

The Flow of Cultural Tides: The Korean Wave in Japan

A THESIS

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Asian Studies

Colorado College

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Bachelor of Arts

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May 2013

Honor Code Upheld

On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment.

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Reader Approval

This thesis project, written by Kathleen M. Senn, meets the required guidelines for partial fulfillment of the Bachelor of the Arts Degree in Asian Studies at Colorado College.

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Dedicated to

my parents, Karen and Ward Senn, without whom I would never have had the chance to pursue the passions that so enrich my life. Thank you for your warmth and unfailing support.

## Special Thanks

SB, SL, SM, YK, YY

卒業論文のお手伝いの感謝だけでなく、皆様の友愛に感謝もしたいと思います。  
その友愛が私の人生の宝物の一つです。いつも皆様の人生に幸せなことがいっぱいありますように。本当に有難うございます。お世話になりました。



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## Introduction

An important trend in Japanese popular culture that has emerged in the past ten years is the popularity of South Korean popular culture, including pop music, television dramas, cinema, cosmetics, fashion, and food. This phenomenon is known as *Hallyu* (한류) in Korean, *Kanryū* (韓流) in Japanese, and the Korean Wave in English. In Japan, the Korean Wave began with a drama called “Winter Sonata” and expanded, breathing life into Korean businesses in Tokyo’s Shin-Ōkubo most notably, and many other places within the country. However, *Hallyu*’s popularity is not without controversy, given the colonial past between South Korea and Japan that began early in the twentieth century. Books have been written, demonstrations have occurred, and websites have been created, all to destroy the power of this phenomenon. Furthermore, the popularity of *Hallyu* belies the history of hardships and discrimination for ethnic Koreans living in Japan under the title *Zainichi Chōsenjin/Kankokujin*<sup>1</sup> (在日朝鮮人 or 在日韓国人). Even so, by tapping into cultural similarities through marketing strategies, the wave goes on. As it continues, the lives of *Zainichi* Koreans and Japanese people change, some in ways associated with the passage of time itself, but also sometimes through the cultural interchange associated with the Korean Wave. The Korean Wave is full of possibilities for Japanese consumers as well as *Zainichi* Korean and South Korean people in Japan to gain cultural capital—in short, because of the Korean Wave, Japanese society is changing.



This work is divided into three chapters. The first chapter deals with globalization and related concepts as these are relevant to the Korean Wave. Next, the history of Japan-South Korea relations outside of Japan through colonization of South Korea and the social standing of the *Zainichi* Korean population inside Japan are explored. The chapter concludes with a look at the construction of Japanese multiculturalism and ways in which cultural capital can be gained by people associated with the Korean Wave in Japan. The second chapter details marketing techniques and cultural concepts that allow the Korean Wave to flourish, such as the creation of the concept of “cultural odorlessness” that led to the description of *mugukjeok* (무국적 or 無国籍, *mukokuseki* in Japanese) cultural products of Japan as described in the work of Koichi Iwabuchi and the concept of pan-East Asian masculinity described by Sun Jung, called *chogukjeok* (초국적 or 超国籍) masculinity. Finally, the third chapter discusses what the Korean Wave means in the lives of five Japanese (including *Zainichi* Korean) and South Korean youth in the present day through looking at interviews conducted in Tokyo in January 2013.

The framework used within this work is anthropological in nature, and particularly draws from the following concept, supported by the foundations of cultural anthropology: culture in all forms requires notice because it is the actions of many over a long period that create the world in which we live. A quote commonly attributed to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century anthropologist Margaret Mead encompasses this viewpoint quite well: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”<sup>2</sup> Each person’s individual actions, down to

what they consume and how they use that consumption to create meaning in their lives and the lives of others, affects the world. Because the Korean Wave in Japan represents consumption of a foreign culture for the Japanese subject, it is full of possibilities to change the way that Japanese conceptualizations of multiculturalism and *Zainichi* Koreans themselves work. Furthermore, because culture suffuses a person's actions every day, learning how this works in the context of another culture can be a personally enriching experience for the person who chooses to study a foreign culture.

Despite the conflicts surrounding Japan and South Korea's relationship and the difficulties experienced by Koreans in Japan, the Korean Wave is a successful force in Japanese popular culture which has great power to change the concept of Japanese multiculturalism. This is because the Korean Wave allows people to begin to know another culture in a non-threatening way, through the glimpses of Korean culture that Korean products sold in Japan as *Hallyu* goods offer. Regardless of the seemingly soulless march of corporate entities in hawking goods far removed from any recognizable cultural origin, it is not just the products that are sold that make up *Hallyu's* overall effect on Japanese society—rather, it is more accurate to say that it is not so much the physical objects sold can cause relationships between fans to develop in the context of the larger Korean Wave fandom, between *Zainichi* Korean or South Korean people and ethnically Japanese people, and also between *Hallyu* stars and their fans. Whether or not these connections between pop stars and their fans are more imagined than real, it is far more important that for the fans, these connections are real and truly matter.

*Hallyu* exists as a phenomenon within Japanese culture that allows people to understand more about Korea despite ethnic and political tensions, and this can allow it to

be a positive force in the lives of people inside and outside Japan even though the current political face of the country may not change for the better (indeed, may even worsen) in the years to come. It offers an avenue to *Zainichi* Koreans for the gain of cultural capital, which is especially important for groups disadvantaged in society by ethnic prejudice against them.

Thus, the following may be said of the Korean Wave in Japan: through the Korean Wave, possibilities for cultural interchange between South Korea and Japan, two countries with a difficult mutual history, are increased, and the sizeable *Zainichi* Korean population in Japan stands to gain cultural capital in Japanese society. In the same way, Japanese consumers of South Korean cultural products stand to gain cultural capital, but they also have a chance to gain personally enriching connections to South Korean culture that go far beyond simple consumption and the conceptualization of multiculturalism as being completely disposable contained within this type of consumption. The Korean Wave represents the opening of a door into a new Japan where multiculturalism runs beyond consumption, as long as Japanese people are willing to use their cultural power to open that door.

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<sup>1</sup> More specifically, *Zainichi* Korean refers to a person of ethnic Korean background in Japan—such people may have lived their entire lives in the country and been born there, but despite this they are not always considered to be full members of Japanese society, hence the marker “in Japan” (*zainichi*) which suggests foreignness. In actual practice, the identity of these people is complicated by a society telling them that they do not belong even though they have indeed lived their whole lives in Japan and their cultural knowledge is almost all or all drawn from Japanese cultural experience. The situations differ for each person, but what is important is that these people create a group who are not always thought to belong in the place that they themselves consider their home. On (perhaps only) a superficial level, the situation experienced by *Zainichi* Koreans is somewhat like that of Asian Americans in America—if it is recognized that the person physically or through naming conventions seems to have a name that sets them apart

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from the ethnic majority of the country that they are in, they become subject to discrimination and are made to feel that they do not belong to a society that, for all intents and purposes, is their society just as much as the ethnic majority. *Zainichi* should never be used on its own, because it is considered to be a slur when used in this way. The word itself can be applied to other groups within Japan, such as *zainichi amerikajin*, or Americans in Japan, but only when combined with the nationality of the person being described—in common parlance *zainichi* as a racial slur most often refers to *Zainichi* Koreans.

<sup>2</sup> The quote is attributed to Margaret Mead in *Curing Nuclear Madness* by Frank G. Sommers, Tana Dineen on page 158.

## Chapter One; Factors Affecting the Development of the Cultural Force of *Hallyu*

In order to understand the Korean Wave and its emergence in Japan, it is first necessary to comprehend discourses of globalization and how these relate to the international dissemination and creation of popular cultures. The book *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* published in 2002, and written by Koichi Iwabuchi, particularly seeks to make sense of the popularity of Japanese cultural products worldwide through an exploration and expansion of the theory of globalization into transnationalism. Sun Jung's 2011 book *Korean Masculinities and Transcultural Consumption: Yonsama, Rain, Oldboy, K-Pop Idols* extends Iwabuchi's work even further for the purpose of analyzing the power of the Korean Wave as it relates to the inter-East-Asian popularity of male stars of South Korean popular culture and the television shows, cinema, and K-Pop bands of which these stars are a part.

Globalization itself as a term refers to the manner in which information flows in an increasingly connected world to create similarities in such aspects of a country or nation's culture as its popular culture. The term has become closely associated with the concept of Americanization, or the tendency of other cultures to absorb or replace indigenous aspects of their own societies with American forms of the same, brought on by American hegemonic dominance in political, cultural, and economic realms

throughout the world (Ferguson ix). Whether American hegemony forces or merely facilitates cultural change is contingent upon which iteration of power one is considering: hard power or soft power. The Harvard Political Science professor and author, Joseph S. Nye, Jr. contrasts soft power with the use of military force by a political entity such as a nation—this use of force is known as hard power. He states that soft power means “getting other countries to want the outcomes that a particular country wants—co-opt[ing] others rather than coerc[ing] them” (Nye and Wang 18). It is necessary to understand the concept of Americanization in attempting to describe the Korean Wave not only because Americanization offers a strong example of the application of soft power on a global scale, but also because the association of globalization with Americanization represents the basis of the transcultural flows that make the Korean Wave possible. Iwabuchi details transcultural flows in Asia in his work and Jung expands upon this idea in hers, relating it to the popularity of the Korean Wave.

Iwabuchi begins by saying this about globalization: “Globalization brings about, as Hanners (1996, 102) put it, ‘an organization of diversity rather than a replication of uniformity,’ or a ‘repatriation of difference,’ which is produced by the local absorption and indigenization of homogenizing forces” (Iwabuchi 43). That is, instead of globalization itself acting as a homogenizing force, there is more to the story—once a cultural product has become part of any given country, this product is reinterpreted specifically for the use and enjoyment of the people of that country. He expands further on this idea by saying:

...If it can be argued that the hegemony of the global cultural system is articulated in globally shared “forms” (Wilk 1995), the latter also promote the production of multiple, distinct modernities in the world. In sum, a convincing analysis of the

unevenness of global interconnectedness should go beyond a global-local binary opposition. The operation of global cultural power can only be found in local practice, whereas cultural reworking and appropriation at the local level necessarily takes place within the matrix of global homogenizing forces. (Iwabuchi 44)

Through Iwabuchi's interpretation, it is possible to understand that global homogenizing forces are very much necessary to the creation of indigenous popular cultures—without an extant homogenizing force, it is impossible to reinterpret this force to create something new. Therefore, global popular culture is not only mediated by a simple unidirectional flow (homogenizing forces of globalization acting on a country's popular culture to make it more similar to, for example, American popular culture) or a bidirectional flow in which homogenizing forces are equal to localizing forces (Iwabuchi 39-40). Rather, because these forces are not evenly matched, the creation of popular culture happens through the forces reacting to each other in an, according to Roland Robertson, "interpenetrative" fashion (Quoted in Iwabuchi 40). The interaction of these forces drives transcultural flow.

Iwabuchi goes on to further explain the concept of transcultural flow by referring to "glocalism." He quotes from Mike Featherstone's 1995 *Undoing Culture: Globalization, Postmodernism, and Identity*: "[Glocalism] refers to a global strategy which does not seek to impose a standard product or image, but instead is tailored to the demands of the local market. This has become a popular strategy for multinationals in other parts of the world who seek to join the rhetoric of localism" (Quoted in Iwabuchi 46).

Sun Jung's work picks up from this point to explicate the forces at work in the Korean Wave, which Iwabuchi has introduced: globalization, glocalism or glocalization,

and transcultural flow. While Iwabuchi explains transcultural flow in terms of the “Japanization” of Asia, which is discussed in chapter two of this work, Jung applies Iwabuchi’s mention of the concept of transcultural flow in the Japanization process to say the following regarding the Korean Wave:

The hybridity of South Korean popular culture and its global consumption demonstrate re/adaptation, re/indigenization, and re/formation of the global cultural hegemony. I argue that South Korean popular culture, rather than being imposed upon by outside forces, confronts and adopts foreign cultural identities, forms, and commodities, and consequently produces a hybrid articulation of South Korean popular culture that enables its movement across cultural boundaries. In other words, the hybridity of South Korean popular culture enables transcultural flow, a flow of culture that is neither uni-directional nor bi-directional, but multi-directional. (Jung 16)

The hybrid articulation of South Korean popular culture that enables this multidirectional flow is able to enable such a flow because it surpasses what was in existence before in Asian popular culture. She explains this concept of hybridized articulation of South Korean popular culture by citing both Iwabuchi’s *Recentering Globalization* and Ding-Tzann Lii’s 1998 article about Hong Kong, *A Colonized Empire*:

...In relation to Iwabuchi’s...arguments on the regional popularity of Japanese popular culture, the current popularity of South Korean popular culture can be understood as “similar but superior” to other Asian cultures...It is evident that South Korean popular culture has been influenced by Japanese popular culture through the Japanization [dominance of Japanese cultural influence in Asia] process and has become “similar,” in other words, *mugukjeok*. This *mugukjeok* South Korean cultural product indeed reinvigorates the sense of sharing Asianness which allows the products to travel more easily in Japan and other Asian countries...[Ding-Tzann] Lii’s point of “marginal imperialism” also supports the notion of the superiority of hybridized South Korean popular culture, as she argues that one culture interacts with another and this creates a new synthesized form with a higher order than the original ones. (Jung 24)



Because the scope of this paper is limited to the popularity of the Korean Wave within Japan, it is most pertinent to talk about the concept of pan-East Asian popularity of South Korean popular culture. Certainly, pan-Asian concepts present in South Korean popular culture enable it to become popular throughout Asia,<sup>3</sup> but a closer geography lent extra possibility for the flow of culture in centuries past that enabled the similarities that currently exist in East Asian countries, particularly in terms of (but certainly not limited to) accepted forms of masculinity. The second chapter explores this masculinity in terms of the work of Koichi Iwabuchi and Sun Jung.

#### The Relationship between Japan and South Korea and its Impact on *Zainichi* Koreans

Next, in order to conceive of the scope of the Korean Wave, it is first necessary to comprehend the current state of affairs between the groups of people most affected by the Korean Wave within Japan. Because *Zainichi* Koreans in Japan are not only aware of issues in Japanese and South Korean politics but may have opinions about these issues that oppose the stances of Japanese nationals, tensions may arise on the basis of nationalist sentiment, sometimes due to a feeling of moral obligation to side with one's ethnic group. Thus, part of this chapter is intended to assist readers in comprehending what perceptions of Koreans in Japan are prior to analyzing specificities of the Korean Wave, and through this increased knowledge, the scope may be better understood.

