



CREATIVE KOREA

**EXPLORING CONTEMPORARY KOREAN CULTURAL
INDUSTRIES AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION**

**MAY 4TH — 5TH / 2023
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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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PANEL 1. AT THE CROSSROADS BETWEEN CULTURE, POLITICS AND SOCIETY IN THE TWO KOREAS

TAEYOUNG, KIM

Loughborough University

**Political Instrumentality of Korean Cultural Industries in the Policy Context:
A Critical Analysis of the Korean Government's Blacklist Scandals**

This study examines the state's persistence in cultural production when much of its production and delivery mechanism becomes subject to the market logic, analysing the Korean government's Blacklist Scandals. During Lee Myung-bak (2008–2013) and Park Geun-hye (2013–2017) administrations, the government covertly blacklisted thousands of creators, staff, and performers due to their political inclination. They exempted them from receiving the state's benefits, seeking the normalisation of the nation's cultural politics in which power dynamics benefited left-leaning figures (Fact-finding and Reform Committee on the Blacklist of Artists 2019).

Contrary to their hostility to artists, both administrations were eager to utilise the popularity of Korean popular culture overseas, also known as the Korean Wave, as a tool for promoting the export of goods and services made by Korean companies and strengthening the government's diplomatic power. Despite its initial reluctance to utilise the Korean Wave after the political turmoil from the Blacklist Scandal, the instrumentalist approach has continued under Moon Jae-in (2017–2022)'s liberal-progressive administration, as more cultural products, like BTS, Squid Power, and Parasite became popular. All this demonstrates the state's persistence to instrumentalise its cultural industries for its political imperatives, even though many of the genre characteristics of Korean popular culture have become more transnational, and many production and distribution mechanisms have been restructured to serve the interests of foreign stakeholders.

Based on interviews with 15 policymakers and nine creators in the nation's film and television industry, as well as textual analysis of policy documents, the findings will contribute to understanding the state's persistence in instrumentalising the cultural industries as political tools despite the marketisation of cultural production, as well as how the marketised cultural production respond to them.

BIO: Taeyoung Kim is a Lecturer in Communication and Media at the School of Social Science and Humanities at Loughborough University in the United Kingdom. Inspired by the traditions of critical media studies and the political economy of communications, his research centres on understanding the relationship between global and local forces in local cultural production at a time when many of the production and delivery mechanisms are reshaped and disrupted by US-based media and platform companies, and how the state responds to the globalisation of local cultural production.

Dressing for success: Cultural and class reproduction through fashion in the North Korean *jangmadang* economy

In North Korea, women's bodies generally are governed by official discourses created by the leaders and the Party. However, recent social changes have had profound and unprecedented impacts on the social construction of femininity in ways that depart from earlier socialist feminine embodiment. In this chapter we explore women's use of their bodies as feminine capital and how women have negotiated their feminine embodiment in transitional North Korea. The current trend for North Korean women to look "pretty" by dressing in a hyperfeminine style is understood in terms of women seeking to negotiate embodiment to remake themselves in ways that accrue greater feminine capital to plan their future lives. They use this enhanced feminine capital to seek protection, achieve business success and marriage, and obtain class mobility.

"I was very concerned about dressing well. Used clothes are more popular than rice among young women [at the market]." (Park, born 1993)

Women's bodies are sites where power relations manifest and competing discourses operate. In North Korea, women's bodies generally are governed by official discourses created by the leaders and the Party. The State has prescribed and policed the ideals of women. However, recent social changes have had profound and unprecedented impacts on the social construction of femininity in ways that depart from earlier socialist feminine embodiment. In this chapter we focus on women's use of their bodies as feminine capital – through their beauty practices and fashion choices – and explore how women have negotiated their feminine embodiment in transitional North Korea. The current trend for North Korean women to look "pretty" by dressing in a hyper-feminine style is understood in terms of women seeking to negotiate embodiment to remake themselves in ways that accrue greater feminine capital to plan their future lives. They use this enhanced feminine capital to seek protection, achieve business success and marriage, and obtain class mobility. In the pre-famine period, the economy was focused on mass production to achieve industrialisation. While women were significant participants in the economy, the state-promoted feminine ideal of the revolutionary mother, devoted to serving the State by producing children to be future loyal and disciplined workers, prevailed. But in the mid-1990s, as discussed, in response to economic collapse and chronic food shortages, a form of grassroots capitalism emerged. Many women established small market stalls or founded small businesses. In this context, a new, more affluent type of female entrepreneur emerged, particularly among women involved in large-scale business and illicit trades such as money exchange, smuggling, human trafficking and drug dealing. The gap between these rich, successful entrepreneurs and the poor also began to widen (Lankov, 2014).

Under the Kim Jong-un regime, the State has become more adept at factoring market development into its political management strategies, and the market economy has matured. North Korean society has become increasingly materialistic and consumerist. The trend for women to appear in fashionable clothing, wear makeup and undergo cosmetic procedures has become prevalent since the early 2000s. Embracing new styles of dress and personal grooming can be viewed as rational – even necessary – strategies for women seeking coveted social and economic rewards, such as desirable marriages or business success.

The embodiment of female citizens in North Korea has historically been shaped primarily by male leaders and official discourse through state propaganda. However, there has been a shift from a socialist feminine embodiment to a capitalist one. The two conflicting femininities – that of official discourse and women’s practice – co-exist and compete. This suggests women are not only being shaped by the official discourse of femininity but also creating new femininity. Women, as agents, are creating a new embodiment that has broadened what it means to be a woman in North Korea from mere reproducers of workers to reproducers of social status.

BIO: Professor **Bronwen Dalton** is the Head of The Department of Management the University of Technology Sydney. She is also the founder and CEO of the charity Ruff Sleepers, a service that washes the dogs of homeless people.

Bronwen completed her PhD at the University of Oxford, where she was awarded the Oxford University Larkinson Award for Social Studies and was the recipient of the British Vice-Chancellors Committee Overseas Research Scholarship and the Korea Foundation Scholarship. Bronwen also has a BA from the Australian National University and a MA from Yonsei University, Korea.

Bronwen has a long association with Korea and speaks Korean. She was recognised as one of 60 people who contributed to Australia-Korea relations and to be featured in the Australia-Korea Foundation publication "Australia-Korea Celebrating 60 Years 수교 60주년, 한국과 호주를 이어온 사람들" as one of "a small number of people and organisations who have made an outstanding contribution to bringing Australia and Korea closer together." She was a Director of the National Korean Studies Centre (NKSC) (1993 - 1996) a consortium of La Trobe University, Monash University, Swinburne University of Technology and the University of Melbourne. Bronwen has focused her interests on North Korea. In 2013-2016 Bronwen is Chief Investigator on an ARC Discovery grant titled "Women in the Rise of the Informal Market in North Korea". This is the first major research project to investigate the role played by women in the emergence of a nascent capitalist economy in North Korea. Her book "North Korea's Quite Transformation" will be published by Routledge in 2023.

