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The South Korean Film Industry in the Age of the Chinese Film Market

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On 26 August 2016, the South Korea-Thailand-China coproduction film *Final Recipe* (Gina Kim, 2014) opened on 3,200 screens nationwide in the People's Republic of China (PRC; hereafter China). The coproduced film was the first South Korean-directed feature to be granted a wide release in China following the 2014 South Korea-China Free Trade Agreement (FTA). *Final Recipe* cast Michelle Yeo (Malaysian), Chin Han (Singaporean) and the K-pop superstar Henry Lau (Taiwanese American) and shot most of its outdoor scenes in Thailand, Seoul and Shanghai. The film tells the story of a high-school student (Lau) who enters a 'Master Chef'-type cooking contest and finds his long-lost father along the way. *Final Recipe* was one of many attempts that the South Korea media giant CJ E&M (hereafter CJ) made to break into the global film market. Led by the company's US-born executive Miky Lee (Yi Mikyŏng), CJ's 'global project' had an ambitious vision: to broaden the horizons of international coproductions, using English-language scripts and transnational casts to increase the films' global appeal. Following this logic, CJ carefully planned to target the company's emerging markets in Southeast Asia and China with *Final Recipe*'s 'all English-speaking' Asian cast.[1] Given the popularity of food-related films in Asia, *Final Recipe*'s box office forecast in the Chinese market was positive. *Hallyu*, or the Korean pop culture wave, has dictated numerous trends across Asia, and China has become the biggest market for the *hallyu* industry. The culmination of this wave was the South Korean TV drama *Descendants of the Sun* (2016). This pan-Asian hit was broadcast simultaneously in South Korea and China only months before the release of *Final Recipe* in China. The last episode of *Descendants of the Sun* was viewed 2.4 billion times on the online video platform *iQiYi* in April 2016.[2]

Final Recipe, however, had no luck in China. South Korea-China film and media coproduction took an unpleasant turn around the time the film was distributed in China. The US missile defence system called Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) was deployed in South Korea amidst a mounting nuclear threat from North Korea. Although South Korea and the US officially stated that the missile shield was necessary for protection against a nuclear armed North Korea, the Chinese government argued that the missile system's radar made it possible to spy on Chinese territory. Accordingly, Beijing quickly responded to THAAD with a ban on tour group travel to South Korea. The Chinese government also suspended all culture-based business with South Korea. Among the sectors hit hardest were department stores, cosmetic products, South Korean TV dramas, online games, music and films. In October 2016, the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television (SAPPRFT) announced a ban on South Korean media

products. All South Korean TV dramas and variety shows accordingly ceased to be uploaded on online streaming platforms. All of the programs uploaded in 2017 were removed. SAPPRFT also proscribed the broadcasting of TV programmes starring South Korean actors.[3] Neither the Beijing film festival in April nor the Shanghai festival in June 2017 included any South Korean films in their line-ups – shunning even the Asia-wide box office sensation *Train to Busan* (Yŏn Sangho, 2016).[4] *Final Recipe*, as a result, disappeared quickly from China's movie theatres. This crisis has abated somewhat with the sudden political truce between North Korea and the US, epitomized by the Kim-Trump summit in Singapore in June 2018. However, SAPPRFT's embargo on South Korean cultural products remains in force. The loss of the film market in China – one of the biggest producer-cum-consumer nations – was a direct hit to the South Korean film industry, which has been actively producing and coproducing films aimed exclusively at the Chinese film market.