While current economic and political trends seem to suggest that Japan and South Korea should increasingly come together to solve issues of security and economic growth (June Park 62), it is less through a mere cost-benefit analysis that the two contextualize their relationship and more through their history as imperialist power and colonial subject and the memories of that time period that inform the lukewarm political relationship

between them (Tae-Hyo Kim 114). In conjunction with these issues, the Korean individual in Japanese society faces a history of stigma not only exacerbated by Japanese colonization of Korea, but a history stretching centuries earlier. Comprehending the position of Korean people in Japan not only requires the knowledge of governmental issues between South Korea and Japan, but also the acknowledgment of individual suffering experienced by Koreans in Japan due to government and individual-level discrimination. From the point of view of some Japanese nationals, the colonization of Korea was completely justified because they believe their culture to be superior to Korean culture. In the same manner that other imperial powers have imposed their will on colonial subjects (e.g., the United States in the Philippines in 1898) and honestly believed that their actions would ultimately influence their supposed social inferiors, it would seem that some Japanese nationals believed that their justification came through a desire to lift up the people of Korea and teach them to live correctly. In addition to this, it would seem that certain political officials, for whatever reason, be it due to personal desire to justify Japanese wartime actions, a lack of information, or political pressures, do not share widely accepted beliefs regarding Japanese practices during this period. For example, some Japanese politicians regard the prostitute status of comfort women as completely voluntary. Despite these beliefs, the women who served in such roles have stated that they were in fact forced into them.<sup>4</sup>

#### A Brief Survey of Issues in Japanese-South Korean Affairs in the Context of Korea's Status as a Former Colony

A great deal of the present problems between South Korea and Japan were generated in the early twentieth century during Japanese colonization of South Korea.<sup>5</sup>

Five important issues standing in the way of a better relationship between South Korea and Japan are as follows: obfuscation of Japanese crimes both during and before World War II against groups including Koreans in national textbooks (Hundt and Bleiker 62) despite evidence of these crimes, visits to Yasukuni Shrine (Cooney and Scarbrough 183), ignorance or outright denial regarding the issue of “comfort women” despite international evidence of their existence (Yang 79), the debate over ownership of the island known as either Dokdo or Takeshima (Choi, Kim, and Cho 366), and what are considered by many people of Korean ethnicity to be insufficient apologies for suffering inflicted on other peoples through Japanese colonial rule and during the Second World War (Cooney and Scarbrough 173). In particular, the past and present denial of issues by the Japanese government keeps the possibility for the further transgression of denial open in the eyes of those affected by such historical incidents.

In comprehending the strained relationship between Japan and South Korea, it is necessary to understand the emotional utility of issues experienced between the two. These issues have far less to do with political and economic rationality than they do with the emotional need of the South Korean people to feel that what they see as Japan’s former atrocities have been brought to light in a satisfying way, and the opposing Japanese need to retain a conceptualization of their historical actions as justified, benign, and even benevolent, without coercion, imposition of cultural loss upon Koreans through colonization, or unjustified cruelty.

### Comfort Women

During Japan’s colonial period in Korea, attempts to destroy Korean culture were enacted through such measures as the banning of teaching the Korean language and the

changing of names to Japanized forms, as well as the glorification of Japanese culture (Cooney and Scarbrough 175). In addition to this, the Japanese military took, among other groups, Korean women as sex slaves during World War II and called them “comfort women” (Ibid.). Although some recent Japanese politicians have apologized for these issues at various points in the past two decades or at the very least acknowledged their veracity as Konō Yōhei<sup>6</sup> did in 1993 (Cooney and Scarbrough 185), admitting that the Japanese military did play a role in the “transport and recruitment of comfort women” there is considerable backsliding as their successors choose to nullify the comments made previously (Ibid.). Former (and once again current) Prime Minister Abe Shinzō’s government attempted to do this after Konō’s statement had been released (Ibid.). Politicians may choose to deny that the Japanese military had any involvement in the forced sexual slavery of comfort women, as Liberal Democratic Party Congressman Okuno Seisuke suggested in July 1996,<sup>7</sup> or even denying that comfort women existed at all, as Former Vice-Secretary of International Trade and Industry Watanuki Tamisuke did later the same year in September (Yang 78).

#### Yasukuni Shrine

Although remarks regarding comfort women are inflammatory in and of themselves to South Koreans, Japan’s most prominent political figure, the Prime Minister, tends to be the office of other political officials who insist upon making visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, which not only honors Japan’s war dead but also class A war criminals (Cooney and Scarbrough 183), yet another problem in Japanese-South Korean relations. Those considered war criminals participated in such activities as medical experimentation on unwilling prisoners, sexual assault of women, and the killing of civilians in Manchuria.

It is primarily important to note that the reason why visits to Yasukuni Shrine by Japanese political officials are particularly inflammatory because these visits are conducted in the official capacity of Japanese political representative and unite church (through the Shinto shrine) with state rather than keeping the two separated as stipulated by the Japanese constitution. Secondly, it would seem that visits to Yasukuni Shrine mark a political endorsement of every action undertaken by those who are enshrined within. Prime Ministers who have visited Yasukuni Shrine in a political capacity include Nakasone Yasuhiro (Hundt and Bleiker 77) (in the seventies), Hashimoto Ryūtarō (Ibid.), and Koizumi Jun'ichirō (Cooney and Scarbrough 183), as well as Tokyo Governor Ishihara Shintarō (Hundt and Bleiker 78), who has governed the metropolis since 1999.<sup>8</sup> Even the second most recent (at the time of this writing, Abe Shinzō was the current Prime Minister) Prime Minister Noda Yoshihiko has made statements suggesting that he does not believe this to be true as lately as August 2011.<sup>9</sup> Although the official Japanese political position on both acts performed during the colonization and occupation of Korea and wartime deeds has been murky as early as the seventies, the trend has not changed even as the Japanese Prime Minister changes, and there seems to be no chance of a final resolution being reached regarding these issues at the present time and in the foreseeable future.

### Insufficient Apologies

Continued visits to Yasukuni Shrine by Japanese political officials can act to diminish the meaning of apologies given for Japanese crimes during colonial rule because they suggest that Japanese officials do not believe that injustices due to Japanese national actions toward South Koreans occurred during World War II. When former Prime

Minister Koizumi apologized for the actions of Japanese people during South Korean colonization, it was impossible to accept his words completely free from doubt and hesitation as to his true feelings, since he had previously visited Yasukuni Shrine (Cooney and Scarbrough 183). Further problems with apologies made by Japanese officials regarding the wording and political validity of such statements are revealed in the response of former comfort women to some of these apologies, as stated on the Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues website:

The Japanese government has not offered an official apology. A few past Japanese Prime Ministers expressed regret, but the apology they offered was expression of their personal feelings, not the official apology from Japanese government. When the Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryotaro issued the "letter of apology (owabi in Japanese)" to be sent along with the money from the Asian Women's Fund in 1996, it was not the serious acknowledgment of wrong doing and proffering of an apology (shazai in Japanese). The expression "owabi" in Japanese in most cases means a sense of apology slightly weightier than an "Excuse me." Even though it is an expression with a wide scope for interpretation, the Prime Minister's owabi in this case can only be interpreted as something trivial since the Japanese government refused to acknowledge any crime.<sup>10</sup>

The Japanese Embassy in America maintains a webpage regarding apologies to the comfort women given by Japanese officials, maintaining that these apologies are meant to be taken as not only individual, but government statements.<sup>11</sup> For this reason, one wonders why no official legislation—that is, a legally binding statement showing that Japan acknowledges the existence of comfort women and involuntary nature of the position in which they served—has been undertaken, since this would appear to resolve the problem in the eyes of the comfort women. Ultimately, the apologies have failed to carry the necessary weight to truly feel not only like honest admissions of wrongdoing, but the will to correct these transgressions in a manner acceptable to the people harmed by them.

## Textbooks

When learning about Japan's imperial history, it is unclear to what degree students are aware of Japanese actions in South Korea and other locations, such as Manchuria, especially in reference to the infamous Rape of Nanking and the existence of comfort women, whereas these two historical events are considered factual beyond doubt and taught about in schools outside of Japan. In May 2001, people were upset when a textbook euphemistically suggesting that colonization was "necessary for regional security" as well as complete omission of the comfort women issue, was released in Japan (Cooney and Scarbrough 183). Thirty-five changes were proposed, but continuing his trend of problematic relations with South Korea, Prime Minister Koizumi resisted the changes since the book had already been approved (Cooney and Scarbrough 182-183). In 2005 (Hundt and Bleiker 75) and 2009 (Kim 139) issues regarding textbooks erupted again. Since this has happened every four years in conjunction with the release of new textbooks, it is important to consider the negative effects should controversy once again arise in 2013. Consistent controversy has only weakened the relationship between South Korea and Japan, and it is difficult to imagine any kind of reconciliation when textbooks were a problem as recently as three years ago. If the memory of what happened under Japanese colonization and occupation is still fresh in the minds of South Korean people, it would be nigh unbelievable to think that three years is long enough to forget that, in the minds of South Koreans, Japanese officials have not written (or approved the printing of) statements regarding Japan's actions that satisfy international communities as far back as 1905.

## Dokdo/Takeshima

The Dokdo/Takeshima debate, over who owns what are known in English as the Liancourt Rocks, has been going strong until the present day. The most recent example of this was during the 2012 Summer London Olympics when South Korean soccer player Jong-woo Park held up a sign saying “Dokdo is ours” in Korean after finishing a soccer match.<sup>12</sup> However, South Korean President Lee Myung-Bak visited Dokdo/Takeshima only hours before the controversy with Park, upsetting Japan enough to cause the withdrawal of the Japanese ambassador from Seoul, according to Prime Minister Noda Yoshihiko.<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, and unfortunately for the relationship between Japan and South Korea, Park’s sign display happened right after the game between South Korea and Japan for the bronze medal in soccer.<sup>14</sup> Because of regulations pertaining to athletes’ inability to make political statements on the field, Park was barred from receiving his bronze medal, but the impact of his choice only added to Lee’s visit. In Jinman Cho, HeeMin Kim, and Jun Young Choi’s<sup>15</sup> paper detailing specifics of the Dokdo/Takeshima debate, the reasons for the controversy are laid bare:

Why is it so important for Koreans and Japanese to gain sovereignty over Dokdo/Takeshima? First, it can be said that the anti-Japanese sentiment among Koreans dating back to Japanese colonialism in the early 20th century is also found in the Dokdo dispute today. Koreans believe that Japan’s claim over Dokdo is completely unfounded and sort of an internee of having colonized the Korean Peninsula by force in 1910. In short, it is a shameless act of subconscious colonialism. In this context, Korea’s claim over Dokdo is fundamentally based on national pride. Japan’s taking even an inch of Dokdo would be considered a national humiliation second time around. (Choi, Kim, and Cho 370-371)

The authors later go on to present the utility of Dokdo/Takeshima in terms of military usage, fishing capacity, and the availability of other natural resources (Choi, Kim, and Cho 372-373). According to them, it seems that until the combination of emotional and



utilitarian factors changes in some way, the debate will rage continuously (Choi, Kim, and Cho 374-375). Although the aforementioned issues constitute a considerable roadblock to positive relations in the governmental sector, these fail to encompass another important aspect of Japanese sentiment regarding Koreans.

#### The Trouble With (Being a) *Zainichi Chōsenjin/Kankokujin*

In short, as Bumsoo Kim describes, *Zainichi* Koreans include those Korean immigrants who arrived in the country due to the annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910 onward to the present day, due in part to their ability prewar to perform cheap labor, and wartime forced conscription into the Japanese military (Kim Bumsoo 875-876). At the present moment, there are a considerable number of *Zainichi* Koreans who are not actually first generation, but rather two or three generations into their family line who have lived in Japan. In a literal sense, *Zainichi* means “in Japan,” and is not only attached to the nationality of Korean (*Chōsenjin* or *Kankokujin*, depending on whether they are, respectively, North Korean or South Korean) but also any nationality that lives in Japan but is not considered to be “native,” such as *Zainichi Chuugokujin*, or *Zainichi* Chinese nationals. Although this is the case, *Zainichi* has in the past been a derogatory way to refer to Koreans living in Japan when the second half, *Chōsenjin* or *Kankokujin*, is not attached. The term itself is problematic in that it is a clear marker of otherness in Japanese eyes—even if a family has lived in Japan for several generations, and a child who is ethnically Korean is born, that child may be marked by the term *Zainichi* and excluded on the basis of ethnic origin from parts of Japanese society although their cultural upbringing accurately reflects the social norms of the country in which they live.

Further explanation of the current face of *Zainichi* discrimination exists in Bumsoo Kim's 2008 paper presented at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Midwest Political Science Association conference, "Bringing Class Back In: The Changing Basis of Inequality and the Korean Minority in Japan." He explains that although *Zainichi* Koreans may lack the barrier of legal discrimination to hold them back, interviews with several *Zainichi* Koreans revealed that they still experience discrimination from individuals around them, particularly when applying for jobs finding that they are considered to be foreigners. 2012 brought with it the abolishment of the alien registration system under which *Zainichi* Koreans were considered to be foreigners in the same way that a visitor of a duration exceeding ninety days had been, even if a *Zainichi* Korean had lived in Japan all his or her life and had been born there (Suzuki and Ōiwa 165). However, even though this abolishment took place, *Zainichi* Koreans are still subject to the new registration system for foreign nationals under the heading of "special permanent residents."<sup>16</sup> *Zainichi* Koreans are restricted to having the same rights as other people considered foreign nationals, meaning they lack suffrage. The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs states:

The Constitution guarantees the human rights of [*Zainichi* Koreans] as mentioned before, although they do not have the rights that are not applicable to foreign nationals such as suffrage or freedom of entry into Japan, because they do not have Japanese nationality. Thus, Korean residents in Japan are basically treated in the same way as other foreign residents under the domestic law.<sup>17</sup>

Regardless of how much time a *Zainichi* Korean may have spent directly affected by Japanese politics through living in Japan, he or she lacks the legal capacity to make his or her voice heard through suffrage.

