

Prevalence of Popular Culture in Northeast Asia: Films of Japan, South Korea and China in the Global Age

Kayoko Nakamura (Postgraduate student of Waseda University)

Introduction

In the twentieth century, Northeast Asia experienced a series of unfortunate events¹⁾, and as a result, each nation in the area seems to have protected itself from being violated by other nations' cultures, controlling the inflow as well as the outflow of cultures. Thus, the popular culture born of one nation rarely crosses the border into other nations.

At the end of the last millennium, however, popular culture suddenly started to flow abroad. In Taiwan, for instance, there emerged young people called "Ha-Ri-Zu," who love Japanese popular culture. In Japan and China, some Korean TV dramas sparked a boom, and things Korean became very popular. A new kind of international relationship has been established in the area of Northeast Asia through popular culture, and now people can come into contact with other cultures from neighboring countries in a way that nobody thought possible until now.

There are two different views concerning this rapid spread of culture. One view regards the circulation of popular culture in Asia as

indicating the reemergence of the notion of the 'East Asian Community' and suggesting that the area as a whole is trying to overcome its unfortunate history in modern times and that the bond among the nations will eventually be strengthened (Hamano, 2005, p.82, 2006, pp.204-205). The other view argues that this type of internationalization is a consequence of globalization, arguing that the historical matters are hard to solve and not directly relevant to the issue of popular culture prevalence. Popularization and spread of local popular cultures in Northeast Asia has been made possible through globalization because multinational companies have promoted cultural industry and pushed it across borders (Iwabuchi, 2002, p.63). In this view, then, what is conceived of as local culture may not be purely local in the strict sense. As we will see presently, the second view, which relates the widespread adoption of popular culture to the acceleration of globalization, is more appropriate to account for the current situation in Northeast Asia.

This paper examines some data concerning films made in Northeast Asia in this global age, observing how 'local' popular cultures have

キーワード :

Northeast Asia, Popular culture, Film, Globalization

prevailed in the area. Specific reference will be made to Japan, South Korea and China, and we will see how well the film industry fares in the region. The paper does not discuss North Korea, Mongolia or Russia, partly because currently there is less cultural exchange between these countries than in Japan, South Korea and China. However, Taiwan will be discussed in the argument – though strictly speaking, it is not usually included in Northeast Asia – since reference to Taiwan is inevitable in talking about the popular culture interaction in Northeast Asia. The paper aims to explain how the popular culture relationship has been established and what has made it possible. In the course of this discussion, we will mention some historical and social aspects in Northeast Asia because we are also interested in the reasons why people in one nation may be attracted by another's culture.

This paper mainly consists of three parts. First, we will consider the relation between culture and nation and see how the relation has changed in the course of history, especially due to globalization and what has happened in Northeast Asia. Second, we will look at some data concerning Northeast Asian films and see how things have changed in the last two decades. Especially we will consider local films in terms of the global age, in connection with several aspects of filmmaking. Third, the paper deals with unofficial cultural exchanges, relating to international film festivals, that have contributed a lot to the boom of Northeast Asian films. In the concluding section, we will discuss how the popular film prevalence has been made possible on the basis of the previous discussions, and suggest how to better understand local films from the

neighboring areas.

1. The Relation between Popular Culture and Nation-state in the Global Age

To tackle the problems posed in the introduction, it seems necessary to clarify the relation between popular culture and the nation-state it resides in, especially because such a relation has undergone some changes in the recent history.

(1) Culture in the Global Age

Although the definition of globalization may be controversial, there seems to be a wide agreement that globalization points to free cross-border movement of people, goods, capital and information. In the global age, therefore, it is not very clear what roles are played by the nation, which used to have much influence on its culture. This section sees how the roles of the nation have changed in the course of events.

