

HALLYU FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIO-CULTURAL-INTELLECTUAL IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract: South Korean society in the twenty-first century is renowned for its vibrant popular culture, known as the Hallyu or Korean Wave, which has significantly influenced global audiences. Korea has the right and responsibility to further cultivate its culture in the future due to its positive impact through peaceful soft power rather than aggressive means. Hallyu's soft power has been revealed inwardly and displayed outwardly, effectively broadening people's emotions and perceptions through highly adaptable and gentle communication abilities and talents. This force has successfully showcased Korea's appealing and high-quality pop culture on a global scale. This research aims to assess the worldwide influence of contemporary Hallyu through the lens of Joseph Nye's socio-cultural historical perspective. We will contend that cultural impact can surpass a nation's geopolitical and military capacities.

Keywords: Hallyu, Hangul, K-food, popular culture, South Korea.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Korean Wave, Hallyu, has spread worldwide in diverse areas, such as Korean pop culture, traditional music, Hangul language, technology (including medical services), food, gaming, and more (Kim et al., 2021; Kim & Chung, 2023a). Research on Hallyu is currently underway. Bok-Rae Kim's research, "Past, Present, and Future of Hallyu," was released in 2015, while Sang Yee Cheon (2015) did a thorough analysis of "The Global Impact of South Korean Popular Culture." The corresponding author of this study has worked on two research projects related to the Korean Wave in Mongolia (Kang et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2021). Dafna Zur (2023) and Ophélie Surcouf (2021) have extensively analyzed the favorable conditions for the proliferation of Hallyu within the domain of K-pop culture. This study will investigate the correlation between Hallyu and the Korean language and cuisine, as prior research has not specifically examined this relationship.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study will show how Hallyu's soft power, as per Joseph Nye's theory of soft power (2012), has influenced global culture. Nye has introduced an intellectual-political theory that emphasizes the importance of soft power above hard force in shaping world history. Hard power relies on force to influence policy, while soft power leverages culture, political views, and diplomacy to bring about non-coercive change. Hard power is perceived as a danger, producing confusion and fear, while soft power is an attractive ability that engages people's consciousness and emotions, fosters personal trust, and encourages collaboration. Our research will utilize his theory to examine Hallyu's soft power sources, which are materials detailing occurrences resulting from the interactions of individuals, periods, and locations, to reveal historical truths (Kim & Chung, 2022a; Kim & Chung, 2023b). This interpretation aims to elucidate historical events accurately while also discerning the significance and essence of the era through the words and actions of individuals that influence history (Cha, 2016; Kim & Chung, 2022b).

III. DISCUSSIONS

1. Pop-Hallyu

The Hallyu phenomenon originated in the 1950s, when Korean artists started imitating the popular culture of the United States, a prominent Western country during that period. They entertained at U.S. military installations in South Korea (hereafter Korea) after the Korean War (1950–1953) and slowly garnered more attention. The military government's strict regulation of the arts from the 1960s until the mid-1990s impeded the song's appeal in South Korea and stunted its growth. The unique features of the Hallyu phenomenon were evident when Kim Dae-Jung, who sought to promote freedom of expression within a democratic system, assumed the presidency. The President ensured freedom of thought, speech, invention, and expression, integrated culture into national policy, backed the cultural industry through legislation, and promoted the fusion of historic ancient Korean Baekje and Silla kingdom cultures to form a new Korean popular culture. He approved the importation of Japanese cultural products, allowing the film and television industries to benefit from Japan's cultural heritage (Chung et al., 2021). Additionally, many universities in Korea have established creative writing departments, resulting in a notable rise in the number of screenwriters being trained. In 2012, 2,531 playwrights were trained, with 87% of them being female (Joo, 2016).

During the 2010s, K-POP artists including KARA, Wonder Girls, and Girls' Generation gained significant success in Asia, Mexico, Central America, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. PSY's *Gangnam Style* and BTS have gained popularity since then. BTS's endeavors have sparked a significant Korean wave that is spreading globally. Moreover, the Korean wave is extending its global influence beyond music and television dramas to encompass movies.