Historically, the 'Chinese film market' has been a contentious issue in the Korean film industry. The notion of the 'Chinese film market' has been constantly redefined over the periods of political and ideological turmoil in South Korea's modern history. Victor Fan, in this dossier, argues that 'market' is not a 'conceptually and historically stable space or network of exchanges'. Instead, it is 'a set of problematics and a constantly changing medium'. Within the Korean film industry, China was for a long time widely regarded as an impenetrable and menacing communist territory. Instead of referring to it as '*Chungguk* (China)', the South Korean government called mainland China '*Chunggong* (Communist China)'. Taiwan, therefore, was the only legitimate '*Chungguk',* or '*Chayujungguk* (Free China)', on Koreans' Cold War map of Asia until August 1992, when South Korea and China established full diplomatic relations.[5] To the South Korean film industry, *Chunggukyŏnghwa* (Chinese cinema) meant popular genre films produced in Hong Kong, such as martial arts films, gangster films and tear-jerker melodramas. Unsurprisingly, South Korea's cultural elites and cinephiles consistently looked down on *Chunggukyŏnghwa*. The only exception was made for fifth-generation film auteurs such as Zhang Yimou, Chen Kaige and Tian Zhuangzhuang, whose arthouse classics were perceived as provocative anti-Communist Party of China (CPC) protests. China, as a result, was not considered a viable or desirable 'market' for the South Korean film industry until the new millennium, when the Chinese film market became the most important and challenging destination for South Korean cinema. In this short essay, I will trace the trajectory of the South Korean film industry's active participation in the regional film sphere, from the post-Korean War era to the present century, by scrutinizing South Korea's repeated attempts to coproduce films with the Chinese-language world in order to expand its rather limited domestic film market, exploit China's cheap and skilled labor and comply with the twogovernment's international politics. I will also address, in the latter part of this essay, the South Korean film industry's sudden turn to Southeast Asia after the THADD tension and the subsequent 'Korea ban' in China.

It is hard to imagine today, but as Nitin Govil shows in his exploration of the intimate cinematic network between India and China in the 1950s, the film industries in Asia were indeed tightly connected to each other at the height of Cold War cultural politics in Asia. The first signs of a regional cinema link appeared in Japan as early as the 1930s and were deeply tied to Japan's imperial ambitions across Asia. Under the Japanese Empire's 'New Filmic System' design – or the 'Greater East Asian Cinema' – each colony was linked to the others under the slogan of 'the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere', which Japan used to instil a sense of

bonding with and among its colonies.[6] This ambitious but exploitative network ended abruptly with the Japanese surrender to the Allies in August 1945. The US has exercised hegemony in this region since then. In the 1950s, threatened by the expansion of communism throughout the region, the establishment of the PRC and the outbreak of the Korean War, the US government believed it necessary to construct a military bulwark and a 'free Asia' bloc in the region. The US-driven 'free Asia' alliance contained vast networks of newly sovereign nation-states. Ranging from the Philippines and Indonesia to South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan, this anti-communist bloc was controlled by the new hegemonic regime via financial and cultural domination.[7] This new regional alliance was, in the words of Markus Nornes, tempered 'by the legacy of Japanese imperialism and the overwhelming power of bilateral relationships with the United States'.[8] Under this new regional order, the cultural arenas of the various 'free Asia' countries, particularly their motion picture industries, were linked.[9] South Korean cinema entered this regional network in the second half of the 1950s.

As I discussed elsewhere, the first contact between the South Korean film industry and *Chunggukyŏnghwa* took place as early as 1957, when South Korea's Korea Entertainment and Hong Kong's Shaw & Sons, the precursor of Shaw Brothers, began shooting the first South Korea-Hong Kong coproduction film, *Love with an Alien* (*Igukchŏngwŏn*).[10] The film was a regional collaboration *par excellence*. Three veteran directors from three countries – Chŏn Ch'angkŭn from South Korea, Tu Guangqi from Hong Kong and Wakasugi Mitsuyo from Japan – were involved in this transnational melodrama set in Seoul, Hong Kong and Macau. After *Love with an Alien* met with a lukewarm reception in both markets, a more intensive phase of cinematic coproduction between South Korea and Hong Kong began a few years later. During the 1960s, Shin Sang-ok, an iconic director of 1960s South Korean cinema, actively engaged in multiple coproduction projects with Hong Kong and tried to export Shin Films' output overseas using his formal and informal connections with Shaw Brothers and other small-scale production companies in Taiwan. Consequently, from 1964 to 1967, four big-budget color epic films were completed and distributed in each market. All four coproduction films, *Last Woman of Shang* (Griffin Yueh Feng, 1964), *The Goddess of Mercy* (Im Wŏnsik,1966), *That Man in Chang-An* (Yan Jun,1966) and *King with My Face* (Ho Meng-hua, 1967), were produced with shared budgets, casts, directors and production duties, all necessary and sufficient conditions for being considered legitimate coproductions.[11] It should be noted that in many South Korea-Hong Kong coproduction films of this period, South Korean companies such Shin Films provided only a certain portion of the total budget while supplying mainly male actors for Hong Kong's *wuxia* films that were produced and distributed for Chinese diasporas audiences around the world. Thus, in other words, the South Korean film industry helped to reinforce 'cultural China' by contributing locations for the 'imagined China' of Hong Kong cinema and providing male actors whose nationalities were erased and whose dialogues were dubbed in Mandarin.[12]

In the early 1970s, with the success of *Five Fingers of Death* (1973), American media conglomerates suddenly turned their attention to Asia and began pouring capital into the region, seeking to maximize their profits by securing the global distribution rights to kung fu films.[13] To provide more kung fu films, Hong Kong film producers extended their networks to South Korea in the mid-1970s. Hong Kong film producers urgently needed subcontractors who had many years' experience in making kung fu films and were reliably prompt in completing them.

