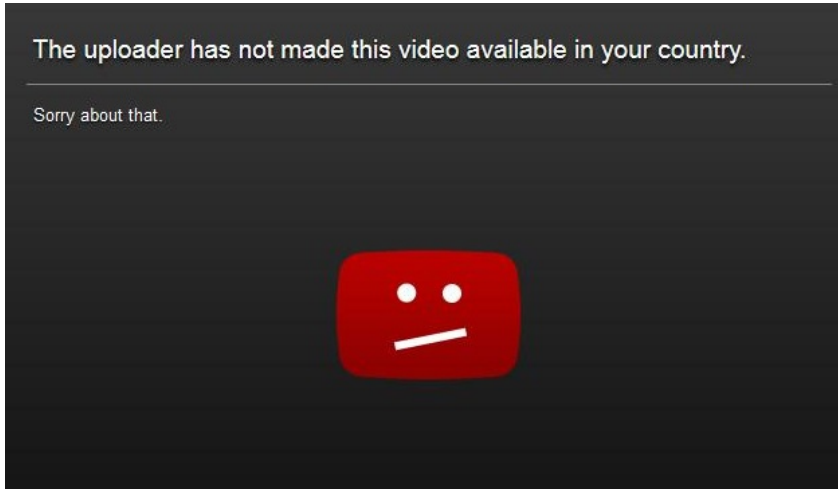


Figure 1.1: YouTube screenshot indicating geographical licensing restrictions. Screenshot on 4 December 2014.

Similar geographical licensing restrictions are often employed by online platforms and content providers, especially by legal ones. The importance of unofficial, illegal and voluntary online-sharing activities lies in the way in which these challenge existing legal and economic infrastructures, thereby enabling new forms of cross-cultural, transnational distribution and consumption of media texts. It is in this sense that the consumption of foreign programmes via online sharing concerns how media and cultural flows may develop in the contemporary media environment.

The studies of fan-subtitling are good examples of scholarship addressing the

television networks (e.g. ABC, CBS) or music labels (e.g. Universal, EMI) have developed partnerships with YouTube, launching their own YouTube Channels to officially provide some of their content via the platform.

⁹ Similarly, if audiences who are outside the UK visit BBC iPlayer, the platform will show the following message: "BBC iPlayer TV programmes are available to play in the UK only".

implications of unofficial online sharing for global cultural flows. Denison (2011) examines the ways in which the fansubbing and file sharing practices of Japanese animation shapes transnational industrial distribution. For instance, she argues that the multiple linguistic translations which fansubbing groups provide, help to globalise animation texts; in many cases, such texts are not legally released outside Japan. Moreover, fansubbing activities also shorten the time between the broadcast of Japanese animations and the foreign audiences' consumption of these texts. This subsequently forces the industry to curtail the time lag between domestic and international distribution. As Lee (2011) points out, fansubbing practices may unsettle the global mediascape by presenting a new mode of global distribution which facilitates the grassroots globalisation of culture.

Denison (2015) conducts another research on fan-subtitling and distribution of Japanese dorama (i.e. drama) in English-speaking regions. She finds that in the cases of animation, asking for donations for fansubbing is “often framed as crossing a line between prosumer work and bootlegging” (p. 66). By comparison, however, asking for donations or even seeking corporative sponsorship are relatively acceptable and normative practices in the fansubbing production and distribution of Japanese dorama. In this regard, Denison contends that these drama-fansubbing practices are moving closer to the capitalist system rather than to a “‘gift economy’ wherein fansubbers are seen to serve the needs of less linguistically adept community members, supporting and encouraging a wider fandom for Japanese media texts.” (p. 67).

Online sharing is certainly not the first use of technologies that raises the issue of copyright infringement. The 1984 legal dispute over the use of video recorders,

Sony Corp. of America v. Universal City Studios,¹⁰ established the legal framework that shaped judicial decisions governing more recent content-providing technologies such as P2P sharing, e.g. *MGM v. Grokster* in 2005 (Casadesus-Masanell & Hervas-Drane, 2010; Seetoo, 2007; Vincent, 2007). As Lessig (2003) points out, if “piracy” means using other people’s creative property without obtaining the relevant permissions from them, then every industry related to copyrighted contents can be regarded as based on a certain kind of piracy.¹¹

As Lessig (2003) suggests, piracy often challenges existing business models concerning the use of a certain medium, and in turn encourages the emergence of newer business models or forms of media use. Pang (2009) argues that “with the aid of new digital technologies, piracy has become a much more adaptable and widespread activity that is immanent in the everyday lives of many people” (p. 122).

This study focuses on how various types of online distribution of foreign programmes (e.g. fansubbing networks, streaming platforms) are used by Taiwanese audiences to consume foreign programmes. Such consumption is often legally liminal (Denison, 2011; 2015, p. 60) as they are based on informal media systems, namely, “flows of communication, information and entertainment in unregulated spaces” (Lobato & Thomas, 2015, p. 1).

¹⁰ Sony was sued in 1976 by Universal Studios and the Walt Disney Company as they claimed the Sony-developed video recorder Betamax could be potentially used for copyright infringement. However, in 1984 the US Supreme Court ruled that the copying of complete television shows for the purpose of time-shifting does not constitute copyright infringement and was fair usage. Moreover, because Sony’s Betamax had substantial non-infringement uses, distributors of video recorders were not legally liable for copyright infringement.

¹¹ For instance, as Lessig (2003) argues, many cable TV companies refused to pay for content from wireless broadcasters when starting their business. In this sense, what cable TV companies did to the broadcasters’ content is similar to what Napster did to the music industry in the early 2000s: they pirated content from other industries without paying any fees to the providers.

Formality, as defined by Lobato (2012), is “the degree to which industries are regulated, measured and governed by state and corporate institutions” (p. 4). The informal forms of media distribution, in turn, refer to those operating beyond this formal sphere “or in partial articulation with it” (p. 4). More importantly, Lobato and Thomas (2015) point out that we should not see informality/formality as a binary division but as a spectrum, if we are to understand “how formal and informal activities interact as a medium emerges, establishes and adapts” (p. 19).

In Chapter 2 Section IV, I will discuss various legal conditions from which the Taiwanese consumption of foreign TV via online sharing emerges as part of the informal media economy defined by Lobato and Thomas (2015). However, as a media researcher, it is neither my intention (nor within my competence) to judge the legality and morality of the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing. Rather, my concern is to understand the implications of this consumption for media and cultural flows and the role of television in audiences’ everyday lives.

Focusing on the Taiwanese audiences’ online consumption of foreign TV, I am interested in looking at the implications of this consumption for the development of cultural flows, cultural identity, and cultural power relationships between countries. The direction of media and cultural flows has been a focus in studies of media globalisation; and among various forms of media flows it is the transnational distribution and circulation of television that has been most widely discussed (Parks & Kumar, 2003; Sinclair & Turner, 2004; Thussu, 2006). On the one hand, political economy theses tend to criticise the imbalanced cultural flows as an extension of Western (especially North American) imperialism. On the other hand, cultural studies scholars have examined how audiences interpret the foreign texts,

and to what extent or in what sense audiences' resistance to imperialist ideology is possible. While both political economy interpretations and cultural studies' accounts of media and cultural flows will be further reviewed in Chapter 3 Section III, here I first want to explicate the meaning of "cultural power" in this study by drawing on the work of Hall (1995) and Iwabuchi (2002).

iii. Cultural Power in the Context of Media Globalisation

Hall (1995) believes that globalisation should be traced back to the history of Western imperialism which began from the Age of Discovery in the 15th century. Globalisation, in his view, is "the process by which the relatively separate areas of the globe come to intersect in a single imaginary 'space'; when their respective histories are convened in a time-zone or time frame dominated by the West" (p. 190). He further points out that "culture and power were intimately connected" (p. 191) from the early stages of globalisation:

Cultures began to be defined [...] by their relationship (usually of power) with *other* cultures. Cultures began to form one of the critical circuits through which power of different kinds – economic, political, religious, gendered, racial – circulated. [...] The establishment of spheres of cultural influence, the hierarchical relations of dominance and subordination between colonising and colonised cultures, [...] the shifting relations of cultural power which followed in the wake of the successive phases of globalisation, are difficult to exaggerate (Hall, 1995, pp. 190-191, italicised by the original author).¹²

¹² Unless otherwise stated all italics are in the original quotation.

Iwabuchi (2002) draws on Hall's (1995) explanation of globalisation and Nye's (1990; 2004) notion of "soft power"¹³ to examine how Japanese popular culture was consumed and understood in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore in the late 1990s. Iwabuchi's main concern is to "rethink the dynamics of transnational regional cultural power" (p. 133):

Transnational cultural power does not necessarily mean the straightforward embodiment and recognition of one culture's superiority over another but can be defined as the capacity of a culture to produce symbolic images and meanings which "appeal to the senses, emotions and thoughts of the self and others" (Lull, 1995, p. 71) (Iwabuchi, 2002, p. 133).

The cultural power that this study refers to is based on Iwabuchi's account of (transnational) cultural power. As Iwabuchi (2002) argues, "the appreciation of foreign media texts is never power-free" (p. 133). The (unofficial) consumption of foreign TV via online sharing is one of the most popular forms of consumption and appreciation of foreign media texts in the world. However, the implications such consumption has for the configuration of transnational cultural power is inadequately analysed in media studies. For instance, how does such consumption challenge the transnational production and circulation of "global entertainment media" (Mirrlees, 2013)? Does such consumption reinforce the dominance of the American popular culture? How might it do this? Are countries emerging as new cultural forces capable of producing media texts that attract overseas audiences? These questions still require careful examination. It is imperative to study the implications of the

¹³ Nye (2004) defines "soft power" as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals and policies" (p. x).

online consumption of foreign TV for transnational cultural power if we are to account for the ongoing globalisation of television in the post-network era.

Specifically, a key concern regarding transnational cultural power is how people's cultural encounters with, and consumption of, foreign cultures shape their cultural identities (Hall, 1995; Iwabuchi, 2002; Morley & Robins, 1995). In the past twenty years in East Asia, it has become common for media contents to circulate across national and cultural boundaries (H.-J. Cho, 2005; Chua, 2008b; Leung, 2008; Lim, 2008). The widespread popularity of Japanese pop culture from the early 1990s (the so-called Japan Fever or Japanophilia) and that of Korean pop culture from the early 2000s (the so-called Korean Wave), are the two most influential regional cultural flows. Chua and Iwabuchi (2008) argue that these cultural flows provide "the material basis for a conceptualisation of an 'East Asian pop culture' sphere with an integrated cultural economy" (p. 2). It is from this material basis that the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing in Taiwan and other East Asian countries emerges.

Many scholars discuss how increasing regional cultural flows promote mutual understanding between countries and inter-Asian referencing (Y. Cho, 2011; Iwabuchi, 2013). Some of them further suggest that such cultural flows encourage the emergence of an "Asian-Pacific identity" (Aoyagi, 2000) or an East Asian identity (Chua, 2004, 2008a, 2010; Katsumata, 2012). According to Chua (2004), when audiences consume foreign media cultures, they have fewer cultural references compared to when they consumed local ones. In order to make sense of foreign cultural products, audiences are required to transcend their grounded nationality and form an abstract identification with foreign characters/materials.

Chua considers that in contemporary East Asia, where inter-Asian consumption and referencing is common, the “foreignness” of cultures from other nations may be absorbed into a concept of shared East Asian-ness. As such, an East Asian identity, in which nationalities are suppressed, may be imaginable.

However, can nationality be suppressed or, if it can, how does East Asians’ sense of national/cultural identity change? The significant lack of empirical data that underpin this kind of argument makes it difficult to understand how, or in what sense, audiences may attain a shared regional identity via their consumption of regional cultures. Furthermore, by focusing on how regional cultural flows promotes an East Asian identity, Chua’s argument seems to overlook how the longstanding presence of American culture throughout East Asia may influence this regional identity-building process. If we are to understand how – or if – a shared regional identity is imaginable, it is necessary to start by looking at how audiences make sense of the cultures of neighbouring countries. Studying the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing, an increasingly popular form of cross-cultural consumption, involves scrutinising how cultural flows between East Asian countries/regions work and how cultural identity is shaped in contemporary East Asia.

iv. Research Questions and the Validity of Empirical Data

Based on the above concerns, I have studied the implications of transnational consumption of foreign television through various online sharing methods by taking consumption of foreign television by Taiwan audiences via this mode as an example. Specifically, this dissertation focuses on two primary issues:

1. The contemporary meaning of television and its audiences:

This dissertation examines how and why audiences rely on online sharing to bypass temporal, spatial and legal constraints on consuming foreign TV programmes, and elaborates the ways in which such consumption has become an emerging norm of television experience. In so doing, it sheds light on how our existing understandings have changed, regarding what is meant by “watching TV” and what television’s role is in providing a sense of liveness, shaping audiences’ sense of social togetherness, as well as organising everyday lives in the post-network context.

2. Transnational media flows and cultural power relationships:

This dissertation also examines the implication of cross-border online consumption of television for transnational media and cultural flows. Taking the consumption of Taiwanese audiences as an instance, it elaborates how audiences’ sense of co-temporality with (and understanding of) other cultures develop via their consumption, and how such cross-border consumption shapes their identities. In so doing, this dissertation illustrates the implications of the Taiwanese online consumption of foreign television for the direction of media flows and cultural power relationships of Taiwan with other countries in the post-colonial East Asian contexts.

In terms of online sharing, I refer to all online, digital forms of data distribution (e.g. streams or downloads) that can be used to transnationally consume video files. For instance, the forms relying on P2P, such as P2P file-sharing software (e.g. BitTorrent) will be addressed, as P2P was the first data distribution protocol with

the capacity to rapidly share visual content online, making the online consumption of TV programmes more prevalent. In recent years, a greater number of online platforms that are non-P2P-based in terms of technical design have emerged as popular video viewing forms. Online video-sharing platforms such as YouTube or video streaming platforms such as Ustream are famous examples used by worldwide audiences to consume shows first broadcast in different parts of the world. The consumption of television via such online platforms is also included in this study.

In terms of foreign programmes, this dissertation focuses mainly on the consumption of foreign programmes from Japan, Korea and the United States; as in Taiwan, programmes from these three countries are the most popular foreign programmes on both broadcast television and online sharing platforms (see Chapter 2 Sections II to III for further details). Moreover, geopolitically speaking, Japan, Korea and the United States, along with China, also serve as the most significant foreign cultural forces that influence the comprehensive development of Taiwanese society at large (see Chapter 2 Section I). By focusing on the Taiwanese consumption of American, Japanese and Korean programmes, this study sheds light on the implications of such consumption for the cultural power relationships between Taiwan and Japan, Korea and the US.

Compared with programmes from the three countries listed above, Chinese programmes are less popular among Taiwanese audiences. Therefore the consumption of Chinese programmes was not featured. Nevertheless, as I will explain in Chapter 2 Section IV, the Taiwanese consumption of foreign programmes relies on Chinese online sharing platforms and fansubbing activities.

This condition, along with the geopolitical tension between Taiwan and China over the sovereignty of Taiwan (see Chapter 2 Section I), highlights the significance of the Otherness of China in the Taiwanese online consumption of foreign programmes. Therefore, the role of Chinese online sharing activities, as well as the cultural power relationship with China, will be addressed in this study.

The informal online circulation of media content has been understood in fan studies as part of participatory culture (Jenkins, 1992; Jenkins, Ford, & Green, 2013). A body of research has examined how the active and productive participants (e.g. individual fansubbers) have voluntarily provided access to industrial media texts and shaped the way those texts are circulated and consumed on a global scale (Hu, 2009, 2014; Ito, 2012; H.-K. Lee, 2011).

Rather than focusing on the production side, this study looks at the consumer. I focus on the Taiwanese audiences who routinely watch foreign programmes through informal, fan-driven online distribution, but do not or rarely contribute their labour (e.g. subtitling). These audiences include fans of foreign media texts, and more casual, ordinary viewers who view – but have not specific interests – in foreign content. By examining their consumption of foreign programmes, this study explains how informal online media distribution has been integrated into the everyday lives of the audiences who are at the receiving end of participatory culture.

I want to briefly outline in the following paragraphs the development of the online viewing environment in Taiwan in the last 10 years and delineate how and when

the empirical research was conducted. This information helps to understand to what extent the empirical analysis of this study can be generalised.

The Taiwanese online consumption of the latest foreign TV first emerged roughly in the middle of the first decade of the 2000s, with file-downloading the prominent online access to the latest foreign programmes. Various forms of video viewing platforms emerged around 2008 to 2009, and they have since been gaining popularity for two reasons. Firstly, as access to foreign programmes, they usually require lower technical repertoire and equipment than file-downloading. Secondly, the fact that users do not download but only stream the programmes on such video platforms indicates that while users gain the *temporal access* to programmes, they do not literally obtain the actual programme files, and this feature helps users to avoid directly infringing copyrights. The thriving Taiwanese pirate disc markets (since the late 1990s) also withered alongside the emergence of video viewing platforms.

While Chinese online fansubbing forums and platforms began distributing copyrighted American, Japanese and Korean content roughly since 2004, it was not until the end of 2009 that the Chinese government started regulating these unofficial/illegal sharing activities. However, since the Chinese government has not whole-heartedly maintained its actions, the unofficial/illegal online distribution of foreign media content is occasionally jeopardised but never eradicated (see Chapter 2 Section IV). At the time of writing in 2015, China-based unofficial/illegal streaming and file sharing are still prevalent and remain the most dominant ways through which Taiwanese audiences consume the latest foreign programmes.

The empirical data for this study was collected through two research methods. First, in-depth interviews with 36 research subjects were carried out from August 2010 to the end of 2011, and the data gathered through the interviews constitutes the primary data of the empirical analysis. Second, two forms of secondary empirical data were collected through online observation from 2007 to 2014: 1) public discussions on viewing of foreign genres on major social networking sites in Taiwan; and 2) worldwide development of online file sharing and viewing practices (with the China-based sharing activities as the main focus).

Due to the lack of time and budget, I was unable to conduct other rounds of interviews after 2012. Two measures were employed to ensure that the empirical analysis remained timely and valid. First, the data collected through online observation (as mentioned above) is intended to keep track of the general and ongoing development of Taiwanese audiences' online viewing of foreign shows. Second, I managed to keep in touch (online and/or offline) with one-third of the interviewees and captured some updated information concerning their viewing. Such updated information (gathered from 2012 to 2014) was incorporated into the empirical analysis with the interviewees' consent. Long-term interactions with the interviewees helped to understand how the consumption of foreign shows via online sharing had become part of the interviewees' everyday lives (see Chapter 4).

Specifically, online observation and Taiwanese media discourses showed that the emergence of video viewing platforms, and the Chinese government's actions on regulating China-based unofficial/illegal file sharing by the end of the first decade of the 2000s were the most recent and significant changes concerning Taiwanese online viewing of foreign programmes. The interviews conducted in 2010 to 2011

covered this critical period of time, and the interviewees recruited include audiences who were the early adopters of file downloading and those who began viewing foreign programmes online thanks to the advent of video platforms. These interviews provided rich empirical data for illustrating how and why the consumption of foreign television via online sharing has gradually become a norm among Taiwanese audiences. Such data also captured the way in which Taiwanese audiences negotiated with the change in legal infrastructures and adjusted their viewing accordingly. Online observation and public discourses in Taiwan also suggest that the consumption of foreign programmes via online sharing remains prevalent in Taiwan at the time of writing in 2015. In this regard, the empirical analysis of this study covers the historical and critical development of online viewing patterns in recent years and at the same time remains valid up to the present day.

It is worth noting that, while the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing is a new form of viewing practice, it is by no means a brand new phenomenon completely different from previous viewing patterns for television. The next section discusses the importance of studying new media technologies with a historical perspective, and how this stance is applied to this study.

III. Studying Media with a Historical Perspective

i. The Myth of the “TV is Dying” Discourse

In recent years, public debates have often proclaimed the death of television, arguing that television is no longer able to address a large number of audiences, or that audiences care less about television and spend much more time on the Internet

while using computers and mobile devices. Phrases such as “the Internet is replacing TV” (Quenqua, 2010; Richtel, 1999) or “television is dying” (Lindelof, 2007) are often deployed in debates on the influence of the Internet on television. Nevertheless, this type of argument is problematic since, as Gentikow (2010) argues, it “confuses technological affordance with empirical use, or access with appropriation” (p. 141). Many researchers have rejected this technologically-deterministic argument, pointing out that TV ratings and/or the time that audiences spend on television has in fact increased in various countries which have multichannel and digitalised media environments (Graham, 2011; Gripsrud, 2010a).

As Brunson (2008) argues, television and media industries often declare the novelty of new media and pursue possible profit from innovation. However, scholars have to diachronically inscribe television within a series of histories (e.g. those of nation-states, of global media industries, of development of genre/programmes). Studies focusing on media histories (see Briggs & Burke, 2002; Huhtamo & Parikka, 2011; Marvin, 1988; Sconce, 2000 for examples) demonstrate that newer media forms do not necessarily replace older ones. Both forms may exist at the same time. Moreover, in many cases, the newer forms in fact share similar features with – or indeed inherit characteristics from – the older ones. For example, as Sconce’s (2000) work demonstrates, liveness and simultaneity is not television’s exclusive feature. Instead, other electric media, such as radio, the form prior to television, or the more current exemplar, the Internet, also share this liveness and simultaneity. What is important is to understand how television and television watching correspond with media convergence. As Spigel (2004), points out, the more we speak of the future of television, the more we have to understand

television “within the ‘long view’ of its historical meaning and place in cultures” (p. 19). The following two subsections discuss how we can study the online consumption of foreign television without being ahistorical.

ii. Understanding Television as Digital Media

Marvin (1988) points out that “*new technologies* is a historically relative term” (p. 3). As she explains:

New media, broadly understood to include the use of new communications technology for old or new purposes, new ways of using old technologies, [...] are always introduced into a pattern of tension created by the coexistence of old and new, which is far richer than any single medium that becomes a focus of interest because it is novel (Marvin, 1988, p. 8).

Marvin (1988) examines how the electric light and the telephone were envisioned and received by electricity experts and the general public when they appeared as new technologies in the late 19th century. Her research provides a framework for understanding early electric communication “in the history of continuous concern about how new media rearrange and imperil social relationships” (p. 235). That concern, she argues, is similar to debates about what contemporary new technologies bring to our lives.

Tomlinson (2007) reminds us that, although we should avoid technological determinism, it is also important to recognise that technologies “possess independent inherent properties which define, to some extent, the possibilities and

meanings of their use” (p. 12). Likewise, Hutchby (2001) considers how the social constructivist approach (e.g. Grint & Woolgar, 1997) allows us to recognise the important role that human agency (both the producers and users of technology) plays in the social shaping of technology. Nevertheless, he suggests that the main problem of this approach is that it fails to explain how the materiality of technology may influence human uses of technology. By drawing on Gibson’s (1979) concept of “affordance” in the psychology of perception, Hutchby (2001) demonstrates a means of studying “the technological shaping of sociality” (p. 442). As he notes, technologies are not entirely open forms whose meanings are fully constructed by their users and producers. Rather, different technologies have different affordances that constrain the ways in which they can be possibly configured or interpreted by human agency. What is made of technological artefacts is “accomplished in the interface between human aims and the artefact’s affordances” (p. 453).

As John Peters (2004) argues, “new media, as vehicles that carry our senses and bodies across the space-time continuum, introduce us to old modes of experience that we never recognised we had before and therefore seem new” (p. 195). Combined with Tomlinson and Hutchby’s arguments, I consider it important to recognise a given new media technology’s shaping of sociality, while it is also necessary to avoid overstating such novelty and its shaping effects. Benjamin Peters’ (2009) notion of “media renewability” is a good example of this stance. As he expands on this concept:

Each medium may have a few basic ideas that take many forms in material technologies. While various institutions and actors clothe a medium in ever-changing outfits and external forms, the operative idea of a medium as an

environment for communicative action connects it back to other similar media throughout time (B. Peters, 2009, p. 22).

Peters (2009) disagrees with Jenkins' (2006) emphasis on the ease involved in the media converging in digital forms, since he believes that – and not just for digital media – “all media contain, constrain and combine fundamental ideas about what constitutes communication itself” (p. 22). For instance, he argues that the idea of “distance writing” permeates the post, telegraph, and the computer; and the idea of “distance seeing” is also shared by both the telescope and television. Therefore, he contends that media are constantly renewable, and “they tend to renew themselves in the gaps, silences and white space left by the media that displaced them” (p. 22).

When discussing how to study changing ontologies of television in the digital, post-network context, Bennett (2008a) argues:

Positioning the television of television studies as a technological and cultural form that lies at the boundaries of old and new media, window-on-the-world and portal, flow and database, allows us to not only historicise the seemingly revolutionary switch to digital technology, but also to avoid overly historicising this moment – as if we have come to all the issues digitalisation raises before (Bennett, 2008a, p. 163).

Bennett (2011) further suggests the idea of studying television as digital media rather than as new media, because digital forms of television or other kinds of digital media are increasingly less new but more and more ordinary. Regarding

television as digital media, however, does not mean that forms such as online sharing or streaming of TV programmes are not considered as “television”. On the contrary, Bennett argues that digital forms of television dispersed across different screens and platforms are still television in a certain fashion. The importance is to recognise the rapid change of television technologies (especially in terms of its digitalisation) while acknowledging the continued importance of broadcast television. Treating television as digital media, he argues, involves “interrogat[ing] the everydayness and ordinariness that has structured television’s position in modern and postmodern society” (pp. 5-6). This stance corresponds to Pertierra and Turner’s (2013) emphasis on locating television in the context of everyday life.

Based on these debates, I consider that the relationship between different media’s novelty and age should be considered simultaneously. In this study, the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing is not regarded as a “brand new” practice. Rather, I will elaborate in what sense this consumption is associated with older media forms and their uses in two ways. Firstly, this study discusses how such consumption has shaped the ontology of television (see Chapters 3, 5, 6 and 7). Secondly, audiences’ previous television experiences were taken into account during the gathering and analysis of the empirical data (see Chapter 4). It is through the comparison of the uses of different media forms that we can better understand how the role of television has changed and how this is experienced by audiences in the age of digitalisation and convergence.

iii. Historicising the Development of Television

As a way to historicise digital forms of television and articulate their relationships to traditional broadcast television, Lotz (2009) points out the necessity of having a

periodisation of the industrial history of television, since changes in operational norms lead to changes in television's role in society. Some work has been done in the UK and the US. For instance, based on the public broadcasting context of the UK, Ellis (2002) divides the development of broadcast television into three eras. The first was the era of scarcity, characterised by a few channels only broadcasting for part of the day. In most countries, this era lasted until the late 1970s or early 1980s. The second was the era of availability, where more channels, commonly provided by cable or satellite systems, jostled for audiences' attention. The third is the era of plenty, in which television programmes "will be accessible through a variety of technologies, the sum of which will give consumers the new phenomenon of 'television on demand' as well as 'interactive television'" (p. 39). This categorisation is roughly similar to Rogers, Epstein and Reeves's (2002) periodisation of US-based television history which delineates TVI (scarcity), TVII (availability) and TVIII (plenty), despite the fundamental difference between the commercial model on which the US television industry is based and the public model on which Britain and that of many European countries is grounded.

Similarly, Lotz (2007, 2009) categorises the development of US television into three eras. The first period is the network era (from the 1950s to the mid-1980s), in which many operational and industrial norms of television were established. Such norms as well as the consumption experiences they delivered to audiences, have been considered as defining television, despite changes in its technological cultural form that developed over the years. The second era is the multi-channel transition from the mid-1980s to the mid-2000s. The third era is the post-network era, beginning in the middle 2000s. Lotz argues that the key feature that separates the post-network era from the multi-channel phase is that while most practices in the

network era were still preserved in multi-channel transition, changes in the norms and operation of the industry in the post-network era have become so pronounced that many new industrial practices are becoming dominant and replacing old network-era methods.

The periodisation models of Ellis (2002), Lotz (2007, 2009), and Rogers et al (2002) share similarities with each other, and are also roughly applicable to the television landscape in Taiwan. However, it is problematic to employ ideas such as ‘post-network’ without taking the specificity of the Taiwanese context into account. As Goldsmith underlines (2003, cited in Keane, 2006, p. 841), “the history of broadcast system and broadcasting regulation is geographically and politically context-specific and [...] shaped by the principle of national sovereignty”. Based on the zones of consumption approach (Pertierra & Turner, 2013), Chapter 2 historicises the development of Taiwanese media environment, which enables me to make sense of how television has been experienced by Taiwanese audiences and how the role of television has changed in the age of online viewing.

IV. Overview of the Remaining Chapters

In the sections above, I have introduced this study’s research questions, and explicated how this study is based on “zones of consumption” (Pertierra & Turner, 2013), thereby illustrating the value of studying media in a historical context. I also delineated the importance of studying the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing as an emerging norm of television experience, while avoiding technological determinism. As the last section of Chapter 1 here, I will introduce the remaining chapters of this study.

Chapter 2 “locates television” (Pertierra & Turner, 2013) in Taiwan by examining how various geopolitical conditions and historical developments established the material foundation on which the Taiwanese consumption of foreign TV via online sharing is based. Section I outlines Taiwan’s geopolitical relations with China, the US, Japan and Korea and their influence on the country’s contemporary development. Section II historicises the industrial development of Taiwanese television. Section III outlines how two particular regional cultural flows, Japan Fever and the Korean Wave, which emerged under the import-oriented structure of the TV industry in Taiwan, and how they were associated with the construction of Taiwanese identity. Section IV examines the legal conditions governing the distribution of foreign media in Taiwan as well as East Asia.

Chapter 3 conceptualises the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing by discussing television’s implications for our everyday lives in different but interrelated ways. Thereby it sets up the theoretical frameworks required for the later chapters’ empirical analysis. Sections I and II review how two essential notions with regard to television, togetherness and liveness, have changed during the post-network era and examine in what sense the online consumption of television is associated with such changes. Sections III to VI elaborate on the significance of television’s globalisation. Specifically, they focus on how the transnational distribution and consumption of television, as a form of cultural flow, shapes audiences’ identification with (and understanding of) other cultures/countries, and why studying the Taiwanese consumption of foreign TV via online sharing sheds light on these issues.

Chapter 4 introduces the research design and methodology used for this dissertation's empirical research. Section I discusses the ethical concerns of this study and how this has shaped the gathering of empirical data. Sections II and III introduce the methodology and rationales for employing various online and offline data generation methods. Specifically, notions of online ethnography and the way in which online and offline methods (e.g. observation and interview) are combined to recruit, interview and interact with research subjects will be addressed. Section IV details the ways in which the empirical research was designed and conducted, and Section V introduces the make-up of interviewees as research subjects, which helps to make sense of the empirical analysis in later chapters.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 constitute this dissertation's empirical analysis. Chapter 5 discusses how television's role in social togetherness has changed in the post-network context, particularly based on the definition of "togetherness" developed in Chapter 3. It looks at how interviewees personalised as well as socialised their viewing of television (both online and offline) and discusses the implications such practices have for television's role in social togetherness. This chapter also examines under what situations local live broadcasting, as an important condition in social togetherness, remained important to interviewees who were already used to time-shifting and personalising their viewing. The analysis demonstrates how, while the audiences' personalisation of online viewing was becoming an increasingly common television experience, a sense of togetherness was attained, even though it might be weaker than that generated in the consumption of broadcast television. In addition, the domestic conditions of media access – particularly television and computer-based – are briefly addressed to help evaluate how interviewees understood these media technologies in general.

Chapter 6 examines how interviewees achieved a sense of coevalness (Fabian, 1983; Wilk, 1994) in their consumption of foreign TV via online sharing as an everyday practice. There is some overlap between the notion of togetherness and that of coevalness as both concepts are associated with the way in which audiences believe they are connected with other individuals via their media consumption. Here I would like to briefly outline how I differentiate between the concepts in order to examine two different issues. While the sense of togetherness focuses on how audiences perceive their coexistence with other audience members elsewhere, coevalness focuses more on the overcoming of temporal distance involved in audiences' encounters with foreign cultures. Moreover, few researches articulate how television as a time-based medium (Scannell, 2009, p. 223) shapes audiences' sense of coevalness with foreign cultures through its daily output and scheduling. Theoretical notions concerning television's temporality, such as flow (R. Williams, 2003), currency (Ellis, 2002, 2007), and for-anyone-as-someone structure (Scannell, 2000, 2014) are usually conceptualised within a given national context. However, when it comes to the online consumption of foreign programmes, what audiences look for is the flow and currency of television from foreign countries.

This chapter therefore, draws on both the notion of coevalness and those regarding television's temporality to examine how, by shortening the temporal gap between foreign broadcasts and local consumption, foreign television schedules were incorporated into interviewees' everyday lives as a significant temporal reference point. Thereby, the audiences' sense of coevalness with foreign countries (Japan, Korea and the US in particular) was enhanced. It also discusses in what sense a certain degree of denial of coevalness with Thailand was evident in Taiwanese

contexts. In so doing, this chapter engages with theoretical debates regarding broadcasting temporalities (e.g. liveness, currency, flow) in cross-cultural and transnational contexts of consumption.

Chapter 7 looks at the implications of online consumption of foreign TV for interviewees' perceptions of local and foreign cultures, as well as for cultural power relationships between Taiwan and China, Japan, Korea and the US. The first four sections deal with how the notion of "foreignness" was valued by interviewees, and how their consumption of American, Japanese and Korean cultures in turn shaped their understanding of Taiwanese culture and their sense of themselves as Taiwanese. Section V examines how the interviewees' reliance on Chinese online sharing activities foregrounded their perceptions of China as a foreign Other, an entity that in turn potentially threatened their identity. Section VI examines how Korea was perceived as a new foreign presence, challenging Taiwanese society. Section VII illustrates how the interviewees generated a perception of regional cultural hierarchy in their consumption of Japanese and Korean culture, and how this observation was associated with the formation of regional identity.

Chapter 8, the conclusion, reviews the whole study, and stresses how this dissertation, by examining the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing as a cross-cultural practice, sheds light on cultural flows, the notions of television, and audiences' cultural and national identity and their perception of temporality in relation to foreign Others. It also discusses the study's limitations and suggests avenues for future research.

Chapter 2: Locating Television in the Context of Taiwan

Drawing on the approach of “zones of consumption” (Pertierra & Turner, 2013), this chapter outlines the general historical and geopolitical contexts that prevail in Taiwan, and historicises important developments in Taiwan’s media environment with the TV industry as the main focus. Section I outlines Taiwan’s geopolitical relations with China, the US, Japan and Korea. Section II historicises the development of the television industry in Taiwan. Section III outlines how two specific regional cultural flows, Japan Fever and the Korean Wave, emerged under the Taiwanese television industry’s import-oriented structure and how these flows are associated with the construction of Taiwanese identity. Section IV examines the legal conditions governing the distribution of foreign media in Taiwan as well as in East Asia, as the former are important in underpinning the Taiwanese consumption of foreign TV via online sharing.

I. Historical and Geopolitical Backgrounds of Taiwan

China, Japan, the United States and Korea have been the primary countries influencing the geopolitical status and historical development of Taiwan. This section characterises Taiwan’s relation with these four countries and their influences on the country’s development at large.

First, relations between Taiwan and China (especially concerning Taiwan’s legitimacy as a sovereign state) have always been the most important factor affecting the development of modern Taiwanese society. As an important aspect of its geopolitical and cultural background, this is the first issue that should be

addressed. The Republic of China (abbreviated as ROC), commonly known as Taiwan, was established in 1912 in mainland China, with the Kuomintang (abbreviated as KMT) as the ruling party. Due to the KMT's final defeat in the Chinese Civil War in 1949 at the hands of their opponents, the Communist Party of China (abbreviated as CPC), the KMT-led ROC was forced to retreat to Taiwan in order to preserve its government. In the same year, the CPC founded the People's Republic of China (abbreviated as PRC), which is now normally recognised as China. Both the KMT and the CPC claimed their regime represented the "real" China and both denied the legitimacy of the opposing side. The turning point concerning the legitimacy came in 1971, when the United Nations (UN) recognised the PRC as the sole representative government of China and, consequently, the ROC was forced to leave the UN, ending its 26 year old control of the Chinese seat.

The PRC has denied Taiwan's sovereignty, regarding the latter as a part of its territory. This denial prevents Taiwan from becoming involved in a wide range of international affairs as a nation in its own right and fundamentally threatens Taiwan's international and political status. For instance, during the mid-1960s and early 1970s, most countries cut off diplomatic relations with Taiwan, regardless of the substantive efforts Taiwan made to preserve them.

When the KMT government retreated to Taiwan, it immediately imposed martial law as a necessary strategy to enforce its policy of countering the CPC and suppressing potential local uprisings. From 1949 until the lifting of martial law in 1987, the authoritarian KMT regime was based on one-party rule with extensive police control and the widespread use of military courts. As Lihyun Lin (2005,

2006) points out, with the political, financial and military support of the United States (see below), the KMT established a repressive state with ideological apparatuses that tightly controlled the media (including newspapers, broadcasts, and other media institutions).

Second, the United States, as one of the most influential countries in the world, plays a significant role in Taiwan's international relations and domestic politics (Bernstein & Munro, 1997). It was because of US financial, diplomatic and military support that the KMT regime survived domestically and internationally during the 1950s and 1960s in the aftermath of its defeat by the CPC. Generally speaking, Taiwan has adopted a pro-American diplomatic position (Yeh, 1991) (this has had a significant influence on Taiwan's media development, which will be discussed in Sections II and III). During the Cold War, Taiwan continued to cooperate with the US politically and diplomatically in order to maintain crucial US-Taiwan relations. However, the US still switched its diplomatic relations from Taiwan to China in 1979. This development was considered a significant Taiwanese diplomatic failure (alongside its expulsion from the UN in 1971). This triggered substantial disputes among competing political parties in Taiwan over its diplomatic, international and social policies, eventually leading to the country's democratisation in the 1980s (Cheng, 1989; Copper, 2007, 2009).

Third, in comparison to China and the United States, the influence of Japan on Taiwan is more related to colonial relations between the two countries. Taiwan was colonised by Japan for 50 years (1895-1945).¹ Taiwanese attitudes toward Japan

¹ It was not until 1945, when Japan surrendered to the Allies in World War II, that the sovereignty of Taiwan was restored to the ROC.

are complicated, due to both the positive (e.g. the development of material infrastructures) and negative (e.g. military and political suppression) impact that Japan had on Taiwan over the course of colonisation. Hostilities toward oppressive Japanese rule over Taiwan still exist, especially among the victims of colonisation (e.g. “comfort women” who were forced to become sex slaves for the Japanese armed forces during World War II). Nevertheless, among the older generations educated by the Japanese school system during colonisation, there are also positive attitudes regarding the advanced development Japan brought to the Taiwan and a certain nostalgia toward the colonisers. Such complex experiences under colonial rule have led to the attempts of decolonisation that lasted for more than fifty years up to the present day (K.-H. Chen, 2010; Y.-F. Ko, 2004).

Fourth, compared with China, Japan and the United States, which have had significant influence on various aspects of Taiwan’s political and cultural development, Korea’s influence on Taiwan has been relatively less pronounced. Economic relations are the main ties between Taiwan and Korea. Their stages of modernisation and economic development were similar, thus making the two countries economic competitors (Copper, 2009).² One turning point in relations between the two countries was Korea’s sudden ending of diplomatic ties with Taiwan in 1992. From the perspective of Taiwan, this made the country’s long-term compromises and efforts (in terms of economic development and trade profits) in order to maintain ties with Korea rather futile. The negative feeling towards Korea due to this development was most evident in how Taiwan promptly cut off the

² Historically and politically speaking, Taiwan and Korea are similar in their shared experiences as former colonies of Japan that have adopted anti-communist political stances. Korea inherited and was influenced by Chinese culture and values (e.g. Confucianism), another shared cultural feature between the two countries. However, until the end of the 1990s neither Taiwan nor Korea exported their TV shows to each other on a regular basis.

Taiwan-Korea air-link and in its reluctance to resume the transportation connection.³ The growth in popularity of Korean popular culture at the beginning of the 2000s added more pressure on the ever-increasing demand for air traffic between the two countries, and eventually led to the resumption of the Taiwan-Korea air-link in 2004 (S.-C. Chen, 2005; Han, 2005; Kuo, 2004; You, 2001).⁴

II. Development of the Taiwanese Media Environment

This section historicises and suggests a periodisation for the development of the Taiwanese media environment in three historical stages: 1) the introduction of television in the 1960s; 2) the legalisation of satellite and cable TV in the 1990s; and 3) the rise of the Internet, media digitalisation and convergence in the 2000s.

i. Introduction of Television and the Geopolitics Behind

The launch of TV broadcasting and the distribution of TV sets in Taiwan were about 10 years later than that of developed countries (e.g. the US, UK and Japan) which had started doing so by the end of the 1940s,⁵ and the local process was led

³ While trade relations between Taiwan and Korea gradually resumed and the exchange of cultural products increased in the 2000s, it was not until the end of 2004 that the air link between Taiwan and Korea was re-established.

⁴ The number of travellers to Korea from Taiwan shot up after Korean dramas such as *Winter Sonata* were well received in Taiwan at the beginning of the 2000s (Han, 2005). While there were about 9,000 travellers to Korea in 1999, the number doubled to 18,000 in 2003. In 2005, the first year after the resumption of the air link, the number rose rapidly to over 36,000 (See the official statistics provided by the Tourism Bureau, M.O.T.C, Republic of China: <http://admin.taiwan.net.tw/statistics/year.aspx?no=134>).

⁵ Two factors contributed to the relatively late arrival of television. Firstly, in the 1950s the Taiwanese government did not have enough capital to launch its own TV broadcasting system. It took a long period for the government to raise sufficient capital from local enterprises and Japanese manufacturers. Secondly, local manufacturers and production companies lacked the technical skills and capital to produce television sets and programmes. These conditions also slowed down the

by the KMT government. Taiwan Television (TTV), launched in 1962, was the first terrestrial (free-to-air) television station in Taiwan. It was a Taiwan-Japan joint venture, with stocks being held by the KMT government (49%), Japanese enterprises (40%) and Taiwanese local enterprises (11%) (L. Lin, 2006, p. 79). During the preparatory stage of TTV's establishment, both the US and Japan, the two countries with the most advanced TV-set manufacturing and broadcasting standards, wanted to join the business. But the sociopolitical situation in the 1960s was such that, as Lin (2006) argues, diplomatic relations with Japan became unstable as Japanese businesses established reciprocal trade with the PRC. This development was regarded by the government as well as Taiwanese society as indicating Japan's intention to switch its diplomatic relations from Taiwan to the PRC. Relations with the US, by comparison, were steadier. With the expectation that diplomatic relations with Japan might be improved via the TTV joint venture, the government chose to partner with Japanese enterprises.

While the KMT government cooperated with Japanese manufacturers to launch TTV in order to gather enough capital as well as to stabilise diplomatic relations with Japan, there was a controversy over the partnership with Japanese enterprises in terms of broadcast content. During the preparatory stage of the establishment of TTV, the Japanese enterprises with which the government was working originally included three electronic manufacturers and one commercial television station, Fuji TV (L. Lin, 2006, p. 79). While the electronic manufacturers provided TTV with TV sets and technologies as their capital, Fuji TV planned to provide two hours of shows per day for broadcast on TTV as cooperative conditions. At that time, TTV

introduction of broadcasting and the distribution of TV sets (see Ho, 2002; Y.-F. Ko, 2009; L. Lin, 2006 for further details).

was supposed to broadcast five hours of television shows daily. As TTV was not sufficiently prepared (in terms of equipment, labour, finance, etc.) to self-produce all the shows, the two hours of Japanese show could have helped to fill the empty airtime.

However, when this plan was disclosed by local newspapers, it was strongly criticised by legislators and the Ministry of Education. From the nationalist perspective, officials were worried, that the ideological content of Japanese language programmes might influence Taiwanese society negatively (L. Lin, 2006). Due to the prevailing criticisms and concerns, the KMT government had to ask TTV to abandon the planned broadcast of Japanese shows and instead the government had to provide subsidies to TTV to produce educational shows (Ho, 2002). The broadcasting of Japanese language shows was prohibited on terrestrial TV in Taiwan from the 1960s to November 1993, when the ban was abolished. Specifically, while Japanese cartoons were allowed to be broadcast only if dubbed into Mandarin or Taiwanese, other genres, such as dramas and variety shows, were banned, regardless of whether they were dubbed or not. Consequently, since the launch of television in Taiwan, the broadcasting of Japanese shows was generally prohibited as a part of a decolonising process.

Ko (2008) argues that in cultural terms the KMT government officially banned the use of the Japanese language in public places, schools and the media in order to eradicate Japanese influences. However, in terms of material production, as the case of TTV clearly demonstrates, Taiwan relied heavily on Japanese technology and capital. As she points out, such a “culturally-anti-Japan-but-economically-dependent-on-Japan” (p. 132)

phenomenon was commonplace in many other industrial developments in post-war Taiwan.

In comparison with Japanese content, American media material was less controversial in Taiwanese society, partly because the US did not colonise Taiwan as Japan did. Moreover, during the Cold War years, as the KMT government relied on US political and military power to counter the PRC, geopolitical and diplomatic relations with the US were friendly. At the same time, the US TV industry had been developing various genres, and by the 1960s overseas sales of its programmes exceeded domestic sales (Spigel & Curtin, 1997), the same period as Taiwanese television was launched. Given the advanced state of the US industry, the Taiwanese government and society's pro-American position, and the anti-Japanese cultural atmosphere, American broadcasts became the main source of foreign shows on the Taiwanese networks from this period onwards. Ho (2002) states that in the initial years of TTV, "it could be argued that 99% of the foreign shows were American products" (p. 92).

After TTV's launch in 1962, another two free-to-air terrestrial televisions, Chinese Television Company (CTV) and Chinese Television System (CTS), were established in 1968 and 1971 respectively. These three terrestrial stations dominated the Taiwanese TV market until the end of the 1980s.⁶ This period can be regarded as exemplifying Ellis' (2002) "era of scarcity" or Lotz's (2007, 2009) "network era". In terms of the importation of programmes, the US had long been the main foreign origin programme source, and this situation remained the same until the early 1990s. Waterman and Rogers' (1994) empirical study based on the

⁶ The fourth terrestrial station, FTV, was launched in 1997.

data collected in November 1989 indicates that, among all programmes hours, 81% of them were domestically produced, and the remaining 19% of them were imported, with 17% from the US, and 2% from Japan. Ishii, Su and Watanabe (1999) also point out that in 1993 “when Japanese TV programmes were still banned on terrestrial TV, 99% of foreign TV programmes came from the US” (p. 419).

To summarise, the development of the Taiwanese TV industry demonstrates how the threat of China in relation to Taiwan’s political legitimacy, colonial relations with Japan, and Taiwan’s Cold War pro-US stance affected the development of the island’s TV industry in the 1960s. Politically speaking, Taiwan was anti-communist and part of the US-led Western bloc; culturally, it was anti-Japan but aligned with the US; economically, the Taiwanese industry was unable to self-produce enough programmes to fill its airtime without relying on foreign programmes, while the US counterpart had the capability to export high-quality media content. Given these political, cultural and economic conditions, American TV shows had taken up a substantial percentage of Taiwanese TV terrestrial broadcast schedules from the 1960s onwards, which was in accordance with the global situation in which the US dominated the international trade in TV programmes (Hoskins & Mirus, 1988; Waterman & Rogers, 1994).

While global concerns about media imperialism mainly focused on the dominance of the US (Schiller, 1969), it has been Japanese cultural products, with the country’s East Asian neighbours detecting a distinctive “cultural odour” (Iwabuchi, 2002) that triggered more concerns in Taiwan (Chiou, 2002; Y.-F. Ko, 2004; T.-D. Lee & Ho, 2003). However, it is worth noting that, although the Japanese media

products (with cartoons as an exception) were officially prohibited on terrestrial stations until the end of 1993, they (in various forms such as comics, music, animations, movies, dramas) were popular and widely distributed via unauthorised means (e.g. videotape recording/rental, cable TV) in Taiwan and across many parts of Asia (Iwabuchi, 2002; Y.-F. Ko, 2008; Sakai, 2004; Shiraishi, 1997, 2000). In other words, Japanese media contents were never completely absent from wider Taiwanese society.

ii. The Legalisation of Satellite and Cable TV and Import-Oriented Structure

Following the lifting of martial law in 1987, direct-broadcast-satellite (DBS, i.e. satellite TV broadcasts) and cable TV were legalised in November 1988 and November 1993 respectively, underlining the fact that TV broadcasting was heading toward a more open, liberal environment. Since then, television in Taiwan has also entered the multi-channel period, or in Ellis's terms, "the era of availability" (2002). Subsequently, the foreign programmes allowed to be broadcast significantly increased both in number and variety, including Japanese ones, which were prohibited to be on air on the terrestrial networks for decades.

The importance of cable TV should be addressed, as the cable systems, arguably reaching 80% penetration (H.-T. Ko, Chang, & Chu, 2011; Li, 2004), have been part of the television mainstream in Taiwan since their legalisation. The development of cable networks can be traced back to the middle of the 1970s. Initially, these cable TV channels (illegally) provided foreign programmes including Japanese ones. Since there was a large volume of American content

broadcast on cable channels, the US government considered these broadcasts as a violation of the rights of American producers. Consequently, the US government put strong pressure on the Taiwanese government to legalise and regulate cable TV. Under US pressure, the Cable Radio and Television Act was passed, and cable TV was legitimised in 1993 (Iwabuchi, 2002; Li, 2004). Therefore, it can be argued that the US, as an economic and political powerhouse, has played a significant role in the development of Taiwanese TV industry in both content and industrial structures.

Following the legalisation of cable television, more than one hundred channels were promptly added to the existing terrestrial networks⁷ as part of the legitimate television landscape, and the penetration of cable television soon reached 60-70% around 1995 to 1996, and arguably over 80% by the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s (Li, 2004; Y.-L. Liu, 1996). However, the increase in the number of channels inevitably led to intense competition for ratings and profits among networks and broadcasting systems. It also led to an extremely high demand for programmes to fill this amount of available airtime. Demand was so high that it was inevitable that most local networks would import foreign shows, because it was beyond their abilities to self-produce all the programmes required. Importing ready-made foreign shows in most cases was preferable as they were more profitable and efficient (in terms of time and budget) than domestically-produced shows (H.-C. Liu, 2004; Y.-L. Liu & Chen, 2004). Moreover, regarding cable TV

⁷ Under the Cable Radio and Television Act, the operators of cable TV networks have to retransmit all content (including programmes and advertisements) of legal over-the-air (i.e., terrestrial) TV channels, including the five terrestrial TV channels (TTV, CTV, CTS, FTV and the public broadcasting service PTS established in 1998) as the basic channels. In other words, when the audiences subscribe to cable TV, they can also watch terrestrial TV channels via cable without paying extra fees.

networks, under the Cable Radio and Television Act, in terms of broadcast hours the minimum percentage of domestically produced programmes required is 20% of the total airtime. This is much smaller than that of terrestrial TV networks, which has to reach 70%. This legal condition encourages cable networks to import a large number of foreign programmes to fill their schedules rather than endeavouring to self-produce content.

Given the huge number of cable channels and high penetration of cable television, the television landscape in Taiwan became import-oriented soon after the legalisation of cable TV in the 1990s. The structure of the television industry has remained import-oriented up to the present day, and this structure has partly contributed to Japan Fever and the Korean Wave in Taiwan, two regional cultural flows which will be discussed in Section III. It can be argued that audiences in Taiwan have been living in a multichannel and relatively fragmented media environment and exposed to a large amount of foreign content since the beginning of the 1990s – well before the advent of online viewing.

iii. The Rise of the Internet, Digital Switchover and After

From the beginning of the 2000s and alongside the constant improvement of bandwidth provision, Internet usage in Taiwan has significantly risen. According to FIND, the Taiwanese research institute under the direction of the Institute for Information Industry,⁸ in 2004 to 2005 the household penetration of broadband climbed from 47% to 59%, and by 2008 it was over 70% (FIND, 2004, 2006, 2009). In 2010 and 2011, the period when the in-depth interviews of this study were

⁸ The Institute for Information Industry is a Taiwanese NGO that operates under guideline set by the Taiwanese Department of Industrial Technology of the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

conducted, this penetration was 77.1% and 80.7%, respectively (FIND, 2011a, 2011b).⁹ Moreover, the household penetration of computers reached 85% from 2009 onwards, with an average 2.3 computers per household (FIND, 2010). These data indicate that for most Taiwanese households, their domestic technological infrastructure (in terms of bandwidth and domestic access to a computer) have been capable of functioning as a platform via which household members can consume videos online since midway during the first decade of the 2000s – a crucial indicator of the transition of media environment to a post-network, convergence context.

Nevertheless, while the condition required for Internet usage is well established, in two senses the digitalisation of Taiwanese legal television systems is less developed compared with the US, UK, Japan, and/or other developed countries. First, although terrestrial television was digitalised in 2012, the digitalisation of cable television has been slow; only 11% of subscribers adopted digital cable TV by the end of 2009, and this only reached 25% in April 2013 (Akhtar & Arinto, 2009; H.-T. Ko et al., 2011; C.-J. Liu & Chuang, 2013). Given the high penetration rate of cable television, it can be argued that it is not yet common for audiences to experience terrestrial channels (retransmitted via cable) as well as other channels on cable TV in digital formats.

Second, relatively few legal channels (terrestrial, cable or satellite) and content providers have launched online viewing services or other digital applications that allow audiences to access their content on computer or mobile devices. Even when

⁹ As the latest data available indicates, in 2013 broadband penetration had reached 81.6% (FIND, 2014).

they have done so, they tend to provide short clips of partial content (e.g. trailers), rather than complete series or entire episodes of a given programme as many foreign viewing services do (e.g. Hulu, BBC's iPlayer). In this regard, these platforms are unable to function as databases that remediate television's flow (Bennett, 2008a). Moreover, as of now there are no equivalents to legal video streaming services providing a large amount of content such as Netflix or Amazon Prime Video. This absence marks a difference between Taiwan and countries such as the US, UK and Japan, where legal services play a crucial role in shaping audiences' viewing. By comparison, illegal and unofficial platforms and file-sharing activities that offer plentiful and comprehensive TV content, such as those used by the interviewees in this study, are more influential in shaping audiences' online viewing practices in Taiwan.

According to a 2011 general survey concerning the personal, multi-platform viewing behaviours of Taiwanese audiences conducted by FIND (2011c, 2011d), 74% of the audiences consumed audio-visual content via traditional broadcast television (including cable, terrestrial and satellite TV). At the same time, 29.2% of the audiences employed the Internet for their consumption of audio-visual content. Such usage was almost double that of legal IPTV and digital cable TV box (15%). Specifically, the Chinese video streaming platforms PPStream, and Tudou (two popular video platforms based in China that unofficially and illegally provided free content) were the top two platforms audiences deployed (YouTube came in at No. 3). In turn, Ya-Ting Lin (2011) points out that PPStream and similar unofficial services rapidly became some of the most popular ways through which Taiwanese audiences accessed foreign content, to the extent that they began to threaten the cable television market. These data indicate that, although the Taiwanese media

environment has made the transition from the earlier stages of television to the post-network era, and audiences have also developed new viewing patterns, the role of legal television systems or content providers have still not yet been significant in such processes.

III. Japan Fever and Korean Wave as Regional Cultural Flows

This section outlines the context for Taiwanese development of the two regional cultural flows, namely Japan Fever and the Korean Wave. The focus here is on how the two flows developed under the import-oriented structure of the Taiwanese television industry, and how they are associated with the construction of Taiwanese identity. In so doing, the section elaborates the transnational cultural contexts from which the Taiwanese consumption of foreign TV via online sharing has emerged. It is important to note that Japan Fever and the Korean Wave refer, respectively, to the widespread popularity of Japanese and Korean popular culture at large, instead of only referring to the popularity of Japanese and Korean TV programmes.

i. Media Liberalisation and Intensified Regional Cultural flows

Given the media liberalisation underway in many Asian countries since the 1980s (Singh, 2000), cultural exchanges within the region have been picking up greater momentum. Japan Fever, evident since the 1990s, and the Korean Wave in the 2000s have emerged as two of the most significant regional cultural flows in East Asia. In Taiwan, the increasingly import-oriented structural conditions of the TV industry, as mentioned in the last section, ensured that Taiwan was the first country to embrace the two regional cultural flows, thereby contributing to the rise in

popularity of Japanese and Korean popular culture in Taiwan.

In the case of Japan Fever, Japanese media content, which was banned for almost 30 years, has been one of the most popular choices among the available foreign materials since the 1990s. Specifically, STAR TV¹⁰ in the early 1990s was the first channel to broadcast current Japanese dramas on a continuous basis in Taiwan. In Japan, those dramas whose themes focus on the modern lives of young people are usually called “trendy dramas” (torendi dorama, トレンディドラマ). However, STAR TV labelled and promoted these trendy dramas as “Japanese Idol Dramas”, focusing on good-looking young Japanese actors and actresses. This strategy was successful in catching the eyes of Taiwanese audiences. The broadcast of *Tokyo Love Story* in 1992, which achieved widespread popularity, was considered the starting point of Japan Fever (Iwabuchi, 2002; Y.-F. Ko, 2004; M.-T. Lee, 2004b; Lii & Chen, 1998; Su & Chen, 2000).