At the 2019 Cannes Film Festival, director Bong Joon-Ho's *Parasite* received the "Golden Medal." It also received honors at the Palm Awards and the 92nd Academy Awards. The Netflix film *Kingdom* captivated audiences worldwide, with a special focus on the actors' traditional Korean attire. BTS' latest single, *Dynamite*, showcased its impact in mid-2020 by entering the number one spot on the Billboard Hot 100 (Kang et al., 2021). Similar to BTS, the Korean female group BLACK PINK is also experiencing a surge in global popularity.

What makes Hallyu so attractive to people worldwide? A significant contributor to the formation of Hallyu, according to Professor Shigeto Sonoda of the University of Tokyo, is the movement's desire to differentiate itself from the culturally prejudiced influence of the United States (Namuwiki, 2024). Professor Dafna Zur (2023) from Stanford University identified the high caliber of Korean cultural content and the capacity for empathy with audiences and followers as the factors that contributed to Hallyu's popularity. Zur's analysis has found that Korean dramas strike a solid balance between the predictability of a typical tale and exceptional inventiveness. Korean dramas commonly portray topics including stories of social mobility, relationships across different socioeconomic strata, and young persons striving to achieve their dreams against parental disapproval. However, the story goes beyond the ordinary aspects of everyday life. An unexpected Korean-influenced factor that goes beyond easy anticipation exceeds this predictability (Seok et al., 2020; Zur, 2023). Children who previously defied and damaged their parents have now reverted to being polite and well-behaved, demonstrating unwavering respect and loyalty. Korean dramas often portray a somber side but are also rich in humor that rejuvenates viewers (Park et al., 2022; Seok & Chung, 2023). Regarding K-pop's success, Korean idols' musical talent, exceptional dancing abilities, and great charisma are key factors. Zur emphasizes that Korean idols are skilled not just in rehearsing and training but also in public speaking and engaging with their audience. They uphold a pristine reputation and adhere to exceptionally high criteria.

Korean idols interact with their fans fervently and authentically, fostering a robust and vibrant bond akin to the allegiance seen between sports fans and their teams (Gwak, 2021). Idols interact with their followers through advanced communication techniques and recognize the significance of fans in their success. Fans develop a close connection with their idols and fervently protect them. BTS members have achieved remarkable success due to their talent and the passion and loyalty of their fans, known as the Army.

BTS's compelling songs and dances offer sentiments of comfort, support, and love. They criticize society in their songs without hesitation, while simultaneously showing sympathy and comfort to its disadvantaged residents (Kang et al., 2021). They offer guidance to stressed young individuals facing college admission exams or job worries, advising them to be calm and perform to the best of their abilities in their present circumstances. BTS also performs *Love Myself* to assist individuals grappling with prejudices and low self-esteem in cultivating self-love. In 2020, the BTS Army donated \$1 million to the "Black Lives Matter" campaign in the United States to fight against racial prejudice (Bhandari, 2020). BTS declined to have their music and choreography used as a tool to distract people from societal issues and are advocating for genuine social

justice. BTS stated, "We are against racism. We condemn violence. You and I, and we all, stand together in this movement against discrimination" (Aswad, 2020).

Hallyu, represented by BTS's performances, filmmaker Bong Joon-ho's *Parasite*, and other Korean young artists' efforts, has garnered worldwide praise for their unique content, acting as a unifying force that goes beyond national and cultural barriers. Therefore, Professor Sonoda's interpretation of Hallyu is somewhat true, although Professor Zur's viewpoint on Hallyu in a wider context is more convincing. Sim (2024) supports Zur's thesis, asserting that Hallyu's dominance in the global market is attributed to its widely accessible material, friendly characters, and high-quality production. Ophélie Surcouf (2021) suggests that Hallyu's worldwide success is due to the continued popularity of K-content, Korea's unique aesthetic standards, the exceptional skills of specific actors, a dedicated global fan base with a distinct identity, and the appeal of the Korean language, following a similar approach to Zur.