South Korean cinema entered this unparalleled race to manufacture 'standardized' kung fu products. By the late 1970s, though, the global kung fu craze was showing signs of a significant decline. Too many hastily dubbed 'inferior' kung fu films that failed to satisfy their audiences led to the genre's entire disappearance in the late 1970s. The early phase of South Korea's network with the Chinese 'diasporas' film market stopped in the early 1980s and has long been forgotten in the chronicle of Asian cinema.

The network was revived in 1999, almost two decades later. In place of Hong Kong, China unexpectedly emerged as South Korea's coproduction partner. *Anarchists* (Yu Yŏngsik, 1999) was South Korea's first cinematic collaboration with China. Interestingly enough, *Anarchists* was not a planned coproduction. The producer Yi Chunik, who later became a prolific director himself, approached Shanghai Film Studio hoping to reduce the costs of this grand epic drama about Korean resistance fighters in Shanghai during Japanese colonial rule (1910–1945). The Shanghai studio executives welcomed Yi's proposal, and the film was completed in 1999. *Anarchists* was not a box office success. It did, however, open a door to the Chinese film market. Between 2000 and the mid-2010s, accordingly, numerous South Korea-China big-budget epic coproduction films were produced and released in both markets, including *Musa* (aka *The Warriors*, Kim Sŏngsu, SK/PRC, 2001), *Shadowless Sword* (Kim Yŏngchun, SK/PRC, 2004), *The Promise* (*Chen Kaige*, PRC/HK/JP/SK, 2005), *A Battle of Wits* (Jacob Cheung, PRC/HK/SK, 2006), *Seven Swords* (Tsui Hark, HK/SK, 2006), *Daisy* (Andrew Lau, HK/SK, 2006), *The Restless* (Cho Dong-oh, PRC/SK, 2006), *Red Cliff* (John Woo, PRC/HK/JP/TW/SK, 2008), *Three Kingdoms: Resurrection of the Dragon* (Daniel Lee, HK/SK, 2008) and *Reign of Assassins* (Su Chao-pin and John Woo, PRC/HK/TW/SK, 2010). Comedies, melodramas and horror films have also been produced, including *Sophie's Revenge* (Eva Jin, PRC/SK, 2009), *Seasons of Good Rain* (Hur Jin-ho, PRC/SK, 2009), *Late Autumn* (Kim T'aeyong, PRC/US/SK, 2010), *Bunshinsaba* (An Pyŏngki, PRC/SK, 2012), *A Wedding Invitation* (O Kihwan, PRC/SK, 2013), *Mr. Go* (Kim Yonghwa, PRC/SK, 2013) and *The Third Way of Love* (John H. Lee, PRC/SK, 2015). CJ, Show Box, Boram Entertainment (BE) and other major media conglomerates in South Korea invested partially and fully in these joint ventures.

This sudden blossoming of South Korea-China coproduction practice can be roughly categorized into three stages according to the mode of production. First, during the early period of this practice, between the late 1990s and early 2000s, China was an 'outsourcing' partner for the South Korean film companies' runaway productions that exploited their Chinese counterparts to manufacture high–production quality 'South Korean' films with cheap labor and exotic landscapes. The late 1990s was when the PRC proposed the catchphrase 'please come in' (*qing jinlai*), and many transnational companies, which Michael Keane aptly called 'willing collaborators', took advantage of preferential policies to set up manufacturing processing facilities that exploited China's cheap labor.[14] The South Korean film industry was one of these foreign forces, along with Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan. There were two main reasons for South Korea's entrance into China. First, the unexpected economic and social transformations that followed what the Koreans refer to as the 'International Monetary Fund (IMF) crisis' in December 1997 led the nation's film producers to find foreign markets to which to export domestic films and cheaper options for producing large-scale films. Second, a group of Korean filmmakers, who had grown up with Jin Yong (Louis Cha)'s martial arts novels and Tsui Hark's directed-produced *wuxia* films, embraced China as a

