It has been nearly a decade since the publication of Cinema Journal’s 2014 In Focus dossier on “Queer Approaches to Film, Television, and Digital Media.” The dossier powerfully demonstrated an essential scholarly refocus from “a US-based politics of ‘coming out’” to more diverse queer deconstructions, non-confrontational queer practices, negotiative queer productions in media and cultural studies. This shift was largely inspired by the late queer media scholar Alexander Doty’s “contra-straight” theorization of the seemingly heteronormative mainstream media text and context. Following this model, in combination with Sara Ahmed’s queer phenomenology, recent scholarship has understood queer as not only minority identities but also disruptive positions, sentiments, styles, and practices that productively reorient normative imaginations, regulations, and sociopolitical identities in global media studies. In par-

2 Ahn, Himberg, and Young, 117, 119.
In particular, a growing body of scholarship has queried and reoriented commercial media that often target straight audiences and have benefited from globalization, migration, urbanization, social stratification, and the rapidly developing digital technologies. Findings from such research have shown that not only binarism-disruptive gender and sexual knowledge but also new forms of identity- and desire-based binarism, essentialism, and homonormative assimilation are produced in queer media production, circulation, and consumption.5

The early 2000s have also witnessed “a queering of Asian studies” amid crisscrossing processes of localization, transnationalization, and globalization. Here *queering* works as a critical perspective, highlighting “the new worlds of queer Asian media cultures created through the globalization” of gender and sexual politics while also problematizing “the binary between the ‘West’ and the ‘rest’” in conceptualizing queer Asian media.6 In particular, the two frameworks of queer Asian studies mapped out by Audrey Yue—“queer hybridity” and “critical regionalism”—have been widely adopted in a range of academic disciplines to challenge imperialism, (neo-)colonialism, ethno-nationalism, heteronormativity, homonormativity, and Orientalism and Occidentalism in scholarly discourses as well as cultural productions.7 Nevertheless, most of the existing scholarship in queer Asian media studies has focused on the queer promises and struggles in media representation, performance, and reception, such as queer Asian star and fan studies. What has remained understudied is the potential of queering Asian media’s production technologies, distribution venues, political-ideological institutions, and narrative strategies, with an eye to tease out nonconforming feelings, subjectivities, and relationalities.

Contemporaneously with the expanding queer turn in media studies and area studies, queer Asian media has broken through into the mainstream and globalized media industries. This breakthrough encompasses the boom of androgynous K-pop idols; the inter-Asian and global popularity of Japanese Boys’ Love (BL) and Girls’ Love (GL) cultures; the surge of Thai and

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mainland Chinese homoerotic TV dramas and their popularity in the Anglophone world; queer and transgender film and TV stardom in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand; and Asian-based lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) live-streaming channels and online celebrities. The proliferation of both LGBTQ content, characters, and celebrities and norm-defying media and pop cultural forms, formats, platforms, and spaces in contemporary Asia offers us an exciting opportunity to bring queer Asian media and the method of queering to bear upon each other and to examine how this might reshape queer approaches to Asian media studies.

Our In Focus dossier, “Queering Asian Media,” showcases six essays that examine a variety of Asian media forms and genres through a queering critical lens, with special attention to East Asian and Southeast Asian media cultures spanning the past five decades. The authors in this dossier mobilize queering as both an analytical tool and an often neglected characteristic of Asian media culture to unpack the contested and morphing modes of knowledge production surrounding gender and sexuality, geopolitics, and histories that have been made possible by Asian media production, circulation, and consumption in an increasingly inter-Asian, globalizing world. Collectively, these essays articulate a spectrum of queer affective politics across spaces, time, ideologies, media forms, and media technologies.