2. *Hangul, the Korean Language*

Due to the widespread popularity of K-pop, K-drama, and K-movies, many individuals globally are interested in immersing themselves in Korean culture, hence their desire to learn Hangul. Also, learning Hangul is essential for individuals from Central and East Asia and other developing nations who must pass a Korean language examination to obtain a visa for employment as migrant workers in Korea, regardless of the duration of the position.

Hangul is a phonetic alphabet capable of expressing a diverse array of emotions and sentiments. King Sejong (1397-1450), Korea's most culturally enlightened ruler, authored the Hangul document in 1443, and it was officially proclaimed in 1446. Various sounds worldwide can be transcribed using letters. The English alphabet can represent a limited number of sounds, around a few hundred, while Japanese can represent about 300 sounds and Chinese can represent over 400 sounds. 24 Hangul letters may represent about 11,000 sounds (NQT, 2017). Hangul was recognized as a UNESCO "Merical Heritage of the World" in October 1997 due to its remarkable advantages.

Hangul is increasingly popular in academic circles globally. Hangul was ranked as the top script by the University of Oxford in England for its logic, scientific nature, and distinctiveness (NQT, 2017). Between 1998 and 2002, UNESCO performed a study to determine the most suitable script for more than 2,900 languages, with Hangul being rated the highest (NQT, 2017). Pearl Buck, an American novelist, praised Hangul as the most straightforward and remarkable script globally and likened King Sejong to Korea's Leonardo da Vinci (Seo & Chung, 2021). British linguist Geoffrey Sampson (2015) described Hangul as a divine gift to humanity, while British historical documentary writer John Man agreed that Hangul is the ideal alphabet that all languages aspire to (NQT, 2017). Professor James McCawley from the University of Chicago commemorated Hangul Day by consuming Korean cuisine on October 9th for two decades, from 1979 until his passing in 1999, considering it an international festivity for linguists (NQT, 2017). Chris Livaccari (2024) asserts that Hangul is unique as a writing system that breaks down sentences into words, syllables, individual sounds, and articulatory qualities. He highlights the remarkable achievements of its designers in the 1440s. Routledge, a British publisher specializing in the humanities and social sciences, released *Fifty Key Thinkers on Language and Linguistics* in July 2011. King Sejong is described as an exceptional linguist (NQT, 2017). Japanese scholar Hideki Noma (2011) praised Hangul as the alphabet that sparked a revolution in knowledge in his book, *The Birth of Hangul: The Miracle of Letters*. The UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize was founded in 1989 and has been granted annually since 1990 to organizations worldwide, such as those in India, Tunisia, and Peru, for their efforts in eradicating illiteracy during the past two decades (UNESCO, 2024). The inclusion of King Sejong in the name of this award highlights the simplicity and efficacy of learning Hangul in combating illiteracy. The Ciatia people of Indonesia, the Lahu people of Thailand, the Chepang people of Nepal, the Papuans of the South Pacific Islands, and the Aramaya people of Bolivia are all either implementing or considering the adoption of Hangul, as they have a spoken language but do not possess a writing system.

In May 2022, Vietnam started using Korean as its primary foreign language. Other countries like Mongolia, Thailand, Russia, Sri Lanka, and India, have chosen Korean as their secondary language. Various nations in South America, as well as the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Japan, China, Thailand, Hungary, Cambodia, and Jordan, are including Korean as a regular foreign language in their educational programs (Kim, 2022). Korean is a significant field of study at universities globally. Master's level or higher Korean language or Korean studies courses are offered in 521 universities in the United States, such as Harvard University and the University of Chicago (Gyanberry, 2024). Surcouf (2021) reported that the number of students studying Korean at French universities offering Korean language courses, such as the University of Paris VII, the University of La Rochelle, and Inalco, rose from 500 in 2007 to 1,300 in 2011. Korean language and Korean studies courses are currently offered at the Universities of Oxford, London, Sheffield, and Newcastle

in the United Kingdom (Jo, 2019). Jawaharlal Nehru University in India is known for its unique Korean language education program. Indian students faced intense competition for a spot in the school's Korean language department. They want to learn Korean due to the recent great growth in Korea's economy, geopolitical position, and cultural influence, making the language more relevant on a worldwide scale (Kocis, 2023).