welcome partner and valuable resource in their efforts to achieve their dream of realizing large-scale martial arts films. A number of martial arts films such as *Bicheonmoo* (Kim Yŏngchun, SK/PRC, 2000), *Ten Hundred Years Lake* (Yi Kwanghun, SK/PRC, 2002) and *Musa* came out almost simultaneously.[15] I call this phase 'runaway production' in South Korea; it was not exactly coproduction, but rather South Korean national cinema produced in limited collaboration with China. Indeed, none of the listed films were defined by the SAPPRFT as 'Joint Productions (*Hapchak*)'. Instead, they were labelled 'Assisted Productions (*Hyŏpchak*)' and treated as 'foreign' films. Among all the films coproduced by the two countries, only *Musa* was released in China. As an 'assisted production', *Musa* had limited screenings and was shown on 90 screens in Beijing and Shanghai in January 2003.[16]

The second stage was 'Inter-Asian Coproduction', which involved cinematic collaborations between two or three states in Asia. This phase coincided with South Korean cinema's embrace of its 'second' golden age in the early 2000s.[17] In 2001, South Korea became the first film industry in recent history to reclaim its domestic market from Hollywood. In 2003, local films had a 49% market share – the highest such figure in the world except for the US and India. The high-quality South Korean local product flowed outward to global film markets to connect with international audiences in commercial cinemas, in art theatres and at major international film festivals. The Chinese film industry also faced radical changes. Since 2004, China Film Group (CFG) has been actively coproducing films with Hong Kong production companies, capital and creative personnel. Indeed, the collaborations between the two countries were triggered by the introduction of the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEFA) in June 2003, which enabled Hong Kong film producers to access the PRC market. CEFA, Darrell William Davis wrote, sought to 'integrate China, Hong Kong and Macau through a package of changes providing favorable conditions for products and services from the latter two'.[18] With the launch of CEFA, the Hong Kong film industry, whose domestic market had shrunk drastically since the mid-1990s, finally saw signs of rehabilitation. Hong King cinema was given a new market whose potential seemed infinite.

The opening of the Chinese film market, or marketization in the China film business, to the Hong Kong film industry attracted many other Asian media players, and within just a couple of years, most major media conglomerates in Asia had joined the race. To provide more big-budget epic films for the Chinese film market, Hong Kong's major media conglomerates, Media Asia, China Star, Emperor and EDK, began collaborating with their Asian counterparts to reduce their financial risks and maximize their production budgets to produce 'bigger and bigger' epic extravaganzas. Accordingly, South Korean media conglomerates were invited by Hong Kong producers to participate. Hong Kong's media moguls Bill Kong and Shi Nansun were the main contacts. South Korea's Show East invested USD 3 million in Chen Kaige's unfortunate epic fantasy *The Promise* in 2005. *A Battle of Wits*, *Seven Swords*, *The Restless*, *Three Kingdoms: Resurrection of the Dragon* and *Reign of Assassins* followed. [19] However, the Chinese market was not mature enough to recoup the costs, and all the above-listed films had to enter the pan-Asian market, including Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore and South Korea.

John Woo's USD 80 million two-part blockbuster project *Red Cliff* (2008) changed the environment completely. *Red Cliff* was based on the classic Chinese novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (*San guo zhi*), written by Luo Guanzhong and familiar to most Asians. Taiwan's CMC Entertainment Group, South Korea's Showbox, and China's CFG coproduced this pan-Asian extravaganza. *Red Cliff*'s

USD 46 million box office record in the PRC market alone surprised most Asian film executives. Hong Kong producers, seeing the growing 'big' market in China, moved fast. Peter Chan Ho-sun (*Comrades, Almost a Love Story*), whose passion in the early 2000s had been to create 'pan-Asian cinema' that would encompass Thailand, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia and India, redirected his energy to producing 'pan-Chinese' cinema, starting with the star-driven epic *The Warlords* (2008). Five years later, Peter Chan produced a China-targeted film, *American Dreams in China* (2013), that grossed almost USD 90 million in China. As Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh pointed out, coproductions between China and East Asia 'appropriate "foreign" elements into a pan-Chinese repertoire and further enhance the standardization of commercial Chinese cinema'. Now, as Yeh claims, pan-Chinese market is the 'dominant order'.[20] The South Korean film industry, accordingly, has had to follow this 'new order'.

