



‘Korean Wave’ — The Popular Culture, Comes as Both Cultural and Economic Imperialism in the East Asia

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Abstract

Korean popular culture such as movies, TV dramas, and pop music is overwhelmingly powerful and TV dramas are one of the most remarkable popular cultures of these. They are not only popular in terms of the fanaticalness of audiences and fans, but also bring considerable profit to the national income. Cultural imperialism to be a new form of economic imperialism. The Korean wave brings a different level of Korean fever in certain East Asian countries, such as China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan, and the Philippines. This paper aims to analyse the changing position of audiences and consumers. It discusses the role of the media, especially, television, which is not only to provide entertainment to its audiences, but is also to change the audiences' consumption.

Keywords: Korea wave, Media, Cultural imperialism, Economy, Audience

‘If imperialism is the dominance of one nation of another, media imperialism is the dominance of one nation's media system by another, and cultural imperialism the dominance of one nation's culture by another. The problem is that the media are the main vehicles for the transfer of cultural values from one nation or society to another. The term ‘culture’ or ‘way of life’ is also fraught with definitional problems. Some scholars choose to use media imperialism in a narrow way, examining only the transfer of media products and media practices, while other see the term as synonymous with cultural imperialism’ (Williams, 2003: 218).

1. Introduction

The term ‘Korean Wave’, also ‘known as Hallyu or Hanryu, refers to the popularity of South Korean popular culture in other Asian countries.’ (Note 1) Korean popular culture such as movies, TV dramas, and pop music is overwhelmingly powerful and TV dramas are one of the most remarkable popular cultures of these. They are not only popular in terms of the fanaticalness of audiences and fans, but also bring considerable profit to the national income. The numbers of tourists visiting Korea was 5, 347, 468 in 2000. (Note 2) Even though there were two major events such as September 11th and the FIFA World Cup in 2001 and 2002, they did not affect the tourists' determination to visit Korea. The percentage of tourists increased to 3.9% in 2002. (Note 3) The figures show that the tendency of Korea is not merely based on the pleasure and gratification of audiences' desires, but also on people taking further action to visit Korea personally. In particular, visiting the shooting locations of certain TV dramas has become the norm.

Culture refers to ‘the beliefs, way of life, art, and customs that are shared and accepted by people in a particular society’. (Note 4) In the case of economy, it is defined as ‘the system by which a country's money and goods are produced and used, or a country considered in this way’. (Note 5) The definitions of culture and economy show that they are two different categories in sociology. However, the phenomenon of the Korean wave is an evidence of how cultural imperialism develops as economic imperialism. The relationship between them is intricate and interactive. O'Sullivan et al. (1983) defines ‘culture is seen as the sphere in which class, gender, race, and other inequalities are *naturalized* and *represented* in forms which sever (as far as possible) the connection between these and economic and political inequalities’ (cited in Tulloch, 1990: 8). Cultural imperialism to be a new form of economic imperialism. The Korean wave brings a different level of Korean fever in certain East Asian countries, such as China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan, and the Philippines. From food, language, fashion, to tourism, the phenomenon of Korean wave permeates through each corner of East Asia.

Korean TV dramas appeared as both a cultural and economic imperialism of East Asia in the late 1990s. As Morley states, ‘mobilizing a hypodermic model of media influence, in which the media are seen as having the power to ‘inject’ their audiences with particular messages which will cause them to behave in a particular way.’ (1989: 16). ‘A particular way’ refers to the reaction of Korean fanatics here. The term imperialism refers to the benefits were brought back to Korea after many popular dramas were exported to neighbouring countries. According to Schiller (1969), the term cultural imperialism is defined as the:

‘Sum of the process by which a society is brought into the modern world system and how the dominating stratum is attracted, pressure, forced and sometimes bribed into shaping social institutions to correspond to, or even promote, the values and structures of the dominating center of the system’ (Cited in Williams, 2003: 218).

