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

**INTRODUCTION**

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

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

**THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING**

**ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

**DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

**Q1**: What is the institutional context?
- Semi-structured interviews with professionals
- Document analysis
- Semi-structured interviews with government officials working at the state media regulation institutions

**Q2**: What industrial norms have influenced the production, distribution and consumption of dramas?
- Media Text
  - Audience Identity
    - Compliancy and resistance
- Media Industrial Norms
  - Party State principle, media professionalism with market awareness, cultural tradition
- Media Institution
  - institutions, rules, practices, narrations, and political parallelism (the links between the media and the Chinese Communist Party State)

**Q3**: How have the dramas affected peasant audiences?
- Media Text
- Audience Identity
  - Compliancy and resistance
- Media Industrial Norms
  - Party State principle, media professionalism with market awareness, cultural tradition
- Media Institution
  - institutions, rules, practices, narrations, and political parallelism (the links between the media and the Chinese Communist Party State)

**REFERENCES**