Bumsoo Kim's paper adds to the comprehension of hardships faced by *Zainichi* Koreans through its focus on class discrimination, and may be summed up by using the words of one of his interviewees:

The lives of *Zainichi* Koreans aren't the same any more. There're so many differences depending on education and money . . . . In order to succeed in Japanese society, one must have either education or money at least . . . . These days it is difficult for those born to a poor family to achieve high education. In this regard, I think, the significance of family's [class] background is increasing [in determining the life chances of *Zainichi* Koreans]. (Quoted in Bumsoo Kim 891-892)

In summary, the trouble with being a *Zainichi* Korean is subjection to not only legal but general societal discrimination leveled against these people regardless of cultural upbringing, and particularly in the case of trying to find employment, though some people interviewed by Kim placed emphasis on daily discrimination over work sector discrimination and others did the opposite (Kim Bumsoo 886). From the angle of mainstream Japanese society, *Zainichi* Koreans have been seen as having "criminal tenden[cies]" (Kim Bumsoo 879) as one stigma against them in a sea of supposed issues surrounding *Zainichi* otherness. As previously stated, because the face of relations between Japan and South Korea becomes, within Japan, the face of relations between groups separated by ethnicity, it is important to acknowledge these notions in a treatment of the scope of trends within the country, particularly *Hallyu*.

#### Social Mobility and Cultural Capital because of the Korean Wave in Japan

Cultural capital is a term coined by Pierre Bourdieu and refers to sum of the non-economic assets that a person possesses, which ultimately allows that person to be capable of social mobility. These assets may include such things as other people in the

sense of a relationship (e.g., being friends with a celebrity might confer upon a person social prestige that allows them to do things that they otherwise would not be able to do, such as gain access to certain social circles), linguistic competence, a collection of memorabilia, ethnic background, or national identity. In the case of memorabilia, it is not the economic value of such pieces that confers cultural capital, but rather how much memorabilia and what kind of memorabilia it is (e.g., an autographed CD) that confer cultural capital.

Ashley Carruthers' article entitled *Cute Logics of the Multicultural and the Consumption of the Vietnamese Exotic in Japan* explores the popularity of Vietnamese handmade goods (*zakka* in Japanese, or 雑貨) in Japan, particularly Tokyo, and how this popularity creates or does not create cultural capital for the Vietnamese community in Japan. The past popularity of Vietnamese *zakka* in Japan mirrors the situation of *Hallyu* goods in Tokyo and Japan at large in some important ways that enable a comparison of the cultural logic behind this interest in popular goods from another country by Japanese people, though there are also some important differences. It is most important to understand these similarities in order to understand how cultural capital functions for two groups related to the Korean Wave in Japan: consumers of the Korean Wave, and the *Zainichi* Korean population, who sometimes serve as the Korean Wave's facilitators. Before that, however, a theoretical basis for multiculturalism is important in working out what kinds of similarities are able to exist in the case of Vietnamese pop culture in Japan and the Korean Wave in Japan.

## Understanding Multiculturalism in Japan

Understanding cultural capital also requires an understanding of the concept of multiculturalism. In the case of Japan, two theories are at work: first, that Japan is homogeneous and singular when compared to other countries which is signified by the term *nihonjinron* (日本人論, literally “theory of Japanese people”), and second, that Japan is unique in its ability to take outside cultural elements and reshape them for Japanese use, suffusing these elements with an essential “Japaneseness” as part of the process (Carruthers 405-406). The concept of any culture as being singular is easier to combat than the concept of cultural uniqueness because cultural singularity is the more extreme of the two. A body of work surrounding *nihonjinron* exists not only in Japanese but also in English, even including work by Koichi Iwabuchi who topples the theory to the ground. Carruthers quotes him, saying “As Koichi Iwabuchi notes, the reality of ‘fortress Japan’ can, increasingly, ‘only be found in representation’” (Carruthers 406). Carruthers then goes on to say that the second theory of Japanese multiculturalism explains away the multiculturalism present within the country by suggesting that the country can absorb everything foreign that it touches and make it Japanese, and thus monoethnic (Ibid.). As she goes on to say, this renders the Japanese subject able to view other cultures from a center of power: “Slavoj Žižek notes that in liberal multiculturalism, the dominant national subject occupies the position of ‘the privileged empty point of universality from which one is able to appreciate (and depreciate) properly other particular cultures’” (Carruthers 423). Although Carruthers also draws from Ghassan Hage’s work about white liberal multiculturalism, she is able to use this research to talk

effectively about how Japanese multiculturalism works. First, she quotes his work directly:

When Hage speaks of [migrant] subjectlessness, he means that within the highly abstract conception of culture embodied in consumer multiculturalism, the migrant cannot be imagined as a social and political actor located in the national field. Rather, the agent at the center of cosmo-multiculturalism is the (middle-class) white national subject, who is redeemed and empowered by the possibility of appropriating the difference of the exotic other—in short, becoming cosmopolitan. (Carruthers 404)

Next, through explaining the cultural appropriation of Vietnamese cultural artifacts such as the traditional long dress (*ao dai*) in Japan, she effectively transfers this concept to the situation at hand (Carruthers 424-425). Another important point that she makes about multiculturalism is that:

As Bruner has succinctly put it, “The Other in our geography is a sight of disgust; the Other in their geography is a source of pleasure.” One might refine this observation by adding that it is embodied and inappropriable otherness which is disgusting in “our” geography, while consumable exoticism is, more often than not, a welcome sight: not Afghan refugees but Afghan restaurants. I would assert that two distinct and hierarchically ordered multicultural logics apply to the two categories of otherness described above: that of multiculturalism as consumed (the dominant logic), and that of multiculturalism as “lived” (the subordinate logic). This distinction broadly conforms to that sometimes made between diversity and difference in critical multicultural theory. “Normative liberal multiculturalism, it is argued, fosters diversity in the form of an ideology of soft cultural pluralism, identity choice, and consumption, and thus is a multiculturalism that “celebrate[s] difference without making a difference.” (Carruthers 403)

Therefore, besides the problematic world that is cultural appropriation, the simple existence of multiculturalism does not necessarily bode well in terms of the probability of fostering cross-cultural understanding—in fact, because there are two multicultural logics that people and objects can be separately compartmentalized into, it is dangerous to rely on the existence of multiculturalism alone in facilitating positive change in cross-cultural understanding. For the purposes of this discussion, Carruthers’ following statement

regarding the operation of multiculturalism through consumption is one of the most relevant in the article: “[It] is often assumed that the benign pursuit of multicultural consumption is the same thing as tolerance, recognition, cultural rights, and social justice. Alternatively, it is assumed that the first must necessarily lead to the second” (Carruthers 403-404). From this discussion of the way in which Japanese concepts of multiculturalism function, we now turn to the specifics of cultural capital gained through the popularity of foreign goods in Japan, and the similarities between the case of the popularity of Vietnamese *zakka* in Japan and the case of Korean Wave.

#### Similarities Between the Popularity of Vietnamese *Zakka* and the Korean Wave

Similarities between the way that the popularity of Vietnamese *zakka* and the Korean Wave in Japan work exist both in the case of the creation of cultural capital for Japanese purveyor of foreign goods, and the people who are the object of interest as the keepers of the foreign goods. First, I would like to focus on the case of the cultural capital gained by a Japanese subject because of their consumption of foreign goods.

#### The Japanese Subject Pursuing Consumable Multiculturalism

As mentioned previously, cultural capital can be gained through relationships, collections, and linguistic knowledge. However, Carruthers points out that another way to gain cultural capital is through travel to the foreign country from where the currently popular goods come:

Since the Meiji era, overseas travelers have been important mediators of the West, and “the foreign” in general, for domestic Japanese consumption. Overseas travel has also historically been a means of achieving prestige and asserting one’s class credentials; indeed, as Joseph Tobin observes, “the tradition of living in New York, London, or Paris to acquire cultural capital continues to this day.” While the Euramerican classicism of the big three global cities remains perhaps the most valuable source of symbolic capital for Japanese sojourners, living in a Southeast Asian city has become, at least since the emergence of a “new Asianism” in Japan

in the 1990s, a way of accumulating what Pierre Bourdieu calls “extra-curricular” cultural capital. This “outlandish” capital lacks classical respectability, but all the same it “can often yield high symbolic profit.” (Carruthers 408)

Although Carruthers is specifically talking about travel to Southeast Asia, it has recently also become popular for Korean Wave fans in Japan to travel to locations in South Korea, sometimes merely for souvenir shopping (which Carruthers mentions elsewhere as the goal of Japanese trips to Ho Chi Minh City), sometimes to visit the locations shown in beloved Korean dramas, and sometimes to watch for their favorite pop stars outside of the studios where some of South Korea’s most popular music shows are filmed (Huat 151). It is possible to extrapolate that this kind of travel, in the same way it functioned in the case of the popularity of Vietnamese goods, works to give the Japanese person interested in the Korean Wave “extra-curricular cultural capital” among people in Japanese society who value the experience of traveling to South Korea, either through association with the Korean Wave, or the sense of cosmopolitanism conferred upon someone who goes abroad by societal peers in a more general sense. Furthermore, travel to the country that is the object of interest can gain the visitor cultural capital through the use of knowledge gained abroad to take objects back to Japan and act as a mediator of the foreign culture through direct communication with people in the foreign culture, who can assist the Japanese subject in getting these objects and then selling them to others.

Carruthers has mentioned this in the case of travelers to Vietnam, saying:

Other Japanese sojourners I was acquainted with in Ho Chi Minh City had converted their Vietnamese experience into not only symbolic but also economic capital by setting themselves up as “backpacker entrepreneurs.” As subjects with a degree of cultural knowledge of both Vietnam and Japan, they found themselves in a position to be able to mediate between local producers and the Japanese tourist market, selecting and even producing goods (using local seamstresses and other artisans) calculated to appeal to Japanese tastes. These “expatriate-cosmopolitans” were in fact selling their own “cool,” adventurous, and



transgressive lifestyles to other Japanese shoppers, tourists and post-tourists.  
(Carruthers 409)

Because of the large number of businesses selling South Korean goods in Shin-Ōkubo alone, much less other places in Japan, it is possible to estimate that the same kind of cultural exchange is taking place from South Korea to Japan through Japanese mediators. One specific example is the Avex Entertainment Group, which controls much of Japan's music market, as well as the distribution and production of Japanese language versions of South Korean *Hallyu* music and Japanese fan clubs for groups such as TVXQ, Afterschool, and Super Junior.<sup>18</sup> In fact, music that was sung by artists such as TVXQ in Japanese originally is then imported and repackaged by Avex into South Korea for Korean consumption and enjoyment. This is an excellent example of the multidirectional flow that comprises the Korean Wave in action.

Another similarity between the consumption of Vietnamese and South Korean goods in Japan is that collections of items from either country can represent connections with the foreign culture, although whether or not these are deep connections depends greatly on the consuming subject. For some subjects, this connection is shallow because it is only the amassment of possessions, but that alone is still enough to convey cultural capital upon the consumer. Carruthers writes:

As with other consumer subcultures in Japan, the consumption of the Vietnamese exotic can become extraordinarily fetishistic. Thus, alongside objects that announce their hybridity, openly catering to the Japanese sense of *kawaii* but with a Vietnamese flourish, one also finds Vietnamese products that are free from the mediation of the Japanese sensibility: aluminum muffin tins and teapots, copies of glossy Vietnamese magazines, videos of ao dai beauty contests, Vietnamese tea and coffee, primary school exercise books, floral plastic toilet paper dispensers, and even toothpicks. The recognition and purchase of these "authentic" symbolic and material products potentially allows the consumer to signify a "deep" engagement with Vietnam that involves experience and cultural knowledge. Alternatively, they may be consumed in a purely fetishistic mode, as with the

non-Vietnamese speaker who buys a magazine that is unintelligible to her simply to have something that is authentically Vietnamese. (Carruthers 410)

If someone looks to gain prestige through consumption, it is enough that such a person possesses large amounts of goods that are of interest not only to the consumer but to others. The Japanese chain Mandarake, based out of Tokyo's Nakano District, acts as a resale point for merchandise from various Japanese consumer subcultures, demonstrating both the appeal of amassment of items for the gain of cultural capital that these items confer, and the "throwaway" mentality surrounding a superficial attraction to a particular cultural phenomenon. While Mandarake focuses mainly on *anime* (Japanese animation, アニメ) and *manga* (Japanese comics, 漫画) related items, the chain also carries items from Japanese and South Korean idol bands. Browsing through the items, it is easy to find an item limited to distribution among Japan's TVXQ (Tohoshinki)<sup>19</sup> fan club, for instance, that has been resold after its original owner has abandoned it for whatever reason. The depth of commitment to a subculture that involves consumption is not always as important to the consumer as the cultural capital that they might gain from it.

Turning back to the subject of the performance of multiculturalism in Japan, Carruthers points out that some Japanese travelers to Vietnam used the experience of being abroad to raise themselves in society in two ways: one, through having a connection to Vietnamese culture which is the source of cultural capital, and two, that it allows the status quo of Japanese multiculturalism to continue. First, she states that, in the case of a group of Japanese people who centered their lives around their interest in Vietnam,

While members of the group had traveled to and lived in other countries (Indonesia, New Zealand, and Malaysia), none identified with any as a facet of identity as closely as with Vietnam—demonstrating that the group members'

Vietnamese cultural capital functioned as a viable source of social distinction (in the twin sense of difference and superiority) from their peers. (Carruthers 409)

The superiority among peers that Carruthers points out here is cultural capital itself. Next, when Carruthers talks about how the way that consumption of Vietnamese goods allows the current mode of Japanese multiculturalism to be reproduced, this reproduction implies the gain of cultural capital among Japanese subjects. That is, because the goods are being consumed, Vietnameseness<sup>20</sup> is therefore reinforced as being different from Japaneseness, conferring prestige upon the “invisible” Japanese subject. By consuming other cultures in an effort to solidify one’s own cultural identity in opposition to these cultures, the subject is raised and the foreign culture is lowered. She writes,

If “we understand ourselves by looking at the foreign,” then the consumption of Vietnamese *zakka* is to be understood as a practice that allows the Japanese consumer to dally with Vietnamese versions of the self. For Iwabuchi, such dalliances even have a certain normative identificatory function. He argues that the important ideological term *kokusaika* (internationalization) “manufactures an empty space within the dominant ideology [of sameness], into which people can invest their own desires differently but positively. . . . *Kokusaika* tries to erase ‘any direct encounter with Others’ and instead encourages people to meet abstract ‘Japaneseness.’” In the consumption of Vietnamese *zakka*, it is of course not the “real” Vietnam that matters, but rather the “discovery” of the abstract Japanese self reflected in the mirror of Vietnameseness. (Carruthers 411)

Thus, even though consumption of foreign goods might result in profit for the person who sells them, depending on the way that the consumer engages with them, increased cultural capital might be a result and increased cross-cultural understanding might not. The Japanese subject retains power throughout the exchange of goods for money. It is, however, also possible that consumption can yield more positive outcomes if the consumer wishes to wield power in a way that becomes constructive for cross-cultural understanding—instead of using consumption to raise themselves while simultaneously maintaining the status quo of multiculturalism in Japan and lowering the people and

culture of interest, it might be possible for a consumer to—through the creation of meaningful relationships, for instance, allowing a culture to be seen as more than just consumable objects—raise the cultural capital of someone who has little. Simply, the person who wields power is able to choose what they do with such power, and that does not mean that taking power from others in the process is the only option. Rather, by reaching out and beginning to see people as more than the sum total of their ethnicity and how manipulation of that ethnicity offers selfish gains, it is then possible for power to be shared in society. The dominant theory of multiculturalism in Japan can change, as long as the wielders of societal prestige and power are willing to use their power in a way that does not prevent this from happening.