The third and current stage is South Korea's 'China production', in which South Korean film production companies, together with China's local partners, are developing and producing films exclusively for China's booming film market. The unexpectedly huge commercial success of *A Wedding Invitation* triggered this stage. This was one of CJ's China projects, or films planned to penetrate China. The main strategy of these projects is to erase 'Korean flavour' from the films. The fact that *A Wedding Invitation* was actually a remake of the 2001 South Korean tear-jerker *Last Present* (*Sŏnmul*) was not advertised widely, although both films were directed by the Korean filmmaker O Kihwan. *A Wedding Invitation* was shot in China with a mostly Korean crew.[21] No Korean performers were involved in the film. Instead, China's Bai Baihe and Taiwan's Eddie Peng starred in this heart-breaking story of a young couple. CJ was involved from the market research stage onward, making it one of the first South Korean productions explicitly produced for China. It made RMB 192 million (USD 31.4 million) at the Chinese box office alone and became one of the most successful films of 2013. *A Wedding Invitation* was, however, a flop in South Korea's local market (USD 118,000).[22] In the same year, South Korea's VFX company Dexter Digital coproduced the visual effects-heavy *Mr. Go* with the PRC's Huayi Brothers. A Chinese actress, Josie Xu, starred in this USD 20 million 3-D baseball fantasy.

The critical watershed moment between the two film industries came with the China-South Korea coproduction agreement, which was concluded on 3 July 2014. This coproduction agreement was part of the larger China-South Korea FTA, which was signed during a two-day visit to South Korea by China's president Xi Jinping.[23] This treaty propelled South Korea's advance into the Chinese film market by providing key creative personnel, including directors, screenwriters and performers, with opportunities to co-develop projects for both markets and co-operate on special effects and craft exchanges.[24] For instance, the China-South Korea-Hong Kong coproduction *Bounty Hunters* (Shin Terra, 2016) was produced and released in July 2016. Lee Min-ho (*Boys Over Flower* and *The Heirs*) starred in this Korean-directed action comedy. *Bountry Hunters* was produced for the Chinese market exclusively and was therefore not released in South Korea theatrically. Likewise, South Korea's sweetheart Son Ye-jin played a leading female character in another coproduction, *Bad Guys Always Die* (Sun Hao, 2015). The Korean actor Ji Jin-hee took leading roles in two coproduction romantic dramas, *On the Way* (Kim Poong-ki, 2015) and *Bad Sister* (Kim Tae-kyun, 2015). CJ developed Chang Yoon-hyun (*Tell Me Something*)'s thriller *The Peaceful Island* (2015). Huh In-moo directed *Wedding Diary* (2015) with the Korean actress Yoo In-na. Huh, in an interview with a South

Korean newspaper, stated somewhat pretentiously, 'there is enough money in China, but the country's film industry is seriously lacking in creative talent'.[25] But the Chinese film market was not as 'easy' as most South Korean producers had expected. Huh had to follow SAPPRFT's guidelines, change the film's title twice and go through multiple rounds of re-editing *Wedding Diary*. *The Peaceful Island* failed to secure a nationwide distribution schedule. In the end, *Wedding Diary* and *The Peaceful Island* were never released in China. According to the Korean Film Council (KOFIC)'s film magazine *Korean Cinema*, approximately 15 coproduction films from the two countries were in production in January 2015. One third of the listed films were completed and released before the 'Korea ban' in October 2016. And only two films, *The Third Way of Love* and *20 Once Again* (Leste Chen, 2015), made a profit in China. *20 Once Again* was one of many (and still counting) regional remakes of the hugely successful CJ production *Miss Granny* (Hwang Tonghyŏk, 2014).