Post-Cold War Remediation: South Korean Webtoon by North Korean Defectors

This paper examines South Korean Webtoon created by a North Korean defector in South Korea. The Webtoon coined in South Korea has been discussed as “snack culture,” which refers to the new cultural consumption on mobile screens with a quick habit and shortened attention span in the post-industrial and creative economy. The North Korean defectors have been the subjects of these media as creators or performers. They remediate the neoliberal culture by comparing the Capitalist South to the Communist North, thereby defamiliarizing neoliberal culture itself in the media content. The defectors have practiced what I called “post-Cold War remediation.” This paper analyzes how the North Korean defectors remediate the neoliberal forms of culture to affectively instruct the viewers about North Korea and the defectors’ subjectivities in South Korea. It further explores the implicit cultural policies of the Cold War in the webtoon commissioned by the private corporate sector. The snack culture indicates cultural implicit policies of the Cold War appeared as Branded Entertainment where the defectors construct and deconstruct neoliberal subjectivity.

BIO: Jinhee Park is an assistant professor in Digital Arts and Creative Industries at Lingnan University. She is a media scholar who specializes in Korean cinema and visual culture. She received her PhD in Cinema and Media Studies at the University of Southern California. Prior to her PhD, she earned her MFA in Film at Syracuse University. Her first book project, *Aesthetics of Reversibility: Post-Cold War Cinema in the Division of Korea* explores the cinematic aesthetics that stemmed from the post-Cold War condition of divided Korea in the early twenty-first century. Her research uses an interdisciplinary methodology that includes film theory, cultural studies, new media studies, and East Asian Studies.

Storytelling in Korean Content: Examining the Depiction of Career Women in Korean Online Dramas

This study discusses the focus of the Busan International Film Festival on the creation and sustainability of Korean content in the digital and globalized world, specifically in

the Busan Story Market Forum. The forum featured experts from platforms such as Netflix and TVING who emphasized the importance of authentic storytelling and the depiction of socially relevant topics, in the successful and sustainable globalization of Korean content. The paper aims to analyze the depiction of socially relevant topics in Netflix and TVING original dramas, specifically around the status of career women in Korea. Given the number of social and economic inequality experienced by women and the limited career opportunities, the juxtaposition of choice and opportunity has become important to social discourses on women's roles within the family and public space. The study uses a method of film analysis based on social and gender studies and applies it to four Korean online dramas to generate a new understanding of how social discourses are depicted in online platform-created dramas. The trend to focus on authentic storytelling and to include socially relevant topics in online dramas has the potential to create a platform for these discourses to become part of popular culture.

BIO: Casandra Chistinean is a research member of the CEDITRAA Project. She primarily contributes to the work in Working Area D: and in Project 1.3 on Transformation of the Korean Wave. She is an academic assistant within the department of Korean Studies at Goethe University. Her dissertation focuses on the evolution in the depiction of women in Korean cinema, especially in the context of digitization. She holds two M.A. degrees in Modern East Asian Studies and International Peace and Conflict Studies, both at Goethe University, and a double partnership B.A. in International Relations and European Studies at Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca and Otto-von Guericke University Magdeburg as well as additional studies in media and film. Her focus areas are international relations, social sciences, Korean Studies and film studies.

PANEL 2. NEW MANIFESTATIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF HALLYU IN EUROPE

YONSON, AHN

Goethe University of Frankfurt

Korean Webtoon Readers in Germany

The global upsurge in consumption of Korean webtoons is a recent phenomenon and the increasing number of smartphone users serves to enhance the spread of Webtoon on a global platform. Some scholars like Jang & Song predict this recent popularity could serve as “an engine of the new Korean Wave” (Jang & Song 2017). Developments of Smartphone Apps like “Webtoon”, “Delitoon” and “Tapas” are emeshed with the shift from web-based to mobile-based webtoons. These digital products with short-form cultural content are easily accessible with smartphones and generate lively “producer-consumer interactions” (Jeong 2020: 79).

As Webtoon digital cultural products are translated in English and German, released, and consumed amongst the German youth, the focus group for this study is German youth as cultural actors engaging with digital cultural products. This study explores the growing popularity of Korean Webtoon amongst German youth and the proactive reception and cultural translation of Korean Webtoon by this cultural cohort. The manner in which they are related to the Korean Webtoon is a salient question. This leads to another issue to explore, whether the webtoons as Korean digital cultural products could be perceived - as what Koichi Iwabuchi (2002) calls - historically, culturally and politically “odourless” to German readers or not. Given the complete absence of studies on Korean Webtoon fans in the European region, this study sets out to fill the gap and serves to identify who the recipients are, and explore how and why they choose the digital cultural product of Korean Webtoon for entertainment in Germany.

BIO: Prof Yonson Ahn is a professor and has been the director of Korean Studies at Frankfurt University since December 2014. She was previously a Korea Foundation guest professor at Goethe University of Frankfurt from May 2010 until September 2011. Prof. Ahn taught at the University of Leipzig in Germany and Ewha Women’s University, Ch’angwon National University and Tongguk University in Korea. She was a visiting scholar at Seoul National University and Waseda University in 2004, as well as at the University of Tokyo in 1996. She received her M.A. degree in Women’s Studies at Ewha Women’s University, Korea in 1988, and her PhD degree in Women and Gender Studies at the University of Warwick in the UK in 2000. Prof. Ahn’s research interests include transnational migration, such as transnational marriage migrants and Korean diasporas; gender-based violence in conflicts, especially the issues of “comfort women” during WWII; and historical controversies in East Asia and oral history. Her current research project is related to transnational migration and gender, focusing on negotiating gender and ethnic identities of Korean migrant workers in Germany and Asian marriage migrants in South Korea.

