



Studies on Transnational Korean Pop Culture; K-drama, K-pop, and BTS
(초국가적 한국 대중문화 : 드라마, 케이팝, BTS)

Course Code			
Class Times	Mon/Wed/Thu Type A(9:00~12:00)	Classroom 201	Bldg IBK Communication Center (Bd.64)
Equivalent Year Level	1/2/3/4	Course Credit	3
Instructor	Seok-Kyeong HONG	Sessions	15(45 class hours)
Office	64-402	Email	Skhong63@snu.ac.kr

□ **Instructor's Profile**



Name: Seok-Kyeong HONG

Professor, Department of Communication
College of Social Sciences, Seoul National University

Seok-Kyeong HONG is a Professor of Communication at Seoul National University, since 2013. She has worked at Korean Broadcasting Commission as Chief researcher (1996-1999) and was an Associate Professor of the Department of Information and Communication Sciences at University of Bordeaux 3 (2000-2013). Her major research and teaching interests include **Cultural Studies, Visual Methods and**

Communication, Media Culture, and Transnational and Global Popular Culture.

She has published books and articles on Korean television dramas, *Hallyu* as a cultural consequence of globalization and digital culture, and various digital cultural forms and practices as *mukbang*(food-broadcasting). She's also interested in visual methods and qualitative research design. She has been writing columns on *Hallyu* and cultural issues for national presses. Her recent research was on the phenomenon of BTS, and a book on the subject is under publication.

Education

1985–1987 : Master in Communication, Seoul National University

1987–1989 : Ph.D Courses in Communication, Seoul National University

1989–1995 : Ph.D in Information and Communication Sciences, University Grenoble3 (France), with mention “*très honorable avec félicitation du jury*” (*summa cum laude honour*) Thesis : *Régime d'Actualité et la construction de la réalité dans la vie quotidienne : contribution à l'analyse pragmatique de la télévision* (*Actuality Regime and Reality Construction in Everyday Life : A contribution to the Pragmatic Analysis of Television*)



Related Publications

- Park, S., Hong, S. (2019). On the Intersectionality of Race and Gender in the Skin-whitening Culture of K-Beauty: A Case Study on the Whitewashing/yellowwashing Debate. *Journal of communication research*, 56(2), 43-78. (in Korean)
- Hong, S., Park, D., Park, S. & Oh, S. (2019). Geography of Hallyu Studies: Analysis of Academic Discourse on Hallyu in International Research. *Korea Journal*, 59(2), 111-143.
- Jang, E., Park, S., Lee, J. & Hong, S. (2019). Beautiful and Masculine: Male Make-Up YouTubers and Heteronormativity in South Korea. *Journal of Popular Culture*, 52, 678-702.
- Hong, S., Park, D. & Park, S. (2017). Knowledge Network Analysis on Hallyu Research. *Korean Journal of Journalism & Communication Studies*, 61(6), 318-353. (in Korean)
- Hong, S. (2017). Hallyu beyond Asia: Theoretical Investigations on Global Consumption of Hallyu. In Tae-Jin Yoon and Dal Yong Jin (Eds.), *The Korean Wave: Evolution, Fandom, and Transnationality*. (pp. 67-86) Lexington Books.
- Hong, S. (2017). Internet Mukbang (Foodcasting) in South Korea. In Ilana Eleá, Lothar Mikos (Eds.), *Young & Creative - Digital Technologies Empowering Children in Everyday Life*. (pp. 111-123) Nordicom.
- Hong, S. & Park, S. (2016). Emergence of Internet Mukbang(Foodcasting) and Its Hegemonic Process in Media Culture. *Media & Society*, 24(1), 105~150. (in Korean)
- Hong, S. (2015). Food Culture as Televised Real Variety Program. *Comparative Korean Studies*, 23(3), pp.131-162.
- Hong, S. (2013). *Hallyu in Globalization and Digital Culture Era: Full House, Gangnam Style and After*. Paju: Hanul. (in Korean)