3. K-Food

"K-food" has emerged as a prominent hub of global cuisine culture, featuring dumplings, chicken, and kimchi. Korean foods like kimbap, tteokbokki, hot dogs, and fried rice are currently achieving unprecedented success in exports (Bae, 2023). The frozen kimbap, a popular item in the United States, quickly sold out due to increasing demand, leading to a shortage. In October 2023, Korea's exports of processed rice amounted to \$79 million, showing a 29.9% increase from the previous year. With 79.2% of all exports, the United States led Australia (3.8%) and China (1.9%) in share (Bae, 2023). Seaweed exports, which will be discussed more, are also active. Korean media products like K-pop, movies, and dramas, as well as the persistent efforts of Korean food companies, have all contributed to the global recognition of Korean cuisine. Moreover, the demand for Korean cuisine naturally rose during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the increased consumption of healthy and convenient meals (Rim, 2021).

Despite the Russia-Ukraine war that began in 2022 and is ongoing, the popularity of K-food in Russia remains strong. Paldo, a renowned Korean ramen company, distributes its ramen products through its subsidiary companies located in Russia and Vietnam. Paldo's product exports totaled \$35.9 million in 2018, \$37.2 million in 2019, \$50 million in 2020, \$52 million in 2021, and \$59.3 million in 2022 (Joo, 2023). Sales experienced growth even during the COVID-19 pandemic. Paldo introduced the "Doshirak" ramen in 1986, with a square container, and began exporting it to Japan in 1991, where it gained recognition as a top Korean product. The total international sales of "Doshirak" ramen surpassed 1 billion in 2003, 4 billion in 2015, and 5 billion in 2016 (Joo, 2023).

In Russia, "Doshirak" ramen holds a significant market share of over 60%. The instant noodle brand "Doshirak" has been marketed in Russia since 1991 and is considered Russia's national dish, with a total of 5 billion units sold in the country in 2019. The trademark "Doshirak" was officially registered as a well-known mark in Russia in 2021, prohibiting other ramen companies from using the same brand. The popularity of "Doshirak" in Russia is due to a localization strategy that includes mayonnaise in ramen noodles to suit Russian nutritional habits. Paldo presently possesses KOYA, a ramen manufacturing company in Russia, and "Doshirak Loos," a ramen retailing business, as its subsidiaries. In addition, it has boosted ramen manufacturing and sales by setting up "PALDO VINA" in Vietnam (Joo, 2023).

Now, let us examine Korea's dried seaweed, known as the "black gold" of Korean cuisine, which represents the concept of "seaweed-Hallyu." The Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries reported that seaweed exports reached \$791 million on January 18, 2024, surpassing the \$700 million milestone for the first time (Jeong, 2024). The amount increased by 22.2% from \$648 million in 2023. After hitting \$100 million in 2010, it has grown seven times in 13 years (Jeong, 2024).

Korean seaweed is processed and offered in several snack forms, including ordinary seaweed, seaweed bugak (cake), and fried seaweed. CJ Cheil-Jedang Food Company mainly focuses on selling seaweed snacks, with the United States and Europe being its main markets. During the first six months of 2023, the company's international sales of seaweed products rose by 30% compared to the previous year. Dongwon F&B Company, the creator of "Yangban gim," had global expansion and achieved sales of about 45 billion won in the previous year (Jeong, 2024). Foreigners like Korean seaweed for its delicious taste and reputation as an environmentally sustainable product. Woon-Chang Yeo (2019) referenced an article from the French daily *Le Monde* titled "Korea Cooking Seaweed for the Earth," stating that consuming seaweed reduces carbon dioxide emissions and contributes to environmental protection. He emphasized that seaweed has the dual benefit of absorbing a significant amount of carbon dioxide as it grows and being advantageous for human health because of its low fat content

Korean Seaweed was sold to 64 countries in 2010 and increased to 120 nations by 2023, including the United States, Japan, China, Thailand, and Russia (Jeong, 2024). In a Bangkok supermarket, a display of shelves is filled with Korean products, including matured seaweed, dried seaweed, seaweed cake, and more. Thais have their own seaweed in their country, but they often buy and eat Korean seaweed since it has a superior taste.