Hallyu and Immigrant Entrepreneurship: Korean Restaurant Businesses in Frankfurt

According to the most recent census data on overseas Koreans published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea in 2019, approximately 45,000 Koreans are living in Germany, hosting the largest number of Koreans residing in Europe. Small businesses have been the prevalent pathway for Korean immigrants into Germany society, despite their high educational background. In particular, the Korean restaurant business is the main economic activity of first-generation Korean immigrants in Germany. The objective of this study is to investigate the reasons and ways that Korean immigrants in Germany have been intensively involved in the Korean restaurant businesses and in particular why the number of these businesses in Frankfurt has increased significantly in the last ten years. Combining the archival research and the ethnographic research in Frankfurt to be conducted in 2022, this research explores the multiple situational factors across socio-structural layers that have critically influenced the entry decision-making and management of Korean restaurant businesses in Germany, beyond the theoretical frameworks of immigrant entrepreneurship. Although starting up a business depends on highly personal and individual considerations and decisions, motivations and decision-making processes are also the products of complex sets of factors and interactions in both the home and the host countries. In particular, taking into account the recent, rapid rise in popularity of Korean culture and food and their increased influence on Korean immigrant communities in Western countries, the study contends that the topic of Korean restaurant businesses should be approached from new angles and perspectives and with more innovative methods, to include topics such as Hallyu (Korean wave), transnational cultural movements, the “glocalisation” of Korean culture and food, and government policy and soft power.

BIO: Dr. Jihye Kim is Lecturer in Korean Studies at the University of Central Lancashire in the UK. A specialist in the migration and settlement experiences of diasporic Koreans, Dr Kim has published a number of articles on Korean migration to Argentina and Brazil. Her current research has expanded to include Korean migration to Latin America and Europe, in particular Korean migration to Germany and North Korean migration to the United Kingdom. Together with Dr Sunhee Koo (University of Auckland) she has coordinated as guest editor a special issue on “Unsettling Korean Migration: Multiple Trajectories and Experiences”, *Korean Studies*. Currently, also as guest editor, she is working with Prof Yonson Ahn (Goethe University of Frankfurt) on three special issues on Korean migration in Europe and the Global South.

Musical Engagement with K-pop and Subjective Wellbeing amongst Korean Students at the University of Leeds

This study explores Korean international students' musical engagement with K-pop for their subjective wellbeing at the UK. Thus, the study aims to give a glimpse of the diasporic meaning of K-pop, a significant part of Hallyu, in relation to the international students' cultural identity, which can be related to their mental and psychological health. Therefore, this study contributes to the sustainability and international partnership of the Korean cultural industry by providing a gaze on the multiple factors that could make the growth of Hallyu possible as a transnational phenomenon. Semi-structured interviews lasting 60–90 minutes are conducted with around 15 Korean international students aged 18-30 with different demographic backgrounds and engagement with music. The semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions grouped around the following main areas: a) general information about gender, age, socioeconomic data, occupation and social life; b) ways of engaging in K-pop; c) preferred K-pop music; d) Korean identity and K-pop; and e) motivations and rewards from engaging in K-pop.

BIO: Dr Hyunah is a Lecturer in Music Psychology and Wellbeing at the University of Leeds in the UK, after working as a teaching fellow at the University of Otago, New Zealand. Her interdisciplinary backgrounds (Music therapy, Psychology, Korean music, Child development & Intervention, Anthropology, and Education) let her explore various research topics, and she has been involved in different collaborative research projects such as a 'Critical Disability Research Network', 'Music Therapy Awareness project', 'Education, Culture and Society'. In New Zealand and/or South Korea, Hyunah has worked as a registered music therapist and a clinical psychotherapist with a range of individuals and groups.

Hallyu beyond the Trend: Investigating the Process of Evolving into the Realm of Lifestyle

Hallyu was a term referring to the huge influx of Korean culture that started in China and Taiwan, with the popularity of Korean music and drama in the late 1990s. Currently, the meaning of Hallyu is expanding to a term that refers to the widespread Korean cultural phenomenon that encompasses dramas, movies, fashion, food, webtoons, etc.

Many scholars and theorists predicted that the Korean Wave would end up as a temporary fad. Contrary to expectations, the Korean Wave has been leading the trend

of Korean culture for more than 20 years and is still exerting its influence not only in the Asian market but also in the global market. Thus, many scholars have been interested in the expansion of the Korean Wave to explain how the popularity of Korean culture can last for more than two decades. Investigating this international cultural phenomenon, they pay attention to the expansion of the Korean Wave, dividing the development by period.

However, this chronological division is classified to understand the global trend of the Korean Wave easily, but it reveals limitations in dealing with the analysis of how the Korean Wave affects continuous development and different industrial areas.

Rather than focusing on the meaning of the expansion of the Korean Wave and trends of the times, this study aims to analyze how the Korean Wave is becoming a genre as a K-brand like Hollywood. Likewise, this research will explore the possibility of the Korean Wave entering and evolving into the realm of lifestyle.

BIO: Dr JaeWook Ryu is an Associate Lecturer at the University of Central Lancashire. JaeWook holds bachelor degrees in Information Systems, Communications, and Marketing; a master degree in Film Studies (Dongguk University); an MBA (University of Illinois); and a PhD in Film Studies (Lancaster University). He mainly looks into Korean cinema, Korean queer cinema, and K-Culture in the Korean Wave. Currently, Jaewook Ryu is planning a documentary film project about the life of indie-queer film directors in Korea.

PANEL 3. NEW PERSPECTIVES ON KOREAN CINEMA

SANGJOON, LEE

Lingnan University, Hong Kong SAR

From Sundance to Netflix: South Korean Cinema in the US Film Market, 1996-2022

Prior to *Parasite's* unparalleled global success, the South Korean film industry had spent over two decades striving to penetrate the American film market. This article examines the negotiation, collaboration, and struggle between the South Korean film industry and US art film distributors, Hollywood studios, overseas Koreans and Asian American communities, and online/offline distribution platforms during the South Korean film industry's twenty-six-year effort to infiltrate the U.S. film market from 1996 to 2022. It argues that the current reception of South Korean cinema in the US film market can be attributed to the transformation of media technologies, new business practices, grassroots events and activities, and shifting movie consumption patterns in the United States. This essay begins with *Chunhyang* (2000) and *Nowhere to Hide* (1999), as well as

early New York and Los Angeles-based art film distributors' attempts to diversify their Asian repertoires, before discussing CJ ENM and other South Korean film studios' efforts to produce and co-produce several low and high-budget films aimed at the American market, such as *Love Talk* (2004), *West 32nd* (2007), *D-War* (2007), *The Warrior's Way* (2010), and *Snowpiercer* (2013). The article concludes by examining the South Korean film industry's new road to global streaming platforms, most notably Netflix, as well as challenges and the future direction of South Korean films in the American film market.