Watching the success of STAR TV, Taiwanese terrestrial TV stations urged the government to lift the ban on broadcasting Japanese shows since they also wanted to profit from their popularity.¹¹ The ban was eventually abolished in 1993, and all three terrestrial TV stations (i.e. TTV, CTV, CTS) promptly started to broadcast Japanese dramas, some airing during primetime. As Lii and Chen (1998) argue, the broadcast of Japanese shows on free-to-air terrestrial TV made Japanese shows even more accessible. This proved a turning point and marked the moment when

¹⁰ STAR TV is the first pan-Asian satellite television broadcaster founded in Hong Kong in 1991. It was acquired in 1994 by the Australian-American magnate Rupert Murdoch, the founder and CEO of the global media conglomerate News Corporation. See Curtin (2007) and Thomas (2005) for further details of STAR TV’s influence on Chinese speaking regions and other parts of Asia.

¹¹ While satellite TV was allowed to broadcast Japanese programmes, the ban on the broadcast of Japanese shows on terrestrial TV networks was still in effect. It was not until November 1993 that this ban was officially abolished.

Japanese popular culture moved from a niche-oriented appeal to more general, mass-oriented popularity. Several cable and satellite channels featuring Japanese programmes were also established in the 1990s.¹²

It is important to note that, compared to American and Korean media product counterparts which are more actively exported overseas, the Japanese industry is domestically-oriented (Iwabuchi, 1994) and relatively passive regarding its overseas markets. According to Iwabuchi (1994; 2002, pp. 86-97), before Japan Fever, given the legacy of Japanese imperialism in Asia, the Japanese media industry hesitated to actively enter Asian markets given potential accusations of cultural imperialism. Moreover, the Japanese TV industry has been supported by a prosperous, self-sufficient domestic market, and the profits generated from Asian markets are much less rewarding.¹³ This makes the Japanese industry reluctant to make great efforts to export content to Asian markets. It has been profit-seeking companies in Taiwan, Hong Kong or other parts of Asia that are more active in (both legally and illegally) importing Japanese materials (Hu, 2004, 2005; Pang, 2006, 2009).

While the viewership of Japanese dramas started to decline gradually around 2001, their price remained as high as before (Sakai, 2004; Shim, 2008). At the same time, the Korean TV industry, after ten years of imitating their Japanese and American counterparts, began to be capable of making dramas of similar production quality

¹² Three of the most popular channels are Gold Sun TV (established in 1993), JET TV and Videoland Japan (both established in 1996).

¹³ According to Iwabuchi (2002), the wholesale price for Japanese programmes in Asian markets in 1997 was three times higher than it was in the early 1990s; but it “still constituted less than 1 percent of the total sales figures of Japanese TV stations” (p. 88).

as their Japanese counterparts. Moreover, in contrast to the passive attitude of the Japanese media industry towards its Asian market, the Korean industry always aggressively exports to regional markets. As a new exporter in the region at the beginning of the 2000s, the Korean industry kept the export prices of dramas comparatively low.¹⁴ As a result, Korean dramas appeared to be a fresh substitute for Japanese products with similar attributes but with a much cheaper price tag for Taiwanese broadcasters (H. M. Kim, 2005; Nian, 2002; Sakai, 2004; Shao, 2003; Shim, 2008). Subsequently, starting with dramas, various forms of Korean popular culture gained popularity both in Taiwan and other East Asian region/countries.

Taiwan is the earliest Asian country to import Korean dramas on a regular basis, and the Taiwanese audience's rapid acceptance of Korean dramas indicates the emergence of the Korean Wave as a regional phenomenon.¹⁵ For instance, *Winter Sonata* was on air in Korea in January to March 2002, and *Dae Jang Geum* from September 2003 to March 2004. Both dramas were promptly broadcast by the Taiwanese network GTV¹⁶ less than two months after they had concluded in Korea.¹⁷ Furthermore, the Taiwanese TV industry also functions as a second-hand provider of Korean drama that resells Mandarin-dubbed versions to

¹⁴ In 2002, the price of Korean dramas was the lowest of imported programmes; the average price of Korean dramas per episode was around 120-150,000 New Taiwan Dollars (NTD) or even lower. However, at the same time the price of a Chinese drama was around 150-200,000 NTD, and 300-400,000 NTD for a Japanese one (Nian, 2002; Sakai, 2004; Shim, 2008). One NTD was roughly equivalent to £0.02 stg in 2013 and 2014.

¹⁵ They were often among the top TV drama ratings, beating most local and foreign dramas.

¹⁶ GTV is the abbreviation of Gala Television, a cable network in Taiwan established in 1997.

¹⁷ In Japan, *Winter Sonata* was first broadcast in April 2003 on NHK BS2, a pay satellite TV channel owned by NHK, Japan's public service broadcaster. However, it was not until its first terrestrial broadcast in April 2004 on NHK that the drama gained general popularity. In the case of *Dae Jang Geum*, it was broadcast in Taiwan in May 2004. By comparison, it was not until January 2005 and September in the same year that Hong Kong and China broadcast the drama. In Japan, it was first on air on NHK BS2 in October 2004, and broadcast on NHK one year later in October 2005.

Mandarin-speaking countries/regions. For example, GTV's Mandarin-dubbed version of *Dae Jang Geum* was resold to China and experienced significant popularity (Leung, 2008).¹⁸ It can be argued that the Taiwanese TV industry played a crucial role in mediating and promoting the regional flows of Korean dramas in the early 2000s in Chinese-speaking regions including Hong Kong and China (Shim, 2008).

ii. Regional Geopolitics and the Shaping of Cultural Identity

Japan went through the earliest regional experience of westernisation and modernisation in contemporary Asian history. By the end of the 19th century, it had become the most developed country and an imperial power in Asia – the only imperial force from the region. Today it remains one of the most developed, core countries in the world system (Wallerstein, 1999). Given this, Japan's relations with its Asian neighbours are sensitive on a number of different levels. In Taiwan, while it took decades for the ban on Japanese media materials to be lifted completely, these materials (dramas in particular) promptly gained popularity, and eventually triggered the avid reception of Japanese popular culture on a wider level (i.e. Japan Fever). Public debates on Japan Fever focused on whether it was a sign of the revival of Japanese imperialism. For instance, the main public dispute over the legalisation of satellite TV in 1988 centred on whether it would lead to a “cultural

¹⁸ The business arrangement concerning *Dae Jang Geum* concluded between GTV and with Hunan Satellite TV, a local TV channel in China, demonstrates the role the Taiwanese industry plays in promoting the Korean Wave in the region. As Leung (2008) points out, it was not until *Dae Jang Geum* became a blockbuster in Taiwan that Hunan Satellite TV purchased exclusive broadcasting rights for the Mandarin-dubbed version from GTV. In China, local stations are not allowed to approach foreign distributors directly. Nevertheless, Hunan Satellite TV purchased the broadcast rights through GTV, which is not considered a “foreign” distributor under the PRC's ideology (as China claims that Taiwan is part of China rather than a sovereign entity). By helping Hunan Satellite TV to bypass broadcasting regulations in China, “Taiwan acts as an interesting intermediary for the local mainland Chinese stations” (p. 64).

invasion” via Japanese programmes (Hsu, 1988). Such disputes were especially prevalent in the late 1990s to early 2000s when Japan Fever was at its peak (Iwabuchi, 2002).

However, Ko (2004) points out that if Japan Fever indicates an imperialist cultural invasion, the long-standing Americanisation evident in Taiwan should have been criticised as another form of cultural incursion. Nevertheless, she argues that while Japan Fever was frequently criticised as a form of cultural imperialism in the late 1990s to the early 2000s, the Taiwanese have been tolerant of American culture and more inclined to take its existence for granted. Chen (2010) also shares the same observation, contending that this indicates that America as an object of identification has been “so thoroughly integrated into our thoughts and practices that we have lost the ability to critically engage with the issue of U.S. imperialism at all” (p. 178).¹⁹

Ko (2004) further argues that although Hong Kong, China and Korea are also political and cultural Others, in terms of domestic intellectual and public debates their cultural products seemed to be more acceptable in Taiwan than those from Japan in the late 1990s and early 2000s. She considers it imperative to examine why the Otherness of Japan was considered more threatening in Taiwan. She contends that in the aftermath of Japan Fever, Japan was conceptualised in two contradictory ways. On the one hand, there was a new and modernised Japan

¹⁹ Chen (2010) argues that during the cold-war period, Japan, Korea and Taiwan became US protectorates, and a long-lasting legacy of this period is “the installation of the anticommunism-pro-Americanism structure in the capitalist zone of East Asia” (p. 7). One of the key consequences of this legacy, Chen considers, is that the United States has not merely become a central component in the constitution of East Asian subjectivity. Chen argues that the United States has been adopted as the default point of references in many East Asian countries, and this partly prevented East Asian academia and critics from adequately examining the Americanism in the region. See also Chapter 7 Section VII.

demonstrating a more culturally proximate and desirable form of urban modernity than that of the West. On the other hand, Japan remained as a historical imperial force (Y.-F. Ko, 2004). The suffering during the colonial past led to decolonisation campaigns that have lasted for more than fifty years. However, the desire for modernity, with Japan as the imaginable prototype, triggered a colonial complex and thereby showed the futility of decolonisation efforts. As a result, a certain cultural anxiety arose in public debate, a concern frequently evident in anti-colonial and anti-cultural imperialism discourses that coexisted with the yearning for a “Japanese style” of modernity generated by the popularity of Japanese culture. As Ko stresses, the omnipresence of Japanese pop culture re-invoked the former colonial relations between Taiwan and Japan and raised the dispute over Taiwanese cultural identity.

The Korean Wave has also become a significant topic in academic as well as public debate in line with its rising popularity. Compared to Japan Fever, the Korean Wave is the first significant cultural flow in this region generated by a semiperipheral and non-colonising country. This non-colonial feature makes Korean culture “relatively free from historical, political and cultural burdens” (Park, 2006, p. 248) and thereby seems less threatening in comparison to its Western and Japanese counterparts, which is commonly considered as the main reason why Korean popular culture can be readily accepted regionally (H.-J. Cho, 2005; Y. Kim, 2013; Shim, 2006, 2008; Sung, 2013).

Moreover, according to Wallerstein (2004), Korea is a semiperipheral country, that is one “with strong enterprises that export[s] products to peripheral zones, but that also regularly relate[s] to core zones as importers of more “advanced” products” (p.

30). When Cho (2005) examines how Korean discourses make sense of the Korean Wave, she also defines her discourse analysis as “a study of the reflexive learning process of people living in the semi-periphery of the world system” (p. 149). Japanese popular culture is often seen as a cultural interpreter moving between the West and East Asia, providing “a variety of ‘Asianness’ that intensely indigenises ‘Westernness’ or ‘Americanness’” (Iwabuchi, 2002, p. 105). By comparison, while it is also Westernised and industrialised, Korean popular culture is often considered more “Asian”, retaining cultural affinities with Chinese and other Asian cultures (e.g. Confucian values) (H. M. Kim, 2005; Park, 2006; Sung, 2013). According to Ryoo (2009), this “in-between” stance of Korea, “which is neither too advanced nor too behind” (p. 146) in terms of economic development, political power and the degree of Western and Eastern hybridisation, helps Korean popular culture’s reception in other Asian countries.

While Japan Fever triggered intense debates regarding whether Japanese culture threatened local identities in other East Asian countries/regions, there was comparatively little of this discussion in the discourse on the Korean Wave, partly due to Korea’s non-colonial and semi-peripheral nature. Furthermore, the Korean Wave emerged when the regional media market at large was more liberalised and open to transnational collaborations and cultural exchanges compared to the early 1990s. As a result, it represented a regional form of urban modernity different from its Japanese counterpart, which in turn has encouraged debates on the emergence of a regional identity in East Asia (Chua, 2004, 2008a, 2010; Katsumata, 2012).

However, as argued earlier, there is still a significant lack of empirical analysis to support the idea of the emergence of East Asian identity. This study will examine

how Taiwanese audiences perceive Japanese, Korean as well as Western (North American) cultures through their consumption of foreign shows, and how such consumption might shape their understanding of foreign Others as well as local identities. It is through the examination of the construction of local identity that we can understand whether – or to what extent – a shared regional identity is possible (see Chapter 7). Specifically, the following two conditions are taken into account in this study.

First, nearly twenty years have passed since the rise of Japan Fever. While Japanese cultural products are still prevalent, anti-Japanese discourse appears to have declined and is milder in tone and substance. Given the changes in transnational cultural flows, it is not appropriate to assume that Japan is the only significant other that triggers cultural anxieties over the local identity of Taiwan. Rather, it is important to ask whether, or in what sense, Korea or other foreign others are significant Others that shape how identity is constituted in Taiwan.

Second, while regional cultural flows have intensified, it never indicates that cultural exchanges between countries are equal. Instead, the directions of the cultural and media flows are uneven, with Japan and Korea as the main centres that export their media and cultural products to other regions (Chua & Iwabuchi, 2008). At the same time, Western (mainly American) culture remains popular in the region. In the case of Taiwan, on the one hand, while the export of Taiwanese media products goes in the main to Chinese-speaking countries and regions (e.g. China, Hong Kong, Chinese diasporic communities in Western countries), very few reach Japan or Korea. The import-oriented structure of the Taiwanese television industry also contributes to Taiwan's uneven cultural exchanges with Japan and Korea. It is

crucial to look at how the online consumption of foreign TV complicates transnational cultural flows.

IV. The Legal Context Shaping the Consumption of Foreign Media in Taiwan and East Asia

This section addresses three main legal conditions concerning the distribution of foreign media in Taiwan as well as East Asia as they play an important role in underpinning the Taiwanese online consumption of foreign TV. The three conditions include: 1) the attitudes of the Taiwanese government and copyright holders towards piracy; 2) the role of Chinese copyright laws and regulations in Chinese-speaking regions; 3) the implications of pirate VCD and DVD for media and cultural flows in East Asia.

Firstly, while the copyright regulations towards foreign media texts in Taiwan were not strictly enforced before the 2000s, they nevertheless became stricter after Taiwan's accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 2002. As a WTO member, Taiwan was required to implement the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), an international agreement that establishes intellectual property regulations, within two years (before July 2004). As a result of this, the Taiwanese government started to amend its copyright laws and investigated its pirate disc markets in an aggressive manner. However, since then the WTO has gradually paid less attention to Taiwan's TRIPS implementation, while the Taiwanese government has again become less active in terms of regulating piracy.

In terms of online sharing, the actions of the Taiwanese government and copyright owners have focused largely on the cases in which the illegal/unauthorised files are publicly placed on Taiwanese online services/websites (whose IP addresses are located in Taiwan). However, the government and copyright owners do not pay much attention to copyrighted files that are illegally or unofficially shared on foreign online platforms. For instance, while the government banned some Taiwanese websites that publicly shared copyrighted foreign content, it has never taken serious action against the use of video sharing or streaming services whose IP addresses are located outside Taiwan.

Secondly, since China's copyright regulations are looser than those of most developed countries, pirating activities are rampant, making China a global centre for piracy (Fowler & McBride, 2005; Hu, 2009; Tosa, 2008). Specifically, the Chinese fansubbing groups and forums are very active in producing and distributing fansubbed foreign media materials to Chinese-speaking regions, making them the major providers of foreign media contents. Taiwanese audiences' access to the latest foreign materials is deeply reliant on these China-based online sharing and fansubbing activities: they serve as a springboard for audiences to bypass Taiwanese copyright laws while consuming foreign content not legally or officially available otherwise. As a result, when the Chinese government makes any changes to its copyright regulations, Taiwanese audiences' access to foreign materials will be affected.

For instance, in 2009, the Chinese government declared its determination to implement stricter regulations in order to eliminate piracy, with online piracy of foreign media the key target. Most Chinese online services that provided foreign

shows illegally either temporally deleted them or shared them in a more low profile manner (e.g. limiting access to exclusive, qualified members) to avoid being accused of copyright infringement. However, several weeks later, when the Chinese government had not moved any further on this issue, the illegal contents gradually returned online, with more complicated and private settings required for access. Beginning in 2011, some P2P TV or video-streaming services also started to set up IP restrictions to prevent users whose IP addresses are located outside mainland China from using their services.²⁰ Since then, this development has made foreign materials less accessible than they used to be. However, as the Chinese government has not whole-heartedly maintained its actions, the illegal and unauthorised distribution of foreign media materials is occasionally threatened but never eradicated (see also Chapter 7 Section V).

Thirdly, in East Asia, before file sharing became the most popular means to obtain foreign shows not legally available, VCD²¹ and DVD were used for the same purpose. VCD is a digital CD format with poor audio-visual quality that was popular in most parts of Asia (including Taiwan and Hong Kong) in the late 1990s and the early 2000s. However, VCD did not enjoy significant success in Japan, North America, and other developed countries. Instead, it was its successor, DVD, which has a higher audio-visual capacity that was widely adopted. Davis and Yeh (2004, p. 237) use the term “Third World guerrilla-technology” to characterise the low audio-visual quality and price of VCDs. However, I believe they ignore

²⁰ While a small amount of the content on these platforms was legally imported and distributed by the content providers, the majority was unauthorised.

²¹ VCD is the first format for distributing films on standard 12 cm optical discs. Compared to DVD, whose capacity is between 4.7 gigabyte (GB) to 17.08 GB, VCD can only contain approx. 800 megabytes (MB). Therefore, even the smallest DVD is still five times larger than that of VCD.

another key feature that makes VCD a Third World guerrilla-technology: its convenience in terms of copying and duplicating content.

Given their digital format, VCD and DVD can be reproduced perfectly (i.e. the duplicated copy can be exactly the same as the original). Furthermore, the content can be distributed online instantly. These two features, which VCR lacks, make VCD and DVD much easier for users to illegally duplicate and distribute copyrighted content. Given these concerns, the global entertainment media have introduced Digital Rights Management (DRM) and applied this to copyrighted DVD, Blu-ray discs²² and authorised disc players to prevent the illegal appropriation of copyrighted works on these formats.²³ Nevertheless, despite its digital features, no copyright protection systems are enforced on VCD. This condition makes it much more convenient to illegally duplicate and distribute content on VCD rather than DVD formats. I argue that it is this copyright-disregarded aspect that is the crucial feature that has made VCD the “Third World guerrilla-technology”.

²² Blu-ray is a digital format designed to supersede DVD. It is capable of storing high-definition videos with a 25 GB capacity per layer.

²³ For example, the content-scrambling system (CSS), a kind of encryption technology, is applied to DVDs, drives and players. Moreover, DVD and Blu-ray region codes also allow the film industry to control distribution in terms of price and release dates according to region variation. A DVD disc with a specific region code cannot be played if the region code of the drive or player is different from that of the DVD disc. Sometimes the Hollywood industry and other content providers release their discs as region-free, allowing the discs to be played by DVD/Blu-ray players of all regions. There are also region-free DVD and Blu-ray devices that are able to play discs from all regions. Moreover, it is important to note that there are many “tactics” (Certeau, 1984) which are employed by worldwide audiences to transcend region code restrictions and/or CSS. For instance, it is common for audiences to hack their DVD/Blu-ray devices (e.g. DVD players, video game consoles) to make the devices region-free. As for the DVD drives on the computer, software applications which can play and duplicate discs while ignoring CSS and region codes are also widely used by audiences. Therefore, while contents are relatively better protected on copyrighted DVD/Blu-ray than on VCD, in practice the protection system on the former can still be bypassed by audiences.

Hu (2004, 2005) and Davis and Yeh (2004) point out two important reasons why pirated VCDs of Japanese dramas in the 1990s and early 2000s have flourished. First, compared to legal channels, the pirate disc companies (many of which were based in Taiwan or Hong Kong but produced the discs in China) provided a much larger number of the latest dramas for audiences to choose from. Second, they distributed these dramas at a much faster pace than that of the legal channels. When one of the most popular Japanese dramas of all time, *Long Vacation*, was broadcast in 1996 in Japan, it was promptly circulated in pirate markets. However, it was not until 2001 that it was legally on air in Taiwan. It was unsurprising that those audiences who were keen to consume the latest Japanese dramas turned to pirated VCDs, regardless of their low technical quality and illegality.

Online sharing has significantly challenged pirate disc markets for access to foreign TV since it allows audiences to access a given media text much more efficiently and with even lower cost: a given foreign text can be promptly circulated worldwide within minutes or hours after it is broadcast domestically, and in many cases the text can be accessed for free. Subsequently, the pirate disc markets in Taiwan, Hong Kong and China have become much smaller in recent years.

Tosa (2008) argues that “grass-rooted” technologies such as pirated DVDs or VCDs can be regarded as a form of “digital fast food”, which enables movies and dramas to be consumed rapidly and become popular worldwide. He argues that the reason why US culture has become globalised is not just because it is imposed on other countries by the US. Rather, developing countries also contribute to this: many media industries in developing countries exploit new technologies to pirate American media content and wildly distribute illegal products within and across

national borders. Tosa considers it important to look at the roles that piracy plays in economic and political relations between the First and the Third World in terms of globalisation.

However, piracy does not exist exclusively in the Third World. In terms of online sharing, as many studies demonstrate it is widely used by audiences all over the world, including those from developed countries (e.g. Sweden, the UK and the US) to consume media texts (Casadesus-Masanell & Hervas-Drane, 2010; L. Edwards, Klein, Lee, Moss, & Philip, 2013; Larsson, Svensson, & Kaminski, 2013; Lessig, 2003; Newman, 2012; Schwarz, 2013). As McDonald (2007, pp. 175-176) argues, as the core force in the global video market, Hollywood remains key to influencing technological and commercial changes in the digital video media industries, both domestically and globally. I argue that this influence is particularly evident in the way in which DRM is used on discs and Internet Protocol restrictions are imposed on streaming websites by the global media conglomerates, particularly in their attempt to control how the technologies are used and content is consumed throughout the world.

Iwabuchi (2002) also argues that Japanese manufacturers (e.g. Sony) bought into Hollywood to “centralise product distribution” through acquiring control of both audio-visual hardware and software, since they regarded that cultural distribution, as Garnham (1990, cited in Iwabuchi, 2002, p. 37) argues, acts as “the key locus of power and profit”. Such influence and power in both technological and commercial change is controlled mainly by a small number of transnational conglomerates and developed countries. In this sense, the features of Third World guerrilla-technology and digital fast food which help audiences worldwide to promptly access

programmes without being constrained by restrictions set up by media industries, can be regarded as a “tactic” in Certeau’s (1984) terms. Online sharing, in turn, is a more current form of tactic that serves the same purpose. The role of online sharing in the audiences’ consumption of foreign TV and its implications for transnational cultural flows will be further examined in Chapters 6 and 7.

Chapter 3: Television as Technology and Cultural Form in the Online and Cross-border Viewing Context

Chapter 3 conceptualises key notions regarding the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing, which serve as theoretical frameworks for later chapters' empirical analysis. Sections I and II discuss how two essential notions with regard to television, togetherness and liveness, have changed in the post-network era and in what sense the online consumption of television is associated with such changes.

As a mass medium, television has been considered important in providing individual audiences with shared experiences, in other words generating a mediated public sphere in which individuals are linked with the general public (Gripsrud, 2010a). However, along with the digitalisation of television and media convergence, television forms are growing in number and diversity, challenging fundamental assumptions about television such as its position as a “window on the world”, or its capacity to act as a vehicle to structure everyday life on a mass level (Bennett, 2011; Spigel, 1992; Uricchio, 2009). These online services fragment the previously mass audience of television into a series of personalised choices. In the post-network or postbroadcasting era, television viewing as a shared experience seems to be increasingly questioned (Lotz, 2009). Moreover, the multiplication of television forms also indicates that it is less likely that audiences watch the same live broadcast at the same time in a communal setting. This tendency challenges another important notion of TV, namely “the aura of live television, the uniqueness, the here-and-now-ness of the broadcast event” (Cubitt, 1991, p. 35).

As an emerging norm of television experience, the increasing prevalence of features on-demand and personalising viewing possibilities has ensured that the online consumption of television continues to shape television's notion of social togetherness and liveness. Reviewing television's notions of togetherness and liveness helps to understand how the role of television as a technology and a cultural form (R. Williams, 2003) has changed, and in what sense the online consumption of foreign TV has implications for our understanding of television and its audiences.

Sections III to VI focus on the significance of television in the context of globalisation. Specifically, they analyse how transnational distribution and consumption of television shapes audiences' identity and co-temporality with other cultures/countries, and how studying the Taiwanese consumption of foreign TV via online sharing sheds light on these issues. Section III reviews existing studies on media and cultural flows to understand how media and cultural flows have developed worldwide, and what critical issues these flows reflect at both global and regional (East Asian) levels. Section IV focuses on an important issue in the discussion on media flows: how the relation between media (television in particular) and national and cultural identity develops alongside globalisation. Section V examines in what sense the practices of dubbing and subtitling, as important measures to bridge linguistic barriers to audiences' consumption of foreign texts, are associated with the former's perceptions of foreign and local cultures and cultural identities. Section VI elaborates how television shapes the audiences' conception of co-temporality with foreign locales/countries and how such conception is associated with cultural power relationships between countries.

I. Television and the Notion of Togetherness

This section theorises and reviews the historical relationship between television and the notion of togetherness. Based on Ellis (2002), I use “togetherness” in terms of how audiences perceive the co-presence of fellow members via their media consumption. The range of fellow members depends on which zones of consumption we look at. These can include family members, national citizens, or people who share the same language, etc. The media provide “the elements of a culture-in-common” (Scannell, 1988, p. 29) in the process of consumption, ranging from a person’s interaction with other people via media (e.g. phone calls or online chats) to the shared reception of a TV programme. In such mediated togetherness, audiences do not necessarily have to be co-present face-to-face, since the media’s capacity to “connect individuals to others geographically elsewhere” (Morley, 2000, pp. 86-87) allows audiences to experience “togetherness in separation with their fellow audience members” (Ellis, 2002, p. 32). I concentrate here on electronic media, especially television and its various forms that converge with the Internet.

The capacity of media to provide audiences with a sense of togetherness is a key factor regarding why they are considered important in the construction of communities. The role of media (especially that of television) in the construction of a nation is a main focus in media studies. Going back to the launch of radio, Scannell (1988) outlines how the scheduling of radio and television broadcast systems constructed a national life available to all of those covered by the broadcast. Morley (2006b, pp. 216-218) points out that, in most countries, television started as a public medium, watched collectively in public spaces before its domestication. It was “the symbolic meaning of the collective nature of television” (Yoshimi, 2003, p. 459) that

has made television significant (see Section IV for further discussion of television's role in the construction of a nation).

Focusing on the domestic space as a “zone” (Perterra & Turner, 2013), various studies examine how living room television has worked as a unifying force, shaping family life and relationships (Kubey, 1990; Spigel, 1992) and linking domestic spaces with public spheres (Silverstone, Hirsch, & Morley, 1994; Spigel, 1992). TV viewing, especially in the early years of television's domestication, was widely considered a shared family activity rather than an individual practice. For instance, Spigel (1992) argues that in the US, the American faith in family values was threatened during World War II, a conflict in which many families lost members and the tensions within households involving traumatised returned soldiers and their wives were intense. This led to the 1950s social obsession with the reconstruction of family life and domestic ideals. In this social climate, television was expected to act in public discussions (e.g., women's magazines, newspapers) as a vehicle for restoring faith in family togetherness.

In zones of consumption larger than domestic spaces, Williams (2003) stresses that television has served as “a form of *unified* social intake, at the most general levels” (p. 21). This feature has been examined in studies concerned with the role of media in constructing communal memory (Lipsitz, 1990; van Dijck, 2004; Wales, 2008), especially through the live broadcast of media events (Dayan & Katz, 1992) in which audiences experience “togetherness even when they are separate” (Zelizer, 1991, p. 73).

Scannell (2000) further examines the communicative and temporal structures of everyday existence that media (television in particular) provide to audiences, and how such existence enhances a sense of social togetherness among individual audience members. He points out that there are three types of communicative structures involved in the everyday lives of human beings: 1) A “for-anyone structure” presents itself as useable and useful for anyone; 2) A “for-someone structure” is only meaningful and useful for a particular person; 3) A “for-anyone-as-someone structure” is an intermediary structure that links and holds the impersonal for-anyone structure and the personal for-someone structure in tension. Scannell argues that media provide individuals with for-anyone-as-someone structures that are in play in their schedules and outputs (e.g. programmes). In such structures, each one of us experiences what we see or read as if it spoken to us personally, while at the same time each of us also “knows that just as it speaks to me it speaks to millions of others at the same time, *now*” (p. 19). Daily media, in this sense, articulate a shared generational time, in which individuals are “routinely gathered into a common, shared world of concern that is manifestly available for each and all” (p. 22).

The introduction of recording technologies (e.g. videocassette and digital video recorders) since the 1980s complicated television’s function in terms of social togetherness and as experienced in various zones of consumption, because these technologies allowed audiences to time-shift their viewing, which in turn led to the fragmentation of TV experiences. Gray (1992) examines how housewives in the domestic space and local communities found that while the videocassette recorder (VCR) provided them with the freedom to choose viewing times, shared viewing pleasure with others (e.g. neighbours) was also sacrificed. Cubitt (1991) argues that television programmes commonly use terms or phrases such as “we”, or “thank you

for joining us tonight” to engage with audiences in the manner of a personal address, and this “pretence of dialogue” is one of television’s features. However, VCR’s time-shifting function not only challenged the unity of the audience, but also altered the latter’s relation to the temporal referent of “tonight”, and the sense of “we”, “us”, “you”, “your”, etc. Boddy (2004) indicates that the capacity to provide the experience of simultaneity and liveness was traditionally considered both as part of television’s nature and central to its relation to the nation. However, by breaking the simultaneity and liveness of broadcasting, the popularity of recording technologies and other digital devices raise concerns regarding “the long-standing privileging of the live nationwide broadcast as [a] guarantor of national cohesion” (p. 104).

The increased challenges new media technologies and services impose on the notion of television continue to be a central concern in media studies. For instance, how the traditional social functions of media events change (Couldry, Hepp, & Krotz, 2010), or how the transnational media can be used by diasporic communities to maintain their ties and shape their identity at local, national or transnational levels have been discussed (Georgiou & Silverstone, 2006; Karim, 2003). The Internet – with which television has converged – also complicates the relationship between media and audiences’ sense of togetherness. It raises issues such as how online communities connect fans with each other on virtual spaces in order to construct fandom (Baym, 2000), how the use of the Internet and personal devices resulted in audiences being “alone together” (Turkle, 2011), or how user-generated platforms construct new forms of communities and television viewing (Uricchio, 2009).

While the growth of online platforms and personal media devices complicates television’s role in social togetherness, it is inappropriate to assume that the media

environment and audiences just switch from one end (broadcasting-mass audiences) to another (narrowcasting-individualised). For instance, focusing on the UK context, Theodoropoulou (2003) studies the subscribers of Sky TV's digital service in 2001. He points out that, although more channels were available on Sky's digital platform, the most popular channels among the subscribers remained the traditional free-to-air channels (e.g. BBC1, Channel 4). On user-generated platforms such as YouTube, content from broadcast television also tends to attract many more viewers than that generated by users (Burgess & Green, 2009). Research conducted by the British communications regulator Ofcom (2013) also indicates that the increased use of mobile devices as a second screen (e.g. tablet, smartphone) does not necessarily fragment television's role in social togetherness. Rather, the living room television is making a comeback in the UK: families are increasingly gathering around the main TV set watching live broadcasting together as they were in the 1950s. What is different, Ofcom argues, is that family members are also multi-tasking via other media devices: they chat with friends on social media, surf the Internet, or stream other content on smartphones and tablets when they are watching the living room TV with family members.

More important questions to be looked at include how broadcast television as well as newer forms of television offer (or fail to offer) "for-anyone-as-someone" structures in which shared experiences and a sense of togetherness can be attained and how, in turn, such offerings shape television's role in social togetherness. Studying the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing – one of the most popular emerging forms of television consumption – helps us to understand the contemporary role of television in the post-network era.

II. Television's Notion of Liveness in the Online Setting

After conceptualising television's role in social togetherness for the later empirical analysis, this section further discusses the notion of liveness, which is considered a key feature of television as well as an important condition regarding whether togetherness can be achieved or lost through television viewing. This section first conceptualises the notion of liveness in relation to broadcast television, the most general television form. Second, it examines the relationship between live television and social media and asks in what sense live television and liveness remain significant in the post-network context.

i. Television and the Notion of Liveness

How and to what extent media technologies can generate a sense of liveness, presence and immediacy among the audience (Corner, 1997) has been a crucial topic in media studies. The ability of broadcasting to convey information over distance without time lapse is the basis of its claim to liveness (Auslander, 2008; Crisell, 2012). The pursuit of liveness in particular is facilitated by television, which is capable of transmitting both audio and video signals simultaneously to a mass audience in real time as events happen (Bourdon, 2000).

In this study, the notion of liveness mainly refers to the definitions provided by Ellis (2002) and Crisell (2012). Crisell (2012) defines liveness with regard to broadcasting as follows: "Broadcast content is live in the sense that everything that radio and television stations transmit is received, or is capable of being received at the moment it is transmitted"(p. 7). Moreover, as Ellis (2002) points out, from the audiences' perspective, while a single transmission is beamed out via broadcasting to dispersed

audiences who are watching or listening simultaneously, audiences may in turn have a sense that many others are consuming the same thing at the same time. According to Crisell (2012), this form of “co-presence in time” (while separated in space) (p. 14) as offered by broadcasting, is a crucial feature of television (and radio) liveness. It is important to note that, “co-presence in time” also serves as an important condition for the construction of audiences’ sense of “coevalness” (Fabian, 1983; Wilk, 1994) in audiences’ encounters with foreign cultures. While the notion of coevalness will be discussed more comprehensively in Section VI and Chapter 6, I want to address some other dimensions of television as related to liveness here.

Spigel (1992) argues that television as a media technology was expected to be more capable of reproducing reality or delivering live and present entertainment into the home compared to other media in the 1950s. Specifically, public debates stressed that TV had the ability “to transport the audience to the site of events taking place elsewhere at the moment” (p. 138) and thus gave viewers a sense of being in the presence of performances. In the practice of television production, it was also commonly seen that when the major networks produced prime-time formats (e.g. the live anthology drama, the variety show) they applied the conventions of live theatrical entertainment. The purpose of doing so was to attract audiences by making them feel as if they were really at the theatre while they were, in fact, at home. Spigel calls this application of and appeal to theatrical, live performance the “aesthetics of ‘presence’” (p. 139). As Doane (1990) also points out, “time is television’s basis, and its principle of structuration, as well as its persistent reference” (p. 222). She argues that via its representation television always addresses a “present-ness” and instantaneity as its form of temporality.

Friedman's (2002) considers that live television should be regarded as a mode of broadcasting, rather than a television genre. Attempting to categorise the different forms of liveness television generates, he distinguishes between four dominant modes of live texts, including (re)presentations, ceremonies, unstructured events, and unscripted events. Friedman rightly argues that when we see live TV as a mode of broadcasting, we recognise that its feature is "broadcast at the time it occurs" (p. 141). However, it is important to note that only factual programmes (e.g. news, sports) are included in the classification of his four types of live TV. Nevertheless, the crucial questions at stake are: if "live TV" is seen as a mode of broadcasting, can we exclude all forms of broadcasts of any fictional or pre-edited programmes? Is the sense of liveness exclusively attached to live, non-fictional, open-ended programmes?

Couldry (2004) argues that in television's early days, all programmes were live performances aired in real time. Television at that time could be seen as a "live" medium in the sense of "being broadcast as it was performed". When the proportion of live performances declined, the reference point of the term "live" mainly shifted to the live broadcast of non-fictional events. However, Couldry argues that concept or sense of liveness should not be limited to the live broadcast of non-fictional genres. Rather, "the decisive criterion of liveness is not so much the factuality of what is transmitted, but the fact of live transmission itself" (p. 355). As Ellis (2002) explains:

Television's sense of liveness does not depend solely upon its programmes; it also lies in the very organisation of transmission. Transmission is live, even when the programmes are not. So recorded programmes are able to claim the status of liveness for themselves simply because the act of transmission attaches them to a particular moment (Ellis, 2002, p. 31).

In this sense, even if the shows are fictional (e.g. dramas), at the time they are on air (i.e. being live transmitted), their broadcasts can be considered as a mode of live broadcast. As Bourdon (2000) argues, watching television live is also “watching non-recorded television” (p. 550). When studying how online consumption of television is associated with liveness, this study not only includes the consumption of live, factual programmes but also that of pre-edited, fictional programmes. It examines in what sense watching foreign fictional genres live (or with a small delay) helps audiences “to become part of a specific interpretive community, and beyond of a national audience” (Bourdon, 2000, p. 550).

ii. Live Broadcasts’ Relation to Social Media

As discussed earlier, the multiplication of television forms and the advancement of recording technologies appear to challenge the importance of television’s liveness. In recent years, it has been common to see critics argue that social media such as Facebook or Twitter may significantly increase TV ratings. Critics who strongly believe in social media’s contribution to ratings even go so far as to argue that social media can save television broadcasting (K. Anderson, 2009; Boorstin, 2011; Goldman, 2011; Norris, 2010; Pomerantz, 2013).

This rhetoric is generally based on two assumptions. Firstly, critics and journalists (Bercovici, 2013; Boorstin, 2011; Norris, 2010; Pomerantz, 2013) often argue that the importance of live TV has declined given the popularity of time-shifting technologies and services (e.g. Tivo, iPlayer), thereby viewers no longer follow TV schedules. Secondly, social media can also serve as convenient online platforms that allow

people to discuss anything in real time with others, either acquaintances or strangers. Subsequently, many people start to use social media (Twitter in particular) to talk about (or to “tweet” about) certain programmes at the same time as they are watching them live. When more audiences do this, it can generate a sense of immediacy and togetherness, because talking about the programmes or reading relevant discussions on Twitter can make participants feel that they are simultaneously involved in the live broadcast of the programme as an “event” with others. However, if audiences want to enjoy this immediate togetherness (provided by Twitter), they have to stick to the live broadcasts since that is the only way they can ensure that there will be other people consuming the same thing at the same time. As Twitter’s CEO Dick Costolo (2011, as cited in Goldman, 2011) puts it, “Twitter provides a social framework around television, forcing people to watch shows as they air to get the full TV-watching experience [...] TV shows become events, meaning people watch them as they happen”. It is in this sense that critics consider that social media can rescue live TV since it prompts people to return to live broadcasts, watching and talking about shows when they are on air.

Nevertheless, while it may be true that social media encourages people to watch television in real time, the rhetoric of new social media regarding “helping” television live broadcasts only tells half of the story as it only focuses on how social media encourages the consumption of live broadcasts but ignores the corresponding significance of how broadcast television may boost the use of social media. According to Boorstin (2011), Twitter suggests that the number of tweets sent during a live sporting event or awards show can be fifty times larger than on an average occasion. Nielsen reports that in the US, 58% of TV viewers surf the Internet while watching TV, and the numbers of such viewers peak during live events. Moreover, although

nearly 40% of Americans own a digital video recorder (DVR), live TV ratings are holding up.

The 30th Olympic Games, London 2012, provides an example of the importance of the liveness of live broadcasting. Given the significant growth of social media usage since the last games (Beijing 2008) (Farr, 2012; Ong, 2012),¹ London 2012 was widely marked in media discourses as the first “Socialympics” (i.e. social Olympics), whereby audiences were connected with other viewers (and even with the athletes) by engaging in social media (Farr, 2012; Vidyarthi, 2012). This connectivity, which meant that audiences were able to communicate immediately with others in real time, while the games were in progress (as well as before and after the games), enabled conversations between the people (e.g. viewers, athletes, game organisers) who were involved in the Olympic spectacle. Therefore, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) hailed London 2012 as the first “conversational” Games (Lopez, 2012; Pfanner, 2012).

The above analysis regarding the relation between TV ratings and the use of social media indicates that live broadcasts can, in fact, encourage the use of social media and help to maintain television’s significance in media convergence. In this regard, the relation between television (live broadcasts in particular) and social media may be mutually beneficial in terms of audience use/consumption. Moreover, as Ofcom (2013) points out, despite the rise in the proliferation of connected devices in the UK, “TV viewing in the home remains predominantly live (i.e. watched at the time of

¹ According to Ong (2012), the opening ceremony of London 2012 inspired 9.66 million tweets, and those tweets generated in the first 24 hours of the games numbered more than the total number posted in Beijing 2008. Farr (2012) also notes that while there were 6 million users on Twitter in 2008, there were more than 600 million in 2012.

broadcast)” (p. 135), with 88% of TV owners (smart and traditional ones combined) using TV daily for live content. Rather than claiming that television is being saved by social media, it seems more appropriate to argue that, as Schneider’s (2012) title puts it, “live TV still matters”. The possibility that television can boost social media usage indicates that audiences’ inclination to watch live broadcasts is still significant. The importance of social media, in this sense, lies in how it functions as virtual, space-crossing set of platforms that encourage audiences to instantaneously talk about specific shows with others in real time. This study will look at how the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing is associated with television’s notion of liveness, and in what sense liveness matters in the audiences’ consumption (see Chapter 5 Section IV and Chapter 6 Sections I and II).

After discussing how two notions concerning television’s ontology, togetherness and liveness, have changed in media convergence, Sections III to VI focus on conceptualising the role of television in globalisation. They discuss how transnational distribution and consumption of television shapes audiences’ identity and sense of coevalness with other cultures, and in what sense studying the Taiwanese online consumption of foreign TV sheds light on these issues. Section III reviews existing studies on media and cultural flows to understand how media and cultural flows have developed worldwide, and how critical issues the flows have raised are reflected at both global and regional (East Asian) levels.

III. Debates on Media and Cultural Flows

i. The Cultural Imperialism Thesis

The term “media flow” generally refers to the distribution and circulation of media products. As media flows became increasingly globalised in parallel with the emergence of transnational media corporations since the 1960s, many social theorists, especially political economists, revealed that the direction of flows was highly unequal: media products were predominately distributed from West to East, from North to South (White, 2003). Mirrlees (2013) argues that social theorists based on theories of capitalist world system, dependency and new colonialism, have developed the concept of cultural imperialism to critically examine how media corporations extend unequal power relations between the First World (especially the US) and the rest of the world. In this thesis, cultural and media products are regarded as “an instrument of one nation-state’s economic, geopolitical and cultural power over others” (p. 21).

Schiller (1969, 1991) is the most representative scholar whose work focuses on cultural imperialism. His analysis begins with explaining how global economic conditions contribute to the existing international geopolitical order. He considers the First World to be made up of the most developed, richest, industrialised Western countries who have adopted capitalism as their economic system. These countries are the “core” constituents of the international order that controls and dominates the allocation of national and human resources. On the contrary, the Third World refers to “periphery” countries that are less developed in terms of various social aspects and are kept at a distance from the centres of control at a global level. Schiller believes that the emergence of transnational media corporations is incorporated into this world system. The media content produced by these corporations is imposed on the Third World, functioning as an informational infrastructure that ideologically supports the existing “core-periphery” world system, thereby contributing to Western cultural

domination, which Schiller considers as constituting media-cultural imperialism. According to Schiller, media-cultural imperialism is not independent, but a part of general imperialism. Media-cultural production based on the capitalist economy is not only ideological but also profit-serving in the wider economic and political system.

Schiller (1991) further argues that, while media-cultural power forces were based on nation-states in the 1960s and 1970s, these forces have now been subordinated to transnational corporate authority: a vast number of media-cultural products circulated worldwide are produced by a small number of transnational media conglomerates. This development, from his point of view, should be understood as “transnational corporate cultural domination” (p. 15).

ii. Audiences, Cultural Globalisation and Problems of Cultural Imperialism

While the idea of media-cultural imperialism was prevalent in the 1970s, it has been criticised later, especially from the perspective of audience and cultural studies. One of the key problems regarding the cultural imperialism thesis is that it ignores how audiences and consumers of foreign cultures interpret and respond to what they consume. It presumes that media has a straightforward, “hypodermic” effect on audiences and can determine and change the latter’s thoughts. Audiences were seen as a “passive victim” (Takahashi, 2010, p. 23) of these imperialistic media texts. However, as Tomlinson (1991) points out, one cannot directly equate the presence of Western media texts with cultural domination. He argues that if we want to understand whether cultural imperialism exists or how it works, it is necessary to analyse the way in which these imperialistic texts are read by audiences.

Much research demonstrates how audiences in fact have different interpretations of texts instead of completely accepting the “imperialist ideology” of the texts being proffered. Media texts are also frequently received differently in different countries. For example, while the American soap *Dallas* was well received domestically as well as in Western Europe, it failed to gain popularity in Japan (Ang, 1985; Liebes & Katz, 1986, 1990). In Taiwan, research has indicated that being a fan of “imperialistic” media texts (e.g. American or Japanese dramas) does not necessarily mean that they are uncritical audiences who accept an embedded imperialistic ideology (M.-T. Lee, 2003; Su & Chen, 2000; Sun, 1998; Yang, 2003). Rather, these researchers demonstrate the ways in which Taiwanese audiences “poach” (Jenkins, 1992) the meaning of those foreign texts and often reconsider their own cultures and cultural identities via their encounters with foreign content.

The second problem of cultural imperialism is its premise that First World countries actively impose their media and cultural products on other weaker countries, thus extending their cultural domination over the latter. However, the question at stake is whether these core countries are always active agents imposing their products upon the rest of the world. For instance, the Japanese television industry is, in general terms, was less interested in exporting its products compared to countries such as the US, the UK or Korea. As mentioned in Chapter 2, when Japan Fever was at its peak in the 1990s, it was local broadcasters (e.g. those in Taiwan or Hong Kong) that were more active in importing Japanese media texts to attract audiences and generate profits (Hu, 2004; Iwabuchi, 2002, see also Chapter 2 Section III).

Even the US television industry, one of the most active countries in terms of cultural exports, does not always actively export popular programmes to other markets,

especially to smaller ones such as Taiwan. Even if they export their programmes, they do not necessarily release the broadcast rights or export the programmes when the importing countries ask. In the consumption of foreign shows via worldwide online sharing, in a large number of cases it is not the core countries that actively impose their media-cultural products upon the rest of the world. Rather, it is audiences from other countries (whether peripheral or not) that are more active and eager to access the content made by the core countries (see also Denison, 2015 on the English-speaking world's fansubbing practices of Japanese media).

For instance, in 2013, the third series of HBO's popular TV series *Game of Thrones* was widely and illegally shared online; some of its episodes generated over four million global downloads. The high subscription fee of local paid-channels for legal access to the series and the time-gap between the legal broadcast and the US premiere contributed to this dynamic. The deal HBO made with other foreign broadcasters in that year did not provide the series simulcast, but it offered a relatively short time-gap between the US and local broadcasts compared to the transnational distribution of many other programmes (it was less than 6 hours in Australia and 20 hours in the UK). However, it did not prevent audiences from simultaneously downloading the series. Given that Australia topped the piracy rates on many of the most popular file sharing sites, the US ambassador to Australia, Jeffrey Bleich, publicly asked Australians to stop pirating the series (Crooks, 2013; Dewey, 2013). Such conditions challenge the cultural imperialism premise. It seems problematic to argue that the core countries necessarily, intentionally and aggressively impose their cultures on other countries, thus harming both the culture and the economy of recipient nations (see also Chapter 8 Section III concerning the global simulcast of *Game of Thrones* in 2015).

The third problem of the original cultural imperialism argument lies in its exclusive focus on one-way flow from the First World to the rest of the world. As transnational cultural flows are now more diverse, it is no longer suitable to focus solely on this uni-directional flow. There have been more counter-flows or contra-flows generated from ex-colonies to former imperialist countries (Thussu, 2006). Brazil's domination of the television market in the Lusophone world, including Portugal, is the most significant counter-flow, and has been diagnosed as reverse cultural imperialism (Straubhaar, 2004, pp. 90-91). The cultural flows within regions are also increasingly intense. In East Asia, as mentioned earlier, Japan and Korea distribute their media and cultural products to the rest of the region (Chua & Iwabuchi, 2008). In the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing in Taiwan, Korean and Japanese programmes – alongside American programmes – are the most popular foreign texts widely shared. How emerging regional flows influence transnational media consumption has to be taken into account when studying the consumption of foreign shows via contemporary online sharing.

iii. The Importance of Political Economy

Although there are limitations to the cultural imperialism thesis, this is not to say that we should abandon the issues concerning political economy that it has raised. Tomlinson (1991) argues that nowadays, the configuration of global power and the interrelationship between different parts of the world are different from those that prevailed in the 1960s, when global power relations were viewed predominantly through imperialist frameworks. The new configuration of global power should be understood as globalisation. He argues that globalisation is different from imperialism in that it is a less coherent or culturally-directed process. Globalisation indicates

interconnection and interdependency across the globe, and its effects are “to weaken the cultural coherence of *all* individual nation-states, including the economically powerful ones – the ‘imperialist powers’ of a previous era” (p. 175).

However, as Harindranath (2003) points out, Tomlinson overlooks how existing unequal relations (especially different economic conditions) between developing countries and the First World may influence the process and direction of transnational cultural flows (see also Chapter 1 Section II).

Furthermore, globalisation is partially a result of neo-liberalism and the spread of capitalism, and it is in the West where neo-liberalism and capitalism are most thoroughly developed. It is problematic to assume that globalisation leads to equal interrelationships between different parts of the world as if the centre-periphery models of cultural flow have faded. Particularly, as a lot of research shows, while the past three decades have seen the emergence of non-US “media capitals” (Curtin, 2007) worldwide, the US still largely dominates the world trade in television programmes and films (Mirrlees, 2013; Morley, 2006a; Sparks, 2007). It is in this sense that Morley (2006a) stresses the importance of developing a perspective that can deal with the important issues raised by both audience research and political economy when examining transnational cultural consumption.

As Christophers (2009) underlines, if we are to understand the question of power in international, global television, we should look at the “*inability* of almost all international producers to penetrate and profit from the US market” (p. 227). In this regard, it is important to examine how different parts of the world are involved with

global cultural flows based on the idea of power-geometry, whose concern is about “power in relation *to* the flows and the movement” (Massey, 1994, p. 149).

While most East Asian countries set post-war limitations on cultural imports to protect their domestic media development, many of them (including Taiwan) went through media liberalisation and opened their markets to outside countries from the mid-1980s onwards. Thomas (2005) argues that most Asian countries have been compelled to integrate into the capitalist world economy and they have experienced the globalisation of their television industries. However, by no means are global media flows equal. On the one hand, in East Asia American culture is still popular and influential in various ways (e.g. economy, the shaping of local cultural identity, see Chua & Cho, 2012; Chun, 2012; Matsuda, 2012). On the other hand, most East Asian media products have difficulties entering the mainstream US market. In other words, the direction of global cultural flows remains substantially uneven (see also Section IV). This condition is taken into account in the empirical analysis of the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing in later chapters.

An important debate on media and cultural flows is concerned with how the cross-cultural, transnational distribution and consumption of media texts influence the constitution of local identities and belongings. Mediascapes,² which provide “resources for experiments with self-making” and “new resources and disciplines for the construction of imagined selves and imagined worlds” (Appadurai, 1996, p. 3), play important roles in the transfiguration of local cultural belongings. Tomlinson (1999) considers it important to examine “how our very sense of cultural belonging

² Appadurai (1996) refers to mediascapes as “the distribution of the electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information, and the images of the world created by these media” (p. 35).

may be transfigured by the penetration of globalisation” (p. 10). The next section discusses how the relationship between media (television in particular) and national and/or cultural identity have developed in parallel with the advancement of globalisation.

IV. Media and National Identity in the Global Age

i. Television as a National Medium within Globalisation

Since its introduction to most countries, television has operated as a national medium: it has been aired mainly via national broadcasting systems and viewed by these national broadcasters’ own citizens. It has been considered as important in shaping different national audiences’ sense of national belonging, identity and everyday life (see also Section I regarding television’s role in social togetherness). For instance, to use the UK as an example, Scannell (1988) examines the role national broadcasting systems (including radio and television) have played in mediating modernity, normalising the public sphere and socialising the citizen’s private life. McCarthy (2010) analyses how, during the inception of television in the US in the 1950s, different agents (e.g. corporations, intellectuals, governments) tried to use television as a vehicle for governing the morals, habits and mental development of Americans in order to create an ideal form of American citizenship.

Yoshimi (2003) reviews the historical development of Japanese television and demonstrates how TV broadcasting has functioned as a nationwide time structure, linking audiences’ domestic memories with national history. In so doing he articulates the relationship between television and nationalism in contemporary Japan. In Taiwan, Liyun Lin (2005) demonstrates the ways in which the government used television to

strengthen its authority at the dawn of television broadcasting in the early 1960s. Ko (2009) shows how the government, during the same period, inserted its idea of the “nation” into family life with the advent of television. While based on different national contexts, the above studies all demonstrate how television plays a significant role in constructing the nation/nationalism, thus shaping audiences’ lives on a national scale.

The introduction of satellite television in the 1960s and 1970s made instantaneous global broadcasting possible, and thus marked a crucial development in the globalisation of television. In the 1980s, the popularisation of satellite and cable television and worldwide media deregulation not only encouraged global media expansion and distribution as Herman and McChesney (2003) argue, but also provided the basis for corporate consolidation in the media industry. Moreover, the emergence of the Internet in the mid-1990s and the subsequent development of media digitalisation and convergence in the 2000s enhanced the globalisation of television. As a result, television is no longer defined only as a broadcasting system confined to the borders of a given nation-state. However, this does not mean that TV as a national broadcasting system has come to an end. In most countries, national broadcasting, whether commercial or public, remains the system that attracts the largest audiences. Furthermore, most national broadcasting systems are still operated exclusively for their own national citizens under complex national, transnational and global broadcasting regulations.

What is at stake, as Thussu (2004) argues, is the availability of multinational channels, which in turn have complicated the national discourse, with audiences being able to access local, national and foreign channels simultaneously as well as being able to

engage in different levels of mediated discourse. Therefore, he considers that the role of television in the construction of cultural identities is much more problematic than it was in the early years of television. This issue is particularly significant in the case of the online consumption of foreign TV, in which the audiences search for further deterritorialised (Tomlinson, 1999) media experiences. These audiences do not want their media choices to be confined to a given territory, even when there are local, national and foreign channels and programmes already provided by legal broadcasters. They actively cross temporal-spatial and national borders in order to directly access foreign broadcasting programmes, especially those which are supposedly produced or broadcast only for their own citizens to consume.

ii. Global Media and a “Bifocal” Version of the Social World

Archetti (1998) argues that national identity and belonging has its appeal and mystique in a particular territory or place, in which the nation is seen as a territory not shared with other foreigners. Nevertheless, global media, according to John Peters (1997), challenges the way different localities function “as a container of experiences” (p. 97). He argues that mass media offer us a ‘bifocal’ vision of the social world, in which media representations of totalising and global images may undercut the immediate knowledge and experience of our local world.³ Compared with the totalising, panoramic representations media provide, John Peters emphasises that our local knowledge and experiences are often too limited, fragmented, mired in immediacy, and thus “constantly discredited as a guide to living in the modern world” (p. 81). Similarly, when discussing the influence of globalisation on individual daily lives, Giddens (1991) claims that “the transformations of place, and the intrusion of

³ For instance, we may drive smoothly on a motorway, while only learning from the radio and television that there is a traffic jam miles away.

distance into local activities, combined with the centrality of mediated experiences, radically change what ‘the world’ actually is”. Therefore, he argues that “although everyone lives a local life, phenomenal worlds for the most part are truly global” (pp. 187-188).

As Evans (2011) argues, if viewers are able to access content from all around the world via illegal/unauthorised means, then the connection between television viewing and nationhood must be re-evaluated. By distributing the latest foreign programmes with the shortest time-gap, online sharing platforms increase “the capacity of mediated experience to involve us emotionally and morally with distant others, events and social-cultural contexts” (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 151), and therefore enhance audiences’ “bifocal” visions (J. D. Peters, 1997) of the world. It is in this sense that we should look at what implications online, border-crossing consumption have for television’s relations with national and cultural identity and belonging.

iii. National and Local Identity in Globalisation

While addressing the significance of online platforms in their capacity to introduce further globalised and mediated experiences to audiences, I do not assume that globalisation necessarily leads to the end of locality/nation-states, or a “borderless world” in Ohmae’s (1990) phrase. Berking (2003) argues that many theorists of globalisation share a belief that the “national” is increasingly losing its importance as the main frame for the construction of collective identities, and has been undermined or even replaced by deterritorialised identity formations. Typical arguments are based on three interlocking processes: “1) the globalisation of the national economy; 2) the institutionalisation of new transnational legal regimes; and 3) the globalisation of

media and motion, of mobile images and people in motion” (p. 250). Tomlinson (2004) also argues that it is commonly understood that globalisation leads to a destruction of national identity, while the Western media plays a key role in this process. This kind of argument, he continues, is based on two assumptions: First, before the era of globalisation, there were well-defined cultural connections between geographical place and cultural experience, and these connections constituted people’s cultural identity. Second, what globalisation brings about is a homogenisation of cultural experience which destroys stable localities and wipes out the differences between locality-defined cultures which had previously constituted our identities.