Korea, China, and Japan are the only countries that widely commercialize and sell seaweed. Korea excels at maintaining the thickness of seaweed. Japan and China are the main suppliers of seaweed for sushi, with bundles weighing approximately 280g (100 sheets). Korea has the capability to adjust the thickness of seaweed from 200g to 330g in 10g

intervals, enabling its production for various uses (Jeong, 2024). Gimbap can only be cooked with Korean seaweed due to its thin texture, which is considered the best in the world.

Seaweed thrives in regions with significant tidal variations, and the western and southern shores of Korea provide the ideal environment for seaweed cultivation. The Jeollanam-do region produces 80% of the seaweed in Korea. In the early 1980s, Korea pioneered the "Floating Manufacturing Method" (FMM) for seaweed production, which enabled large production. FMM is a technique that involves cultivating seaweed by suspending a net beneath white styrofoam floating on the water's surface. This approach enables the cultivation of seaweed in deep ocean waters, making it particularly beneficial for seaweed farming. In the early 1990s, Korea successfully achieved sporeization and created a new variety that was not present in Japan. Stone seaweed is significantly enhancing Korea's seaweed sector due to its excellent flavor and scent.

Japan's seaweed farming industry is less competitive than Korea's because of suspended operations and aging fishing communities. Japan previously produced 120 million seaweeds, but production has significantly decreased, leading the government to start importing seaweed from Korea. Japan produced 48 million pieces of seaweed in 2022, the lowest in 51 years, while Korea produced 151.72 million pieces, about three times the amount produced by Japan (Jeong, 2024).

The future of seaweed exports, often considered "black gold," shows great promise. Korea dominates the global seaweed market with over 70% market share due to its exceptional production capabilities. Mid-sized Korean seaweed producers, including "Shinan Angel, Seongseong Food, Manjeon Food, Gwangcheon Seaweed, and Dongwon F&B," are at the forefront of the seaweed export market (Jeong, 2024). "Shinan Angel Seaweed" was projected to yield \$100 million in exports in 2022, offering promise for the local economy.

Additional challenges must be addressed in Korea's seaweed cultivation. The first issue is the consistent decrease in the population of fishing communities. The Rural Community Fund Headquarters reports that the number of fishing households in fishing villages is projected to be 42,536 in 2022, which is a 47.9% decrease from 81,571 in 2000. The fishing population decreased by 63.9%, dropping from 251,349 to 90,805 individuals (Jeong, 2024).

Korean fishing communities are also experiencing a considerable increase in the average age of their residents. In 2022, 41.1% of the population in fishing villages nationwide will be aged 70 or older. Without foreign workers to help, the seaweed industry is at risk. If this issue is not resolved, Korea will emulate Japan's actions. A reduction in production due to climate change is another issue with seaweed farming. Seaweed farming often begins in the fall with seedlings (which fix spores to the foot) and continues until April or May. This is a way of harvesting seedlings based on the temperature of the sea water during the cooling season and before the temperature rises dramatically. If ocean temperatures rise due to climate change and the seedling season is delayed, not only will the seaweed harvest season be reduced, but the death rate will also rise. The heat wave in Korea caused a significant increase in water temperatures, leading to a delay in seedling growth. Korea's seaweed farming business requires immediate advancements in new seed varieties and strategies to address climate change.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

1. *Pop-Hallyu as an Effective Cultural Soft Power*

Hallyu has not come into being by chance. After gaining independence from Japan in 1945, Koreans embraced and imitated American pop culture but did not produce much original creative content. Hallyu emerged as a significant social movement in Korea in the late 1990s, under Kim Dae-jung's administration, which promoted freedom and creativity. In March 2014, Wang Qishan, a member of the Chinese Politburo Standing Committee, questioned his government agencies about China's inability to generate popular dramas like Korea's "My Love from the Star," despite its large population of 1.3 billion (Joo, 2016). Chinese Communist Party leaders such as Hu Jintao, Wen Jiabao, Zeng Qinghong, and Wu Bangguo appreciated Korean dramas and looked forward to Chinese dramas surpassing Korean ones. As of 2024, China remains unable to create Hallyu-inspired dramas or films.