The honeymoon was over. The South Korean film industry had to accept the 'Korea ban', however painfully. Most South Korea-China coproduction efforts were interrupted after the ban, and the Korean producers' rush to Beijing stopped abruptly. Lessons were learned. The Chinese film market is not stable, and the industry is still under state control. Anything can happen in the ever-changing political situation involving US, China, Japan and North and South Korea. CJ, while continuing to operate its film office in Beijing, drastically redirected its policy. Instead of pursuing a 'two-way' strategy – in China and the US – CJ is now focusing aggressively on the Southeast Asian market in tandem with the current Moon Jae-in administration's 'New Southern Policy', aimed at deepening South Korea's ties with Southeast Asia. In summer 2015, *Sweet 20* (Phan Gia Nhat Linh), CJ's second regional remake of *Miss Granny* (after *20 Once Again*), outperformed *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (2015) and became the highest-grossing Vietnamese film of the year.[26] In May 2018, CJ made multiple co-finance deals with Singapore's mm2 Asia that included six films from Indonesia and Thailand.[27] CJ's theatre chain, CGV Indonesia, has been aggressively expanding the number of its movie theatres, from 10 in 2013 to 50 in November 2018.[28] Witnessing the commercial success of CJ in Indonesia and Vietnam, South Korea's other major players, Lotte Entertainment and Showbox, also jumped into this 'future' film market for South Korean cinema.

On 15 October 2018, at the Busan International Film Festival (BIFF), the KOFIC, under its new president O Sŏkkŭn, unveiled and launched an ambitious enterprise, the Asian Film Center (AFC). As a former head of the Busan Film Commission, O had helped create and solidify the Asian Film Commissions Network (AFCNet), comprised of Asian quasi-governmental organizations. 'We need to help solidify Asian cinema's position in world', said Busan's mayor O Kŏton. 'The idea behind the AFC is not to promote Korean films'. He continued, 'Korea has politically difficult relations with Japan and China'. Indeed, no representatives from either country were present at the meeting.[29]

The South Korean film industry, along with the nation's cultural institutions, has been making miscalculations since the 1950s. It failed to perceive the structure of the regional and trans-regional media industries and the direction they are moving in the age of the Chinese film market. Today, while the Chinese film industry focuses on the PRC's gigantic domestic market, the South Korean film industry aspires to position itself as a hub of the Southeast Asian film industry. But how? Will the AFC and BIFF help to solidify the South Korean film industry's position

and expand South Korean cinema's 'market' in Southeast Asia? My answer is, unfortunately, not very optimistic.

Notes

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[1] Dal Yong Jin, '*Final Recipe* as a pan-Asian co-production film: Interview with director Gina Kim', in *Asia-Pacific Film Co-Productions: Theory, Industry and Aesthetics*, ed. Dal Yong Jin and Wendy Su (Routledge, forthcoming 2019).
[2] John Kang, 'Korean drama *"Descendants Of The Sun*" breaks records thanks to Chinese investments', *Forbes*, 5 April 2016. https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnkang/2016/04/05/korean-drama-descendants-of-the-sun-breaks-records-thanks-to-chinese-investments/#171d776a19ee
[3] Lisa Leung Yuk-ming, 'Sleeping with the intimate "enemy"? Dynamics and precarities of Chinese co-productions in the case of the "Korea ban",' in *Asia-Pacific Film Co-Productions*.
[4] Sonia Kil, 'China's blockade of cultural Korea marks troublesome anniversary', *Variety*, 24 August 2017. https://variety.com/2017/film/asia/china-ban-on-korea-culture-anniversary-1202537823/
[5] Four months later, diplomatic relations between South Korea and Taiwan were terminated on 23 August 1992.
[6] For more about the Greater East Asia Film Sphere and its impact on Asian cinema during (and after) Japan's imperial adventure, see Michael Basket, *The Attractive Empire: Colonial Asia in Japanese Imperial Film Culture, 1931–1953* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008) and Kinnia Yau Shuk-ting, *Japanese and Hong Kong Film Industries*: *Understanding the Origins of East Asian Film Networks* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009).
[7] Bruce Cumings, *Dominion from Sea to Sea: Pacific Ascendancy and American Power* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010).
[8] Abé Mark Nornes, 'The creation and construction of Asian cinema redux', *Film History*, vol. 25, no. 1-2 (2013), p. 181.
[9] See Sangjoon Lee, 'The Asia Foundation's motion picture project and the cultural Cold War in Asia', *Film History*, vol. 29, no. 2 (2017), pp. 108–137.
[10] Sangjoon Lee, 'Seoul-Hong Kong-Macau: *Love with an Alien* (1957) and postwar South Korea-Hong Kong coproduction', in *Asia-Pacific Film Co-Productions*.
[11] For a more detailed history, see Brian Yecis and Ae-Gyung Shim, 'Asian interchange: Korean–Hong Kong co-productions of the 1960s', *Journal of Japanese and Korean Cinema*, vol. 4, no. 1 (2012), pp. 15–28.
[12] Sangjoon Lee, 'The genealogy of pan-Asian big pictures and the predicament of the contemporary South Korean film industry', *Transnational Cinemas*, vol. 3, no. 1 (2012), pp. 93–106. A significant portion of this section (on the three stages of China-South Korea coproduction) has been substantialy revised and updated from this previously published essay.