There are at least three problems concerning globalisation in the above assumptions. First, economic transnationalisation and globalisation does not necessarily destroy national borders and lead to a single homogenised culture as Ohmae (1990) suggests. Mann (1995) states that, although international trade has greatly increased, “the national basis of production and trade seem undiminished” (p. 117). If we look at the contemporary mediascapes worldwide, such as that discussed earlier regarding the television industry, we can also see that national television systems remain the main form of television, and a large number of televisual products are still produced and consumed nationally. In this sense, the nation-state as a unit remains influential, even when the economy is increasingly globalised.

Second, although it seems that cultural or national unity is often territorially bound, connections between geographical place and cultural experiences are anything but natural and well-defined. Given the differences between people with regard to social status and conditions (e.g. gender, income, class and age differentials) longstanding before globalisation, people who live in the same territory (e.g. the same town, city,

nation) do not necessarily share homogenous cultural experiences at a particular and given time. However, such cultural differences between people might not be enunciated when it comes to the conceptualisation of “the nation”. As Donald (1988) argues, “cultural heterogeneity is given a certain fixity by the articulating principle of ‘the nation’. ‘The nation’ defines the culture’s unity by differentiating it from other cultures [...] a fictional unity [...] because the ‘us’ on the inside is itself always different” (p. 32).

Third, Berking (2003) argues that the declaration of the end of the nation-state ignores the fact that the “national” represents “not only identities but our dominant form of sociation as national-state organised societies” (p. 248). While globalising processes do indeed affect the form of the modern nation-state, the consequence is not so much the end of the nation-state, but a “reconfiguration process of the relation between state, territoriality, sovereignty and identity” (p. 261). Using the work of Castells (1997) as an example, Tomlinson (2004) states that, instead of resulting in the destruction of national identity, globalisation in fact may be a significant force in shaping and proliferating cultural and national identities and belongings.

To summarise, while globalisation may have an impact on how local places (e.g. a hometown, a nation) serve as containers’ of experiences, it is problematic to assume that globalisation leads to the destruction of local cultural and national identities. Cultural (or national) identity and belonging can be seen as a matter of negotiation, rather than a fixed unity. It is important to consider how forms of cultural and/or national identity change in the process of global encounters, such as the mediated cultural experiences brought about by global media. Regarding the relationship between the online consumption of foreign TV and identity, I am interested in how an

audience's understanding of local and global cultures develops via these modes of consumption. Specifically, how do audiences understand foreign countries when they can have access to an amount of the latest foreign media content larger than ever before? I will also examine how audiences' senses of national cultures may in turn be shaped by their understanding of foreigners since, as Morley and Robins (1995) point out, cultural or national identities are only "constituted in and through their relations to one another" (p. 45).

Furthermore, when it comes to the consumption and comprehension of cross-linguistic foreign television programmes, audiences may encounter the linguistic barriers: they do not speak the language of the foreign content they consume. Accordingly, it has been an important task for distributors and broadcasters to find appropriate translation practices "to transpose the language of the source programme into a form the target audience will readily understand" (Kilborn, 1993, p. 642). If we are to analyse how audiences' understanding of foreign cultures develops along with their viewing of foreign programmes, it is imperative to first examine how the possible language barriers may be coped with through various translation practices. Given these considerations, the next section looks at the role dubbing and subtitling play in transnational, cross-linguistic media consumption. Specifically, it analyses how dubbing and subtitling function as "transformative practices" (Adamou & Knox, 2011, p. 17)⁴ that shape audiences' understanding and perception of foreign and local cultures (a crucial issue to be discussed in Chapter 7). The practices of dubbing and subtitling in the Taiwanese context will also be addressed.

⁴ Adamou and Knox (2011) point out that dubbing and subtitling not only "contribute to determining the meaning of the target text, but they problematize notions of a fixed, stable *core* of textual identity" (p. 17). It is in this sense that these two translation measures are understood by Adamou and Knox as "transformative practices". (p. 17).

V. Dubbing, Subtitling and Their Alteration of Foreignness

Dubbing and subtitling are two crucial measures to bridge language gaps and cultural differences which audiences may experience in their consumption of foreign media texts. Dubbing and subtitling, by altering the foreignness of media texts in different ways, may influence audiences' understanding of these foreign texts. As Danan (1991) argues, dubbing is “an attempt to hide the foreign nature of a film by creating the illusion that actors are speaking the viewer's language” (p. 612). It is through such processes that “dubbed movies become, in a way, local productions” (p. 612). On the other hand, subtitling is “an extreme form of source-oriented translation [...] viewers are constantly reminded of the foreignness of a film by the presence of the original soundtrack” (pp. 612-613). Similarly, Chan (2011) sees dubbing as a form of cultural domestication, and subtitling as a form of foreignisation, or “preserving the foreignness” in Chua's (2008b, 2011) terms.

The respective employment of the two translation practices varies worldwide, and which practice is chosen in a given country is partly based on economic conditions. Generally speaking, as dubbing is much more expensive than subtitling, it is more often used in larger countries which have bigger media markets. On the other hand, small economies (e.g. Austria, The Netherlands) tend to adopt subtitling when importing foreign media (Kilborn, 1993; Wissmath, Weibel, & Groner, 2009).⁵ More importantly, the employment of either dubbing or subtitling by a given country may also be seen as an expression of nationalism or it can be associated with issues

⁵ For instance, in Europe, while dubbing is generally used in larger countries (e.g. Italy, Germany, Spain), subtitling is used in smaller countries such as Belgium, Austria and the Scandinavian countries (Wissmath et al., 2009).

concerning cultural identity (Burgelman & Pauwels, 1992; Danan, 1991; Kilborn, 1993). For instance, in his analysis of translation practices in Western European countries, Danan (1991) points out that “suppressing or accepting the foreign nature of imported films is a key to understanding how a country perceives itself in relation to others” (p. 613). While subtitling corresponds to a cultural system more open to foreign influences, dubbing often results from dominant national systems in which nationalistic media rhetoric and language policy are promoted.

In Taiwan, where the media industry is highly import-oriented and relatively open to foreign media texts (see Chapter 2), the policy regarding translation practices is flexible. Under the Radio and Television Act,⁶ while foreign-language programmes on free-to-air networks are required to be either subtitled or dubbed, no specific requirement or rules are applied regarding which translation practice should be chosen.⁷ The cable TV system is allowed to broadcast more foreign programmes with no regulatory stipulation regarding what translation practices are used. In practice, both subtitling and dubbing are commonly employed on TV (including free-to-air, cable and satellite networks), and the broadcasters’ decision as to which mode to employ depends mainly on economic reasons: broadcasters go for the practice most likely to attract greater audiences and/or earn more profit. Specifically, American programmes were typically subtitled when broadcast on free-to-air networks before the 1980s, as audiences (many of whom were elites and intellectuals) preferred the

⁶ Article 19 of the Radio and Television Act reads: “Locally produced programmes shall not be less than 70 per cent of the total radio/television programmes. Foreign-language programmes shall carry Chinese subtitles or broadcast with Mandarin narration. If necessary, the regulatory agency may instruct (sic) that the programmes be dubbed in Chinese” (official English translation).

⁷ Japanese programmes and other media forms were the only foreign media texts which were strictly restricted regarding their importation or broadcasting before 1993 (Y.-F. Ko, 2008; Y.-T. Lin, 2011). However, restrictions on Japanese programmes were not listed in the Radio and Television Acts, but were detailed in other policies.

subtitled versions to the dubbed ones (Ho, 2002, p. 93). However, since the 1980s, the three free-to-air networks began to dub American series as a way to “popularise” these and to attract mass audiences. (Y.-T. Lin, 2011, pp. 52-55). Nowadays, American and other English programmes broadcast in Taiwan are more commonly subtitled, while dubbing is also employed and occasionally broadcast with multichannel television sound (MTS).⁸

As part of an attempt at decolonisation, the use of the Japanese language in public places, schools, newspapers, and terrestrial broadcasting (including radio and television) was generally banned before the 1990s (Y.-F. Ko, 2008, 2009). In the rare cases in which certain Japanese programmes were on air, they were mostly dubbed into Mandarin (Cao, 1992; M.-F. Chen, 1992). After Japanese programmes were allowed to be legally broadcast on both satellite and terrestrial television, the employment of dubbing or subtitling has not so much to do with geopolitical reasons but more with business concerns. When Japanese trendy dramas were first imported in the early 1990s most were dubbed into Mandarin. However, in the mid-1990s most Taiwanese networks stopped dubbing the majority of Japanese programmes in response to the insistence of Taiwanese audiences that they wanted to consume the “original” Japanese versions (Iwabuchi, 2002; Sakai, 2004). Nowadays, Japanese programmes are usually subtitled, except for cartoons that are occasionally dubbed (with or without MTS, see also Chapter 2 Section II).

In terms of Korean programmes, the programmes broadcast in Taiwan are mainly dramas (and a relatively small number of variety shows, which are either dubbed or

⁸ For instance, satellite networks such as Travel and Living Channel (TLC) and Animal Planet tend to localise their services by dubbing a certain amount of their programmes.

subtitled). Korean dramas are usually dubbed without MTS, since local networks consider that the dubbed versions attract more audiences (H. M. Kim, 2005; Sakai, 2004). As a result, in cases where both dubbed and undubbed versions are broadcast, the dubbed version of Korean dramas is usually on primetime, whereas undubbed versions are placed in less popular time slots.

In the empirical analysis in Chapter 7, I will further discuss how the employment of dubbing and subtitling in the Taiwanese industry has influenced audiences' decision to opt for online sharing to consume foreign programmes, and how audiences' online consumption has shaped their perception of the "foreign" and "local".

VI. Television, Co-temporality, and Cross-cultural Relationships

This section reviews the concept of "coevalness" (Fabian, 1983) and other research regarding the relationship between television and temporality in cross-cultural contexts, in order to help examine one of the main aims of this research: the implications of online consumption of foreign TV for perceptions of co-temporality, foreign cultures and transnational cultural power relationships (see Chapters 6 and 7).

i. Coevalness, Colonial Time and TV Time

Tomlinson (2007) argues that the growing popularity of the use of media technologies, and the tendency for mediated experiences to be taken for granted by audiences indicates that media, as agents of time-space bridging, are gaining importance in our everyday lives. He considers it imperative to study the ways "in which technologies, as the perceived 'vehicle' of an increasing cultural acceleration, have been received and interpreted" (p. 11). Similarly, Wilk (1994) argues that the greatest impact of

media lies in “the concepts of time and distance carried by the immediacy of the medium” (p. 94). In this regard, it is important to understand how the use of the Internet in the online consumption of foreign TV bridges the temporal and spatial gaps between foreign broadcasts and local consumption, and how such consumption shapes audiences’ sense of temporal distance from foreign countries.

Fabian (1983) argues that the word coevalness contains both notions of “synchronous/simultaneous” and “contemporary”, and he takes “*synchronous* to refer to events occurring at the same physical time; *contemporary* asserts co-occurrence in what I called typological time” (p. 31). He points out that in anthropology, especially Western anthropology, there is a problem called “denial of coevalness”, which refers to the tendency to place the people being studied at a time other than the present one in which the anthropologists are living. In other words, it becomes a way for anthropologists to put research subjects into another temporality, one normally years behind, thus “turning ‘the other’ far away into the ‘primitive’ long ago” (Shove, Trentmann, & Wilk, 2009, p. 2).

Based on Fabian’s idea of time, Wilk (1994) defines two notions of time, “colonial time” and “TV time”, in his study of the consumption of satellite TV in Belize. Colonial time refers to “a system that merges time with distance and cultural difference” (p. 95). Wilk argues that colonial time is at the heart of colonial cosmology, in which time, distance and culture are almost interchangeable notions in terms of justifying cultural differences between the colony and the metropole. By objectifying the tradition of the colonial culture as something rooted in a primitive time and distance place, the colony is kept in a different and backward time zone. As such, colonial time functions as a form of cultural timekeeping and affirms the

superiority/advanced status of the colonial agents and the inferiority/undeveloped status of the colonised.

Another notion of time in Wilk's theory is TV time. He argues that before the 1980s, old foreign TV programmes (mainly from the United States) provided by local networks made the Belizeans feel that the present in Belize was years behind the present in the metropole (the US). However, new forms of TV time, brought by satellite technology in the 1980s, offered Belizean audiences a new viewing experience: they could watch *real time* television being broadcast *now* (p. 98) from the US. This change, according to Wilk, has removed the temporal distance between the metropole and the colony. Products and cultures outside Belize are no longer something from the advanced future, while, at the same time, local cultures can also be considered as existing in the present. Wilk believes that since the information time-gap between the United States and Belize is gone, Belizeans can now regard American culture in the same temporality as local culture. In this sense, he argues that TV time seems to have the power to "unfreeze clocks" (p. 100), thereby releasing the colony's present from the past and placing metropolises and the colony on the same timeline.

Nevertheless, it may be too arbitrary to argue that temporal distance is removed simply by the arrival of satellite TV or certain media technologies. The removal of temporal distance should not be understood as a decisive moment or an action that takes place once and works immediately. The next subsection discusses how the satellite as a time and space machine, might not remove but reconfirm instead the temporal distance between different parts of the world.

ii. Satellite TV and Cultural Distance in the Context of Modernity

Green (1987, as cited in Morley, 2000, pp. 99-100) studies the consumption of television in the Outback, a remote area of Australia. She finds that for her respondents, while in the past the lack of outside communication in the Outback had made them feel self-centred and isolated, the introduction of satellite TV made this issue more complicated. On the one hand, the residents became more aware of other parts of Australia and thus had a stronger sense of inclusion after the introduction of satellite TV. On the other hand, TV commercials aggravated their sense of exclusion, when they found that the goods advertised were in fact unavailable in the place where they lived. In other words, instead of only having the effect of eliminating mental and geographical distance, the introduction of satellite television also heightened their sense of mental and geographical difference.

Parks' (2003) analysis of *Our World*, the first international satellite TV programme broadcast in 1967, further demonstrates the implications of the use of satellite television for the building of both temporality and spatiality. She argues that *Our World* used various forms of narrative, aesthetic and camera techniques to stress the concept of immediacy and global now-ness, and defines its broadcast as a global event that transcended temporal and spatial distance and cultural boundaries. However, at that time, only a few developed countries were able to receive and deliver satellite signals. Furthermore, *Our World* portrayed life in the Third World as hungry people struggling towards basic living conditions, while that in the West was depicted as people engaging in intellectual life at their leisure. In this regard, Parks points out that the notion of "global" is nothing more than the Western imagination of the global (mainly referring to the United States, West Europe and Japan at that time).

Non-industrialised countries were not seen as present in the same temporality as their industrialised counterparts when *Our World* was broadcast live “globally”.

While Wilk shows how satellite TV can break temporal and spatial distance, what Green and Parks demonstrate is the opposite possibility: the historical and political contexts of satellite TV can work as a way to consign the geographically peripheral world to the past. Park (2003) states that the meaning of liveness in the 1960s was closely related to modernisation. Satellite TV, with its capacity to reconfigure time and space, became the key to reaffirming the Western hegemony over *Our World* because it “divided the world not only into First and Third, industrialised and developing, but also fast and slow” (p. 90). In this sense, even if satellite TV can, to some extent, break the temporal transmission gap, TV time does not necessarily escape completely from the ideology of colonial time, particularly if the First and Third worlds are not “co-present in time” (see also Section II regarding liveness).

While Fabian (1983) argues that the notion of coevalness includes both “synchronous/simultaneous” and the “contemporary”, he does not clearly explain the relationship between the two notions, and how this constitutes coevalness. The studies of Wilk, Green and Parks help to clarify this relationship by demonstrating how the satellite’s capacity to distribute simultaneous, live information worldwide may influence the ways in which audiences understand the cultural and temporal distances between themselves and others.

iii. The Acceleration of Cultural Flows, and Cultural Relationships

It is important to contextualise the sense of time in the setting in which the Internet is used as a mode of consumption. Wilk (1994) accurately points out that the greatest impact of TV lies in “the concepts of time and distance carried by the immediacy of the medium” (p. 94). As there are now more technologies capable of delivering the latest information from foreign cultures, the concept of TV time may be expanded to include that of “electronic media time”, a general category to cover the influence of the senses of temporality provided by different media. In particular, I argue that “Internet time”, as a significant type of electronic media time, shapes the sense of temporality in/between different regions.

The consumption of foreign TV via online sharing is associated with this Internet time. As previously argued in Chapter 2 Section IV, the possibility of the Internet to promptly distribute audio-video files across various borders at a much faster speed than their predecessors (e.g. DVDs) is a key reason why online sharing is used increasingly by audiences worldwide to consume foreign programmes. Moreover, as a cross-cultural practice, such consumption raises two questions: what foreign media are audiences attracted by and why? As Iwabuchi (2002) argues, the perception and appreciation of foreign cultures is always associated with transnational cultural power – a culture’s capacity to produce symbolic meanings with which other cultures identify. The audiences’ sense of temporality with a given foreign other is, by default, reciprocal: both sides have their own sense of temporality towards their other side. The dynamics of cultural power relationships seem to be manifested when examining how two cultures, via increasing and accelerating cultural exchanges, conceptualise their sense of temporality with each other.

On the one hand, in the context of East Asia, various research regards the sense of coevalness as a key reason why Korean or Japanese dramas are well received in Taiwan and other parts of East Asia (H.-J. Cho, 2005; Iwabuchi, 2002; H. M. Kim, 2005; M.-T. Lee, 2004b). On the other hand, studies also show that Japanese audiences view other East Asian cultures with nostalgia, in a sense denying coevalness (Iwabuchi, 2002, 2008), or “counter-coevality” in Jung’s (2011, p. 39) terms. In other words, intensified East Asian cultural flows do not necessarily mean that audiences in different countries consider that they share the same co-temporality with their neighbouring countries. It is true that the Internet has facilitated the transnational distribution of media texts and bridged the time-gap between foreign broadcasts and local consumption. However, when examining the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing, it is important to carefully look at: 1) how audiences conceptualise their sense of co-temporality with foreign others; 2) with which foreign others audiences share (or do not share) temporality; 3) what implications such conceptualisations have for transnational cultural power relationships.

Specifically, it is important to point out that, although coevalness is commonly employed by studies on media flows to explain the sense of contemporaneity between different cultures/countries (H.-J. Cho, 2005; Y. Cho, 2011; Chua & Iwabuchi, 2008; Iwabuchi, 2002; Powell, 2002; Wilk, 1994), little research examines closely how the temporality of television output and scheduling is at work in the process of consumption through which a sense of temporality with foreign cultures is generated. As a result, the significance of television as a “time-based medium” (Scannell, 2009, p. 223) is not fully analysed in the cross-cultural consumption of television.

Scannell (2000) argues that television broadcasting is delivered as a daily schedule “not now and then but continuously, uninterruptedly and indefinitely” (p. 19). This form of dailiness, “yields the sense we all have of the ordinariness, the familiarity and obviousness of radio and television” (p. 19). It also helps to make time “available as a shared resource for the generations of living”, namely, a “shared temporality as being together *now*” (p. 19). In the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing, apart from watching something delivered by legal local and transnational broadcasters and content providers, it has become increasingly imaginable for audiences to follow national broadcasting schedules of foreign countries more directly. In this regard, the temporality of foreign broadcasting may be more significant in shaping audiences’ sense of temporality, and therefore should be examined closely if we are to understand more comprehensively how coevalness is achieved via the consumption of television. This is a key theme in Chapter 6’s empirical analysis.

This chapter has conceptualised the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing as an emerging form of cross-cultural practice and has underlined its important bearing on changing notions of television, cultural flows and audiences’ perception of foreign and local cultures as well as the construction of cultural identities. As the major aim of the study is to understand audiences’ consumption of foreign TV via online sharing, it is necessary to approach audiences and to examine the way in which they construct their media consumption, and in what sense such online consumption of foreign shows is significant to them. In the next chapter, I will introduce the research design and the methodology applied in gathering the necessary empirical data to achieve the aims of this study. The design and conduct of the empirical research is framed on the socio-cultural conditions and theoretical discussions outlined in Chapters 1 to 3.

Chapter 4: Methodology and Research Design

Four issues will be addressed in this chapter. The first section discusses the ethical concerns relevant to the copyright issues in this study. Second, the concepts involved in online ethnography, including the works of Hine (2000) and Kozinets (2010) in particular will be examined. The third section discusses the way in which online and other methods (e.g. face-to-face interviews) are used in this empirical research. Fourthly, I will introduce the research design, which includes participant observation and in-depth interviews.

I. Ethical Concerns

This study is an example of qualitative audience research whose data collection and generation focuses on the audience (Jensen, 1991, p. 139). It attempts to account for the cultural implications of the online consumption of foreign programmes by examining the way in which an audience makes sense of its consumption of foreign TV via online sharing. Before introducing my research design, I will briefly discuss a key ethical concern that influences the way in which this study was designed and conducted: the legality of use of online file sharing.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the legality of using online file-sharing is a complicated issue still in dispute due to conflicts between the notion of copyright, its exploitation and application, and the copyright-related creative activities of ordinary people (Lessig, 2003). It is also partly a legal ambiguity that makes the consumption of online sharing increasingly prevalent as an everyday practice by audiences around the world. In this context, how do we approach audiences given these conditions?

It is common to find social science studies, such as analyses of deviant groups and behaviours, that engage with legal controversies (e.g. Adler, 1993; Adler & Adler, 1993 on drug dealing; Bourgois, 1999 on gang communities; Whyte, 1993 on social activities in the Italian American slum Cornerville). The researchers who carried out these studies suggest that fellow scholars deploy self-consciousness and reflexivity in order to negotiate with (instead of ignoring) the ethical controversies and practical difficulties encountered in the research process.

Similarly, I adopted a reflexive stance in terms of my research design and conduct as follows: First, given that the audiences' perception of the legality of online sharing is not my research focus, and that there is still ambiguity regarding this issue, the most practical and reasonable way to deal with the topic is to leave the answer open. I did not judge whether the research subjects' online consumption of foreign shows was legal or not in the first place. My research design, mode of conduct and analysis of the empirical data were based on this stance. After all, who would like to be studied if he or she finds that his or her everyday practices were judged illegal by an unknown researcher, while the legality with regard to such practices is still uncertain? Second, this is not to say that the legality of online sharing has been ignored here. Rather, when I recruited the potential research subjects, I explained to them that I was aware of possible legal controversies in their consumption, but I did not focus on or judge the legality of their consumption in the interviews. If relevant legal issues were brought up during the interview, I would leave my answer open and focus on understanding how they perceive the legality of their consumption. Such openness makes it possible to capture the cultural implications of such consumption without ignoring the legal concerns it may raise.

II. Online Ethnography and Its Implications for This Study

The key data that this research needed to gather includes: how and why audiences employ online methods; what foreign programmes they prefer; how such consumption is incorporated to their everyday lives; and how it shapes their perception of foreign and local cultures. Face-to-face in-depth interviews were employed as the main research approach. This study regards qualitative interview as constituting data generation, a process in which researchers often cooperate with interviewees to co-produce the data (Mason, 1996). As Mason argues, the data gathered and produced are a result of the interaction between researchers and interviewees. The data gained from the interview and other secondary methods were, as Jensen (1991) argues, “interpreted with reference to context, both the context of the media discourses in question and the broad social context of historical and psychoanalytic circumstances” (p. 140).

Furthermore, the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing is a social phenomenon that not only involves offline, physical settings (the household where the consumption takes place, the devices the audiences used, etc.), but is also based on virtual and online settings. It is a phenomenon that is manifested and can be captured in various online spaces. For example, we can observe that a large number of online forums are sharing a wide range of media content worldwide and that many audiences are discussing the latest programmes on social media. If we view a live stream video on an interactive platform, we may also be reading and participating in an instant discussion with other online audiences. While such practices demonstrate the important empirical contexts in which virtual consumption takes place, they are not easily captured and studied based solely on

traditional ethnographic methods. Given this concern, my research design and its conduct was based largely on blended ethnography/netography:¹ “a combination of approaches, including data gathered in face-to-face as well as online interaction” (Kozinets, 2010, p. 65).

As Internet-related research, my study can be counted as “research into communities/cultures online” as Kozinets (2010) defines it: research which does not focus on a certain cultural phenomenon directly related to online culture² itself, but which concerns a phenomenon which exists not only online but also beyond it. Research based on this approach looks at a given online community or an online practice because it reflects and relates to a wider social phenomenon. While I observed and examined certain online discussions on several social networking sites (see Section IV), I did not look exclusively at the online phenomena as such. Rather, by examining the audiences’ online practices along with their offline media consumption, I focused more on how they made sense of such online practices in their everyday lives and what implications such sense-making processes have for

¹ Kozinets (2010) argues that there are many terms attached to online ethnography, including webnography, cyberanthropology and so on. He defines netnography as a form of ethnographic research adapted to include the Internet’s influence on contemporary society. However, he does not clearly define how netnography is crucially different from Hine’s (2000) notion of “virtual ethnography”. In comparison to virtual ethnography, Kozinets focuses more on practical ethnographic procedures and methods of conducting online research, and he proposes the concept of blended ethnography/netnography. In this approach, both online and face-to-face interactions are important to the research. Researchers may also collect data from both online and face-to-face settings. In contrast, a pure netnography is more suitable for studies of “online communities/cultures”.

² Kozinets (2010) categorises Internet-related research into two types: “research into communities/cultures online” and “research on online communities/cultures”. The latter refers to research focusing on a given online culture (e.g. online dating or online gaming), and “online communities, online identity, online sociolinguistic patterns, cyberculture(s); relationships that emerge through Computer-related communication *will be central, core constructs that the research tries to explain*” (p. 64). Moreover, this type of research tends to employ netnography as the primary method, and Kozinets cites Correll’s (1995) work on the online lesbian community Lesbian Café and Baym’s (2000) research on the online soap opera newsgroup rec.art.tv.soaps as two examples of these studies.

issues such as identity construction and the development of transnational media flows.

“Research into communities/cultures online” tends to see netnography (i.e. online ethnography, or virtual ethnography) as forming a secondary or supporting role (Kozinets, 2010). Hine (2000) argues that, traditionally, ethnography stresses being there, and face-to-face interaction, and therefore relies on travel, experience and interaction in person. However, she considers that face-to-face should not be regarded as inherently better than other forms of interactions. Rather, she claims that it is necessary to first examine how physical presence plays a role in making ethnographers’ work convincing³ and then suggests re-conceptualising ethnographic authenticity in a way that incorporates mediated communications on its own terms.⁴

Castells (2010) argues that, with the advent of communication technologies, communication practices increasingly take place not only within a given physical place but also at a spatial distance. He calls the spatiality of social interaction “the space of flows”, defining it as “the material support of simultaneous social practices communicated at a distance” (p. xxxi). Drawing on Castells’ theory, Hine (2000) points out that the space of flow is formed around connection rather than

³ Hine (2000, pp. 43-46) argues that ethnographies can be viewed as “textual constructions of reality”. Ethnographic works rely heavily on the experiences of ethnographers to construct a convincing story. The first-hand data is regarded as imperative in the construction of ethnographically valid research. It is in this sense that actions such as travelling to the field site, being there and interacting with people face-to-face are considered valuable in contemporary ethnography.

⁴ Hine uses Baym’s (2000) study as an example. She argues that in Baym’s study, the latter clearly explains issues such as how she negotiated with the people in the online community to access information and how she observed and interacted with these people in the virtual setting. Since Baym provided valuable details to explain the significance of the virtual setting and the ways she coped with it and why it was appropriate to conduct the research online, she could provide information as valuable as other studies.

physical location. The ethnographic field site in turn can be considered as a field of flows “organised around tracing connections rather than about location in a singular bounded site” (p. 61). She suggests that ethnography – and virtual ethnography in particular – pay more attention to connectivity rather than bounded locations/places. Connective ethnography turns its focus from “‘being there’ to ‘getting there’” (p. 62). It enables researchers to conduct studies based on connections in and around the Internet, abandoning online/offline boundaries and exploring how connections are assembled.

By the word connectivity, Hine means the cultural processes in which social interactions and communication take place. Connection may refer to two friends’ online instant-messaging about a given television show or live discussion threads about a sports game on a social networking site. It can also be domestic environments (e.g. a living room) where the Internet is used to access a foreign programme. Since the connections can take place physically in a place, or virtually in a space, a given field site can be conceptualised as a domain that consists of certain connections between people. In this regard, a field site can be a physical place or a virtual space, or both. A given field site can expand and be linked to different places/spaces via the dynamic flows of cultural connection.

More specifically, compared with face-to-face interviews and interactions, the most important benefit of virtual approaches (e.g. online interviews, online observations) is that they are, in a sense, closer to the “natural” (online) settings (Morley & Silverstone, 1991, p. 149) in which the online consumption takes place. Such virtual settings can also be as much field sites as physical domestic places. For instance, when an interview takes place face-to-face, the interviewee is usually

offline and not necessarily engaging with the devices (e.g. desktop) that he or she uses to watch the relevant programmes. By comparison, if the researcher interacts and interviews an interviewee online via instant messaging, such interaction may provide information regarding how he or she uses the Internet as a set of everyday practices in a more general context (even though certain visual and audio cues such as facial expressions are inevitably lost). Such information helps contextualise the interviewees' online consumption of foreign TV. However, this may not be readily obtainable in a face-to-face-interview setting, a dynamic in which interviewees are more likely to explain, rather than "naturally" reveal their Internet use. Hence, online methods were applied in this study, namely with the purpose of gaining "access to naturalised domains and their characteristic activities" (Morley & Silverstone, 1991, p. 156) that face-to-face interviews might not offer.

III. Applying Online and Offline Methods

This research employed both online and offline qualitative methods, including online observation, online and offline recruitment of research subjects, and online and offline in-depth interviews with the following principles.

Firstly, in terms of online observation, Baym (2000) points out that many audience research projects (e.g. Brown, 1994; Hobson, 1989; C. Williams, 1992) rely exclusively on focus groups or interviews. They did not employ any specific form of observation for their data collection. However, she considers that, without applying observation, these research projects may overlook the natural setting and spontaneous process in which the audience discussion occurs (p. 15). As a result, they cannot express clearly how fan talk is used to negotiate relationships between

viewers and dramas, or the relationships between viewers. I consider how social networking sites, as an online setting, demonstrate important information regarding how audiences' discussions take place and what topics audiences care about. This advantage was manifested particularly when I followed live discussions in which audiences would gather and discuss their viewing of a certain show while the show was on air. Therefore, online observation was employed to gather information concerning the discussions of foreign programmes on several well-known, public Taiwanese online networking platforms and blogs (see Section IV). The purpose was to better understand the way audiences discussed their online viewing of foreign shows with others in a relatively natural online setting where the conversation took place.

Secondly, in terms of the recruitment of the research subjects, given the legal sensitivity of online sharing, in most cases, those potential subjects whom I did not know were reluctant about be interviewed since they had difficulties in confirming my identity as a researcher (especially if they were contacted online). Therefore, I relied on my (offline) existing social networks to conduct snowball sampling and in order to recruit research subjects. I also attempted to recruit certain research subjects via online forums and platforms, ones whom I considered to be specifically interested in foreign programmes and heavy users of online platforms (e.g. administrators of forums featuring the latest foreign genres). With significant virtual profiles regarding their consumption of foreign TV via online sharing, such audiences might have been appropriate potential research subjects for this study. I contacted seven of these administrators or bloggers via email to ascertain their willingness to be my research subjects, and whether they would consent to be interviewed either online or in a face-to-face setting, according to their preference.

I explained my research purpose, my stance for the openness regarding the legality of their consumption, and guaranteed that all data gathered from them would be confidential and used exclusively for academic purposes. However, only one blogger agreed to be interviewed; others politely refused my request, saying either that they were busy or that they had their own concerns (without clearly mentioning what these were). Due to these difficulties, the range of online recruitment achieved was inevitably limited; most research subjects were drawn from offline snowball sampling.

Thirdly, in terms of in-depth interviews, face-to-face in-depth interviews provided visual and audio cues to help understand the interviewees' responses (Berg, 2009; Gillham, 2005; Hine, 2000; Kozinets, 2010; C. Mann & Stewart, 2000). However, online interviews were applied in two situations: 1) Three interviewees were interviewed online because they had their own concerns (e.g. lack of time, sensitive to accusations of copyright infringement) and were reluctant to be interviewed face-to-face; 2) online interviewing was applied after face-to-face interviews, when I needed to ask the interviewees follow-up questions and/or confirm with them certain pieces of information they had provided previously.

The structure of the in-depth interview in this study was designed based on the methodological guidelines by Gillham (2005), James and Busher (2009), Mason (1996) and Gray (2003). It moved between semi-structured and unstructured: all interviews were conducted with a standard outline of questions handed to the research subjects, but the interviews were also interactive and open-ended.

I briefly explained my research and outlined key research questions at the beginning of the interview. After this brief introduction, I tended to let the interviewees develop their own narratives freely and to see how they understood and responded to the questions. I also responded to their spontaneous narratives and prompted follow-up questions if I needed to reconfirm certain information or if I uncovered some implications relating significantly to my research that were not clearly expressed. In many cases, the narratives that seemed to be trivial or irrelevant to the research at first glance turned out to be crucial to the explanation of the interviewees' viewing patterns.⁵ Specifically, in this study, many interviewees had already taken the online viewing of the latest foreign programmes for granted, so it was sometimes not easy to gather important information using a structured approach, because the interviewees tended to respond to the question simply and briefly without providing enough context. An open-ended interview structure was thereby applied to cope with this problem, as it provided information that explained how they understood the media technologies they relied on, and what their consumption of foreign media really meant to them. As Gray (1987, quoted in Morley & Silverstone, 1991, p. 155) suggests, the value of interviewing audiences with the open-ended approaches is that they allow “respondents to ‘tell it their way’ with a minimum of direction”.

Fourthly and lastly, I kept in touch with the interviewees via online interaction if they were willing to do this. Roughly one-third of the interviewees maintained an online connection with me. Depending on their willingness, the degree of online

⁵ For instance, an interviewee talked about her travel plans and certain episodes regarding her previous student life during the interview, and such information crucially explained why she preferred Korean dramas to Japanese ones. Some interviewees talked about what new mobile phones or other media devices they were planning to buy; and such conversations were always helpful in analysing their understanding of media technologies as a whole.

interaction varied, ranging from direct instant messaging to keeping each other on our social networking sites (e.g. Facebook) with limited direct interaction. As James & Busher (2009) argue, previous research has shown that rather than changing their personas constantly, most individuals tend to maintain a stable and abiding online personality in the long term. Therefore, a long period of interaction, even when it takes place online, enables researchers to confirm the authenticity of the research subjects' written information. In this sense, in cases where the research subjects only wanted to be interviewed online, online interaction helped to support the text-based information provided by the subjects. In those cases in which interviews took place face-to-face, online interaction (especially if retained over the long-term) helped the researcher to better understand the research subjects. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing takes place on the Internet: the interviewees went online to access their favourite programmes. Communicating with the interviewees online indicated that the interviewees might be in a setting closer to the situation in which their consumption took place, especially when compared to face-to-face interaction. Therefore, online interaction with research subjects provides significant information which helps to understand how the consumption of foreign shows via online sharing is embedded in audiences' general Internet use and in everyday contexts.

IV. Research Design and Conduct of the Interviews

i. The Design of the Online Observation

Foreign TV online public discussion platforms/forums/websites were observed from 2007 to 2014 as a supplementary form of data collection. The rationale for the observation of these forums is two-fold. First, they were public and could be visited

by the audiences without requiring special means of identification or complex procedures. Second, since these forums attracted a significant number of audiences who consumed the latest foreign shows via online sharing, they served as a good channel through which to understand the general development of this form of consumption.

Specifically, the PTT,⁶ based on based on Bulletin Board System (BBS),⁷ is one of the most popular social networking sites in Taiwan. It was featured as my sample site for the observation of audiences' discussions of foreign TV and which allowed me to search for opportunities to recruit some audience members as my research subjects (as explained in Section III, this recruitment turned out to be unsuccessful). Specifically, I focused on gathering information relating to the following questions:

1. Historical changes in the discussion topics: When did the PTT and other online forums or social networking sites start to discuss the latest foreign TV shows, and when did such discussions become mainstream topics?
2. What are the PTT forum rules regarding the discussion of "illegal" methods of foreign TV consumption such as pirate DVD or fan-subbing versions of files?

⁶ PTT (<http://www.ptt.cc/index.html>, or Telnet://ptt.cc) was established and managed by National Taiwan University from 1995. It has been the biggest and most influential BBS in Taiwan, with more than six thousands bulletin boards and sixty thousand members.

⁷ Bulletin Board System (shortened as BBS) is an online social network system (developed in the late 1970s) providing functions such as bulletin boards, mails, chat rooms that allow users to communicate on the Internet. Originally, it was connected through phone lines and modems. In the early 1990s BBS allowed access through Telnet, a kind of online protocol. BBS lost its popularity since the Internet become popular throughout the world. However, the text-based BBS system is still extremely popular in Taiwan today. Generally, the BBSs used in Taiwan today are accessible via both Telnet and the Internet. In a large number of cases in Taiwan, the BBSs are founded and run under the regulations of education institutes such as universities so that they are not for commercial use.

3. Concerning aspects of audiences' discussions of foreign TV, how did they discuss the latest dramas that they obtained only through illegal and/or unofficial online methods?

By observing the way in which audiences discussed their viewing and acted in the forums, crucial information regarding how they understood and consumed foreign TV online was obtained. Specifically, in order to avoid being accused of infringing copyright, PPT does not allow users to publicly discuss and share illegal/unofficial access to copyrighted content. Discussions on such access (e.g. where to download a given programme, how to bypass the IP restrictions of a certain online platform, which fansubbing groups' subtitles are more accurate) are banned by board administrators. Therefore, PTT users tend only to discuss the contents of foreign shows (e.g. why they like a given drama, whether an actor's performance is convincing) without mentioning how they managed to access the shows. However, ironically, all public discussions about the actual content of the latest foreign shows unavailable via legal means (e.g. local cable television) are evidence demonstrating the existence of consumption through controversial online methods.

While discussions on access were frequently seen before 2007, they have been much less evident since the beginning of the 2010s. Moreover, while the majority of the online discussions focused on foreign programmes broadcast on local television networks before 2007-2008, this has gradually switched to programmes available via illegal and online access. Identical patterns can be found in other Taiwanese social networking sites featuring foreign programmes. It seems that audiences take accessing this material for granted, as if it were a choice as common and sustainable as those provided by legal channels such as local networks. The

online observation followed the development of Taiwanese online discussions on foreign shows, and the data gathered helped to examine how the online consumption of foreign TV has become a norm of television experience in Taiwan (see Chapters 5 and 6).

According to the online observation, those programmes that were popular in their originating countries also tended to be more frequently discussed on Taiwanese networking sites. Occasionally, a small number of online services that provided unauthorised access to the live terrestrial television of foreign countries emerged and became popular online. While such access was usually shorted-lived (e.g. lasted only in days or weeks), it often encouraged enthusiastic real-time discussions on networking sites when a certain highly anticipated programme was broadcast live in its originating country.⁸ This tendency was prevalent in 2007 and 2008, especially in cases in which some Japanese dramas that garnered high domestic ratings and featured popular, good-looking actors and actresses were being aired live in Japan. Special attention was paid to these instances. First, I observed how these dramas were discussed before and after the three-month span of their broadcasts. Second, I also followed closely the PTT discussions when these dramas were live broadcast in Japan.

Specifically, the drama *Operation Love* (*Puopōzu Daisakusen*, プロポーズ大作戦) was one of the exemplars that generated very enthusiastic online discussions. It was therefore chosen as my main case study in Chapter 6 Section II concerning the importance of liveness in the online viewing of foreign programmes.

⁸ This situation was more common during 2007 and 2008. Online access to foreign live broadcasts (especially Japanese programmes) has become much less readily available in recent years.

Another example which generated a great number of discussions on social media in Taiwan was the broadcast of the Japanese drama *Hanawa Naoki* (半沢直樹) in Japan. While its online popularity among the Taiwanese audiences was covered intensely by the mainstream Taiwanese news, a serious and factual error occurred in such coverage. As a researcher in media studies and a long-time consumer of Japanese dramas, I discovered such a critical journalistic blunder right away from my online observation of Taiwanese social media (for details of the factual error and the subsequent blunder of the Taiwanese media, see Chapter 6, Section V). This development in the media coverage should serve as one of the most significant and up-to-date instances relating to one of my key research concerns: how the Taiwanese audiences' sense of coevalness was achieved through informal online circulation of foreign programmes. The broadcast of this Japanese drama was, therefore, also chosen as a relevant case in point in support of such research concerns.

ii. The Design of the Interview

After introducing the design and conduct of the online observation, the following subsection discusses how the in-depth interviews was designed and conducted.

1. Outline of the in-depth interviews

Based on my research concerns and the data collected from online observation, the data I aimed to gain from the in-depth interviews are listed as follows:

- (1) What general TV consumption patterns do the audiences have?
- (2) What are the viewing conditions in which the audience's consumption takes place?

- (3) How and why do the audiences use online sharing platforms/services to consume foreign shows?
- (4) What online sharing platforms do they use, and what are the reasons for choosing these platforms?
- (5) Do the audiences also deploy online sharing to consume other media materials (e.g. local shows, music)?
- (6) To the audiences, what are the similarities and differences between traditional TV watching and TV watching via online sharing?
- (7) Do they consider consumption via online sharing as in any sense significant? Why?
- (8) How does this kind of TV watching alter audiences' perceptions of local and foreign cultures as well as their sense of time and space?

A number of relevant studies also helped in developing the list of questions. Specifically, Gray's (1992) and Moores' (1993a) works served as guidelines when investigating a given new media technology's significance "as an object of domestic consumption" (Moores, 1993a, p. 621). Pertierra's (2012) study on practices of informal digital media circulation in Cuba helped in developing inquiries into audiences' motivation and the rationales of their online consumption of foreign TV. The works of Ming-Tsung Lee (2004a, 2004b), Ko (2004), and Fujita (2009) provided insight into the empirical examination of audiences' cultural identities.

The above lists of questions were then reshaped into an outline for interviewees (see Appendix 1). The outline was given to every interviewee at the beginning of the in-depth interview as a reference guide to help them to understand what my

research purpose was, what information I needed from the interviews, and how the interviews would be carried out.

2. The definition and recruitment of the research subjects

The above subsection discussed how the outline of the in-depth interviews was developed. I expand here on who I interviewed and the rationales for choosing them as my research subjects. Specifically, I discuss: 1). the conditions under which a given audience member could be defined as a potential research subject and; 2). how the subjects of this study were recruited and interviewed.

This study regards Taiwan as a zone of consumption (Pertierra & Turner, 2013) and focuses on the practices of Taiwanese audiences. Specifically, the research subjects were defined by the following two conditions. First, the audiences had to have grown up in Taiwan and have accumulated their television experiences in a Taiwanese context before they started adopting online viewing. Second, they had developed a regular use of such online sharing methods to watch foreign programmes. “Online sharing methods” here refers to any online methods (downloading/sharing activities, streaming platforms, etc.) which allow audiences to bypass temporal, spatial and legal restrictions in order to access foreign shows, especially those unavailable via legal forms of access (e.g. broadcasts of local networks, streaming platforms). The Taiwanese audiences who met both conditions were broadly considered as potential research subjects. In this regard, while Taiwanese audiences who had grown up in foreign countries were not included as subjects, those who had spent their childhood and teenage years in Taiwan but currently lived overseas were considered as potential subjects, as their online

viewing was based on their previous television experiences developed in a Taiwanese context.

Based on this delineation of research subjects, three conditions were taken into account in terms of subject recruitment. The first was concerned with the media the audiences used to consume foreign TV shows. This study aimed to understand how online viewing has become a normative television experience for Taiwanese audiences. It did not focus exclusively on those users of online sharing who mostly or only relied on online methods to access foreign programmes. Rather, recruitment included both the audiences who relied heavily on online sharing, as well as those who maintained older patterns of television consumption (e.g. viewing via a TV set) and those who used online sharing for their television consumption in a more casual fashion.

The second condition relates to the audiences' preferences for media content of two categories: the country of origin and the television genre. In terms of the foreign programmes' country of origin, Chapter 2 has examined how various conditions made the programmes from Japan, Korea and the United States the most popular foreign ones in Taiwan. Moreover, the online observation also indicated that, compared with programmes of other foreign origins, the online access and discussions featuring programmes from these three countries were more commonly found on most social networking sites. Accordingly, the sample included audiences with programme preferences derived from these three foreign countries.

With regard to genre, the sample consisted of audiences with different preferences (e.g. dramas/TV series, variety shows, animation, or sports). Specifically, the

sample included audiences who were fans of a certain foreign culture as well as those who consumed, but did not have specific interests in, foreign programmes and/or cultures. By taking a range of different audiences' preferences for programmes into account, it was possible to make sense of the significance of the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing more comprehensively.

The third condition had to do with the research subjects' place of residence and demographic profile. Specifically, the experiences of living overseas (i.e. outside Taiwan) were taken into account as a crucial recruitment variable. A key concern of this study relates to how the audiences' perceptions of foreign cultures may be shaped via their online access to foreign programmes. However, whether or not audiences had experiences of living abroad, as a significant form of direct contact with foreign cultures, plays a crucial role in influencing audiences' perceptions and understanding of foreign cultures. Given such concerns, both audiences who had and who had not lived overseas were included in this study, for the purpose of examining how audiences' boundary-crossing consumption shapes their sense of time and space and perception of foreign cultures along with other (local and/or foreign) cultural experiences. In terms of demographic considerations, I focused on recruiting audiences across a range of ages, educational backgrounds and occupations and with both genders. Based on the above three conditions, the following steps of snowball sampling were taken in the recruitment of my subjects:

(1) As a starting point I approached audiences who I knew (my close friends, past colleagues, etc.) and used these contacts as the main way to recruit research subjects. About one-third of the subjects were recruited via this approach. My relationships with these contacts were formed in three ways:

- Education: Many of the research subjects were friends and classmates who attended the same high school and/or university as me.
- Social networking sites: Some of research subjects were friends I knew via various online sites/forums for years, and these friendships were based on shared interests. While the friendships I had with them started from the Internet, I had met them in person over the years.
- Workplace: A few of research subjects were my colleagues who worked for a governmental research project at university.

At the time when the interviews were carried out I had known all these subjects for a minimum of two years (e.g. colleagues) up to a maximum of over 15 years (e.g. classmates from high school).

There are several reasons for this choice of sampling. First of all, given that I knew these acquaintances and was familiar with them in terms of their personalities, habits, interests and so on, it was easier to capture their general media consumption and discover the relationship between their general consumption patterns and their consumption of foreign TV programmes. Second, this scrutiny also provided information to determine whether the samples were representative and allowed me to adjust the sampling procedures. Third, as media consumption was an ongoing process, in order to account for their consumption, it was beneficial if I understood whether or how their consumption and viewing conditions changed over time (e.g. if they started to be interested in a new programme, acquired a new media device). However, it requires mutual understanding and long-term interaction between a researcher and research subjects to gather these two forms of information. In this

sense, the subjects with whom I had strong interpersonal ties (e.g. friends) emerged as the best subjects to begin with.

(2) Based on snowball sampling, I approached and interviewed audiences (strangers) who were introduced to me from my personal social network. About two-thirds of the subjects were recruited via this approach. The benefit of this approach was to widen the diversity of subjects in terms of age, occupation, education, etc., rather than limiting myself to acquaintances with whom I shared a similar cultural background. After each interview, I asked the interviewees if they could think of anyone who would be suitable to be one of my subjects, since I believed that they had gained more understanding of my research through their direct interaction with me. A few of them introduced me to their acquaintances (sisters, classmates, etc.), and in some cases these individuals became my interviewees at a later stage. Furthermore, this introduction also served as a good way for me to get to know these interviewees better, since their interpersonal and mutual networks offered a valuable opportunity to get to know them not only from the information they offered but also through the information provided by their acquaintances.

(3) As mentioned previously, while I tried to recruit several subjects online who had actively discussed, showed interest in and practiced viewing foreign shows online, I only managed to interview one administrator who was once famous among Japanese drama audiences and whose blog specialised in sharing drama files.

In total, with the use of the above processes, 36 Taiwanese subjects were recruited and interviewed from August 2010 to November 2011. The recruitment was conducted on two occasions. First, in August and September 2010, seven subjects were recruited and interviewed. The data was gathered and analysed in April 2011 as a pilot study, which focused mainly on audiences who consumed Japanese programmes via online sharing. Based on the this pilot study, the recruitment and research design were slightly adjusted to include audiences with more diverse consumption patterns and preferences, such as those who preferred Korean dramas or American series. Second, from June to November 2011, a further 29 subjects were recruited and interviewed. The data gathered in 2010 (for the pilot study) was incorporated into the whole data set for analysis.

In Particular, I kept in touch (online and/or offline) with one-third of the interviewees and captured some updated information concerning their viewing. Such updated information (gathered from 2012 to 2014) was incorporated into the empirical analysis with the interviewees' consent. Long-term interactions with the interviewees helped to make sense of how the interviewees' online consumption of foreign shows was integrated in their everyday lives.

V. Description of the Sample

i. Number, Age, Gender, and Marriage Status

Three of the 36 interviews were conducted online (Tim, Rachel and Peter), and I managed to meet one individual (Rachel) in person one year after the interview took place. The remainder of the 33 were conducted face-to-face. The length of

each interview lasted between 1-6 hours. Some of them were interviewed twice, mainly due to the interruption during the first interview.

In general, in the interviews and other informal interactions (online and offline) Chinese (Mandarin) was used, occasionally accompanied with some English and Japanese terms. However, English and/or Japanese were more heavily used in the interactions with Peter, Evan and Ivy. The online interview with Peter, who had not lived in Japan, was conducted in both Chinese and Japanese, as he preferred using Japanese to communicate with me. However, in order to express myself more precisely and effectively, I mainly communicated with him in Chinese.

Evan studied for his master's degree in the UK. While we usually spoke Chinese face-to-face, he wrote to me exclusively in English. Consequently, I mainly communicated with him in English in text-based settings. Ivy studied for her bachelor's degree in Japan, and our face-to-face and phone conversations were in Chinese. However, in text-based settings, Ivy tended to write in Japanese, while I replied either in Chinese or Japanese (see also Chapter 7, Section IV concerning how the interviewees' use of foreign languages is associated with their identity formation).

Overall, 15 males and 21 females were interviewed and the subjects' ages ranged from 16 to 57, with most of them in their mid-20s to mid-30s (see Table 4.1). In terms of marital status, seven subjects were married (marked with an asterisk “*”). While the rest of the subjects were single, two of them (Alex and Stella) planned to marry each other at the beginning of 2013. See Table 4.1 for further details (English pseudonyms were applied to all subjects).

Table 4.1 The age groups of the subjects

Age	Number of subjects	Subjects' names
Under 20s	2	Fiona and Emma
21-25	3	Vivian, Sarah and Jane
26-30	17	Johnny, Tim, Rachel, Peter, Cheryl, Adam, Dan, Mandy, Sophie, Nancy, Alex, Ken, Gary, Evan, Jenny, Ally, and Julia
31-35	10	Ben, Steven*, Helen*, Claire, Ryan*, Stella, Will, Katie, Ross and Ivy
36-40	1	Jeff*
41-45	2	Ann* and Nicole*
Over 50	1	Joyce*

ii. Education

Most subjects who were over eighteen years old had a Bachelor or Master's degree and their fields of study covered both social and natural sciences. More specifically, 10 of them had studied or were studying for their degree overseas (included the UK, US, Australia and Japan, see Appendix 2 for further information). Those who had studied or lived overseas tended to be more proficient in foreign languages (e.g. English and/or Japanese) than those who had not. There were also a few subjects who were fluent in English or Japanese either because they took foreign languages as their major or they spent more effort learning these languages outside school. These two types of subjects tended to rely less on subtitle/translation than the others. While many subjects watched Korean programmes, none of the subjects had

learned Korean (see Table 4.2). Several subjects studied engineering or information technology and had more technical knowledge and skills than the other subjects. Generally speaking, they tended to start consuming programmes online earlier than the others.

Table 4.2 Subjects' education background

Education	Number of	Subjects
	subjects	
High School/Junior College	5	Fiona (current student) Ben, Ryan, Ann and Joyce (vocational school/junior college)
Bachelor	14	Domestic: Peter, Cheryl, Adam, Helen, Claire, Emma (current student), Dan, Sarah (current student), Nicole, Katie, Ally, Jeff and Julia ⁹ Overseas: Ivy
Master	14	Domestic: Johnny, Tim, Mandy, Ken, Jane, Ross, Gary Overseas: Rachel, Vivian, Sophie, Alex, Stella, Evan, Jenny (current student)
PhD	3	Domestic: Nancy and Will (current student) Overseas: Steven (current Student)

⁹ Julia pursued her master degree in the UK but she decided to drop out from her study after nine months. She also studied in the US for a year as an exchange student during high school.

iii. Occupation and Family Economic Status

Due to their differences in age and education background, the subjects varied in their working experiences, occupation, and salary.¹⁰ One (Helen) became a housewife after she was married. Except for those who were current students, she was the only subject who was not working. Although the subjects differed in occupation, covering the fields of social science (e.g. teacher, civil servant) and natural science (e.g. engineer, architect), almost all of them were white collar workers.¹¹ According to their occupations (and family backgrounds), most of them belong to the middle class. As a result, a limitation of this sample is that it did not have enough information to examine how class differences influenced consumption patterns. Specifically, those who had studied abroad were born to relatively wealthy families, and they were financed by their parents.¹²

iv. Residence

All 36 subjects lived in the urban cities, including the major cities in Taiwan (e.g. Taipei, Kaohsiung) and those in the foreign countries also lived in major metropolitan centres (e.g. New York, London). Eleven subjects had experiences of living abroad for one year or more (Rachel, Vivian, Steven, Helen, Sophie, Alex, Stella, Evan, Jenny, Ivy and Julia). Of these eleven subjects with overseas experiences, six of them (Rachel, Vivian, Sophie, Evan, Jenny, Julia) had lived overseas from one to three years, and five of them (Steven, Helen, Stella, Alex, Ivy)

¹⁰ As none of the subjects revealed their salary range, the salary listed in Appendix 2 was estimated mainly on the basis of average occupational salaries for their specific positions in Taiwan.

¹¹ Ben was the only one who had blue collar experiences (as a cook). However, given that he owned a diner, his occupation and income was closer to the white collar category.

¹² A few of other interviewees (e.g. Adam, Jane) argued that they wanted to study abroad but they had to give up since their families were not rich enough to support them

had more than five years of overseas experience when the interviews took place. The locations included the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and Japan. While eight of them had lived in one foreign country, two of them had lived in two foreign countries (Jenny and Ivy), and one subject had experiences of living in three countries (Julia). The other subjects lived only in Taiwan.

31 of the subjects lived in Taiwan when the interviews were conducted, and five interviewees (Vivian, Steven, Helen, Alex, Stella) lived overseas when they were interviewed (Vivian moved back to Taiwan three months after the interview was conducted). The interviewees who had lived overseas all grew up in Taiwan (most of them moved to other countries in their twenties); therefore they had developed their long-term television experiences in Taiwanese cultural contexts before they lived overseas. The development of their online viewing patterns is substantially based on domestic (Taiwanese) experiences. In this sense, their online viewing practices can be roughly generalised into “Taiwanese online consumption of foreign TV”. Given that all interviewees lived in cities, while the sample could reflect how overseas living experiences influenced the audience’s consumption, it did not have sufficient information to examine if place of residence – countryside, suburb or urban areas – influenced consumption.

v. Media Use and Genre Preference

The subjects’ genre preferences and media use varied. Regarding shows of foreign origin, those from Japan, Korea, and the US were the most popular. The sample included both fans of certain foreign cultures, who were keen to consume the latest foreign shows (e.g. Peter, Ken, Evan, Ivy), and more casual viewers (e.g. Cheryl,

Jenny, Nancy), who consumed foreign shows online but were not specifically attached to these shows or foreign cultures. The latter interviewees indicated how online viewing was not only fan-oriented but a more common practice for Taiwanese audiences. A few of them were heavy users (e.g. Ken, Julia) of online platforms who had abandoned broadcast television for years. The rest of them consumed media content via both television and the Internet, and the Internet tended to be a preferred choice in three cases: (a) when they wanted to watch something without being constrained by local broadcasting schedules; (b) when they could not find the content they looked for via local TV networks; (c) when they had limited or no access to television (see Table 4.3 and Chapter 5 Section I).

vi. Access and Control over Television

Table 4.3 outlines the subjects' access to and control over television in their domestic context (married subjects are marked with an asterisk “*”). While the domestic space was not the main zone of consumption I focused on, some brief points regarding the interviewees' use of technologies have to be addressed, since, as Silverstone and Haddon (1996) note, access to and control of the media is fundamental to an understanding of the way the media are used and understood in the domestic space. The extent of my interviewees' access to television was influenced mainly by those they lived with and what family roles they played. Specifically, if the interviewees lived with parents, it was their parents who paid for the living room TV, arranged the family space, and subsequently had more control over television viewing. By the same token, the interviewees who were themselves parents were in charge of the TV. For most interviewees TV sets were a shared object. Nevertheless, while the interviewees' access to broadcast TV varied, almost

all of them had their own computer connected to the Internet. Therefore, television viewing via their connected computer was regarded as much more personal when compared to that of broadcast TV.