BIO: Sangjoon Lee is an Associate Professor of Film Studies and Head of the Department of Digital Arts and Creative Industries (DA+CI) at Lingnan University in Hong Kong. Lee is the author of *Cinema and the Cultural Cold War: US Diplomacy and the Origins of the Asian Cinema Network* (Cornell University Press, 2020) and the editor/co-editor of *Hallyu 2.0: The Korean Wave in the Age of Social Media* (University of Michigan Press, 2015), *Rediscovering Korean Cinema* (University of Michigan Press, 2019), *The South Korean Film Industry* (University of Michigan Press, 2023), and *Asian Cinema and the Cultural Cold War* (Amsterdam University Press, 2023). Lee is the recipient of the David H. Culbert Routledge-IAMHIST Prize for Best Article by an Established Scholar (2019). His works have been translated into Korean, Japanese, Chinese, and Italian.

**ANDREW SANGGYU,
LEE**

University of Pittsburgh

Born in the 1980s: A Brief Survey of Women Filmmakers in Contemporary Korean Independent Cinema

With the start of film schools in the 1990s and the global #MeToo movement in the middle of the 2010s, South Korean women filmmakers have moved from their marginalized status into the mainstream, with women's films dominating the independent film scene. Along with the success of *Kim Jiyoung: Born 1982*, many women directors like Kim Do-young, Kim Bo-ra, Lim Sun-ae, Ahn Ju-young, Han Ga-ram, and Yoon Ga-eun have brought unique and personal stories of Korean women and their lives to the big screen. A distinguishing characteristic of these directors is that they were all born in the 1980s. In my paper, I will discuss a few of the numerous notable and emerging female directors and their films. I will also address the following questions: What characteristics do these directors share? Is it appropriate to categorize these directors as "women" and "born in the 1980s"? Regarding their gender, how do some of these directors feel? What do these directors have to say about the gender implications of their works?

BIO: Andrew Sanggyu Lee is a doctoral student in Film and Media Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. His primary research interest is Korea's occupied cinema under Japan and US, and how its fictional and documentary films before and during the Cold War provide an intriguing intervention of postcoloniality, global film movement, and social imaginary. His forthcoming publications examine the formation of Korean film theory and its praxis by young political filmmakers in the 1980s, as well as the campiness of gender representation in wartime films of U.S., Japan, and colonial Korea. He received MA degrees from Columbia University and UC San Diego.

GYUCHAN, JEON

Korea National University of Arts

Learning from the Experience, Experiment of Inter-Asia Documentary Film Coproduction Workshop

This paper is critical summary, reflexive evaluation of DMZ Asian Docs Co-Production Network Project. The author has been a key organizer of this continuing project from the beginning. His writing thus will become an interesting participatory observation of that very rare collective venture.

Interested faculty members and talented students from seven universities from China, Japan, Korea and Singapore are currently joining the Project to make together short documentary films. KARTS and Yonsei University from Korea, Tainan National University of Arts from Taiwan, Yunnan University and Yunnan University of Arts from Japan, and Nanyang Technological University from Singapore, and finally Komazawa University from Japan are the working members of this joint program.

Young documentary film directors selected from these schools meet and discuss, learn from each other. The faculty members will prepare useful insights and provide important suggestions for the students. They together produce – direct, shoot, edit – short documentaries. The end products from this two-year workshop are formally invited and screened at the DMZ International Documentary Film Festival. One of them will be later invited by Hot Docs of Canada.

This paper is a historiography of this daring, interesting project. It is a critical evaluation of special venture launched six years ago and continuing into the next season. Even in the terrible Covid-19 situation, the project would not stop. It keeps repeating, and it has just restarted its 5th season. What is the story of this? What can we learn from this transnational cultural initiative, new inter-Asiatic creativity?

The author of this paper is not just reviewing, recording the factuality of the project. He will try as much to interpret the meanings, significances of the experiment, experience. For that job, he will use some key notions, ideas from various thinkers including Ranciere, Guattari. He desires this line of flight, point of connectivity becoming a learning event for many interested, related and/or concerned people .

BIO: I am currently teaching documentary and journalism, philosophy of communication, media cultural studies at Department of Television of KARTS. I am interested in the issues from counter-history and memories, urban spatial theory to trans-Asiatic

documentary making among others. Having directed and produced a few short documentary films on these topics, I am now more focused in doing researches and writing on the related areas. My role and responsibility in the department is mainly consisted of introducing key concepts and fundamental theories, providing research/writing methods, to the students. In addition to this, I will do documentary/journalism workshops with the (under)graduate students in and out of the School. The Asia Young Documentary Coproduction Workshop with the DMZ International Documentary Film Festival is one of them.

PANEL 4. ADDRESSING THE FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR THE KOREAN FILM INDUSTRY

STEPHEN, RANGER

ECIPE, Brussels / Center for East Asia Studies, University of Turku, Finland

The Korean film industry in a new environment: adapting to the rise of China

Since the early 2000s, China has steadily emerged as a major investor in the Korean film industry. However, political issues such as the dispute over the US THAAD deployment have somewhat impacted upon the flow of investment. At the same time, China's own film industry is expanding and will likely become a close competitor for Korea in the international film markets. In this respect, how will the Korean film industry manage the political shocks associated with China and in what ways will it ensure sustainability of its current success in this new competitive environment? This talk will explore these issues by suggesting that Korea should avoid overtly protectionist measures and rather maintain its current course. Furthermore, rather than more active involvement, the Korean government should seek to support the Korean film industry through more indirect means that have proven to be successful.

BIO: Stephen Ranger is a Research Associate at the ECIPE in Brussels and Doctoral Researcher at Center for East Asia Studies, University of Turku in Finland. His background is in Korean studies and he had written articles on the film industry and international politics. Currently he is writing his dissertation on British foreign policy in East Asia in the early twentieth century.

When tide of investment goes out: Survival strategies for the Korean film industry

As Korean films have internationally emerged, foreign investment has become more visible in its industry. The Korean film industry and Korean media outlets have welcomed such investment and have viewed it positively. Furthermore, it has been regarded as having brought about positive impact on the industry so far. However, a series of unexpected events such as deployment of Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), the COVID-19 pandemic, and the rise of streaming services has significantly changed the film industry environment. Foreign investors can change their investment target from Korea to others at any time by considering such changing environment. In this regard, it is meaningful to scrutinize the impact of alleviation or disinvestment in the industry as such analysis can help the Korean film industry to prepare its survival strategies. This paper argues that the industry should give efforts to economize production costs of films, increase its flexibility to the change of wage, expanding its global network for better distribution, maintain or upgrade audience's sophistication by opening the market, and prepare for the technological advancement.

