

The Wave of Korean Hallyu: A Big Leap to the Global Acceptance of Popularity and Influence

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The instant influence of Korean Hallyu since its emergence

Whether we like it or not, there exists Hallyu. And whether we like it or not, it is already part of the culture of Korea and the way the culture of Korea *culturized* other culture.

It's been a long time when the world viewed the wonders behind Korea's extraordinary background. It became the façade of the richness of Korea's unending quest from the transitions of civilization, the pink smile of the citizen, the magnanimity of their native language and the colorful day to day living of the friendly residents. These aspects of the culture behind the phenomenon Hallyu became the household endearment of accepting what Korea has to give.

If India has their Bollywood which already created its niche since the different versions of Kama Sutra has been released up to the release of the well-acclaimed movie 3 Idiots to the controversial; Slumdog Millionaire, Bollywood has shared the excellence in the pedestal with Hollywood, which sound to speak the epitome of world's glory of entertainment.

In perspective, even though that Korea only extends its link to the world via media during the late 60's and the intense campaign for cultural proliferation during 1973, the emergence of Hallyu is still not late. The fact is, it became a pendulum in the local scenario of entertainment industry specifically television, music, film and fashion. Each Cultural Revolution has its advent and ending. The Korean Hallyu is still on its Golden Age and its emergence is still the center of Korean cultural legacy.

The hallyu or Korean Wave has been aired since 1990's from China, Taiwan and Japan. The regional distribution of Korean cultural products was begun with trendy dramas, then extended to popular songs, movies with the growth of Korean media markets. The export of Korean media contents has continually expanded even to Singapore, Vietnam and Mongolia which is beyond East Asia to South East Asia . Now the term Hallyu seems to connote the influence of Korean social and cultural aspects such as clothes, fashion and technological goods among the Asian countries. (Dong 2006:258)

Like any other cultural influence, the public can easily follow any productions if it uses medium that is very easy to access and accept. As per record, it was the television industry that has the biggest follower and the main bridge to keep in touch with the promotion of culture and the people who will follow it.

All popular audience engage in varying degrees of semiotic productivity, producing meanings and pleasures that pertain to their social situation out of the products of the culture industries. But often turn this semiotic productivity into some form of textual production that can circulate among and thus help to define the fan community. Fans create a fan culture with its won systems of production and distribution that forms what I shall call a shadow cultural economy that lies outside that of cultural industries yet shares features with them which more normal popular culture lacks. (Lewis 1992: 30)

Different Asian regions have been influenced that much by Hallyu, through television specifically. Such countries are Japan, China, India, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Bangkok, Philippines and even the majority Mexican regions of America. Significantly, Hallyu served as pattern for some countries to make their cultural manifestations through media particularly television be in its hyped as well.

The television viewer is rule-governed player moving back and forth across a programme, attempting to relate the sense of individual parts to an over-all meaning for the whole: the movement of understanding is constantly from the whole to the part and back to the whole. (Wilson 1993: 75)

Korean Hallyu and its influence in Asian context

As mentioned, different Asian countries were influenced by the emergence of Korean Hallyu. But not the entire influence gave a positive impact to the countries being influenced by it. Take in consideration the case of Taiwan wherein they almost ban all of Korean dramas especially during primetime because this drama surpasses the ratings of their own local drama. Taiwan is also likewise tried its luck to make their own television drama. The most famous of them all is Meteor Garden. In China, through their State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, gave a quota to the broadcast of Korean dramas. In Japan, they have their book entitled *Hyom-Hallyu* meaning anti-Korean Hallyu. It is also tagged as the *real ugly nature of Korea*. (Chung-a: <http://www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=37127>) This situation might say that not everybody can appreciate the process of enculturation. The problem perhaps lies on the fact that some countries may see that Korean Hallyu is a threat that will dominate the popularity of their own native culture. And since the very essence of Korean Hallyu is mass media through television that has the biggest number of followers, they may think that it will start the condemnation of their own culture.

Condemnation of one's culture is perhaps the most tabooed thing that a citizen may do for his country. It may lead to the non-acceptance of cultural and historical identity and at the same time rejecting one's heritage and legacy. Others may see that Korean Hallyu might be a way for the commercialization of promotion of Korea's interest to capture the world whether in terms of industrialization, education and other stuffs. But because of the consistent and continuous production of drama, movie, art and music, it may tell that Korean Hallyu is just a cultural revolution that was being molded by a non-Western country and crawled in the ladder of global acceptance.

