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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE on ASEAN-Korea Partnership

Korean Media Industries and the ASEAN-Korea Cultural Cooperation

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Introduction

- Cultural relations make South Korea and ASEAN “old and true friends.”
 - Korean Wave in SEA & Koreans’ appreciation of Southeast Asian culture
- Structure of this paper:
 - Trajectory of Korean film industry development
 - Examination of the current state of ASEAN-Korea cultural relations

Crisis of Korean film industry

- Market opening to Hollywood in 1988
 - Number of annual Korean film production fell from 121 (1991) to 63 (1994)
 - Hollywood's market share rose from 53% (1987) to 80% (1994)
- Korea's TV program imports grew from \$19.86 million (1994) to \$42.82 million (1995)
- Spillover of satellite broadcasting into Korea

Jurassic Park factor

- With the coming WTO era, countries are to open their markets in media and culture sectors
- *Jurassic Park* was worth the foreign sales of 1.5 million Hyundai cars
- Government support:
 - Introduction of Cultural Industry Bureau within the Ministry of Culture and Sports in 1994
 - Enactment of Motion Picture Promotion Law in 1995 in order to lure corporate and investment capital into the local film industry
- ‘Learn from Hollywood!’

“Workout” of Korean film industry

- “hardware-software synergy”
 - Consumer electronics companies began doing business in film industry
 - Business expertise introduced to film production and marketing
 - More transparent film business environment made way for new form of capital
- Fresh talent inflow
- Democratization
 - More lenient censorship policy led to freedom of expression

Development of Korean Film Industry

- Multiplex building boom since 1998
 - Number of screens: 497 (1997) → 2,575 (2016)
- Increase of film exports: (unit: US\$ M)

<i>Year</i>	1995	1999	2007	2016
<i>Amount</i>	0.2	5.96	24.39	43.89

Korean Films' Successes

- 1993, *Sopyonje* (1.03 M attendance in Seoul)
- 1999, *Shiri* (5.8 M countrywide)
- 2001, *Joint Security Area* (5.89 M)
- 2001, *Friend* (8.2 M)
- 2004, *Silmido* (10 M)
- 2004, *TaeGukGi* (11.09 M)
- Best Director, Best Actress Awards at the Cannes, Venice, Berlin Film Festivals, etc.

02 ORCHARD

8 Grange Road
 Cathay Movie Line • 6235 1155
 Fax-A-Movie • 6735 8389

CONDUCT ZERO*
 (PG) (Kor) (Eng/Chin Sub) (05262)
~~10.45am, 12.45pm, 2.45, 7.15pm, 2.10am~~

HOME RUN* (PG) (Mand) (Eng Sub) (05220)
 10.40am, 12.50pm, 3.05, 7.25, 9.40, 11.50pm

BAD BOYS II* R(A) (Chin Sub) (05216)
 10.30am, 1.15pm, 4.00, 4.50, 6.45, 7.35, 9.30pm,
 12.15am, 3.00am

DADDY DAYCARE (PG) (05222)
~~3.35pm, 5.25, 7.40, 9.35pm~~

MARRIAGE IS A CRAZY THING
 R(A) (Kor) (Eng/Chin Sub) (05260)
~~11.10am, 1.15pm, 5.20pm~~

TOMB RAIDER: THE CRADLE OF LIFE
 (PG) (05212)
 10.30am, 12.35pm, 2.40, 9.35, 10.20, 11.40pm,
 1.05am, 2.00am

2 FAST 2 FURIOUS (PG) (Chin Sub) (05207)
 3.20pm, 7.25pm

CITY OF GOD R(A) (Bra) (Eng Sub) (05186)
 4.45pm, 9.15, 11.40pm, 2.15am

~~Sneaks Today.~~

MY TUTOR FRIEND*
 (PG) (Kor) (Eng Sub) (05269)
~~5.15pm, 11.20pm, 2.30am~~

Korean Wave and its Impact

- “Call it ‘kim chic’. All things Korean--from food and music to eyebrow-shaping and shoe styles--are the rage across Asia...” (*AP*)
- “Korea has transformed itself from an embattled cinematic backwater into the hottest film market in Asia” (*Hollywood Reporter*)
- K-drama, K-pop
- Popularity of “things” Korean

Recent changes in Asian media

- Media practices in Asia: Filipino Singers, Chinese drama, Thai commercials, K-Pop, etc.
- Multi-polar media production and dynamic cultural consumption characterize Asian media culture
- The end of Cold War, neoliberal market reforms, and digital revolution have driven media globalization and regionalization
- More interaction in culture would lead to regional unity (e.g. Eurovision Song Contest)

Factors impeding cultural exchange in

- Lack of an understanding of the importance of cultural exchange
- Lack of an appreciation of the cultural diversity in the region
- Lack of institutional arrangements to enhance cultural exchange
- Low priority given to the area of culture in national/international agendas
- The ‘unidirectional’ mode of cultural flow
- Domination of market-mediated and market-driven culture

Recognition of the importance of culture

- Joint Statement on East Asian Cooperation (Manila in 1999) recognized the importance of promoting cultural understanding
- Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the APT Summit (December 2005) emphasized the importance of sharing of ideas in East Asia
- Since 2007, NEAT Working Group on the Enhancement of Cultural Exchange has held annual meetings, participated by all 13 country delegates
- Now, defunct because of a lack of political will and adequate funding

Suggestion

- Building media platform in Korea:
 - Devoted to showing the whole gamut of Southeast Asia including the culture, political and economic issues and scientific development of the region
 - The platform can be a new television channel, pages on YouTube or SNS (Facebook, Twitter, or KakaoTalk and Line Messenger)
- Political leaders, policymakers, scholars, and media and cultural sector practitioners should make efforts to promote a more balanced and reciprocal cultural exchange in the region
 - “Difficult roads often lead to the most beautiful destinations.”