BIO: Jimmyn Parc is an associate professor at the University of Malaya, Malaysia. Prior to joining the University of Malaya, he was a visiting lecturer at Sciences Po Paris, France and a researcher at the Institute of Communication Research, Seoul National University. He has published numerous academic articles and conducted several research projects related to the competitiveness of organizations, industries, and countries. His current research focuses on cultural industries in Asia and Europe, which includes films and music. Professor Parc is also the co-author of *The Untold Story of the Korean Film Industry: A Global Business and Economic Perspective* (Palgrave Macmillan in 2021).

Film policies: lessons from the past and the present for the future. European approach vs. Korean approach

In her acceptance speech for the film *Parasite*, Mie-Kyung (Miky) Lee, who has played a key role in the Korean film industry renaissance since the early 1990s, has highlighted the pivotal role of the Korean audience in the long term success of the Korean films: “[you] keep pushing the directors, the creators, the envelopes and without you – our Korean film audience – we are not here”. At the same time, a number of voices in Korea have been advocating European film policies as models for reforms – more production subsidies, less concentration in the theaters' ownership (“screen monopoly”), more regulations for organizing the digitized exhibition sector (“chronology of media”). With the help of empirical evidence, this paper explores these conflicting views. First, it shows that the Korean film industry has had a much better performance record than its

European equivalents. Over the last forty years, it has shown a much more dynamic competition with the arch-rival – the US industry – compared to the European countries where US films have always been the leaders and the national films the followers since the 1980s-1990s.

Second, the paper relates this feature to the number of films produced, which depends crucially on the size of subsidies. If subsidies are limited, film makers are careful not to produce too many films, in order to focus on attractive films and avoid as much as possible flops: it is not a coincidence that the US and Korean industries have been the only ones to have reduced their film production, when necessary, over the last decades. By contrast, high subsidies in Europe – especially in France – has made the film industry operating in an increasingly “protective bubble” generated by almost certain, always increasing annual subsidies. In this context, market signals launched by the audience do not count for much.

Third, turning to the exhibition layer, the paper shows the higher efficiency of the Korean theaters compared to their European equivalents. Being exposed every year to more films, a larger Korean crowd of viewers has accumulated, individually and collectively, a much wider and deeper knowledge of films – foreign and domestic – compared to the European movie-goers. The Korean audience has thus been better equipped to give valuable signals to the supply side of the industry. This feature is closely linked to the vertical integration – the ownership of movies theaters by three large companies – of the Korean film industry, a point misunderstood by the Korean critics of the “screen monopoly”.

Fourth, today digitization adds opportunities – it increases competition with respect to theaters, hence reduces further the risk of “screen monopoly”. But it raises a key question: how to organize the access of the movie watchers to the screens run by exhibitors competing in a very complex environment – theaters, videos-sellers, TV-channels, streaming platforms. Many Koreans are attracted by the French regulation of the “chronology of media” which deals with this issue. The paper shows that they admire its broad principles but ignore the devils in detail – which indeed are increasingly recognized today in France. The end result is a “devolution” of a major part of the funds raised for producing “French” films to foreign SVOD companies.

Based on all this empirical evidence, the paper’s main lesson is that the European film industries are those which need the deepest reforms in order to become closer to the way the Korean industry operates. It explores this point in more detail – offering the opportunity to stress that good film policies are not an obstacle to culture but, on the contrary, a fundamental support to it.

BIO: Patrick Messerlin is Professor Emeritus at Sciences Po Paris, and Chairman, Steering Committee ECIPE, Brussels. He has written many books, articles, and reports on trade policy and international trade. Since 2013, he has focused on cultural industries and policies, especially the film and music industries. His most recent book is co-authored with Prof. Jimmyn Parc, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur and entitled *The Untold Story of the Korean Film Industry: A Global Business and Economic Perspective* (Palgrave Macmillan in 2021).

Korean films, for the Northern masses and Southern highbrows

Korean films have become one of the primary sources of Korea's increasing soft power. Although soft power is fundamentally attraction, it takes varied shapes. In contrast to hard power, such as wealth and military prowess, the strength of which rests on the holders, soft power is defined by those in the receiving ends. Therefore, a Korean film can result in diverse types of soft power depending on cultural, socioeconomic and political milieus of varied global audiences. Whereas films are a powerful source of soft power for the masses in the global North, I would argue that the growing popularity of Korean films garner highbrow soft power in the global South. Drawing on a half-decade long field research on the consumption of Korean films in sub-Saharan Africa, I explain that entry barriers caused by peer-swapping culture, education divide and a lack of telecommunications infrastructure in the region retain the consumption of Korean films within socioeconomically privileged demographics rendering itself highbrow soft power.

BIO: Suweon Kim enjoys writing on the role of creative industries and cities in South-South cooperation in light of public diplomacy and development cooperation with a specialization in Afro-Asia relations. Having completed her MSocSc and PhD in Cape Town, South Africa funded by the government of Korea, she went on to teaching at the Accra campus of Webster University. She joined Hankuk University of Foreign Studies faculty as an assistant professor in the department of International Studies at Graduate School of International and Area Studies in 2020.

PANEL 5. VISUAL KOREAN WAVE: CHALLENGES AND INNOVATIONS IN ANIMATION, WEBTOON, ART AND TECHNOLOGY

FINN, HARVOR

EIT | Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (Yongin)

Digital culture, graphic fiction, and webtoons — a culturally various form of cultural evolution

The ascension of online popular culture is hardly noteworthy; it seems a given of contemporary life. Yet within specific forms of cultural practice, such as graphic fiction, there have been noticeably different evolutions of this overarching art form. For example, in South Korea, where the author lives, various economic and technological factors have driven the establishment of one of the most vibrant and thematically diverse scenes of graphic fiction (commonly termed webtoons). In contrast, Western nations which also have very vital graphic fiction cultures (for example, the US, Canada, France, Belgium, Italy, etc.) have followed different routes, with much stronger emphasis on printed graphic fiction/ comics. Moreover, one Asian nation with a strong graphic fiction scene — Japan — has, despite sharing some of the cultural traditions and economic forces as South Korea, also taken the route of emphasizing print over online webtoon. This is not to say other national cultures from South Korea do not have vibrant online graphic fiction cultures; they do. Nevertheless, South Korea's graphic fiction scene is so overwhelmingly toward online distribution/ consumption that it is hard not to notice its uniqueness. This presentation will examine some of the historical and economic reasons for this uniqueness.

BIO: Award-winning artist, writer, musician, filmmaker and academic based in South Korea. Articles in many journals including the Brooklyn Rail and Canadian Notes and Queries. Have presented to academic conferences in Oxford, Bath, Liverpool, Berlin, Seoul, Osaka, and elsewhere. Selected by festivals in Korea, Ireland, the U.K., the US, China (Hong Kong), Kazakhstan, Australia, Greece, Pakistan, Serbia, Portugal, Germany, Ukraine, Russia, and India.