Where the Japanese subject stands to gain much in the way of cultural capital from consumer encounters with foreign culture, the possibilities of increased cultural capital for the people of a culture that is being consumed are fewer. Furthermore, the possibility for increased cultural capital does not necessarily make up for experienced disadvantages in society—as Bumsoo Kim writes, the *Zainichi* Korean people have met discrimination in Japanese society that can make parts of everyday life that come easily to a person whose ethnic background is fully (or, at least, assumed to be fully by sight) Japanese. The kind of cultural capital that a *Zainichi* Korean person in Japan can gain through their association with South Korean culture is that which is afforded due to ethnicity itself, or, similarly to Carruthers' portrait of Vietnamese people in Japan, through commerce. She sums up the situation by saying that:

There are also a small number of Tokyo Vietnam boutiques with Vietnamese-Japanese owners, such as Kim Dinh, proprietor of Shop Vietnam in downtown Shinjuku, who have found themselves suddenly able to “profit” from their diasporic position. On the one hand, they have been able to use their Vietnamese

contacts and overseas Vietnamese investor status to get privileged access to cheap labor, and on the other, they have been able to deploy their (imperfect) understandings of Japanese aesthetics and consumption to become relatively successful retailers of the Vietnamese exotic (thus Kim Dinh takes orders for ao dai in Tokyo and has them made in her factory in Ho Chi Minh City). (Carruthers 412-413)

Through my experience in Shin-Ōkubo over the year that I spent in Tokyo, I was able to understand this concept of cultural capital through commerce, particularly in the case of young, attractive men of South Korean ethnic background. This is because there are a number of cafes capitalizing on the popularity of the Korean Wave in Shin-Ōkubo (and, I imagine, in other Koreatowns in Japan) that specifically seek to hire attractive young men to attract female customers. One particularly vivid memory from my time spent in Tokyo of this type of advertisement is during a hot summer day in Shin-Ōkubo. While walking down the main street of the area with some Japanese female friends, a young, attractive, and visibly ethnically Korean male spoon-fed ice cream to one of my friends. Because there is a concept of South Korean sex appeal in Japan due to the popularity of the Korean Wave, this young man was able to turn his attractive figure into cultural capital. For women of a Korean ethnic background, whether immigrants to Japan or *Zainichi* Koreans, their knowledge of Korean beauty products can be a useful form of cultural capital for obtaining a job in one of Shin-Ōkubo's many Korean cosmetic shops. Of course, rather than merely being hired, it is much more profitable (and risky) to open one's own business relating to the Korean Wave, but in any of these cases, the *Zainichi* Korean or South Korean subject can gain cultural capital. This is possible through linguistic competence in Korean which may also lead to an increase in economic capital, or through physical ethnic Korean appearance, which might lead to a romantic relationship that confers further cultural capital, depending on the social status of the

other person in the relationship. Having a job is an important part of being a member of society, so it is important not to underestimate the importance of the Korean Wave's ability to confer cultural capital upon *Zainichi* Korean people.

*Zainichi* Koreans in Japan and Vietnamese People in Japan

The largest difference between what Carruthers writes of Vietnamese people in Japan and the situation of *Zainichi* Koreans in Japan is numerically based, but also extends to history inside the country. She says:

...The desire for Vietnamese-ness is not at all inconsistent with the desire to keep Vietnamese refugees and migrant workers out of Japan. Not only are authentic ethnic subjects not required to mediate the consumption of the Vietnamese exotic, but, as we have seen, this consumption takes place most “comfortably” in their absence. The Japanese fantasy of multicultural consumption stages the desire for a nation that, beneath the superficial surface of internationalized consumption, is not in fact plural in any substantive sense. (Carruthers 423)

Whereas it is easier to put Vietnamese people out of mind easily while in Japan because they do not live in the country in great numbers, this is impossible in the case of *Zainichi* Koreans, simply because there are so many of them compared to Vietnamese people in the country, and because the history of *Zainichi* Koreans is directly tied to Japan's colonization of Korea. It does not make sense for Korean culture in Japan to be mediated by non-Korean people in the same way that it makes sense for Vietnamese culture by non-Vietnamese people, because mediation of a culture is most often left up to the people of that culture. Certainly, Korean restaurants in Japan change their cuisine to suit the Japanese palate, and there are people with no ethnic Korean background working in Korean restaurants, but because *Zainichi* Korean history is a very big part of Japanese history, it is highly likely that someone of Korean ethnic background mediates Korean cultural products in Japan. It is much harder to ignore the existence of the *Zainichi*

Korean minority group in Japan than it might be to ignore a very small Vietnamese minority, so Japanese people are forced in most cases to interact directly with *Zainichi* Koreans in order to have a chance to maximize their cultural capital through encounters with Korean culture. Even though mainstream music stores such as HMV and Tower Records carry some K-Pop albums, for example, the selection is limited and it makes more sense for a consumer to go to a shop with more options, likely run by a *Zainichi* Korean person who is able to get more merchandise through international channels. If a person is interested in the Korean Wave in Japan, they will certainly deal with many *Zainichi* Korean people. Even with no interest in the Korean Wave, they will certainly encounter a *Zainichi* Korean person in their everyday life at some point. Because the *Zainichi* Korean population has something desired by Japanese society either directly or indirectly (i.e, a connection with Korea, or indirectly, because as members of Japanese society they generally work jobs and thus contribute to a generally desired working society), cultural capital can be gained by a *Zainichi* Korean person in ways from which a Vietnamese person might not be able to benefit in the same way.

#### Possibilities for Japanese Multiculturalism

Where Carruthers points out that there is a popular perception (endnote 7) that white liberal multiculturalism in shallow ways can lead to multiculturalism in deep ways in the context of her look at a paper that explores white liberal multiculturalism in a critical fashion, she does not actually attempt to refute this popular opinion. Her argument is more generally focused on the possibilities of Japanese multiculturalism for Vietnamese immigrants, and she makes two particularly valid and relevant points: first, that there is indeed a difference between shallow and deep multiculturalism and that it is

folly to simply assume that the former leads to the latter, and second, that the actual social mobility acquired by Vietnamese people in Japan because of the popularity of cute Vietnamese goods is quite limited. It is certainly an excellent cautionary tale, but it does not ever seek to disprove that the link between shallow multiculturalism and deeper multiculturalism exists. Finding out exactly how many people actually cross over from interest in a subculture that celebrates, in some form, a culture, to actual comprehension of that culture on a deep level is not easily possible in the sense that different people might have different ways of assessing the same degree of cultural knowledge in a particular subculture's adherents. (ranging from somewhat disconnected from a particular country's current reality in the case of diasporic subcultures, simply because of the physical absence of a diasporic person from the country to which they feel bound by heritage or prior residence, to attenuated or even bastardized in the case of subcultures where the culture that creates the subject of the interest is not understood well, or even understood at all by the adherents of the subculture) Furthermore, if one has moved to a deep level of understanding, the subculture may become upsetting in its misperceptions of a certain culture to such a person, who then leaves, and thus, gathering data from this person—indeed, finding them in the first place—is rendered difficult.

Thus, in this case, it is most important that such a link cannot be disproven, even when it is looked at in a critical light. Combining this conclusion with the perception that change on an individual level matters because it eventually changes the world, consumption definitely matters. When confronting large societal issues, like the social mobility of ethnic minorities in any country, at the same time as it is important not to overlook a dire situation for small progress, it is also important that progress be



understood when it does occur because it is possible that big solutions can come from small steps forward.

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<sup>3</sup> Of course, the Korean Wave also exists in other areas of the world excluding Asia, such as North America, South America (Brazil, for example), Europe (France, where SM Entertainment has held various concerts), and Australia, but this is not necessarily because of pan-Asian identity, although it may be occasionally the case in terms of Asian diasporas in these places.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.comfort-women.org/faq.html>

<sup>5</sup> The period of Japanese colonization of Korea lasted from 1910 to 1945, and included measures taken to remove the influence of Korean culture from the Korean people, such as name changes to Japanized versions of Korean names enforced upon the population as well as a ban placed on use of the Korean language in favor of the use of Japanese.

<sup>6</sup> Excluding the case of Koichi Iwabuchi who writes his own name without macrons and in English order in the context of his English language publications, I have used the revised Hepburn System of Romanization for Japanese words and Japanese name order for Japanese names throughout this work.

<sup>7</sup> Kiwoong Yang's article entitled "South Korea and Japan's Frictions Over History: A Linguistic Constructivist Reading" contains an excellent appendix describing specific statements of Japanese politicians, the subject of each statement (e.g., comfort women), the year these statements were made, and the office held by the politician who made the statement. It is an excellent resource and I highly recommend taking a look at it in order to understand issues surrounding Japanese interpretations of history and the relationship between South Korean and Japan more fully.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.metro.tokyo.jp/ENGLISH/GOVERNOR/PROFILE/index.htm>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20110817a2.html>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.comfort-women.org/faq.html>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/english/html/cw1.htm>

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/12/sports/olympics/south-korean-soccer-player-park-jong-soo-denied-medal-over-politics.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/12/sports/olympics/south-korean-soccer-player-park-jong-soo-denied-medal-over-politics.html?_r=0)

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/11/world/asia/south-koreans-visit-to-disputed-islets-angers-japan.html>

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/12/sports/olympics/south-korean-soccer-player-park-jong-soo-denied-medal-over-politics.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/12/sports/olympics/south-korean-soccer-player-park-jong-soo-denied-medal-over-politics.html?_r=0)

<sup>15</sup> I have here preserved the names as they were originally written in the paper itself, though they represent three different ways of writing Korean first names. Ultimately, none of these ways affects the pronunciation and is a stylistic choice on the part of each person represented. In dealing with Korean Romanization, the McCune-Reischauer system and the currently used Revised system are both commonly encountered. To the best of my knowledge, I have tried to use the Revised system since it is currently both commonly accepted and, in my personal view, closer to how words are actually written in *Hangeul* than McCune Reischauer.

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact\\_1/en/q-and-a\\_page2.html#q4-a](http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact_1/en/q-and-a_page2.html#q4-a)

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/human/race\\_rep1/intro.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/human/race_rep1/intro.html)

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<sup>18</sup> <http://fc.avex.jp/as/> is the webpage address for Afterschool's fan club. For TVXQ, that address is <http://fc.avex.jp/toho/>. For Super Junior, the address is <http://fc.avex.jp/sj/>. Unfortunately, Avex's main Japanese fan club page only shows the fan clubs that have spots open for entry at present, but this page is accessible at <http://fc.avex.jp/index.html>.

<sup>19</sup> I would like to point out here that although the Japanese for Tohoshinki includes two elongated "o" sounds (therefore making it Tōhōshinki), the conventions for writing this Japanese form in Roman letters (rōmaji) are that these macrons are not written, and because of this, I have chosen to keep Tohoshinki written the way that Japanese people actually write it in Roman letters.

<sup>20</sup> Essentializing any culture into a monolithic concept is considered problematic in race and ethnic studies as well as anthropology, and as we have already seen with *nihonjinron*, essentialism does not accurately portray the way that a culture works in reality.

## Chapter Two; Making the Wave: *Hallyu*'s Constituent Parts and Success

### Why *Hallyu* Works in Japan

A good amount of what makes *Hallyu* work in Japan has to do with what makes pop stars popular in general—good marketing. The stars become commodities in the sense that what is being sold is their public image, a concept created through a combination of stage personality, charisma, *aegyo*<sup>21</sup> (cuteness), athleticism, vocal talent, and physical beauty. One example of this is the pop star Rain<sup>22</sup> (이재민 in Korean, 鄭智薰 in Japanese). Rain straddles statuses as a sexual symbol and a cute boy simultaneously, causing him to exemplify the type of masculinity that often occurs in K-Pop. In this chapter I will explore the creation of pop stars that can transcend national barriers to become popular in not only South Korea but Japan among other countries as well. It is through this type of marketing that *Hallyu* has kept its hold on Japan's population.

From *Mugukjeok* Masculinity to *Chogukjeok* Masculinity: Koichi Iwabuchi and Sun Jung

Returning to the earlier discussion of Koichi Iwabuchi's 2002 book *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism*, the author explores the transnational flows that comprise the Japanization<sup>23</sup> of Asia—that is, the spread of

Japanese popular culture into corners of the continent (Iwabuchi 34). He argues that, in the case of many Japanese products that are exported worldwide, it is not that the products are popular or sought after because the positive image of Japaneseness worldwide makes this the case, or that the products promote a Japanese lifestyle in some way, but rather that without what he terms “cultural odor,” these products are popular:

I use the term *cultural odor* to focus on the way in which cultural features of a country of origin and images or ideas of its national, in most cases stereotyped, way of life are associated *positively* with a particular product in the consumption process... The way in which the cultural odor of a particular product becomes a “fragrance”—a socially and culturally acceptable smell—is not determined simply by the consumer’s perception that something is “made in Japan.” Neither is it necessarily related to the material influence of quality of the product. It has more to do with widely disseminated symbolic images of the country of origin... The use of the Walkman does not evoke images or ideas of a Japanese lifestyle, even if consumers know it is made in Japan and appreciate “Japaneseness” in terms of its sophisticated technology. Unlike American commodities, “Japanese consumer goods do not seek to sell on the back of a Japanese way of life” (Featherstone 1995, 9), and they lack any influential “idea of Japan” (Wee 1997). (Iwabuchi 27-28)

By explaining Japanese cultural products in this way, he is able to then attribute to them the quality of *mukokuseki* or *mugukjeok* (無国籍, 무국적)—“literally meaning ‘something or someone lacking any nationality,’ but also implying the erasure of racial or ethnic characteristics or a context, which does not imprint a particular culture or country with these features” (Iwabuchi 28). He goes on to cite Ōtsuka Eiji’s 1993 work that suggests it is actually this cultural odorlessness and *mukokuseki* that makes Japanese pop cultural products (specifically in what Iwabuchi has cited, *anime*) able to become very popular worldwide (Iwabuchi 33).