Our dossier raises the following questions. Acknowledging queering as an established and powerful practice in media production, distribution, and reception, how might we identify the queering potential in and surrounding Asian media as cultural processes and products that are situated in heteronormative media industries and sociocultural environments? In what ways do queer representations in, and queer readings of, media work contribute to resisting normative imperatives in Asian societies and their increasingly globalized media industries? How can we productively navigate the dilemma that Asian media industries both capitalize on and contribute to the increased visibility of, as well as the hierarchies (associated with gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, geopolitics, and digital literacy) within, queer feelings, stardom, and fandom? And, finally, how can queering as a methodology reframe and expand Asian media studies to engage with not only representation but also shifting media technologies, screening venues, and off-screen practices (such as spectators’ and fans’ relation-making with media works and with each other)?

Our dossier begins with two essays that delve into one of the most successful queer media genres in Asia—BL—and strive to understand how the cross-regional circulation, production, adaptation, and consumption of

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queer media in Asia reflect, contribute to, and further complicate the gender and sexual politics and imaginaries closely associated with specific Asian geopolitical locations. Alvin K. Wong’s essay, “Queer Sinophone Media across Asian Regionalism,” analyzes Hong Kong transnational TV adaptations of Japanese BL series and the global success of a Taiwan BL film and explores the ways in which queer media produced in, consumed by, and circulated across Sinophone societies negotiate with location-specific sociocultural and political circumstances. Charlie Yi Zhang’s essay, “The Megacity of Bangkok Rescaled through Queerness,” explores how Thai BL TV and its related celebrity-fan economy have emerged in the entertainment industry by appropriating both Japanese and Korean gender and sexual cultures while queerly romanticizing Bangkok for transnational fandom and tourism.

The next two essays deploy Sara Ahmed’s queer phenomenology to probe the expansive sexual-erotic and sociopolitical queer feelings in the cinematic child—a figure too often disavowed as non-queer, if not outright de-gendered and de-sexualized. Celine Parreñas Shimizu’s “Queer Childhood Sexuality in Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros” draws on psychoanalytic object relations theory to study the child’s queer desire in Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros (The Blossoming of Maximo Oliveros, Auraeus Solito, 2005), highlighting the child’s genderqueerness in intersection with a broader set of sociopolitical feelings and economic experiences in the Global South. Yiman Wang brings queer studies, feminist cyborg theory, and Indigenous kinscape discourses to bear on the high-profile Chinese animated feature Nezha naohai (Prince Nezha’s Triumph Against Dragon King, Wang Shuchen, Xu Jingda, and Yan Dingxian, 1979) to queer the socialist child hero Nezha, dismantle the Confucian and socialist heteropatriarchy, and gesture toward an eco-erotic kinscape. The last two essays explore two severely underexamined topics in queer Asian media during the digital age of globalization. Jamie J. Zhao’s essay, “Global TV Formats Queer Contemporary China,” understands global TV formats as an actively queering and queered platform that negotiates marital-familial ideals in China’s heteropatriarchal spaces. Finally, Ungsan Kim contemplates South Korean media, specifically the epistemological shift entailed by the migration or cruising of queer experimental media works (such as those of Im Cheol-min) from theaters and film festivals to art museums in the digital age.

Together, the essays in our dossier demonstrate that Asian media’s complex longitudinal formation and transformation in relation to shifting local, national, and global geopolitics have given rise to queer fantasy spaces, which are in turn shaped by real-world struggles for nonnormative and

9 For example, Fran Martin’s 2012 research on Taiwanese transnational fandom of Japanese BL has revealed that this form of trans-Asian circulated and consumed queer media helps create an unrealistically homoeroticized Japanese setting for Taiwanese fans to situate their queer fantasies that have been stigmatized and silenced in their local realities. Yet the creation of this imaginative fantasy space, heavily drawing on Japanese gender and sexual politics and Taiwan’s colonial history, ultimately aims to enable a safe space to reflect on Taiwanese LGBTQ issues, instead of uncritically valorizing and worshipping the queer and feminist progress of Japan. See Fran Martin, “Girls Who Love Boys’ Love: Japanese Homoerotic Manga as Trans-national Taiwan Culture,” Inter-Asia Cultural Studies 13, no. 3 (2012): 365–383, https://doi.org/10.1080/14649373.2012.689707.