This paper aims to analyse the changing position of audiences and consumers. It discusses the role of the media, especially, television, which is not only to provide entertainment to its audiences, but is also to change the audiences’ consumption. Audiences are influenced by TV dramas, for example, Korean TV dramas. People are fascinated by the plot, the pop stars, and the songs. Seeking the reasons for the popularity of Korean TV dramas is required to deduce from its background, such as the kind of pleasure given by the dramas and the element of cultural proximity. A literature review of two chapters of Ien Ang’s book *Watching Dallas* (1985) is provided, which includes the Introduction and Dallas between reality and fiction. This essay also, analyses in what ways television audiences accept certain kinds of television programmes. Moreover, the paper discusses the role of the media in the age of globalisation, the power of the media and its strategies in terms of advertising. Finally, a conclusion of this paper is given.

2. Literature Review

In Ien Ang’s book *Watching Dallas*, he points out that pleasure is one of the essential reasons why people enjoy watching television programmes. Even though audiences can be led by the attractive advertising, nobody can be forced to watch television (1985: 3, 9). However, it seems to Adorno and Horkheimer that ‘the experience of pleasure in mass culture is a false kind of pleasure, even part of the trick of manipulating the masses more effectively in order to lock them in the eternal stultesque of exploitation and oppression’ (Ang, 1985: 17).

According to Ang, ‘sociologists often start with the premise that media-use is determined by people’s needs and the gratifications they expect...pleasure must be conceived of as not so much the automatic result of some ‘satisfaction of needs’, but rather as the effect of a certain productivity of a cultural artefact’ (1985: 9). No matter what kind of satisfaction audiences look for, seeking the satisfaction of need can be understood as one of the considerable factors why people enjoy watching TV. Actually, a comedy is not always necessary, a tragedy touch audiences’ souls as well. This factor can be connected with the Korean TV dramas, they do not always have a happy ending, and in fact some of them are totally different versions to the audiences’ expectations.

In Frith’s (1982) opinion of pleasure, he quotes from Marx’s idea that gloom is the reason that people enjoy mass culture (cited in Ang, 1985: 17). This idea is based on rock music.

‘Marxist idea is as follows: because the production of culture is subject to the laws of the capitalist economy, cultural products are degraded into commodities to make as much profit as possible on the market. The exchange value of those products is therefore essential for the producers, leading to a neglect of quality. The capitalist market economy is only interested in the production of surplus value and as such is indifferent to the specific characteristics of the goods: caring only that they are sold and consumed. Mass culture is the extreme embodiment of the subjection of culture to the economy; its most important characteristic is that provides profit for the producers’ (Ang, 1985: 18).

The Marxist idea is to describe the production of culture as the commodities in a capitalist market. It includes other aspects, such as exchange value, quality, surplus value, and profit. Marx critically suggests that the main concept of the producer is to make profit. They only care about whether or not the commodities can be sold and consumed. Therefore, the quality of these commodities and the specific characteristics of goods are lacking (Ang, 1985: 18).

Each scholar has a different perspective on the mass media. In Ang’s opinion, ‘popular pleasure is first and foremost a pleasure of recognition’ (1985: 20). There is no denying that television brings pleasure to its audiences. People seek relaxation and pleasure through it. Indeed, Ang describes television viewing as ‘time for yourself’ (1985: 21). After one finishes a long day’s work, entertainment plays an influential role in one’s leisure time. On the one hand, ‘entertainment is usually associated with simple, uncomplicated pleasure, therefore, entertainment is also called as ‘mere entertainment’ (1985: 19).

‘This is to evade the obligation to investigate which mechanism lie at the basic of that pleasure, how that pleasure is produced and how it works—as though that pleasure were something natural and automatic. Nothing is less true, however. Any form of pleasure is constructed and functions in a specific social and historical context’ (Ang, 1985: 19).

