



# China Pop: How Soap Operas, Tabloids and Bestsellers Are Transforming a Culture

*Jianying Zha*

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**China Pop: How Soap Operas, Tabloids and Bestsellers Are Transforming a Culture** Jianying Zha  
*China Pop* is a highly original and lively look at the ways that contemporary China is changing by Jianying Zha, a critic hailed in *The Nation* as "incisive, witty and eloquent all at once--a sort of female, Chinese Jonathan Spence." From her constant contact (and, in many cases, friendships) with a dynamic group of young novelists, filmmakers, and artists in China, Zha examines a wide range of developments largely unknown to Western readers: the careful planning of television soap operas to placate popular unrest after Tianamen, the growth of the sex tabloid and pornographic industries, the new generation of entrepreneurs successfully bringing to the mainland techniques of Hong Kong and the West, and the politics behind the censorship and commercial success of the film director Chen Kaige (*Farewell My Concubine*) and Zhang Yimou (*Ju Dou* and *Raise the Red Lantern*).

Praise for *China Pop*:

"One of the twenty-five best books of 1995." —*Voice Literary Supplement*

"[A] photographic, a freeze-frame, of a country in rapid motion... [Zha is] a young writer with many arresting ideas and, from the evidence of *China Pop*, a bright literary future as well." —*New York Times*

"Perceptive... What *China Pop* so brilliantly chronicles is the commercialization of China's cultural world and the anxiety that change is causing in China's intellectuals." —*Christian Science Monitor*

"By far the best book on Chinese urban culture after the 1989 Beijing massacre. [Zha] brilliantly combines the eye for detail of an insider with the detached perspective of an outsider. Her lively and graceful style make the book as enjoyable as it is edifying." —Perry Link, author of *Evening Chats in Beijing*

"An absorbing and revealing book. With the familiarity of an insider and the ability of an outsider to step back and reflect, Zha... captures the fundamental paradoxes lying at the root of this mutant 'people's republic' in the throes of reform." —Orville Schell, author of *Mandate of Heaven*

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