SARAH, BENAZIZI

Cultural Heritage Studies, Korea University

VR and AR art in Korea: how museums are implementing technology to educate visitors South Korea, a case study of Gyeongju National Museum

In recent years, the use of AR and VR technologies in museums and galleries has become increasingly popular, ranging from virtual human docents to artificial intelligence. Such technologies are mainly used for educational purposes in the museum and gallery sectors. This paper conducts a case study focusing on the educational use of AR and VR technologies at South Korea's Gyeongju National Museum and Gyeongju Tower. Gyeongju, which was previously the capital of Silla, a prosperous kingdom in Korea, is one of the most important historical cities on the peninsula. Its heritage is the key

attraction of the city. The Gyeongju Museum, the second most popular museum in Korea, followed by the National Museum of Korea in Seoul, provides an active platform to engage with visitors through AR and VR elements. The Gyeongju Tower is a contemporary landmark that features multimedia work introducing Shilla's thousand years of history. This case study allows us to examine how Korea has increased people's understanding and promoted Korean art and culture by implementing new technology.

BIO: I am Sarah Benazizi, born and raised in Rome, Italy. Since I was young I was surrounded by art and heritage. Being born from a Moroccan father and Italian mother, I was always open to new cultures which led me to study Korean language and culture at La Sapienza University of Rome. After graduation I got the chance to study Cultural heritage in Korea thanks to the Korean government scholarship. I chose this field because I think studying heritage outside of Europe will greatly help me to open my mind on how heritage affects communities depending on the culture and location. For this specific reason this winter I was involved in an internship in the city of Gyeongju, where I assisted in a project related to heritage promotion. Korean art and Asian art is still a niche field in Europe, thus after my studies I wish to come back and work in a museum related to Asian art, so that Europeans can become better world citizens through education.

**ALESSANDRA,
RICHETTO**

Università degli Studi di Torino

Relying on South Korea: outsourcing practices in the animation industry.

When thinking of Korean Wave and Korean pop culture and its influence and spread in Western culture, the first things that come to mind are Korean fashion, music, drama and food.

However it is less known that for many decades Korea has contributed to the creation and production of a piece of Western culture: animation.

Since the early days of the medium, the most expensive, difficult and time-consuming part of producing an animated show or film has been done by hand outside the principal production studios. Outsourcing the production of animation cuts means that some scenes may be the sum total of an idea by a director working from their studio in one country while the production work is done by employees who may be located in a foreign country. South Korea was and still is one of the main countries where animation is produced for a significant number of the world's animation studios.

This talk will focus on what outsourcing is and how it applies to the American and Japanese animation industries, two of the largest in the world. It will explain its historical and practical implications and how South Korean artists have responded; it will attempt to trace the different geo-cultural approaches and will give some examples of how the heavy reliance they put on South Korean handwork has recently put its

animation in the spotlight.

BIO: Alessandra Richetto, born in 1996 and long time animation and pop culture enthusiast, I am now a first year PhD Student in Humanities from Università degli Studi di Torino, curriculum of Semiotics and Media studies, with a project on discourses about the future in animated forms of entertainment. Also professor of History of Animation in Scuola Internazionale di Comics of Turin since September 2022.

JAE-EUN, OH

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Korean Animation and Theme Parks: Creating Nostalgia to Compel Emotional Attachment

This paper aims to investigate the application of animation in South Korean theme parks vis-à-vis the impact of the Korean Wave (K-Wave, Hallyu, Hánliú) on localized content. While adopting the Westernized theme park concept, local parks in Korea do not capitalize on famous Western characters such as Mickey Mouse or Elsa. Rather, they focus on employing localized, Korean-made animation characters such as Pororo or Secret Jouju for their park narratives. Thus, it suggests that local theme parks in Korea have evolved through localized narratives to enhance visitors' emotional attachments. Furthermore, familiarity with local animation and Korean culture (K-Wave) is central to the attractive attributes of theme parks in Korea.

It is believed that the Korean animation industry has been an underdog and underestimated (Jin, 2016). In contrast, K-pop, Korean movies, and K-drama became the center of the global K-wave phenomenon. In addition, the Korean animation industry, which has a long history of subcontracting to overseas studios, produced many animation projects through Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM). Consequently, creating the original storytelling and characters did not seem smooth until Pororo the Little Penguin (*Pporong Pporong Ppororo*) made an immense sensation locally and globally. In the early 2000s, the Korean government introduced various support programs for SMEs and existing animation studios to improve their productivity because animation was recognized as a profitable industry that would contribute to Korean cultural identity.

Pororo's success led to other Korean animations gaining local and international recognition. Different platforms, including theme parks, have adopted many characters from these shows. With these in mind, this paper explores how local Korean animation is used in theme park attractions to induce nostalgia for popular Korean characters and stories. In particular, this discussion will address the means by which feelings of nostalgia are evoked characters for adults who grew up watching these same animated characters.

BIO: Dr. Jae-Eun Oh is an associate professor and program leader for the BA (Hons) in Digital Media at Design School, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. She received an

MFA from the School of TV, Film and Media Department at UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles) and a Ph.D. from Sejong University, South Korea. Her research interests lie primarily in animation storytelling, animation nostalgia, and theme park attractions that adopt animation content to attract visitors. Besides animation-related research, her research demonstrates how to motivate creative media students using studio/project-based learning, where they learn to create their own media artifacts.

PANEL 6. SOCIO-ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF THE KOREAN WAVE

**VINCENZO,
CICHELLI**

CEPED (Université Paris Cité/IRD)

SYLVIE, OCTOBRE

*Département des études, de la prospective et des
statistiques / Ministère de la Culture, Centre Max Weber
ENS Lyon*

Entertainment Capitalism as the Ultimate Stage of Aesthetic Capitalism: the Example of Hallyu

In a form of capitalism that has become aesthetic, addictive, and emotional — and which encourages the growing aestheticization and commodification of everyday life — the Korean Wave presents a unique production model that borrows from global capitalism and builds upon close collaboration between the State and the private enterprise. In addition, this model has recentered economic focus on exports, which have become fundamental for a country with a limited domestic market. Entertainment capitalism burst onto the global scene in the 2010s. The South Korean version of aesthetic capitalism promotes the horizontal integration of various products and has an important degree of serialization (leading to specific modes of productions), the rise of the transmedia idol (rather than its predecessor, the star), and the transformation of the relationship between artists/entertainers and their audiences. A great degree of closeness is fostered between idols and their fans, especially given that fan communities play an essential role in the elaboration of cultural dynamics, in particular via extensive online activity. Entertainment capitalism promotes an ideology of well-being inspired by neoliberalism, of which is also the fruit, relying on the authenticity of the emotions elicited in consumers by the products they consume.