One of the strategies of a television serial is to link the story with audiences' histories, social situation, and the aesthetic and cultural preferences (Ang, 1985: 26). When Ang talks about the value of television programme, he compares the different interpretation of 'value' that the viewer and producer have. Entertainment is the value for the viewer. On the other hand, advertising time is the most valuable time for the producer as it is time for selling a product (1985: 19). Generally speaking, people in different positions have different understandings of the word 'value'. As far as a producer is concerned, making a profit through television programmes is a, or the only way to survive. However, this ambition cannot come true without audiences' support. Therefore, understanding what audiences' need and what they like to watch become the crucial issue.

3. The Efficiency of McDonald's

Lull (1995) defines globalisation as 'a complex set of interacting and countervailing human, material, and symbolic flows that lead to diverse, heterogeneous cultural positioning and practices which persistently and variously modify established vectors of social, political and cultural power' (cited in Moeran, 2001: 12).

Globalisation was not a new concept in the 1990s. When people praise globalisation, on the other hand, there is lots of objection from others. This paper focuses on the affects of global culture. In James L. Waston's book *Golden Arches East: McDonald's in East Asia* (1997), he analyses how McDonald's has successfully captured local consumers in East Asia. In the relationship between globalisation and media, Williams defines globalisation as 'a theory recognises the complexity of the contemporary global media environment, and in particular the part media in the 1990s played in preserving, promoting and defending the local' (2003: 224). It is important to draw evidence from the success of McDonald's before analysing people's acceptance of global cultural change.

It is well known that McDonald's is 'fast food coming from America' (Waston, 1997, cited in Moeran, 2001: 42). Waston (1997) suggests that even though the way of cooking is totally different from the West to the East, people are happy to accept the new culinary way (Moeran, eds, 2001: 42). Even though McDonald's food is considered as junk food somewhat, it does not affect people's pleasure when eating it. According to Moeran, 'exploitative, corrupting, or unhealthy' do not represent the western-style cultural experience of eating at McDonald's (Moeran, eds, 2001: 41). The McDonald's phenomenon shows 'the revolution in family values that has transformed East Asia.' As Moeran stresses this phenomenon is representative of 'global cultural change, but not subversion' (Moeran, eds, 1997: 42). In other words, people accept this changing with pleasure, rather than go against it.

McDonald's is a paradigmatic case of social transformation. In Chaney's (1996) opinion that 'culture has been transformed as a social construct away from relatively general and received "ways of life" to more diverse and constructed designer cultures and "lifestyles"' (Moeran, eds, 1997: 40). In the case of popular culture, according to Lull (2000), 'Global popular cultures strikingly reflect the cultural metamorphoses and transformations of social influence that are now underway' (Moeran, eds, 2001: 41). However, the change only happens regarding the influence of food. It does not mean that the same phenomenon happens in the popular culture.

Hannerz (1992) argues that the development of culture is only related to the economy. Cultural processes seem to play a passive role in the relationship with the economy (cited in Moeran, 2001: 35). This passive role suggests that the development of culture does not function as the leader of social development. Curran and Seaton (1997) describe the role of the media in globalisation seen as 'the shock troops of global cultural revolution' (cited in Williams, 2003: 223). The acceptance of fast food and popular culture is different. This paper provides further discussion about popular culture and cultural proximity in the coming section.

4. Television, Audience, and Consumer

'As a commodity form, television seeks to organize the viewer's relationship to cultural meanings according to the dictates of the role of the consumer. Television attempts to constitute this role at two separate but interrelated level: given television's economic imperatives, the viewer is constituted abstractly as a consumer in the larger socioeconomic order of capitalist goods and services; more importantly, given its technological and organizational structures, television attempts to constitute the spectator as a consumer of television as a cultural commodity...In effect, television appropriates the 'free time' of the individual in order to carve out of the private realm of leisure a space in which to produce economic value...Just as the early factory system commodified the labour capacity of the worker, the system of modern broadcasting commodifies the very symbolizing capacity of the privatized viewer, objectifying and quantifying it for the advertising market' (Robert Dunn, cited in Tulloch, 1990: 63).