On October 24, 2014, Lee Young-ae, famous for her role in the Korean drama *Dae Jang Geum*, gave an in-depth interview to Hong Kong's *Ming Bao* newspaper, discussing the Korean Wave's growth and the elements contributing to its success. Korea's artistic climate is characterized by freedom from restriction and censorship. When a military dictatorship was in power in Korea, both the content of movies and television shows was subject to intense scrutiny, and there were restrictions on the exercise of free speech. In addition, some rules allowed actresses to avoid wearing clothing that was considered offensive to the morality of the general public. Korea abolished cinema censorship during the Kim Dae-Jung administration. An environment has been established to produce films addressing the most politically sensitive topics. Korea exhibited

cultural innovation and successfully attained its present affluence (Joo, 2016). When analyzing Hallyu, it is important to remember that its essence is centered around attaining creative autonomy and fostering a harmonious community. For China to create works similar to Hallyu plays or movies, it needs to establish a free society that prioritizes human dignity and worth. Hallyu is embraced in both Asia and Western countries like France, the UK, and the US because it promotes both individual subjectivity and social prosperity.

2. Hangul as Socio-Intellectual Soft Power

Hangul possesses multiple intellectual elements that can be beneficial for learning and practical use in our lives. Being proficient in speaking or writing Korean is beneficial not just for enjoying Korean pop culture but also in areas like trade and education. Having a deep connection to Korean culture will not only improve language abilities but also enable them to engage with a diverse range of people and navigate new experiences more effectively. Hangul is a fitting alphabet for a future society. When inputting Chinese or Japanese characters on a computer keyboard, both the pronunciation and meaning must be entered separately. In contrast, in Korean, each vowel represents a single sound that is recorded immediately after entering. Hangul has a character composition with a transmission speed that is three times faster than English, eight times faster than Chinese, and five times faster than Japanese. Mastering Hangul will be highly advantageous (Woo, 2023). A Korean researcher who values Hangul has compiled the diverse interpretations of foreign students studying the Korean alphabet: Hangul enhances communication, overcomes mental barriers, and serves as a bridge between other civilizations, playing a vital role in the complex structure of world culture (HM, 2024).

Hangul's incorporation into the Korean Wave has recently attracted international attention. Coca-Cola, a leading American food and beverage company, held a news conference in a hotel in Seoul, Korea, on February 20, 2024. The corporation plans to introduce a new beverage with a Korean logo in limited quantities in 36 countries globally. The merchandise option will be a tribute to K-pop fans all over the world. By emulating the lively and energizing atmosphere of a performance venue, the product is intended to appeal to fans of Korean pop culture (Jeong, 2024). When it comes to strengthening its brand, Coca-Cola has, for the first time in 138 years, openly incorporated Hangul into its marketing plan. This decision was made in response to the growing popularity of the Korean Wave. When this incident is viewed from the perspective of cultural and intellectual history, it becomes clear that its repercussions go beyond merely financial ones, demonstrating the influence of soft power that Hangul has had on the feelings and thoughts of individuals.

3. Koren Food as an Impotent Soft Power

Let us analyze four reasons why Hallyu-style K-food is a valuable soft power. Taste is one factor. Korean food provides a broad and delightful dining experience with a range of flavors, including spicy, sweet, salty, and sour. Anyone who has tasted ingredients such as red pepper paste, soy sauce, soybean paste, and garlic will have a distinctive and exciting culinary experience.

K-food also improves our health. Korean cuisine incorporates fresh and natural ingredients, such as fermented and vegetable dishes like kimchi, bean sprouts, and vegetables, which can help promote excellent health. Korean cuisine is a healthy choice due to its high mineral and fiber content, which can enhance digestion and boost immunity, making it ideal for those focused on their health.