Globalization, which was undeniably observed at the end of the last century, has changed the fundamental relation between culture and nation. Needless to say, culture had been globalized long before then, in various forms. As Held *et al.* show in detail, a number of religions and empires had been transregional and transcontinental. Especially after the late eighteenth century, (Western) nation-states made efforts to make their culture prevail throughout the world, pushed by Western ideologies. This situation had continued for about two hundred years until we met globalization in the last century. (Held *et al.*, 1999, pp.327-341). Thus, nation-states do not exert their authority over the transmission of culture the way they used to.²⁾

When we talk about prevalence of popular culture in Northeast Asia, globalization must be

well distinguished from Americanization and Cultural Imperialism, where culture travels from the central place to other peripheral places, since it seems impossible to identify the source of Northeast Asia's popular culture (Iwabuchi, 2002, p.32). Rather, popular culture is the result of the cultural interaction that has taken place in various places in the area. Therefore, to account for the complicated aspects of Northeast Asia's popular culture, we need to look at it carefully. For one thing, it is likely that the culture from one region should (slightly) change its form to be accepted in another region, just as commodities produced by multinational companies change their forms to be suitable in local and indigenous markets (Watson, 1997). As Tomlinson argues, 'movement between cultural/geographical areas always involves interpretation, translation, mutation, adaptation, and "indigenization" as the receiving culture brings its own cultural resources to bear, in dialectical fashion, upon "cultural import"' (Tomlinson, 1999, p.84). Thus, when cultural transmission is accelerated by globalization, we need to consider how the culture comes to be accepted in local areas.

(2) Popular Culture and National Policies in Northeast Asia

1) Three Factors that Motivated Popular Culture to Flow

A brief review of Northeast Asia's modern history reveals that nation-states have utilized and controlled popular culture. Before and during WWII, when Japan expanded its territory into the Asian Continent, it kept an eye on cultural activities at home and abroad. Under the gag rule issued in 1938, the Japanese govern-

ment severely censored popular culture. After WWII, the Japanese colonies were liberated, but then each nation started to protect its culture from foreign cultures, especially from the Japanese culture, and to control it. Japanese popular culture was banned in Korea, Taiwan, and China. As a consequence, officially there was no constructive cultural exchange between those nations and Japan for some time. (With respect to films, exceptional were Hong Kong films. Films starring Bruce Lee and those directed by Michael Hui were quite popular.) Nonetheless, the situation began to change in 1980s, and these nations in Northeast Asia started to interact with each other in terms of popular culture.

There were three factors that drove cultural flow in the region. First, because of the scientific technology developed in the early 1980s, popular culture started to cross borders into foreign countries. For example, satellite television broadcasting enabled people in Korea and Taiwan to watch Japanese TV programs. The nations had no way to stop the viewers from getting to know Japanese culture. Other communication and information systems also helped people acquire the knowledge of other countries.³⁾

Second, Korea, Taiwan and China started to change politically and economically in late 1980s. Korea and Taiwan were democratized while China had started the reform and open-door policy in 1978, which led to the socialist market economy in 1992. In addition, privatization of many sectors – especially the communications and broadcasting sector – should be noted. Thus, democratization and privatization established the foundation for cultural transmission.

Third and most important, around the late

1990s each government in Northeast Asia found that popular culture might serve national interests, both economically and politically, and started to promote its popular culture. To put it differently, the policy makers in each nation began to pay attention to what Nye calls 'soft power'⁴⁾ (Nye 1991, 2004). In the next section, we will see what political stance the Northeast Asian nations took towards this goal.

2) National Policies

As mentioned above, the nations in Northeast Asia have started to think that popular culture is profitable. Now let us see the national policies made in Japan, Korea, Taiwan and China in turn.

Japan considers that making its popular culture known to other countries is important because it may help to solve the historical conflicts between countries and build the foundation for the East Asian Community (Bunka Gaiko no Suishin ni Kansuru Konshinkai, 2005). Especially the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) started to put emphasis on contents business projects including manga and computer games as well as on film industry.

Korea has formally lifted its ban on Japanese culture, despite the fact that the polls in 1995 showed that many people were against such a move (Iwabuchi, 2001, p.126). Korea also promoted its popular culture and was quite successful in selling its films and TV dramas abroad, which led to what is known as the Korean wave⁵⁾.

Taiwan lifted a ban on the Japanese culture in early the 1990s while the National People's Congress of China proposed its plan to boost the cultural market in 2001. In 2002, the Ministry

of the Economic Affairs of Taiwan decided that digital contents industry should be one of the major industries of the nation, and put forth a policy to that effect.

As we have demonstrated, the cultural exchange among Japan, Korea, China and Taiwan has been accelerated by technological advance, deregulation and national interests.