Table 4.3 Subjects' access to and control over television

Types	Subjects	Domestic viewing conditions
Without TV access	Tim, Vivian,	They lived by themselves without a television set.
	Evan, Emma, Ross	They had television access with limited or equal control when they were back with their families.
Limited/no control	Rachel, Cheryl	The older family members were in control of the television
Full control	Ryan*, Nicole*, Ann*	They were parents who set the rules controlling their children's (teenagers or younger) TV access. Their spouses were not as interested in television, and gave them full control over viewing choices.
	Sarah, Ivy, Ken, Julia	They were single, living either by themselves and/or with families, and they had their own television access.
Equal control	Others	They lived with families, partners or roommates with one or multiple TV sets. They negotiated with other family members regarding television choices.

(Compiled by the author)¹³

¹³ See Appendix 2 for more information in relation to each subject's socioeconomic background and consumption patterns.

VI. Concluding Remarks

Two major concerns of the conduct of research are revisited in this concluding section. First, based on the long term online observation of social networking sites, several cases that involved a large number of online discussions were carefully chosen to be featured in the empirical analysis in the chapters that follow. These cases help to understand how online sharing has emerged as a norm of television viewing among online users who actively participate in networking activities.

Secondly, regarding the 36 interviewees, they can be roughly categorised as middle-class and relatively tech-savvy audiences who are used to employing various devices and software to consume media texts. Moreover, the interviewees varied in their interests in foreign media. They ranged from long-term fans of foreign cultures to ordinary viewers who just consumed – but were not obsessed with – foreign content. However, it is worth noting that, if we regard the online consumption of foreign programmes as a digital fandom (Hills, 2013), the interviewees, whether or not self-defined as fans, should be understood much more as consumers than as producers. Most interviewees rarely or never participated in fansubbing production. Although they often exchanged access to foreign programmes with acquaintances, they were much less active in self-creating and sharing such access with unknown online users.

While many interviewees regularly visited social networking sites such as PTT, few of them actively participated in online discussions. Compared to vocal, active participants on networking sites (e.g. fansubbers, bloggers, administrators of online forums), not much trace of my interviewees' viewing of foreign programmes could

be found on the Internet. While the approach of fan studies tends to focus more on the practices of the most active fans, fewer works accounted for the significance of the relatively less visible practices. By analysing both the online cases and the interview data, this study examines the implications of both highly visible and relatively obscure audience practices for television's ontology, the construction of identity, and the configuration of transnational cultural power relationships.

Chapter 5: Social Togetherness via Online Viewing

As discussed in Chapter 2, as media forms are increasing in number and diversity, media consumption is going through a process of fragmentation and personalisation, challenging our existing understanding of television viewing as a mass-oriented and collective experience. As Uricchio (2009) argues, “while not yet individualised [...] we inhabit a moment where the steady erosion of the mass viewing public has created anxiety in political terms regarding the future of television as a collective mode of address” (p. 34). As an emerging form of consumption that enables audiences to personalise their viewing, watching foreign TV via online sharing has an important bearing on this transitional stage of media development. This chapter discusses the empirical data gathered from interviews to illustrate how television’s role in social togetherness at different levels (familial, social, global, etc.) has changed.

I. Personal and Shared Screens in the Household

While Chapter 4, Section V outlined interviewees’ access to and control over television, this section discusses interviewees’ domestic conditions governing such access making use of empirical data, as this is fundamental to understanding how television and computers were used by this group. Moreover, such conditions play an important role in how interviewees understood the functions of these technologies in their media consumption.

Of my 36 interviewees, more than two-thirds of them lived with their families or partners.¹ While the households they lived in had one or more TV sets, most of

¹ Some of their residence conditions changed around or during the research because they moved to

them did not have their own television: in most cases, sets were located in shared spaces (e.g. the living room, a bedroom shared with family members) as communal objects. TV viewing, in turn, was generally negotiated by family members, and the interviewees watched television on TV sets with family members from time to time. Among the interviewees who lived with family members, Rachel and Cheryl enjoyed the least control over television and seldom watched TV at home, as their elder family members (an elder sister in Rachel's case, parents in Cheryl's), with whom they did not share media preferences, were in charge of the remote control.

The remaining one-third of interviewees lived with their roommates in private houses or university accommodations. They either shared a TV set and negotiated their viewing with roommates (e.g. Alex, Stella. Nancy and Katie, Emma), or they had no access to TV at all (e.g. Vivian, Tim). Among the interviewees who did not live with their family, Ivy, who resided in a house by herself, was the only one who had full and unmediated access to television.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, while most interviewees did not have their own TV sets and/or regarded a TV set as a shared object, almost all interviewees, except for the youngest one – Fiona, who was sixteen² – had their own computers and access to the Internet. In general, they had complete control over their computers and did not have to share them with other family members. As a result, consuming something via their computers and over the Internet was considered a much more personal and private activity than watching anything on a TV set at home.

other cities or countries for personal reasons. See Appendix 2 for more details.

² While Fiona did not own a computer, her parents granted her full access to the communal computer and the Internet at home; she also acquired more technical expertise utilising the computer compared to her parents.

Some interviewees had more than one TV sets in their households. However, they still preferred watching programmes on their own computers to watching TV on a second set. For instance, Nicole and Julia argued:

Sometimes even when I have to work the next day, I still watch Korean dramas till 2:00 a.m. However, since I watch it in my room, rather than in the living room, my son has no idea about this [laughing]! He still goes to bed at the normal time. (Nicole, female, 45 years old)³

After living alone for a few years, I was used to having my own access to TV shows, and I like watching TV by myself. I cannot stand someone next to me when I am watching something. Therefore, rather than going downstairs to turn on TV, I prefer staying in my room watching it on my own computer. (Julia, female, 28 years old)

Both Nicole and Julia lived with their families. Nicole did not watch the living room TV very often; she especially avoided doing so at midnight, as it might disturb her teenage son's everyday routine (e.g. sleep, study). She preferred watching Korean dramas in her bedroom, where her viewing would not influence her son's routine. While she had a second TV set in her bedroom, she seldom used it because the Korean dramas she wanted to watch were only available on the Internet. In Julia's case, while there were multiple TV sets in her household, she did

³ In order to reflect the natural style and register of the spoken Chinese as used by the interviewees, I try my best to retain, in the English translation, the linguistic and pragmatic features of their oral speech in the quotations. These features may include pauses, omissions, false starts, incorrect diction, self-corrections, and even grammatical errors. Therefore, unless otherwise specified, all the seeming irregularities and unidiomatic usages in English in the quotations are intended to reflect as closely and truthfully as possible the actual expressions of the interviewees' speech.

not have her own TV in her room. After living by herself and having her own access to TV for years, she regarded TV watching as a personal, rather than familial activity. As a result, even though she moved back to live with her family during the period when the interview took place, she refused to watch TV in the shared family space, as she considered watching programmes in her room with her Internet-enabled computer much closer to her ideal form of television consumption. In both Nicole and Julia's cases, in their media-rich households (Livingstone, 2002), personal computers replaced the second TV set as the main second screen.

Moreover, for interviewees who had almost no control over television (e.g. Rachel and Cheryl) or those who did not have television (e.g. Andy, Vivian), watching programmes online via their own computers functioned as a solution to their limited access to television in the households in which they lived. Cheryl was an example:

Well, they [parents] have their rules, but we [Cheryl and her brothers] also have our tactics [to bypass their parents' control over television]. The Internet is so developed. Since each of us gets our own computer, as long as we plug our headphones in, we can very easily and freely watch whatever we want to watch, can't we? (Cheryl, female, 29 years old)

Cheryl and her younger brothers "had given up TV" (in her own words) due to her parents' strict control over television access at home. However, she stated that with the Internet and their personal computers, which their parents did not have enough technical repertoire to take control over, "my brother and I still watch lots of stuff. We just do not do so via our home TV sets". In this sense, it was Cheryl and her

brothers' personal, Internet-enabled computers that helped them to access their favourite media content, while avoiding both parental control and possible conflicts over television with their parents.

While, in most cases, my interviewees' Internet-enabled computers were used for their individual viewing of programmes and movies, it is also important to note that the convergence of the Internet, computers and television made it possible to turn personal computers with online content into a means that enhanced family viewing and togetherness. Both Nancy and Ann explained how their use of online sharing and personal computers brought family members together:

If I download some good movies, I would connect my laptop to our TV, and then all my family members could watch it together. In fact, in many cases, the reason why I download movies was for them. (Nancy, female, 27 years old)

Last time I downloaded a Disney movie, and everyone in our family, including members from the extended family all liked it very much. One reason why I download movies is exactly because then we can all watch it together when we have time. On Saturdays when every family member finishes dinner, they definitely all come to our house. (Ann, female, 41 years old)

While both Nancy and Ann, like all other interviewees, enjoyed consuming entertainment media by themselves via their computers, they also wanted to retain family TV viewing. Both of them argued that sometimes on TV there was a lack of content that the whole family was interested in, or was suitable for family members

of all ages. As a result, such a lack occasionally discouraged family viewing. Given this situation, both Nancy and Ann deliberately acquired media content online that they thought suitable for the whole family. They then connected their laptops to, and showed the content on, the living room TV, inviting all members to watch it together. In so doing, they transformed their personal devices into a family home cinema and maintained the main TV set as “an object that enhances family bonds” (Nancy’s words). In both Nancy and Ann’s cases, it was online platforms, not broadcast television, which provided the content that encouraged family unity. In this regard, Internet-enabled personal devices did not exclusively represent the personalisation of media use in the household. Rather, similar to the suggestion of Ofcom (2013) (see Chapter 3 Section I), mobile devices and online content functioned in two ways: while they separated the media consumption of family members, they also helped to encourage the traditional role of living room TV as a shared screen that enhanced family togetherness in other contexts.

This section briefly discussed how domestic conditions shaped the way in which interviewees understood their viewing on TV sets and on Internet-connected computers. The next section focuses on how interviewees enjoyed personalising their viewing via online platforms, and why it was the main reason they opted for online viewing rather than viewing broadcast television.

II. Pleasure of Personalising Viewing

i. Making Your Own Flows

When defining the features of broadcast television, Raymond Williams (2003) uses the phrase “flow” to describe the nonstop sequence of television output, which is scheduled by television networks with endless successions of programmes and commercials. Both Ellis (1992) and Feuer (1983) refine Williams’ notion of flow by emphasising that broadcast television is based on the segment (e.g. programme segments, commercial segments). Feuer points out that it is more accurate to say that television is constituted by a dialectic of segmentation and flow, possessing “segmentation without closure” (p. 14). Ellis (1992) suggests that segments of television output follow on “from each other with no necessary connection between them” (p. 116). Most interviewees thought that the flow of broadcast television was filled with a great deal of unwanted interruptions (e.g. commercials) or pauses (e.g. a week of intervals between episodes).

Therefore, broadcast television was experienced more as segmentation and fragmentation than as flow, over which the interviewees had little control. Nevertheless, online sharing platforms, similar to previous recording technologies, acted as “production devices” (Cubitt, 1991, p. 4) which enabled interviewees to control or even create their own flow with a continuity that suited their taste and schedule (e.g. skipping commercials, compiling moments from a programme). This possibility was the most frequently mentioned reason why my interviewees used online platforms to consume programmes. Here are two typical opinions:

It is so convenient [watching her favourite shows via P2P software], and instantaneous. I can watch something whenever I want. I don’t need to wait, let’s say, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Sometimes they [the shows she watched]

would even be suddenly cancelled and replaced. How sad it is [laughs]!
(Mandy, female, 27 years old)

You can fast forward when you are watching shows online. My bad habit is that sometimes I only focus on the plot of the leading roles and fast forward [i.e. skip] those of the supporting roles. When my colleagues watch Korean dramas on TV, they just watch it obediently [i.e. passively] from the beginning to the end. They can't do anything with it at all [e.g. fast forwarding the dramas]. But I can't stand it. That's why I cannot watch dramas on TV anymore. (Nicole, female, 45 years old)

Both Mandy and Nicole were dissatisfied with the flow imposed by broadcast television. Mandy considered that while online platforms provided access to her favourite content at her own convenience, broadcast television left her no viewing freedom in terms of time. This contrast between online platforms and broadcast television was further articulated by Nicole. She disliked watching dramas on TV because she did not want to “obediently” (passively) follow the “sequence of programming, in which the programmes were carefully orchestrated by broadcast television” (Uricchio, 2010, p. 32) to demand her continuous viewing.

For example, when airing a Korean drama comprised of 20 episodes, Taiwanese networks usually broadcast an episode a day every weekday. Therefore, Nicole had to watch the drama episode by episode, one per day, until the final day of its broadcast. However, she could reject this imposed programming sequence by actively constructing her own sequence via online platforms. She skipped the narratives in which she was uninterested, or browsed the finale first to see if she

liked the ending and was able to decide whether she would watch the whole drama. Since this viewing pattern was not possible via broadcast television, she refused to return to the passive mode of viewing. By the same token, online viewing platforms satisfied interviewees who preferred binge-watching weekly dramas (i.e. viewing sequential programme episodes at one sitting; see Brunsdon, 2010, p. 65):

I want to finish watching them [dramas] in a very short time, say, within two or three days, doing nothing else but watching. I don't feel like waiting [for the next episode every week]. (Stella, female, 33 years old)

I can finish watching a certain Korean drama at one moment, just within one or two days. If I just don't sleep, then I can make it! I can't stand going to bed without knowing the ending [laughs]! (Mandy, female, 27 years old)

Both Stella and Mandy desperately wanted to know the ending of their favourite dramas and preferred finishing the whole series in a more compressed period of time than that dictated by the broadcasting schedule. They still appreciated the narrative continuity and felt compelled to watch. However, they preferred acting on their own compulsion (e.g. watching the whole season of a drama in one day) instead of being “trapped” by a given timetable not shaped for them, but one created for attracting the largest audience. In this sense, the self-customised feature of online platforms became the perfect alternative. This personalised viewing signals a “shift from the programming-based notion of flow [...] to a viewer-centred model” (Uricchio, 2010, p. 35).

ii. Impressions of Intrusion-Free

It was common for interviewees to describe online viewing as “commercial-free” and they often regarded this feature as a major attraction that prompted them to adopt online viewing, since they considered television commercials as unwelcome elements that disturbed their viewing. For instance, both Joyce and Ann enjoyed using PPStream, a popular Chinese P2P TV online viewing platform, as their principal means to consume foreign dramas. When I asked why they preferred PPStream to local television networks, they argued:

I can watch whatever I want, and the key point is with no ads! It saves so much time. (Joyce, female, 56 years old)

The difference [between online streaming services and broadcast television] is that there are no ads online. It is very annoying to be interrupted by ads, and I won't feel fulfilled [by such watching], because I want to finish the whole programme at once without pauses and interruptions. (Ann, female, 41 years old)

In fact, the PPStream or other streaming services my interviewees used regularly inserted ads in two ways: via pop-up ad windows, or inserting video clips of ads between programme units. I briefly mentioned this condition, and asked my interviewees why, given this, they tended to describe online platforms as commercial-free. Joyce further argued:

Well, only two [pop-up] ads there and I can just double-click to get rid of them, so it's fine. There are only 15 or 30 seconds of ads in between [programmes], so they will be gone very soon. It is quite satisfying. (Joyce, female, 56 years old)

Based on Joyce's arguments, two reasons explained why online ads were felt to be less intrusive than those on broadcast television: first, the length of online ads was shorter and, more importantly, these ads were not inserted in the middle of the programmes' narratives. Pop-up ads were shown in a new window rather than in the same window as the platforms and could be turned off easily. The ads embedded in the viewing flows were inserted between programmes units, instead of being inserted into the programme text. As a result, commercials on the online platforms that my interviewees used were more likely to retain the totality of the narrative of a given programme. By comparison, while television commercials were seamlessly threaded through narratives of programmes and intervals between programmes (R. Williams, 2003), they cut through narratives, leaving interviewees who wanted to consume narratives in their totality "unfulfilled" (to use Ann's expression).

Moreover, and as argued earlier, compared to broadcast television, online platforms gave audiences greater freedom to create their own viewing flows. As a result, online platforms made it plausible for Joyce, Ann and many other interviewees to generate the impression of interruption-free, "watch-whatever-I-want" viewing experiences, experiences in which they were more tolerant towards, or even unaware of, the existence of online commercials. As Joyce and Ann pointed out, such personalised flows were more satisfying than linear television flows. Rather

than operating as commercial-free platforms, it is more accurate to describe online platforms as platforms capable of giving the impression of being commercial-free to audiences.

Of all my interviewees, Ken clearly stressed that he “could not bear watching any programmes with all kinds of advertisements popping up and interrupting my watching”, and this stance was the main reason why he had “refused to watch TV for 10 years” (his words). By the same token, he was much less tolerant of advertisements on online platforms compared to other interviewees. Therefore, he usually downloaded programmes online instead of employing streaming, since downloading was the most feasible way to orchestrate a personal viewing flow with the least ad-interruptions, one which he might otherwise encounter on any networks or online platforms.

Williams (2003) argues that the continuity of flow in television experiences is apparent in the way audiences describe their viewing: they remark that they are “watching television”, rather than “watching ‘something on television’” (p. 94). The consumption of TV via online platforms offers new insights in relation to this argument. Rather than saying that they are “watching television”, my interviewees tended to describe their consumption as watching a certain “programme” (the name of a programme), “a specific genre” (American TV series, Korean dramas, etc.), or a specific “platform” (e.g. PPstream, YouTube). Both Ken and Julia, who were heavy television programme viewers/lovers, claimed that they “do not watch television at all” at the very beginning of the interviews. However, as the interviews went on, it became clear that by the term “television,” they referred to engaging with the physical object of a television set, and the designed flow of

broadcast television. Both of them preferred directly downloading programmes to employing streaming platforms. What they tried to make clear was that their television consumption had more to do with specific TV programmes or genres than with a flow developed by television networks or even (comparatively) on-demand online platforms. As was the case for other interviewees who relied on online platforms, they tended to describe their viewing by using expressions such as “watching PPStream”, “watching YouTube”. In such cases, the platforms’ importance in making flows was made manifest.

Many interviewees had bought or rented DVDs and/or used recording devices to cope with the time constraints and commercial insertions of broadcast television. However, online viewing was considered even more convenient in two ways. Firstly, the fact that interviewees could stay at home to access a large amount of content was much more efficient in terms of time and budget than opting for a disc rental/purchase. Secondly, and more importantly, in contrast to recording devices whose viewing resources were based on broadcast television, online platforms functioned as another viewing source with content that broadcast television did not offer. Therefore, online viewing became a preferable option, one that freed interviewees from the constraints of broadcasting. As Johnny described: “With just one or two clicks, here you are with the file [i.e. programme]”.

As demonstrated in this section, the interviewees often contrasted online platforms with traditional broadcasting, regarding the former as the more liberating and convenient option, while the latter was seen as more constrained and demanding. In general, they happily detached themselves from broadcasting and moved to “narrowcasting” (Smith-Shomade, 2004) or “flexible microcasting” (Parks, 2004),

thereby engaging in tailoring their own viewing. However, while interviewees cherished the liberating potential of online viewing experiences (Newman, 2012, p. 466), some interviewees also indicated that their narrowed down, personalised consumption might be influencing their sense of social togetherness. This leads us to the discussion in the next section: conflicts between personalised viewing and social togetherness.

III. Conflicts Between Personalised Viewing and Social Togetherness

To a few interviewees, it seemed that personalised viewing raised concerns about whether such consumption might result in their detachment from society or a lack of general knowledge. This tendency is demonstrated in how they described their complex, at times ambivalent, feelings about the on-demand feature of online viewing. Here are three examples:

In fact, I really think that I should get a TV set and subscribe to those channels [the cable system providing both free-to-air and paid channels], otherwise I would always be considered as out of touch with the world. [...] Take news for example, I always watch it at a later time every day compared to anybody else. Others watch it in the morning when they are brushing their teeth to know what it is going on today, while I have to wait until I get to the office or when I have time to check it online. (Stella, female, 33 years old)

While it [watching TV via online streaming services] is convenient, I will still turn on the TV, watch dramas, news and other stuff [...] I think that it isn't a

good idea to only watch things on the Internet [...] since you tend to filter the things you watch and choose the ones you like when you use the Internet [...] somehow it is still necessary to know what is going on outside, more general information. (Katie, female, 32 years old)

When you are on the computer, you will only choose what you want to watch and what you want to know, but sometimes, it is necessary to know lots of information you are not interested in. Although it's convenient that you search for stuff yourself or watch the news you like, it means that the stuff you get to know is partial and limited. [...] With TV you get to know more information that you don't actively search for yourself, so it is better. (Ivy, female, 31 years old)

Stella did not have access to broadcast television for years and mainly used online platforms to consume programmes. While she was used to living without a television, she expressed a sense of not being as connected to the world as people who had TV sets. Sometimes she arrived at her office in the morning and her colleagues were discussing a common topic (e.g. news or the current episode of a TV series) which she was not conversant with due, in her opinion, to not having access to broadcast television. What she missed, in terms of Ellis (2007), was the “social sense of currency” offered by broadcast TV as “a common point of reference, a means through which to belong to the same present as others” (p. 11). Although the Internet helped her access the news or other information, she did not get the same information at the same time as her acquaintances. As a result, her lack of access to television's simultaneity and capacity to “aggregate dispersed

publics” (Uricchio, 2009, p. 33) kept her from sharing an up-to-date frame of reference with her peers.

While many interviewees who had reduced their consumption of broadcast television after they started using online platforms, Katie intentionally watched broadcast television via her TV set. She suggested that when people (including herself) watch programmes online, they tended to stick to what they preferred while ignoring content they were not interested in. As a result, she argued, “the range of information you got was narrowed down”. In order to avoid this, besides online viewing she still watched broadcast television regularly to get a general picture of what was currently on air. By the same token, Ivy also stressed that while it was enjoyable and convenient to consume the information people were interested in, it was still essential to get to know a more general range of information – the information which people might not actively search for themselves – as delivered by broadcast television. It was in this sense she argued that for her “television is a must have”.

The reasons that prompted Stella to consider buying a TV set and why Katie and Ivy insisted on staying “tuned” to TV were based on a similar urge to be connected to a more collective awareness. In these cases, it was broadcast television – not the Internet – that offered a stronger sense of social togetherness: interviewees tended to turn to broadcast television rather than online platforms to know the more general information which would indicate “what is going on outside” (to use Katie’s expressions). Such general information was, as both Katie and Ivy considered, necessary for them as social beings.

Silverstone, Hirsch and Morley (1994) identify the processes involved in the consumption of media technologies as appropriation, objectification, incorporation and conversion. They stress the importance of examining how media are consumed both as technologies and as content in order to grasp the role of media consumption in linking private and public life. As mentioned earlier, while TV sets were usually the shared objects in the interviewees' households, most interviewees had their own Internet-connected computer and used it as a personal device. This difference partly explains why, although both broadcast TV and online platforms allowed access to "the public world outside the home" (Bakardjieva, 2005, p. 162), interviewees regarded the latter as more private. Furthermore, online viewing welcomed, but did not necessarily require interviewees' direct interaction with others as compared to other online activities (e.g. instant messaging, social networking). Interviewees could stream programmes without interacting with anyone online. This made it more likely for online viewing to be experienced as personal. As a result, broadcast television, as Couldry (2003) argues, was regarded as the more appropriate medium "through which we imagine ourselves to be connected to the social world" (p. 2).

To end this section, I want to briefly discuss the notions of active and passive viewing that were frequently brought up by interviewees (see also Section II). Along with the emergence of new media forms that promise audiences a greater degree of interactivity, selectivity and participation, industrial discourses often promote, as Caldwell (2004) argues, "a series of stark binaries: old media versus new media, passive versus interactive, push versus pull" (p. 41). Such binaries often describe the interactive potential of new media as more democratic in various ways. However, there have been academic debates examining the potential of new

media, examining in what sense audiences can be active or constrained, and the implications of such activities for democracy, public engagement, viewer-production relationship, etc. (Carpentier, 2011; Holmes, 2004; Jenkins, 2006; Livingstone, 2004; Tincknell & Raghuram, 2002). Specifically, both Parks (2004) and Bennett (2008b) examine the binary industrial discourse of understanding television viewers as active and new media users as passive. They point out that the activity potential offered by new media still need to be understood within the historical context of media development, rather than viewing them as better than older – and more democratic – media forms.

Similarly, while my interviewees often described online viewing as active and broadcast viewing as passive, it did not necessarily mean that the latter was a practice that requires no (or less) agency. As Silverstone (1994) argues, the key issue concerning the comparative activity and passivity of audiences “is not so much whether an audience is active but whether that activity is significant” (p. 153), since television viewing or other forms of media consumption, even in their most habitual mode, all involve certain forms of action. Katie and Ivy actively chose a relatively “passive” mode of viewing (broadcast television) for the purpose of gaining a stronger sense of social currency, one that they might not achieve in their personalised online consumption. In this regard, their passive viewing did not seem to have less agency as compared to their tailored viewing. Rather, their conscious choice to keep watching broadcast television was, to some extent, an active way for them to imagine themselves as connected to the world as social beings.

IV. Live Broadcast in the Context of Online Viewing

As discussed in Chapter 2, television's liveness is a crucial condition and one associated with its role in social togetherness. As Couldry (2004) argues, television's liveness continues to be emphasised as the former's key selling point. Liveness here is understood as a form that "guarantees a potential connection to shared social realities as they are happening" (p. 355). The interviewee Ryan's discussion of the differences between consuming live sports in the past as compared to the present is an example demonstrating how audiences' sense of liveness and togetherness is related in a time-shifting, online age:

I clearly remember the time when I was still studying in junior or senior high school, in the past in which the Internet did not exist. When our baseball team went overseas to play games, [...] even when it was midnight, or one or two o'clock, the whole family still gathered in front of TV to watch those (sports) games together! But it wouldn't be the case now since, first, sports games are not as popular now, and second, even if I miss live broadcasting, I still can watch it [the rerun] during the next timeslot. But reruns were rare in the past. (Ryan, male, 35 years old)

On the one hand, Ryan thought that it had become easier to watch sports games since there were more options to do so (e.g. reruns or catch-up services provided by networks and online platforms). Therefore, it was not as regrettable as it used to be if he missed a certain live game, and he was satisfied with such options. On the other hand, he expressed nostalgia for enthusiastically watching live games together with his family members. His ambiguous feelings towards the live

broadcasting of sports indicates how the significance of liveness lingers in television consumption in an age in which time-shift options challenge the necessity of live broadcast's synchronicity.

Bourdon (2000) argues that recent academic debates tend to assume that live broadcasting or the idea of liveness is less important in an age of narrowcasting. However, he stresses that it is still crucial to study live broadcasting as it is linked to a form of socio-semiotic unity in society. As he notes, despite the trends towards narrowcasting, broadcast television still attracts the majority of worldwide audiences and the use of live broadcasting has not disappeared.

The question at stake here is in what sense online viewing was associated with television's experiences of simultaneity and liveness. While all interviewees were very used to time-shifted online viewing, they had not completely abandoned live broadcasts. In general, while the interviewees preferred to consume scripted or fictional programmes (e.g. dramas, variety shows) at their convenience, it was more likely for them to follow the live broadcasts when it came to non-fictional, non-scripted programmes (e.g. news, sports, talent competitions). At the time that the interviews were conducted in 2010 and 2011, the most common way to access live broadcast television via a computer was to use devices such as TV tuners (either digital or analogue) that received the broadcast signals and converted the computer monitor into a TV screen.⁴ Sarah, Vivian and Cheryl, who had very

⁴ In the United Kingdom, the main terrestrial channels, such as the BBC or ITV, have launched their own digital streaming platforms which simultaneously stream the same content online as their television broadcasts, allowing audiences to access the same live broadcasts through computers, tablets, smartphones and other Internet-connected devices as they do via TV sets. However, in contrast to the UK, in Taiwan, none of the main channels (including terrestrial, cable and satellite outlets) have yet to officially live-stream their broadcast content online at the time of writing (June 2015). Although there are a few illegal platforms that re-stream the live broadcasts of some stations

limited access to TV sets, shared with me their memory of watching a popular live singing competition, the *Super Star Avenue*:⁵

We would gather together [her friends or roommates and her], watch the *Super Star Avenue* and talked about it [the progress of competition] together. It is especially in the case of this programme that we did so. (Sarah, female, 21 years old)

I rarely went to watch TV at the common room, unless everyone said and decided that we were going to do so together, or in the situation that we felt we had to watch these live broadcasts. For instance, the *Super Star Avenue* finale was going out live, so we would go there and watch it. (Vivian, female, 23 years old)

Nearly 90% of the programmes I watched were downloaded. As long as I don't feel an urge to watch something right away, I will wait until the whole shows, or at least when half of them are finished, then I start watching.

(Yu-kei Tse: Can you name some examples of the programmes that make you feel the urge to watch them right away?)

from time to time, their services are not sustained for a long period of time.

⁵ *Super Star Avenue*, first aired on CTV (one of the Taiwanese free-to-air networks) at the start of 2007, is the most popular and successful live singing competition in Taiwan in recent years. Different from recent singing competitions shows in the UK or US (e.g. *X Factor* or *The Voice*) which allow audiences to vote and decide which contestants can stay on the shows, the result of the competition in *Super Star Avenue* was still determined by the judges who were all professional musicians. Several contestants, especially those from the first three series, built up their popularity through the show and were signed by major labels in Taiwan. The show's popularity soon reached its peak in the first series in mid-2007 and retained its popularity for three series until mid-2008. From series four onward, which started in August 2008, ratings started to decline. The show came to a close at the beginning of 2011 after the end of series seven, mainly due the sustained decline in ratings.

Oh yeah, *Super Star Avenue*, I was so addicted to it. [...] I was a freshman living in a dorm. There were no stay-out parties at Friday nights, no kidding [laughs]! All the common rooms were packed with people, and every TV set was tuned in to *Super Star Avenue*. Those who couldn't get into the common rooms just returned to their rooms, squeezed together in front of a computer screen to watch PPSStream [a Chinese illegal live re-streaming platform]. We could even compromise on the low audio-video quality, since we were desperate to watch it in real time, and we needed and enjoyed the atmosphere of "staying tuned together in front of the screen". It [the viewing] had to be in this kind of atmosphere. Until the end of the third season I always ran back home or to the dorm to stay tuned to TV on Friday night as long as there were no big deals going on. (Cheryl, female, 29 years old)

When the popularity of *Super Star Avenue* was at its peak in Taiwan from 2007 to 2009, Sarah, Vivian and Cheryl were all living in a dormitory on their university campus. In general, they usually watched programmes (mainly via their computers) by themselves, rather than watching programmes together with their friends and/or roommates. However, *Super Star Avenue* was a particular case for which the three interviewees and their friends would gather weekly to watch its live broadcast. While the show did not have the voting systems that granted audiences the power to influence the competition result as many contemporary talent programmes in Western countries do, the interviewees still preferred the live broadcasts to replays. Sarah stressed that it was more exciting to watch it together, since "we could discuss and witness the result directly in real time". This coincides with "the atmosphere of staying tuned together in front of the screen" that Cheryl engaged in.

Friedman (2002) argues that, the audiences' attraction to the televising of unscripted events not only involves a desire to witness history in the making, but is also derived from the pleasure in predicting the progression of events, and in so doing, their own knowledge of ongoing real events is tested and sharpened. My interviewees' satisfaction with live *Super Star Avenue* was intensified by watching the show in real time together with their acquaintances and a more general public, and this collective viewing experience can be regarded as a form of "media event time" in Zelizer's (1991) terms. The interviewees' viewing experiences of *Super Star Avenue* indicated that live broadcasting still managed to be an influential form of television, one which the interviewees – who were used to detaching themselves from schedules – looked to for a strong social currency (Ellis, 2002, 2007), thereby achieving a sense of togetherness with peers. In other words, the "for-anyone-as-someone structure" with which television functioned in linking individuals and publics (Scannell, 2000) remained in play, especially relating to live broadcast television which exists in and as the "phenomenal now"⁶ that connected interviewees' live consumption with the impersonal time of the human world. However, it is problematic to assume that the for-anyone-as-someone structure of television was only at work in live broadcasting or broadcast television per se. The next section examines how and in what sense the "narrowcasting" of online platforms also functioned as the for-anyone-as-someone structure, thereby generating various forms of social togetherness among audiences.

⁶ Based on a phenomenological approach, Scannell (2014) distinguishes between two modes of time. First, numbered time relates to the lifeless-eternal time-space universe (Ontology A). Second, phenomenal time involves life in the living world (Ontology B). While the former refers to the order of time that is eternal, objective and meaningless to human beings, the latter is meaningful to human beings as it is the temporal order of human beings' immediate experiences. "The phenomenal now of immediate experience", in turn, is "the now in the immediacy of my concern" (p. 41). See also the literature review on Scannell's work in Chapter 3 Section I and the empirical analysis in Chapter 6 Section IV.

V. Togetherness via Time and Space-shifting

i. Stay Tuned with Others via Online Methods

As argued previously, generally speaking my interviewees were used to watching programmes online. They not only employed online platforms to free themselves from broadcasting schedules, but they also had a sense that other audiences would also do the same. This was particularly demonstrated when I recruited them and explained that I was looking for viewers who regularly used various forms of online sharing platforms/services to consume foreign TV. Many of them said that it must have been very easy for me to find a large number of interviewees as they thought that “so many people were watching foreign programmes via online sharing platforms/services”. Some asked in a curious tone, “Why did you choose me? I am not special since I just do what others do [i.e. consuming TV online]”. Some of them also mentioned that they were not worried if they were caught for copyright infringement by illegally downloading programmes because, as Tim put it, “everyone is downloading them”. Moreover, both Cheryl and Adam further indicated that:

It seems to me that nowadays most people are very used to watching TV programmes from somewhere besides TV, such as online. Many people no longer follow TV schedules. (Cheryl, female, 29 years old)

There are hundreds of TV channels for me to watch. I can also download shows or rent a disc, there are plenty of ways to consume TV. We all have such choices. (Adam, male, 26 years old)

The way in which interviewees assumed that most viewers watched TV online or elsewhere in an asynchronous manner indicates that the personalisation and fragmentation of viewing was experienced as a communal norm. This enhanced the interviewees' sense of togetherness while they personalized their viewing in two ways.

Firstly, many interviewees visited social networking sites featuring foreign genres, and they found that the latest foreign shows available exclusively online were commonly discussed. We can take the public discussions on foreign genres on PTT, the most influential and popular social networking site in Taiwan (see Chapter 4 Section IV regarding PTT), as an example. While a few years ago users typically discussed the foreign shows broadcast on Taiwanese networks, it is now more common that they focus on episodes currently on air in foreign countries. This is also seen on other popular Taiwanese online forums, blogs, social networking sites etc. featuring foreign TV, indicating that the practice of catching up with the latest foreign shows online is threatening traditional viewing and becoming a standard form of consumption. Consequently, Tim argued:

I will firstly check online how PTT users talked about the latest dramas in order to select the ones I want to catch up with this season [...] people online seem to think that TVBT⁷ does a better job in translation, right? (Tim, male, 27 years old)

⁷ TVBT is one of the most popular fansubbing forums based in China and has focused on distributing Japanese dramas and movies since 2005.

Tim loved to watch Japanese dramas but had no friends with whom to discuss such shows. PTT served as a site where he could get to know the consumption patterns of other people with similar interests. When he noticed that most PTT users consumed the latest Japanese dramas online, he promptly adopted the same viewing pattern. Many interviewees considered that the number of viewers of online platforms seemed to be greater than those for local broadcasts. Therefore, they opted for online viewing when they wanted to have shared viewing experiences (e.g. talking about the same shows, exchanging relevant information about the same show) with other audiences.

Anderson (2006) argues that all communities larger than primal, face-to-face ones in which people do not have personal contacts with all fellowmen are imagined. This imagining is facilitated by mass media that provides shared information for a scattered population to feel an affiliation with their fellowmen. Most interviewees did not necessarily argue that they “belong to” a certain online group or community. They were not users who actively engaged in networking sites, posted their own opinions, or who joined fansubbing groups in order to translate foreign content for others. In most cases, they went online to read discussions and to download or stream shows shared by other anonymous users. However, that is not to say they did not find a sense of connectedness or togetherness online. Rather, many of them used social networking sites as reference guides to decide what to watch and what platforms to use. These individual activities all had their social purpose, even if not as explicit as activities such as public online discussions. The way in which Tim adopted the same consumption pattern as other PTT users was an example of searching for a sense of connectedness. As Jones (1997) argues, Internet communities are imagined as parallel groupings of people and “they are not

composed of people who are necessarily connected, even by interest, but are rather groupings of people headed in the same direction, for a time” (p. 17). The online consumption of television “headed in the same direction” may refer to “develop[ing] a similar form of online consumption of television”.

When talking about Chinese fansubbing forums, Alex stated that their files were “shared by all the Chinese-speaking people around the world”. This description indicated the ways he imagined his online consumption as part of a group who might not be physically watching TV together, but who were watching individually as part of a collective. As Jones (1997) argues, “we are struck, as we use the Internet, by the sense that there are others out there *like us*” (p. 17). This paralleled how the interviewees developed a sense of togetherness via their online consumption.

The second reason why the interviewees stated that “many people watch television online like they did” was an interpersonal one: they found that more and more people around them watched TV online, or they were the people who introduced such online consumption practices to their acquaintances:

My sister-in-law lives in the same neighbourhood, and my brother-in-law lives nearby. All the files they have are provided by me [...] say, my brother-in-law mentions a certain movie that he fails to find online, and then I just say, “Okay, alright” and I download it. Similarly, if my sister-in-law finds the Korean drama that she is interested in on TV, I will download all the episodes for her. [Their media content] is all from me, including music content. (Ann, female, 41 years old)

Nowadays, everyone goes online to directly stream something; you don't even need to download it. I stopped downloading movies or programmes for others when I noticed that all the people around me started to use PPStream! They no longer need me [laughs]! (Dan, male, 27 years old)

As a person interested in foreign television, familiar with computers and eager to maintain family bounds (see also Section I), Ann actively helped her relatives who were less familiar with downloading to obtain the files they wanted. Dan started to consume TV online (mainly by downloading) before his friends and colleagues. He used to be the “contributor” who actively distributed video files to people around him. However, the growing popularity of online streaming sites enabled people to watch TV online even more easily since they required lower levels of technical repertoire and equipment. In contrast to Ann, whose relatives still needed her to access media content, Dan found that more and more of his acquaintances, even those who had low technical repertoire, started to watch TV online without his help. This was the moment at which he realised how online watching was much more accessible than before, as well as – ironically – denying him a social role.

Will ran a website sharing Japanese dramas he collected online, and he was the only interviewee who actively shared the downloaded content with anonymous online users. When being asked why he set up his drama-sharing site, he argued:

I find that many people want to download or find the latest Japanese dramas and sometimes having problems doing so, so I set up this site. I want to provide and share easy access to the dramas with others online. People can

also share the dramas they have or discuss these dramas here [i.e. on his drama-sharing site]. (Will, male, 31 years old)

Will set up his website with a clear social purpose: instead of watching the dramas individually, he engaged in sharing his viewing with anonymous, unknown users. Similar to Dan, Will also had high technical repertoire, and could find dramas online with ease. When he re-shared the dramas, he intentionally made the access relatively simple: users could easily download the drama by merely double-clicking on the listed URL links, without going through complicated steps and using specific software as required by many P2P sites. By attracting individual users to downloading files, discussing, and even sharing dramas together, his site became a popular hub for many Taiwanese audiences interested in Japanese dramas.

The way in which Ann, Dan and Will helped acquaintances or unknown audiences to access programmes online indicated a change in the online consumption of television. At its inception, such consumption was commonly understood as an activity limited to audiences with high technical repertoires and strong interests in actively finding media content. However, it has gradually become a practice adopted by more casual audiences who enjoyed watching easily accessed content, without necessarily having developed technical repertoires or wanting to make substantial efforts obtaining the content. This change was similar to the shifting definition and understanding of radio listening that Boddy (2004) delineates: from an activity of male enthusiasts interested in machinery and assembling radio sets themselves, to housewives who enjoyed broadcasts during their housework via the complete, ready-to-be-used radio sets they purchased (see also Chapter 7 Section V

on Dan's thoughts of the role Chinese online platforms played in the Taiwanese online viewing of television).

Given that all my interviewees were audiences who actively searched for television programmes online by themselves, they (including female or older interviewees) were generally more familiar with finding online access than their acquaintances. While some interviewees (e.g. Will, Dan or Cheryl) had relatively higher technical repertoire and/or more knowledge about finding content online compared to other interviewees, the gender difference in this regard was not very distinct. Most interviewees argued that most people they knew had – to a greater or lesser extent – consumed TV online, indicating how such consumption became gradually understood as a general practice. A few years previously, a frequent question posted on online forums, or that interviewees asked each other was, “have you tried using online downloading/streaming to watch a programme?” Nowadays, the questions the interviewees discussed were:

[...] what pieces of software are you using to download stuff, which pieces are better or faster in terms of sharing speed, what platforms you are relying on, and so on. (Ben, male, 34 years old)

When online viewing was becoming a common practice among audiences, the question to ask was no longer if they did so or not, but how they did it and what the best ways to do so were. The growing popularity of online viewing indicates that even though this practice is a form of narrowcasting, it can still connect people. Many interviewees pointed out that the crucial reason they started watching foreign shows online was because they discovered that other people were doing so. For

example, Joyce had no idea about PPStream until her friends talked about what to watch in the evening; she found out that “they were busy watching PPStream every night” so then, she said, “I started using it as well”. Evan was very interested in American series and was surrounded by close friends with similar interests. Since he wanted to discuss the latest American programmes with them, he opted for the same viewing pattern (i.e. online) to ensure that they could all watch something within the same timeframe. Rachel also said that, besides reading online discussions, she also watched current dramas that her friends had introduced her to, which then became a shared topic of conversation.

As Ellis (2007) argues, the currency of television programmes still seems to be important in television experience despite the growth of on-demand viewing. In most cases, the interviewees did not literally watch a given programme at the same time, or watch broadcast television live as others did. However, if they watched the same programme online individually within a relatively similar timeframe, it was likely that they could roughly catch up with the currency of that programme in order “to belong to the same present as others” (Ellis, 2007, p. 11). Therefore, many interviewees watched current foreign shows online since they felt that if they watched those programmes months later via local broadcasts they would have missed the viewing experience and the currency shared among audiences employing online platforms. In this sense, rather than breaking down shared viewing experiences, online methods were used by the interviewees in a collective sense, the main purpose of which was to establish identical viewing patterns with people who shared their interests, thereby achieving a sense of togetherness.

ii. Connectivity to Home

As argued previously, illegal and/or unofficial online platforms often provide foreign programmes that would have been unavailable to the audiences. Such platforms offer audiences not only time-shifting but also “space-shifting” functions in their consumption. By “space-shifting” I refer to providing cross-border content that is difficult or impossible to find in the broadcast territory where audiences are located. While in most cases, space-shifting was valued by the interviewees as a means to access foreign shows, it was also used by some of those currently not resident in Taiwan to access Taiwanese content. In other words space-shifting served two purposes: to connect with broadcasts in foreign locations, and to link back to the audiences’ native land. Despite different purposes, both modes were used as a form of deterritorialisation (Tomlinson, 1999), that is to eliminate geographical, temporal and legal boundaries limiting the regions in which the consumption took place. The connection with foreign locations will be discussed more comprehensively in Chapter 6 and 7; here I will discuss the audiences’ experience of connecting back to their native land.

Alex had lived in the US for nearly ten years, Vivian had been living in London for nine months when the interview took place,⁸ but neither of them were migrants. They talked about their viewing habits when living outside Taiwan:

Although I was abroad, I still used YouTube or PPstream to watch Taiwanese shows. I mainly watched variety shows, say, *Here Comes KangXi*, *Super*

⁸ Vivian moved back to Taiwan three months later after, while Alex moved to the UK for a year, and then returned to the US in 2012.

Idols, *Super Star Avenue* and *The University*,⁹ and I am still simultaneous with Taiwan. (Alex, male, 27 years old)

I don't really change viewing habits when I am living here [in London]. I still watch *One Piece*¹⁰ and *Here Comes KangXi* as I did when I was in Taiwan. (Vivian, female, 23 years old)

For Alex, being able to consume current Taiwanese shows when he was abroad could reduce the temporal and spatial distance between him and Taiwanese culture. The variety shows he mentioned were a shared topic with his Taiwanese friends (either in Taiwan or the US). Although most of the shows he watched were not live broadcasts, he still felt that he was to some extent living “in a simultaneous manner” with his friends. While he did not identify himself as diasporic, his practice was close to the ways in which diasporic communities use media to maintain ties with their homeland (Georgiou, 2006).¹¹

Moreover, online platforms were not only used to consume domestic shows but also non-Taiwanese shows when interviewees were abroad. Vivian had been watching Taiwanese and foreign programmes (e.g. Japanese animation, American series) online in Taiwan and she continued the same practice in London where these programmes were unavailable on any British broadcasting system; the

⁹ *Here Comes KangXi*, *Super Idols*, *Super Star Avenue* and *The University* are all the names of current and popular Taiwanese variety shows.

¹⁰ *One Piece* is a Japanese animation that has been very popular in Asia in recent years.

¹¹ While online platforms might be used for diasporic purposes, most (or at least those that my interviewees relied on) cannot be counted as diaspora media or diaspora-oriented. They are not established and operated by a diaspora, while maintaining ties between diaspora and the homeland is also not their aim. For instance, the variety show clips that Alex viewed on YouTube, were frequently uploaded and viewed by Taiwanese viewers (in Taiwan). This might serve as a means to fill the absence of official online platforms of networks rather than as a diasporic medium.

foreign programmes she had been watching were seldom available on Taiwanese networks either. Online platforms helped her to carry the whole zone of consumption (Pertierra & Turner, 2013) that she was acquainted with her. In doing so, it was as if physical and spatial locations made no difference when she moved from one country to another. Most interviewees who had lived overseas (e.g. Jenny, Sophie, Helen) more or less also used online platforms as Alex and Vivian did to “space-shift” back home to access the zone of consumption in which they had been used to before they moved to foreign countries, and to watch Taiwanese programmes abroad. If using online methods to consume foreign TV is a practice conducive to connecting with foreign cultures without having to deal with time differences (see also Chapter 6), applying the same methods to consume shows from the domestic zone of consumption is a way to connect with an audience’s home country in real time. In either case, the time and space-shifting capacity of online methods helped audiences to transcend the physical, temporal and spatial distance to achieve a sense of togetherness at their convenience.

VI. Concluding Remarks

This chapter elaborated on the implications of foreign TV consumption via online sharing platforms, thereby examining television’s role in social togetherness, by looking at the ways in which interviewees negotiated the possibility and limits of both narrowcasting and broadcasting and asking how their sense of social togetherness was achieved or lost during the negotiating processes that this required. Online sharing, by definition, is never a completely isolated practice. It has, as Evans (2011) argues, both “a fracturing and a unifying potential in terms of its role in an individual’s perception of being a part of ‘an audience’” (p. 172).

It was common for my interviewees to cherish their freedom to personalise their viewing at one moment, while expressing their nostalgia for the “old days” the next, for times when they followed the live broadcasts as others did. This trait was also very commonly shown in the discussions on PTT and other social networking sites. Some interviewees worried they would become detached from society if they were not following broadcast television. Sometimes, they were conscious that their viewing was social, but were vague when talking about who they were ‘together’ with during online viewing. They mentioned friends and family, or – in many cases – they just said “others” or “we”, a more general public that was not clearly defined. Although they often referred to Taiwanese audiences in a broad sense, at times the sense of what this included shifted from acquaintances, national audiences, to an even more general idea of the transnational, global audiences who also adopted online viewing. It was hard to tell which forms of togetherness they perceived, imagined or looked for.

Sometimes the interviewees were not necessarily conscious that they were looking for a certain sense of togetherness. For instance, they talked about how personalised their consumption was, while overlooking the fact that they picked a certain show because it was popular among their friends or on the networking site they visited. They frequently rushed to download shows when many users were sharing the file because the download speed was faster according to the technical specifications of P2P. That is not to say that they did not find a sense of togetherness. Rather, the “for-anyone-as-someone structure” with which media functioned in linking individuals and publics (Scannell, 2000) was still in play, but the social, public dimension of such viewing was sometimes overshadowed by the

on-demand capacity of online sharing. Consequently, in the consumption of television via online sharing, the sense of togetherness might be weaker than that generated in the consumption of broadcasts.

As Lotz (2007) argues, while the customisation of viewing has become an essential part of television experience, in a paradoxical manner audiences also begin to “reestablish some of the shared cultural experience that had once been more typical of the medium” (p. 245). In 2013, the finale of the third series of HBO’s *Game of Thrones* was illegally shared over a million times worldwide in 24 hours, and became the most pirated television episode in global history (Crooks, 2013). In the following year (2014), the finale of the fourth season again set a new piracy record: it was illegally downloaded 1.5 million times in 12 hours after the US premiere; and the number of downloads reached 8 million by the end of 2014 (Izundu, 2014). Many other programmes were circulated globally in a similar way. Given how large the number of downloads can be, we cannot assume that audiences who personalise their viewing no longer appreciate shared experiences, especially in cases where the shows consumed (online or offline) are from mainstream networks. Such collective downloading/streaming practices are, as Ellis (2007) argues, “in effect variants of broadcasting, depending on a public currency of nowness” (p. 223). Even though audiences have access to more channels and platforms than before, this does not mean that fragmented audiences no longer constitute a mass audience.

Moreover, a sense of togetherness concerns who or what publics individuals are together with. Gripsrud (2010a) argues that mobile and privatised people still find a sense of community via which broadcasting and its currency provide – shared topics, shared frame of reference, etc. Specifically, in the online consumption of

foreign programmes, the currency audiences appreciate is a transnational, foreign one, which is fulfilled by unofficial/illegal, space-shifting online services. When the currency of national broadcast television is temporally and geographically stretched by these transnational online practices, questions concerning television's role in social togetherness that should be looked at include how, and to whom, this form of transnationally-stretched currency provides various forms of publicness, thereby shaping the construction of nation and public spheres at a transnational level.

If broadcast television is understood as a national system territorially bounded by national borders, for audiences who search for foreign content unavailable on local networks, their practices not only challenge television's notion of "broadcasting" but also that of the "national/local". Why are they eager to transcend national broadcasting borders to catch up with the latest foreign content? Who or what communities – if any – do they imagine themselves to be with and when are they doing so? As Evans notes, if it becomes more feasible for audiences to access television shows from all over the world, as if there were no geographical and temporal boundaries, the relationship between television viewing and nationhood should be re-examined (p. 146). This chapter has demonstrated how, at a local and general level, the interviewees' sense of social togetherness was achieved or challenged via their online viewing. Focusing on the transnational context of online viewing, the next chapter employs the notion of "coevalness" (Fabian, 1983; Wilk, 1994) to ask how the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing is associated with a specific form of social togetherness involving audiences' perceptions of temporal distance with foreign locales and cultures.

Chapter 6: The Sense of Coevalness in the Consumption of Foreign TV via Online Sharing

This chapter examines the implications of online consumption of foreign TV for audiences' sense of coevalness with foreign cultures. The concept of coevalness, as Fabian (1983) argues, consists of both "synchronous/simultaneous" and "contemporary" states. In the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing, technological development enables media content to be distributed and consumed across national borders and other spatial boundaries in a more immediate fashion. However, as Chapter 3 Section VI indicates, having access to the same media content at the same time as people located elsewhere does not necessarily mean that audiences will automatically consider that they are living in the same temporality with foreign others. The important question following from the improvement of synchronicity in media and cultural flows lies in whether, or in what sense, our sense of contemporaneity changes. Moreover, while coevalness is frequently employed by studies on media flows to explain the sense of contemporaneity between cultures and countries, little research looks closely at how television as a time-based medium (Scannell, 2009, p. 223), and through the temporality involved in its daily output and scheduling, is shaping a sense of shared temporality with foreign cultures.

This chapter first looks at various practices of online platforms and local television in shortening the temporal gap between foreign broadcasts and local consumption in terms of "time-space compression" (Harvey, 1989) and promoting coevalness. Second, it also examines the way in which audiences employed different platforms

to access foreign television programmes in order to elaborate how temporalities of foreign broadcasting are implicated in interviewees' everyday life as important temporal frameworks. Several important notions regarding television's temporality (e.g. liveness, for-anyone-as-someone structure, currency) are employed here. Thereby this chapter articulates how, and in what sense, the interviewees' sense of coevalness was achieved and also explores important theoretical notions on TV broadcasting in cross-cultural and transnational contexts.

I. Live Connectivity to Foreign Locales with Re-streaming TV

i. Conditions Regarding Transnational Live Transmission and Consumption of Broadcast TV

As discussed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 5, Section IV, the liveness of television, most manifest in live broadcasting, is a crucial condition for television's function in terms of social togetherness, contributing to "a form of enunciation evoking experiences of face-to-face-communications and a sense of the audience as simultaneously present" (Johansen, 1997, p. 192). This simultaneity is close to Anderson's (2006, p. 188) idea that individuals imagine themselves as living lives parallel to other unknown, substantial groups of fellow members – which is key for the formation of imagined communities. More specifically, according to Fabian (1983), the notion of simultaneous and that of contemporary together constitute the concept of coevalness. In other words, simultaneity is a crucial condition when we look at whether, or in what sense, people perceive themselves and their fellowmen as "engaged in a common, active, occupation or sharing of time" (Johansen, 1997, p. 186).

In Chapter 5 Section V, I defined the notion of “space-shift” in terms of discussing the way in which online sharing helped interviewees to transcend spatial and temporal boundaries, virtually “shifting” themselves to other zones of consumption at their convenience. Here, I would like to elaborate on the practice whereby audiences and illegal online services strive to bypass various broadcast restrictions to achieve the live broadcasting of foreign networks. This will allow us to discuss: 1) the significance of space-shifting in consuming flows of live foreign broadcasting; and 2) how such consumption helped the audiences to achieve a sense of coevalness with foreign locales and cultures.

The conditions with regard to transnational live transmission and consumption of broadcast television should be briefly addressed here (see also Chapter 1 Section II). All legal television networks and providers, regardless of their differences in signal transmission (e.g. terrestrial, cable, satellite, online), have broadcast territories within which their signals are allowed to be transmitted and received legally. Such territories are regulated by a series of broadcast/licensing restrictions and policies based on geolocations.

National television, by definition, generally broadcasts within its own national territory. While programmes made by a given national network can be traded internationally and globally, the flow of this given network as a whole is not allowed to be traded in the same way, or indeed retransmitted to other countries (either live or not).¹ Although more national television broadcasters now release their programmes or even live stream their broadcasts online, access to the content

¹ Some countries can receive the national broadcasts of their neighbouring countries via satellite or terrestrial antennas in real time (either legally or unofficially). However, this is not the case in Taiwan; for instance, Japanese and Korean national broadcasts are not accessible through satellite.

is still governed by IP (Internet Protocol) address restrictions. From the audiences' point of view, broadcast territories determine the extent of access whereby their right of consumption varies according to their location. A viewer is not able to access the online content of a given channel or network if his or her IP address is not located in the same country as a given channel or network.

For example, the terms of use of BBC Online Services² clearly note that audiences may not access video and live television services via BBC Online Services if they are located outside the UK. Most national television networks apply similar terms of use to their broadcasts and online content. Based on these conditions, when it comes to the transnational consumption of television, it is difficult to access the entire flows of national broadcast television of a specific foreign country when audiences are outside this country, since they are beyond the reach of those networks' broadcast territories (by comparison, it is easier for audiences to view foreign programme units online, either legally or illegally).

From approximately 2006 onwards there have been unauthorised websites and streaming platforms which strive to live re-transmit the broadcasts of various kinds of television networks (e.g. the national networks of certain countries, paid satellite and cable channels).³ Many of these live services became popular among audiences who wanted to consume live broadcasts of foreign networks, and Taiwanese audiences are no exception. On PTT, the most influential Taiwanese Bulletin Board System (BBS) or other social media, information about these live

² See the official website of BBC for its terms of use: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/terms/help.shtml>. Last accessed 12 January 2015.