Key words: Aesthetic capitalism, Entertainment capitalism, Serialization of production, Transmedia idols, Ideology of happiness

BIO: Vincenzo Cicchelli (PHD) is an Associate Professor at the Université de Paris and a Research Fellow at the Centre Population et Développement (CEPED) (Université Paris Cité/Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD)).

He is currently the Director of International Relations at GRIP (Global Research Institute of Paris, Université de Paris):

<https://u-paris.fr/global-research-institute-paris/en/homepage/>

At Brill, he is the Editor-in-Chief (with Sylvie Octobre) of the "Global Youth Studies" suite: <http://www2.brill.com/gys>.

He is the author of many books and articles, of which the latest are: *Youth on Edge. Facing Global Crises in Multicultural French society*, London, Palgrave, 2022 (with Sylvie Octobre); *K-pop, soft power et culture globale*, Paris, PUF, 2022 (with Sylvie Octobre); *The Sociology of Hallyu Pop Culture: Surfing the Korean Wave*, London, Palgrave, 2021 (with Sylvie Octobre); *Cosmopolitanism in Hard Times*, Leiden, Brill, 2020 (with Sylvie Mesure, eds.); *Aesthetic Cosmopolitanism and Global Culture*, Leiden, Brill, 2019 (with Sylvie Octobre and Viviane Riegel, eds.); *Aesthetico-Cultural Cosmopolitanism and French Youth: The Taste of the World*, London, Palgrave, 2018 (with Sylvie Octobre); *Plural and Shared: The Sociology of a Cosmopolitan World*, Leiden, Brill, 2018

Sylvie Octobre (PHD) is a researcher at the Département des études, de la prospective et des statistiques (French Ministry of Culture), and a Research Fellow at Centre Max Weber (ENS Lyon and Université Lumières Lyon 2).

At Brill, she is the Editor-in-Chief (with Vincenzo Cicchelli) of the "Global Youth Studies" suite: <http://www2.brill.com/gys>.

She is the author of many articles and books, of which the latest are: *Youth on Edge. Facing Global Crises in Multicultural French society*, London, Palgrave, 2022 (with Vincenzo Cicchelli); *K-pop, soft power et culture globale*, Paris, PUF, 2022 (with Vincenzo Cicchelli); *The Sociology of Hallyu Pop Culture: Surfing the Korean Wave*, London, Palgrave, 2021 (with Vincenzo Cicchelli); *Youth Technoculture: From Aesthetics to Politics*, Leiden, Brill, 2020; *Aesthetic Cosmopolitanism and Global Culture*, Leiden, Brill, 2019 (with Vincenzo Cicchelli and Viviane

Riegel, eds.); *¿Quién teme a las culturas juveniles? Las culturas juveniles en la era digital*, Mexico, Oceano Travesia, 2018; *Normes de genre dans les institutions culturelles*, Paris, Presses de Sciences Po, 2018 (with Frédérique Patureau); *Aesthetico-Cultural Cosmopolitanism and French Youth: The Taste of the World*, London, Palgrave, 2018 (with Vincenzo Cicchelli).

The *Hallyu* Self: Daily Korean Life as Aspirational Content on Social Media

This paper aims to explore a developing trend in Korean cultural production where user-generated content on social media has become a new element in the appeal of 'Brand-Korea' for global audiences. Initially driven by the export of K-Dramas and K-Pop, *Hallyu* has since expanded to include a variety of Korean cultural products, such as fashion, cosmetics, and food. This paper argues that the cultural branding of Korea for global consumption is now expanding further than mainstream media production and lifestyles products, with ordinary residents of Korea both contributing to and capitalising on Korea's global visibility by posting aspects of their daily lives on social media. In particular, this paper is focused on lifestyle content that hinges on the more mundane or banal aspects of daily life in Korea, such as TikToks showcasing convenience store food or vlogs detailing different amenities in Korea, such as gyms, recycling, and libraries. The Korean-ness of these mundane activities is amplified by their creators, turning the mundane into aspirational content for audiences and consumers of Korean Wave products. Most significantly, this new trend in the expansion of the Korean Wave encourages the average Korean social media user (or even visitors to Korea) to brand themselves according to *Hallyu* logics, in particular given the increase in social media interaction and visibility that association with *Hallyu* and Brand-Korea can bring. However, while these social media users/content creators may benefit in terms of metrics and advertising revenue, these efforts ultimately feed into the larger, cross-industry branding efforts of South Korea. The fantasy of K-Dramas and K-Pop alone can no longer drive the global expansion of Korean content, Korean life must now also replicate the fantasy constructed by the Korean wave.

BIO: Faye Mercier is a junior lecturer in Television and Cross-Media Culture at the University of Amsterdam. Her research areas include the media industries of Japan and South Korea, and she has previously published on the topics of Japanese reality television, K-Dramas, and K-Pop fandoms. Her forthcoming work explores the platformisation of reality television in South Korea, focusing in particular on the impacts of global television logics on the participants and consumers of Korean reality production.

HATICE, ÇELİK,

*Department of Asian Studies, the Institute for Area Studies,
Social Sciences University of Ankara (SSUA), Turkey*

YUSUF, AVCI,

SILA SELİN, TÜRKEL

“Eating” the Korean Wave: Korean Restaurants in Ankara

The Korean Wave (Hallyu), which has been influential worldwide since the 1990s, shows itself in Türkiye as an interest in South Korean popular culture spread over time. This interest in South Korea has been broadened beyond the entertainment industry branded as K-Drama and K-Pop. This spread of popular culture has encouraged people of all ages to learn about the Korean language, literature, history, and traditions. In recent years, the growing interest in South Korean culture within Turkish society has turned to Korean food, which is similarly trying to be branded as K-Food. In other words, the consumption of Korean food has almost become a complementary element as a different kind of expression of Turkish interest in Korean culture. There are currently many restaurants based on Korean cuisine in Ankara. Additionally, there are more general Asian cuisine restaurants, including Korean food. The research aims to understand the reasons for the increase in interest in Korean cuisine in Ankara, the motivations of people who visit these restaurants, the effect of the Korean Wave on people visiting Korean restaurants, and how these visits affect people’s interest and curiosity in Korea. The methodology will be an in-depth interview with the customers, restaurant owners, and officials from Korean foreign missions/institutions/non-governmental organizations in Ankara. In this context, the paper explores the relationship between Korea’s rising cultural power and the growing interest of people in Korean cuisine in Türkiye.