2. Films in Northeast Asia

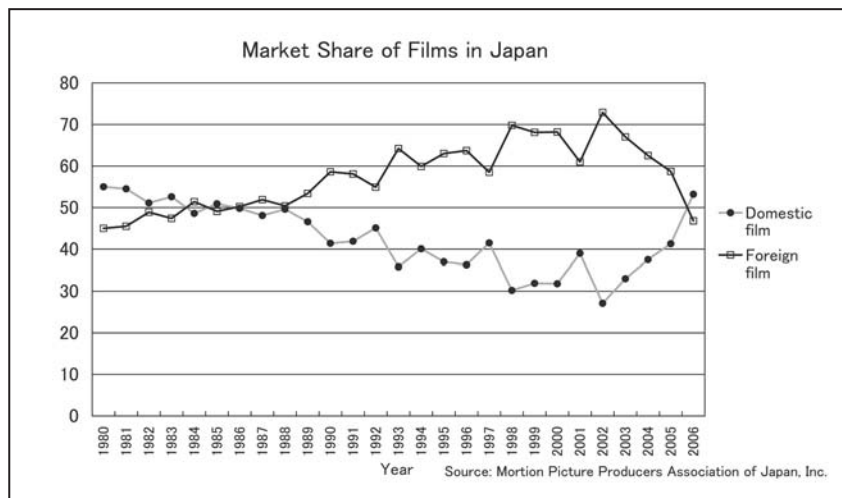
This section considers how the film production and distribution in Northeast Asia has undergone changes from the 1980s through the present day.

(1) The Flow of Films

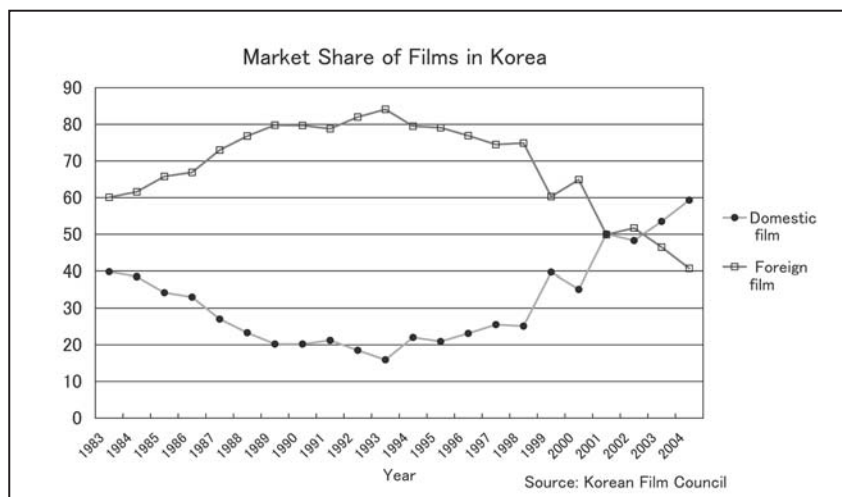
In the 1980s, the numbers of domestic films produced in Northeast Asia were well below those of films imported from other regions of the world. The greatest film exporter at the time was the United States, followed by India, France, Italy, the USSR, the UK, and Germany. Then came Japan and Hong Kong. On the other hand, the country that made the greatest number of feature films was the United States, followed by Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong and India (Held *et al.*, 1999, pp.354-355). Note here that while Asian countries such as Japan, Hong Kong and South Korea made a lot of films, it was very likely that many of those films not viewed in foreign countries

On the other hand, the people of Northeast Asian countries loved foreign films and imported a lot of such films. Figures 1 and 2 demonstrate the market share of foreign and domestic films in Japan and South Korea, respectively. In the 1980s and thereafter, the percentage of foreign films continued to rise in both countries. Need-