Obviously, television does not simply exist to provide entertainment. The main concern of television is to provide its audiences with goods and services as well. In other words, the meaning of entertainment is like a backdrop, to be presented in front of its audience. What is hidden behind the backdrop? It seems to Croteau and Hoynes that 'there is an

underlying commonality to almost all advertisements: They are fundamentally about *selling*. They address their audiences as *consumers* and celebrate and take for granted the consumercapitalist organization of society' (2000: 183).

'The "encoding/decoding" model, developed by Stuart Hall (1980a) and David Morley (1980). The model saw the production (encoding) and consumption (decoding) of television as two distinct semiological processes. Television programs were no longer seen as reflections or distortions of reality, but as a set of highly coded *significations*, the product of specific aesthetic, political, technical and professional ideologies' (Lewis, 1991: 58).

Lewis points out that television's message is powerful. The meaning of powerful here refers to the changing attitude of audiences. After people receive the information given by television, people's esthetic sense or standard of life may be influenced by certain kinds of programmes or advertisements (1991: 61). For example, *Winter Sonata* is one of the most popular Korean TV dramas, it presents a complicated, and romantic love story that takes place in Korea. (Note 6) Audiences are not only fascinated by the plot of the drama, but also intend to visit its shooting location after watching the drama.

According to a survey conducted by the International Travel Fair in Korea, Seoul ranks as the most popular city for tourists, following by the soap operas' shooting locations. (Note 7) In Singapore, for instance, after broadcasting Korean TV dramas, some of the travel agencies use Korean soap opera as the selling point to promote their tourism. (Note 8) As Lewis points out, 'use and gratification' a complete transfer of power from the TV message to the TV viewer' (1991: 14). 'Use' can be understood as the way of watching. However, 'Gratification' is adopted in terms of spirit and material.

'Served to stimulate consumption among those who had the wherewithal and desire to consume, it also tried to provide a conception of the good life for those who did not...in the broader context of a burgeoning commercial culture, the foremost political imperative was *what to dream*' (Ewen, 1976, cited in Croteau & Hoynes, 2000: 185).

Korean TV dramas can be seen as a new and indirect way of advertising. Kubey and Csikzentmihalyi criticise that the main concern of television programmes is to sell advertising. (1990: 33) It seems to them that watching television is a sort of motivation, as people are motivated to earn money to buy the products that are promoted. (1990: 33) Therefore, in Zillmann and Bryant's opinion, 'consumption can be highly adaptive. This is the case when consumption serves to improve on prevailing moods, affects, and emotions, shifting them from bad to good or good to better' (Kubey & Csikzentmihalyi 1990: 34). Audiences' psychology of consumption can be understood clearly from the way they perform.

It seems to Croteau and Hoynes that 'advertising presumes and promotes a culture of consumption, normalizing middle- or even upper-middle-class lifestyles and making buying power a measure of both virtue and freedom' (2000: 184). People are free to consume and make decisions on what they want to consume. Korean TV dramas play a part as a good introduction of each facet of Korea.

On the one hand, TV dramas used for promoting Korean tourism are one of the typical examples of how people are influenced by the power of television programmes. Although the strategy of selling seems different from direct advertising, it is a new way of economic imperialism. As Ang (1996) argues 'the conflation of commercialism as an economic principle of production, which is utterly capitalistic, with commercialism as a cultural system of producing goods for consumption, which certainly has connections with the popular' (cited in Moeran eds, 2001: 31).