Another reason is that Korean cooking is pleasurable. Korean cuisine is aesthetically pleasing. Foreigners frequently prefer grilled meat meals like hog belly and ribs. They like the new experience of participating in a pleasant activity, such as grilling meat, wrapping it with vegetables, mixing rice and kimchi, and seasoning food with red pepper paste and ssamjang. In Korea, marine plant products such as seaweed are mostly consumed as food, but in nations like France, seaweed is employed for animal feed and industrial applications. K-food is spreading new information and raising awareness about the correct use and importance of sea plants (Yeo, 2019). Food Hallyu showcases Korea's eco-friendly sea plant farming process, the nutritional benefits of sea products as a meal, and modern seaweed processing technology worldwide.

4. Hallyu as a Source of Reconciliation

In this section, our goal is to establish a connection between Hallyu in Japanese and Korean history and analyze the significance of Hallyu in the process of healing and reconciliation. While the impact of Hallyu differs between countries, there are strong justifications to focus on Japan. Korea and Japan have been perceived as both proximate and far from each other for an extended period. Despite Japan's close vicinity, many Koreans feel a strong tendency to distance themselves from Japan because of Japan's historical maltreatment of Korea. Japan has a history of consistently mistreating Korea. Japan initiated an invasion of Korea in the sixteenth century, resulting in significant damage to the peninsula. Seok et al. (2020)

found that Japan ruled Korea with a harsh imperialist colonial regime that continued until 1945. This government was established following Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910. Under Japan's control of Korea, many Koreans were compelled to labor as miners, soldiers, and comfort women against their will. They experienced a severe infringement of their human rights. The Japanese government required Koreans to change their names to Japanese in order to erase their Korean identity. Japan mandated that all schools in Korea comply with the Japanese language requirements. Enhanced communication between people from Japan and Korea was not achieved until the mid-20th century. Japanese nationalists who strongly support their country and have a sense of pride in its colonial history acknowledge Japan's past control over Korea and maintain hostile ideas towards Koreans, viewing them as former subjects of the Japanese empire. There is a need to transform this viewpoint. By heightening the cultural significance of Korea, Hallyu has been contributing to the improvement of the strained relationship that exists between Japan and Korea. Since around 2017, the younger generation has been the main consumers of the Korean Wave in Japan. The popularity of Hallyu is increasing as Japanese women in the age groups of teenagers and those in their twenties discover and distribute Korean Wave content, including K-Pop and beauty, through social media channels like Instagram and YouTube. BTS members remain at the forefront of the Korean wave in Japan, maintaining their popularity. Japan plays a significant role in K-Pop's global sales, encompassing record exports, live performances, and retail sales. The impact of Hallyu can be seen in instances where Japanese individuals credit listening to TWICE, BLACK PINK, or BTS lyrics with aiding in their recovery from despair, or when expressions like "I need to cherish myself" surface on social platforms.

Multiple Korean dramas were featured in the Japanese Netflix Top 10 in November 2021, with *Crash Landing on You* and *Itaewon Class* maintaining their top rankings. The female protagonist in *Crash Landing on You* is a self-made Chief Executive Officer who displays confidence and fearlessness, even in the strange setting of North Korea. Her unwavering demeanor has amazed and revitalized Japanese onlookers.

Japanese interest in visiting Korea increased after the COVID-19 outbreak, leading to a rise in the popularity of the "Korea Travel Game." The craze, referred to as "Dohannori," involves people imagining a Korean scenario in a specific location in Japan and sharing it on social media. The Japanese people show great enthusiasm for visiting Korea.