<Figure 1>



< Figure 2 >



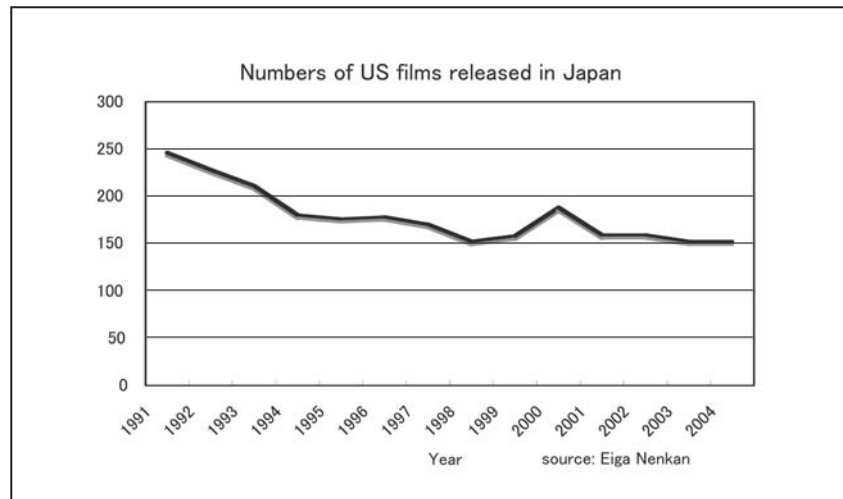
less to say, Hollywood films dominated the film market in both countries. Notice especially that about 70% of the films seen in the early 1990s in S. Korea were from abroad.

The trend began to change gradually in the 1990s, however. As we saw earlier, during that period the nations in Northeast Asia started to do away with the regulations imposed on foreign films, and films began to be imported and exported within the region. Now people in a Northeast Asian country could see films from neighboring countries. In addition, the nations found it appropriate to support domestic film

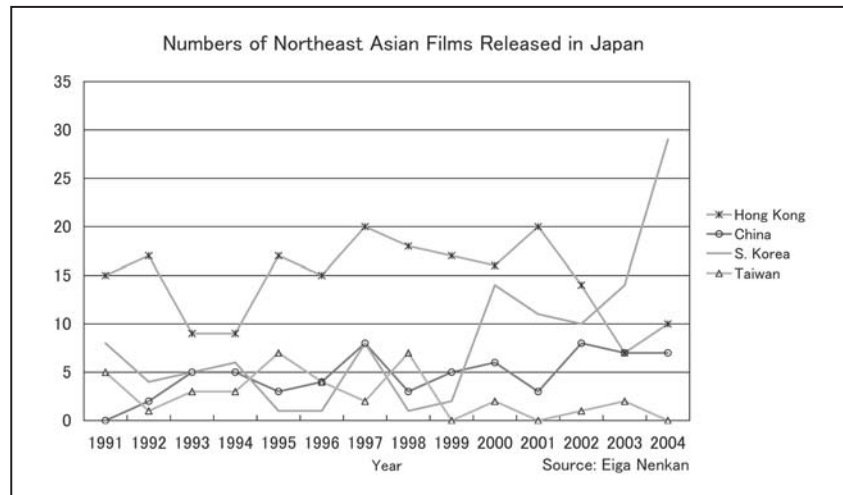
industry since it might boost national prestige. The Taiwanese government, for example, designated the year of 1993 as the year of Taiwanese films and established a subsidy system for filmmakers.

In South Korea, the number of domestic films surpassed that of foreign films in the early 21st century. The success of domestic films can be attributed to S. Korea’s motion picture law issued in the 1995, which made the government support film industry. For that reason, even under the pressure of globalism the government did not abandon the screen quota policy that had

〈Figure 3-1〉



〈Figure 3-2〉



been in effect since the 1960s, promising that more domestic films would be shown in theaters. It is worth mentioning that the Pusan International Film Festival was launched in 1996, in order that prominent young Korean filmmakers would be found and (financially) supported and that outstanding Korean films might be introduced to the outside world. In 1999, the Korean film titled *Shiri* made waves at the box office and drew the largest audience.⁶⁾

In Japan, too, domestic films gained much popularity in the early 21st century. Moreover, while the number of Hollywood films released

in Japan gradually declined, those of Korean films released in Japan increased dramatically, and those of Chinese grew slowly, as Figures 3-1 and 3-2 show. Thus, we can say that because globalization lifted that had existed, people in Northeast Asia came to appreciate films from the neighboring countries while in each country domestic films became more popular.