[13] See David Desser, 'The kung fu craze: Hong Kong cinema's first American reception', in *The Cinema of Hong Kong: History, Art, Identity*, ed. Poshek Fu and David Desser (Cambridge, UK: University of Cambridge Press, 2000), pp. 19–43.
[14] See Michael Keane, Brian Yecies and Terry Flew, eds., *Willing Collaborators: Foreign Partners in Chinese Media* (Rowan & Littlefield, 2018); Michael Keane, 'China's digital media industries and the challenge of overseas markets', *Journal of Chinese Cinemas*, forthcoming fall 2019; and Michael Curtin, 'What makes them willing collaborators? The global context of Chinese motion picture co-productions', *Media International Australia*, vol. 159, no. 1 (May 2016), pp. 63–72.
[15] Hwang Dong-mi and Park Hee-sung, 'Korea-China co-production and Korean cinema's way to China', *Korean Film Observatory*, 17 (June 2002), pp. 3–5.
[16] '*Musa* will be released in China', *Cine 21*, 6 January 2003. http://www.cine21.com/news/view/?mag_id=16279
[17] Many historians view the 1960s as South Korean cinema's 'first' Golden Age. For more about South Korean cinema's golden age, see Kathleen A. McHugh and Nancy Abelmann's superbly edited volume *South Korean Golden Age Melodrama: Gender, Genre, and National Cinema* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2005).
[18] Darrell William Davis, 'Market and marketization in the China film business', *Cinema Journal*, vol. 49, no. 3 (2010), p. 122.
[19] Hawon Kim, 'Current state of Asian film industry exchange', *Korean Film Observatory*, 17 (Fall 2005), pp. 10–13.
[20] Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh, 'The deferral of pan-Asian: A critical appraisal of film marketization in China', in *Reorienting Global Communication: Indian and Chinese Media Beyond Borders*, ed. Michael Curtin and Hermant Shah (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2010), p. 188.
[21] South Korea's technical staff, particularly visual effects and digital intermediary experts, have contributed to the PRC's visual effects-heavy blockbuster films, such as *Assembly* (2007), *Aftershock* (2010), *Flying Swords of Dragon Gate* (2011) and *The Mermaids* (2016). See Brian Yecies, 'The Chinese–Korean co-production pact: Collaborative encounters and the accelerating expansion of Chinese einema', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 22, no. 5 (2016), pp. 770–786.
[22] Kevin Ma, 'Korean cinema, Chinese characteristics', *Film Business Asia*, 7 October 2013. https://web.archive.org/web/20131229180044/http://www.filmbiz.asia/news/korean-cinema-chinese-characteristics
[23] Patrick Frater, 'China and South Korea sign co-production and import deal', *Variety*, 6 July 2014. https://variety.com/2014/biz/asia/china-and-south-korea-sign-co-production-and-import-deal-1201258316
[24] Do Sung-hee, 'Korea and China, hand in hand', *Korean Cinema*, 53 (August 2014), p. 27.
[25] Do Sung-hee, 'Korea and China, Hand in Hand', p. 29.
[26] Patrick Brezeski wrote, 'If there's any force to rival *The Force*, it might be just be the so-called *Hallyu*, or Korean pop culture wave, which continues to dictate trends across much of Asia'. See Brezenski, 'How Korean pop culture beat "Star Wars" in two Asian countries', *The Hollywood Reporter*, 12 December 12 2015. http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/star-wars-box-office-how-850450
[27] Liz Shackelton, 'South Korea's CJ E&M and Singapore's mm2 strike financing pact', *Screen Daily*, 10 May 2018. https://www.screendaily.com/news/south-koreas-cj-eandm-and-singapores-mm2-strike-financing-pact-exclusive/5129089.article

[28] 'CGV Indonesia opened its 50th theatre', *Chosŏnilbo*, 30 November 2018. http://it.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2018/11/30/2018113002202.html
[29] Patrick Frater and Sonia Kil, 'Plans For Asian Film Center given launch in Busan', *Variety*, 8 October 2018. https://variety.com/2018/film/asia/plans-asian-film-center-launch-in-busan-1202971854/