Sun Jung applies and extends the concept of *mukokuseki* (which she refers to in its Korean form, *mugukjeok*) to the masculinity of men in South Korean popular culture, including K-Pop stars. Jung argues that South Korean male pop stars, rather than having a kind of acultural masculinity, actually possess what she terms *chogukjeok* masculinity:

...In addition to *mugukjeok* or the effort to make South Korean stars Asianized and/or globalized and to play down their Korean specificity, another characteristic is increasingly demanding of attention. This is *chogukjeok* (cross- or trans-national[ity], 초국적, 超国籍), or the tendency to retain national specificity while deploying it as part of a transborder and multinational cultural figuration. (Jung 163)

This *chogukjeok* masculinity makes it possible for the Korean Wave to succeed in Japan because *chogukjeok* masculinity contains East Asian regional elements of masculinity, such as the combination of sexiness and sweetness as elements of masculinity that are seen as attractive in both South Korea and Japan (Jung 109).

In order to explain the concept of *chogukjeok* masculinity, Jung cites the example of “Winter Sonata” star Bae Yong Joon’s<sup>24</sup> soft masculinity<sup>25</sup>, which unites South Korean and Japanese masculinities through his persona as a pretty boy (Jung 57). She explains the concept of a “pretty boy” and its relation to the root of *chogukjeok* masculinity, *mugukjeok* masculinity, as follows:

...*Mugukjeok* is an example of the cultural proximity that is created through transcultural flows between South Korea and Japan. In terms of masculinity, *mugukjeok* is evident from the ways in which the two countries commonly produce and consume pretty boy (*kkonminam*) images which possibly originate from the bishōnen images of Japanese Shōjō manga. This bishōnen image has repeatedly appeared in pastiches and been commodified by various regional pop-stars, in the course of which this image has evolved to eventually create the “shared imagination” of pan-East Asian soft masculinity. (Jung 30)

The kind of sweetness that Bae Yong Joon exudes, creating soft masculinity, is not the only part of the softer side of *chogukjeok* masculinity—this softer side can be extended to include performances of cuteness, which I have expanded upon later on in the case of extremely popular *chogukjeok* group, Super Junior, which, in addition to a Korean official fan club, has its own Japan-specific fan club.

Jung also devotes a chapter of her work to the pop star Rain and his embodiment of different aspects of *mugukjeok* masculinity, including his *momjjang*<sup>26</sup> (literally, “best body,” 몸짱) muscular physique. In chapter two of the book which is dedicated to Bae Yong Joon and his popularity in Japan among middle aged women due to his soft masculinity, she explains that because of this soft image, when he was portrayed in a photobook in a fiercely sexual, aggressive way, it alienated many of his fans who wanted to protect their image of him as a sweet and gentle man (Jung 68). On the other hand, Rain’s international popularity stems from his sexual presentation on stage at concerts:

Among [the] three elements of globally popular *momjjang* masculinity, BYJ’s [Bae Yong Joon’s] *momjjang* image emphasizes the aspects of personal wellbeing and postmodernity whereas Rain’s *momjjang* masculinity predominantly highlights sexiness. Rain often exposes his half-naked body on the stage by ripping off his shirt and he also often wears low-cut white pants that expose the well-toned muscles framing his lower abdomen. (Jung 114)

While Jung’s chapter on Rain pays special attention to the strength of Rain’s sexual appeal in capturing the hearts of fans in Singapore, the concept of this type of *momjjang* sexuality is also part of the reason that male K-Pop groups such as Super Junior and TVXQ are popular in Japan, which I discuss below. Interestingly, one of the companies to which Rain has belonged in the past, JYP Entertainment, also employs the kind of

*momjjang* masculinity that attracts Rain's swooning legions of female fans in the creation of an image for the all-male K-Pop group 2PM<sup>27</sup>, particularly its member, Taecyeon (Jung 164). For Rain and Taecyeon, as well as the other members of 2PM alike, it is not only their ability to be sexual but their ability to be cute at the same time that makes them popular in a *chogukjeok* way (Jung 165). Uniting elements of cuteness and *momjjang* sexiness in the same individual necessitates careful image creation for that person, of which JYP Entertainment's president, Park Jin Young, is a shrewd master, as demonstrated by his marketing of 2PM:

Like Rain, 2PM's stage performances demonstrate sexy and tough masculinity by often showing off their well-toned muscular bodies. At the same time, in many game shows, they often cross-dress and perform cute dances of girl groups, where they exercise feminized soft masculinity. Most of all, in reality shows on cable television, such as Idol Show and Wild Bunny, by performing as immature and obnoxious boys, they practice *kawaii* masculinity. It is thus evident that 2PM's hybrid masculinity has been constructed through exercising different masculine forms via different media channels. (Jung 165)

The combination of sweetness and sexiness that is embodied in stars such as Rain and Taecyeon is *chogukjeok* masculinity that makes them popular in East Asia, and even Asia in general, but not necessarily outside of this area because *chogukjeok* masculinity is based around Asian concepts of masculinity that do not always transfer to other countries in expected ways—Rain conducted promotions in New York at one point and there received a negative review that seems to have been part of the reason that the release of his English language album was delayed indefinitely, according to Shin Hyunjoon (Shin 509). In fact, although Rain has also acted in several Korean language drama series and movies such as the 2006 movie “I’m A Cyborg, But It’s Okay” and the 2004 television drama (unrelated to the American sitcom of the same name) “Full House,”<sup>28</sup> and even in

the Hollywood films “Speed Racer” (2008) and “Ninja Assassin,” (2009) it is not likely that the average American movie audience would be able to identify him by name in the same way that someone in South Korea or Japan might (Jung 93). Part of this is likely because, although he has an attractive body and appearance that seems as though it could be torn from the pages of an American magazine, his overall performance of masculinity, particularly his cute image, is not appealing to the average American. In fact, the chief editor of the magazine *Platinum*, which is dedicated to the Korean Wave, Lee Gyeong-Hui, states that he does not think that Western audiences would appreciate the cute masculinity embodied in parts of his musical stage performances, such as shaking his hips while showing an obnoxious smile, saying “I don’t think Western audience would appreciate that kind of funny gesture. They might think it’s cheesy. It would only please Asian fans who know Young-Jae [the name of Rain’s character in the Korean drama “Full House”]” (Jung 102).

In essence, taking Rain’s presentation of masculinity as an example, *chogukjeok* masculinity is shown to be less appealing to a worldwide audience than it is to people within the East Asian region she describes as being the center of this concept, who accept the idea of a man’s attractiveness as not only being through sexiness but through sweetness (Jung 111). However, in Japan and Korea, it is not unusual to see groups that straddle sexiness and cuteness very successfully, such as Japan’s *Arashi* (Jung 59) and Korea’s Super Junior. In short, the idea of uniting cuteness and sexiness in a male pop star is nothing new in either Korea or Japan, and Jung’s concept of pan-Asian masculinity can be successfully used to account for the popularity of *Hallyu* bands within the Asian market including Japan. In fact, Iwabuchi’s work pre-empts the popularity of South



Korean *chogukjeok* masculinity when he introduces the concept of a Pan-Asian masculinity in terms of the popularity of Hong Kong popular culture in Japan in the late 1990s, by quoting from a photoshoot spread in the women's magazine *Elle Japon* in November 1997:

Gallant, sexy, and with a sensitivity so delicate as to appeal to the maternal instinct...Asian stars have all these factors of a seductive guy. They attract attention not only in Asia but also all over the world, because they attain an overwhelming aura of stardom and vigor...Japanese women, who are quite sensitive to new trends, are now sensing male sexiness in Asian guys. Their sexiness is something that Japanese guys do not have. Asian guys are becoming more and more stunning and beautiful with the economic development in the region. (Quoted in Iwabuchi 185-186)

In order to better understand the actualization of concepts of cuteness and sexiness in an East Asian context, we now turn to specific treatments of both of these concepts in a *chogukjeok* context through the stage performances of several bands that may be considered part of the Korean Wave in Japan.<sup>29</sup>

#### *Kawaisa* and *Aegyo*—the Aesthetics of Cuteness of Korea and Japan

For a band to get away with lighthearted crossdressing in a goofy sendup of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "The Sound of Music" in one part of a concert and retain their status as sex symbols in the same show without defeating either of those two aspects in the eyes of the audience, it makes sense that the appeal of a K-Pop star is not only a sexy body, but a certain cuteness in their personality that does not defeat the sexiness overall. Super Junior's world tour Super Show 4<sup>30</sup> contained both sexy and silly/adorable moments for the fans, satisfying them and making the show a success. Because getting a ticket for the show was an ordeal in itself, and because it was held in Japan's Tokyo Dome, a venue reserved for those stars who are shining success stories in the country, it

stands to reason that what Super Junior does with their performance strategy works wonders in Japan. In the case of Super Junior, their cuteness arises from teasing, cuddling and even kissing their fellow members on stage, as well as their lighthearted costume changes. Besides the normal coordinated costumes that accompany and support the theme of certain songs (e.g., the use of masquerade masks in the song Opera) each member dressed up in the sort of costumes one might expect to see at a children's Halloween party in America, including Superman, a chicken, Chucky from the movie Child's Play, and Steve Jobs, among others. By showing that the members are not unapproachable in their personalities, the group balances their sexy factor in a way that makes them appealing to a Japanese audience. Similar balances occur in female groups as well, including Afterschool's subgroup Orange Caramel, who tend toward very cute songs and more childlike costumes replete with large bows, but only within the subgroup, showing that *aegyo* (애교) is a huge feature of Orange Caramel's performances through common gestures and phrases in their songs and dance moves.<sup>31</sup> Orange Caramel is set to release a Japanese album in March 2013, showing the success of their aesthetic within the country. These cuteness performances fit with the preexisting Japanese *kawaii* aesthetic<sup>32</sup> in a way that means the stars can easily be accepted into a Japanese person's daily life because although they are Korean, they are not acting in a way that is unfamiliar to Japanese people (Jung 111-112). The *kawaii* aesthetic essentially espouses a desire to protect or care for the person or thing perceived as *kawaii* (Nittono Et Al. 1). Because *kawaii* can be created by a person through modes of speaking, mannerisms, or dress and utilized to evoke a certain feeling in those viewing it, it resembles *aegyo*, particularly in the realms of speaking and mannerisms. Thus, the

possibility for cultural overlap exists between *kawaisa* (“cuteness” as opposed to “cute”) and *aegyo*.

*Momjjang* bodies, *Ulzzang* faces, S-Lines and Honey Thighs<sup>33</sup>: K-Pop Stars as Physical Beings

Another extremely important part of the ability of K-Pop stars to succeed in Japan is their physical look. It is not uncommon to hear about idols being forced to diet or have plastic surgery, typically for but certainly not limited to creating double eyelids from monolids for those who possess them.<sup>34</sup> Because this physical look is so appealing in both countries, it is not uncommon to see *Hallyu* stars in magazines showing exercise routines which purportedly allow anyone to achieve similar physical proportions, or makeup tutorials for women on how to get the perfect *ulzzang* (Korean for “best face”) look. Korean cosmetics have become popular in Japan to the extent that Korean cosmetic brands such as Etude House, Nature Republic, and Missha are setting up stores in Japan, and part of their draw is to get a look for women that will allow you to resemble an idol you admire (e.g., Etude House’s use of two members of girl group f(x), Sulli and Krystal, in their ads<sup>35</sup>) or get a boyfriend who resembles the kind of star you admire (e.g., Etude House’s use of SHINee<sup>36</sup> in advertising, Nature Republic’s use of Jang Geun Suk<sup>37</sup>, or Missha’s use of TVXQ<sup>38</sup>). Furthermore, stores that carry K-Pop goods in Japan carry many official and unofficial posters of K-Pop stars, and magazines that follow Japan’s *Hallyu* contain the same. Concerts are not merely a forum for enjoying the voice of one’s favorite K-Pop star, but also enjoying the public display of their body. Short skirts are not an unusual look at concerts for female performers, and torn-off shirts combined with pelvic thrusting are the same for male performers. Upon attending concerts, it is

particularly easy to see that the bodies of K-Pop stars are a hot commodity. Pelvic thrusts from TVXQ's Yunho during his performance at the Tokyo Dome<sup>39</sup> sent the audience, composed of mostly women not only in teenage years but even middle aged women, into even more of a frenzy than the beginning of the concert and the first appearance of their beloved idols had caused. Super Junior's Super Show 4 at the Tokyo Dome contained a solo dance performance by one of the members (Eunhyuk) in which he stripped his shirt off to swooning female fans. In the case of all-female group Afterschool, with current members ranging in age from 18 to 29 as of April 2013, the high concentration of middle-aged male fans at their first Japanese tour can be explained by their sexy performances and costumes, with gold ruffled hot pants, shiny vinyl corsets, and high heels. In fact, even the portion of the performance which allowed the band members to go backstage for a costume change was accomplished by the showing of a video containing sexy black silhouettes of each of the band members to music and the chanting of their most recent album name,<sup>40</sup> "Playgirlz." The kinds of bodies that K-Pop stars possess are not only appealing within Korea but Japan as well. Combined with cuteness, a sexy body helps K-Pop stars become popular in Japan.