After the popularity of Korean TV dramas, Dator and Seo point out that 'South Korea may be leading the transition as it implements policies to base their economy on popular culture, perhaps eventually replacing "Gross National Product" as a measure of socioeconomic success with "Gross National Cool"'. (Note 9) Korea is not the other new world—America is. Korean tourism has become popular only after exporting popular culture to other East Asian countries. General speaking, there are different purposes for visiting Korea, as the figures shows from the Korean National Tourism Organization, 71.9% of the total number foreign visitors went for pleasure in 2002. Japanese tourists accounted for 43.4% of the total number of foreign visitors. China ranked second with 539,466 visitors in 2002. (Note 10)

Using TV dramas to promote Korean tourism is one aspect of cultural imperialism. On the other hand, Korean food is also promoted through the dramas. 'South Koreans are only just starting to realize that food can be just as profitable an export as semiconductors' (Note 11). Kim Chi, one of the traditional Korean foods, has become an accompaniment of the acceptance of Korean TV dramas. Returning to the acceptance of the McDonald's in Asia, the situation of Kim Chi is more or less similar to that of McDonald's.

The more the Korean phenomenon reveals of itself, the more equivocal is the role of the television audience. The role of the audience changes in different situations. Indeed, as Ang stresses, there is not a fixed definition of television audience, as its definition is unfinished (1991: 14). Ang (1990) describes the audience as a commodity, 'with viewing as

an essentially commercial transaction, in which all that matters is a “sale” and program content matters only to the extent that it encourages a sale’ (Hay et al. eds, 1996: 100). When the audience is used to calculate the rate of viewing, it becomes a number (Hay et al. eds, 1996: 100). In McQuail’s (1987) opinion, the audience may be conceived as a social group, which is based on the similar interests and share the same experience of communication in terms of place, class, politics, and culture (Hay et al. eds, 1996: 100). From Fiske’s (1989) point of view:

‘There is no such thing as “the television audience,” defined as an empirically accessible object...The “television audience” is not a social category like class, or race, or gender—everyone slips in or out of it in a way that makes nonsense of any categorical boundaries: similarly when in “it” people constitute themselves quite differently as audience members at different times...Categories focus our thinking on similarities: people watching television are best modeled according to a multitude of differences’ (cited in Seiter et al. eds, 1989: 56).

McQuail (1987) defines the audience as the potential consumers of a market (Ang, 1991: 27). This definition is not only appropriate in terms of television programmes, but also advertising (Ang, 1991: 27). McQuail (1987) explains that ‘the essence of any market is to bring goods and services to the attention of potential consumers, to arouse and keep their interest’ (cited in Ang, 1991: 29). Television advertising can be understood as a market that sells various commodities. Audiences, therefore become the consumers of the market. It does not mean everybody will be the consumer as some of them may just glance over the products. However, as McQuail (1987) points out ‘We never conceive of ourselves as belonging to the markets, rather we are placed in market categories or identified as part of a target group by others’ (cited in Ang, 1991: 32).

Seiter et al. criticise television audiences as ‘television zombies’ (1989: 16). This viewpoint is based on the use of television; for example, television audiences consume the products, which are advertised through television (in their example, a constant diet of pre-digested junk food) (1989: 16). Critical thinking seems to be lacking in the way audiences consume. However, as Seiter, et al. point out ‘only few people think about that these “television zombies” are always other people’ (1989: 16). Obviously, television audiences do not realise their situation in the commercial world, they may not agree that they are one of the zombies, even if they are slowly mesmerised.

If the audience’s role is merely as a viewer, there is nothing to do with the producer who makes a large profit through television programmes. What would people be watching on the television—maybe nothing. According to Ang, the term audience is a ‘profoundly ideological concept...Broadcasting institutions are not concerned with “viewers”, but they are with “audience”...Broadcasting institutions do not seek viewers; they seek audiences’ (1991: 37). A person can use their own VCR to record things they like. They are free to use them; pausing, replaying, shuttling forward if they like. This person is called a viewer. In the case of audience, ‘use’ is not an action for them. Rather, what audiences can do with television is only watch and consume it (Ang, 1991: 37). This is the essential difference between viewer and audience. In other words, viewers are not consumers, but audiences are.

