***Contemporary Culture and Media in Asia*.** Edited by Daniel Black, Olivia Khoo, and Koichi Iwabuchi. London: Rowan & Littlefield Int. 2016. 274 pp. $27.95 pbk. £85 hbk. £24.95 ebk. Paper ISBN: 9781783487097/ Hard ISBN: 9781783487080 / eBook ISBN: 9781783487103

***Telemodernities. Television and Transforming Lives in Asia*.** Tania Lewis; Fran Martin and Wanning Sun. Durham and London: Duke University Press. 324 pp, 2016. $27.95 pbk. $104.95 hbk. Paper ISBN: 978-0-8223-6204-3 / Cloth ISBN: 978-0-8223-6188-6

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In the last sixty years cultural studies have been built through the debate around just a handful of semantic differentials.These spaces of opposition include diads such as the local versus the global, the urban versus the rural or the consumption versus the production. Another debate has been established around the space these discussions takes place, moving the focus from the European and North American centers, to Asia. In this sense, both texts reviewed adopt complementary perspectives in this attempt to relocate the media globalization, while combining critical and non-critical approaches to Cultural Studies.

Among these two works, *Contemporary Culture and Media in Asia* (2016) is, perhaps, the most ambitious, embedded in a more complex structure that aims to give answer to different problems around the Media, Culture and Society triad within the Asian context – the authors (Daniel Black, Olivia Khoo and Koichi Iwabuchi) are precisely experts in Media Studies affiliated to Monash University who have conducted extensive research on this topic. The text belongs to the series *Asian Cultural Studies: Transnational and Dialogic Approaches.* This is a collection supervised by relevant figures within Asian Media Studies - including Koichi Iwabuchi himself- with the aim of identifying and describing common aspects of the dialogues around culture. In this series, Asia is presented as epicenter although not necessarily as the only place of interaction. More than just being another volume, the text seems to be an introduction to the series, since it describes some of the main lines discussed through the series, as reflected in its table of contents:

In the first part, authors introduce the main concept of the book that is, the discussion of spatio-temporal nature of the “Trans-Asia” concept, consisting of three different aspects. The first one, elaborates a historicization of the trans-Asian through different periods (pre-modern, early modern, colonial ...). Consequentily, the book defines the concept in spatial terms, circumscribing it to East Asia. The third aspect expands this geographical area of influence (China, Japan, Korean and Taiwan) through their diasporic populations.

The second part of the book, moves away from the geographical axis of the Pacific in order to bring attention to a less well known dialogue between media and Asian Muslim audiences. Religion and Islamic culture are one of the most important identities of the global Asia. Here, the research focus on the representational aspects of these international Islamic audience- being

productive and resistance aspects of these audiences less explored than in other sections. This approach changes in the third section, by name, "Cultural Politics Across Borders: Ethnicity, Gender, Sexuality" in which the authors examine in depth these identitary construction through media consumption. The last of the sections, "Digital Media and Social Action", moves to the interaction between audiences and political power, in relation to the use of the Internet. Here, the geographical axis of the analysis is again restricting to East Asia (China and Korea). The volume closes with n afterwards, signed by John Nguyet Erni (Hong Kong Baptist University) who invites, through the introduction of the concept "meta-media" to seek other applications of this "trans-Asian" construction in relation to the interactions between individuals, a different but complementary scale of analysis which can be an alternative to the global and transnational flows of popular culture.

The book justifies, through the diversity and relevance of the selected case studies, the debate surrounding the so-called "trans-Asian" approach. However, it does not seem to give a satisfactory and ultimate definition of the Asia object. But it may be questioned -if this perspective goes beyond the national limits and diasporic populations- how can we define the Asian?

On the other hand, Tania Lewis, Fran Martin and Wanning Sun, delve through *Telemodernities. Television and Transforming Lives in* Asia (2016) in this question of the inter-Asian, taking as a starting point the television medium, in relation to the multiple identities or "modernities" of Asian audiences. The choice of television as the center of this exploration is not accidental. The volume is part of the series inspired by the annual conferences with the name of "Console-ing Passions: Television and Cultural Power" that examines the multiple political readings of television, as well as the identities (geographical, ethnic, gender, etc. ) and experiences elicited by television consumption among these audiences.

The book is structured in different chapters that examine, in a parallel or sequential way, several contents of Asian television in a simple but still significant group of examples formed by East Asia (Taiwan and China) and South Asia (India). The introduction explains the purpose of the book which connects directly with the television medium and the way it inspires and reflects the lifestyle of different Asian audiences. The rest of the book is structured implicitly around two main ideas.

The first part (chapters 1 to 4) aims to characterize Asian television in relation to their consumption, production and main television genres. Thus, in the first chapter, the necessary context is provided in order to describe this macro-system through a brief description of Asian Media Industries’ political economy. Then, in the second chapter, the responses of rural and urban China audiences are contrasted. In the third chapter, the authors shift the focus to the representation of the geographical imaginaries through Indian television. In contrast, the fourth chapter explores the transnational character of these narratives and their role shaping imagined geographical spaces, in this case using television travel shows as main example.

The second idea of the book, which occupies the rest of the volume (chapters 5 to 8), discusses both the Lifestyle programs (cooking, domestic life) and the so-called Advice TV (of greater scope), introducing, through the combination of Political Economy, textual analysis and qualitative audiences studies. These television genres, broadcasted to audiences as different as India and Chinese-Taiwanese, allow the exploration of several aspects of modernity, including spirituality (chapter six) or romantic relationships and gender roles (chapters seven and eight). Finally, the authors highlight in the conclusions the differences between these prototypical Asian markets in terms of content and, as a consequence, also in the role of these narratives in modeling “ethical choices” to different national audiences.

Reading these two volumes raise interesting questions about the ways in which Asia is conceptualized through Media Studies. As pointed out by the editorial of Clark et al, the boundaries between nations and states haven been blurred as a result of the uncontrollable flow of transnational popular cultures. Thus, we may considerer the Asian as nothing but another manifestation of the local, global or transnational interactions between media and audiences. Asia, as space of interaction, may be less explored than other global media centers, but still replicates the same processes. In this sense, these books contribute substantially to the development of Asian Media Studies, combining Structural and Holistic-Cultural approaches, but above all, to the concept of transnational flows itself.