#### Speaking my Language: Linguistic Performances in K-Pop

Another important factor in the success of *Hallyu* in Japan is the effort made on the part of K-Pop stars to learn Japanese when beginning promotions in Japan. Research in neuroscience has suggested that in bilingual individuals, people react more strongly emotionally when hearing statements in their first language than in their second language (Wu and Thierry 6488). Members of audiences at K-Pop concerts in Japan may be bilingual, but even for monolingual audience members, language helps to create the

emotional high for which concerts are well known.<sup>41</sup> In the sense that people are emotionally affected by the language they know best in the strongest way, it is possible to extrapolate that the reason why it is important to translate song lyrics and the statements of Korean stars into Japanese while performing in Japan is to create a connection with their audience. Responses even to mistakes made when Korean stars attempt to speak Japanese at concerts within Japan are quite warm,<sup>42</sup> and the audience appears overjoyed that the star in question has made an honest effort to communicate in Japanese. Although some concerts do use near-simultaneous interpretation, the efforts made to conform to the chief language of the audience seen in many concerts in lieu of interpretation have a very positive effect on the quality of the performance. In a more practical sense, having an artist speak and sing in one's first language makes it easier to sing along and in that way become connected to the music. Furthermore, changing a song's language allows for adjustments to be made regarding concepts that may exist in one language but not in another, either through addition or subtraction in the second language version. For example, in the popular Korean artist BoA's work as described by Jamie Shinhee Lee, the same song in Korean and Japanese has different lyrics to the point that the feel of the song itself is affected. The Japanese version tends towards similar songs in J-pop in terms of thematic elements whereas the Korean version contains references to the concept of destiny that do not exist in the Japanese version.

For those Korean groups with Japan-specific fan clubs, the entirety of the website will be in Japanese, and the concept put forth by the creators of the fan club, usually if not always the company that manages the artist's Japanese work, is one of being able to get closer to the members of the group, in an economically savvy move by the managing

company, through paying a fee to get more information on the stars than people who are not members have access to, including group-specific messages to members of the fan club in Japanese. These fan clubs can be immensely popular—I was barred entry to Tohoshinki's Japanese fan club, Bigeast, in 2011 on the grounds that there were simply too many members, and fan club merchandise at Super Junior's Super Show 5 limited to the members of E.L.F. Japan, their fan club, was sold out far before I had a chance to purchase it both when I was at the Tokyo Dome for the tour and online through their online sales outfit. Although there are fan clubs for Korean groups based in Korea, the appeal of a Japanese language fan club comes from the feeling that one is able to get closer to their pop star in the language that is most comfortable for them to communicate, although the communication tends to be one-sided rather than similar to, for example, a conversation between two parties, due to the large amount of positive response to the group in conjunction with the limited abilities of a group of a few stars who are very busy to actually communicate with the fans. Nevertheless, the groups are felt by their fans to be close at hand due to this linguistic performance. In the same way, the scripts given to stars during Japanese concerts generally contain heavy product references in order to get the concert attendee to purchase more merchandise at the show for the artist, or perhaps promote product tie-ins in which the artist advertises a certain product for their profit, such as Afterschool's promotion in-concert of both Rexena deodorant<sup>43</sup> through passing it out to all attendees and the use of Samantha Thavasa brand bags<sup>44</sup> in a dance, which were later won by Japanese fans in a raffle—provided that they bought all three versions of the group's latest single. Simply, a lack of a language barrier means more money for the group and its promoters.

*Hallyu* as Lasting Trend

Although *Hallyu* is considered to be a trend, which is evident not only in its name (waves are not long-lasting in nature) but also in the waxing and waning popularity of related Korean merchandise, the value it possesses is different from that of other trends in the sense that what is being marketed, while superficial, is also a chance for a Japanese fan to scratch the surface of something much larger. Popular culture and culture itself are separate entities, but the recognition that a song or food is the product of even popular culture will relate itself to the culture from which it originates writ large. For some people in Japan, *Hallyu* is giving them a chance to learn a language through interest in understanding song lyrics, or perhaps a chance to try new foods, a chance to learn about Korean holidays through seeing one's favorite star decked out for such holidays as *Chuseok*<sup>45</sup> (Korean harvest festival). Through seeing a drama that portrays aspects of Korean culture, as in the case of "Winter Sonata's" immense popularity, Japanese viewers were exposed to the concept that their Korean neighbors were in actuality not that different from them in a way that was not threatening to discover because "Winter Sonata" was a pop cultural artifact. *Hallyu* even provides a service to the Japanese viewer in the sense that it is not necessary to take every song seriously when merely enjoying it. Because there is a great need in Japanese society for a relief of pressure from the worries of daily life, *Hallyu* can create a space for people to enjoy themselves in that manner because it brings people together to appreciate a favorite pop star, drama, or even food.

One of the most striking things about *Hallyu* is that it has garnered a strong negative response in parts of Japanese society. Because there are people who are heavily

against the showing of Korean television dramas on air or the introduction of Korean stars into the *Kōhaku Uta Gassen* competition held to ring in the new year as a contemporary Japanese tradition, the Korean Wave itself is shown to hold power in the eyes of people who would rather Japan stay closed off to foreign influences or maintain a façade of ethnic homogeneity. In fact, at least four volumes of Japanese *manga* comics in the series *Kenkanryū* (“Hating the Korean Wave”)<sup>46</sup> are devoted merely to explaining “the truth behind what the mass media will not say about the relationship between South Korea and Japan” (my translation from the jacket of the book) and the first volume has sold enough volumes to become recognized by its publishing outfit as a bestseller. The contents of the *manga* itself are of the same kind as its outsides—inflammatory statements left and right and unflattering depictions of the physical characteristics of *Zainichi* Koreans. The series was even mentioned in the *New York Times* because of its content.<sup>47</sup> If there were no danger of this ideology being destroyed by the Korean Wave, protests, both in physical locations and in the space of ideas furthered through the use of such media as the aforementioned *manga*, would not exist. Thus, it is possible to conclude that *Hallyu* is affecting some people’s lives in a lasting way.

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<sup>21</sup> *Aegyo* is interesting in that it is more of a forced cuteness than a natural one, through the use of certain phrases and expressions. Please see Seoulistic’s excellent youtube appraisal of *Aegyo* at <http://youtu.be/sZxNfJMpr4g> for more details. A quick search of *Aegyo* on youtube will yield examples of this in Korean media as well.

<sup>22</sup> Figure 1; Appendix B

<sup>23</sup> The term Japanization actually has several meanings, which are discussed on pages 9 and 10 of Iwabuchi’s book. However, the definition that I have given here is the one that reflects the facet of his book that is most relevant to this work.

<sup>24</sup> Figure 2; Appendix B

<sup>25</sup> When Jung treats the concept of yearning of Japanese middle aged women for a “simpler” time in talking about the elements of Bae Yong Joon’s performance in “Winter Sonata” that made the series a runaway hit in Japan, this is not actually the first time that



a nostalgic desire for the past of Japan has prompted Japanese interest in another Asian country's popular culture—actually, as Iwabuchi points out in his book, this is similar to the popularity of Hong Kong culture in the 1990s. He says:

More importantly, the nostalgic yearning for Hong Kong popular culture is also being fueled by a deep sense of disillusionment and discontent with Japanese society as well as the entertainment business. The attraction of the aforementioned films and performers, again, tends to be linked to the loss of energy and power of Japanese society in general...” (Iwabuchi 191)

<sup>26</sup> Interestingly enough, the woman responsible for the beginning of the *momjjang* boom and the subject for the creation of the term “*momjjang*” itself in 2003 referred to as the “*momjjang ajumma*” (middle-aged woman with a great body) has published several diet books in Japan which have become best sellers (Jung 65). Her name is Jung Dayeon, and she maintains both Korean language and Japanese language versions of her website at [www.jungdayeon.jp](http://www.jungdayeon.jp) and [www.jungdayeon.com](http://www.jungdayeon.com).

<sup>27</sup> Figure 3; Appendix B

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0464625/?ref\\_=sr\\_3](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0464625/?ref_=sr_3)

<sup>29</sup> I would like to take this opportunity to point out that TVXQ specifically resists being called a “Hallyu Band” in reference to their reasons for moving into the Japanese market and their performances within it, choosing instead to call themselves a part of J-Pop while in Japan. (See <http://youtu.be/w2SkkmeX7KU> starting around 10:45 for the relevant interview from *The Star Show*, May 26, 2008) Their catalog of Japanese language albums is rather immense, so it is understandable that they believe this to be the case. It seems that they think of TVXQ or Dong Bang Shin Ki (동방신기), which is their Korean name, as a separate entity from their Japanese iteration, Tohoshinki. All three of these monikers, however, refer to their *hanja* name, 東方神起, which, regardless of whether it is in Korean, Chinese (from which the acronym TVXQ originates), or Japanese, means “Rising Gods of the East.” Although TVXQ does choose to differentiate their Japanese performances from their South Korean performances, I find it very difficult to not consider them part of the Korean Wave at large, especially when their Japanese concerts include not only songs that were originally written in Japanese and actually can be classified as J-Pop, but also Japanese language versions of songs such as “Why (Keep Your Head Down)” which were actually originally written in Korean and released first for the South Korean market and then rereleased in Japan in Japanese language versions. I think that the reason why TVXQ is so concerned with not being called a “Hallyu Band” is that they do not wish to be viewed as having great popularity in Japan merely as a result of their South Korean origin, but also because of their legitimate talent and ability to succeed as J-Pop artists, which is something else entirely and, regardless of the length of the popularity of the Korean Wave, is instead subject to their J-Pop-related successes.

<sup>30</sup> See Appendix A

<sup>31</sup> The Orange Caramel music videos are prime examples, such as “Aing” and “Lipstick.”

<sup>32</sup> See Hiroshi Nittono, et al.’s article entitled “The Power of *Kawaii*” for more specific information on this aesthetic.

<sup>33</sup> “*Momjjang*” means “best body,” whereas “*Ulzzang*” means “best face.” See Jung 111-117 for an excellent description of “*momjjang*” masculinity in action. “Honey Thighs” means that someone has thighs “as sweet as honey,” or, nice thighs. This term is used in reference to women. A woman’s “S Line” is the shape formed by generous curves from top to bottom, as if she is standing turned to have her left shoulder facing a viewer—the top of the “S” is the chest and the bottom is the shape of the buttocks. See Figure 5, Appendix B.

<sup>34</sup> Several examples of this type of surgery, known as 쌍꺼풀 수술(ssangkkeo pul) in Korean, can be found at <http://drpark.co.kr/eng/med01.htm>, though I have included one in Appendix B as Figure 4.

<sup>35</sup> Figure 6; Appendix B

<sup>36</sup> Figures 7, 8; Appendix B

<sup>37</sup> Figures 9, 10; Appendix B

<sup>38</sup> Figures 11, 13, 17; Appendix B

<sup>39</sup> I attended this show; see Appendix A for details.

<sup>40</sup> “Playgirlz” is also, incidentally, the name of their official fan club, which exists as that of TVXQ and Super Junior in a separate iteration specifically for Japanese fans in addition to an official Korean fan club. A female fan of the group is called a Playgirlz, whereas a male fan can be called a Playboyz. Most K-Pop groups have official names for their fans, such as “ELF” (short for “Ever Lasting Friends” in reference to their relationship with the band) for Super Junior fans, and, at least during the period of time that TVXQ was a five-member group, “Cassiopeia” for their fans. (TVXQ was split up when three members had a disagreement with the band’s agency, SM Entertainment. At the time of my attendance of TVXQ’s concert at the Tokyo Dome, the group was down to two members, Shim Changmin and Jung Yunho.)

<sup>41</sup> I have experienced this as well, particularly during Super Junior’s Super Show 4 at the end of the concert when one member of the band thanked the audience for attendance in English by saying “Thank you” and also at two shows during Afterschool’s First Japan Tour during which a member said “Thank you for coming.”

<sup>42</sup> At one point during Tohoshinki’s tour stop at the Tokyo Dome on the first day, Changmin flubbed his lines, but everyone responded positively.

<sup>43</sup> Figure 14, Appendix B shows a relevant advertisement for this deodorant.

<sup>44</sup> Figure 15, Appendix B shows a relevant advertisement for this line of handbags.

<sup>45</sup> Figure 18, Appendix B

<sup>46</sup> Figure 16, Appendix B shows the cover of the first volume of the manga.

<sup>47</sup> See Norimitsu Onishi’s article entitled “Ugly Images of Asian Rivals Become Best Sellers in Japan.”

## Chapter Three; *Hallyu*'s Cultural Impact in Japan

### Research Participants: A Brief Introduction

The following paragraphs describe the various research participants whom I interviewed in various settings in January 2013 in Japan. Each of the participants is a person with whom I have had the experience of meeting through participation in a Korean language group at a well-known university in Japan<sup>48</sup>.

YK is a native Japanese young woman in her fourth year at university. When she was younger, she discovered to her surprise that she had Korean ancestry, and began her search for her own identity in view of that fact. Over the time she spent with Korean friends that she made in Japan and trips to South Korea, she began to feel that she was really Japanese due to her cultural upbringing, though she remains aware of her ancestry. She is currently learning Korean and has reached a conversational level. She is dating a student from her university who is Korean and speaks not only Korean but English and Japanese. For the most part their communication is in Japanese. The two celebrated the hundredth day of their relationship in Korean fashion,<sup>49</sup> commemorating it with presents and a date. Their relationship resembles that of other couples navigating cultural differences. In particular, the cultural differences that the two experience can create

difficulties in communication, but YK seems genuinely willing to deal with these in pursuit of a relationship. In general, YK is friendly and open to cross-cultural exchange, making it a part of her daily life. When she becomes a member of Japanese working society, her open attitude could be the key to helping others in her company to desire understanding of other cultures in and around Japan.

YY leads the Korean language group on campus and is a full time student at university. She is of Korean descent and nationality and, although her first language is Korean, speaks fluent Japanese with great attention to politeness. Spending time with her outside of an interview setting, I learned that she had spent her elementary school years in Japan, and actually went to have a small informal reunion with them while I was in Japan. Although she is younger than some of the students who she recruits to become the group's Korean language tutors, she is adept at working with all the members of the group to accomplish tasks and set up meetings. Through her commitment to the group, she is able to promote a positive image of Koreans in Japan and foster international friendships. Furthermore, she is a student of the Political Economy department within the university, so she has an interest in what Japan does in the world. Through a few hours in conversation with her, I began to understand the keen eye with which she views the world around her. Lively and friendly, she is very adept at relating to others. In speaking with her, I found it obvious that she feels a responsibility to comprehend the political situation around her in order to work within it effectively.