It seems to Marx that ‘consumers produce themselves in the process of consumption’ (Mosco, 1996: 26). The producer understands more about the audience’s needs than the audiences themselves. This understanding is based on the reception of certain programmes. It does not mean that the producer makes decisions for the audience. Rather, it is the audiences’ preferences that making the decision of the programmes. The audience is no longer playing a passive role in television, as the position of the audience is the consumer as well. Halloran (1970) concludes that what is relevant is ‘what people do with the media rather than what media do to them’ (Seiter, et al. eds, 1989: 16). No market can survive without people’s consumption. It is the same situation of television programmes and advertising. Becker (CBS executive) claims that ‘I’m not interested in culture. I’m not interested in pro-social values. I have only one interest. That’s whether people watch the program. That’s my definition of good, that’s my definition of bad’ (cited in Ang, 1991: 27).

5. The Acceptance of Korean TV Drama

‘Korea is like the next epicenter of pop culture in Asia’ —Jessica Kam, vice present for MTV Networks Asia. (Note 12) Japanese TV dramas have been popular for certain duration in Asia. Today, the popularity of Korean TV drama has replaced the situation the Japanese dramas once experienced. Korean TV dramas are a reflection of the audience’s acceptance of the elements of pleasure and cultural proximity.

Autumn Fairy Tale (2000), *Winter Sonata* (2002), *Stairway to Heaven* (2003/4) (Note 13) are the typical and successful examples of Korean TV dramas in Asia. These dramas are based on the complicated love story between the younger people and the family. According to Iwabuchi (2001) and Lin’s (2002) explanation of Korean TV dramas, ‘they place the heart-wrenching, often tragic, stories of young lovers in the Confucian familial framework...heightens the conflict arising from family (and familial) duties (Erni and Siew, 2005: 7). The plots of Japanese TV dramas and Korean TV dramas are more or less similar, that is they concern the love stories of young people in the city. However, the plot of

Japanese TV dramas do not seem as complicated, John and Siew point out that the plot of Japanese TV dramas is predictable (2005: 7).

‘The “structure of feeling” is that of a translocal reckoning of moral ideals and practical decision-making not only in terms of matters of youthful sentimentality and sexuality, but also of a syncretic “Asian modernity” capable of enlisting middle-class-based, cross-generational, and western-value sensitized, dialogue and sentiment as a part of the social imaginary for an increasingly regionalized cultural Asia’.

The plot of every drama is one of the most important elements of attracting the audience’s attention. On the other hand, the popularity of Korean TV dramas shows another indispensable factor of its success—cultural proximity. According to Waston’s (1997) point of view, culture is not something to abide forever. It is not the knowledge from people’s ancestors and inherited by each generation. ‘Culture is a set of idea, reactions, and expectations that is constantly changing as people and groups themselves changes’ (cited in Moeran eds, 2001: 42). In other words, culture is changed by people’s changes.

It can be associated with fashion. The fashion trend is not set by people’s ancestors from primitive society. It is set by some particular people, fashion designer, for instance. Sometimes it combines different cultures, customs, and practices. In the case of television programmes, as Iwabuchi (2001) sees it, cultural proximity refers to the audiences’ identification of themselves and ability to find cultural similarities through certain programmes (Moeran, eds, 2001: 58). Moeran defines cultural proximity as meaning ‘the general tendency of audience preference for local programmes and programmes imported from countries of similar cultural make-up, and the significance of cultural-linguistic regional centers’ (Moeran, eds, 2001: 57). To Moeran, ‘cultural proximity does not exist a priori but occurs a posteriori. It is not something ‘out there’, but needs to be subjectively identified and experienced by the audience’ (Moeran, eds, 2001: 58).

In the case of Korean TV dramas, they are not only popular in Korea, but also in other Asian countries like China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, and the Philippines. Iwabuchi suggests that language plays a dominant role in cultural proximity. On the one hand, the acceptance of a programme is also affected by other cultural elements, such as ‘religious, dress, music, nonverbal code, humor, story pacing and ethnic’ (Moeran, eds, 2001: 56). The dramas will be translated into the local language once they are exported to other countries. However, there are some exceptions such as Singapore. Even though the official language is English in Singapore; the Korean TV dramas were translated into Mandarin—as more than 70% Singaporeans are Chinese. The dramas were broadcasted in a Chinese broadcast.