□ Course Information

Course Description	<p>This is an introductory course on Korean pop culture, underlining its recent performance in the international scene under the name of <i>Hallyu</i>, the Korean Wave.</p> <p>This course starts with a short history of the making of Korean Pop Culture from the 50's to the 90's, and introduces the phenomenon of <i>Hallyu</i> in East Asia followed by its propagation beyond the region. Structural causes of <i>Hallyu</i> as democratization, East Asian media and entertainment industry, and the development of digital culture will be treated as the core contextual elements of <i>Hallyu</i>.</p> <p>The second part will treat the case of K-drama, K-pop and BTS. These three successful elements of <i>Hallyu</i> will be analyzed using many videos and audio tracks. Students will not only learn basic concepts and theories relating to <i>Hallyu</i> Studies (transnational reception, fan culture, emerging cultural forms and practices), but will also be encouraged to watch, listen and experience various major contents of the Korean Wave.</p> <p>Through these theoretical and practical process, students will acquire a comprehensive understanding of the process of a transnational cultural propagation and reception, as well as the way gender, race, generation, and national identity intersects in global culture especially in terms of identity formation.</p>
Course Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 2 essays (each of 2000-3000 words): 40% (the format and content will be explained during the course)- Final exam: 60% <p>Students under the score of 60/100 will fail the course.</p>
Course Materials	Course Packet
Class Policy	If a student misses the class more than twice and or late for the class m.If a student is absent more than twice and/or is late for the class more than 4 times without acceptable excuses, he or she may fail the course.
Etc. (e.g. Guidelines)	Students should read all reading materials for class discussion. (The lectures will not summarize the reading materials.)



□ Course Schedule

Week1: Introduction on History of *Hallyu*

After a quick introduction of the course, the *Hallyu* phenomenon will be explained through its historical background in East Asia and beyond. Globalization and changes in *mediascapes* and *ethnoscapes* will be discussed as well as digital culture as the context of transnational propagation of Korean pop culture. Related key concepts will be introduced.

Week 2: East Asian media and entertainment industries: its formation and transnational practices

Korean Popular culture was formed under various foreign influences. This lecture will focus on TV drama production in this region. Crossmedia strategies of East Asian media and entertainment industries, transnational adaptations, recurrent themes and characters which traverse genres and frontiers will be discussed in terms of East Asian convergence culture.

Week 3: Korean drama and its cultural meaning (1): History, genres, and the future

After a rapid historical introduction of the Korean television drama, this lecture concentrates on the genres of K-drama and their convention. What are the strengths and limitations of K-drama for the globalized TV fiction market? What will be the future of K-drama in the age of global platforms? Observations on the role of Netflix will help to develop opinions on this ongoing question.

Week 4 : Korean drama and its cultural meaning (2) : A Case Study of <*Dae Jang Keum* (대장금, *Jewel in the Palace*>(2003)

Through a case study on the mega hit historical Korean drama <대장금>, this lecture will develop a multidimensional analysis on the success of this 64-episode drama in order to clarify the intercultural comprehension of televisual fiction. Narratives, characters, and scenes will be analyzed, and their effects on regional identity construction will be discussed.

Week 5: Korean drama and its cultural meaning (3): Places in K-drama and K-cinema

The division of place/space is one of the key concepts in understanding urban space and the construction of identities. In a rapidly changing society such as Korea, serialized television fiction played an important ideological role in producing the agreeable images of modern Korea through the *mis-en-scène* of everyday life, where tradition and modernity intertwine. Places like the patio of a traditional urban family house, rooftops,



semi-underground apartments, snack carts, and urban convenience stores are at the center of narratives and genres.