(2) Changing Trends

In the preceding section we have seen that the situation concerning films in Northeast Asia has been changing. In this section we consider

how the situation has changed from several points of view.

1) Asian Films

Especially since the mid-1980s, more and more Asian films have been praised worldwide. Before then, only some Japanese films had awards in international film festivals, as Table 1 shows. After the Chinese film *Red Sorghum* had been awarded the Golden Bear Prize in Berlin Film Festival in 1988, it seemed as if Northeast Asian films were truly recognized for the first time in the West, and many Northeast Asian films gained a worldwide reputation. In reality, though, there had been many excellent films produced in China and South Korea.⁷⁾

About the same time, Asian films came to be appreciated in Japan as well. Before 1985, a Japanese film magazine *Kinema Junpo* (*The Movie Times*) had categorized films into three types according to the region where they were made: (1) Japanese films, (2) Hollywood films, and (3) European films and others. This shows how people in Japan used to perceive films in general. Asian films were included in the third category, under the heading of 'others.' Interestingly, however, the magazine added a new category in 1986: Asian films. This was probably because Asian films had enjoyed more and more popularity among the Japanese by that time.

<Table 1> major international film festival prize-winners

	Cannes	Venice	Berlin
1951		Rashomon (J)	
1954	Jigoku Mon (J)		
1955			
1958		The Life of Muhou-Matsu (J)	
1975			
1980	Kagemusha (J)		
1983	The Ballad of Narayama (J)		
1988			Red Sorghum (C)
1989		A City of Sadness (T)	
1992		The Story of QIU JU (C)	
1993	Farewell to My Concubine (C)	Farewell to My Concubine (C)	Woman Sesame Oilmaker (C)
			Wedding Banquet (T)
1994		Vive L'amour (T)	
1997	The Eal (J)	HANA-BI (J)	
1999		Not One Less (C)	
2000			
2002			Spirited Away (J)
2006		Still Life (C)	
2007			Tuya's Marriage (C)

(Note: J = Japan, C=China, T=Taiwan)

2) Hollywood Films

Even though Northeast Asian films have become popular, Hollywood films are still strong and predominant in the area in terms of sales. Table 2, 3 and 4 show the titles of the top 10 box-office films in 2004 in Japan, South Korea and China, respectively.

Though different films appear in the chart from one country to another, examination of them will point to a general pattern where three factors are involved. First, every chart consists of domestic and Hollywood films, with the exception of the UK film *Harry Potter*. Second, no imported Asian films appear in the top 10 charts. Third, about half of the top 10 are occupied by Hollywood films in every chart and the same three Hollywood films – *Spider-Man II*, *The Day after Tomorrow* and *Troy* – show up in all the charts, suggesting that Hollywood films are favored and predominant worldwide.

In Northeast Asia, therefore, while domestic films are good competitors, Hollywood films are still strong as far as the box-office records are concerned. Northeast Asian films have crossed borders within the region⁸⁾ but have not gained as much popularity as domestic and Hollywood films. Thus, there is more room for more Asian films to cross borders into other countries and become more popular there.

〈Table 2: Top 10 in Japan, 2004〉

	Film Title	Dom.	H	other
1	Howl's Moving Castle	√		
2	The Last Samurai	√	√	(√) NZ
3	Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban			√
4	Finding Nemo		√	
5	The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King		√	
6	Sekai no Chushin de Ai o Sakebu	√		
7	Spider-Man II		√	
8	The Day after Tomorrow		√	
9	Troy		√	
10	Ima Ai ni Yukimasu	√		

(Source: Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan, Inc.)

(Note: Dom.=domestic, H=Hollywood)

〈Table 3: Top 10 in Seoul, Korea, 2004〉

	Film Title	Dom.	H	other
1	Taegukgi	√		
2	Silmido	√		
3	Troy		√	
4	Shrek 2		√	
5	Spirit of Jeet Keun Do	√		
6	The Day After Tomorrow		√	
7	The Passion of the Christ		√	
8	Spider-Man II		√	
9	Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban			√
10	My Little Bride	√		

(Source: KOFIC)

(Note: Dom.=domestic, H=Hollywood)