³ KeyHole TV (<http://www.v2p.jp/video/english>) based in Japan or Sopcast (<http://www.sopcast.com>) based in China are some of the popular services in Taiwan.

streaming services promptly spread among users. However, most of these services did not last long. The limits of broadband width (especially in 2007 and 2008, when bandwidth capacity was much more limited than it is now) and providers' concerns about copyright infringement were the main reasons why they could not be sustained.

ii. Tokyolive.tv and the Space-shifting of Live Television Flow

This subsection introduces the practice of tokyolive.tv in order to explore the implications of re-streaming live broadcasting from foreign networks for the enhancement of coevalness. Tokyolive.tv is a small-scale Taiwanese website which provided unauthorised, free live broadcasts of major Japanese national television networks (Fuji, TBS, Asahi, etc.) and which was well-known among audiences interested in Japanese TV. After having been in operation for a few months in 2007, it was eventually forced to shut down as a result of copyright concerns and a lack of finance. Figure 6.1 was the index page of tokyolive.tv with a statement from the administrators before the website was shut down. Below is my translation of the main part of the statement:

For whatever reason you come and visit us, we believe that all of us share the same interest in Japanese culture. It is exactly because of this interest that our site is here for you. Being able to watch Japanese TV in real time might not be that special to many others. Moreover, nowadays many programme clips are already available to be downloaded online. However, to you and to us, people who appreciate Japanese culture, there may be a special, shared affection in our hearts. It is an irreplaceable affection and appreciation towards the access

of synchronicity and liveness. Being able to see our favourite artists in real time, being touched by the exquisiteness of Japanese culture, finding a platform to learn Japanese [...] all of these aspects are what we want to offer and what our dreams are about. [...] We are indeed facing lots of difficulties concerning lack of resources in these days. However, in order to insist on pursuing our dreams, and to let all friends with the same interests have a shared space, we will carry on [...] we need your help, and let's keep making an effort to make our shared dream come true. (tokyolive.tv, 2007)

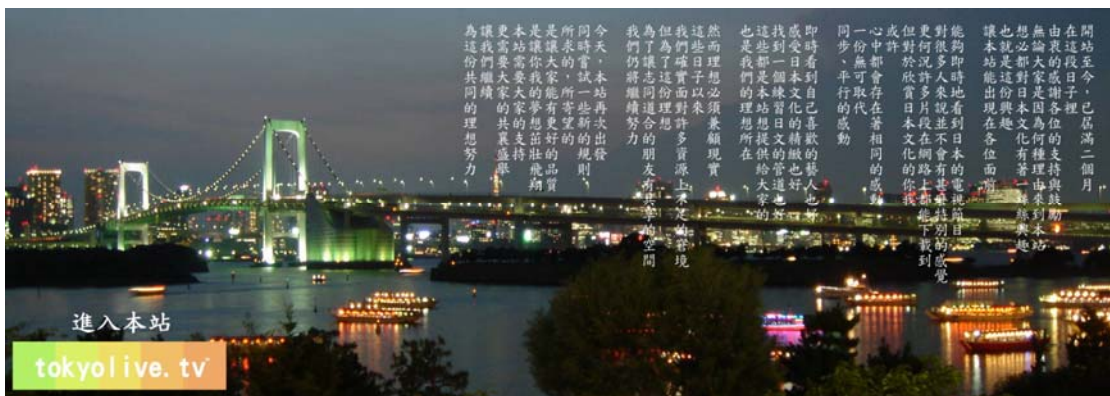


Figure 6.1: The index page of tokyolive.tv. Screenshot on 7 September 2007.

The statement “many programme clips are already available to be downloaded online” indicated that tokyolive.tv clearly knew that by the time its service was online, many (target) audiences would have already used file sharing services to download their favourite shows. In what sense then did tokyolive.tv mark its difference, giving users an “irreplaceable affection and appreciation towards the access of synchronicity and liveness”?

Since tokyolive.tv streamed (retransmitted) the live broadcasts of Japanese television in real time, the audiences did not even need to wait until programme

clips were uploaded hours or days later. Similar to the transnational live transmission of satellite television, the TV time (Wilk, 1994) tokyolive.tv delivered via the Internet was the transnational TV time with the narrowest temporal gap between their efforts and Japanese national broadcasts.

Moreover, rather than only providing programme units or segments (i.e. “clips”) (Ellis, 2002), tokyolive.tv offered a seamless flow (R. Williams, 2003) or “segmentation without closure” (Feuer, 1983, p. 14) of Japanese television to Taiwanese audiences. As Feuer (1983) points out, television’s ability for instantaneous transmission and reception has become the ground for a pervasive ideology of liveness, and this ideology helps to overcome fragmentation within television’s flow. Compared to online methods or platforms which tend to function as databases rather than as flow (Bennett, 2008a), tokyolive.tv insisted on offering linear television synchronically with Japanese broadcasts, a whole package of television experience. This form of linear television was special in the sense that it was a national television flow directly “space-shifted” from another country, a flow not supposed to be consumed outside Japan. This was what tokyolive.tv meant by “irreplaceable affection and appreciation towards liveness and synchronicity”. By virtually space-shifting the Japanese television flow to Taiwanese audiences in real time, tokyolive.tv claimed its ability to offer a comprehensive and synchronised viewing experience that was most identical with the viewing experience of audiences in Japan.

There are of two implications in the term “shared affection” as mentioned in the tokyolive.tv statement. First, given that the administrators put the website online so as to publicly share access to live broadcast of Japanese networks, one of their

main “dreams” (or more precisely, motivations), was to share their affection for Japanese culture with fellow Taiwanese audience members. Phrases such as “all of us share the same interests”, “watching in real time might not be that special to many *others*, but to *you and us* [...] a shared affection in *our* heart” (my italics), clearly addressed a sense of togetherness regarding a specific Taiwanese audience with whom they shared a strong interest in Japan. Second, tokyolive.tv pursued the live broadcast of Japanese networks because it sought to access the most current Japanese information (e.g. “being able to see our favourite artists in real time”). In this regard, the cross-border viewing experience that tokyolive.tv offered was not only about a sense of togetherness with local (i.e. Taiwanese) people with similar interests, but also with contemporary foreign (in this case, Japanese) society and culture: namely, a sense of coevalness (Fabian, 1983; Wilk, 1994).

The background of the index page, as illustrated in Fig. 6.1, is a night view of the famous scene of Tokyo Bay featuring the Rainbow Bridge, Tokyo’s most famous bridge that crosses between Shibaura and Odaiba. The Odaiba area, where people can see the best view of Tokyo Bay and the Rainbow Bridge, has been frequently chosen as the exterior setting for some of the most successful Japanese trendy dramas (e.g., *Love Generation* in 1997; *Yamato Nadeshiko* in 2000) from the late 1990s to early in the next decade. The Odaiba area and the Rainbow Bridge are not only regarded as a typical image of Tokyo and Japan, but also as a symbol of Asian audiences’ affection for Japanese popular culture and their desire for Japanese modernity (M.-T. Lee, 2003, 2004b; T.-D. Lee & Ho, 2002). In this regard, tokyolive.tv’s index design symbolised this same desire, and in doing so stressed its attempt to enhance a strong sense of coevalness. As an amateur service that did not charge its users any fees, tokyolive.tv was not a business that made profits by

infringing the copyright of Japanese networks. Rather, it “poached” (Certeau, 1984; Fiske, 1989) the live broadcast of Japanese networks, in order to serve as a fan-oriented, amateur site that sought an audience with shared interests.

iii. Live Foreign Broadcasting as a Window to Foreign Countries

There have also been Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) commercial services that made profits by delivering unauthorised live broadcasts of foreign TV to their paying subscribers.⁴ This section introduces two audience experiences of IPTV services featuring Japanese broadcast television to elaborate on the relationship between the consumption of live broadcast of foreign TV and the coevalness achieved with foreign locales.

The interviewee Ivy was very interested in Japanese culture, and this interest prompted her to go to Tokyo to pursue her BA degree and stayed there for five years during her early twenties. She had bought a TV set and enjoyed watching Japanese broadcasts. After moving back to Taiwan, she subscribed to a commercial IPTV service that offered unauthorised live broadcasts of Japanese TV for years, and she was the only interviewee (out of a total of 36) who had done so. She argued:

The reason why people want to subscribe to this service is because they want to watch some of the hottest [Japanese] programmes live. Since I do not have too many financial pressures, I just keep it as a kind of access to Japan. It is

⁴ These unauthorised commercial services are in general well equipped with the necessary technologies (e.g. bandwidth, servers) to sustain their services compared to free amateur services. Moreover, they normally use a more private way to deliver their signals to users, making it more difficult for copyright holders (e.g. networks) to eradicate them.

like a window to Japan. You can use it if when you want to watch Japanese TV in real time. For instance, there were a lot of special programmes at New Year's countdown, weren't there? I watched them directly via it (IPTV), so it really tasukaru⁵ [i.e. helps in Japanese, 助かる]. (Ivy, female, 31 years old)

Ivy explained that although it was convenient to use on-demand online services to choose the Japanese programmes she liked (see also Chapter 5 Section III), they could never replace live TV, because watching the latter, especially foreign TV, was important in the following sense:

When you watch TV, sometimes you also have to watch the commercials, or follow schedules. It is not always a bad thing though. Sometimes commercials are not just about products, but also about a certain event, then you can get to know this kind of information. To be honest, you will better understand a country or accommodate yourself to it when you have a TV set, since you can know what is happening there, just by turning the TV on and leave it there, no matter what is being broadcast on it. Even through content like commercials, you will know what kinds of commodities are currently trendy. (Ivy, female, 31 years old)

Both Ivy's argument "you will better know a country or accommodate yourself to it when you have a TV set" and tokyolive.tv's statement regarding "an irreplaceable affection and appreciation towards the access of simultaneity and liveness [of Japanese broadcasting]" indicate that the relationship between broadcast television

⁵ While Ivy spoke Mandarin in the interview, she also used certain Japanese terms. In order to maintain the nuance of her use of Japanese, the terms she used are kept in their original Japanese form rather than being translated into English.

and the nation was considered strong. Broadcast television, in Ivy's understanding, functioned as a "window on the world" (Spigel, 1992) that helped her to be more connected to the public world of a given foreign country, whether she lived in that foreign country or not. Similar to *tokyolive.tv*, Ivy's argument suggests that consuming a seamless flow was a more complete viewing experience than watching single programme units, since every piece of televised output (including commercials) was seen as the latest, real time information from the given broadcast location. In other words, foreign television flow as a whole provides the most comprehensive, up-to-date currency (Ellis, 2002, 2007) regarding that foreign country and culture. This foreign currency, with a strong relation to its nation, was the key to the audience achieving a sense of coevalness with a given foreign country and culture.

The relation between live foreign broadcasts and the sense of coevalness is manifested in the experience of Wispa, a famous Taiwanese blogger and author who is interested in Japanese dramas.⁶ Wispa has been running various social networking sites (e.g. BBS board, blog, microblogging site) focusing on Japanese dramas since the late 1990s. In 2007, she subscribed to an unauthorised IPTV service and wrote an entry titled "An urge leads to the purchase of a dream! Watching Japanese TV in Taiwan," and she shared her excitement on her blog *Wispa's Notes on TV Viewing*.⁷ Below is a translation of part of the entry:

⁶ Wispa published her book featuring her viewing experience of Japanese dramas in 2005, and it is the most popular book on similar or identical topics.

⁷ The URL of *Wispa's Notes on TV Viewing* is <http://wispa.pixnet.net/blog/post/10184686>; last visited on 25 June 2015.

My dream of watching Japanese TV in Taiwan has come true, thanks to this machine! [...] Watching simultaneously with Japanese audiences the live TV of Japan is just like a dream! The pleasure [of doing so] is completely different from the experience of waiting impatiently all day long and suffering from downloading [...] I feel as if I were in Japan. Since Taiwan is an hour behind Japan, I even experience the time difference: I have to rush back home before 8:00 p.m. to watch Japanese shows broadcast at 9:00 p.m.!

Watching Japanese broadcast television is a dream as well as an urge! Even if I unsubscribe half a year later, I would still feel as if it is a dream to have had the magical experience of synchronised viewing.⁸ Anyway, I really feel that subscribing and installing it and acting on such an urge is such a special Japanese drama-viewing experience! (Wispa, 2007, extracted and translated from ‘Wispa’s Notes on TV Viewing’)

The way in which Wispa repetitively phrased the realisation of “watching Japanese broadcasts live in Taiwan” as a dream and “magical experience” coincides with the “dream” tokyolive.tv tried to achieve (i.e. restreaming Japanese broadcast TV to its users in real time). This phrase indicates how the consumption of the live, national broadcasts of another country was still considered rare and difficult in an age of global television (Parks & Kumar, 2003), one in which transnationally televised content is increasing and programme trades are more globalised.

Johansen (1997, pp. 191-194) argues that national broadcast television, with its capacity for liveness as both “simultaneity” and “fellowship” in his terms, provides

⁸ According to the information given on Wispa’s blog, she kept her IPTV subscription at least until 2009.

audiences the impression of being co-present with their countrymen. If this is the case, being able to watch the national broadcasts of another country indicates that audiences may have the impression of being co-present with the citizens of that given country. Since the IPTV service virtually space-shifted the consuming and transmitting zone of Japanese national broadcasts to Wispa's television screen in Taiwan, she experienced that co-presence – “as if I were in Japan” – to the extent that she felt that she had lived in the Japanese time zone, which is an hour later than Taiwan. This experience of sharing the same time zone with Japanese audiences is one of the most significant examples of how the consumption of live foreign broadcast television helps audiences to achieve a sense of coevalness with foreign countries. While this section focused on the live broadcasting of Japanese TV and Taiwanese audiences' coevalness with Japan, the identical pattern of consumption and the coevalness achieved can also be found with live broadcasting from countries such as Korea and the US.

As Ivy was born into a family that was wealthier than average, middle-class Taiwanese families, she had greater economic capital than most of the other interviewees. She not only had the costly live IPTV subscription to virtually access Japan as a form of symbolic mobility, she also had the physical mobility to live in Tokyo, Sydney and London. To some extent, Ivy not only imagined but also actually experienced herself as living lives parallel to foreigners (i.e. Japanese, Australian, British). By comparison, despite Wispa's long-time interest in Japanese popular culture, she had not lived in Japan at the time of writing the quoted blog entry. In this sense, live Japanese television might be more likely to function as the primary (if not the only) resource through which she experienced coevalness with Japan. While the importance of audiences' overseas living experiences in terms of

physical mobility will be discussed again in Chapter 7 Sections II to IV, the next section discusses another audience practice associated with the live broadcasting of foreign networks: the real-time online discussion of the consumption of foreign shows via streaming services.

II. Real-time Discussion Threads as a Form of Live Event

On social networking sites (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, PTT), in recent years when a given popular programme is on air, it is increasingly common for audiences to gather online and start a live, instant thread of conversation to discuss the programme as it is transmitted in real time. This kind of discussion thread on PTT is usually called a “live thread”.

On 25 March 2008, a special episode of *Operation Love* (*Puropōzu Daisakusen*, プロポーズ大作戦),⁹ the Japanese drama popular both in Japan and other East Asian regions at the time, was on air in Japan. Given the popularity *Operation Love* gained in 2007, the broadcast of a special episode featuring the end of the whole story was a long-awaited event for Taiwanese audiences on PTT, and this ignited enthusiastic discussions even before its Japanese premiere. On the day of its Japanese premiere, many enthusiastic audience members gathered at the same time on one of the PTT boards, Japandrama, and started live threads to discuss the ongoing plots with other online users/viewers. Figure 6.2 features the user AAU who was watching the special episode in Taiwan at around 20:00 (Taiwanese time)

⁹ The original story of *Operation Love*, a drama composed of 11 weekly episodes, was first broadcast in Japan from April to June 2007. The special episode was first aired in Japan on 25 March 2008. It was a newly shot two-hour special episode. In Taiwan, the original 11 episodes were imported and first broadcast on the local channel Videoland Japan on 7-21 August 2007, and the special episode was on air on the same channel on 26 and 27 August 2008.

when the drama was being aired in Japan. The fact that AAU did not understand Japanese did not stop him/her from enjoying the live broadcast of the episode. He (or she) asked on Japandrama if other users would like to discuss the plot together. The entry is translated as follows:

Hey, the *Operation Love SP*¹⁰ is on air right now in Japan! I wonder how many of the people here are watching. Sigh... I can neither read nor understand Japanese... (Well there's no subtitle anyway...). Ahhhhhh, folks, how about starting a live thread? (AAU, 2008)

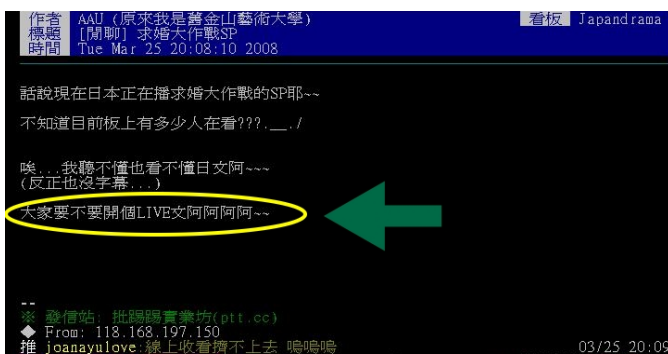


Figure 6.2 The post proposing to start live threads to discuss the episode in real time. The arrow indicates the proposal sentence. Screenshot on 25 March 2008.

A large number of users promptly responded and joined the live thread. Less than an hour and a half later, the number of responses on the thread was over 2,000 and it became the most popular entry of the day and over the following week. Many conversations reflected the audience's excitement and frustration regarding their online connection to the live broadcast. Figure 6.3 shows a very small section of the threads. In the first row, the user joanayulove wrote: "the online streaming was

¹⁰ SP refers to the special edition of a certain drama. This term is commonly used both in the Japanese TV production industry and in Taiwanese audiences' discussions.

disconnected...Sobbing”; and in the second row, tomwu said: “watching now...I don’t understand the Japanese language either, haha”. At the bottom of the figure ‘nilcc’, who did not seem to realise that *Operation Love SP* was only accessible online at that time, asked: “which local network is broadcasting this now??” While many others discussed the live viewing conditions they were having, Ishigaki (ninth row) was the first user (in the conversation shown in Fig. 6.3) who directly discussed the plot: “This drama, in fact, should be called ‘runaway groom’!!!!”

```

推 joanayulove:線上收看擠不上去 嗚嗚嗚 03/25 20:09
推 tomwu:收看中...我也看不懂日文...哈哈 03/25 20:09
推 ajiecyj:超LAG的... 03/25 20:09
→ AAU:我這邊很順耶--但是剛剛也是連了30分鐘才連上 03/25 20:09
ajiecyj:聲音跟畫面會對不太準...我是用K**H**E**TV的... 03/25 20:10
推 pokejohnson:我正在看!!! 03/25 20:15
pokejohnson:連上去就很順了 K 牌的會lag 03/25 20:16
推 Jacktang:XDDD 看到勒 03/25 20:16
→ Ishigaki:這部戲根本是逃婚大作戰吧!!!! 03/25 20:19
推 ajiecyj:蘇格拉底XDDD 03/25 20:20
推 pei098:找不到頻道 OTZ 03/25 20:21
推 pokejohnson:蘇格拉底出來我狂笑阿XDDD 03/25 20:23
→ pokejohnson:這篇會變大雷XD 03/25 20:23
推 slieat09030:有網路可看嗎?XD 03/25 20:24
推 ayago:用s*pc**t不會lag喔 03/25 20:23
怕有違反版規-修掉囉~
→ AAU:麥補遙的廣告好正(上一段的) 03/25 20:25
※ 編輯: AAU 來自: 118.168.197.150 (03/25 20:26)
→ pokejohnson:老師XD 03/25 20:27
→ aiomio:文章標題可能要標個雷吧 不然太熱情忍不住就爆雷了 XD 03/25 20:27
→ pokejohnson:廣告好突然 因為都聽不懂XD 03/25 20:30
推 nilcc:是哪個電視台播的阿?? 03/25 20:30

```

Figure 6.3 Part of the ongoing threads. Screenshot on 25 March 2008.

The title of the entry that generated the live thread, was translated as “*Operation Love SP, Live Now* (spoiler alert!)”. The term “spoilers” can be understood as “sneak peeking”, or previewed information directly related to the plot (Baym, 2000, p. 87). While some people cannot wait or would not mind being “spoiled” regarding the story, others would – understandably – rather avoid spoilers since they are concerned that their later viewing enjoyment will be sacrificed. Gray (1992) notes that drama viewing has to be “carefully organised in order to keep up with not only a serial but also television-related talk” (p. 125). The influence of asynchronous viewing between audiences on television-related discussion is shown in audiences’ spoiler concerns with foreign programmes available only via unauthorised online methods. Since these programmes are not yet officially and

legally premiered in Taiwan, all detailed information about their plots are “spoilers” to the general Taiwanese public. In order to avoid conflicts between users over spoilers, as a norm on PTT, any discussion concerning foreign programmes is considered as a potential spoiler, and is required to be clearly labelled as such in the title.

The live thread of *Operation Love SP* indicated the same practice regarding spoiler concerns. While many PTT users joined the discussions, the users who were actually watching *Operation Love SP* when it was simultaneously on air in Japan were still a minority. More users (whether participating in the discussions or not) consumed the episode at other times for different reasons (e.g. they were busy during the live broadcast, lacked the necessary IT skills, had poor Internet connections). Therefore, the live thread was clearly marked as spoiler to respect the majority of the audiences who had not watched the drama and wanted to retain their enjoyment both in terms of viewing and participating in the discussion.

The live threads of *Operation Love SP* could be understood as “online liveness”, a form of “social co-presence on a variety of scales [...] all made possible by the Internet as an underlying infrastructure” (Couldry, 2004, p. 356). Specifically, two forms of online liveness were evident. The first was associated with the real time connection to the live broadcast in Japan. As Ellis (1992) notes, television’s “live” aesthetics is maintained in the live broadcasting of factual, unfolding programmes as well as that of fictional programmes, “as though the TV image is a ‘live’ image, transmitted and received in the same moment as it is produced” (p. 132). Although *Operation Love SP* was itself fictional, its live broadcast in Japan was an actual event that took place in the living world. The fact that it was rare to have such live,

transnational access justifies this act of synchronic transmission and consumption as constituting a special event. Insofar as such online transmission connected PTT users in real time to an ongoing, unfolding “shared social reality” (Couldry, 2004, pp. 355-356) – i.e. the live broadcast of *Operation Love SP* – these users achieved a sense of liveness and thereby a sense of coevalness with both Japanese and Taiwanese fellow audiences.

The second form of online liveness has to do with the live discussions that brought audiences together online. The live threads of *Operation Love SP* demonstrate the same conversational feature with that apparent in live tweets about the London 2012 Olympics (as discussed in Chapter 3) and many other popular fictional and non-fictional programmes. Given the increasing worldwide popularity of television-related live tweets/discussions, the phenomenon of online live threads per se, while based on TV broadcasts, should be regarded as a relatively smaller but still significant form (compared with TV broadcasts) of live, media events.

Specifically, Ytreberg (2009) examines the ways in which television networks set up multiple platforms to encourage audiences to discuss reality shows or even take part in shows’ development online (e.g. by voting). He regards this online practice as promoted by the networks to be a form of “extended liveness” (p. 477). Nevertheless, although online threads in my empirical data could also be regarded as a form of extended liveness, they were not the result of the networks’ deliberate efforts. In the online consumption of foreign TV, such as in *tokyolive.tv*’s case, liveness was not originally deployed by networks that originated the flows, as these networks did not intend to live broadcast their programmes to overseas audiences. Rather, it was the audiences who actively tried to “poach” (Certeau, 1984; Fiske,

1989) foreign live broadcasts in order to be connected to the latest information on foreign countries, via which a sense of coevalness was enhanced.

III. Online Platforms' Promotion of Foreign Schedules and Ratings

i. Juxtaposition of Local and Foreign TV Schedules

In the opening section of this chapter, the Taiwanese blogger Wispa's argument demonstrated how, by consuming live Japanese television, the Japanese time zone had become a temporality within which she lived parallel with the local (Taiwanese) time zone. A lot of research examines how broadcast schedules play a crucial role in the social construction of time (Ellis, 2007; Robins, 1995). Specifically, they look at how broadcast systems provide a framework "both for the household's involvement in the sequencing of public time, and for the sustaining of domestic routines through the broadcast schedules" (Silverstone et al., 1994, p. 21). According to Scannell (1988), throughout the years and over generations, the temporal rhythms of scheduling had made broadcast output a temporal reference that functions as "traces both of a common past and of the biography of individuals" (p. 19). It is in this sense that he stresses that the fundamental work of national broadcasting systems is "the mediation of modernity, the normalisation of the public sphere and the socialisation of the private sphere" (p. 28). Thereby, through these processes, the broadcasting system constructs a national public life available to all.

While this research rightly explains the implications of the temporality provided by broadcast schedules, they are mainly based on a national context. Nevertheless, as Wispa's argument indicates (see Section I), how can the temporality of television

function if audiences have not only their national schedule, but also other foreign schedules, to follow? In both this and the next section (Sections III and IV), I examine the way in which the scheduling of foreign broadcasts is incorporated into Taiwanese audiences' everyday lives and the implications of this for coevalness with foreign countries. While this section focuses on the practices of online platforms, the next section features the interviewees' practices. Both sections aim to illustrate "the ways in which media texts and technologies are implicated in the experience of time" (Keightley, 2013, p. 63) at a transnational level.

Since approximately 2006, it has been increasingly common in Taiwan for the online social networking sites featuring foreign genres to juxtapose two television schedules. One is the local schedule showing what foreign shows will be broadcast, at what time, and on which Taiwanese channels. Another one is the current schedules of foreign television networks, listing on what day, on which channel and at what time the latest foreign shows will be aired in their countries of origin (see Figs. 6.4 and 6.5 as examples).



Figure 6.4 The index page of the BBS board Reality Show on PTT. Screenshot on 19 March 2008.

Figure 6.4 shows the discussion board Reality Show on PTT which features Western shows (mainly American ones). At the top of the figure is the current schedule of reality shows airing in Taiwan (e.g. the first line lists “*Project Runway* Season 4, Travel Living Channel, Tuesday at 10 pm”). The bottom lists the time the schedule of reality shows airing in the United States, including the current season of *American Idol*, *America’s Next Top Model*, *Big Brother* (US version), *Make Me a Super Model*, and *Survivor*.



Figure 6.5 The index page of The Little Otaku’s Weekly Drama Journal.¹¹ Screenshot on 20 September 2012.

Figure 6.5 is the index page of the fan-oriented website The Little Otaku’s Weekly Drama Journal with three highlights (marked by the author). The first line marked by an oval is information indicating those Korean dramas currently on air on Taiwanese local networks. The second line highlighted by a rectangle is information regarding Korean dramas currently on air in Korea. The last highlight at the bottom of the screenshot is information about current Japanese and Thai dramas on air in Japan and Thailand, respectively. The Little Otaku’s Weekly Drama Journal is a site some interviewees (e.g. Ann and Nicole) regularly visit in

¹¹ The URL of The Little Otaku’s Weekly Drama Journal is: <http://chi.gogoblog.tw/>. Last visited on 19 May 2015.

order to check for up-to-date local and foreign information regarding Korean dramas.

From the audience's perspective, the function of television schedules is to indicate what programmes are available, at what time and on which platforms/channels. Therefore, it would be almost meaningless for Taiwanese sites to share current foreign schedules, if these programmes were unavailable to Taiwanese audiences who visit these sites. These sites' juxtaposition of local and foreign TV schedules indicates that it has become imaginable for Taiwanese audiences to access the national broadcast outputs of foreign countries, and to live in Internet-enabled foreign TV times (Wilk, 1994) parallel with local TV time, as if the boundaries of national territory within which each national broadcasting is regulated have blurred (if not disappeared). By the same token, a large number of Taiwanese online platforms (legally and illegally) provided foreign programmes to their users. Their programme collection is usually based on a database structure (Manovich, 2002) in which programmes are organised by country of origin, release date, genre, etc. However, it is worth noting that many of them simultaneously employ a calendar-based structure to orchestrate their programme units similar to broadcast schedules, as illustrated in Figure 6.6.

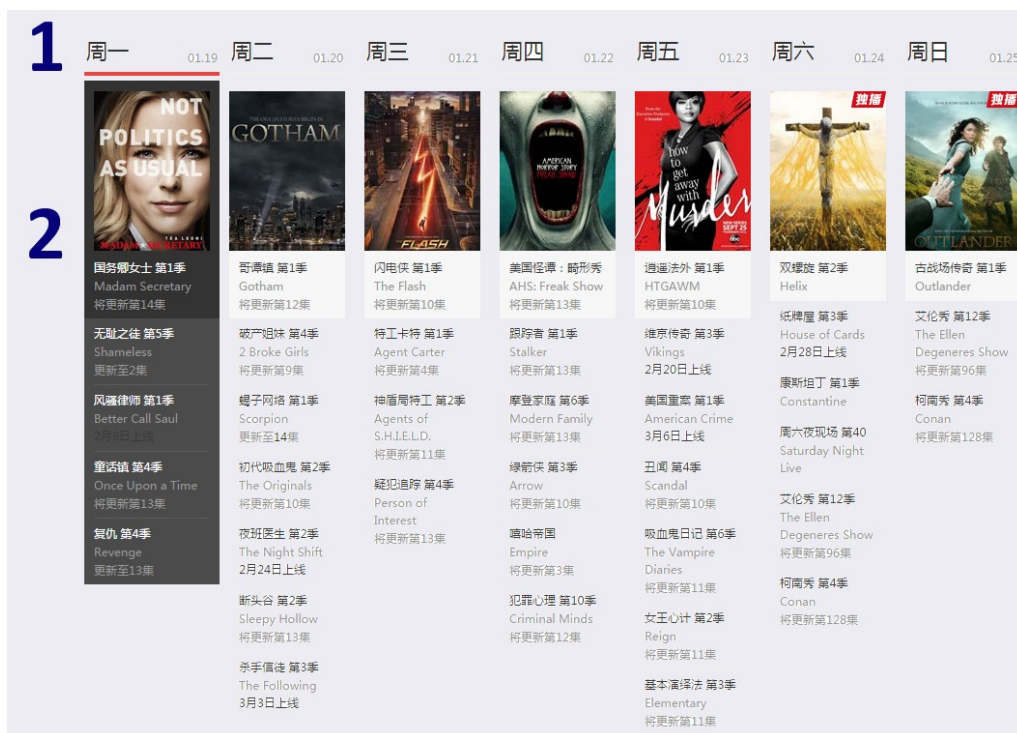


Figure 6.6 The weekly calendar of the latest American TV series on Sohu. Screenshot on 20 January 2015.

Figure 6.6 is the weekly calendar of the latest American TV series legally available on the Sohu¹² streaming platform, one of the largest Chinese Internet corporations. While the platform also contains illegal and unlicensed content, it has started to make deals with major American networks and premieres a wide range of the latest, subtitled American TV series just one day after they air in the US. The numbers on the left (marked by the author) 1 and 2 represent, respectively: 1. The days of the week (Monday-Sunday); 2. The information of programmes updated on each day. This calendar, titled “Current Seasons of American TV Series to Catch Up On”, is designed as an index to keep users up to date with information about what and when the latest episode of each series would be updated on Sohu. For instance, *Madam Secretary* is a 2014-2015 美国 series currently airing on Sundays on the

¹² Sohu’s American TV platform is: <http://tv.sohu.com/drama/us/>; Sohu’s general TV platform is: <http://tv.sohu.com/drama/>; the main site Sohu: <http://www.sohu.com>. Last visited on 23 January 2015.

American network CBS. It is listed at the top left of the calendar, indicating that it is updated on the platform every Monday. All American programmes on this calendar are updated a day after their US debuts. Many of the platforms my interviewees visited regularly, either Taiwanese or foreign, legal or illegal, employ a similar calendar structure.¹³

Bennett (2008a) argues that online video platforms such as the BBC's iPlayer, Netflix or Hulu "remediate television's ontology from flow to database" (p. 160) by unbundling television programmes from the flow of the linear schedule and relocating them as on-demand content. Uricchio (2009) argues that video platforms like YouTube lack linear broadcasting flows, but offer instead "a set of equivalently accessible alternatives at any given moment" (p. 32). This change indicates "a shift from flow as default to flow as a condition that requires active selection" (p. 33). However, unlike iPlayer or YouTube, the online platforms that combined a database with a time-based calendar structure remediate television's ontology in a different manner. These platforms unbundle foreign programmes from original schedules where the programmes are based. Nevertheless, rather than abandoning the notion of linear flow, these platforms imitated the practice of broadcast television and orchestrating foreign programmes on the platforms in a calendar layout. This is to guide users, not only regarding what to watch but also *when* to watch. In so doing, they in fact reformulate a flow that is similar to that of foreign broadcast television. The viewing experience they represent is based on the combination of two patterns

¹³ For instance, Evan relied on an English website, Sidereel (<http://www.sidereel.com>), that provided unlicensed access to American TV series with a weekly schedule to catch up on all the series he was into. By the same token, Ivy visited Japanese websites that collected unlicensed Japanese dramas, animations and variety shows and displayed them on a weekly calendar (e.g. YouTube Doramamatome Douga, <http://youtubetvdoramadouga.blog111.fc2.com/>) to find and watch the latest Japanese programmes. See Chapter 7 Section III for further details. Last visited on 23 January 2015.

of flow: one using the database, on-demand feature, the other the linear, calendar-navigated device.

While online platforms with both a database and calendar structure offer “a set of accessible alternatives at given moments” (Uricchio, 2009, p. 32), these also carry a currency closer to the time-based broadcast flow. By orchestrating the latest foreign programmes into a weekly release schedule, these online platforms reinstate the “watch it now insistence of broadcasting” (Ellis, 2007, p. 220), and thereby enhance audiences’ sense of coevalness with the foreign countries these programmes originated from. The importance of television programmes’ currency is therefore highlighted in the operation of these online platforms and the viewing experience they embody.

ii. Tracking Foreign Ratings as a Practice

Besides following the broadcast schedules of foreign countries, more and more Taiwanese networking sites have started to track keenly the ratings of foreign programmes in their countries of origin. Take the BBS board Japandrama as an instance. In Japan, the daily ratings are released the next working day. Once these are released, enthusiastic Japandrama audiences will update the rating charts in minutes (to a few hours) to keep the data up-to-date. Figure 6.7 shows a ratings chart of Japanese dramas for the 2012 summer season. It was posted on Japandrama on 24 September, when most of the summer dramas had finished. The numbers at the top (marked by the author) from 1 to 6 represent, respectively: 1. The average rating; 2. The finale’s rating; 3. The first episode’s rating; 4. The TV networks and the time slot these dramas were allocated; 5. The original drama title

(in Japanese); 6. Its Chinese translation. All the ratings listed in Figure 6.7 were ratings *in Japan* rather than in Taiwan. In fact, none of these summer dramas had been broadcast on Taiwanese networks at the time the chart was posted.

平均	最終	初回	局・时段	劇名	中文劇名
13.13	14.3	15.1	CX 火22	GTO	GTO
12.44	13.1	13.3	EX 木21	遺留捜査	遺留捜査
12.36	13.2	13.9	CX 月21	リッチマン、プアウーマン	Rich Man, Poor Woman
11.79	14.0	13.0	EX 水21	警視庁捜査一課9係 season7-	警視廳搜查一課9係
10.72	11.1	15.2	NTV 土21	ゴーストママ捜査線	幽靈媽媽搜查線
10.43	10.6	12.9	NTV 水22	トゥッカン〜特別国税徴収官〜	特別國稅徵收官
10.30	10.1	16.0	EX 木20	京都地検の女	京都地檢之女
10.01	*9.6	12.9	CX 日21	ビューティフルレイン	美雨
*9.92	*8.6	14.7	TBS 日21	サマーレスキュー〜天空の診療所〜	Summer Rescue
*9.86	*8.0	12.9	TBS 金22	黒の女教師	黑之女教師
*9.73	*8.6	12.1	CX 火21	息もできない夏	無法呼吸的夏天
*8.35	*6.2	11.3	CX 木22	東野圭吾ミステリーズ	東野圭吾推理單元
*7.44	*5.7	*8.5	TBS 木21	ビギナーズ	Beginners
*5.98	*4.4	*7.8	TBS 月20	浪花少年探偵団	浪花少年偵探團
*5.86	*6.3	*7.5	EX 金23	ボーイズ・オン・ザ・ラン	敏行快跑

Figure 6.7 The ratings chart of Japanese dramas in 2012 summer season on the BBS board, Japandrama on PTT. Screenshot on 2 November 2012.

Similarly, Figure 6.8 demonstrates a small part of the Korean ratings chart for current Korean dramas in 2014-2015 winter season as created by the well-known amateur Taiwanese website Dorama.info.¹⁴ The numbers at the top marked from 1 to 4 represent, respectively: 1. The days and time slot; 2. The title of Korean dramas (in Chinese); 3. The weekly ratings; 4. The updated average ratings. The chart is updated daily by the administrators; the same practice prevails for drama ratings in Japan, Hong Kong as well as Taiwan on Dorama.info.

¹⁴ The URL of Dorama.info is: <http://dorama.info/>

週期	電視劇名稱	台	12-29	01-05	01-12	01-19	01-26	02-02	02-09	02-16	02-23	03-02	03-09	03-16	03-23	03-30	平均	
			01-04	01-11	01-18	01-25	02-01	02-08	02-15	02-22	03-01	03-08	03-15	03-22	03-29	04-05		
1 每週一二	2 Punch	SBS	7.8	9.3	9.8												目前_8.27	
		MBC	7.7	9.4														9.77
		KBS2	7.8	8.2	9.4													目前_8.26
每週三四	22 皮諾丘	SBS	12.9	12.6	12.1												11.00	
		MBC	9.2	10.3													目前_9.45	
		KBS2	7.3	7.0													目前_6.82	
每週六日	20 誕生吧(家族)(AGB)	SBS	4.3	4.1	3.4												目前_4.45	
		MBC	19.4	17.9	18.8												目前_16.12	
	20 家人之間何必這樣	KBS2	37.0	36.8	36.7												目前_29.47	
		SBS	6.1	6.5													7.28	
	22 美女的誕生(AGB)	SBS	5.7	7.2														

Figure 6.8 The ratings chart for current Korean dramas, winter 2014-2015 as listed on the Taiwanese website dorama.info. Screenshot on 20 January 2015.

The ratings of foreign dramas in their countries of origin (not the ratings in Taiwan) have been popular topics of discussion on networking sites featuring foreign programmes. Why a certain drama draws or fails to gain high ratings; or, which actor is capable of generating high ratings, are some of the most talked-about themes. Many of my interviewees regularly visited these Taiwanese sites from which they obtained a general idea of what current foreign programmes are on air, which programmes generated high ratings in foreign countries, where to access these programmes, etc. In the next section I will examine interviewees' practices to illuminate how foreign broadcasting became "traces of the biography of individuals" (Scannell, 1988, p. 19) and thereby enhanced the interviewees' sense of coevalness with foreign countries.

IV. Living within Dual TV Times

i. Foreign Temporal Indications as Taken-for-granted Notions

Many interviewees showed their familiarity with foreign broadcast schedules when

they talked about their online viewing of foreign programmes. In many cases, they employed foreign temporal indications and terminologies not commonly used and understood in the Taiwanese cultural context. For instance, Helen was interested in Japanese dramas:

Helen: Maybe the [drama] list of the coming season has been released now. And I am going to keep an eye on the dramas that are most talked-about on Japanese media or those whose cast interests me. Then, I can start to find them when they are on air [in Japan].

(Yu-kei: Any specific ones that you want to watch this season?)

Helen: Is it Spring Season or Summer Season you are referring to by saying “this season”?

Helen first described how she routinely visited Chinese-language websites¹⁵ to gain a broad idea about Japanese dramas slated for the coming season. I followed up and asked what she was planning to watch “this season”, without making clear what season I was referring to. However, when the interview took place (the third week of July), it was the transition between the Spring and Summer broadcast seasons in Japan. Helen immediately asked me which season I exactly referred to since she wanted to make sure if she understood me accurately.

It is important to note that, in Japan, where the four seasons are well-defined, the seasonal calendar is closely connected with contemporary Japanese life (Bestor,

¹⁵ Kenshin.hk (<http://kenshin.hk>) was one of the websites she used to visit. The site is operated by a Hong Kong blogger, Kenshin, who is known to provide extensive and up-to-date information about Japanese popular culture. Last visited on 23 January 2015.

2011; Davies & Ikeno, 2002; Linhart, 1998), and this is also articulated in broadcasting: the seasons are the primary category to produce, classify and schedule programmes (especially drama series). However, unlike Japan or other countries whose broadcast calendars are based on the seasons, the seasons are not the main notion employed in the Taiwanese broadcasting practice, where seasonal differences are not as distinctive.¹⁶ In terms of locally produced dramas, there are no regular drama seasons, and the storyline and drama settings do not necessarily contain materials that “suit the climate of the year” (Scannell, 1988, p. 19). In terms of imported dramas, broadcasters do not necessarily schedule foreign dramas according to the original season they were broadcast in their countries of origin. For instance, a winter drama featuring a love story in the snowy white Christmas season in Korea, Japan or the US may be on air during the Taiwanese summer when the temperature is 35°C. A Japanese morning drama may be shown in the evening. In other words, in the Taiwanese context foreign programmes may be scheduled “*at that time*” but not necessarily “*for that time*” (Scannell, 2014, p. 49).

Given that the seasons are not key notions in the Taiwanese broadcast calendar, the significance of the conversation between Helen and I does not lie in which season I was actually referring to during the interview, but in the way she naturally employed the seasons as a temporal broadcast framework when responding to my ambiguous question. Her spontaneous response illustrated how she had attuned her viewing pattern to the Japanese (broadcast) seasons and adopted the Japanese sense of the seasons as a taken-for granted notion of broadcasting.

¹⁶ While Taiwanese networks produce festive programmes on national holidays (e.g. Chinese New Year, Mid-Autumn Festival), in general they do not specifically produce programmes based on the seasons.

Another case demonstrating how foreign broadcast calendars are implicated in interviewees' viewing is evident in the way in which interviewees adopted foreign temporal terminologies when they talked about their viewing experiences. The naming system of the days of the week in Taiwan, Japan and Korea requires explanation. In Taiwan (and other Chinese-speaking countries/regions), Monday through Saturday are numbered by the numerals “one” through “six”, with the short form “Sun” referring to Sunday. By comparison, the day naming system in both Japan and Korea is ordered after the “Seven Luminaries”, consisting of the Sun (Sunday), the Moon (Monday) and the five planets named after the five elements in East Asian philosophy: Fire (Mars, Tuesday); Water (Mercury, Wednesday); Wood (Jupiter, Thursday); Metal (Venus, Friday); and Earth (Saturn, Saturday). Table 6.1 compares the day naming systems between Taiwan, Japan, and Korea:

Table 6.1 Comparison of names of the days of the week

English	Taiwan	Japan	Korea
Monday	一 Day One	月 Moon day	워 Moon day
Tuesday	二 Day Two	火 Fire day	화 Fire day
Wednesday	三 Day Three	水 Water day	수 Water day
Thursday	四 Day Four	木 Wood day	목 Wood day
Friday	五 Day Five	金 Gold day	금 Gold day
Saturday	六 Day Six	土 Earth day	토 Earth day
Sunday	日 Day Sun	日 Sun day	일 Sun day

(Compiled by the author)

Specifically, when Korean networks categorise their dramas, they name the days on which a certain drama is on air (e.g. Moon-Fire drama), whereas Japanese networks specify both the day and the time of broadcast using an abbreviation (e.g. Fire-Ten as dramas shown at 10 pm on Tuesday). Given that neither Japanese nor Korean were mandatory subjects in compulsory education in Taiwan, the Japanese and Korean naming system of the Seven Luminaries are not general knowledge. Nicole's argument, however, indicated how familiar she was with the Korean naming system for the days of the week:

[Korean dramas are called, for example] Water-Moon drama, or Earth-Wood drama.¹⁷ Their schedules are like this: they broadcast one drama on Monday and Tuesday, another one on Wednesday and Thursday, a variety show on Friday, and the hottest drama on Saturday and Sunday. (Nicole, female, 45 years old)

After mentioning phrases such as “Earth-Wood drama”, Nicole explained the Korean weekly drama scheduling to me, in case I was unfamiliar with the Korean scheduling or what Earth-Wood meant. This suggested that she was aware that these terminologies that she had adopted were not shared knowledge among the general Taiwanese public: dramas broadcast on two days a week was not a local broadcast convention; nor was the Seven Luminaries based on the Taiwanese day naming system. While Nicole did not understand Korean, she regularly checked Taiwanese social networking sites¹⁸ that translated and updated Korean

¹⁷ Water-Moon drama and Earth-Wood drama respectively refer to the dramas shown two days a week, i.e. Wednesday and Monday, and Saturday and Thursday.

¹⁸ Little Otaku's Weekly Drama Journal (<http://chi.gogoblog.tw/>) mentioned in Section III is one of the websites she regularly visited. Last visited on 30 May 2015.

broadcasting information, and eventually understood how to count drama ratings in Korea:

They don't have as many channels as we do, so their ratings are usually higher [than in Taiwan]. It is very competitive in terms of ratings, so it can be considered very impressive if it [a given drama] gains [a rating of] 20%. The worst ratings would be around 6%, like the drama I mentioned. There had been extremely high ratings, say, 40% or 50%. (Nicole, female, 45 years old)

In Taiwan, where there have been over 100 channels, many audiences have had a rough idea that the viewership is fragmented and TV ratings are generally low, regardless of whether they are able to specify the rating of a certain programme or not. Nicole is no exception, and she assumed that I had the same understanding regarding Taiwanese ratings. However, the standard by which a rating is considered high or low in Taiwan is very different from Korea, where viewership is dominated by three terrestrial networks, which is crucial information for any Taiwanese attempting to understand the meaning of ratings in a Korean context.¹⁹ Nicole expanded on her understanding of Korean ratings to ensure that I was as aware of Korean ratings as she was. However, while she was familiar with Korean ratings and regarded them as references regarding what to watch, as a viewer who seldom consumed Korean dramas via local networks and had no interest in Taiwanese dramas, she did not pay much attention to the ratings Korean or Taiwanese dramas achieved in Taiwan. In this sense, her drama viewing pattern was grounded, not so much on Taiwanese but rather on Korean broadcast television.

¹⁹ In recent years in Taiwan, a given local drama that scores a 4% to 5% of rating is already good enough to be acclaimed as a success.

Similar to Nicole, Claire, who was interested in Japanese culture, automatically employed the Japanese naming of the days of the week:

Moon-Nine is always excluded from my viewing list [those shows she consumed online] since, first, I think that Videoland Japan [i.e. a Taiwanese network] will broadcast it anyway. Second, Moon-Nine is usually about romance, so I don't watch it if I am not interested in the leads. (Claire, female, 30 years old)

The term “Moon-Nine” referred to Monday 9:00 pm, and it is commonly used to specify Fuji TV dramas scheduled in that time-slot.²⁰ Many dramas that drew significantly high ratings in Japan and other parts of East Asia were Moon-Nine dramas (e.g. *Long Vacation* in 1996, *Yamato Nadeshiko* in 2000). Although Moon-Nine is understood by Taiwanese audiences familiar with Japanese dramas, it is not a general phrase used in Taiwan. However, as Claire and I were friends for years and she was sure that I understood what Moon-Nine meant, she used the term spontaneously as shared knowledge (between us) without explanation. Moreover, the way in which Claire mentioned local broadcasting conventions and Japanese temporal terminologies simultaneously exemplified how both Japanese and Taiwanese TV temporalities had blended in her viewing patterns. Similar traits are seen in the following instances:

²⁰ The combination of the day and the time in an abbreviation such as Moon-Nine is not exclusively used by Fuji TV. It is a common form that Japanese networks usually employ to refer to a certain time-slot where which a certain programme is located.

*Hawaii Five-0*²¹ is on air at 9:00 p.m. tonight. It should be Episode 13 and 14 this week [...] but I have already finished watching all 24 episodes! Files have been leaked from foreign countries, so many Taiwanese just go online to download the series. [...] If I couldn't find them, I would have followed the broadcast, but why would I do so and in turn limit my viewing freedom in terms of time, if I can find them so easily? (Ryan, male, 35 years old)

If it [the Japanese animation *One Piece*] is out and it is possible to watch it, then I will definitely watch it! Can I delay my viewing? Yeah, but if I can catch up with the most current season, of course I will do so, why would I wait until TTV [a Taiwanese terrestrial network] air it? I haven't been watching TTV for a long time. The time-lag between TTV and Japan is around three to four months. (Gary, male, 27 years old)

Both Ryan and Gary knew where their favourite foreign programmes were allocated in both foreign and local schedules, to the extent that they knew how far the local broadcasts were behind their current foreign counterparts. They stressed that there was no reason for them to wait for the local broadcasting, if it was possible to keep up easily with the latest foreign broadcast. This was a shared opinion among most interviewees.

Scannell (2014) elaborates on in what sense broadcasting creates “a spanned spatiality and temporality” (p. 63):

²¹ *Hawaii Five-0* is an American police drama series that premiered on CBS in September 2010 (in turn a remake of the 1968 original series), and it debuted in Taiwan in June 2011.

In turning on the television, I enter a doubled spatiality and a doubled temporality: the ‘here’ of where I am (in the room) and the ‘there’ of television wherever it may be [...] I am *now* (at one and the same time) in a here-and-there; a doubled spatiality. I am *now* in two times at one and the same time: the now of my time (in the room, watching television) and the now of the time of television (Scannell, 2014, p. 63).

For those interviewees who had access to both local broadcasting and online platforms, when they went online to consume foreign programmes, they seemed to be given another sense of spatiality and temporality: the spatiality and temporality of foreign programmes created by the Internet. In this tripled spatiality and temporality, the temporality sustained by local television was experienced as a relatively “backward” temporality compared to the Internet-enabled temporality, in which the more current foreign content was achievable. As a result, local broadcasts might be less capable of enhancing the interviewees’ sense of coevalness with foreign locales compared to online platforms.

The practices of interviewees discussed above demonstrate how both local and foreign temporal indications and broadcast scheduling were “implicated in the temporal arrangement” (Scannell, 1988, p. 28) of their daily lives. The significance of foreign TV times was even more manifest in other interviewee practices as illustrated in the following subsection.

ii. Living within Foreign Temporalities

Peter had been very interested in Japanese culture since childhood, and when he

told me how he was fascinated by the animation *K-On!*,²² he stated:

The latest one [the latest episode of *K-On!*] is always on Fire day, at 26:00.²³

But I get it on Wednesday after I finish my work. Oh, what should I do with my life after *K-On!* ends! (Peter, male, 29 years old)

It was worth pointing out that Peter's argument was originally written in Japanese. Since Peter preferred being interviewed online, all interactions with him took place via text-based instant messaging (IM) services (see also Chapter 7 Section IV regarding the implications of his use of Japanese for the shaping of cultural identity)²⁴. The phrase he mentioned, "Fire day at 26:00", – referring to "Wednesday at 2:00 a.m." – was never a temporal indication in Taiwan. Although Fire day was a Japanese day-naming convention, the representation of "26:00" was not used in the general Japanese cultural context. Rather, it was a convention employed exclusively in Japanese networks' broadcast schedules. Instead of using conventions widely used in Taiwan (i.e. Wednesday at 2.00 a.m.) Peter used "Fire day at 26:00" in a matter-of-course manner, as if it were common sense (or at least between him and me). As he was proficient in Japanese, he always consumed the un-subtitled version of *K-On!*, which allowed him to catch up with the latest episode earlier than those who relied on fan-subtitled versions that were only available hours after. He had been watching *K-On!* less than 20 hours after the Japanese premiere and updating the online status of his IM account with his

²² *K-On!* is the name of a Japanese animation broadcast from April 2009 to September 2010.

²³ In general, the 12-hour and 24-hour clock time conventions are more common in Japan. However, some of the TV schedules or the networks also use 25:00 – 30:00 to refer to 1:00a.m. – 6:00a.m. For example, TBS, the channel that broadcasted *K-On!*, uses 25:00 – 28:00 to refer to 1:00 a.m. – 4:00a.m.

²⁴ The IM services we used included Windows Live Messenger and Skype.

thoughts on each episode as a weekly practice. This weekly viewing had become an important routine that he was most excited about, to the extent that he half-jokingly said that he “did not know what to do with his life” when *K-On!* eventually finished its run.

The Japanese temporal indications he adopted, and his insistence on typing in Japanese and consuming exclusively un-subtitled files indicated his effort to “recreate” (or simulate), as much as possible, the original Japanese conditions in which *K-On!* was broadcast and consumed. It seemed that he did so to ensure that his sense of coevalness with Japanese culture was enhanced enhanced than if he had simply viewed the latest episode without simulating other Japanese conditions.

I interviewed Ken on 23 September 2011, and Evan on 2 October 2011. Given that the most high profile American TV series usually start from late September/early October and end in May or June, the interviews took place at exactly the same moment that the latest series started to air. Ken and Evan argued respectively:

Finally my life is back! I am reborn and reactivated again, as it is the time when all the American series are back! I am *so* thrilled! [I was] so bored and dead during the past few months. (Ken, male, 27 years old)

Nothing [that I wanted to watch] was on Sunday. There are so many on Monday, say, *Amazing Grace* [while writing down *Gossip Girl* simultaneously] On Tuesday, there is *Playboy Club*, it’s so great! You should check it out [...] there have been two episodes, by the way. What else is on Tuesday? Oh! *Glee*! How can I forget it? It’s my favourite! [...] Oh, there is

the US version of *X Factor* just on air recently, have you heard about that? What is on Wednesday [...thinking continuously, at times checking online with his smartphone, and writing down the latest American series he kept up in parallel with their US broadcasts]. (Evan, male, 26 years old)

Both Ken and Evan were self-proclaimed fans of American TV series. While Ken described that he was “dead” in the previous four months, his elaboration symbolised vividly how his private life was synchronised and interwoven with the temporal arrangement of American broadcasting. Similarly, Evan was also very excited that the long-wait for the new season of TV series had come to an end so that he could start watching his favourite shows. When asked what shows he was currently following, he started to excitedly discuss those shows in a daily order from Sunday to Monday for about ten minutes. In the middle of our discussions, he grabbed the sheet of the interview outline I handed to him and used the back to write down the calendar of the series he was “chasing” (his word) as his personal viewing timetable (see Fig. 6.9 below). This hand-written viewing timetable manifested his obsession and familiarity with American series, as well as how much his viewing pattern was based on American broadcast schedules.

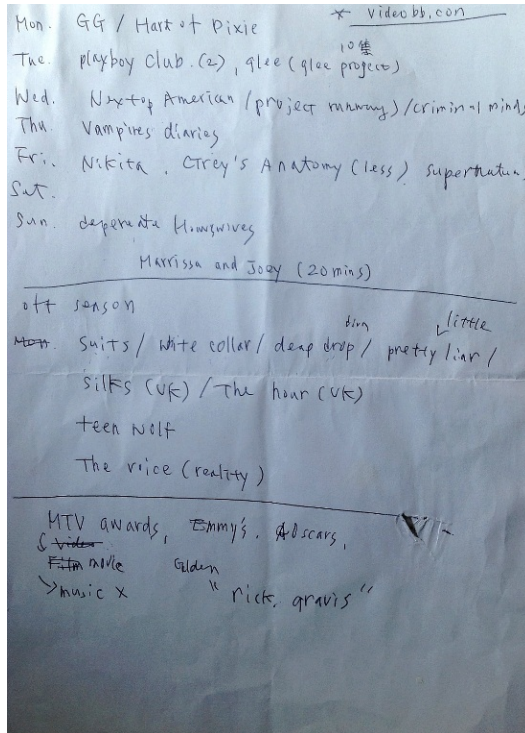


Figure 6.9 Evan’s hand-written timetable of the latest American TV series. Scanned on 21 September 2012.

Particularly, Ken had refused to watch Taiwanese broadcast television for years (see also Chapter 5 Section II) and had no interest in local programmes. While Evan watched Taiwanese broadcast television occasionally, he showed no motivation to watch American programmes on TV, not only because most series he watched were not available, but also because Taiwanese broadcasts were lagging “too far behind” their American counterparts (his words):

Gossip Girl is on air [in the US] on Monday, and online links will be available on Tuesday morning, so [I] can watch it in the evening. There is no way we [he and his friends] can wait when it comes to such viewing, you know [...] STAR World,²⁵ Seriously? No way, I cannot stand it. It is just an alternative,

²⁵ STAR World is an Asian English language cable and satellite television network owned by STAR
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okay? It is only when my life comes to an end that I will tune into it
[laughing]! (Evan, male, 26 years old)

Even though some American series he liked aired on STAR World a week or up to a month later after their US broadcasts, he was still dissatisfied as online access to the same series was available only hours after the US premiere. Therefore, he made fun of STAR World as an alternative, describing it as a choice that he would have opted for only if/when “his life comes to an end” – a metaphor that referred to the situation which he would face if he had no other way to access American TV.

In the cases of Ryan, Gary or Claire (discussed earlier), they were still familiar with both local and foreign broadcasting schedules. By comparison, for Peter, Ken and Evan (and, to a lesser degree, Nicole), their strong interests in foreign cultures seemed to prompt them to abandon the temporality of local television and instead stay tuned in to the temporality of foreign broadcasts. The temporality of Internet-enabled foreign broadcasting was implied not only in their programme viewing patterns but also in the routine of their everyday lives. Such experiences were shared by some other interviewees who had strong interests in foreign cultures but did not care about local television in general (e.g. Ivy, Fiona, Julia).