Keywords: Ankara, Korean Wave, Korean restaurants, Korean culture, K-food.

This study was supported by the Scientific Research Projects (BAP) Commission of Social Sciences University of Ankara. Project Code: BÇE-2023-210

BIO: Dr. Hatice Çelik is an Associate Professor at the Department of Asian Studies, the Institute for Area Studies, Social Sciences University of Ankara (SSUA), Türkiye. She graduated from the Department of International Relations at Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara. She got her master’s degree in Asian Studies at METU. She was a visiting researcher at the Academy of Korean Studies, South Korea for a six-month period in 2013. She earned her Ph.D. in the Area Studies Ph.D. program with her thesis on South Korea-ASEAN relations at METU. Her research interests include the foreign policy of the Korean peninsula, middle powers, ASEAN, and regionalization in Asia.

Dr. Yusuf Avcı is a lecturer at the Department of Asian Studies at SSUA, Türkiye. He

completed his Ph.D. at the School of East Asian Studies at Sheffield University with an ethnographic thesis on asylum seekers in Japan. He works on migration and mobility movements from an anthropological perspective, with a particular focus on Japan and Türkiye. During the fieldwork, he was affiliated with Waseda University as a visiting scholar and conducted participant observations and interviews with asylum seekers and refugees in Tokyo. Before joining SSUA, Dr. Avcı taught courses at the Department of Politics and International Studies at Warwick University as an associate tutor. He works on migration and mobility movements from an anthropological perspective, with a particular focus on Japan and Türkiye.

Sıla Selin Türkel is currently a Ph. D. student in Area Studies Ph.D. Program, Institute for Area Studies in SSUA, Türkiye. She completed her master's degree with her thesis titled "The role of international organizations on disarmament of the Korean Peninsula: The cases of UN and ASEAN". Her research interests include Korean foreign policy, security and disarmament of South Korea and North Korean studies.

PANEL 7. NEW TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN THE K-POP INDUSTRY

**LORENA VARELA,
DOMINGUEZ**

University of Oviedo, Spain

East or West, North or South? Chungha's "Play" and the "localization strategy" in the K-pop industry

Even if the Korean Wave has spread around the world during the early 21st century, it is not until the 2010s that K-pop raised as its main cultural expression. Many theories have been proposed by academics to explain the international success of the Korean musical genre. One of the most prominent is the use of a "localization strategy" in the K-pop production, part of the so-called Cultural Technology of K-pop – its characteristic business know-how. This strategy aims to create a versatile national identity that helps K-pop idols to become 'local artists' in whichever market they are promoted.

In this paper, I will argue that this localization is not only a tool to shape the whole career of K-pop artists – it can be partially used in the span of a single release. The K-pop soloist Chungha's "Play" (2020) is a recent example of this latter tendency in the K-pop industry. In this case, the artist tries to appeal several audiences – Latinx, Afro-descendants Americans, and Europeans. To do so, several cultural references to those demographic profiles are displayed in the music, the choreography and the song's music video. I will analyze these features following Allan Moore's musical analysis model, Halifu Osumare's concept of 'intercultural body', and Raymond Monelle's 'indexical index' concept. I will also examine whether or not this strategy was actually appealing for the audiences mentioned above.

BIO: I have studied Musicology in the University of Oviedo, Spain. Currently, I am working on my PhD dissertation on K-pop and its representation of Latin-ness throughout the 21st century. I receive economic support from the pre-doctoral FPU Governmental Program, and from the research project “Music and audiovisual media in Spain: creation, mediation and negotiation of meanings” [MCI-20-PID2019-106479GB-I00].

I have participated in international conferences, such as IASPM XXI (Daegu, South Korea), and the BTS Conference (Seoul, South Korea). I have also published a divulgation article in The Conversation about K-pop’s origin.

SOYOON, PARK

York St John University

Critical Discourse Analysis of Gendered Performance and Perception before, during and after Study Abroad: A Case of Korean Language Learners in the United Kingdom

This study demonstrates how Korean language learners in the United Kingdom perceive and perform gender in a study abroad context. Employing (Feminist/) Critical Discourse Analysis, the study firstly explores how gender is discursively constructed under hegemonic normativity set in the West and its reflection around the discourse stemming from Korean Pop Music (K-Pop hereafter). For many learners of the Korean language, performances of masculinities and femininities in K-Pop function as cultural indicators to facilitate their understanding of the contemporary gender ideals and norms in South Korea.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted before, during and after the study abroad in Korea, and the interview data was analysed in light of hegemonic construction of gender. The pre-study abroad interview has a focus on how the participants perceive gendered performances in K-Pop, in relation to their own gender and sexual orientation and thus illustrates how they situate themselves in the target culture. The during and post study abroad interviews focus on are more narrative in nature as the participants’ real-life experiences are shared around the topic of gender. Small stories in the interviews reveal gender hegemony in Korean society and how the participants negotiate their gender identity accordingly and perform their gender across British and Korean contexts.

BIO: Soyoon Park is a doctoral candidate at York St John University, where she also teaches undergraduate Korean modules as a Graduate Research Fellow in School of Education, Language and Psychology. Her research areas are in sociolinguistics and applied linguistics, investigating how gender is discursively constructed cross-culturally and how it translates to adult language learners’ gender identity negotiation and performativity in intercultural contexts.

No Longer Human: The Commodification of the K-pop Idol's Humanity

The K-pop idol is an intriguing example of how the creative industries have commodified personae. In order to align with the notion of the musician as an innovative artist, K-pop idols may be portrayed as unique individuals with creative control, but their persona is highly crafted and managed. The shift to parasocial participatory consumer behaviour in today's parallel world of social media allows K-pop management companies to capitalize on an alleged closeness between idol and fan. Feeding on constant media exposure, this relationship shows that likable personalities are driving the company's financial profit. In that sense, persona creation is directly related to financial success. This paper aims to critically examine the commodification of the K-pop idol's humanity by both the management companies and the fans and answers the following question: how and why is the humanity of the contemporary K-pop idol commodified?

BIO: I am a PhD candidate at Leiden University and lecturer at the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences. I have a BA in Korean Studies from Leiden University. As a recipient of a KGSP scholarship, I obtained an MA degree in International Relations and Diplomacy from Seoul National University. Taking all my classes in Korean, I have attained full professional fluency in the language. Over the past eight years, I have built personal relationships with idols within the K-pop industry. Their personal stories inspired me to devote my PhD project to their sense of autonomy and authenticity in a highly controlled and manufactured environment.



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