〈Table 4: Top 10 films in Shanghai, China, 2004〉

	Film Title	Dom.	H	others
1	LOVERS	√ (C&HK)		
2	The Day after Tomorrow		√	
3	The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the king		√	
4	Kung Fu Hustle	√ (HK)		
5	Troy		√	
6	A World Without Thieves	√		
7	Spider-Man II		√	
8	Deng Xiaoping 1928	√		
9	〈2046〉	√ (HK)		
10	Harry Potter And The Prisoner of Azkaban			√

(Source: Shanghai almanac)

(Note: Dom.=domestic, H=Hollywood)

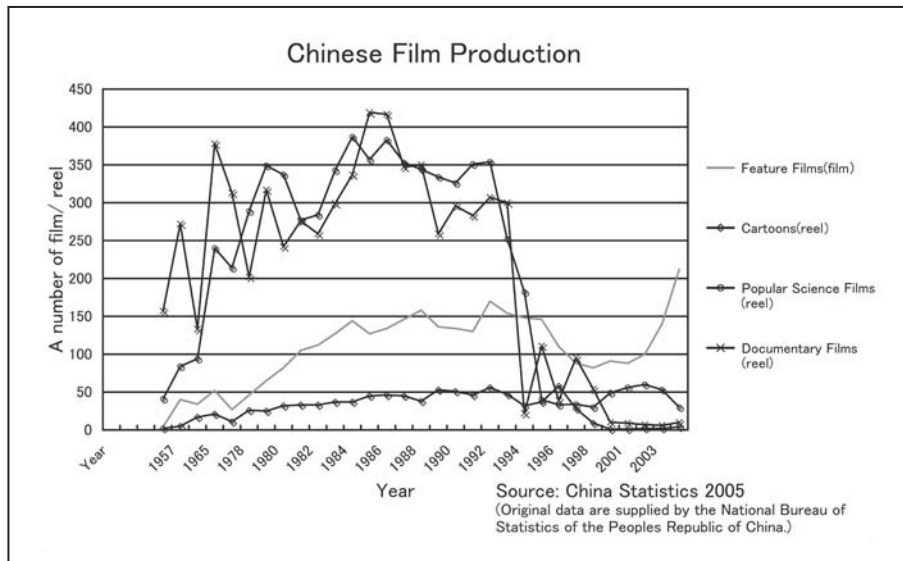
3) Asian Films and Hollywood Films: How Are They Different?

Blockbuster films are different from art films, and it is not the case that great films are always successful in terms of box-office sales. It seems true that Hollywood films have played major roles in the film history and have provided the model for how a film should be in order to be successful. In this connection, it is noteworthy that many successful Northeast Asian films have the same style as Hollywood films. For example, consider the 1999 South Korean film *Shiri*, which was very popular not only in Korea but also in Japan, generating box-office sales of 1.8 billion yen and starting the Korean boom in Japan. The film, however, was unlike traditional Korean films and adopted the Hollywood style in

many aspects (Yomota, 2003. p.248). Some point out that the Korean government gave priority to the development of film industry, rather than the Korean cultural identity depicted in films, and encouraged the making of profitable blockbuster films (Jin, 2006, p.16). Moreover, some Chinese films such as *Hero* and *LOVERS* targeted the world market with the aim of making a lot of money, and thus huge budgets was given to them. Figure 4 shows the numbers of films made in China. Paying attention to the late 1990s and thereafter, we notice that the numbers of documentary films decreased while those of feature films⁹⁾ increased. This seems to indicate that Chinese filmmakers, conscious of film market needs, have taken more and more interest in producing Hollywood-like films.

On the other hand, Hollywood is well aware of the current situation in Northeast Asia and makes the best use of it. Good screenplays are necessary for films to be successful. In this respect, it is wise to buy the screenplay of a film that proved itself to be successful. For instance, the Japanese horror film *The Ring*, which was quite successful in Japan in 1998, was remade in Hollywood in 2002. The number of Hollywood remakes of Northeast Asian films has increased while film companies in Northeast Asia are interested to sell remake rights. Hong Kong's kung-fu films' impact on Hollywood films is also notable since the latter display action scenes much like those in the former. As is well known, Yuen Woo-ping, who is a Hong Kong film director and martial arts choreographer, participated in films such as *Kill Bill* and *The Matrix* as the kung-fu choreographer. In this way, Hollywood may make use of human resources in Northeast Asia. In addition, it is not unusual now that film com-

〈Figure 4〉



panies from several countries produce a single film. Such joint capital investment contributes to the close ties between Hollywood and Northeast Asia. Some films, like *Last Samurai*, have been co-produced with Asian companies, and famous Northeast Asian actors and actresses appear in them so that the films become familiar to the audience in Northeast Asia. Therefore, in the global age Asian and Hollywood films interact with each other.