SB impresses me with his warm personality, humility, concern for others, practicality, and intellect every time I see him. We spent a brief time as language exchange partners during my second semester at a Japanese university, although

ultimately I was able to help him far less with his English than he was able to help me with my Korean. After completing a year of study of the Japanese language within Korea, he enrolled full-time in a Japanese university. Like most other Korean men in college, he took time off to complete his mandatory military service in the middle of school, coming back afterward to successfully complete his degree and *shūshoku katsudō* (job hunting for fourth year university students which often determines where a person will spend the bulk of their working lives). He works at a large, well-known internationally established bank and uses English every day at work. In speaking with him, I learned that his motives for coming to Japan were largely practical, but in my view, this does not encompass the whole of his life in Japan. In particular, by teaching within the Korean language group at his university, he was offering up his skills freely to facilitate international communication with others and establishing international friendships at the same time. Furthermore, he related to me that he enjoyed being in Japan outside of his practical reasons for being there, despite his extremely busy lifestyle at work. During our discussion, it came out that we have similar views regarding *Hallyu*: particularly, that it is actually facilitating relationships between Korean and Japanese people in the sense that *Hallyu* allows Japanese people access to Korean culture in a non-threatening way. Both of us find, however, that Koreans in Japan still face discrimination and that the tension between the Korean and Japanese governments is quite high, so it is not possible for either of us to be solely optimistic.

SL began coming to the language group shortly after I did. Her native language is Japanese, although both of her parents are ethnically Korean. She is currently a beginner in Korean, having decided at one point that it was odd for her as a Korean not to

understand the language at all. Her commitment to learning the language is strong enough that although she does not attend the same university as the other students, she has come to participate in language study since hearing through a network of friends about the existence of this club. She told me that as time passed in her life, the discrimination against her became less overt, although it remained, and she believes that right wing members of Japanese society would talk about her and other *Zainichi* Koreans in very negative ways in situations where *Zainichi* Koreans are not physically present. Because SL has a last name that is immediately recognizable as not being native Japanese, people have known from the time that they meet her that she is not entirely of Japanese descent. Despite this, following her graduation this spring, she will go to work for a very well-known Japanese electronics manufacturer. Her degree will be in Physics. SL does not believe that the Korean Wave has done much to change discrimination against *Zainichi* Koreans, and rather, that in her experience it has been her age that has divided overt from covert racism.<sup>50</sup>

SM regularly writes short messages in Korean and Japanese on her Facebook page and has been studying as part of the group for all of her time as a university student. Although she is only finishing up her first year in university, she will study abroad during the summer at a Korean university. Gregarious, straightforward, and energetic, she seems to find herself very much at ease with her friends. She is a native speaker of Japanese and not a teacher within the Korean language group, but nevertheless seems to play a strong role in the class in which she participates. She is open and friendly, well known as one of the members of the group who helps plan events. She goes by a nickname to all of the students in the group, marking her close relationship with them.

She is of Japanese descent, and her first language is Japanese. Her interest in K-Pop seems to have been the root of her interest in the Korean language, but I would like to emphasize that it is truly her connection with her friends who speak Korean that matters far more to her. Korean is fun to learn for her, she says, because it allows her to communicate with her friends. This is further evidenced through her decision to study abroad in Korea, in that decisions of such personal magnitude are rarely, if ever, made lightly due merely to a passing interest.

During my interview with SM, I learned that at the time of her high school graduation, she suddenly discovered that a very good friend of hers was Korean. Evidently this friend had been quite nervous about letting people around her know due to the discrimination she might face, but this did not affect SM's relationship with her negatively—rather, SM was more interested in the fact that they were friends and happy to have learned more about someone to whom she felt very close. In contrast to what SL had told me about her experience as a *Zainichi* Korean, SM's *Zainichi* Korean friend told her that she did feel that the Korean Wave had a positive effect on Japanese people's reception of her as a *Zainichi* Korean. Given that this statement is not that of SM but directly from her *Zainichi* Korean friend, it is possible to evaluate this statement as that of a firsthand account of what being *Zainichi* in Japan can entail. That is, it truly seems to depend on the person to whom certain events happen that ultimately influences their perception of the power of the Korean Wave. For some people, like SL, it may not seem to have much of an impact on their daily lives, but for others, like SM's friend, it seems to have been a beneficial factor in allowing her to become closer to her friends and less scared about revealing her ethnic background.

## Research Methodology and Conclusions

First, interviews were conducted one-on-one at a location of the participant's choice while I took notes. A list of interview questions is available in Appendix C. The language of the interviews was, in all but one case (that of SB), Japanese, my second language, as well as the second language of about half of all participants. I chose to use Japanese because the participants are overall best able to express their thoughts to me in a manner I can understand through the use of Japanese since levels of English confidence vary between participants and my Korean is still being developed. In choosing this, I have simultaneously chosen to have ideas expressed to me primarily (again, excluding my interview with SB) through concepts that exist in Japanese. My hope is that the participants find my analyses to be accurate representations of their feelings and thoughts surrounding the Korean Wave and it is through days of careful thought that I have chosen my methods.

On the whole, prior to conducting the interviews, I imagined that the Korean Wave had not actually changed the day-to-day activities of the participants at large, but that it has had more of an effect on their relationships with people overall. In the case of the South Korean nationals, I felt that they had probably had a little bit more interest expressed in them as time goes by because of the number of people interested in learning Korean language in Japan. In the case of the Japanese participants, I thought that they would have made the decision to become involved with Korean outside of factors that are related to the Korean Wave, but that the Korean Wave would have allowed them to pursue individual interests without raising much surprise in the people around them. Overall, in my estimation prior to the interviews, I thought that the Korean Wave acts to



further the ideas that South Koreans and South Korean culture are acceptable within Japan. On the part of the Japanese participants, it is very telling that for their own reasons they have even decided to become interested in Korean culture at all—that alone shows Japanese society is in a place where they, as generally well-off, elite youth in the country's capital, can afford to pursue these activities without fear of resistance. It is not possible to say that Japan has always been like this or that it is like this in every part, but the current state of South Korean culture and South Koreans or *Zainichi* Koreans in Japan is one of (sometimes grudging) tolerance and occasionally acceptance.

Furthermore, prior to conducting these interviews, although I had ideas in mind regarding what the cultural impact of the Korean Wave was, it was very important to me to guard against overly rosy pictures of the wave's impact and listen with an open heart and mind to what the participants would tell me. Although I asked the questions, what they gathered from my inquiries was up to their interpretations, and as previously stated, I hoped that I could synthesize something from their words that reflects the truth of their situations.

After having had time to think about what these interviews revealed in regard to the Korean Wave, I have found that it is not entirely clear whether or not the Wave itself has had a positive effect on the lives of Koreans in Japan. For some people, it seems to be the case that reception of them by others has become more friendly due to the Korean Wave, but in other cases, such as SL's, it has been growing up that has contributed to the way that people relate to her the most, because where children are blatant about discrimination due to a lack of understanding of what is socially acceptable to say, adults may hold the same views but express them less directly (or, for that matter, not at all) to

the person that is the subject of discrimination. Along with the interviews, my short stay in Tokyo this January revealed a recession to the Korean Wave, though it is unclear to me how prolonged this recession will be and whether or not it represents the beginning of the end. Particularly, Shin-Ōkubo seems to have seen a drop in visitors to some of the many shops devoted to Korean goods within the area as evidenced by my multiple trips to the area at different times and during different days of the week, in addition to hearing about this change from a friend of one of my interviewees, who said that visitors had dropped by almost one-third (in her words, *san wari*, or thirty percent). However, new shops have appeared within the six months that I was away from Tokyo, including one called “Gangnam Style” and blasting the song that inspired its name constantly, that sells a combination of K-Pop CDs, cosmetics, and idol merchandise, a shop dedicated to Korean cosmetics, and a shop with a café upstairs and cosmetics downstairs in great quantities. The cost of keeping one of these shops open is immense, given the information I received from a fellow K-Pop concert goer who told me that his friend owned one of the largest merchandise outfits in the Shin-Ōkubo area, and that the cost of renting the building for a single month exceeded \$100,000 in U.S. dollars (i.e., ¥10000000). Thus, even if the shop in question is an extreme case in terms of operating costs due to its prime location in Shin-Ōkubo, opening a business in Tokyo’s Shinjuku district is not a decision to be made lightly—certainly not if one is worried that the Korean Wave will subside in a short time.

Things get even more complicated looking at recent news stories relating to Japan—Korean performers did not perform in the famous end-of-year singing competition *Kōhaku Uta Gassen*, even though 2011’s show had some extremely famous Korean performers. It is said that Korean performers were actually completely barred

from participating by the network, but this is strange considering the vast popularity of the performers chosen for the 2012 show in Japan. Furthermore, Abe Shinzō has become the Prime Minister of Japan once again, making the future of Japanese-Korean relations questionable given inflammatory statements made during previous years in the 1990s when he had previously also been the Prime Minister. In March 2013, an anti-*Zainichi* Korean protest was held in Shin-Ōkubo.<sup>51</sup>

At the same time, K-Pop group Bigbang ended their world tour by performing in Japan and Tohoshinki plans another Japanese tour to accompany their upcoming sixth Japanese album release. Multiple anti-*Zainichi* protests in Shin-Ōkubo have been met with counter-protests by concerned Japanese people.<sup>52</sup> Korean cosmetic brand Tony Moly now has a presence in Shin-Ōkubo. Subunit of Super Junior, Super Junior KRY recently held two concerts in Japan, concurrently releasing a Japanese language single. Afterschool subgroup Orange Caramel continues to promote their newest maxi single through fan meetings in Japan. Korean cosmetic brand Missha has increased the amount of advertising in Japan related to Tohoshinki, in what appears to be an effort to capture the Japanese market. However, they have also employed Japanese-style marketing techniques such as the introduction of “lucky bags”<sup>53</sup> around New Year’s, a Japanese tradition of (to some extent) blind-bagged collections of products for a much lower price than during the rest of the year, as well as creating Hello Kitty branded products for sale only in Japan.<sup>54</sup> Particularly striking is the introduction of a class at my alma mater in Japan regarding the Korean Wave which was open to students from all schools within the institution. Reconciling the difference between the pushing away of Korean culture and the introduction of Korean products into the Japanese market results in the conclusion

that the Korean Wave has permeated Japanese society as the commodification of cultural elements in part removed from their larger native cultural significance. Keeping this concept in mind, however, does not preclude the possibility that commodification can lead not only to the mere accumulation of items by interested parties, but the accumulation of cultural comprehension through these items and ultimately the comprehension of a culture. Admittedly, it is a big jump to make from CDs to cultural appreciation, but the tie is worth considering. For example, fans of a particular idol will make the effort to connect with that idol through fan signs—not only in Japanese but in Korean. Who is to say where that small bit of *Hangeul* practice will take a fan? Commodification is not merely the dismal death of culture—it is, rather, the transmutation of that culture into another form which is not completely devoid of potential to recall the form from whence it came, and that form's significance. This conceptualization of marketing culture is supported by the research of Chua Beng Huat, who says

Consumption is to be treated as a process by which artefacts are not simply bought and consumed, but given meaning through their active incorporation in people's lives. The innovative ways of using undistinguished mass-production goods are conceptualized as "styles" which are expressive of the individualities/identities of the users. (Quoted in Jung 21)

As soulless as a piece of plastic shaped into a CD may be, it is what it means to the person who owns it that gives it value. By ascribing value to the culture behind a pop cultural phenomenon, it is possible for a consumer to begin to value people considered culturally foreign as important people outside of oneself in a world full of many diverse and universally important human beings.

### Research Participants and the Greater Japanese Society

As members (or, in the case of SB, a former member) of the Korean language group within their university, the research participants demonstrate strong adherence to the goal of either learning or teaching Korean. In particular, unlike many other groups within the same university, alcohol is banned from the group's meetings, in order to keep the focus on studying at all times. The group tends to have female Japanese participants with a few dedicated male participants (there was one incident in which two potential new members stated that they were uncomfortable with all of the women in the group because they felt so outnumbered) whereas the group's language tutors tend to have a more even gender ratio. Given that *Hallyu* tends to be a domain in which there are many female participants, it is possible that the group's ratio of female to male students reflects this. There are, however, other mitigating factors which might affect this ratio, such as uneven gender distribution at the university overall and uneven spread of information regarding joining the group. At any rate, the group marks a departure from club activities which emphasize socializing to the point that it is no longer clear what the group members are mutually interested in which led them to join the group. It can be concluded that for whatever reason, learning or teaching Korean is very important to the group to the point that they extend a part of their free time in order to learn. This does not necessarily mean that the group members are particularly academic minded in terms of their language learning, however; some members join in order to better understand a Korean significant other and improve their relationships. The structure of the group is such that it is very difficult to miss a meeting and understand what is going on in the next lesson. A serious group like this represents a strongly invested population of students.

Comparing the members of the group to other members of the same university, the members are fairly diverse in terms of major and are generally under no scholastic obligation to learn Korean, though some students, such as YK, are supplementing their college courses with the content of weekly lessons. The reason for YK's involvement in the group may not have much to do with academic goals, however; her interest in learning Korean may be chiefly for personal satisfaction which extends into academic choices. In order to better understand the motivations that each member of the club has for being a member, it is necessary to consider them as individual people. Thus, what is best concluded from an analysis of the group is that for personal reasons, the members have chosen to teach or learn Korean in their spare time as a hobby.

The group represents a very small section (about twenty students of the Korean language and ten group officials) of the overall population of the university's undergraduate students and meets on its main campus. There are several campuses, some separated by considerable distances. Most of the students in the group seem to study at one of the campuses closest to, if not the, main campus. Proximity to club activities as a factor in participation is of unclear relevance. Whether students who are not close to the main campus do not participate because of distance, lack of knowledge about the group, or lack of interest is unclear.<sup>55</sup> Because the members range in major from humanities to sciences, there is not a clear link between major and interest in learning or teaching Korean. Membership seems to be a function of personal goals and feelings which may have a bearing on personality. Because the students all attend one of Japan's consistently highly ranked universities, they do seem to have ambitious academic goals, but this is not necessarily representative of the entire group who would call themselves *Hallyu* fans in

Japan. Even so, because the university is linked to many well-known companies in Japan through alumni status as employees of these companies in various positions as well as the Japanese government in the same way, the future prominence of the university's students means that their opinions will be crucial in shaping Japan's future. Even a small amount of students within the university who go on to fulfill important roles in Japanese society have the ability to eventually make decisions that will affect the country. As such, members of the Korean language group have the chance to change Japan and are thus a very important part of the understanding between Japan and South Korea.

