

**Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
China Research Centre**

**Trip Down Memory Lane: Revisiting the Red Classics
as Television Drama in Post-Mao China**

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at
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CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature

Date: July 4, 2011

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Abstract

In the post-Mao era, the boundaries of the Red Classics, the canonical Chinese socialist literary and theatrical works, and the values and aesthetics they promoted were transgressed. By adopting the “circuit of cultures” as a methodology, this thesis explicates how a canonical body of texts created to politicise and educate socialist citizens has been transformed into TV dramas appealing to an increasingly sophisticated, demanding audience. The study situates the transformation of the genre within the context of China’s transition from a Maoist socialist society to a neoliberal one. The TV adaptation of the Red Classics embodies the transition from an era dominated by mass production and consumption for ideological control to an era in which political indoctrination and market differentiation compete for audiences in contemporary China. In this process, the norms and standards prescribed by the Red Classics have been dismantled, subverted, transgressed, and re-written.