In fact, Hollywood has been attentive to what makes films successful. Therefore, in the global age Hollywood films too have been changing just as some Northeast Asian films, like *Shiri*, have become untraditional. Then, the popularity of Northeast Asian films within the region cannot be accounted for solely by the argument that external factors such as the trade barrier have been cleared away. Rather, Northeast Asian films have been incorporated in the global film system with Hollywood films at its centre, whereas the latter too have undergone some changes because of the newcomers in the system. It is not very clear, at the moment,

what this system will develop into in the future. It might be that Hollywood films will be more Asiatic. Most of the Northeast Asian films may be more Hollywood-like. Whatever the future, it is too simplistic to claim that Northeast Asian filmmaking, in tandem with globalization, will solve the longstanding historical problems in the region. Note that *SAYURI*, a Hollywood film starring famous Chinese actress Zhang Ziyi and Japanese actor Ken Watanabe, was prohibited from screening in China because of the fear that the Chinese actress's playing the role of a Japanese geisha girl might stir up the anti-Japanese sentiment. Thus, it may be true that Northeast Asia's international cooperation in the area of entertainment business has brought the Northeast Asian countries close to each other, but solving the historical conflicts is quite a different issue.

3. Regional Networks and Film Festivals

This final section discusses the personal human network that was observed before the global age and international film festivals because it

has played an important role in making films go around in Northeast Asia and it also has the potential to help solve the historical conflicts in the region.

(1) The Personal Human Network in the Region

Although accelerated prevalence of Northeast Asian popular films was seen in the 1990s, it was not the case that there had been no cultural exchanges in terms of films in the region before then. Even before the 1990s, filmmakers in Northeast Asia interacted each other, and such personal ties have been studied recently (Yomota 2001a, 2001b, Kokusai koryu kikin 2004, Nishimoto et al. 2004). For instance, in the 1930s, there was a famous actress named Li Xianglan who belonged to the Manchuria Film Production and appeared in films rooting for Japan's national policies. She was actually a Japanese but was thought to be a Chinese actress even in Japan. After WWII, she moved to Japan, and came back on screen with a Japanese name Toshiko Yamaguchi. In the 1950s, she was invited to Hong Kong, where she appeared in Hong Kong films with a Chinese name, working with people she had worked with a long time before. It has been said that her personal network made this project come true (Yomota 2001b: 26).

Tadashi Nishimoto was a cameraman who worked for a Japanese film company. In the 1960s, he was invited to Hong Kong and shot some films there under the name of a Chinese. The films he took part in in the 1970s include Bruce Lee's *The Way of the Dragon* and *The Game of Death* and Michael Hui's *Games Gamblers Play*.

Meanwhile, in the 1960s, Japanese action films dealing with Japan's youth culture had in-

fluence on Taiwan and South Korea, as Yomota points out (Yomota 2001a: 25). Notice that at that time Japanese culture was banned in Korea, where remakes of Japanese films were produced – without permission. In the 1980s, pirate videos were smuggled from one country to another in Northeast Asia, ignoring the regulations separating the countries. Therefore, even before films from one country in the region could officially be viewed in others, there had been rather personal human network – dating from the end of WWII to the 1980s. We have yet to clarify how such network functioned, but we cannot discuss the cultural exchange in Northeast Asia with respect to films without mentioning the human network.

(2) Film Festivals

International film festivals transcend the notion of the borderline. Even if a film is banned in the country where it has been produced, it may see the light of day in oversea film festivals. Such film festivals also give opportunities for films to be seen even if the films are unlikely to make a hit. Thus, international film festivals may find routes to move films from one country to another which are different from the routes used for the purpose of commercial distribution. In a sense international film festivals may keep themselves away from the global media conglomerate and help produce films in a traditional way.