To conclude this section, I would like to revisit Scannell’s analysis of the implications of temporality of broadcasting for our everyday lives. Scannell (2000) points out that the temporality broadcasting (i.e. its dailiness) has a “for-anyone-as-someone” structure: each of us experiences what we see as if it was

TV and FOX International Channels. The channel broadcasts the largest number of current American and Britain shows in Taiwan and at the fastest pace.

spoken to each of us personally, while also knowing that it simultaneously “speaks to millions of others at the same time *now*” (p. 19). Based on this notion, he argues that broadcast television is “attuned to the existential structure of the days of our lives while at the same time connecting each and all of us” (Scannell, 2014, p. 49), and it is in this sense he contends that we can speak of broadcasting as part of our lives (see also Chapter 3 Section I and Chapter 5 Section IV).

However, while the broadcast carries a for-anyone-as-someone structure that expresses “we-ness” and “articulates human social sociable life (Scannell, 2000, p. 9), Scannell does not specify the conditions by which the structure may be shaped or limited in practice. For instance, when it comes to national broadcasting, which, by definition, addresses “a population resident within the boundaries of a given national territory as a mass audience of cultural citizens” (Sinclair, 2004, p. 45), its for-anyone-as-someone structure is not so much for anyone worldwide. Instead, it is more for “anyone in a given national territory”. In other words, while this structure indeed expresses a “public, shared and social world-in-common” (Scannell, 2000, p. 12), it is more accurate to suggest that it expresses a “public, shared and social world-in-common nationwide/in a country” (my phrases).

As the above practices demonstrate (see also Section III), in the case of the online consumption of foreign television, audiences made efforts to access foreign broadcasting temporalities whose for-anyone-as-someone structures did not actually address them. In so doing, they were more or less connecting themselves to the public, shared world of those foreign countries. The “double articulation of life (my life and its times linked to the life and times of the world)” (Scannell, 2014,

p. 49) were thereby reiterated in the schedules of both local and foreign broadcasts over days and years.

In particular, it is worth noting that Taiwanese broadcasting did not necessarily serve as temporal frameworks for local consumption. Rather, it was more likely that national broadcasting of foreign networks and online platforms offering the access to the latest foreign programmes and information functioned more as temporal references for the audiences. This tendency was specifically manifest in those cases where interviewees regarded the temporality of local broadcasting as “behind” or not “as synchronous” with the Internet-enabled temporality of foreign broadcasts. Moreover, it might not be the case to which foreign broadcasting was “attuned to the existential structure of the days of our lives”. Instead, in the online consumption of foreign television, it was the interviewees who actively attuned their temporal rhythms of daily life to foreign broadcasts; it is in this sense that the national broadcasting of foreign countries can be considered part of the interviewees’ lives. This is also how their sense of coevalness with foreign cultures was reiterated.

V. Ratings in Japan as a Taiwanese Media Sensation

This section discusses how ratings of a current Japanese drama broadcast in Japan became a media sensation in Taiwan and examines how this case can be linked with Taiwanese audiences’ sense of coevalness with Japan and the development of cultural flows.

i. *Hanzawa Naoki* Hype

In July 2013 a new weekly Japanese drama, *Hanzawa Naoki* (半沢直樹), was broadcast on the Japanese network TBS. Its finale on 22 September 2013 achieved a 42.2% rating in eastern Japan, the highest rating of a single drama episode for 30 years. Given this popularity, *Hanzawa Naoki* also attracted the attention of the Taiwanese news media. How its ratings continued to climb and how the storyline developed was covered by the Taiwanese media weekly, before and after each episode was broadcast in Japan, as if the drama were simultaneously on air in Taiwan (it was widely consumed in Taiwan before its Taiwanese legal broadcast in October of the same year).

On Sunday, 22 September, right after the end of the finale at 10:20 p.m. Japanese time (9:20 p.m. Taiwanese time), a tweet (written in Japanese) on Twitter claimed that the ratings of the finale in Japan had reached 54.4%. This bogus information rapidly spread across the Internet and also featured on Taiwanese networking sites within hours. Almost all mainstream Taiwanese news networks considered the bogus rating as real and covered it as a piece of breaking news on Monday, 23 September (see Figs. 6.10 and 6.11). On the same day, the 54.4% rating became a hit topic on the board Japandrama on PTT and other social networking sites featuring Japanese dramas. Besides those who felt surprised and excited for *Hanzawa Naoki*'s high rating, many audiences who had not watched the finale complained that the Taiwanese news revealed the story's ending in the coverage and thus "spoiled" their viewing pleasure.

Despite the hype on Taiwanese media and social networking sites, some PTT users familiar with the release routine of TV ratings in Japan argued that the 54.4% rating was phony since an authentic rating would not have been officially released on a Sunday night. A few of those familiar with the Japanese calendar also pointed out that since it was a Japanese national holiday on Monday, 23 September, the rating would not be out until Tuesday, the next working day. Such arguments were rejected by other users, who believed that the 54.4% rating was accurate. The intense dispute over what the actual rating was finally forced the administrators of Japandrama to announce on 23 September, that the 54.4% rating was bogus, and asked users to discuss the drama peacefully and to patiently wait one more day for the official ratings. Roughly around the same time, an anonymous user made and shared a picture to mock the way in which fellow audiences and Taiwanese media were misled by the bogus rating. The mocking picture (see Fig. 6.12) showed the finale's climatic scene, in which the lead character Hanzawa was shouting at his enemy Owada and commanding him to kneel down²⁶ At the bottom of this mocking picture, the subtitle was altered from the original line "Kneel Down! Owada!" to "The rating has not been released yet!! Owada!" This parody was acclaimed by many PTT fellow users as ironic, funny and accurate, and was re-shared on other networking sites.

²⁶ The same scene was frequently used by Taiwanese news networks throughout their coverage, as shown in Fig. 6.10



Figure 6.10: TV news item regarding *Hanzawa Naoki* on 23 Sept. 2013, by the Taiwanese network TVBS. News title: *Hanzawa Naoki* Finale Breaking Record 54.4% Rating”. Screenshot on 23 September 2013.



Figure 6.11: TV news item regarding *Hanzawa Naoki* on 23 Sept. 2013, by the Taiwanese network ETTV. The news title: *Hanzawa Naoki* Finale Over 54%”. Screenshot on 23 September 2013.

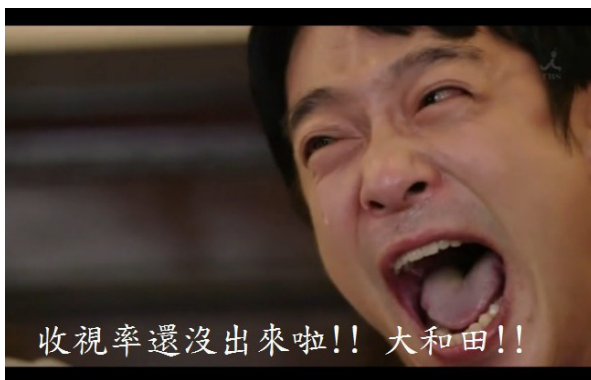


Figure 6.12: Reaction to the bogus rating on PTT on 23 Sept. 2013. The altered message reads: “The rating has not been released yet!! Owada!!!”²⁷ Screenshot on 23 September 2013.

The authentic, official rating of the finale of *Hanzawa Naoki* (42.2%) was finally available online in Japan at 9:00 a.m. (8:00 a.m. Taiwan time) on Tuesday, 24 September 2013, and it was reposted on Japandrama less than one minute later. What the authentic rating was, how the rating climbed up during its Japanese

²⁷ The man on the figure is Hanzawa (played by the actor Masato Sakai), the drama’s leading character.

premiere (in Japan), how the Taiwanese media made a mistake on covering the incorrect rating on 23 September, and how Taiwanese audiences were annoyed by having the ending spoiled by the coverage became breaking news in Taiwan on 24 September (see Figs. 6.13 and 6.14).

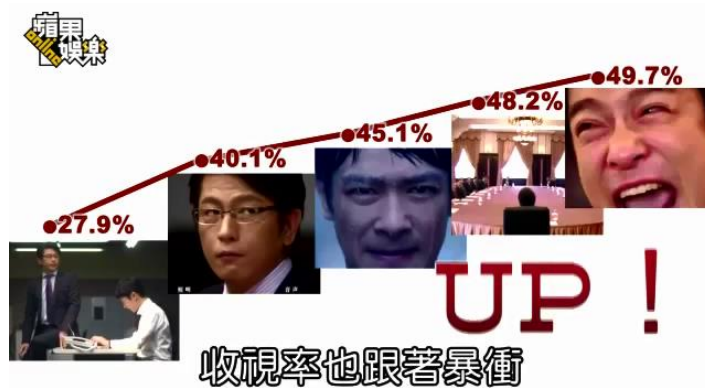


Figure 6.13: Online coverage of the official rating (in western Japan) on 24 Sept. 2013, by Taiwanese newsgroup Apple Entertainment. It depicts graphically the exact moment (Japanese time) at which the episode’s ratings climbed. The news title reads: “The up-shooting rating!” Screenshot on 24 September 2013.



Figure 6.14: TV news coverage of *Hanzawa Naoki* on 24 Sept. 2013 on the Taiwanese network ETTV. The news title: “Hanzawa finale shoots up to 42.2%”.²⁸ Photo taken on 24 September 2013 (at the author’s household in Taiwan).

²⁸ Apart from the rating, Taiwanese TV news covered the transnational sensation of *Hanzawa Naoki*, including: a) The red-bean bread (shown in the drama), which became popular both in Taiwan and Japan; b) The possibility of a Taiwanese remake of *Hanzawa Naoki*; c) The Japanese locations where the drama was shot that had become popular tourist attractions.

Two weeks after the broadcast of its finale in Japan, *Hanzawa Naoki* was legally on air on Monday, 7 October 2013 in Taiwan on Videoland Japan, the local Taiwanese channel featuring Japanese programmes established in 1996. Due to its high ratings in Taiwan (the highest rating of any Japanese drama in Taiwanese broadcast history), Taiwanese media covered the local (Taiwanese) ratings and other relevant information daily, and the news coverage hype made the drama one of the hottest topics throughout October 2013.

ii. *Hanzawa Naoki* and Coevalness

Four points regarding how the Taiwanese' sense of coevalness is associated with the *Hanzawa Naoki* hype need to be addressed. First, the Taiwanese news networks incorporated the drama scenes into their coverage. However, in order to obtain the latest drama scenes in the shortest possible time and at the lowest cost, they did not seek permission to use the drama from the local and Japanese copyright holders (i.e. Videoland Japan and TBS). Rather, they cunningly reshot the fansubbed version of the drama while shadowing both the fansubbing forums' logos and that of TBS. As they did not directly use the "raw" scenes that were without question identified as TBS's copyrighted property, but instead reedited the drama's "fansubbed edition", they avoided directly infringing the copyright of TBS or Videoland Japan. By obscuring the fansubbing forums' logo, the news networks also prevented themselves from being accused of encouraging piracy. Moreover, the fansubbing sites were by no means entitled to claim a fansubtitling "copyright", even if their editions of particular dramas were used by any other parties, as their fansubtitling and distributing practices were legally controversial in the first place. As such, the illegality of fansubbing activities was exploited by Taiwanese news networks in

order to rapidly cover the latest *Hanzawa Naoki* boom in Japan as well as in Taiwan. Such practices are increasingly employed by Taiwanese news networks when they want to discuss a foreign programme not yet legally available in Taiwan.

Second, and as mentioned earlier, on networking sites some Taiwanese audiences displayed a familiarity with Japanese temporal references, which is exemplified by the fact that audiences pointed out the fact that 23 September (a normal weekday in Taiwan) was a Japanese national holiday when discussing the disputed rating. Moreover, it is worth noting that the Taiwanese media hype regarding *Hanzawa Naoki* demonstrated that Taiwanese online consumption of Japanese dramas was not only fan-oriented but also a more general practice.

Third, given that *Hanzawa Naoki* was neither a local Taiwanese drama, nor had it been on air in Taiwan, its ratings should have been of little importance in a Taiwanese context. However, the Taiwanese news networks covered a wide range of issues concerning the local reaction to *Hanzawa Naoki*, even before the legal Taiwanese premiere. The news included why Taiwanese viewers were obsessed with the drama, how the drama might encourage Taiwanese to travel to western Japan (where it was shot), how Taiwanese television producers were examining its success and what they learned from it, and so on. In other words, *Hanzawa Naoki* was covered intensively, not only as a foreign phenomenon, but also as a local, Taiwanese sensation triggered by a foreign programme. In so doing, the Taiwanese media created their own informational and temporal references by which a more general Taiwanese public might understand what *Hanzawa Naoki* was about. Such local practices made the Japanese broadcasting and ratings of *Hanzawa Naoki*

significant to Taiwanese audiences, thereby contributing to an enhanced sense of coevalness with Japan.

Fourth, given the Taiwanese hype around *Hanzawa Naoki*, in October 2013 the Japanese media also covered the Taiwanese sensation around the programme (as well as in Hong Kong) as proof of a regional cultural phenomenon that had originated in Japan. This indicates that Taiwanese media and audiences are incorporated in a shared, regional temporality and in turn shaped a regional sensation alongside their Japanese counterparts.

When mentioning the Taiwanese *Hanzawa Naoki* media hype, Adam argued that the drama was a sensation in Japan and also popular among Taiwanese audiences who illegally consume foreign programmes online. Both conditions made *Hanzawa Naoki* a “handy topic” for the Taiwanese news media to cover it as an example of hype “that resonates with their audiences” (Adam’s words). Ivy asked, “Why did the rating of *Hanzawa Naoki* in Japan matter to Taiwanese? It hasn’t been on air in Taiwan yet. Shouldn’t the rating be the business of the Japanese, not ours? Why do we care so much?”

The arguments from both interviewees lead us to form a question with regard to the Taiwanese cultural relationship with Japan: why does a current, domestic Japanese media and cultural phenomenon matter so much in Taiwanese society? While Japanese popular culture is not as frequently featured as it was in the 1990s, the Taiwanese *Hanzawa Naoki* sensation indicates that the latest, domestic Japanese popular cultural phenomenon still contains a foreign currency (Ellis, 2002, 2007)

that appeals to Taiwan and which is employed by the Taiwanese media to resonate with their audiences' sense of coevalness with Japan.

This section uses *Hanzawa Naoki* as an example to examine how the Taiwanese media catches up with the latest Japanese popular cultural phenomenon. Similar practices are also increasingly employed when the media covers a given Korean drama – e.g. *My Love from the Star* that premiered in Korea at the end of 2013 – which was popular in Korea and among illegal sharing networks in Taiwan. In terms of American media content, while there are few current American TV series available through legal platforms, a significant number of major Hollywood movies are (roughly speaking) synchronically premiered in Taiwan simultaneously with other countries. Moreover, the major American annual film and music awards, such as the Golden Globes, the Grammys and the Oscars, have always been live broadcast (on terrestrial and/or satellite networks), whether or not the awards involve any Taiwanese nominations.

It can be argued that, in a global sense, the international release of Hollywood movies plays a more significant role than Western TV series in connecting Taiwanese audiences to the shared temporality with the relevant Western countries (mainly the United States). Regionally, a given drama from East Asia continues to carry a strong, shared currency and substantial cultural proximity (Straubhaar, 1991, 2003) capable of enhancing the audiences' sense of coevalness with neighbouring countries. This inter-Asian referencing (Iwabuchi, 2013) feature not only applies to regionally-co-produced dramas, but also to locally-produced dramas which were regionally distributed. Nevertheless, as the *Hanzawa Naoki* hype indicates, this was more a form of cultural flow from Japan to Taiwan and Hong Kong than a

reciprocal cultural exchange. Compared to how common it is for the Taiwanese media to focus on Japanese and Korean dramas or idols (or other local phenomena in both countries) one does not often see the Japanese or Korean media focusing on a Taiwanese drama or other cultural phenomena if there are no Japanese or Korean elements (e.g. co-production or a franchise adopted from a Japanese or Korean novel/comics) in it. As Chua and Iwabuchi (2008) argue, despite the increasing regional cultural exchanges, cultural flows in East Asia are still imbalanced, with Japan and Korea as the centre that leads the flow direction. Given the scarcity of Taiwanese entertainment media broadcasts in Japan and Korea, it seems unlikely to see the emergence of a significant contra flow, at least in the near future.

VI. Conditions Complicating Relations Between Access to Foreign Cultures and Coevalness

i. Online Access as a Default Choice?

This chapter introduced a range of examples regarding how interviewees and online platforms strived for watching and distributing the latest foreign programmes a short time after those programmes' debut in their countries of origin. However, it is important to note that my interviewees did not always watch the latest foreign programmes right after they were available online. As Helen said, "we are just casual addicts [of foreign programmes], we can leave the files for a couple days", or as Claire argued, "it doesn't always have to be watching it right away", in many cases interviewees waited for days, weeks or months until they felt like watching them. However, as Claire stated "it is fine as long as I can watch them", this is the underlying premise in many interviewees' arguments. The interviewees had the sense that there was access to the latest foreign programmes,

and such access had to be available as one of the default choices concerning the viewing platform. Nevertheless, when such unauthorised online access was gone, the interviewees were not happy with the situation:

I was in panic and I searched so desperately for [the solution]. I forgot how but I eventually managed to find it [the solution] and restore access [to American TV series online]. (Rachel, female, 29 years old)

Please give my American TV series back ASAP [laughing]! People were sharing solutions online to get the American TV series back [to PPStream]. Some friends also passed those solutions on to me, but I failed to get it right, so in the end I had to give up on American series for a long time. (Stella, female, 33 years old)

If you wanna watch something you have to be quick, say, you have to watch it on the day [after it was uploaded], or it will be removed [...] `Obviously I am so upset, but there's nothing I can do. I just hurry up to find some other way [to consume current Korean dramas], but my sister also has time to find some solution, so I am not worried yet. (Nicole, female, 45 years old)

Both Rachel and Stella were shocked when they found that all American series on PPStream disappeared at the end of 2009 (see Chapter 2 Section IV). Their expressions such as “give my series back” or “in a panic” indicate how they had become used to viewing PPStream and took it for granted as a means of default access to foreign programmes. Nicole also found that the online links to current Korean dramas did not last as long as they used to. Instead of accepting that the

access was gone, all three interviewees tried to develop new ways to regain access – a practice commonly shared among other interviewees.

Certeau (1984) delineates two terms, “strategies” and “tactics”, in his analysis of the individuals’ practice of everyday life. He links strategies with institutions or structures of power (as “producers”) which have the power to set (produce) the rules and orders deployed in determining what should be considered as ‘proper’ in a certain environment or situation. On the contrary, tactics are “the act of the weak” (p. 37), the acts individuals (as “consumers”) apply in those environment/situations whose rules are defined by the institutions/power structures. His analysis is concerned with “battles or games between the strong and the weak, and with the ‘actions’ which remain possible for the latter” (p. 34). In this sense, legal broadcasting systems and content providers can be seen as “the strong”, while unlicensed online viewing platforms are “the weak”. The interviewees’ use of online platforms includes the tactics they employed to escape from viewing limitations imposed on them by a range of legal systems. As Certeau argues, “whatever a tactic wins, it does not keep” (p. xix), thereby online methods as tactics that disturb legal systems in many cases did not last long or stay the same. In some cases, they may become “institutionalised” (i.e. legalised) and thus lose their tactical features that challenge the strong.²⁹ They may also be defeated by power systems (e.g., eradicated by the government or legal businesses). As exemplified by Rachel, Stella or Nicole, rather than enduring the disappearance of online access, it was common for interviewees to constantly negotiate with the

²⁹ See also Schwarz (2013) for his analysis on the Swedish file sharing site the Pirate Bay on this issue.

imposed limitations and develop new tactics to resume their access to the shows they liked watching.

ii. Thai Dramas and a Denial of Coevalness

As a counterpart to the Taiwanese sense of coevalness with the US, Korea and Japan as illustrated in this chapter, I will briefly discuss how Thai programmes are perceived in Taiwan based on the geo-economic conditions between Taiwan and Thailand. According to the International Monetary Fund (2013), while Thailand remained a developing economy, Taiwan had become an advanced one by the end of the twentieth century. Meanwhile, Thailand is the biggest supplier of foreign workers for the Taiwanese labour market (Tsay, 2002). Although Thai and other Southeast Asian workers are increasing in number, they have experienced difficulties such as being marginalised in Taiwanese society (Lan, 2003).

When the interviews were conducted in 2010 and 2011, while American, Japanese and Korean programmes were readily available on Taiwanese channels, very few Thai dramas had been broadcast (the situation remains the same as of 2015). I did not recruit audiences specifically interested in Thai dramas, and most interviewees rarely mentioned them. Nicole and Joyce were the only two interviewees who argued that they watched a small number of Thai dramas. Both of them were online viewers of Korean dramas, and they noticed that their favourite online platforms had started to provide current Thai dramas alongside their Korean counterparts. What interested me was how they described their encounters with Thai dramas and culture:

I am so self-indulgent recently, spending lots of time watching Korean dramas online every day. I even click the links of Thai dramas and watch them [laughing, slightly embarrassed]. [It is because] I read some blogs featuring Korean dramas and which also introduced Thai dramas [...] but, to be honest, I don't find any one that is really outstanding. The tone of their language is so weird, and in terms of their plots, they just copy pieces from here and there, which I cannot really stand. (Nicole, female, 45 years old)

I started watching Thai dramas, but it was because I have already watched almost all of the Korean dramas. We shouldn't make light of Thailand you know, they also have good traditions and morals, as do Korean or Japanese [cultures]. Watching their dramas, you see that they always show respect to others [...] but I think that Korean dramas are more sophisticated. Thai dramas are still rarely made like that [i.e. as sophisticated]. This is to say, Thai actors are not as good as Korean actors in terms of acting and [in terms of story], good people are extremely good, and villains are extremely evil. (Joyce, female, 56 years old)

While Nicole described how she spent her holiday, she said that she *even* watched Thai dramas (my emphasis), using a confessional tone as if she was slightly embarrassed to have watched so many dramas. She used Thai broadcasts to show how much she indulged herself in online viewing: she not only watched her favourite, well-made Korean ones, but also those of lower quality that she perceived as being and not as worthwhile. Thai culture seemed to be perceived not only as exotic (e.g. the language used weird tones) but also as relatively unfashionable and backward in its copycatting of other foreign dramas.

Joyce's comment on Thai dramas indicates vividly that while "we" (i.e. Taiwanese) had recognised Japanese or Korean cultures as having virtues and worthwhile traditions, we had not appreciated or paid due attention to Thai culture, which carried similar morals. However, Joyce later emphasised that Thai dramas were rarely as sophisticated as Korean exemplars in terms of acting or plots. Therefore, while she recognised that Thai dramas have their own virtues, they were still no more than a secondary choice: she watched these when she had finished most of the Korean dramas. In both Ann and Joyce's experiences, the latest Thai dramas (and culture) were perceived as less advanced than other foreign dramas. The tendency of time-distancing evident in Thai dramas (and culture) is further demonstrated in the Taiwanese news media. Television news often juxtaposes old Taiwanese dramas with current Thai ones, sarcastically arguing how similar they are and how Taiwanese audiences are "brought back to the last century",³⁰ while at the same time being amused by "out-of-date Thai styles".³¹ In an article in a major Taiwanese newspaper, *United Daily News*, the journalist Chen (2013) states:

The characteristics of Thai dramas are: beautiful mixed-blood actors and actresses with extremely exaggerated plots and actions. When an actor slaps another person, the one who is slapped just falls dead; the good character who is buried by villains is rescued because the ground is chopped into pieces by thunder and lightning from the sky. Such exaggerated plots and shooting skills

³⁰ For further details, see the news item "Thai drama hits Taiwan, 40 year old cliché is fun to watch" broadcast on 14 June 2013 on the cable news channel CTI (available on <http://goo.gl/o2FPo0>, last retrieved 10 March 2014).

³¹ For further details, see the news broadcast titled "Cliché plots hot in Thai dramas, fifteen thousand amused by out-dated styles" on 14 June 2013 on the local cable news channel ETTV (available on <http://goo.gl/bx376G>, last retrieved 10 March 2014).

are just like the *The Flower Series*³² in Taiwan some 20 years ago. (H.-Z. Chen, 2013)

As Fabian (1983) argues, “for human communication to occur, coeval has to be created. Communication is about creating shared time” (p. 31). As Chen’s article (2013) indicates, the currency of Thai cultures and dramas is not necessarily seen as insignificant or not “current enough” according to the Taiwanese news media. While the previous lack of Thai dramas in the Taiwanese mediascape contributed to this tendency, it seems that Thailand’s economic stage of development is more or less equated with that of the country’s culture in the Taiwanese perception of Thailand, leading to different levels of denial of coevalness as seen in interviews and Taiwanese media representations.

VII. Concluding Remarks

This chapter examined a range of practices involving online platforms, local television and audiences, all in terms of shortening the temporal gap between the foreign broadcast and the local consumption, and articulated how temporalities of foreign broadcasting were implicated in the interviewees’ everyday life as important temporal frameworks. In so doing, this chapter accounted for how the audiences’ sense of coevalness was achieved, and also shed new light on theoretical notions concerning temporalities of broadcasting (e.g. liveness,

³² *The Flower Series* is made up of local Taiwanese melodramas produced by the free-to-air network CTV from 1988 to 2000. It is well-known for its exaggerated and clichéd styles of acting, storytelling and setting. Due to this, in Taiwan, *The Flower Series* has become a common term to describe something (especially dramas) that is exaggerated, platitudinous and out-dated.

'for-anyone-as-someone structure', currency, flow) in cross-cultural and transnational contexts of consumption.

Coevalness is always about those whom we consider that we share temporality with. The empirical analysis indicates that, on the one hand, a strong sense of coevalness with Japan, Korea and the US was shown through the dissemination and consumption of programmes from these three countries. On the other hand, a certain degree of denial of coevalness was reflected towards Thailand when it comes to Thai dramas. As Johansen (1997) argues, it is "a denial of access to the kind of communicative time – analogous to the presents and presences of conversation – that would turned the Others into subjects and included them as one's 'fellowmen'"(p. 186). Therefore, having synchronous access to current foreign media and culture with people elsewhere does not necessarily lead to the generation of coevalness. More factors are involved in the perception and understanding of foreign others and foreign locales. This leads to the theme of the next chapter: the audiences' perceptions of both local and foreign cultures, and the role of the online consumption of foreign TV in the shaping of such perceptions.

The audiences' cross-border online viewing of foreign programmes is an example of the "the virtual/symbolic geography, in which television flows across physical boundaries and connects audiences to networks of identity that transcend the nation-states" (Beatty & Sullivan, 2006, p. 14). Specifically, as the empirical analysis demonstrates, in the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing, schedules and temporalities of local broadcasting (including national and transnational broadcasters legally accessible in Taiwan) are not necessarily more implicated in patterns of everyday life than those of foreign broadcast television. To

interviewees who lived in Taiwan, foreign broadcasting schedules were often as important or even more significant than those of local broadcasting in terms of structuring their viewing as well as dictating a wider range of their daily life patterns. This is not to say that interviewees did not live within the Taiwanese temporality, or that local (Taiwanese) identity was no longer important. However, the above factors complicate the way in which interviewees' everyday lives and identity are shaped and television's role (both local/national and foreign ones) in the shaping processes.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that, by no means does the cross-border consumption of television indicate that the relation between television and the nation is irrelevant, or that national boundaries are no longer important. That television is still closely associated with the nation can be seen in how television is perceived as a form of representation of a given national culture (see also Chapter 7, especially Sections 1, III, IV and VII). The country of origin and genre were two of the most important criteria for interviewees when deciding what to watch. The difference between the sense of coevalness with Japan, Korea and the US, and with Thailand is a clear instance indicating that although interviewees appreciated a border-free consumption environment, it never meant that symbolic or physical boundaries differentiating cultures and nations were insignificant to them. The interviewees' yearnings for the latest information from some specific countries (e.g., the US, Japan, Korea, but not Thailand as evidenced by Section VI's analysis) symbolise the complicated transnational power relationships that require closer examination. Based on the above concerns, the next chapter examines how the interviewees' sense of the "local" and the "foreign" develop via their consumption of foreign shows.

Chapter 7: The Perception of the Local and the Foreign

This chapter examines how the interviewees' perceptions of the local and the foreign developed via their online consumption of foreign programmes, and outlines the implications of such perceptions for transnational cultural power relations between Taiwan and its foreign Others. The first four sections examine how the notion of foreignness makes the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing a "process of identification and distancing, simultaneously or as a series of intermittent moments of one of the other" (Chua, 2008b, p. 79). Chapter 6 demonstrated how American, Japanese and Korean cultures were interviewees' most popular foreign cultures with which they searched for coevalness. Sections I to IV discuss how these three national cultures shaped interviewees' identities.

While this study did not focus on the consumption of Chinese programmes, online sharing activities based in China were crucial in making it possible for Taiwanese audiences to view the latest foreign TV online. Section V discusses how this condition foregrounded the interviewees' perceptions of China as a foreign Other, threatening their Taiwanese identity. Compared to Japanese and American cultures, Korean popular culture is a newcomer to Taiwanese society, and during the period when the empirical research was conducted (from 2010 to 2011), the Korean Wave reached its regional and global peak. Section VI examines how, under these conditions, Korea was frequently perceived as a new and significant foreign presence, one that challenged Taiwanese society. Section VII illustrates how the interviewees created a perception of a regional cultural hierarchy in their consumption of Japanese and Korean culture, and how this perception is associated with the shaping of a regional identity.

It is necessary to note that although both Japanese and American cultures were important foreign lodestars that my interviewees identified with, they were not as frequently perceived as Others who called the contemporary identity of Taiwan into question as was the case for their Chinese and Korean counterparts. Firstly, the interviewees were accustomed to the cultural presence of the US. They did not always consider the American brands and icons present in their everyday lives as American: a similar phenomenon has been observed in other countries such as Brazil (Straubhaar, 2003) and Japan (Iwabuchi, 2002). Even when American-ness was recognised, consuming something American was not very likely to be considered as a challenge to the interviewees' identity as Taiwanese. As Ivy argued:

Why do I have to be told that “You really *love* Korea” just because I like Korean cuisine and Girls' Generation, even though I don't like the Korean nation at all? [...] I love American cuisine, and I used to love Britney [Spears]¹ very much, but no one would say “Oh, you *love* the US”. (Ivy, female, 31 years old)

Even when a number of interviewees (e.g. Evan and Jane) had been called Americanophile (see also Section IV) by acquaintances, such naming/labelling, according to them, was more playful than hostile, and is “rarely likely to happen, especially nowadays” (Jane's words). Specifically, since (American) English is the only foreign language stipulated as a mandatory school subject in Taiwanese compulsory education, learning English is much more highly valued than the

¹ Girls' Generation is a South Korean girl group formed in 2007. From 2009 onwards, they became one of the most popular Korean groups in the region and around the globe. Britney Spears is an American singer who won international popularity soon after the release of her debut album in 1999.

learning of other foreign languages. Many interviewees and their parents regarded consuming American popular culture as a good way to improve their English language proficiency, which is important to academic achievement and professional prospects. Interviewees such as Ann also encouraged her children to learn English via American movies and animation. This condition, I argue, partly explains why consuming American popular culture was more often regarded as a meritorious activity rather than challenging interviewees' local identities.

Secondly, and as argued in Chapter 2, media discussions on Japanese popular culture are less prominent now than they were in the 1990s and the early 2000s, and anti-Japanese discourses have become less explicit and milder in substance and tone. While some interviewees' interest in Japanese popular culture was criticised by acquaintances using a nationalistic tone in the 1990s, similar comments in the last 10 years were rare. Instead of regarding this change as a decline in the influence of Japanese popular culture on Taiwan, I argue that it indicates that Japanese culture is more "indigenised" (Iwabuchi, 2002, p. 92) and integrated into the Taiwanese cultural context. This means that Japanese culture is now similar to American culture in Taiwan: their respective presences have become part of the Taiwanese context, to the extent that Taiwanese seem to be less likely to perceive them (either positively or negatively) as something "new" that needs to be talked about. Moreover, as many interviewees argued, while they disagree with and dislike Japanese imperialism, they also regarded it as something in the distant past. These factors also kept Japan from being seen as a recent challenge to the construction of contemporary Taiwanese national and cultural identity. Specifically, when examining how audiences' identities is hybridised and shaped in global media flows, Straubhaar (2008) points out that "the layers of identity are articulated

with a variety of media [...] but not in a simple sense of being primarily influenced by media” (p. 11), since, as he further explains:

[...] markets and services are not simply or clearly defined by technology, or by corporate ambition, but also by culture, uses and identities and how they layer over time. Many of these culturally defined markets and identity reflect pre-global layers of culture (Straubhaar, 2008, p. 14).

Likewise, the interviewees’ cultural capital influenced how they interpreted media content. Besides consuming media texts, other forms of consumption (e.g. travel) were also important in constructing the interviewees’ identification with foreign cultures. These conditions are taken into consideration alongside interviewees’ online viewing practices in order to account for their perceptions of local and foreign cultures and identity layering.

I. Foreignness as an Attraction

Chua (2008b) argues that foreignness is usually foregrounded by audiences as part of the pleasure of watching media products from other countries and regions. Similarly, in most cases foreignness was exactly what my interviewees looked for and enjoyed when they went online to download or stream a foreign programme. When it came to drama as a genre, most interviewees preferred foreign programmes to Taiwanese for three main reasons, all of which were based on how they “bifocally” (J. D. Peters, 1997) viewed and interpreted local as well as foreign cultures via media representation and their everyday life experiences.

Firstly, many of my interviewees believed that Taiwanese programmes were not as sophisticated and well-made in various aspects (e.g. settings, storylines, acting skills, shooting styles), by comparison with their foreign counterparts. The range of themes dealt with was also narrower. As a result, they found it hard to sustain interest in Taiwanese dramas, especially after they had watched more foreign broadcasts or grown older. For instance, Gary said that he was uninterested in Taiwanese dramas because he was “so scared by their extremely redundant and tedious styles”. He preferred Japanese dramas since he thought that they were much shorter in length while also having sharper and more subtle storylines. Stella watched a few Taiwanese dramas after she entered university and felt that they seemed to “target junior or senior high school students because they were somehow childish”. She then argued that she would have been obsessed with some Taiwanese dramas or considered them good dramas if “I were in junior or senior high school”. By the same token, Vivian argued that while she used to love Taiwanese dramas when she was in primary and junior high school, her interests shifted to Japanese and American examples when she was older.

The second reason for interviewees’ preference for foreign dramas was based on how Taiwanese media products were considered copycats of foreign counterparts and thereby less attractive. Iwabuchi (2013) points out that in contemporary East Asian media culture, “the idea of the original is put into question” (p. 47) while inter-Asian cultural adaption and hybridisation is increasingly common. However, in terms of production, the idea of the original might be challenged; meanwhile regarding audience reception, it seemed that originality was still considered important by most of my interviewees:

Now Taiwan wants to learn how Korean music is made. Showbiz in Taiwan is always like this. People just all rush to learn from a certain country when that country becomes the fad and fashion of the time. (Claire, female, 31 years old)

I think many of the themes of Taiwanese dramas can be found in Japanese dramas and because of these similarities I will not watch the Taiwanese versions. (Gary, male, 27 years old)

The dramas of the three terrestrial networks were very good in the past! However, the quality of our dramas has declined after the great increase in the number of channels due to [the introduction of] cable TV. I don't watch Taiwanese dramas because they just copy the ways in which Japan produces its idol dramas. *Meteor Garden*² was just an imitation of Japanese idol dramas. In Japan, it seems that they broadcast an episode weekly, don't they? *Meteor Garden* was also broadcast that way. It copied the Japanese shooting styles and plots as well. And then recently, [Taiwanese producers] started to imitate Korean dramas. I don't really enjoy watching [Taiwanese dramas] because I feel that, fundamentally, they are just imitations of foreign programmes. Therefore, I would definitely rather watch Japanese or Korean dramas. I refuse to watch copycats. (Jeff, male, 36-40 years old)

² *Meteor Garden*, made in 2001, was a Taiwanese idol drama based on a popular Japanese comic *Hana Yori Dango* (*Boys Over Flowers*). It was the first Taiwanese trendy idol drama that gained regional popularity in Chinese-speaking regions and Southeast Asian countries. It was also broadcast in Japan and Korea, but was not as successful as it was in the aforementioned countries and regions. The Japanese TV network TBS made its own version of *Hana Yori Dango* in 2005 and 2006 (two series); subsequently, both the Korean network KBS and the Chinese network Hunan also produced their versions of *Hana Yori Dango* in 2009. *Meteor Garden* is considered one of the best examples of inter-Asian referencing that emerges in the intense regional cultural flows in East Asia (see Iwabuchi, 2013).

Claire, Gary and Jeff all pointed out that Taiwanese dramas or the entertainment media at large were less attractive because of their lack of originality: they always behaved like followers, imitating well-received media products from other countries, especially those from Japan and Korea. The interviewees were, at the same time, aware that the Japanese and the Koreans also imitated American media products.³ However, from the interviewees' perspectives, Japanese and Korean media texts had developed their own Japanese-ness and Korean-ness and had managed to attract foreign audiences via the imitation of others (i.e. a "cultural fragrance" in terms of Iwabuchi, 2002, p.27) and therefore, to some extent, they could be regarded as original. Nevertheless, it was not the same for the Taiwanese media.

Take Jeff's comment on *Meteor Garden* as an example. *Meteor Garden*, adapted from a popular Japanese comic *Hana Yori Dango* (花より男子, *Boys Over Flowers*), is the most well-received Taiwanese drama in the region. Its regional popularity caused a Japanese TV network to produce its own version in 2005, while both Korea and China made their versions in 2009. As Iwabuchi (2013, p. 47) argues, it contributes significantly to the emergence of "inter-Asian cultural adaption" in East Asia in the early 2000s. As the earliest and the most regionally popular Taiwanese idol drama engaging with the contemporary urban life of the younger generation, *Meteor Garden* was relatively original compared to other Taiwanese dramas at that time, whose main themes rarely dealt with youth or urban

³ In their early years of development, Japanese dramas and music imitated and adopted the plots, shooting styles, etc. of their American counterparts; in the case of Korean dramas and music, it was their Japanese and American counterparts that they copied and learned from. These imitative practices were also considered a process and form of cultural hybridisation and thereby a main factor contributing to the regional popularity of both Japanese and Korea dramas (Iwabuchi, 2002; D.-H. Lee, 2004; Shim, 2006).

issues. However, Jeff considered that it was still a counterfeit given its obvious imitation of Japanese production styles (e.g. shooting skills, storylines, the weekly scheduling as means of broadcast).⁴ The imitative dimension became a crucial reason why, for Jeff, Taiwanese dramas were inferior to foreign examples; therefore, he preferred the authentic, original Japanese and Korean dramas to Taiwanese copycats. The foreignness of Japanese and Korean dramas was valued, not only for being exotic, but also for being original and creative.

The third frequently cited reason why the foreignness of foreign dramas was valued by interviewees was associated with the idea of cultural proximity (Straubhaar, 1991) and difference. As Jeff and Nicole argued:

Since we are not very familiar with the foreign environment [...] when we watch American dramas we would assume that their lives and how they look are exactly like that [how Americans were represented in dramas]. In terms of our own dramas, it is easier to tell if the acting is good or not based on how close it is with our environment. (Jeff, male, 36-40 years old)

Those [dramas] from the local or [other] cultures similar to ours make you feel they are somehow unnatural, but you will not experience this sense of unnaturalness as easily when you watch Korean dramas. By the same token, we feel that European and American dramas are more natural when we watch them. The fact that they [European and American cultures] are so strange to us makes us feel that “they are exactly like that”. However, when you watch

⁴ Since Jeff did not specifically mention the fact that *Meteor Garden* was adapted from a Japanese comic, it remained unclear whether or not he also considered this as a factor which made *Meteor Garden* less original.

Taiwanese dramas you just feel that everyone in them is so affected, so fake and very unnatural. I feel that the way the actors/actresses talk is different from how I usually talk. Since I can identify such differences, Taiwanese dramas don't attract me. Nevertheless, in Korean dramas they speak in Korean, and I cannot tell if they speak naturally. When there is a barrier you won't notice if there are problems, and this is why I only watch Korean dramas.

(Nicole, female, 45 years old)

As Jeff and Nicole's experiences indicate, in the case of Taiwanese dramas, the interviewees were more likely to interpret the dramas using a "reality check". They inevitably and constantly compared Taiwanese dramas to their everyday experiences as cultural references, and judged at a denotative level (see Ang, 1985 for her account of "emotional realism") how natural and realistic the actual Taiwanese context was represented in dramas. As they often found that the representation (e.g. how the actors spoke) was different from their own experiences (how they actually talked in real life), it became difficult for them to see these local dramas as something realistic, or "taken from life" at a connotative level (Ang, 1985, p. 44). As a result, Taiwanese dramas were often regarded as unnatural and/or affected.

By comparison, Jeff and Nicole had not lived in other countries and both of them argued that they could not easily tell to what extent foreign conditions (e.g. how foreigners speak, what their daily environments were like) corresponded with representations of these conditions. Interestingly, this difficulty made it easier for them to assume and believe that the representations truthfully reflected actual foreign situations (even though they were aware that representation and reality

would not be identical). This interpretation coincides with the work of Liebes and Katz (1986, 1990) on cross-cultural receptions of *Dallas*. The authors find that non-Americans consider the story more real, and have little doubt that the story is about “America”, while Americans are less sure and somewhat sceptical about *Dallas*’s representation of North America, and were more playful in their attitudes towards the programme.

Hoskins and Mirus (1988) introduced the concept of “cultural discount” to refer to the situation in which a programme rooted in one culture will have less appeal elsewhere “as viewers find it difficult to identify with the style, values, beliefs, institutions and behavioural patterns of the material in question” (p. 500). However, as both Jeff and Nicole demonstrated, the difficulty in the identification of foreign cultures in fact served as a crucial reason that made foreign dramas attractive or more natural and realistic than local ones. This is not to say that the interviewees who exhibited such interpretations uncritically believed that there was no difference between the representations of foreign programmes and actual foreign conditions. What is crucial is that the lack of cultural references regarding foreign reality somehow makes it more likely for them to abandon a “reality-check” (which might either destroy or enhance the enjoyment of viewing), thereby immersing themselves in the fictional foreign narratives. A sense of East Asian-ness is also implied in Nicole’s mentioning that European and American dramas felt even “more natural” and strange than Korean ones. Such feelings, associated with the notion of regional identity, will be discussed in Section VII.

II. Dubbing vs. Subtitling: Domesticating vs. Foreignising?

The last section discussed the main reasons why the interviewees enjoyed foreign programmes and, in many cases, preferred foreign broadcasts to local ones. This section examines how the dubbing and subtitling of foreign programmes, by indigenising the foreignness of foreign media texts in different senses, serve as an important factor influencing my interviewees' modes of consumption and their identification of foreign and local cultures.

i. Audiences' Preference for Subtitling to Dubbing

Danan (1991, p. 613) argues that the ways in which a country suppresses or accepts the foreign nature of foreign media is a key to understanding how a country perceives itself in relation to others. As discussed in Chapter 3, in Taiwan, where the media industry is import-oriented and relatively open to the foreign nature of external media texts, the policy regarding translation practices is flexible. Both subtitling and dubbing are commonly employed, and broadcasters usually go for whatever method is most likely to attract more audiences and earn more profit. Regardless of differences in terms of age, education, location and television interests, when it came to the consumption of foreign programmes and movies, my interviewees in general preferred subtitled, undubbed versions to dubbed ones. Specifically, the criticism of dubbing was expressed most frequently by the interviewees interested in Korean dramas, which were dubbed much more often on Taiwanese networks compared with American and Japanese programmes:

I don't understand any one of the two languages [Japanese and Korean] so I always just listen to their intonations and read the Chinese subtitles, and I

don't have a specific preference for either language. However, I don't watch the dubbed Japanese or Korean dramas because I think that it doesn't sound good to me! I can't get used to it [dubbing]. I enjoy the original soundtrack with subtitles. I remember there was MTS [multichannel television sound] on TV in the past, wasn't there? I never turned to it [the dubbed sound], because it just didn't feel right, or to the point. In comparison, you can find the Chinese-subtitled versions online [...] Sometimes the translation is not that accurate, but you can still get a general idea of what it means. Therefore it wouldn't be a hassle to understand [the dramas]. (Stella, female, 33 years old)

I prefer the Korean, original versions to the Taiwanese ones, which were translated and turned into Mandarin Chinese. In Taiwan, from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m., it is always the Chinese versions which are on air. It is not until from 10:00 or 11:00 p.m. onwards, during the recap, that the original versions are on air. I am not very much used to it. I don't like dubbing, as the original feels more authentic. Take *Scent of a Woman*⁵ for instance. When its airing on Saturday [in Korea] is finished, I will definitely go online in the early morning on Sunday to watch the latest episode, and I will definitely do the same on Monday, after the latest Sunday episode is on air. (Ann, female, 41 years old)

I prefer the original soundtrack. It feels more genuine even though I don't understand it. If you watch the Taiwanese version of Korean dramas, they are all dubbed by Taiwanese people. However, I feel a certain kind of distance, and inauthenticity. Although the characters [in the Taiwanese dubbed version]

⁵ *Scent of a Woman* is a 2011 Korean drama on air on Saturday and Sunday from July to September on the free-to-air Korean network SBS.

...speak in a language that I understand, I very much dislike it. I didn't necessarily insist on listening to the Korean dialogue in the dramas, but I started to [do so] since [I started using] PPS [laughing]! (Joyce, female, 56 years old)

While none of the three interviewees understood Korean, they all expressed their strong preference for the original soundtrack of Korean dramas compared to the Mandarin-dubbed versions. This strong preference also served as one of the principal reasons why they opted to watch fan-subtitled, undubbed Korean dramas online, rather than on TV where Korean dramas were very frequently dubbed. As Stella argued that in the cases of the broadcast of American and Japanese programmes in which MTS was deployed, she never switched to the dubbed version, the three interviewees' preference for subtitled, undubbed versions applied not only to Korean dramas but also to other foreign genres.

The three interviewees believed that dubbed Korean dramas were culturally domesticated (Chan, 2011; Chua, 2011) and, to some extent, turned into Taiwanese media texts (particularly as expressed by Joyce). Rather than making Korean dramas culturally more familiar and enjoyable, however, this domestication in fact distanced Korean dramas from being positively perceived as authentic, regardless of their deployment of the same language used by the interviewees. As studies on translation practices point out, "the presence of the original soundtrack acts as a form of guarantee of authenticity" (Kilborn, 1993, p. 643), therefore subtitled programmes can be "more 'real' and more closely resemble the original programme because the actors are heard with their own voice" (Koolstra, Peeters, & Spinhof, 2002, p. 336). Both Ann and Joyce pointed out that the undubbed

Korean dramas felt genuine and authentic. Nevertheless, such genuineness and authenticity were largely lost through the use of dubbing; this was what Stella implied when she made this point regarding the dubbed Korean dramas, using expressions such as “didn’t feel right” or “not to the point”.

While the interviewees did not fully elaborate what they meant by genuine or authentic, based on the context of the interviews I consider that their perception of genuineness/authenticity may refer to the following aspects. As Van Leeuwen (2001) argues, the term “authenticity” can refer to the “faithful reconstruction or representation,” and it can also apply to something “thought to be true to the essence of something [...] the way these are worded or otherwise expressed” (pp. 392-393). Regarding dubbed fictional programmes, I argue that there are two kinds of representations:

1. Fictional narrative as a representation of the foreign culture and context in which the narrative is based.
2. Dubbing as a representation of a given “raw” foreign programme, thus suppressing and domesticating the foreignness of the source programmes (Chan, 2011; Chua, 2008b, 2011; Danan, 1991). Therefore dubbing reconstructs and represents the programme’s original foreign narrative.

In terms of fictional narrative, as pointed out in the previous section, the interviewees’ familiarity with the local contexts and their own native languages made it easier for them to reflexively judge – based on their experiences – whether or not the narrative or the actors’ performances were natural and genuine. By the same token, when a foreign language was domesticated into the interviewees’ mother tongue (i.e. Mandarin), they tended to be more critical regarding how

authentic the dubbing was in representing the original soundtrack and the foreign culture.

More specifically, dubbing's authenticity was judged by interviewees in two ways. First, it had to do with how close the domestication was to the local (Taiwanese) context. For instance, some interviewees (e.g. Cheryl) complained that sometimes the phrase lines, or the voice performance of dubbing, were "not those commonly heard or used in our daily lives". This made the dubbing less genuine and difficult to "situate in the viewer's own environment" (Koolstra et al., 2002, p. 336), since it did not match the daily Taiwanese context in which Mandarin was used. Secondly, and more importantly, my interviewees were made up of those audiences who were used to watching a large number of foreign programmes before the emergence of online viewing. Through their active use of online platforms to access foreign programmes they were increasingly accustomed to foreign media texts with original soundtracks (e.g. Joyce's argument). They judged dubbing's authenticity by examining how close it represented the original foreign narratives and soundtracks. During the interview, Mandy imitated how voice actors performed Korean dialogue in Mandarin in a flat tone to explain how she felt that the nuances and tones of the Mandarin dialogue were too plain and less emotional, which was not in keeping with the nuances and tones of the original. Some interviewees (e.g. Rachel) argued that local broadcasters always employed the same voice actors in many different programmes, making the once distinctive stories identical to each other post-dubbing and thereby inauthentic compared to the original foreign narrative.

ii. Original Soundtracks and the Preservation of Raw Foreignness

As mentioned previously, foreignness was generally appreciated by my interviewees as the main facet they looked for when viewing foreign programmes. Based on this appreciation, in many cases they preferred original soundtracks because they wanted to experience a “raw” foreignness, instead of a diluted, reconstructed version. For instance, Nicole pointed out that “I want to know directly what the actors’ real voices are like, and if you dub them they immediately sound fake”. This notion had to do with the way in which dubbing reconstructed the source programme. Dubbing, in Nicole’s view, prevented her from experiencing the original soundtrack and thus a significant degree of foreignness was lost. The importance of the original soundtrack as a key component for experiencing the foreignness was further demonstrated in Jane’s arguments. Jane, who was interested in American culture but had not been to the US, started watching American TV series since childhood via terrestrial local networks. She explained why she enjoyed watching American TV, especially undubbed versions:

I would learn how they talk in American series. Especially, when I did my major in English in university, I watched even more American TV series, as it helped to improve my English speaking ability. Since I don’t have that much money to go overseas, I haven’t had the experiences of travelling to English-speaking countries like my classmates. Some of them even went and lived there when they were little. I feel like, watching American TV series, even though it is through small screens, helps me to know better about the US. Say, in the US, the Chinese takeaway food was put in that kind of [paper-made]

box, or American pizza seemed very thin, you know, these kinds of thoughts would come into my mind. (Jane, female, 25 years old)

As Jane emphasised, compared with her classmates who had had the opportunity to make sense of American culture through travelling to or living in the US, American TV series was the main way through which she could experience and learn about American culture. The original soundtracks accompanying the scenes demonstrated a sense of American-ness for her that helped in imagining what actual foreign contexts might be like. She also improved her English-language speaking proficiency by listening to and learning the way American actors and actresses talked on screen – it was the original American soundtracks that made her language learning possible. As a result, it was not surprising that she preferred the original soundtracks, which carried a more comprehensive sense of American-ness compared to the dubbed versions. Jane's experience was shared by other interviewees who had a strong interest in foreign cultures, especially those who had also learned foreign languages but had relatively limited opportunities to have direct encounters with those specific cultures (e.g. Ken, Adam, Claire, Emma).

When Vivian studied in London, there were many Korean students at the university where she studied. She argued that she always liked to observe how Koreans talked on the phone or in person:

When they finished the phone call and said goodbye, they always had a sound like, “um” which was very cute. The ways in which men pronounced the sound was different from the ways in which women did. [...] Sometimes

when I listened to and watched how they spoke I felt “it is very much like a scene from a [Korean] idol drama”. (Vivian, female, 23 years old)

As Vivian described, the conversations of real Koreans were “like a scene from the drama”, the fictional representation, manifested specifically in the original soundtrack, became a reference point that interviewees used to make sense of the real foreign contexts they experienced. Interviewees who had lived abroad and therefore had more encounters with foreigners (e.g. Stella, Fiona, Ivy, Sophie), or those who had travelled to foreign countries after they watched dramas from those countries (e.g. Ross, Katie, Mandy), shared impressions similar to Vivian’s.

Moreover, the audiences’ judgment with regard to the authenticity of dubbing might not only apply to the case in which a foreign text was dubbed into Mandarin, but also to the case when a foreign text was dubbed into another foreign language. Ivy had lived in Japan for five years. When she mentioned how *Friends*,⁶ a popular and famous American sitcom, was dubbed in Japanese, she imitated an English line “Ross,⁷ you are so nasty” as “Rosu, hidoiwa!” (ロス、ひどいわ! her own words in Japanese), with a soft, feminine Japanese nuance and tone (the way in which Japanese females commonly talked). Then she argued:

Oh my god, that’s annoying. All characters became so disgusting and pretentious.

(Yu-kei: But if that were the case, perhaps it might also be the case if you dubbed something Japanese into English?)

⁶ *Friends* was broadcast on the American network NBC from 1994 to 2004.

⁷ Ross is the name of one of the six main characters in *Friends*.

Yes, it could be, but it depends on what is dubbed. For instance, if you dub *Final Fantasy*,⁸ that should be totally okay, since the appearance of the characters are actually Western, and so are their names. However, in terms of those programmes which are very Japanese, well, I am not quite sure if [dubbing] works. (Ivy, female, 31 years old)

Ivy elaborated an important standard in the audiences' interpretations of dubbing's authenticity, one associated with cultural proximity: as a form of representation, the closer the language and cultural context of dubbing were to those of the source media text, the more likely it would be that dubbing was considered authentic and natural by the audiences. Ivy felt that American sitcoms such as *Friends* had a distinct American-ness (e.g. the ways the characters spoke or the romantic relationships they had) that was very different from Japanese cultural contexts and thereby unable to be genuinely represented by Japanese dubbing. For her, the Japanese dubbing was unnatural because it turned *Friends* into a text neither Japanese nor American. By the same token, she was doubtful if a media text with a distinctive Japanese-ness could be perfectly dubbed into English. In comparison, *Final Fantasy*, a Japanese franchise featuring Western-ness in its character design and visual setting, was much more suitable to be dubbed into English, regardless of its Japanese origin.

It can be argued that my interviewees tended to expect and enjoy the foreignness of source programmes. Therefore, they preferred subtitles to dubbing as subtitles

⁸ *Final Fantasy* is a famous Japanese role-playing video game series that was first released in 1987. It gained global popularity after several games were released in different languages. It was also adapted into animation, films and released in various languages. Most characters have a Western name and appearance (e.g. white skin, blonde hair, and other Caucasian features).

functioned as a “foreignising strategy that send the viewers abroad” (Venuti, 1998, p. 242). However, such foreignness might not necessarily be maintained if local broadcasters considered dubbing more profitable. As a result, the fact that original soundtracks were more likely to be kept and experienced via online platforms compared to broadcast TV made online platforms a more enjoyable choice for most of my interviewees, who were used to consuming foreign programmes and valued the foreignness of a given foreign programme.

III. Maintaining Foreignness with Cultural Capital: Access to “Raw” Texts

Based on Bourdieu’s (1984) concept of cultural capital, Straubhaar (2003) argues that such a concept plays an important role in influencing audiences’ preferences, whether for global, regional or national television programming. Particularly, the ability to speak or understand the language of a broadcast is, as Straubhaar points out, “an important ingredient in audiences’ selection of a programme and their enjoyment of it” (p. 82). His research on Brazil shows that elite and upper middle class Brazilians who have more cultural capital are more capable of understanding and enjoying programmes from other cultural-linguistic regions (especially non-subtitled ones) compared to other classes. By contrast, audiences with less cultural capital with which to comprehend foreign media texts, tend to look for cultural proximity in their media selection: they prefer national and regional television to global choices.

In this study, cultural capital was not a significant factor determining my interviewees’ preferences for media texts, particularly in relation to cultural

proximity and difference.⁹ First, regardless of their differences in education and socioeconomic background, my interviewees generally enjoyed watching foreign programmes. In terms of dramas, they usually shared a view that foreign programmes (Korean, Japanese and American) were better made than Taiwanese variants (e.g. development of the plot, design of the setting), and thereby in many cases more enjoyable or worth watching. Even though the interviewees did watch and even like a certain number of Taiwanese dramas, they were rarely their favourite choices. Second, regarding country of origin of foreign dramas and cultures, while the interviewees' preferences varied, no clear evidence indicated that those with more cultural capital tended to favour American dramas, while those with less cultural capital were in favour of regional (i.e. Korean and/or Japanese) counterparts.¹⁰

Nevertheless, cultural capital seemed to play a more crucial role in shaping interviewees' choice of access to foreign programmes. A few of my interviewees were from relatively richer families and/or families with higher cultural capital, and they frequently visited, or had even lived in the foreign country/countries whose cultures they were interested in. They acquired "nonmediated cultural capital from direct contact with global culture and people" (Straubhaar, 2003, p. 105), including language skills and knowledge of those foreign cultures. This enabled them to consume the raw, non-subtitled programmes via online platforms, rather than being limited to the subtitled versions as other audiences were.