Among cultural creators of the various popular media, television producers are first among equals because

television has become a dominant cultural force in Korean daily life. It is the television producer who supplies culture everyday and every night to most Koreans. Though it is still an empirical question whether the television producer plays central role in the process of programming decision, it is, however, generally agreed that the producer is one of the most important contributors to cultural content. The television producer is a gatekeeper in a cultural organization. Hence, he is a cultural gatekeeper. (Kang 1991: 134)

Korean Hallyu in the Philippines

If some of the nearby Asian countries have made a perennial reaction as to the emergence of Korean Hallyu, it's totally different in the Philippines. Ever since that the local television industry imported foreign shows, Filipino people are open minded for new shows. The Philippine television was first given a Chinese soap opera and eventually Japanese anime. Later on, the proliferation of Mexican telenovela highly influenced households. It even became a titan in Philippine primetime viewing because it defeated a mammoth evening newscast. Because of the wave of Mexican telenovela, local dramas were upgraded into different ways such as the technicalities, the plot and even the castings. For almost two years, local primetime viewing was dominated by Mexican telenovelas till the coming of Korean drama through *Endless Love* (2004) and *Lovers in Paris* (2004). From then on, the Philippines already feel the presence of the Korean wave. But what more exciting in terms of the emergence is the coming of the much phenomenal *My Name is Kim Sam Soon* (2005), *Jewel in the Palace* (2005) and *Boys Over Flowers* (2009).

Filipinos go gaga and crazy, not only because of the new genre of drama viewing but also because of the new culture being introduced to them. They were mesmerized of the new cultural proliferation after the Chinese and Japanese invasion as well as with Mexican telenovela.

The Hallyu was felt because of the simplicity of the story of each drama with a touch of feel light (light drama/tear jerker) theme. Aside from the fact that majority of Korean

drama has almost showing their cultural heritage and physical setting with cultural or historical value. The audience were amazed because they are not only watching a drama in which they can relate but also a drama wherein they were in a tour that though they are not there, they are still there because it was highlighted as if a tourist guide is there present among their household.

Filipino people are very easy to please and so the theme of the Korean drama has touched their hearts easily. They can relate with the story and at the same time looking and familiarizing on the tangible cultural manifestation of that country. This is a form of metalinguistic translation/dubbing. This method, a technical aspect of understanding a foreign drama is the tool or bridge of Korean drama that the Filipino understands. It makes them interested on a drama that offers something new and at the same time something informative which are all pleasing to their consciousness.

Metacommunicative messages frame communication, that is, they explicitly or implicitly give the receiver instructions or aids in his attempt to understand messages included within the frame and define the set of messages about which it communicates. (Jaworski 2004: 19)

The theory might be very helpful for the many Filipinos because they are not mastered or acquainted with this new trend of drama. We can say that the influence of Korean Hallyu is successfully spread in the Philippines.

Global Acceptance

It seems that Korean Hallyu finds no difficulty in entering the global arena. We can say that it has a position already in the filed of popular culture and media blitz. The mere fact that it was accepted by means of following its production, technicalities, story and plot and most importantly, the artists and their fashion and personality, then there is already a stance of welcoming this phenomenal culture of Korea.

Though Korea is still considered as a striving country, aiming to lift its beautiful heritage and remnant of historicity, time and revolution, it already find itself in the position of finding its contribution to the competitiveness of globalization.

Most research on the Korean pop culture has had a tendency to emphasize the universal superiority of Korean culture or the economic effect of the phenomenon based on econism...the popularity of the Korean drama can be understood in the context of the specific reprocessing and consumption system in Taiwan to reduce the high economic risk of the business. One way of adapting that has been developed to maximize profits and minimize the risks of the cultural industry is the accompaniment of various localization processes. The localization processes sometimes entails the *hybridity* of the Korean drama's text as well. (Mee 2005: <http://www.globalizationstudies.upenn.edu/node/526>)

It is indeed evident that perhaps commercialism heights have a clear participation in the emergence of Korean Hallyu that is creating its part in the global acceptance. Ideally, when we say global acceptance, we are not talking of the industrial, educational and economic aspects of a country. Such as the emergence of Hallyu, global acceptance may be realize by means of history, civilization, language and the most important of all, the kaleidoscopic culture. Cultural revolution is the start of Hallyu. It is a matter of being tough with the preserved culture that was never been known and the worst, appreciated for the longest time. For a country like Korea, in which the division of state created a catastrophe and friction among political interest, issues about economic fluctuation, heinous crimes, war and other communal plaque that ruins one's life, culture is a survival aspect of a country's identity. The distinguishing mark of a country that was prolonged in agony is not economy or industry but the culture and heritage left by the remnant of war and other destructions of humanity. It is so happened that Korea was extremely a product of ideology, political poverty and extremities.

Appreciation of Hallyu is not merely appreciating Korea as it is. Appreciation of Hallyu is appreciating some aesthetic principle of songs, fashion, dance, material things, places and avenues of neglected but preserved civilization, it talks about culture and history, religion, art, drama and comedy, theatre, technology and the pragmatics of life.