#### The Effect of *Hallyu* on the Larger Issue of Japanese Acceptance of Diversity

In essence, the effect of *Hallyu* on the Japanese population at large has much to do with the cultural capital of the individual people who are interested in it or those who comprise it (i.e., idols) used to forward their ideas, as well as the utility of these ideas, down to what the ideas they espouse actually are. The important concept to remember is that although the Korean Wave is not always linked to lasting social change in every single member of Japanese society or even its participants, the possibility for lasting social change grows stronger with the actions of those committed to helping ethnically and/or culturally Japanese and Korean individuals to understand each other. This might be accomplished through sharing a television drama from South Korea with a friend, eating together at a Korean restaurant, listening to music, attending concerts, learning a few words of Korean, or any other of a vast number of activities that are encouraged by the spread of the Korean Wave. At the same time, painting too rosy of a picture is not the goal of this thesis. The Korean Wave fights the memories of Korean colonization in the minds of the ethnically Korean population of Japan, the Japanese governmental desire to

avoid bringing up subjects of past controversy relating to Japan's role in Korea during colonization and up to the present day, and parties on both sides with adherence to ethnically based claims regarding this shared history. However, since ethnic Japanese residents have the upper hand in Japan, it is up to them to become open to others around them. Again, given current situations in Japanese politics, it is possible that Japanese society will have to make adaptations to survive. Although much remains unclear in terms of Japan's future, the ten years that the Korean Wave has existed there have the possibility to affect how this future is formed. The longer that the Korean Wave has to penetrate Japanese society, the stronger its effects have the possibility to become. Although it is impossible to undo the history between South Korea and Japan, the increase in length of time between this history and Japan's present holds the possibility to become a space in which the two countries can heal past wounds. Of course, this analysis does not include the possibility of further insult in the minds of South Korean people based on Japan's future governmental actions, including the aforementioned issues of Dokdo/Takeshima, comfort women, visits to Yasukuni Shrine in an official capacity by Japan's Prime Minister, textbook revisions, and insufficient apologies for past actions. Given Abe Shinzō's recent return to office, the tension between South Korea and Japan could worsen, were he to continue to make the types of statements that he had made while previously in office. Change is not necessarily likely on a large scale, but certainly possible, and already happening on a smaller scale for Japanese citizens who choose to involve themselves with South Korean people and culture because of the Korean Wave. In the meantime, it is possible to hope and affect change in small ways on an individual scale for those with some sort of a connection to Japan and interest in relevant issues.



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<sup>48</sup> In order to protect the research participants, the name of the university and full names of the participants are not given.

<sup>49</sup> This is not something that is celebrated in Japan; it only exists as a tradition in Korea.

<sup>50</sup> In my estimation, this would be due to the gradual acculturation process in Japanese society—as one advances in age, their expressions of personal feelings may become attenuated by the strictures of society around them, whereas children are far less restrained socially because they do not have the experience to know what will be acceptable in Japanese society.

<sup>51</sup> [http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind\\_news/social\\_affairs/AJ201303260097](http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201303260097)

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Figure 17, Appendix B

<sup>54</sup> Figure 13, Appendix B

<sup>55</sup> Distance from the main campus, not physical distance of household from the campus, because this is mostly mitigated by the fact that club activities take place on Saturdays in the mornings, usually following morning classes on the main campus. It is not unusual for students at schools in Japan to commute over an hour each way daily to their universities.

## Conclusion

Ultimately, *Hallyu* in Japan has offered people of Japanese ethnicity in Japan an avenue to better understand and sympathize with *Zainichi* Koreans in Japan. Friendly greetings between a Japanese and South Korean neighbor in the morning are a small step toward mutual understanding, but a large step away from mutual ignorance or expressions of dislike, even hatred. The positive buzz created by *Hallyu* has allowed Shin-Ōkubo, a Tokyo neighborhood known as a Koreatown to enjoy economic success. The Korean Wave functions as a possible source of cultural capital not only for Japanese consumers, but also people of Korean ethnic background living and working in Japan.

Even though my most recent research seems to indicate that the amount of Japanese people coming to Shin-Ōkubo for *Hallyu*-related purchases has decreased, *Hallyu* remains a recognized genre of magazine in Japanese bookstores, the “*momjjang ajumma*” Jung Dayeon’s diet books that are incredibly popular in Japan,<sup>56</sup> and *Hallyu* (*Kanryū*) is still a household word. The reason why it matters that *Hallyu* has permeated Japanese society is that it has done so to an extent that it is visible in the daily life of millions of people in Tokyo and beyond.

*Hallyu*-related merchandise might be a cursory introduction to Korea and fail to explain many Korean cultural nuances, but at the same time, by making parts of the culture easily accessible to the general public in Japan, the door is opened for even more Korean culture to flow in. With large numbers of Koreans studying abroad and some of the sizeable *Zainichi* Korean population in Japan's best tertiary educational institutions, it is easy enough to run into someone whose ethnic background is Korean in class as a Japanese student. Spending one day every week of a semester with Korean and *Zainichi* Korean classmates can be the beginning of friendships. Working with Korean and *Zainichi* Korean people in one's company can be an opportunity to learn from them about a cultural, experiential world that the average Japanese person may not understand or recognize.

At this time, the tenor of the political relationship between Japan and South Korea has not changed, even becoming worse in the past six months. But, as newer generations of politicians replace older ones, the possibility for change becomes larger. In particular, time to move away yet further from the events of World War II as those who grew up during the war pass on may help to remove some of the stronger anger and enmity between the two nations. Furthermore, even the opposition of *Hallyu* has been protested within Japan—even as some members of Japanese society try to push it out, others open the gates for it to flood in. Japan is not monolithically pushing *Hallyu* away, and that represents great possibility for the phenomenon.

As Japan continues to face the senescence of its population, better relationships with its native *Zainichi Chōsenjin/Kankokujin* citizens and Korean immigrants will serve to keep the changing country from deteriorating more than necessary. This is because

workers will be needed in increasing numbers to assist the elderly population, and combined with the low birth rates Japan is experiencing at present, it will be impossible to recruit Japanese workers for all positions that need to be filled. With South Koreans close by the country, the face of Japan could change quite a bit in the years to come. One reason for this is that the grammatical structure of Korean is similar to that of Japanese, making it easier to learn Japanese as a second language for a Korean already familiar with the grammar of their mother tongue. When the Japanese government is ready to look the situations of its people in the face and analyze them for the sake of the continuation of the country, hopefully the situation for Korean immigrants will improve, with *Hallyu* as a background to start from rather than merely historical tensions.

Although change that starts below a legislative level may not be as obvious, *Hallyu* allows Japan to take a look at its consumer multiculturalism and the inherent power of the consumer, and possibly use this power in a different way from the past through fostering cross-cultural understanding, relationships, and respect. This type of change mediated by a colorful and interesting pop cultural phenomenon has the potential to change Japan in a way that can be more lasting than a sudden political shock,<sup>57</sup> by changing the country's race relations from their foundations. Even though every *Hallyu* fan might not experience radical change in their personal beliefs due to its cultural influence, the possibility for change is an important part of this pop cultural phenomenon. The friendly exchange of culture has the potential to create meaningful relationships, even through two people listening to the same song together. The multiplied action of personal relationships stands to change the way society works. Thus, the flow of the

cultural tide of *Hallyu* in Japan will be an important phenomenon to watch in coming years.

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<sup>56</sup> See Kōdansha's website at

<http://www.bookclub.kodansha.co.jp/books/topics/momjjang/>

<sup>57</sup> Particularly in the sense that sudden political shifts may not actually represent a change in ideology of a group as a whole but rather the wishes of a well-organized group of a few elites. At the same time, however, it is necessary to add that in some cases, the opposite can be true. In particular, the scope of governmental reform in China during the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century represents this type of long-lasting breaks from tradition, especially because many physical and ideological cultural relics from China's history were wiped out. However, given that this is a violent kind of revolution in terms of not only lives lost but cultural loss, something that does not destroy the integrity of any culture is, in my mind, preferred.

## Appendix A

### K-Pop Performances Attended in Japan

2011

- Tohoshinki TONE Mini-live and Interview, Tokyo International Forum, Tokyo
- YG Family Concert in Japan, Saitama Super Arena, Saitama Prefecture

2012

- Springroove (with performances by Bigbang and 2NE1), Makuhari Messe, Chiba Prefecture
- Afterschool First Tour in Japan, Zepp Tokyo, Tokyo
- Tohoshinki TONE, Tokyo Dome, Tokyo
- Super Junior Super Show 4, Tokyo Dome, Tokyo
- Afterschool First Tour in Japan, Zepp Tokyo, Tokyo

Appendix B

Images



Figure 1: Rain's *momjjang* figure.



Figure 2: Bae Yong Joon's famous outfit from the television drama Winter Sonata. Compared to Rain, he has a much more gentle look.





Figure 3: The cover of 2PM's album *2:00 PM: Time for Change*. Taecyeon (far right) displays his fierce masculinity by seeming to growl at the viewer.



Figure 4: An example of the results of double-eyelid surgery.



Figure 5: The S-line illustrated in a Korean ad for school uniforms.



Figure 6: In Etude House's latest campaign, popular band f(x)'s members Krystal (left) and Sulli (right) are used to advertise the products not only in South Korea, but Japan as well.



Figure 7: Etude House also uses the band SHINee in their advertising. The caption reads: "SHINee event opening this week too! New goods [products] are finally being delivered~ Let's get Etude House original goods [goods only available at Etude House] quickly!" SHINee's appearance in ads and in promotional items offered to Etude House customers draws customers into the store. It is not uncommon to see a package including some sort of SHINee-branded item, such as a poster or folder, used to sell items in the store.



2012年12月14日  
**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

オニユ  
**オンユ**

オニユくんにバースデーメッセージを送ろう!  
 メッセージは、エチュードが  
 オニユくんへお届けします!  
 メッセージを書いてツリーに飾ってね!

◆ ETUDE HOUSE ◆

Figure 8: Perhaps an even more obvious use of SHINee to move products at Etude House can be found in this special Japanese promotion: "Let's send Onew-kun [Japanese honorific denoting a close male friend] a birthday message! Etude House will send Onew-kun the message! Write a message and hang it on the tree!" The caption on the original facebook page states: 本日店舗にて 1000 円以上お買上げのお客様にメッセージカードをお渡しいたします♥ "Today at the store, those customers who purchase over ¥1000 in products will receive a message card♥" The message, while done very cutely, is still ultimately a chance to draw new customers into the store.

**Happy Valentine!!**  
 幸せなひと時を ~バレンタインキャンペーン~

お待たせいたしました。  
 多くの方より要望をいただいております  
**マッコラスペシャルギフトセットを**  
**限定発売♪**

**♡マッコラハンドクリーム スペシャルギフトセット♡**

マッコリエクス<sup>®</sup> (保湿成分) 配合の、しっとりなめらかマイルドな洗い上がりのマッコラソープと  
 手指を乾燥から守り、潤いを与える嬉しい3種類 (コラーゲン・ヒアルロン酸・セラミド) のハンドクリームを詰め合わせました。  
※アスベルキルス/コメ発酵エキス

Figure 9: This ad, from Nature Republic, features their spokesperson Jang Geun Suk, a popular Korean drama star who has also ventured into music. His picture emblazons this special makgeolli (Korean rice-based alcohol) hand cream set, sold as a limited edition Valentine's Day set.



Figure 10: Nature Republic stores in Japan are packed with advertisements prominently featuring Jang Geun Suk's image.





Figure 11: Two new perfumes in Missha's lineup are accompanied by an advertisement featuring TVXQ (Tohoshinki, or Dong Bang Shin Ki) members Changmin (left) and Yunho (right). The text in the ad states: "A limited edition set will be available for sale at the same time [as the release of the new perfumes on 21 February 2013]." The limited edition set contains two perfumes with the autographs of Changmin and Yunho engraved into their own separate bottles. Normal, individually sold perfumes do not contain this engraving.



Figure 12: Missha Japan also has branded products specific to the country, such as this Hello Kitty sheet mask, available for purchase. The other item shown is a wrinkle care BB cream, which is not specific to Japan.



Figure 13: This promotional makeup pouch from Missha was available with a purchase of over ¥5000 during the opening of a new Missha store in Japan.



Figure 14: These three still images are from Afterschool's Rexena Deodorant commercial. The top says “Rexena Dry Shield” and features Afterschool member Nana. The middle features all of Afterschool’s members. The bottom panel says, “Idols don’t sweat [from their armpits]!”





Figure 15: This Samantha Thavasa ad features all of AKB48's members posing with brand bags. Recent models have included not only Japanese celebrities like AKB48's Tomomi Itano, but also Victoria's Secret model Miranda Kerr.



Figure 16: The cover of the first volume of the manga "Hating the Korean Wave," or Kenkanryu. The speech bubbles, from an anonymous translation and given in order from right to left, are as follows:

"There is no longer any need for Japan to apologize or pay reparations to Korea!!"

"South Korea fabricates that Samurai, Kendo, Sushi, the tea ceremony, Ninja, and Origami, among many other aspects of Japanese culture, originated in Korea!!"

"Why does South Korea invade Japan's territory, Takeshima [Dokdo/Liancourt Rocks]?"



Figure 17: Missha Japan's "Love and Beauty Happy Bag" for Japanese New Year, containing three pictures of TVXQ members Changmin and Yunho as well as a Japan-only Hello Kitty sheet mask.



Figure 18: TVXQ's Changmin and Yunho in hanbok for the Korean harvest festival, Chuseok.



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## Appendix C

### Interview Questions

Participant's Age

Gender

Nationality

Is your first language Korean or Japanese?

(if mother tongue is Korean)

How long have you been studying Japanese? Why did you start?

(if mother tongue is Japanese)

How long have you been studying Korean? Why did you start?

Do you have close relationships with a person or people from Japan/Korea?

Do you have any long-term goals regarding your study of Japanese/Korean, such as  
working in the country?

As you have spent more time in Japan, have you noticed any differences over time in the  
way that Korean and Japanese people in your life, including you, interact with each  
other? If so, what kinds of differences?

How do you feel about the concept of the Korean Wave? Do you think it helps the relationship between Japan and South Korea?

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