Compared with popular culture, Hollywood movies, for instance, cultural proximity clearly shows the different levels of the audiences’ acceptance. Even though some of the Hollywood movies are popular in Asia as well; the way which people’s fascination manifests itself is different. Language is no longer a barrier for audiences, as each movie will be either translated or given sub-titles. By simply applying what Iwabuchi says about the other cultural elements, which affect audiences’ acceptance, humour, for instance, it is likely that the same joke may have two different outcomes from a Chinese audience and an American audience. Moreover, in the case of cultural differences, an Italian may not understand why it is not appropriate for guests to wear the colour, if they are invited to a wedding ceremony in Japan.

As well as language, religion, dress, music, non-verbal code, humor, story pacing and ethnicity; sense or notions of esthetics, and history are also considered as parts of cultural proximity. In the opinion of Seiter, et al., ‘audiences’ interpretations of television programmes are influenced by race, nationality, class, age, and gender’ (1989: 2). Moeran concludes that the most important element for the acceptance of products in any market is to meet the local needs, desires, orientation, preferences, and curiosities. He stresses that the cultural artifacts includes movies, TV shows, pop songs, and hamburgers (Moeran, eds, 2001: 48).

Obviously, Korean tourism is taking the opportunity of the popularity to make the most of Korean dramas. Countries in East Asia, such as China and Singapore, for instance, are seizing the opportunity to import more Korean TV dramas in order to attract more audiences attention and in particular, to make more profit through the advertising. It seems there is a circulation of consumption. No business will be successful without achieving the balance between supply and demand. In Moeran’s opinion, ‘on the one hand, organizational networks of capital and influence that seek to exploit the power of their audiences as ‘consumers’ and, on the other, specifically Asian narratives to attract those audiences’ identification of themselves as ‘Asians’ (Moeran, eds, 2001: 2). In other words, cultural proximity can be considered as one of the most essential reasons for the popularity of Korean TV dramas. Coming back to the point of Hollywood movies, they are popular in not only Asia, but also all over the world. People’s acceptance can be reduced by different nationalities and culture.

6. Conclusion

The development of culture and economy are two of the most indispensable elements of social structure. The Korean TV drama is a paradigmatic case of how cultural imperialism develops as successfully as economic imperialism. The role of television seems to always be leading the changes in culture, standards of living, and notions of esthetics. On the

one hand, the popularity of Korean TV dramas is a reflection of how cultural proximity functions as an identification of Asian people. Cultural proximity provides an easy way to understand the background of the programmes; audiences are easily by the plot. On the other hand, it seems that the phenomenon of the Korean wave shows that the strategies of cultural promotion are becoming more and more indirect. Audiences' attention is no longer attracted by the tourist advertisements, tourist fairs, or special television programmes for certain places. Rather, they are playing an active role as a visitor.

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Dictionary

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Notes

Note 1. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_wave

Note 2. http://www.knto.or.kr/eng/07_statistics/07_02_2002.html

Note 3. http://www.knto.or.kr/eng/07_statistics/07_02_2002.html

Note 4. LONGMAN, Dictionary of Contemporary English

Note 5. LONGMAN, Dictionary of Contemporary English

Note 6. <http://www.koreanfilm.org/tvdramas/>

Note 7. <http://www.knto.or.kr/eng/hallyu/hallyusurvey.html>

Note 8. <http://www.knto.or.kr/eng/hallyu/hallyuintro.html>

Note 9. http://www.futures.hawaii.edu/dator/japan/Korea_Wave.html

Note 10. <http://www.knto.or.kr/eng/hallyu/hallyuintro.html>

Note 11. http://www.futures.hawaii.edu/dator/japan/Korea_Wave.html

Note 12. http://www.futures.hawaii.edu/dator/japan/Korea_Wave.html

Note 13. <http://www.koreanfilm.org/tvdramas/>