⁹ In this study, no demographic factor stood out specifically as an individual variable that differentiated the interviewees' preferences for programmes' country of origin.

¹⁰ Some interviewees who had acquired more cultural capital were in favour of Japanese dramas (e.g. Will, Ivy) or did not have a specific preference for country of origin regarding foreign dramas and cultures (e.g. Jenny, Julia); and some other interviewees with relatively weaker cultural capital (e.g. Ryan, Ben) enjoyed American TV series and movies.

As discussed in Chapter 6, a sense of coevalness always relates to how fast audiences attain access to foreign shows. Many programmes available online only had the non-subtitled versions, and even when both the subtitled and non-subtitled versions were available, the subtitled examples tended to become available later than the non-subtitled ones, as the former required more waiting time until the subtitling was completed by fansubbing groups. The interviewees with superior language proficiency (through their overseas living experiences and/or education) are more likely to access shows earlier with wider programme options than others with similar levels of technical literacy but less ability in terms of foreign languages. Therefore, these interviewees were in a “better” position when it came to the achievement of coevalness. Furthermore, since they did not rely on subtitles that somehow diluted the foreignness of the foreign content, they were more likely to appreciate raw, or least-altered foreignness when they consumed the foreign content. Sometimes they expressed a sense of accomplishment about being able to achieve this. Ivy is a typical instance:

I am watching it [a Japanese animation] on FC2¹¹ and the version was without subtitles, but I am good at it [referring to her fluency in Japanese language], I have no problem understanding the story! [...] I prefer using FC2, many shows are available and it was much more stable on my laptop. Youku¹² doesn't work so well on my laptop these days. (Ivy, female, 31 years old)

¹¹ FC2 (<http://www.fc2.com>) is a popular Japanese blogging service launched in 1999 (the host is based in the United States), and most of the access is from Japan. It started its video blogging service a few years ago, but it did not have Chinese language support in its initial years of operation. It was not until 2008, nine years after its launch, that Chinese and English were gradually introduced to its multiple services.

¹² Youku (<http://www.youku.com/>) is one of the largest and most popular Chinese video streaming sites hosted in China. It shares a large number of both legal and illegal Chinese-subtitled foreign programmes.

Motivated by her interest in Japanese popular culture since childhood, Ivy spent five years studying for her bachelor's degree in Japan in her early twenties. After moving back to Taiwan, she had several jobs, all of which required a high-level of Japanese language proficiency (e.g. teaching Japanese in private institutions, working in the Taiwanese branches of Japanese banks). Ivy's confidence in her Japanese language proficiency was manifested in her choice of using FC2, one of the most popular Japanese blogging and video hosts, as her primary online access to Japanese programmes, where a significant amount of Japanese content was non-subtitled. Fiona, who was also very interested in Japanese culture, set up a blog on FC2 for a school club which she had joined; the club was run as a community for students interested in Japanese popular culture. Evan, who studied for his master's degree in London for a year, always watched American programmes via Siderell,¹³ an English-language website that collected streaming access to American TV series for its users.

It is worth noting that, while FC2 and Siderell were widely used in their local contexts, they were much less known in other countries and linguistic regions. FC2 focused on the domestic Japanese market in its initial years. Siderell mainly targeted American (and other English-speaking) users, and most access it collected was without Chinese subtitles (some had Spanish subtitles). Both FC2 and Siderell's popularity in Taiwan were far behind the more globally-known platforms such as YouTube, or services aimed at Chinese-speaking populations such as PPStream, whose content was mostly Chinese-subtitled. Taking these conditions into account, I consider that Ivy, Fiona and Evan's deliberate use of FC2 and

¹³ Sidereel (<http://www.sidereel.com/>) was launched in the US in 2007.

Sidereel indicated their strong intention to stay as close as possible to the everyday contexts of foreign cultures. The cultural capital the three had acquired through education and direct contact with foreign cultures enabled them to differentiate themselves from other Taiwanese audiences regarding the use of online platforms. Instead of choosing those Chinese-speaking platforms widely used in Taiwan, they tended to abandon such relatively culturally proximate media access and opted for platforms that local Japanese or Americans commonly employed. Thus, they maintained a stronger, rawer sense of foreignness, not only in terms of media content but also regarding the media environment (i.e. foreign platforms) in which the consumption took place. These practices seemed to maximise their immersion in, and enjoyment of, the foreign cultures they were interested in (see also Peter's online viewing of *K-On!* in Chapter 6 Section IV).

Fiona further demonstrated how her immersion in Japanese culture was enhanced through the simulation of a "para-Japanese media environment" (my coinage) in her household. Fiona's interest in Japan was mainly due to the influence of her parents who had the same interests when they were young. She was their only child, and she grew up surrounded by various Japanese cultural and media products.¹⁴ Encouraged by her parents, she started learning Japanese when she was 8 or 9 years old; by the time the interview took place, she had been learning it for seven years and was planning to continue her studies in Japan when she graduated from high school.¹⁵ When I asked what she usually watched on TV, she said that:

¹⁴ For example, Fiona's father always bought pirate DVDs of Japanese dramas and watched them with her, by himself, or with the whole family; when it came to the purchase of electronic goods, SONY products were always the first choice.

¹⁵ Fiona successfully entered one of the most prestige Japanese universities to pursue her Bachelor of Science degree in 2014.

In our home, we always have to switch to NHK¹⁶ before we switch off the TV. When we switch on [the TV] in the morning, it [the channel on TV] has to be NHK. It always has to be NHK at the time when the TV is switched on [laughing]. This is the rule in our home. It has to be switched to NHK when we switch on the TV. It has become a natural practice. If there is nothing interesting on NHK, then it will be switched to Videoland Japan.¹⁷ (Fiona, female, 16 years old)

Fiona explained that her father wanted her to take her Japanese language study seriously. In order to encourage her to do so, he set this “NHK rule” in an attempt to create a media environment as close to a real Japanese context as possible (even though her parents did not understand Japanese). While most foreign content and channels on Taiwanese cable TV are localised (e.g. content editing, subtitling) in order to effectively address Taiwanese audiences, such cultural localisation was consciously abandoned by Fiona’s family in their domestic media context. After a few years of practice, this “NHK rule” became a ritual in her home. As a result, most of the time what was shown on their living room TV was Japanese content, which constituted the rawest version available on Taiwanese broadcast TV, since the content on NHK World Premium was neither dubbed nor subtitled.

¹⁶ NHK is the national public Japanese broadcasting system, and the channel she referred to was NHK World Premium, which was legally accessible on cable and satellite TV systems in Taiwan. There are different versions of NHK World Premium broadcast around the globe, and the content is tailored to target audiences in different regions. Therefore, the content seen in Taiwan is different from that broadcast on the British version of NHK World Premium.

¹⁷ Videoland Japan, established in 1996, is a Taiwanese TV network that focuses exclusively on Japanese programmes.

IV. Embodying Foreignness and Identity Shaping

The last section examined how some interviewees with more cultural capital strived to keep foreignness in their viewing of foreign programmes by using the same access foreigners frequently used, instead of that localised for Taiwanese audiences (e.g. Taiwanese channels, Chinese-fansubbed files). This section continues to elaborate other interviewees' practices which are associated with the construction of their cultural identity.

i. Language, Travel, and Identity

While Fiona had not lived in Japan, she had travelled to Japan two or three times and stayed there for a few days to a couple of weeks every year. She elaborated on how her fluency in Japanese raised a question regarding her nationality for Japanese people:

We [she and her mother] went to buy some clothes [in Japan]. I talked with my mom in Mandarin, and my mom asked me to help her ask some questions; then I started to ask the questions in Japanese. I felt that the staff member definitely had doubts about what our relationship was. She later asked me, "Are you Japanese?" She started by asking, "Are you mother and daughter?" I said yes. Then she asked, "Are you Japanese then?" She [said that she] originally thought that I must be mixed-blood and generally lived in Japan, and my mom came from Taiwan or somewhere else. I said, no, [my identity] is very simple [laughing]. Every time staff members ask [these questions] in a curious manner, I always have to repeat my story from the beginning. (Fiona, female, 16 years old)

As a person of Chinese origin, the media scholar Ien Ang was raised by Indonesian-Chinese parents in the Netherlands, spending most of her life there until she moved to Australia in the 1990s. She elaborates on how various notions of “Chineseness” are attached to and imposed on her cultural identity. She finds that, in her surroundings, a crucial notion regarding Chinese identity “to which the ethnicised ‘Chinese’ subject must adhere to acquire the stamp of ‘authenticity’” (p. 30) is her supposed fluency in the Chinese language. The fact that she doesn’t speak Chinese is “a condition that has been hegemonically constructed as a lack, a sign of loss of authenticity” (p. 30) of her “Chinese” identity: people either presume that she spoke Chinese, or joked that she was “fake” Chinese as she does not speak Chinese.

In Fiona’s case, language fluency was also crucial to how cultural identity was defined. The reason why Fiona was *not* in the first place considered Taiwanese but Japanese or mix-blooded, while her mother was considered Taiwanese (or some other foreign native), was based on the languages they spoke. According to Fiona, while many Japanese people identified her mother, who did not seem to understand Japanese, as a foreigner, they were always uncertain about her own identity. They often assumed that someone like her, who looked ethnically East Asian and spoke both Japanese and another language fluently, must be Japanese with a complicated cultural background (e.g. mixed-blooded or an immigrant growing up in Japan). Compared to diaspora or immigrants, her nationality and cultural background, as she argued, was rather simple: she was born to Taiwanese parents and raised in Taiwan and had not lived overseas. However, by acquiring Japanese language proficiency and demonstrating this proficiency alongside her mother tongue

(Mandarin), Fiona's cultural and national identity became less clear-cut from the perspective of Japanese people.

The relation between language and the construction of identity was also shown in the ways of some interviewees' use of foreign languages as everyday practices. Peter, whom I interviewed via text-based instant messaging services online, employed Japanese temporal indicating conventions when he told me his viewing patterns of Japanese animation (see Chapter 6 Section IV). It is worth noting that, although Japanese was not our first language, he always used *Japanese* rather than Chinese (our first language) to interact with me. He was an acquaintance of my friends, and since he knew from my friend that I had learned Japanese, he had already used simple Japanese to interact with me from the very beginning. Ever since he was sure that my Japanese language level was "good enough to understand what he talked about" (his own words in Japanese), he only wrote in Japanese to me.¹⁸ He also mainly wrote in Japanese when he updated his status or shared information on social networking sites and the IM service via which we interacted.

I met Evan in London in 2009 when both of us had just moved there to study. While we mainly spoke Mandarin with each other face-to-face in London or in Taiwan, our text-based, mediated interactions always took place in English: he never interacted with me in Chinese (even though at times I replied in Chinese) on all kinds of text-based messaging and networking services. His posts (either the notes he wrote or the information he shared on social networking sites such as Facebook or Instagram) were always in English. The Chinese language, as a crucial

¹⁸ As I considered that it was easier for me to express myself and ask questions more accurately in Chinese than in Japanese, I usually used Chinese rather than Japanese to interact with him.

condition of an expression of being “Taiwanese” rarely used in his online networking activities. During the interview Evan joked that he was always called, “the Western food boy”: a person who was uncritically obsessed with American (Western) material culture and he quite loved this term even if it was a bit negative by definition. He then argued:

I always love to be a “fake” white person, you know? Yeah, [I am] saying this as a joke [laughs]! (Evan, male, 26 years old)

As Edwards (1991) points out, language as a marker with both communicative and symbolic values is “the central pillar of ethnic identity” (p. 269). If Ang’s (2001) experience of not speaking Chinese was considered as a sign of her loss of authentic Chineseness, Evan’s deliberate use of English was crucial for him as an East Asian to disguise himself as a “fake” Westerner, or an American-born Taiwanese who was not “authentically” Taiwanese. Moreover, as a “fake” white person, Evan also picked an English last name from a fictional character, namely a young white New Yorker in a recent American TV series, and used it as his last name in most social media (e.g. Facebook) and offline memberships (e.g. a free membership card from a supermarket) in Taiwan as well as in the UK (he also picked another English last name derived from a character in the globally renowned British novel *Harry Potter*). He said that he did so mainly for fun, and in most cases would do so when other services did not require him to provide his authentic name.

Compared with Evan and Fiona, Adam was born to a family with relatively less cultural and economic capital, and had rarely travelled overseas before he started to

work. Adam had been extremely interested in Japanese popular culture since childhood and majored in Japanese at university. After travelling to Japan for the first time in his mid-twenties, he was more convinced that Japan as a country and a culture was indeed what he wanted to identify with. Since then, he visited Japan one or twice yearly and always went to the same city, Osaka. One time after returning to Taiwan from Osaka, he wrote a post on his Facebook page in July 2013, and cited below is part of the content (used with his consent):

I am now feeling homesick for my second homeland, Osaka. The symptoms include:

1. I feel a bit annoyed when I use a large bill to pay for something, the [Taiwanese] staff members don't promptly and accurately count the notes for me when they give me back the change [as Japanese people did].
2. The Taiwanese airport was just so noisy. The way Taiwanese spoke was just so, so, so, so, so loud.
3. [Taiwanese] people just like sounding their horn for no apparent reason when they drive.
4. I feel that Taiwanese trains are just so old and shabby.

I asked Adam in August 2013 to explain further to me his “homesickness for Japan” via instant messaging when I was in London.¹⁹ He argued:

Oh, there are in fact other symptoms, say, I would accidentally use Japanese Yen to pay for something, and also unconsciously say “Ryoshusho ha

¹⁹ I also double-checked his response with him in person when I returned to Taiwan a few months later. His face-to-face reaction was identical to the online conversation.

iranaidesu” [i.e. I don't need the receipt", 領収書は要らないです, written in Japanese in his original response].

(Yu-kei: I wonder why you think Osaka is your second homeland).

The passion of Osaka people and my yearning for Japan, and the happy memories I had with Japanese people, and so on. These things make Osaka feel like a homeland to me. To some extent, the life in Japan is the life I want to have. I experienced and learnt lots of new things, but then I had to leave [Japan], and in turn I felt a sense of nostalgia for leaving Japan. For instance, you know Osaka people like to make jokes. I really like playing the fool, and these [Japanese] friends will just sarcastically point out my silly acts. [We are] just playing a double comedy act you know, I am the funny man and they play the straight man. I really enjoy this kind of interaction, and they [Japanese] get me. [...] Taiwanese people don't like making jokes as much. [...] When I arrived at Kansai airport [the airport in Osaka] and rushed to take the train, I already felt “Oh, it is Japan, I am back”.

(Yu-kei: You meant that you felt like going back to Japan, instead of going there?)

Yes, I felt a sense of belonging [...] I had wanted to do these things for a long time and I made it, so I had a sense of fulfilment and belonging.

Unlike diaspora or immigrants who reside in places other than their countries or those interviewees who had lived overseas, Adam never left Taiwan, his “first homeland”, and each of his trips to Japan was less than ten days. However, his strong emotional attachment to Japanese culture is manifested in the way he used terms to describe his feelings about his trips such as “homesickness”, “the second homeland”, “back to Japan”, or “belonging”. Similar to Peter or Evan, he kept

using Japanese in many daily contexts (e.g. posting entries on Facebook in Japanese). As Frith (1996) points out, “identity is not a thing but a process” (p. 110), therefore Adam’s experience of “unconsciously” and “accidentally” speaking Japanese was a significant example showing the dynamic process in which his identification with Japanese culture was taking shape. If the meaning of “homeland” Adam referred to is similar to the homeland that Georgiou (2006) defines, that is “a symbolic, ideological concept [...] that addresses issues of imagination, longing and belonging and less so a specific geographical place”(p. 165), how was Adam’s belonging for Japan as a second homeland formed?

Ming-Tsung Lee has studied how young Taiwanese audiences’ imagination and “tourist gaze” (Lee citing Urry, 1990) towards Japan are constructed through their consumption of Japanese dramas and actual visits via so-called “Japanese drama tours”,²⁰ and how such practices shape their self-identifications with local and Japanese cultures. Similar to the informants in Lee’s study, Adam’s long-term consumption of Japanese media texts as “imaginary travel” (Urry, 2000)²¹ played a crucial role in developing his understanding of, and yearning for, Japanese culture. Through frequently engaging with Japanese media texts and majoring in the Japanese language, he had gone through an “anticipatory socialisation” (Wulff, 1992) relating to life in Japan years before he actually visited the country. Therefore, his “nostalgia” for [visiting and leaving] Japan was not only based on

²⁰ According to Lee (2004b), these drama tours are usually arranged and promoted by Taiwanese local travel agencies and/or Taiwanese television networks that broadcast Japanese dramas. The tours are tailored for Taiwanese people interested in Japanese dramas; and therefore the routes usually feature various scenes and locations where some of the most famous Japanese dramas are shot.

²¹ Roughly based on the notion of imagined communities (Anderson, 2006), Urry (2000) argues that media generate imaginative travel, “by which distant events, personalities, and happenings are mundanely brought into the living room [...] as a consequence we imagine ourselves sharing events, experiences and personalities [...] with whom we constitute certain kinds of community” (p. 69).

the good time he had on his visits there, but was also shaped by long-term memories of his interest in Japanese culture.

As Meyrowitz (2005) argues, media extend the boundaries of experiences and, as a result, those whom we perceive as significant Others or as part of the generalised other include not only the people we encounter face-to-face but also those from distant places. Moreover, by providing us with perspectives external to the locality, media expand our perception of “the generalised” elsewhere” (p. 23) as a mirror to view and judge our localities. A crucial reason why Adam regarded Osaka (and Japan in general) as his second homeland was because certain customs and social values of Japanese culture he expected and experienced were those he could identify with – sometimes easier than he could with Taiwanese culture, which he at times felt that he did not fit in with (as implied in his complaint about how Taiwanese people were noisy or how they constantly sounded the horn). He also felt that part of his personality was closer to that of Osaka people (e.g. enjoying making jokes) and, as a result, he thought that he shared certain social bonds and interpersonal interactions with them that his Taiwanese fellowmen were less likely to relate to. His sense of belonging in Osaka was especially evident when he repeatedly told me that Osaka “was the only place I want to visit if I travel overseas” (his words).

ii. Self-identification via Understanding of Foreign Others

Billig (1995) argues that an identity is “to be found in the embodied habits of social life. Such habits include those of thinking and using language” (p. 8). Day (2011) further underlines that language is “a tool people use to claim a cultural identity” (p.

51). If this is the case, what cultural identities did my interviewees want to claim, by consciously employing foreign languages (even avoiding using Mandarin in some circumstances) and by adhering to platforms foreigners commonly used (see Section III), alongside consuming foreign programmes as everyday practices?

When Japan Fever emerged as a regional phenomenon in the 1990s, the younger Taiwanese generation's strong interest in Japanese popular culture was often featured in Taiwanese media. Hari Kyoko,²² a famous Taiwanese writer, published several travel guides to Japan and books on Japanese popular culture. In her first book *I've Got a Fever Called Hari*, she said that she wished she were Japanese and she also felt as if she were Japanese in her past life. She believed that many readers had the same feeling. She was widely considered the most significant representative of young Taiwanese people who were obsessed with Japanese culture. The Mandarin term for such people is "Ha-ri", meaning Japanophile.

As discussed in Chapter 2 Section III, many Taiwanese critics were concerned that these young Japanophiles were ignorant about the history of Japanese colonisation and had forgotten their identity as Taiwanese. The title of one issue of the renowned Taiwanese news magazine *The Journalist*, was "Watch out! Your Children are becoming Japanese!" (published in April 1997) becoming the most substantial expression of these concerns (see also Iwabuchi, 2002, pp. 126-157). Arguments which were broadly based on a similar nationalistic perspective and the

²² Hari Kyoko, the author's pen name, contains crucial meanings with regard to her cultural and national identity. "Hari" is a well-known Taiwanese term created by her that refers to the "Japan Fever" of a person who "fancies everything about Japan". Kyoko is not a Taiwanese name, but a common Japanese name for Japanese female. As a pen name, "Hari Kyoko" was often considered by critics as demonstrating the Taiwanese younger generation's embrace of Japanese identity and their abandonment of their Taiwanese one.

thesis of cultural imperialism were common in public discourse and academia in the 1990s and early 2000s (Y.-F. Ko, 2004). Some interviewees who were developing strong interests in Japanese popular culture as teenagers/children during this period (e.g. Ivy, Claire, Adam) were also subject to nationalistic criticisms expressed by their acquaintances and/or public discourses.

From the perspective of cultural imperialism (see T.-D. Lee & Ho, 2003 for instance), the interviewees whose views were discussed in the previous subsections can be readily criticised as individuals who uncritically embraced everything foreign, to the extent that they happily abandoned their local identity in exchange for a foreign one. However, this kind of argument does not examine how audiences make sense of their local identity. It also tends to treat identity as clear-cut and attached to a given culturally- and nationally-defined territory, rather than as a process that is constantly being shaped and reshaped. As a result, it ignores the complexity involved in the construction of audiences' national or cultural identities.

Far from abandoning their local identities, my interviewees, including those who had strong interests in foreign cultures, still regarded themselves as Taiwanese. Their encounters with foreign cultures encouraged them to think of their cultural identity from a bifocal perspective (J. D. Peters, 1997). In the cases of Evan, Fiona, Ivy, Adam and Peter, they were confident that they were superior to many other Taiwanese people in terms of their knowledge of foreign cultures and languages. It can be argued that the concept of being a specialist in foreign culture was added and integrated into their identity.

Nevertheless, instead of wishing that "I were a foreigner", it seemed that my

interviewees were more interested in being considered as Taiwanese who were so familiar with foreign cultures that they might even be considered as foreigners. The main reason for them to act like foreigners in their everyday lives (e.g. using foreign languages consciously, employing foreign services unknown in Taiwan), was not so much to prove that they had become foreigners and so had given up their Taiwanese identity. Rather, it was more likely to emphasise the fact what they were *not*, which was especially evident in how Fiona described herself as “simply a Taiwanese” who lived in Taiwan, rather than a person with a more complicated transnational cultural background such as being of mixed-blood extraction or an immigrant. Likewise, Adam was sometimes considered Japanese by Japanese people (and occasionally by Taiwanese or Chinese people, as he argued) when he was travelling in Japan and he had a “complicated and rather bittersweet” feeling towards such experiences: “I had a sense of achievement as my Japanese seemed to be good enough to be considered as if I were Japanese, but at the same time I also thought, ‘Wait a minute, hey, I am misjudged! I am in fact Taiwanese [laughs]!’”

It was exactly because the interviewees were not foreigners that their familiarity with foreign cultures and foreign language fluency was valuable to them: after all, nothing is special about an American speaking fluent English or a Japanese speaking perfect Japanese. In this sense, the interviewees’ familiarity with foreign cultures was more likely to be used by them to *differentiate* themselves from other Taiwanese rather than to *deny* themselves as Taiwanese. As Meyrowitz (2005) argues, instead of needing to choose between local, place-defined identities and more distant ones, “the media-networked glocality affords the possibility of having multiple, multi-layered, fluid and endlessly adjustable senses of identity” (p. 28). In

this sense, the interviewees' sense of identity as Taiwanese may be shaped and proliferated, but not necessarily threatened.

Moreover, in many cases, the interviewees expressed their interests in, and criticism of, foreign programmes and cultures at the same time. As Julia argued, through media consumption as well as actual residency, she had been learning more about “the good as well as the bad sides [and] the aspects you liked and agreed with and those you disagreed with” of a certain foreign culture. In turn she had become more careful and critical when making judgments about these cultures. Claire further argued:

I wonder how closely someone's preference or favourite is associated with his or her identity. [...] If there were something that interests me in my own country, I might not have been so much into foreign stuff. But it's not to say that I identify with a given [foreign] country simply because I am interested in something from there. For instance, since [I] have been experiencing Japan for a long time, you would like to get to know more about its various aspects. Then you realise that preference is preference, but identity is identity, they are different things, because if you look closer at it, you definitely find many things that you don't identify with. (Claire, female, 30 years old)

The “identity” Claire mentioned largely refers to national identity. She made clear that her preference for a given foreign culture (e.g., Japanese culture) did not suggest that she completely identified with Japan (as a nation state) or identified herself as Japanese. She further stated that her lack of interest in Taiwanese popular culture did not deny her identity as a Taiwanese national or her appreciation of

other aspects of Taiwanese culture. These thoughts were shared by most interviewees. It can be argued that, the interviewees' identification as Taiwanese was more multilayered and hybridised (in terms of Straubhaar, 2008), but many layers of their identity (especially that of Taiwanese nationality) were not replaced by their interest in foreign cultures (see Section VI regarding the interviewees' perceptions of Korean culture).

V. The Role of Chinese File Sharing in Taiwanese Online Consumption of Foreign TV

Sections I to IV examined the interviewees' various forms of consumption of Japanese, Korean and American cultures such as travelling, language learning and viewing of programmes. The four sections investigated how such consumption shaped the interviewees' perception of the three cultures as well as their identities as Taiwanese. This section, in turn, analyses the role China-based online services play in the Taiwanese consumption of foreign TV via online sharing. It specifically focuses on how such online services, along with the geopolitical relation between Taiwan and Chinese, influenced my interviewees' perceptions of China, Taiwan (local) as well as other foreign countries.

i. The Significance of Chinese Fansubbing and File Sharing

As a part of Greater China, Taiwan and China share the same geo-cultural and linguistic roots, an important layer of cultural identification predating the nation-state and globalisation (Straubhaar, 2008). However, while Chinese-speaking countries and regions share the spoken language, written characters are divided into two types: Traditional Chinese used in Taiwan, Hong

Kong and Macau, and Simplified Chinese used in China, Singapore and the remaining Chinese-speaking regions.²³ As previously mentioned, online forums/services featuring Chinese fansubbing and file sharing activities are the central providers of foreign media content in the regions – a significant number of them targeted *all* Chinese-speaking populations, actively producing and distributing foreign media materials with both Simplified Chinese and Traditional Chinese subtitles (see Chapter 2 Section IV).

The empirical data demonstrates that, to varying degrees most interviewees relied on Chinese online services in their consumption of foreign TV. While many of them (especially those who had more cultural capital or lived overseas as discussed in Section III) also used legal or unauthorised services hosted by other countries to watch foreign TV, Chinese online services in general were still the most common options used. In the early years of online video sharing (the mid-2000s), the interviewees either directly downloaded fansubbed files from forums or exchanged these files via personal networks. Many of them started using P2P TV and other types of video sites more frequently after they gained popularity around 2009 and 2010. For them, these Chinese-based online services served as intermediates that increased the accessibility of foreign shows in two ways:

1. Bridging the language gap with foreign (i.e. non-Chinese language) content. In terms of content, they added Chinese subtitles to raw files and in doing so they become the original producers of “first-hand fansubbed” programmes.

²³ Traditional Chinese characters are also used in overseas Chinese immigrant communities such as those in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom, since most first generation immigrants were from Hong Kong and Taiwan. However, Simplified Chinese characters are also used more often nowadays as more recent immigrants often come from mainland China.

2. Distribution and Circulation. These Chinese online services actively distributed a large number of fansubbed as well as unsubbed, copyrighted foreign programmes which are unavailable elsewhere.

Many interviewees considered Chinese file sharing intermediaries handy and helpful for their consumption of foreign shows, because they could, as Rachel said, “provide lots of things to watch at a fast [distribution] speed”. It was also easier to find foreign content on Chinese services since the content would last longer, compared to, as Emma said, sites such as YouTube, where “the copyright regulation was so strict that the content would be promptly removed”.

Steven had been living in the United States for a few years when the interview took place, and he was concerned that his downloading habits might be subject to accusations of copyright infringement, especially as the downloaded programmes were American. Therefore, he argued that:

In general I don't directly download the raw American series. We can see that when episodes were on air, someone would record them and release them on P2P networks a few hours later, with English titles and the numbers of series and episodes listed. Authorities will use these words as keywords to track and identify who has downloaded the files. Similarly, [Internet] providers also track Internet traffic to know who downloads a lot. Well, what do I do to protect myself then? I don't download the pure files. In recent years, more and more Chinese students came to the US, and they liked to subtitle, translate and upload [American programmes] to their own servers [...] Those files are not *pure* files [...] and the titles are in Simplified Chinese, rather than English or

Spanish. Therefore, they are not so easy to be tracked [by authorities when they are downloaded]. (Steven, male, 34 years old)

The “pure” or raw files Steven mentioned refer to the files that were unsubbed and unaltered. Downloading raw files was perceived to be more likely to infringe copyright because, compared to the subbed files, raw ones were the closest duplicates of the original broadcast. For Steven, in comparison with raw files (in English) and files remade in Spanish or other Indo-European languages, Chinese-subbed files were a better solution to his concerns about copyright. (Simplified) Chinese made the Chinese-subbed files (with Chinese titles) more different from the original broadcasts, and thereby harder to track for the American authorities. Steven demonstrates how the Chinese language as a shared layer of cultural identification (Straubhaar, 2008) between Taiwanese and Chinese made Chinese fansubbing activities a perfect springboard for him to avoid infringing (American) copyright while accessing American TV series.

In Chapter 5 Section V, I discussed how Dan had lost his social role as a personal file-sharing facilitator to his acquaintances due to the increasing accessibility of online viewing. In order to address the significance of Chinese online video services in shaping Taiwanese consumption of television, I will briefly revisit Dan’s experiences here. As a person who was proficient in computing, Dan thought the growing popularity of Chinese online video services (e.g. the P2P TV) indicated that:

The way in which pirated content is accessed has become so different from that in the past. It is much easier to get it now. You don’t need any kind of skill.

In the early days if you wanted to get some file, you had to have some computer literacy. For instance, searching [pirated content] is a kind of skill. You also needed to have some skills if you wanted to merge [the subtitles and timelines into the file] and produce the content. That was what I did in the past. I got and made the files and shared them with not only my colleagues and friends but also others [i.e. strangers]. However, lots of sites or pieces of software have already done these things for you today. All you need to do is to install it. [...] You can easily watch pirated content without having any kind of skill [laughs]. (Dan, male, 27 years old).

When talking about Chinese fansubbers, Jane praised them for their efforts to make the foreign content available to a large number of audiences:

These people [Chinese fansubbers] are just awesome. They help so many people to enjoy [the foreign content] for free, and what they do even helps others to learn [about different] cultures and languages. I think that they are really honourable! (Jane, female, 25 years old)

When Jane mentioned the “people”, she mainly referred to Chinese speakers. As mentioned in Chapter 2, pirate VCD was the main technology East Asian audiences used to access the latest Japanese programmes in the 1990s and early 2000s (Davis & Yeh, 2004). In Chinese-speaking regions, pirate disc companies based in Hong Kong and Taiwan were influential in the circulation and consumption of Japanese (and other foreign) content at that time, since they were the production centres for unauthorised VCDs (Hu, 2004). However, as the above discussion demonstrates, a crucial change took place during the period of online sharing. China, through the

fansubbing activities of online forums/services, took the lead in shaping the circulation and consumption of (fansubbed and pirated) foreign content, thus becoming the production centre for such content for Chinese-speaking countries and regions. Jane's argument was one of the most significant testimonies to the significance of such a change.

In Chapter 6 I have analysed how interviewees strived to follow foreign broadcast schedules, and here I want to foreground the importance of Chinese online services in such processes. Many interviewees regularly check those specific Chinese sites and/or services that release their favourite foreign shows. Tim and Vivian are two examples:

I will roughly remember [the Japanese broadcast schedules] because at the earliest the [fansubbed] files will be available for us to download the next day. So, for instance, *Hotaru No Hikari* seems to be on Wednesday, and *Gold* on Friday.²⁴ I am the kind of person who downloads [fansubbed files] weekly. I always go to official fansubbing forums because they are the first ones to release files. (Tim, male, 27 years old)

I watch *Jin 2* and *One Piece*²⁵ on Tudou.²⁶ *Jin* is updated on Tuesday, I think.

I always check it on Tuesday and find the new episode. Sometimes it [the

²⁴ *Hotaru No Hikari* and *Gold* were on air in Japan 2010 on Wednesday and Thursday, respectively. Therefore, in terms of the Japanese broadcasting schedules of the two dramas, he was accurate regarding the former, but wrong in the latter (he believed that *Gold* was on Friday).

²⁵ *Jin 2* is a Japanese weekly drama that was broadcast on Sunday evening from April to June 2011. *One Piece* is a Japanese animation broadcast every Sunday morning in Japan since 1999.

²⁶ Tudou (<http://www.tudou.com>) is one of the most popular Chinese video sites and was established in 2005. Last visited on 25 March 2015.

update of a new episode] will be on Monday. As for *One Piece*, you can watch it [in a Simplified Chinese version] on Sunday, and on Monday for the Traditional Chinese version. (Vivian, female, 23 years old)

Tim did not understand Japanese, and he always waited for the regular release of dramas subtitled by SUBPIG,²⁷ a Chinese fansubbing group specialising in Japanese dramas. Since he wanted to access the dramas at the earliest possible time, he opted for “official” fansubbing forums that produced the “original fansubbed” files, instead of the “second-hand” online services (e.g. P2P TV) that re-uploaded the original fansubbed files. As soon as SUBPIG released his favourite dramas, he went to download them and, as a result, he gained a rough idea of Japanese schedules due to this regular practice. Unlike some interviewees (e.g. Peter, Adam, Emma, Claire) who learned Japanese and checked Japanese sites for relevant broadcasting information, Tim’s understanding of Japanese broadcasting schedules and the ways in which he followed the latest Japanese dramas was crucially structured by the SUBPIG operation.

Rather than mentioning when *Jin 2* or *One Piece* aired in Japan, Vivian explained to me in detail how and when she could access the latest episodes of both programmes via the Chinese streaming video site Tudou. Similar to Tim’s experience, her argument also indicated how Tudou determined her viewing of Japanese (and other foreign) shows: the updating of the Chinese video site was felt as more significant than the original Japanese broadcast schedules. The interviewees who mainly relied on Chinese online platforms to consume foreign

²⁷ The website of SUBPIG is <http://www.suppig.net/>. Last visited on 25 March 2015.

programmes shared identical experiences with Tim and Vivian.

In general, Chinese online services were widely used by most interviewees as guerrilla platforms that offered content unavailable under official capitalist structures. Nevertheless, besides being significant to Taiwanese consumption of foreign TV, Chinese online sharing forums/services as the main providers of foreign media content in Chinese-speaking regions, also have implications for the shaping of Taiwanese identity. The next subsection looks at why and how these Chinese services triggered interviewees' negative feelings and anxieties towards China.

ii. Antagonism Towards China: Making Detours as a Form of Cultural Resistance

Section III has examined Fiona, Evan and Ivy's experiences of intentionally choosing foreign platforms as an important way to employ foreignness in their everyday lives. Here I focus on the practices of other interviewees who also avoided or reduced using made-in-China services to access foreign content, but for different reasons.

As an engineer, Cheryl expressed the strong criticism that there were always many dirty tricks (e.g. computer viruses, spam, data-theft) embedded in made-in-China software and this threatened her computer security. Therefore, she always tried to avoid made-in-China software or online services. A few interviewees (e.g. Tim, Peter) expressed similar reasons for their unwillingness to use Chinese software and/or services to watch foreign shows. If they occasionally did, they also tended to

reduce the usage as much as possible. Furthermore, Cheryl underlined a more specific reason to explain why she did not use PPStream (shortened as PPS), one of the most famous pieces of Chinese P2P video software:

There are two reasons why I decided that I won't use PPS. First, besides Taiwanese dramas, all the others (TV shows) are Simplified Chinese-subtitled. Second, the whole interface is full of Simplified Chinese characters as well. What an eyesore! (Cheryl, 29 years old)

When Cheryl wanted to watch a certain show that required subtitles, she always tried to find the Traditional Chinese version, because "it's my own agenda. I dislike Simplified Chinese characters" – thereby the anti-Simplified Chinese attitude was revealed again. Likewise, Adam argued that he neither understood nor liked Simplified Chinese characters, and stressed that he never consumed fansubbed files:

[Chinese fansubbing forums] are never my thing, *ever*. The video quality [of fansubbed files] is so, so bad; and they [Chinese fansubbing forums] just so shamelessly violate copyright. On top of that, I am sick of the typical attitude of 426.²⁸ They [426, i.e. "goddamn Chinese mainlander"] always thought that they were the boss. Some fansubbing forums even shamelessly added their own logos on the files, as if they were really the original one [which produced the programmes]. It's so annoying. (Adam, male, 26 years old)

²⁸ The three numerals ("4"- "2"- "6") in Chinese is homophonous with three other Chinese words ("死[dead]"-"阿[vocative particle]"-"陸[mainland]"). The combination thus means "Goddamn Chinese (mainlander)" and is a hostile and derogatory term for Mainland Chinese. It is also commonly used by Taiwanese people when they refer to Chinese people in a relatively less hostile context.

Antagonism towards various aspects of China-based intermediates was evident in Adam and Cheryl's arguments. Simplified Chinese characters, the dirty tricks embedded in the Chinese software, the low visual-quality of the files, and the shameless attitude toward piracy were all reasons they disliked Chinese platforms and services. Furthermore, the immorality and inferiority mentioned here were considered to be essential characteristics of the Chinese people (especially clear from Adam's use of the term "426"). However, where did such antagonism come from? It was not so much the shortcomings of these Chinese platforms and services, but the political power China represented that mattered.

As discussed in Chapter 2 Section I, China as a nation-state denies the sovereignty of Taiwan, claiming its own regime to be "the one and only" China, while regarding Taiwan as part of its territory. This denial prevents Taiwan as a sovereign nation from becoming involved in a wide range of international affairs and thus fundamentally threatens Taiwan's international and political status. As the interviews went on, it became clear that both Cheryl and Adam insisted that Taiwan is not a province of China but an independent country. Nevertheless, their belief was not in keeping with the international political reality because most countries do not treat Taiwan as such given the political pressure that China exerts on the issue. This, in turn, triggered their antagonism toward, and resentment of, China. Therefore, my interviewees' dislike of China-based intermediates was, in fact, mainly based on this kind of attitude. With this political concern in mind, it was rather uncomfortable for Cheryl and Adam to acknowledge and accept the fact that the Chinese file sharing service as a cultural force might affect their consumption

of their favourite foreign content. As a result, they wanted to make a detour to bypass China-based intermediations.

Originally, the foreignness of a foreign show, whether American or Japanese for instance, did not appear to threaten the interviewees. However, with China-based intermediaries involved, such unthreatening foreignness seemed to be compromised. The “pure” foreign programmes (as in Steven’s description) turned into “made-in-China products”, which were items they did not want to consume, or to admit that they had consumed.

However, sometimes the interviewees found that it was almost impossible to completely rid themselves of China. In many cases, they needed subtitles or faster file sharing networks to access the files they wanted, and the China-based platforms were the only choice. As a result, they also expressed a certain level of denial of, or regret for, their reliance on China concerning their consumption. For instance, Adam argued that “I installed XunLei [a piece of Chinese P2P software], but uninstalled it right away after I got the file I needed. As I said, I don’t use it”. Sometimes he asked his acquaintances to help in checking or accessing Japanese programmes via Chinese file sharing sites since he did not want to use those sites himself. Such a practice showed his refusal to admit that he had indeed used and had to rely on the Chinese software and services. Cheryl confessed that, “I know that I cannot really criticise them since I benefit from them”. In other words, on the one hand, she knew that she still had to rely on Chinese-subtitled files. On the other hand, she was also a little frustrated by acknowledging her reliance on Chinese fansubbing activities, because she thought she might have been able to be more critical if she did not benefit from them.

iii. Making Do with Chinese Services

Some interviewees had similar anxieties or antagonisms to those that Cheryl and Adam experienced regarding China as a nation-state and political superpower. However, despite such negative feelings, they did not try to completely avoid using Chinese platforms and services. For these interviewees, Chinese services were seen as a tactic (Certeau, 1984) in their online consumption of foreign TV. The notion of tactic here harbours two meanings. First, as discussed in the previous subsections, interviewees tactically used these Chinese platforms and services as springboards to access foreign content. Second, while they relied on these Chinese platforms, they constantly resisted or dismissed the Chinese cultural and political ideologies and threats they felt during their consumption as well as in other aspects of their everyday lives. As Mandy said:

I will not avoid using [Chinese sites because] all sites that allow you to download things are good sites. It is the access and content that matter. Therefore, as long as I can understand the interface and get the shows, I don't mind if it is a Chinese site or some site in Kenya or South Africa [laughing]; the sites that allow you to download are the good sites. After all, how is it possible to completely cut the relationship with China as there is so much made-in-China stuff available nowadays? I think that there is a clear distinction between everyday life and our beliefs. Well, daily life is daily life, and our beliefs are our beliefs. We shouldn't mix up the two. (Mandy, female, 27 years old)

Unlike most interviewees who only watched fansubbed files, Ken participated in Chinese fansubbing activities as a fansubber and proofreader. For him, it was an active and effective resistance against Chinese cultural and political power as demonstrated in the dominance of China in the distribution of foreign content among Chinese-speaking audiences:

I mainly made the subtitles and proofread [the subtitles of others]. The reason why I wanted to join fansubbing groups was because many other Taiwanese also started to watch [foreign programmes]. With many Taiwanese starting to watch [those foreign programmes], Chinese fansubbers converted [Simplified Chinese subtitles] into Traditional Chinese subtitles and released them. However, they didn't know how to really translate Simplified Chinese into Traditional Chinese. Foolishly, they just used Word [the word-for-word conversion function in Microsoft Word software] to do the conversion.²⁹ I really *hate* the fact that many Chinese terms were mixed up with Taiwanese terms. I am very familiar with the differences between the two, and I felt that it was a kind cultural invasion when I saw such mix-ups. I was furious, again [laughing scornfully]! Since I knew that no Taiwanese was in that [fansubbing] group, they had no idea how to deal with it. On top of that, I was an early user of the group. Therefore, I requested to join the group, and told them that I could take over the Traditional Chinese role. (Ken, male, 27 years old)

²⁹ Except for the differences in the Chinese characters, in terms of language use, many terms and expressions used in Taiwan and those employed in China are also different. Most conversion software is only capable of converting the Simplified Chinese characters into Traditional counterparts. It fails to automatically alter the nuances, the terms, and the expressions to those actually used by Taiwanese. It requires human agency (i.e. Taiwanese people) to convert such linguistic details if a given Simplified Chinese subtitle is to be perfectly converted to the Traditional Chinese version.

However, at times my interviewees also found it hard to tactically “make do with” (Certeau, 1984) these Chinese services. The most significant instance lies in how they were annoyed when they were unable to access their favourite content:

Even Tudou is blocked now; it [a notification on Tudou] tells you that you are not allowed to watch it outside Mainland China. It is so irritating. (Claire, female, 30 years old)

Now Tudou even blocks IPs from Taiwan, saying that we are not allowed to view the shows due to copyright issues! It is at this point that you can say that we are not part of you then! [I am] so upset [but laughing]! I was forced to give up so many American TV series, such as *CSI* or *Criminal Minds*! (Mandy, female, 27 years old)

Chinese video platforms and services have gradually started to legalise their business activities from the beginning of the 2010s (roughly around the same time when this research was conducted). Consequently, they also began to block visitors whose Internet Protocols are outside Mainland China.³⁰ In general, under such new terms of service, access from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan is not granted. However, as Mandy’s argument points out, this clearly contradicts the political statement and status of China, in which Taiwan is considered part of China’s territory (and Hong Kong and Macau have already reverted to China). In other words, these three places, which are “included” in the political territory of China, are excluded from the digital and technological map of Chinese online platforms.

³⁰ For the most recent development regarding the competition and collaboration between video sites, fansubbing groups and state control in China, see Hu (2014).

This contradiction turned out to be the main reason why interviewees like Mandy and Claire were irritated by the Chinese employment of IP blocking.

In fact, most of the programmes and movies on the Chinese sites undergoing legalisation remain unauthorised or pirated. The employment of IP blocks helped these sites in the legalising process in two ways. Firstly, this IP blocking, as their statement on legitimacy, was directed at outsiders (e.g. foreign countries). Secondly, by keeping out outsiders, it is easier for them to “regulate” the content and access under the loose copyright regulations prevailing in China: they can still keep a large number of unauthorised and pirated programmes to attract Chinese audiences, without being accused of copyright infringements by copyright owners based in foreign countries (e.g. Hollywood studios). As a result, on the one hand for my interviewees the new terms of services were the tactics (tricks) employed by Chinese sites for their own good. On the other hand, from the Taiwanese audience’s perspective, it became harder for Taiwanese to access foreign content, and the tactics employed by Chinese sites were a strategic move against them.

Unofficial and unauthorised file sharing and fansubbing activities have been regarded as grassroots and tactical practices that are in opposition to legal regimes and institutions (Pang, 2006, 2009). However, Andersson (2009, p. 64) has studied the Swedish filesharing site Pirate Bay, and he finds that, rather than “breaking the rules” as a form of tactical practice, the activities that Pirate Bay represents have gradually become much more influential in setting the rules of digital distribution, forcing the entertainment industry to respond to them. In this sense, Pirate Bay is more strategic and institutional than tactical in Certeau’s (1984) sense. Similarly, the way in which Chinese online platforms serve as production centres of

fansubbed foreign content, and how they legalise their business, can be seen as strategic and institutional manoeuvres. More importantly, due to the geopolitical tensions between Taiwan and China, for Taiwanese audiences it is even more likely to see the legalisation of Chinese platforms as a strategic force that is necessary (albeit difficult) to resist.

VI. Korea as a Significant Foreign Other

This section discusses the ways in which my interviewees perceived the Korean cultural presence in Taiwan and how it reflected their understanding of regional cultural power relationships. As discussed in Chapter 2 Section III, compared to Japan Fever that originated from a former imperial nation, the Korean Wave is the first significant cultural flow in this region generated by a non-colonising country, which is a “semi-periphery of the world system” to use Cho’s terms (2005, p. 149). This non-colonial aspect makes Korean culture “relatively free from historical, political and cultural burdens” (Park, 2006, p. 248) and thereby seem less threatening in comparison to its Western and Japanese counterparts, and this is commonly considered as the main reason why Korean popular culture can be readily-accepted regionally (H.-J. Cho, 2005; Y. Kim, 2013; Shim, 2006, 2008).

Nevertheless, while there are no historical colonial relations between Taiwan and Korea, it does not necessarily indicate that the diplomatic, political and cultural relations between the two nations have always been friendly.³¹ While some interviewees, especially those interested in Korean programmes, had a positive

³¹ For instance, Korea cut off its diplomatic relations with Taiwan in order to establish new ties with China in 1992, triggering a strong antagonism towards Korea in Taiwanese society (see Chapter 2 Section I). However, this diplomatic history was rarely mentioned in the interviews.

perception of Korean culture generally, it was also common for my interviewees to point out how and why they, their family members and/or acquaintances had negative impressions of Korea (as a nation and a foreign culture). These negative impressions were mainly based on two factors concerning cultural and economic relations between Taiwan and Korea.

i. Sport as a Cultural Factor

Sport is often associated with nationalism as it functions as a sphere of symbolic competition between nations, contests in which strong nationalistic emotions are easily generated (Bairner, 2001; Silk, Andrews, & Cole, 2005). For many interviewees the way in which Korea competed in various international sports competitions was one of the most crucial impressions they had of Korea as a nation. This impression turned out to be largely negative, mainly due to the fact that Taiwan has competed intensely with Korea in various sports, and Koreans were considered as lacking sportsmanship. As Nicole and Jeff argued:

While I do watch Korean dramas, to be honest, I don't like Koreans. Because the Jones Cup³² was so popular among our generation and Korea was the dirtiest team that cheated and played tricks, [I was] so pissed when watching [the games]. Therefore, I thought that they were so malevolent. (Nicole, female, 45 years old)

Basically I wouldn't buy their products because Koreans are so hateful. They

³² This refers to the William Jones Cup, an annual international basketball tournament held in Taiwan since 1977. It was one of the most popular international sports competitions in Taiwan in the 1980s.

are very crafty in business. In sports, we all know that, don't we? In sports they always play dirty tricks, and their judges also cheat, say, in those Taekwondo³³ competitions. It isn't just once. Various cases have happened here and there in recent years. Therefore I dislike the Koreans. (Jeff, male, 36-40 years old)

While Nicole and Jeff enjoyed watching Korean dramas online, both of them underlined that they disliked Koreans because of their lack of sportsmanship. For them, Koreans' apparent lack of sportsmanship frequently put Taiwan at a disadvantage in competition. Similar criticism regarding Koreans was commonly heard from interviewees, regardless of whether they liked Korean dramas and/or music or not. In another instance, when asked if he watched Korean dramas, Ryan said "no", with scorn. I followed his reaction, asking if there were specific reasons regarding his answer, and he argued:

Will this be put on record [pausing, hesitant]? Is it okay if I just say anything?
(Yu-kei: Yeah, it will be [put on record]. But it doesn't matter. You can say what you want to say.

OK, well, I am against Korea. I am against Korea. It is simple, I don't like the Koreans. Maybe I should put it this way: I don't like most of the national characteristics of Koreans. It's because I am a person in love with sports. As long as you love sports, you will not like the Koreans; it is that simple [...] I

³³ Taekwondo, which originated in Korea, is one of the few sports in which Taiwan has been internationally competitive, and Korea is the strongest powerhouses against which Taiwan has been competing. There have been controversies regarding judging systems in Taekwondo; in Taiwan, it is widely considered that Taiwanese contestants are frequently treated unfairly in the games in which Koreans are involved (e.g. competing with Korean contestants, having Korean judges or competing in a Korean city).

would never ever watch Korean dramas [...] The Koreans are, in fact, not bad in terms of drama production. Although I am anti-Korea, I do admire them. Their national characteristics are very annoying but you have to admire them because they always stick together, and they make a lot of effort to promote themselves. (Ryan, male, 34 years old)

When Ryan asked, “Will this be put on record?” it was not because he did not want his opinions to be recorded (he was willing to be voice-recorded throughout the whole interview). Rather, it was because he was unsure if his anti-Korean emotions were relevant to, or appropriate for, my research or not. After I said that it was okay to express what he thought freely, he opened up and talked about his emotions towards Korea and he repeatedly indicated that it was a “simple” principle that “sports fans would not like Koreans” because Korean national characteristics as demonstrated in sports were hateful. Given his scorn for and hate of Koreans’ behaviour in sport, he refused to watch Korean dramas, despite his recognition of their production quality and the fact that some Korean national characteristics (e.g. sticking together) were admirable. Ryan’s dislike (as well as admiration) of Korean national characteristics demonstrated how sports generated complex nationalist emotions towards Korea.³⁴

ii. Economic Competition as a Cultural Factor

The last subsection demonstrates how the nationalistic characteristics of Koreans

³⁴ It has to be noted that the negative impressions regarding Koreans sportsmanship are often featured in Taiwanese media, and as such are the most common impressions of Korea in Taiwan. Some interviewees (e.g. Mandy and Vivian) argued that, although they had no resentful feelings toward Koreans’ sportsmanship themselves, they were surrounded by family members or friends who did.

were perceived negatively via the interviewees' consumption of sports games. As Jeff commented, Koreans are "so crafty in business". This negative perception of Korean national characteristics was also frequently mentioned when interviewees talked about Korea's presence in commerce.³⁵ Crucially, Taiwan and Korea, as two of 'The Four Asian Dragons',³⁶ went through similar development processes in terms of modernisation, industrialisation, and economic trajectory (see also Chapter 2 Section I). Both countries specialise in manufacturing electronics and in developing information technologies; these shared trajectories have led to keen economic competition. Such competition, alongside the interviewees' impressions of Korean national characteristics including being sly in commerce, often caused them to have concerns about buying Korean products. As Vivian argued, her father was unhappy to see her watching Korean dramas or her brother buying Korean smartphones because "he always thought that Koreans were the main competitors with the Taiwanese, in terms of both technologies and product designs" (her own words).

Moreover, the way in which Korea has become increasingly competitive (compared to Taiwan) at an international level worried some interviewees. Cheryl, who reduced her consumption of Korean culture and manufactures, explained why she decided to do so:

³⁵ For instance, Ann and Vivian both mentioned that their family members had worked with Koreans and realised that Koreans were aggressive and sly in business (e.g. trying to take advantage of the Taiwanese).

³⁶ The "Four Asian Dragons" label refers to Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan, which all went through rapid economy growth, modernisation and industrialisation from the 1960s to the 1990s, and developed into advanced economies by the beginning of the 21st century.

On the one hand, their [Korean] economic infrastructure and advantages are too similar to ours. Our economy won't be good if theirs is good, so I kind of boycott them. On the other hand, I think that their dumping strategy just went too far and, in fact, not all of their dramas are good or better than ours. Therefore, I seldom watch them unless there are certain themes or features that really attract me. (Cheryl, female, 29 years old)

Cheryl elaborated why the consumption of Korean culture and manufactures might be worrying: she considered that the consumption of Korean culture and manufacturing might benefit the economy of Korea and in turn threaten the economy of Taiwan. Furthermore, since she felt that the Korean media's strategies for exporting their not-so-well-made programmes were aggressive and unacceptable, she was reluctant to consume them.

Similarly, while some other interviewees consumed and enjoyed Korean dramas or music, they tended not to consume other Korean commodities, especially electronics and information technologies, as the IT market is the very market in which Taiwanese manufacturers are in intense competition with their Korean counterparts. Occasionally, this kind of consumption pattern was partly due to their family members' concerns about Korea:

My husband always says, "We have to be against Korea, against Korea, and we should not buy Korean stuff." For example, Korean smartphones, say, LG, Samsung, are not allowed in our home.

(Yu-kei: How about Japanese ones then?)

It doesn't matter. We use Sony Ericsson [the Japanese manufacture Sony's

smartphones], and our cameras are from Panasonic and Canon. His rule specifically applies to Korean technology. (Ann, female, 41 years old)

My boyfriend said “You are so into Korea, and it doesn’t seem right, you know. We should support Taiwan, support our own manufactures. We should use HTC³⁷ smartphones!” [laughing]. (Mandy, female, 27 years old)

Ann and Mandy’s arguments indicated how economic competition in manufacturing between Taiwan and other countries triggered a sense of nationalism in Taiwan, and Korean manufacturing was the main (if not the only) industry to be boycotted. Similar nationalistic tones were often seen in other interviews. However, in many cases (as shown in Ann’s argument), Japanese products (e.g. the Sony, Panasonic and Canon brands), were often more acceptable than their Korean counterparts. As can be seen in the next section, the reasons for this tendency go beyond economic competition: they are associated with a regional cultural hierarchy as perceived by the interviewees.

When Mandy talked about her boyfriend’s anti-Korean attitude, she said that he sometimes made fun of her interests in Korean pop culture, asking her to tell him “What’s superior about Korea anyway?” She explained that this kind of conversation was a frivolous one: they made fun of, but never seriously argued with each other about their opposing attitudes towards Korea. However, the interviewees’ thoughts with regard to whether or in what sense Korea is superior

³⁷ HTC Corporation, established in 1997, is the most internationally competitive Taiwanese manufacturer of smartphones and tablets.

leads to another important issue which will be discussed more comprehensively in the next section.

VII. Transnational Cultural Relationships and Local Identity

i. The Perception of a Regional Cultural Hierarchy

As two regional foreign Others to Taiwanese society, Korean and Japanese cultures were often compared to each other in the interviews. Some respondents (e.g. Katie, Nicole) preferred Korean dramas to their Japanese counterparts; a few other interviewees (e.g. Claire, Emma) enjoyed both Korean and Japanese cultures. Both types of interviewees found that many of their acquaintances showed a divergent attitude towards the Korean and Japanese cultures:

Many people hate Koreans now, but I always want to ask them why. Is it just because they are arrogant and will play dirty tricks? If it is the case, haven't Japanese people done the same thing? Why, then, can you accept or love Japan, or even become Japanophile, but cannot accept Korea? Aren't these two situations the same? (Katie, female, 32 years old)

My elder sister and I have a common friend, and she always says that we [my sister and I] are Korean, and we only watch Korean stuff recently, and I thought, well, if it were the case, you are Japanese then. Isn't it the same? (Emma, female, 19 years old)

Katie and Emma had a relatively neutral attitude towards the Otherness of both Korea and Japan as nation-states and popular cultures, and neither of them was

seen as essentially “better” than the other. However, both interviewees found that Japanese cultural presence often seemed to be perceived more positively than Korean culture in their surroundings; and they did not agree with such perception. They underlined their doubts regarding this circumstance in a similar tone, which can be roughly rephrased as “should not the two countries be judged in the same way?” This question seemed to be partly answered in other interviewees’ arguments. In many cases, the interviewees showed a relatively tolerant attitude towards the consumption of Japanese culture and manufacturing compared to that of Korean examples. Some of them explained why:

My feeling towards Japanese dramas is not as antagonistic as my feeling towards Korean ones. Although Japan is influential in economic terms, the way they make money is not similar to ours. But the Korean way is. But then, in fact, to some extent we are not yet strong enough to challenge Japan either.
(Cheryl, female, 29 years old)

So many [Taiwanese] idiots love Korean idols. Korean idols are all clones,³⁸ so are their dramas. Although Johnny’s³⁹ were pretty much as bad as theirs [i.e. Korean idols], at least a few of them have had some success and recognisable achievements. (Adam, male, 26 years old)

³⁸ The term “clones” meant people who have had plastic surgery and thus looked all the same. It also indicated the widespread popularity or even “obsession” with plastic surgery in both the Korean entertainment business and wider society. There are two implications when he used “clones” to describe Korean dramas. First of all, it indicates that the idol actors/actresses appeared in the dramas have had plastic surgery and thus looked too similar to each other. Second, the dramatic plots are too similar and repeated constantly, so that it is difficult to tell the difference between different dramas.