Women in their twenties and thirties hold the majority of the positions among Japanese tourists who are now visiting Korea. According to Song (2023), women accounted for 66.2% of Japanese tourists who traveled to Korea during the first half of 2023. Among these women, ladies in their 20s and 30s accounted for 27% and 9.1% of the whole, respectively. The Japanese MZ generation that travels to Korea to experience Korean culture may take advantage of the opportunity to learn about the tragic histories of both nations as a result of the influence of Hallyu. It will be tremendously useful in increasing the possibilities for a bright future in Korea-Japan relations if the Japanese can establish real apologies for the past and mutual respect in the present through the concept of Hallyu. Some Japanese kids write their names in Korean on their name tags and tie them to their clothing (Grangna, 2023). This is a highly intriguing phenomenon because it demonstrates that a considerable number of students in Japanese elementary and middle schools are using Korean without any reservations in their day-to-day lives. They express their happiness by saying "jinzza oshii" when they are eating. The word "oshii" in Japanese means "delicious," while the word "jinzza" in Korean means "really." This statement, which is written in a tongue that is a combination of Korean and Japanese, can be translated as "It is delicious." What a hilariously ironic occurrence! When Korea was under Japanese dominion in the past, it was painful for Koreans to be compelled to change their names to Japanese. However, in today's world, Japanese children and teenagers can take pleasure in using their names in Korean of their own accord. This demonstrates that authentic culture, which is a sort of soft power, only reveals its actual value when it is developed in a natural and joyous manner (Chung, 1997), much like water flowing without any form of force, as Nye (2012) and Zur (2023) have stated.

V. CONCLUSION

To this point, we have utilized the socio-cultural-intellectual history technique to paint a favorable picture of the role that the Korean Wave played in the history of the world. Nevertheless, history does not often paint a particularly positive picture. If one side of history is clear and distinct, then the other side can be cloudy. There is no way that the Korean Wave will be an exception. Numerous younger generations in Korea struggle in the competitive climate of Hallyu, making sacrifices of their time, money, and youth to achieve the status of K-Pop idols and achieve fame on a global scale. However, only a small section of this large number is informed of what is considered to be a success, while the remaining individuals are reduced to the role of assistants to these successful heroes or live an unfavorable life working part-time or in temporary employment in the conventional art world. This is the point at which one of the limitations of a democratic, free, and competitive society becomes most obvious.

The fact that not everyone who studies Hangul does it because they enjoy it is something that needs to be acknowledged. Many people in countries such as Nepal, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, and others are interested in learning Korean in order to improve their chances of passing the Korean language test and securing employment in Korea, either temporarily or permanently. Many of them are offered jobs in factories, farms, or fishing villages when they arrive in Korea; nevertheless, the majority of Koreans are hesitant to accept any of these positions, even if they are provided. When individuals first arrive in a different nation, such as Korea, they experience culture shock because they are unable to easily adjust to the routines that characterize their everyday lives there. Certain Koreans take advantage of the pay of these foreign workers or force them to work hard even though there are just a few of them. Furthermore, the education of these immigrants' children is severely hindered when they marry Koreans and settle in Korea. This is a significant problem. The government of Korea, educational institutions, and civic organizations are obligated to address these issues and implement comprehensive social welfare measures for foreigners and their families. These measures include intercultural education and medical care, among other things.

Although a large number of people all over the world consume Korean cuisine, not all of it is nutritious. Ramen is a food that is quite popular in Russia and Mongolia, and it is typically considered to be an acceptable choice for those who have a lot of things going on in their lives. On the other hand, to make ramen, we typically deep-fry the noodles in oil. This is part of the preparation process. In addition to the fact that ingesting an excessive quantity of fatty meals is harmful to the human body, people who have delicate stomachs or intestines should make every effort to avoid consuming them to the greatest extent feasible. We need to be entirely aware before purchasing or consuming Korean cuisine, and we need to take specific actions to prevent doing anything that may be dangerous to our health. This is necessary to avoid doing anything that could be harmful to our health. In general, except for particular Korean foods such as ramen, Korean cuisine is not only highly practical but also advantageous to one's health.

Overall, Hallyu will evolve into a nutrient that is helpful to all of humankind if we embrace both the positive and negative parts of the Korean Wave and successfully assimilate them into the culture of each nation. In this regard, the intellectual and educational lesson that Hallyu conveys is that if a nation creatively develops the profound spiritual components of its soft power culture, it will generate a different sort of cultural wave and accomplish a "miracle" that is distributed all over the world. This is the lesson that Hallyu delivers. As Nye has eloquently defined, it is abundantly evident that the content of this new "wave" as a fruitful and beneficial soft power must include responsibility and autonomy based on open communication, universal fairness that is acceptable to all, and the concept of a global community. This is a requirement that must be met. The deployment of destructive and powerful socio-political and military forces stands in stark contrast to this particular soft power situation.

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