Korean Hallyu is not only a cultural promotion but rather it is a way to lift the cultural degree of Korea pertaining to its identity and space in the demanding world we have. Each country must appreciate the emergence of a new cultural dimension penetrated their boundary. It is a matter of change; it is a matter of knowing how you value not only one's native culture but also the appreciation of other's culture. Globalization is a matter of change. It is a matter of accepting the coming of changes not only in terms of culture but also through other perspectives of what makes a country been known for its identity, for its worth being the cradle of a civilization that has been appreciated by a demanding world.

The globalization process is widely perceived as having the force of inevitability behind it; those who oppose it accept its existence as much as those who see it as necessary or even desirable consequence of development. But its meaning varies considerably: indeed for some writers, globalization is seen an opportunity for change, for the creation of new ideas and new identities. (David & Richards 2000: 17)

New identity or simply acknowledging the changes of the demand of situation, in all aspects is a matter of accepting the fact that indeed there is also other culture that would be helpful for interaction in another culture. Korean Hallyu is a matter of presenting the cultural manifestation of the beautiful and colorful Korea to those who, in a way fail to appreciate it. Thus,

The formation of national identity is, then, the result of social action, but its specific outcome is not the same as nationalism. Nationalism is a particular kind of doctrine with an emphasis on mobilization and the active pursuit of a collective interest. Within this, national identity can be invoked as a reference point and certainly nationalism and national identities often come together, when, for example patriotic ceremonies are

used to strengthen a sense of national identity. (David & Richards 2000: 31)

The path of Korean Hallyu

Korean Hallyu is still in its finest. You can still feel and watch it throughout the Asian archipelago and nearby continents. It is a clear indication that since its emergence, you can still catch, watch, eat, asleep, get hurt and fall in love at the same time.

Korean Hallyu may seen the pressures of globalization and change at the same time. But Korean Hallyu itself is already a manifestation of globalization and already started because of change. It may be pressured because of change but it will still exist all because of change.

Under the pressure of increasing globalization of business, transnational media firms are expanding and targeting much of the world as their market. Global media conglomerates once content with only a limited international presence outside of their own countries, now adopt worldwide strategies. (David & Richards 2000: 142)

As long as there is it's followers who provide support, who has the access and the comprehension of the product being introduced and produced to them and with them and at the same time as long as there is the Korean production who keeps on bringing light and feel good movies, television shows, who never fail to let us feel that indeed there is jeers and happiness in living because of the outstanding fashion, dresses and colors of the world, the prime of Korean Hallyu will still continue. People from all walks of life especially the majority audience, the masses are the ardent follower of mass media can still don't deny the fact that they will continually support, appreciate and follow Korean Hallyu.

It took a long time when Korea, in it's glory has proven to the world, in spite and despite of the pressures of Western influence have created its path going to the ladder of mass popularity. Through mass popularity, no can deny the fact that it is already in the forefront of being a magnet to the commercial appreciation. Once a cultural manifestation

has been appreciated and well-followed, it means that country has successfully relayed and adapted the culture of that country. In the context of Korean Hallyu, it can easily grasp because the culture itself is not complex and not difficult to understand, to adapt and to relate to the original native culture.

We can say that Korean culture is totally different from any other culture for after all, there is no culture who can share the same principle but however, because of the magic that Korea has, all countries who appreciated Korean Hallyu can easily relate and live with the Hallyu has.

Indeed, the path of Korean Hallyu is still in the course of its journey. It may have its critique but it has a towering supporters and followers who religiously appreciate the aesthetic of Korean cultural value. The path of Korean Hallyu has already proven its worth. It was globally accepted and it already creates its own genre of being one of the most influential contemporary Cultural Revolution.

Conclusion

Now it can be told. First it was just a cultural promotion, to cultural progression. It was first imported to some nearby countries but it level up with those popular culture canons. First, it was just part of foreign canned entertainment but later on, it became a pattern for others to patterned and patent their own base on its influence. Korean Hallyu is another form of civilization's appreciation to what is new, to what is challenging and what is progressive according to the demands of time. The most important thing is how does this culture became part of building not necessarily the identity of one's country but the way that country sees itself to appreciate things in which others gave.

The Korean Hallyu is still in its finest. It will continue to become part of one's native culture till each culture will find its benefit to each other. Korean Hallyu is appreciated

because of its aesthetic value and at the same time because of themes that each native country can relate. Korean Hallyu is not an illusion. It is an absolute Cultural Revolution surviving because of the demand of time.

Yes, Korean Hallyu exists. It will continually exist as long as there is sense of appreciation.

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