³⁹ Johnny’s refers to Johnny’s Agency, the most well known talent agency in Japan which specialises in training and promoting young and good-looking male idol groups. The idol groups of Johnny’s are very popular in East Asia.

I am being a bit culturally discriminatory, but Korea is a totally primitive country that lacks a rich history. While there are many great writers in Japan, no one can tell me if there are any in Korea. That's why I said, Taiwanese people like to consume other people's (i.e. Koreans') shit. It's not worth doing so. There are winners of the Nobel Prize in literature in Japan. Nevertheless, for a country [i.e. Korea] that has a strong entertainment business but a weak publishing industry, how would this even be possible [for them]? [...] Taiwanese publishing is quite influential in Chinese-speaking regions, and we also have many independent publishers; but Korean publishing is rather under-developed. However, the Taiwanese rarely resist Korean stuff. (Ken, male, 27 years old)

The above arguments revealed several crucial issues. Firstly, all three interviewees considered that – compared to Korean culture – Japan's was seen as superior in various aspects (e.g. having more internationally recognised achievements such as having novelists who had won the Nobel Prize in literature); therefore it made more sense to consume Japanese culture. Secondly, Ken and Cheryl's arguments also indicate that Korean culture did not seem to be considered as better than Taiwanese (as in Cheryl's comments that "their dramas are not good or better than ours" in the previous subsection). Therefore, it made less sense to be fond of something that was more or less similar (if not inferior) in quality. This is particularly illustrated in how Ken "discriminated" against Korean culture and criticised the popularity of the Korean Wave in Taiwan. Korean culture in his perception was inferior to Japanese as well as Taiwanese (e.g. Japanese and Taiwanese literature were much better-developed). Moreover, the way in which Cheryl argued that "we are not yet

strong enough to challenge Japan” seemed to indicate a perception of the cultural (and economic) relations between Taiwan, Korea and Japan: while Taiwan was competitive relative to Korea, it was not yet as competitive relative to Japan.

A sense of cultural hierarchy was revealed in this subsection with which interviewees explained in what sense a culture was felt to be superior to another. The interviewees’ comparisons between Taiwanese, Japanese and Korean cultures were clearly subjective interpretations rather than objective facts, and not every interviewee had the same interpretation regarding cultural relations between the three countries. However, a sense of cultural hierarchy between local (national) and foreign cultures is associated with the construction of local cultural identity; therefore it is important to examine what and how structures of feeling (R. Williams, 1977) shaped the interviewees’ sense of this cultural hierarchy.

When analysing how Japan as a significant Other has shaped Taiwanese identity, Ko (2004) argued in the early 2000s that, compared to Japanese culture, Korean culture was relatively more acceptable and less threatening in Taiwan. However, as discussed above, interviewees’ varied perceptions concerning Korea often seemed to be negative or even disdainful in the early 2010s, during which period the Korean Wave was at its peak. This indicates that nowadays, Korea does not necessarily seem to be less threatening to Taiwanese society than other foreign cultural presences (e.g. Japanese or American). It is more appropriate to recognise Korea as a sub-empire, a “lower-level empire depending on the larger structure of imperialism” as Chen (2000, p. 15) argues. If so, the crucial question with regard to the identity of Taiwan is to ask what cultural anxieties or disfavours are aroused in response to the Korean Wave in Taiwan.

While it is easier for Taiwanese to consider Japan as “better” than Korea in their perceptions of a cultural or economic hierarchy, a difficult question arises relating to where to place Taiwan in such a ranking. In other words, if Japan were acknowledged as leading the three, then who is next? If fewer cultural anxieties were caused by Japan in recent years (as compared to the 1990s) indicating that a cultural inferiority complex towards Japan was being triggered less frequently, what the Korean Wave started in Taiwan in terms of identity formation can perhaps be regarded as a form of cultural resistance or denial.

This form of cultural resistance or denial is closely related to similarities between Taiwan and Korea in their developmental stages, particularly in terms of economic advancement and modernity. When Korea (but not Taiwan) started to appear as culturally and economically influential in East Asia as well as across the globe, similarities in the stage of development achieved between the two seemed to be challenged. As a result, the sense of denial (or anxiety) caused by the question of “Is Korea more influential than Taiwan?” or “why can Korea generate the Korean Wave?” is also induced. In the case of Japan Fever, “Why Japan, why not some other country?” (Y.-F. Ko, 2004, p. 124) as a significant Other that shapes Taiwan’s identity is a question having to do with the colonial relations between Taiwan and Japan.⁴⁰ Comparatively, however, in the case of the Korean Wave, the crucial question seems to be “Why Korea, why not Taiwan?”

ii. An East Asian Identity?

⁴⁰ See Chapter 2 Section III regarding how Japan Fever triggered a cultural complex in Taiwan

As discussed in Chapter 1 Section II, a key concern in East Asia regarding increasing regional cultural flows, is whether or how such flows encourages mutual understanding and the emergence of a regional identity (Aoyagi, 2000; Chua, 2004, 2008a, 2010; Katsumata, 2012; Park, 2004). Based on empirical data, I aim to respond to and rework the key idea in this debate, Chua's (2004, 2008a) conceptualisation of "East Asian identity", and argue for the following three characteristics:

First, Chua (2004) conceptualises an East Asian identity as "an ideological effect of the production and consumption of the [East Asian] popular culture" (p. 215). However, he does not specifically explain how regional identities may be conceived in different forms, and how multiple forms of regional identity constitution are associated with transnational cultural flows and power relationships. If audiences' consumption of neighbouring cultures are crucial processes through which a sense of regional identity is generated, it is important to ask, which neighbouring cultures do audiences consume and identify with?

For a common regional identity to emerge, there should not be significant gaps between each East Asian country/region in terms of their "cultural power [...] to produce symbolic meanings which appeal to the sense, emotions, thoughts of the self and others" (Iwabuchi, 2002, p. 133). However, such power is highly imbalanced between each East Asian country/region (see Chapter 2 Section III and Chapter 3 Section VI). Particularly, while Japanese and Korean popular cultures are popular throughout East Asia, other East Asian cultures still have difficulties

entering the Japanese and Korean markets.⁴¹ Such cultural power disparities indicate that not every East Asian culture can serve, on an equal basis, as a significant Other with which its neighbours identify. For instance, while Japanese and Korean cultures are important in shaping identity in Taiwan, Taiwanese culture is less likely to have the same or similar influence in Japan and Korea. Given these conditions, even if we ignore cultural heterogeneity within a nation and regard people in each East Asian country/region as having a roughly united national identity, it is still hard to imagine that different East Asian countries/regions will share one East Asian identity.

It is appropriate, therefore, to conceptualise regional identity as plural; that is: East Asian identities or senses of East Asian identity.⁴² Based on the notion of “structures of feeling” (R. Williams, 1977), Cho (2011) conceptualises the idea of “East Asian sensibilities” as “emerging structures of feeling within the cultural geography of the region that encompass meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt” (p. 393). Following Cho’s idea, each East Asian identity can be regarded as an identity consisting of different sets and combinations of East Asian sensibilities. In contemporary Taiwan, it is Japan, Korea and China that function as the most significant regional Others in terms of any conceptualisation of regional identity (Singapore, which is included in Chua’s conceptualisation of East Asia, was nearly never mentioned in the interviews). The interviewees’ perceptions of the

⁴¹ Cultural production and collaboration between Taiwan, Hong Kong and China is increasing, yet these productions are mainly circulated among Chinese-speaking locations and populations.

⁴² See also Chen (2010) on his account of the anxieties over the meaning of “Asia” in different Asian countries.

regional cultural hierarchy, as part of their identity construction (for instance), can be seen as a Taiwanese perspective on an East Asian sensibility.⁴³

Second, in Chua's (2004) conceptualisation of East Asian identity, he assumes that the "insertion and projection of an idea of 'Asian-ness', with nationalities suppressed" (p. 217) is evident in the production, circulation and consumption of regional cultural products. For instance, he argues that trendy dramas from multiple East Asian countries/regions all emphasise identical urban lifestyles and promote a similar standard of beautiful youth. As a result, "urban middle-class Asians are given interchangeable bodies on screen [...], only the trained eyes of aficionados who can recognise the actors and actresses are able to distinguish one country's product from that of another" (p. 217). These East Asian dramas, he considers, "foster identification among those who are willing to interpellate themselves into the screen, by temporally and permanently suppressing their national/ethnic identities" (pp. 216-217).

However, even though nationalities are "suppressed" and less clear-cut in the production of regional cultural products, it does not necessarily mean that nationalities were perceived by the interviewees to be suppressed and indistinguishable. As examined in previous sections, the interviewees generally preferred to experience a raw, "less-diluted" foreignness in their viewing of foreign programmes. This preference, in effect, encouraged them to discern cultures based on nationality. The way Chinese online sharing activities and the regional cultural

⁴³ Although issues such as how Japanese and Korean senses of regional identities are generated are beyond the scope of this study, they are imperative issues to be examined in the future if we are to investigate the implications of regional cultural flows for generation of regional identities.

hierarchy were perceived indicate how national boundaries were recognised distinctly as important dimensions by the interviewees in terms of their consumption. It is true that the interviewees formed abstract identifications with overseas cultural products. Nevertheless, rather than “transcend his or her grounded nationality” as Chua (2004, p. 200) suggests, the interviewees always carried with them their identity/nationality, and made sense of foreign cultures using a “bifocal” vision (J. D. Peters, 1997). It was also through such a bifocal perspective in their consumption of foreign programmes that the interviewees’ identification as Taiwanese nationals was reconfirmed.

My interviewees’ interests in popular cultures from the main neighbours (e.g. Japan, Korea, Hong Kong and China) varied. However, in general they (including those who did not consume these neighbouring cultures) did not have much difficulty in distinguishing a Korean drama from a Japanese one. When the interviewees delineated their perceptions of East Asian neighbours, they tended to talk more about differences than similarities between Taiwanese culture and neighbouring exemplars. As Iwabuchi (2002) points out, the interconnected “familiar difference and bizarre sameness are simultaneously articulated” (p. 15) in global cultural encounters. The interviewees reflexively perceived the “familiar differences” between Taiwan and neighbouring countries, while at the same time they comprehended geographical, ethnic and cultural proximity with these East Asian neighbours. This brings us the third issue which Chua (2004, 2008a) does not specifically address in his account of regional identity: the role of American culture in the shaping of East Asian identity.

The interviewees clearly specified each country/culture more frequently rather than using pan-regional terms such as “Asian” or “East Asian”. They neither used such terms when they specified the differences between several East Asian countries/cultures, nor did they use them when they generalised about the similarities between Taiwan and its East Asian others, or the similarities between two East Asian neighbours (e.g. Japan and Korea). It was mainly when the interviewees talked about American or other Western cultures that they used “Asian” or, in fewer cases, “East Asian”, to make generalised statements about multiple Asian countries.

This is not to say that the interviewees did not have a sense of East Asian identity. Rather, it is to suggest that the term “East Asian” is more commonly used in academia and public discourses than in more mundane, everyday contexts. While the term “foreign” was usually employed to refer to something not Taiwanese, interviewees at times also used the phrase to refer exclusively to Western (mainly American) cultures, as if their Japanese and Korean counterparts were not foreign. This is a common slip of the tongue often found in general Taiwanese contexts. For instance, Nicole once said that her husband did not watch Korean and other (East) Asian dramas because “he feels unnatural whenever he sees Asian people acting. However, he likes foreign series, since he finds the performances of European and American actors are natural and authentic”. As such, the meaning of “foreign” and “European and American” became interchangeable. In these circumstances, Western cultures (especially American culture) were roughly conceptualised by my interviewees as entities – and opposite to Taiwanese and other East Asian cultures (see also Nicole’s comments in Section I and Ivy’s thoughts on dubbing in Section II). Thus, the interviewees’ encounters with American or other Western cultures in

effect encouraged them to conceive a certain sense of “sameness” (Iwabuchi, 2002) and “cultural proximity” (Straubhaar, 1991) with East Asian neighbours. It was in this regard that a sense of East Asian identity emerged.

VIII. Concluding Remarks

This chapter examined interviewees’ perceptions of foreign cultures and how these perceptions shaped their conceptions of Taiwanese culture and their identity as Taiwanese. As the empirical data demonstrated, the foreignness of source programmes was highly valued and expected by the interviewees in their viewing of foreign programmes. With the expectation of experiencing foreignness, the interviewees often preferred unofficial online platforms and sharing activities to local broadcast television because they were more likely to experience a range of foreignness that was lost or diluted in the domestication of local broadcast television (e.g. dubbing). As examined in Chapter 6, this was based on the same expectation that many interviewees who followed foreign broadcasting schedules to enhance their sense of coevalness with foreign countries exhibited. In such cases, the foreignness represented by both the content and the broadcast mode employed was maintained. The interviewees with a high proficiency in foreign languages and thus relying less on language domestication also turned out to be at an advantage regarding experiencing “rawer” foreignness in their consumption.

As Morley and Robins (1995) argue that cultural or national identities are “constituted in and through their relations to one another” (p. 45), the interviewees’ consumption of Japanese, Korean and American programmes not only enhanced their identifications with these foreign others, but also in turn shaped their identities.

Through their identifications with foreign cultures, the interviewees' senses of identity were proliferated, diversified, layered and hybridised. Such processes seem to be more likely to help interviewees to identify what kind of Taiwanese they were going to become, rather than directly threatening their (cultural and/or national) identity as Taiwanese.

It is important, nevertheless, to note that local (Taiwanese) programmes and television networks seemed to gradually lose their importance in shaping the interviewees' senses of identity – many interviewees were less likely to consume Taiwanese programmes and/or consume programmes in general via Taiwanese networks. The interviewees expected that their access to foreign media texts to be increasingly “deterritorialised” (Tomlinson, 1999). In many cases, such expectations were more likely to be fulfilled through online platforms than via local networks' importing overseas programmes. Moreover, even if the access to foreign cultures is more deterritorialised, it does not necessarily mean that those foreign Others with which Taiwanese audiences identify, or search for coevalness with, will significantly increase. Both Chapters 6 and Chapter 7 have demonstrated that the foreign Others that acquired the cultural power to produce symbolic meanings appealing to Taiwan were largely limited to Japan, Korea and the US. The interviewees' cross-border viewing, in this regard, was at the same time an experience of “reterritorialisation”, whereby the interviewees' identifications seemed to be increasingly connected to Japanese, Korean and American cultural contexts.

In terms of China, on the one hand, online sharing services based there bridged the language gap with foreign content, and distributed a significant number of both

fansubbed and unsubbed copyrighted foreign programmes unavailable elsewhere. Interviewees, alongside their Taiwanese (and other Chinese-speaking) fellowmen, more or less relied on these China-based services to consume foreign programmes. In other words, China-based services played an important role in “reterritorialising” interviewees’ viewing of programmes from Japanese, Korean and the US as well as their identification with these three cultures.

On the other hand, as a country, China’s denial of Taiwan’s legitimacy and its increasing influence on the economy and culture of Taiwan makes China both an urgent and long-term threat. These cultural and geopolitical conditions turned out to foreground the Otherness of China (represented by China-based online platforms and services) in the interviewees’ online consumption of foreign TV. Some interviewees tried to reduce their reliance on Chinese platforms; some other interviewees regarded these Chinese platforms as part of their tactics (Certeau, 1984) to access foreign programs, while arguing that they resisted the cultural and political ideologies and threats of China they felt in their everyday lives. These practices indicate how China was perceived as a foreign Other that threatened Taiwanese society on a range of cultural and political issues.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

I. Review and Summary

This study examined the implications of the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing for television's role in everyday life and the configuration of transnational cultural power relationships. My overall concern was to understand how this emerging form of television experience "re-cast the organization of the spatial and temporal scenes of social life" (Barnett, 2004, p. 59). As Moores (1993b) argues, if media can "'transport' viewers and listeners to previously distant or unknown sites, meditating between private and public domains, we need to specify the kind of 'journeys' that are made" (p. 366). Questions such as "who chooses to go where, with whom and why [...] what different sorts of identification are on offer" (p. 366) are the crucial dimensions in such mediated, symbolic journeys. Viewing the Taiwanese audiences' various forms of online consumption of foreign programmes from the perspective of these journeys, this study looked specifically at how such consumption was concerned with the following three issues:

1. Television's role in social togetherness in the post-work, narrowcasting context.
2. The way foreign broadcasting has functioned as an important temporal framework in Taiwanese audiences' daily lives.
3. The audiences' identifications with themselves and foreign cultures and how such identifications are associated with the cultural power relationships between Taiwan, Japan, Korea and the US.

The remainder of this first section summarises the key findings in relation to the above three issues. The second section in turn discusses how the consumption of foreign TV via online sharing, as a practice crossing temporal, spatial, and cultural boundaries, are structured by the specific conditions of the “power-geometry” of time-space compression (Massey, 1994). The last section discusses the limitation of this study and suggests directions for future research. By paying attention to “the media’s temporal and spatial organisation” (Moore, 1995, p. 329) in any account of the online consumption of foreign TV, this study has articulated the various roles television, both as a technological and cultural form, plays in media convergence and given an increasingly globalised context.

i. Television’s Role in Social Togetherness in the Narrowcasting Context

Chapter 5 examined how television’s role in constructing social togetherness has changed in the post-network context, by analysing the way in which interviewees personalised as well as socialised their online and offline television viewing. Interview findings demonstrate that most respondents preferred online platforms to broadcast television as they believed online platforms gave them much greater freedom to orchestrate their viewing. Nevertheless, it does not indicate that interviewees who enjoyed customised viewing no longer searched for a sense of togetherness with others in their consumption of television.

Some interviewees noticed that their personalised, time-shifted online viewing might prevent them from experiencing “a public currency of newness” (Ellis, 2002, 2007) as carried by broadcast television, and consequently they might become detached from society. Therefore, they tuned into broadcast television at times,

especially for live broadcasts of certain media events (e.g. a Taiwanese singing competition) on local networks, in order to gain a more rounded awareness of the social environment in which they lived. Moreover, by using online platforms, interviewees also achieved a sense of togetherness in two ways. First, the interviewees managed to connect to other people (acquaintances as well as strangers) with the same interests in foreign programmes by establishing identical online viewing patterns with these people. Second, some interviewees who had lived overseas found that consuming current, domestic programmes online helped them to reassociate with their home country and cultures when they were abroad. These are the practices through which the interviewees considered themselves to be connected to the general public.

When personalised online viewing increasingly became a collective, shared television experience between interviewees and their fellow audiences, a sense of togetherness was also more likely to be achieved. The 'for-anyone-as-someone structure' with which media functioned in linking individuals and publics (Scannell, 2000) was still in play in the online consumption of television. However, it is worth noting that the social, public dimension of online viewing was sometimes overshadowed by the on-demand features of online platforms and the interviewees' understanding of a computer as a personal device. Consequently, interviewees might tend to regard their online viewing as personal, while overlooking the fact that their viewing was encouraged by a given social purpose (e.g. watching a certain programme because it generated discussions on the social media they visited). In this regard, the sense of togetherness attained in the online consumption of television might be at times weaker than that generated in the consumption of broadcasts.

ii. Television's Changing Ontology and Its Relation to Coevalness

Chapter 6 looked at the implications of online consumption of foreign TV for the audiences' sense of coevalness (Fabian, 1983; Wilk, 1994) with foreign cultures. Coevalness is frequently employed by studies on transnational media and cultural flows to explain how people gauge their temporal distance with other cultures and countries. Nevertheless, little research articulates how television as a time-based medium (Scannell, 2009, p. 223) shapes audiences' sense of temporality with foreign cultures/countries through its daily output and scheduling. Theoretical notions concerning television's temporality, such as flow (R. Williams, 2003), currency (Ellis, 2002, 2007), and for-anyone-as-someone structure (Scannell, 2000, 2014) are usually conceptualised within a given national context. However, when it comes to the online consumption of foreign programmes, what audiences look for is the flow and currency of broadcast television from foreign countries.

This study, therefore, analysed the ways in which online platforms, local television and audiences endeavoured to shorten the temporal gap between the foreign broadcast (mainly from the US, Japan, and Korea) and local consumption, and articulated how temporalities of foreign broadcasting were implicated in the interviewees' everyday lives as important temporal frameworks. It also employed theoretical notions regarding temporality of broadcasting in cross-cultural, transnational contexts of media consumption.

The empirical analysis finds that various forms of online viewing platforms and services stored a large amount of content for audiences to choose from. They did indeed remediate television's ontology from flow to on-demand database as

Bennett (2008a) argues. However, it is important to point out that many of these platforms also employed calendar-based structures in their operation. For instance, they often adopted a calendar template as an index guiding their users to find what and when to watch and/or download – a function very similar to traditional linear television schedules. Such practices, I argue, to a certain extent have recreated television's ontology as both flow and a time-based medium.

Specifically, unofficial and illegal online platforms/services closely followed the schedules of foreign broadcasts, and accordingly released the latest foreign programmes. As such, they formulated a form of television viewing that allowed audiences to experience the television flow and temporality of foreign broadcast television. Consuming the current foreign contents through online platforms/services in turn encouraged the interviewees to have a sense of living simultaneously in both local and foreign television temporalities. It is through this process that interviewees' coevalness with foreign countries was achieved. The fact that such online platforms/services were increasingly employed by interviewees as their primary means of access to the most current output and schedules of foreign broadcasts challenges the role of local broadcasts (including those national and transnational broadcasters legally accessible in Taiwan) in shaping interviewees' everyday lives. For many interviewees living in Taiwan and interested in foreign cultures, foreign broadcasts – as temporal frameworks – were as important as, or even more significant than, local broadcasts in structuring their viewing as well as their daily life patterns.

On the one hand, a strong sense of coevalness with Japan, Korea and the US was demonstrated among the interviewees by the dissemination and consumption of

programmes from these three countries. On the other hand, a certain denial of coevalness regarding Thailand was reflected from the interviewees when it came to the distribution and consumption of Thai dramas. Coevalness is always concerned with those who we consider that we share temporality with. More specifically, as Fabian (1983) and Johansen (1997) suggest, it is a notion whereby we include and exclude foreign Others as “fellowmen”. The Taiwanese perception of temporality with Japan, Korea, the US and Thailand indicated that, having synchronous access to the latest foreign media and cultures did not guarantee that these foreign cultures would be the same societies that Taiwanese would identify with. Such inclusion and exclusion of foreign Others is associated with transnational cultural power relationships between different countries and cultures.

Furthermore, as Chinese programmes were not as popular as programmes from Japan, Korea and the US, this study did not feature the way in which audiences consumed Chinese programmes. As a result, it was unable to account for whether or how Taiwanese audiences had a sense of coevalness with China through their consumption of Chinese programmes. However, as Chinese programmes appear to be gradually gaining popularity in recent years in Taiwan, future research should also examine their Taiwanese consumption. This may help in any analysis of how such consumption, along with the conflict between Taiwan and China regarding Taiwan’s sovereignty, might be influencing the way Taiwanese perceive their temporal distance with China.

iii. Cultural Flows and the Formation of Identity

Chapter 7 continued to investigate interviewees’ perceptions of foreign cultures

(mainly those of Japan, Korea, the US), and how such perceptions in turn shaped their conception and perception of Taiwanese culture and their identity as Taiwanese. The foreignness of source programmes was highly valued by the interviewees, and they often preferred unofficial online platforms to local broadcast television because the former meant that they were able to experience a range of foreignness which was lost or diluted in the domestication of local television (e.g. dubbing). In such cases, the foreignness represented by both the content and the mode of broadcasting was maintained. Those interviewees with a high proficiency in foreign languages and thus relying on less language help turned out to be at an advantage regarding experiencing “rawer” foreignness in their consumption.

As demonstrated in the empirical data, those foreign Others that displayed cultural power that was able to produce symbolic meanings with which Taiwanese audiences identified were mostly limited to Japan, Korea and the US. The interviewees’ cross-border viewing was a simultaneous experience of “reterritorisation”, in which their identifications seemed to be increasingly connected to Japanese, Korean and American cultural contexts.

In the 1990s when Japanese popular culture promptly gained popularity, media scholars such as Lee and Ho (2002, 2003), alongside the public discourses, were concerned to examine if young Taiwanese “Japanophiles” uncritically embraced everything from Japan to the extent that they would happily abandon their local identity in exchange for a Japanese one. This kind of investigation regarded audiences as passive victims whose cultural/national identity as Taiwanese was jeopardised by their consumption of Japanese popular culture. However, this view overlooked the fact that cultural and/or national identity is never a fixed essence in

the first place. As Hall (1989) argues, cultural identity is “a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as of ‘being’. [...] Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, [cultural identities] are subject to the continuous ‘play’ of history, cultural and power” (p. 70). Through the consumption of Japanese, Korean and American programmes, the interviewees made sense of their own cultures and foreign counterparts using bifocal, or even multiple viewpoints. The interviewees’ identities were proliferated, layered and hybridised. Such processes appeared to be more likely to help interviewees to identify “what kind of Taiwanese they were going to become” as I phrased it in Chapter 7, rather than directly threatening their (cultural and/or national) identity as Taiwanese.

Drawing on the interview findings, this study also revised the idea of “East Asian identity” as conceptualised by Chua (2004, 2008a). Specifically, Chua’s conceptualisation focuses on how regional cultural encounters make East Asian identity imaginable, yet ignores the importance of American culture (and other Western cultures) in the construction of regional identity. However, a regional identity is formulated, not only through the encounters with regional neighbours, but also through encounters with the cultures of other regions. The interviewees had a rough sense of East Asian or Asian identity, but they rarely employed terms such as “East Asian” when they accounted for the similarities and differences between Taiwan and its neighbours. They were also more likely to detect and talk about the differences instead of similarities between Taiwanese culture and its East Asian counterparts. Even if increasing regional cultural exchanges and co-productions promote an idea of East Asian-ness with nationalities being suppressed as Chua suggests, it does not necessarily mean that audiences might overlook the differences between different East Asian locales.

When Chen (2010, p. 177) discusses the extent of the unconscious identification with the US in Taiwan, he points out that the word “foreign” is often used interchangeably with “America” (the United States). In a similar vein, terms such as “foreign”, “America”, “Europe-America” and “the West” were at times used interchangeably by my interviewees. In such cases, multiple Western cultures were roughly simplified as one single concept, “Western culture” or “European-American (US) Culture”, in contrast to Taiwanese and other (East) Asian cultures. When the West was seen as an entity, the similarities between Taiwan and its East Asian neighbours were at the same time implicated. It was in this way the interviewees’ sense of East Asian identity was articulated.

As mentioned previously, the empirical data of this study was collected from 2007 to 2014. During this period of time, the cultural presences of Japan and the US were both already deeply integrated as part of Taiwanese society to the extent that Taiwanese people seemed to be less likely to perceive their presence (either positively or negatively) as something “new” that needed to be talked about. By comparison, the cultural presence of Korea and China – as well as the cultural anxieties towards the cultural and national identities they triggered – were more commonly regarded as new and recent. It was more common to detect my interviewees’ attempts to make sense of what Korean and Chinese presences meant to them. The ways in which the interviewees discussed their dislike of Korean national characteristics, alongside their liking of Korean dramas or their love or hatred of Chinese fansubbing activities, can be regarded as examples of such attempts.

In the case of Korea, while Taiwanese seemed to be relatively used to the idea of seeing Japan and the US as the cultural loci for the project of modernity, Korea emerged as another more recent locus of modernity. The popularity of Korean popular culture was at its global peak during the time the empirical research was conducted. Moreover, Taiwan's economy has heavily relied on its technology sector from the 1980s onward, when it first became a key exporter in the global high-tech market. However, Korean conglomerates (e.g. Samsung) have been expanding their global market share in this very market since the beginning of the 21st century. These developments indicate Korea's increasing cultural and economic power in the world system; and the similarities in the stage of development (in terms of economy, modernisation and industrialisation) achieved between Taiwan and Korea seemed to be challenged. Compared with the long-term American and Japanese influence on Taiwan (either positively or negatively), Korea's growing cultural and economic competitiveness seemed to be a more recent threat that had to be dealt with.

In terms of China, its denial of Taiwan's legitimacy, alongside its significantly growing influence on the Taiwanese as well as global economy and politics, makes China an increasingly urgent threat to be faced. Moreover, most Chinese-speaking regions, including Taiwan, heavily rely on Chinese online sharing activities which subtitle and distribute the foreign media texts unavailable elsewhere. These conditions inevitably foregrounded the cultural presence of China in the interviewees' online viewing of foreign programmes. Some interviewees disliked China-based online platforms and sharing activities, or felt uncomfortable admitting their reliance on them. The main reason was because these online platforms and activities somehow reminded them of China's denial of the

legitimacy of Taiwan and underlined the former's increasing influence on Taiwanese society. Consequently, these interviewees also revealed their antagonism toward China as a foreign Other threatening their identities.

II. Television in a Global and Digital Context: Border and Power Geometry

i. The Implications of “Cross-border”

The consumption of foreign TV via online sharing always involves the idea of “crossing borders”. Borders here refer to the conditions that may limit the extent a given media text is distributed and consumed across the globe. They include (but are not limited to): national borders; language barriers, time-gap between foreign broadcast and local consumption, international licensing agreements regarding media distribution, etc. This study has illustrated how Taiwanese audiences employed a range of practices (“tactics” in terms of Certeau, 1984) to transcend various borders to consume and make sense of foreign media texts and the implications of such practices for the notions of television, the formation of cultural identity and transnational cultural flows. How and to what extent an audience can cross borders in the online viewing of foreign TV is a concern shared by audiences around the world; yet what boundaries are encountered and how they are dealt with may vary. Given these concerns, it is imperative to keep examining the online consumption of foreign TV in different parts of the world if we are to account for the changing notions of television and transnational cultural power relationships in the global and post-network context. Therefore, I want to briefly illustrate how online viewing of television is imagined and how it is in play in other cultural

settings (e.g. English-speaking regions) before returning to the specific issues concerning online TV viewing in a Taiwanese (and East Asian) context.

Emerging Internet-enabled TV viewing platforms and services often share a similar rhetoric in their marketing strategy: addressing their capacity to offer audiences/users with great viewing freedom in terms of time and space. They label themselves as on-demand, “pull” services/platforms in contrast to traditional broadcast television, a “push” medium that does not grant viewers much freedom. For instance, the satellite television provider Sky TV in the UK launched its online service in 2006. With its DVR and software, Sky TV now allows audiences to watch both live television and on-demand TV content on a wide range of devices (e.g. TV sets, smartphones, tablets, computers); and it brands its service as “whenever you want, wherever you are”. The US-based on-demand television platform Hulu (owned by NBC, ABC and FOX) launched its service in 2009 with the slogan “anywhere, anytime”. Likewise, the video streaming subscription service Netflix (launched in the US in 2007) proclaims its service as “watch TV shows & movies anytime, anywhere”.¹ This kind of “anywhere, anytime” rhetoric is shared by other online TV viewing services across the world. In its dawn in the 1990s, the Internet was often imagined as a primary driver of globalisation (Schulte, 2013), through which “all were supposedly connected to all, without boundaries of time and space” (Wellman, 2011, p. 18). In the 2010s, online viewing services’ rhetoric still chimes with this sentiment.

¹ Netflix launched its service in 2012 in the UK. The phrase it uses to promote its service is “watch TV programmes & films, anytime, anywhere”, which is nearly identical to its US counterpart.

Nevertheless, as the analysis of our empirical data shows, this “anytime, anywhere” rhetoric can be easily challenged when we examine it in the context of a transnational zone of consumption. Online viewing services as well as Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are still principally based on national borders. Under these conditions, audiences’ access to a given viewing platform is confined within the national territory where the service is based. In other words, by no mean can audiences literally consume the content on these viewing services “wherever they are”, unless they employ Virtual Private Network (VPN) or Doman Name System (DNS) to virtually alter their IP address and thereby space-shift (my coinage in Chapter 5) themselves to other national territories (see also Chp. 1, Sec. II).

Schulte (2013) argues that the 2000s was “characterised by remapping physical and often national boundaries onto the internet” (p. 155). This development, she considers, “challenged late 1990s globalisation rhetoric, in which scholars expected that the nation would fade away and citizens would become netizens” (p. 155). Through the geo-blocking execution of online platforms, national boundaries are experienced and rearticulated in audiences’ various online practices (e.g. online viewing, shopping, social networking). As Morley (2000) points out, while the Internet has been “lauded for its capacity to transcend geography, [it] turns out to have a very real geography which replicates and reinforces existing patterns of social, economic and cultural division” (p. 187). This contradiction between how the Internet is expected to be and how it actually functions is articulated when audiences look for “anytime, anywhere” viewing yet encounter geo-blocking.

At the time of writing this study (2015), Netflix provides its service in over 20 countries. The entry-level pricing is roughly the same in the US, the UK and

Australia (roughly £5-6 stg). However, the available content varies significantly. While over 8,000 titles are available in the US, only 3,000 and 1,500 titles are available in the UK and Australia respectively. Roughly 4,000 titles are available in Canada, where some major American channels are accessible via legal TV systems in many parts of the country. This condition encourages audiences in the UK, Australia and Canada, many of whom share the same language (i.e. English) with Americans, to use VPN or DNS to access US Netflix rather than consuming their localised versions. Moreover, the market research conducted by GlobalWebIndex indicates that more than 30 million Netflix users are based in countries where the service is unavailable without the employment of VPN or DNS. Among these users, more than 20 million are in China, where most of the population are not native speakers of English (Coletta, 2015; Hern, 2015).

Meanwhile, on the one hand, Netflix has started to use measures to block VPN and DNS access. On the other hand, it also plans to overcome various legal and cultural restrictions to make its content the same around the world in the near future (Hooton, 2015; Roberts, 2015). It remains to be seen to what extent the Netflix service can be standardised across the globe, and how copyright holders, ISPs, national governments and audiences negotiate with each other in order to secure their own interests. Along with the growing worldwide popularity of online TV viewing, the conflict between audiences and services (whether legal or illegal) over geo-blocking is increasingly common. As Roberts (2015) argues, audiences' VPN practices are testament to an "issue confronting media owners: the territory-based approach to selling movie and TV rights is harder than ever to maintain in digital world [...] the role of borders is less obvious when it comes to the Internet". What is at stake concerns who has more power over whom, who will shape the landscape

of online TV viewing, and how audiences can “make do” (Certeau, 1984) in this new context. Massey’s (1994) notion of “power-geometry” helps us to approach these issues more theoretically and I will explore this further in the next subsection.

ii. Power Geometry of Online TV Viewing

The empirical findings of this study regarding cultural flows and power relationships can shed light on Massey’s (1994) contention that the power-geometry of time-space compression concerns “power in relation *to* the flows and the movement” (p. 149). Massey argues that control over mobility is uneven. While there are social groups that are in charge of time-space compression (and thus are able to turn it to their advantage), there are also groups on its receiving end. Based on Massey’s notion, Morley (2000) underlines that if we regard “(voluntary) access to both physical mobility (transport) and information (via communication systems) as forms of cultural capital, then the question is that of the social distribution of access to these goods” (p. 196). He argues that access is structured by a whole range of social factors (e.g. class, gender, ethnicity), and unevenness of access can be seen not only between the First World and the Third World, but also within the First World. The ultimate issue, he notes, is “who has control – both over their connectivity, and over their capacity to withdraw and disconnect” (p. 199).

In the case of Netflix, from the perspective of audiences, we can see how they might have different control over access (or connectivity) to the US service. For instance, in the US access to Netflix is often structured by factors such as economic capital and class. For audiences in the UK and Australia, whether they acquire

technical repertoire to bypass geo-blocking may be another important factor that influences their access to different versions of Netflix. In countries such as Taiwan and China, access to any version of Netflix may turn out to be heavily structured by audiences' English language proficiency (cf. the relationship between my interviewees' language proficiency, their cultural capital, and the role of this linguistic advantage in terms of their consumption of foreign TV via online sharing). On the side of the industry, the example of Netflix shows that the Hollywood industry (including major television networks, film studios, and other content providers) continues to play an important role in shaping the development of global mediascapes. How industries in other countries and regions are going to respond to this shaping in the globalising post-network era is a key issue that requires further attention. Furthermore, questions regarding transnational cultural power relationships – the key focus of this study – such as why audiences worldwide want to consume TV shows and films (made mainly by Hollywood) on Netflix, or how such consumption shapes audiences' identities, remain issues that need to be investigated.

In order to examine further the importance of power-geometry of the online consumption of foreign television and this study's analysis of this phenomenon, I want to briefly reiterate this study's findings. In her account of how Japanese animations are pirated and circulated in China, Pang (2009) argues that "the cultural hierarchy of production and reception in which Japan is centre is not challenged but is further promoted by these illegal practices" (p. 127). In a similar vein, in the Taiwanese consumption of foreign TV via unofficial and illegal online sharing, the cultural hierarchy of production and reception in which Korea, Japan and the US act as centres of production were also reinforced. Moreover, in terms of

distribution, in the 1990s and at the beginning of the 2000s, pirate disc companies based in Hong Kong and Taiwan served as the primary access to the latest Japanese (and other foreign) content in Chinese-speaking regions. However, in the age of online sharing, it is the China-based unofficial/illegal online platforms and services that have played a much more significant role in mediating transnational media and cultural flows and in forming implied cultural hierarchies of production and reception. Meanwhile, at this moment there are no Taiwan-based businesses (either legal or illegal) capable of competing (or indeed willing to do so) with China-based services over online foreign media distribution.

These findings indicate Taiwan's lack of influence regarding the development of transnational cultural flows in two respects. First, the Taiwanese media industry faced difficulties in exporting its contents to Korea, Japan and the US. Second, Taiwan-based businesses have lost their influence on (legally or illegally) mediating content distribution in Chinese-speaking regions. Consequently, it seems that Taiwan is increasingly located in a "peripheral" position in the power-geometry of the online transnational distribution and consumption of media content.

Such conditions also influence the way in which Taiwanese audiences' identities are constructed. As Massey and Jess (1995) argue, "the identities of both places and cultures [...] have to be made. And they may be made in different, even conflicting, ways. And in all this, *power* will be central: [...] the power [...] to construct the dominant imaginative geography" (p. 232). Different countries will have different perceptions and definitions of East Asia based on their encounters and relationships with their regional neighbours.

It is true that increasingly intense regional cultural exchanges have promoted interconnectivities and cross-border dialogues (see Iwabuchi's (2013) "inter-Asian referencing") between East Asian cultures/countries. However, if regional cultural circulation and consumption is the key factor for the emergence of East Asian identities as Chua (2004) suggests, we have to consider who has the power to influence regional cultural flows and shape the imaginative geography of the region. On the one hand, with the success of Japan Fever and the Korean Wave, the two countries have delivered their own respective modernities that Taiwan and other East Asian and neighbouring countries have – at least to some extent – identified with. On the other hand, in the case of Taiwan, while the island's media industry has entered Chinese-speaking regions and some South Asian countries (e.g. Indonesia), making its cultural products points of identification in these territories, it is not yet capable of doing so in locations such as Japan and Korea. It remains to be seen if other East Asian cultures are capable of having more influence on regional cultural flows and the formation of regional identities.

III. Limitations of This Study and Suggestions for Future Studies

This section outlines the limitations of this study and provides suggestions for future research. First, as described previously, the empirical data of this study was collected through two ways: 1) the observation of online discussions concerning online consumption of foreign TV was conducted from 2007-2014; and 2) in-depth interviews were carried out from August 2010 to the end of 2011. Due to time and budget constraints, I was unable to conduct additional interview rounds after 2012. However, I managed to keep in touch with one-third of the interviewees and gather some updated information concerning their viewing, and incorporated such

information into the empirical analysis. I also maintained a close and constant observation of public discussions concerning online viewing and the ongoing international growth of online sharing services and activities. These measures helped to ensure that the findings of this study remained timely and valid.

Nevertheless, as discussed in the previous section, with the increasing worldwide popularity of online viewing of foreign shows, the legal, cultural and technological conditions governing such viewing changed accordingly. On the one hand, unofficial and illegal forms of online viewing continue to increase in number and diversity. On the other hand, legal businesses are gradually beginning to actively respond to worldwide audiences' demand for transnational cross-border viewing. Except for Netflix, many television networks worldwide, including both public and commercial ones, are developing new forms of delivery in an attempt to extend their global reach and to fight against piracy.

For instance, in January 2014, the third season of BBC's *Sherlock* was legally released in China on the Chinese online streaming platform Youku a few hours after its debut in the UK. This was the show's earliest overseas release – two weeks and three weeks ahead of its Taiwanese and US releases, respectively. This also marked the BBC's first move to cooperate with a given Chinese online platform in terms of content distribution. While Youku enforced geo-blocking to *Sherlock*, many Taiwanese audiences also employed VPN to access the show along with audiences in China before the show was on air in Taiwan. In a similar vein, the Chinese online video platform iQIYI made a deal with the Korean network SBS to simulcast its hit drama *My Love from the Star* in February 2014. This marked the first overseas simulcast of a given Korean drama. In this case, no geo-blocking

measure was applied to iQIYI's *My Love from the Star*, and thereby many audiences in Taiwan could access the show with ease. Both *Sherlock* and *My Love from the Star* gained further popularity after they were on air on Taiwanese channels weeks later.

In April 2015, HBO simulcast the fifth season of its drama *Game of Thrones* in over 170 countries (including Taiwan), and it claimed to create a “global television event” each week of the show’s 10 episode run (Steinberg, 2015). The finale aired in June became the most-pirated episode worldwide, and attracted 1.5 million downloads in 8 hours, many of which were from the US, the UK and Canada (Russon, 2015). In Taiwan, many scenes that were considered inappropriate to be on air (e.g. violence, nudity) were cut. In China it was CCTV, the state-owned television broadcaster, who purchased the broadcast rights. While the illegal online access to the fansubbed version of the show can still be found, the fact that CCTV owned the rights inevitably made *Game of Thrones* relatively less accessible than many other shows (including other American shows and Japan and Korea counterparts).

All instances mentioned above suggest the complexity of the shaping of cross-border viewing, with a large number of local and global sectors with their own economic, cultural and geopolitical concerns involved. For Taiwanese audiences who want to consume the unedited, subtitled foreign shows within the shortest time gap, they continue to negotiate with these complicated conditions. Further interviews that I might conduct with both existing respondents and new participants would scrutinise how such ongoing transnational developments are influencing Taiwanese audiences’ consumption of foreign TV, thereby shaping

notions of “watching television” as well as transnational cultural power relationships.

There are also other issues that call for further investigation. As mentioned previously, in Taiwan (and other Chinese-speaking regions), the audience’s online access to foreign media texts relies deeply on fan-subbing and online sharing activities based in China. Nevertheless, the Chinese government has gradually tightened its copyright enforcement, especially over the last three years. Moreover, more and more Chinese platforms and services are legalising their services and, as a result, they are employing more complicated geo-blocking systems against IP addresses outside mainland China. How these changes, alongside China’s denial of Taiwan’s sovereignty, will affect audiences’ access to foreign cultures and their construction of identity remain one of the first and most urgent issues that requires further examination in the near future.

Second, this study discussed how language proficiency, technical repertoire, and the experience of living overseas shaped the audiences’ consumption of foreign shows via online sharing. However, as most interviewees belonged to the middle class and lived in urban areas, this study did not have enough information to account for how class differences influenced Taiwanese audiences’ online consumption of foreign programmes. It is suggested that follow-up studies examine audiences’ online consumption of programmes, based on factors such as class, gender, age, etc. in order to understand more comprehensively the implications of such consumption for changing notions of television, transnational cultural flows, and other social aspects.

Third, while the online viewing of foreign shows has become an emerging norm of transnational and global television experience, we should keep looking at how consumption patterns are developing in different places and/or countries. Park and Kumar (2003) conceptualise “global television [as] part of the very social fabric that gives shape to us as individual subjects and imagined communities” (p. 3). Meyrowitz (2005) argues that “we now live in “glocalities”. Each glocality is unique in many ways, and yet each is also influenced by global trends and global consciousness” (p. 23). Online viewing of foreign programmes, as a type of cross-border, transnational cultural consumption, certainly shapes audiences’ experiences of glocalities. In this regard, the relevant and important questions to ask concern who we have connections with, in what glocalities are these based, and how we are influenced by such connections.

Fourth, with regard to the configuration of power-geometry in online consumption of foreign TV, it is certainly not a ready-made, fixed product but an ongoing process associated with a range of local, transnational and global sectors. Specifically, the key concerns have to do with who acquires the economic and cultural power required to offer symbolic meanings and to whom the flows may be appealing. In the context of Taiwan, Japanese, Korean and American cultures are the most popular foreign cultures, and this study offered a general and current account of the Taiwanese consumption of, and identification with, these three cultures. It also suggested that the cultural hierarchy of production and reception in which Japan, Korea and the US as the centres of production was not challenged but reinforced.

Chen (2010) points out that US culture's power "comes from its ability to insert itself into a geocolonial space as the imaginary figure of modernity, and as such, the natural object of identification from which the local people are to learn" (p. 177). Based on the empirical findings of this study, the cultural power of the US as the imaginary figure of modernity does not seem to be changing soon in Taiwan. Mirrlees (2013) also argues that although currently there are a large number of "media capitals" (Curtin, 2003) across the world, the most influential examples are still located in the US. This is evident in HBO's simulcast of *Game of Thrones*. As a live telecast of a particular fictional TV series, it is by far the most globalised exemplar. To what extent media capitals based in other countries can globalise the simulcasting of their media content, or how other cultures negotiate with the cultural power of the US in the age of online viewing, are critical issues to be looked at.

Fifth, besides Japan, Korea and the US, are there still other cultures that may and become significant in the identifying process of Taiwanese audiences? While the latter opt for online platforms to consume American, Japanese or Korean shows, will foreign audiences from these countries do the same? While a significant number of Taiwanese audiences consider that they are living in the same temporality as Japanese, Koreans and Americans, what do these foreign audiences think of the temporal distance between the Taiwanese and themselves? Will Taiwanese culture constitute a significant foreign Other to these three countries, or to other places? These issues are beyond the scope of this study. However, it is imperative to examine them in the near future if we are to understand in greater depth the implications of cross-border online viewing for the configuration of transnational cultural flows and power relationships.

Finally, while this study focuses on TV viewing online, it is important to note that, other forms of media consumption also involve different cross-border conditions and are shaped by complicated configurations of power-geometry. For instance, geo-blocking has been widely used, not only by video viewing platforms, but also by a large number of Internet-based services (e.g. application stores for mobile devices, e-journals databases). Consequently – similar to the cases of online viewing – various means of space-shifting (e.g. VPNs) are also employed by users and audiences who intend to freely access geo-blocked services regardless of where they are. It is therefore important to investigate how different forms of cross-border consumption emerge, how they may be structured, and by what kinds of power geography, as such investigations help us to understand the way the media function in the deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation of our everyday life.

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Appendix 1: Outline of the Interviews

1. The media devices/equipment deployed and their use contexts

- What kinds of audio-visual media devices/equipment (e.g. PCs, TVs, DVD players) do you have, in the place in which you live?
- Do you use these media devices/equipment with others? If so, please describe how they are being used.

2. TV viewing patterns

- What kinds of TV shows do you watch on a regular basis?
- Can you briefly introduce your viewing histories of foreign TV shows (e.g. Japanese drama, American series, Japanese animations, Korean dramas)
- Please list one or two of your favorite foreign shows, and explain why you like them.
- Based on your viewing history, please briefly compare with and talk about the similarities and differences between shows from different countries. For example, what do you think about the differences and similarities between Taiwanese, Japanese, and Korean dramas, and American TV series?

3. Consumption patterns of other media forms

- Apart from watching TV, what kinds of media materials (e.g. music, books, comic, movies, etc.) do you consume on a regular basis?
- How do you consume these materials (e.g. buying CDs/movie tickets, DVD rentals, downloading)?

4. Ways used to consume foreign TV shows

- Based on your knowledge, please introduce the ways/platforms allowing you to watch the foreign shows you like. Of the ways that you know, which is (are) the one (ones) you usually apply?
- How are you aware of these ways of consuming?
- How long have you applied these ways to consume foreign (and local) TV shows?
- Please describe how you use these ways to watch foreign shows, taking one

or two of your favorite shows as examples.

5. The differences and similarities between traditional TV watching and alternative TV watching

- Will you use the same or different ways when you watch different kinds of genres? If yes, then how and why will you do so under different circumstances?
- What are the main reasons for you to use P2P or other alternative ways to watch shows (e.g. foreign dramas)?
- Do you think there is some influence on your life when you apply online methods to consume foreign shows (e.g. the change of media consumption patterns, a change in your understanding of a foreign country, etc.)? If yes, what are the most significant influences that TV watching via online sharing have on you?

Appendix 2: Interviewees' backgrounds¹

Table: Interviewees' backgrounds

Category Name	Age	Gen der	Marital Status	Education	Occupation	Salary ²	Residence	Notes
1.Johnny	27	M	Single	MBA	Project manager at a major car company	Above average	Taipei Lives with parents	His family owns a company and is wealthy (according to his friends).
2. Tim	27	M	Single	MBA BS in Engineering	Engineer	Above average	Tauyuan (North Taiwan) Lives by himself	High technical skills
3.Rachel	29-30	F	Single	MA in Marketing Management in the UK BA in Information Communication	Website Designer/manager in a clinic	Around/ above average	Taipei Lives with her sister	She lived in the UK for around a year.

¹ The interviewees are listed according to the chronological order in which their interviews took place.

² The average personal monthly salary in Taiwan in 2011 is NTD 45,462 (around £ 900 stg). See the official website of National Statistics, R.O.C <http://www.stat.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=30679&ctNode=527>

Category Name	Age	Gen der	Marital Status	Education	Occupation	Salary ²	Residence	Notes
4. Peter	30	M	Single	BA	Administrator/Manager in business	Around/Above average	Taipei. Lives with parents	His family is wealthy. He travels overseas a lot.
5. Cheryl	29	W	Single	BS in Engineering	Engineer in a private company	Around average	Taipei Lives with parents	High technical skills
6. Ben	34	M	Single	Vocational School	Cook and owner of a diner. Used to be work in video retailing	Unknown	Taipei Lives with parents	His family ran a business in VCR retailing.
7. Adam	26	M	Single	BA in Japanese	Staff in a business hotel	Around/ below average	Shinchu (North Taiwan) Lives with his mother	His parents divorced when he was young.
8. Vivian	23	F	Single	MA in Media in the UK BA in English	Student → Civil servant	Around average	Taichung Kaohsiung (Central and South Taiwan) Lives by herself in hall	She lived in London for a year. Her family owns a factory in manufactory.

Category Name	Age	Gen der	Marital Status	Education	Occupation	Salary ²	Residence	Notes
9. Steven	34	M	Married	PhD Candidate in Information Communication/Te chnology in the US. MA in Information Sociology BA in Psychology	Graduate Student	(Student)	Indianapolis, US	He has been living in the US for 5 years. High technical skills
10. Helen	35	F	Married.	BA in Chinese Literature	Housewife. Used to be a book editor before marriage	No	Indianapolis, US	She has been living in the US for 5 years. Married to Steven
11. Claire	30	F	Single	BA in Information Management	Unoccupied → Manager	Around average	Taipei Lives with parents	Her father is an engineer and his mother is a tailor.
12. Emma	19	F	Single	BS student in Forestry and Natural Resource	BA student	Student	Yilan (North Taiwan) Lives by herself in hall /with parents	Claire's sister She lives in a university hall during semesters.

Category Name	Age	Gen der	Marital Status	Education	Occupation	Salary ²	Residence	Notes
13. Ryan	34	M	Married	Vocational School	Customer service in a major consumer electronic company	Around/ above average	Taipei. Lives with his family (wife and two children)	His family is wealthy and gave him financial support to buy his house.
14. Dan	27	M	Single	BS in Engineering	Engineer in a major consumer electronic company	Around average	Taipei. Lives with his father	His mother passed away years ago.
15 Mandy	27	F	Single	MA student in East Asian Studies	Student	Student	Taipei. Lives with her boyfriend	She is the youngest child in her family, with brothers and sisters who are 10 years older.
16. Sarah	21	F	Single	BA student in Communication	Student	Student	Taipei. Lives by herself in hall/ with parents	She lives in a university hall during semesters.

Category Name	Age	Gen der	Marital Status	Education	Occupation	Salary ²	Residence	Notes
17. Sophie	26	F	Single	MA in Media, Communication and Tourism in Japan BA in Japanese	Research assistant at a University → Civil servant	Above average	Taipei Lives with parents	She lived in Japan for 2 years.
18. Nicole	45	F	Married	BA in Education	Teacher in elementary school	Above average	Taipei. Lives with her husband and son	She has a son who is a teenager, about 14 years old. Her husband is a Physics teacher in a cram school.
19. Nancy	27	F	Single	PhD student in Psychology MBA	PhD student	Student	Chiayi (South Taiwan). Lives by herself	

Category Name	Age	Gen der	Marital Status	Education	Occupation	Salary ²	Residence	Notes
20. Alex	27	M	Single	MBA BA in Management	Manager in the UK. Program Manager at a major company in the US	Above average	Oxford, UK Indianapolis, US Taipei Lives in a shared house/lives in hall	He will get married in January 2013 with Stella (Subject 27). His father is a university professor. He has US citizenship. He lived in the US for more than 10 years.
21. Ann	41	F	Married	Vocational School	Freelance architect/housewife	Unstable (freelance)	Keelung (North Taiwan) Lives with her husband and two children	Her husband is also in the architecture business.
22, Ken	27	M	Single	MA student in Journalism	Student	Student	Taipei. Lives with parents	

Category Name	Age	Gen der	Marital Status	Education	Occupation	Salary ²	Residence	Notes
23. Gary	27	M	Single	MS in Mathematics BS in Mathematics	Teacher in High school	Above average	Taipei. Lives with his mother	Joyce's son. His father worked in the biggest Taiwanese telecom company, now retired.
24 Joyce	56	F	Married	Vocational School	Senior manager	Above Average	Taipei Lives with her son	Gary's mother
25 Evan	26	M	Single	MA in Media in the UK BA in Television	TV News Editor	Around/ below average	Taipei. Lives with his aunt	He lived in London for around a year.
26. Jane	25	F	Single	MA in Television BA in English	Freelancer/writer	Unknown/ unstable (freelance)	Shinchu (north Taiwan). Lives with her family	She claimed that her family is not wealthy.
27. Stella	33	F	Single	MA in Management	Office employee	Above average	New Jersey, US. Lives in a shared house	She has been living in the US for 6 years

Category Name	Age	Gen der	Marital Status	Education	Occupation	Salary ²	Residence	Notes
28. Will	31	M	Single	PhD student in Physics	Graduate Student	Student	Taipei. Lives with parents	He is taking a temporary break from his studies.
29. Katie	32	F	Single	BA in English	Office employee in a law firm	Around average	Taipei. Lives with her sister	
30 Jenny	28	F	Single	MA student in Media in the US BA in Japanese	Graduate Student Office employee in a foundation	Student	New York Taipei Lives with parents	She has been living in the US since Aug. 2012. She lived in Japan for a year.
31. Ally	29	F	Single	BA in English	English teacher in a cram school for children	Around/ below average	Changhua (Central Taiwan). Lives with parents	

Category Name	Age	Gen der	Marital Status	Education	Occupation	Salary ²	Residence	Notes
32. Fiona	16	F	Single	Student in High School	Student	Student	Taipei. Lives with parents	She is an only child. Her parents are very interested in Japanese culture. She often travels to Japan.
33 Jeff	35-40	M	Married	BA in Education	Teacher in elementary school	Above average	Taipei Lives with his wife	He is very interested in consumer electronic products.
34, Ross	33	M	Single	MA student in Sociology (unfinished)	Teacher in elementary school →Research assistant	Around average	Taipei. Lives by himself	He took a temporary break from his study.

Category Name	Age	Gen der	Marital Status	Education	Occupation	Salary ²	Residence	Notes
35 Ivy	31	F	Single	BA in Management in Japan	Office employee in a branch of a major Japanese bank in Taiwan	Around/ below average	Taipei. Lives by herself (her parents live nearby)	She lived in Australia for 1 year, Japan for 5 years and she is moving to London, UK in Jan. 2013. Her family is wealthy and her father has his own business.
36 Julia	28	F	Single	MA student in Asian studies in the UK (unfinished) BA in Journalism	Marketing/PR manger in an art/entertainment agency	Around/ below average	Taipei. Lives with parents	She lived in the US for a year as an exchange student during her high school years. She lived in Japan and the UK for a year each respectively.