Week 6: Making of Korean Pop Music

The global popularity of K-pop stimulates explanations on the causes of its success, but scarce is the questioning on its historical formation. This lecture traces the modernization of Korea from the opening of the hermit dynasty during the 19th century to the nineties of the 20th century, showing how multiple foreign musical influences were melted into a localized musical forms and practices. Democratization of the Korean society through the 80's and the explosion of cultural expressions in the nineties will be explained with audiovisual illustrations.

Week 7: K-pop, A pop culture formation of the digital era

What is K pop? Is it a music style or a genre? Or rather, is it a cultural formation with related human practices? And what does the 'K' in K-pop mean, considering the existence of the K-pop groups without Korean members? This lecture proposes a comprehensive analysis on the digital cultural forms and practices which constitute K pop culture: Reaction videos, fan productions, Romanization, theory and explanation videos, and so on. It also questions the content of 'K' in K pop.

Week 8: K-fandom culture or Generation K pop

One of the major elements that distinguishes K-pop from other pop cultures is its fandom. Fandom studies provide a basic understanding on the active and participative audience, as well as the relations fans develop in and out of the fan community. This lecture proposes a comprehensive analysis on K-fandom culture, which has been influencing the formation and practices of the international fandom of K pop. The case of Army will bring about questions of generation as well as K-pop cosmopolitanism.

Week 9: BTS, strategies for “good influence”

Taking the world of Pop by storm, the seven-member boy group BTS stands in front of music actualities all over the world. This lecture focuses on the differences and similarities between BTS and other K-pop groups in terms of production, propagation/communication, reception, as well as transmedia strategies.

Week 10: K-pop and Gender issues

Continuing from the previous lecture, this session focuses on the gender dimension of the BTS and the K pop phenomena. K-pop idols are proposing a new regime of masculinity that fans across the world consider to be 'alternative', which challenges the white dominant masculinity and provides the materials with which fans negotiate their proper



gender identity.

Week 11: K pop and the East Asian Identity

From whitening makeup to photo retouches, K-pop idols' aesthetics are often in the center of online polemics between Korean fans and foreign fans (white-washing, yellow-washing, *mibaek* practices of the Korean beauty industry, etc.) Based on these observations, this lecture develops a theoretical framework to understand how the rise of Korean pop culture and celebrities contributes to reflections on the enhancement of the East Asian identity, and how it produces an empowering effect for the related people. An intersectional approach will help understand East Asian masculinity.

Week 12: K-Culture and Studies on Korean contemporary society (1): Food Culture and *Mukbang* (Food Broadcasting)

Whether it be in Korean dramas or in everyday life, food or eating takes a very important part in Korean society. Scenes of eating together and other representation of these social moments are full of cultural elements which help in understanding the society. Through the case of *Mukbang*, a kind of food broadcasting developed on platforms like Afreeca TV, this lecture develops a critical understanding of the contemporary Korean society and its transformation.

Week 13: K-Culture and Studies on Korean contemporary society (2): Reality program and socio-cultural issues

Korea exports not only K-pop and Korean drama and films, but also many reality programs. Defined as “Real-variety Show”(예능), these shows are exported and adapted by many foreign television channels in China, USA, Vietnam, Taiwan, and some European countries. In Korea, programs like <Infinite Challenge (무한도전)> saw huge popularity and constructed a significant collective memory during its decade-long run. In the continuity of the previous lecture, this lecture will analyze social issues related to the popularity of this televisual genre.

Week 14: Soft Power? The future of Hallyu

In recent years, the notion of Soft Power has been taken for granted to explain a nation's transnational cultural influence, and has been enlarging its reach to accompany public diplomacy issues. According to this theory, the *Hallyu* phenomenon represents Korean Soft Power. Keeping a critical stance on the use of this concept in transnational cultural influence cases, this lecture will retrace the debates on the influence of the *Hallyu* and develop projections on the future of Hallyu. The last hour of the class will be reserved for Q & A in preparation for the final exam.



Week 15: Final exam

Time : 9h- 12h