It is true that international film festivals held in Northeast Asia have activated film exchange in the region. Historically speaking, there had been no international film festivals in Asia, except for Hong Kong International Film Festival approved by International Federation of Film Producers Associations (FIAPF), until 1985,

when Tokyo International Film Festival was held. Since then, 'Northeast Asia has witnessed some more international film festivals (see Table 5). There are other international film festivals not listed in Table 5 because they have not been approved by FIAPF. There are even regional film festivals which promote friendship among participants.

<Table 5>Inaugural international film festival in Northeast Asia

1977-	Hong Kong International Film Festival
1985-	Tokyo International Film Festival
1989-	Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival
1993-	Shanghai International Film Festival
1996-	Pusan International Film Festival
1998-	Taiwan International Documentary Festival

Film festivals featuring Asian films have contributed towards making Asian films popular. Tokyo International Film Festival featured Asian Pacific films in 1987, and now the film festival regularly has a section called 'Winds of Asia' that deals with Asian films. Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival has focused on Asian films since the beginning. In the first YIDFF, Ogawa Shinsuke, a famous filmmaker who started the festival, commented that the film festival was intended to stimulate Asian filmmakers and make a network among them (Yano, 2006, p.363). The film festival also discussed how to revitalize Asian films within Asia. Shanghai International Film Festival and Pusan International Film Festival are worth mentioning. While the former provides 'the New Asian Talent Awards' while the latter has had special sections titled 'A Window on Asian Cin-

ema' and 'New Currents.' Film festivals held in Northeast Asia have raised the awareness of Asian films and have been places where Asian filmmakers and fans can meet.

As we have seen, film festivals held in Northeast Asia have helped establish new relations or networks among (Asian) filmmakers and fans. In fact, such film festivals can do without Hollywood films or even Hollywood-like Asian films. In this sense these festivals may create a new trend in film industry in the near future.

Summary and Conclusion

Since the 1990s, popular culture has widely spread out in Northeast Asia. We have seen that more and more films made in a country in the region have come to be viewed in other countries. By showing that the trend has been supported by such crucial factors as technological advance, the change of political systems, and most significantly, national policies promoting cultural industry in global society and gaining economical and cultural profits from them, we undermined the argument that prevalence of popular culture was mainly due to the nations' endeavor to overcome the unfortunate historical difficulties and establish friendship with each other.

Today, unlike before the 1980s, people in Northeast Asia can see a lot of films made in other countries in the area. Still, as we have observed, Hollywood films are favored in each country while domestic films as well as films from neighboring countries have gained more and more popularity. Furthermore, Asian films incorporating Hollywood-like features, such as

Shiri, *Hero* and *LOVERS*, have promoted film circulation in the region whereas Hollywood endeavors to co-produce films with Northeast Asian film companies or use Asian human resources, absorbing the essences of Asian filmmaking. Within the global dynamism, then, international relations in Northeast Asia with respect to films have been changing.

It is not likely that Asia's market-driven films will quickly deepen mutual understanding in Northeast Asia. However, it seems true that some of such films have set the stage for the fu-

ture of Northeast Asia. For instance, *Shiri* dealt with the issue of the division of Korean Peninsula in it. The viewers inevitably had to face the reality of the world.

We have also seen that international and local film festivals held in Northeast Asia have played a crucial role in circulating and distributing films in the region. Basically such film festivals are not subject to commercialism, so they may open up new possibilities of cultural exchange in Northeast Asia in the future.

< Notes >

- 1) To be more specific, Northeast Asia had to go through Japan's imperialism and large-scale wars, and then was thrown into the structures of the Cold War. How to interpret this history remains one of the major issues to be solved among these nations, and the 38th parallel of latitude in the Korean peninsula has been the military boundary dividing it into two sides, which haven't yet constructed any long-term friendly relations.
- 2) Still, we don't claim that nation-states have no control over the cultural flow today. In fact, nation-states do not always compete with international/multinational companies that play major roles in globalization. They may have an enormous impact on cultural transmission in different ways, by attempting to promote, channel or block the cultural flow, as argued by Fetherstone (Fetherstone, 1995, p.118).
- 3) For more detailed information about the development of media and technology in Asia, see Nihon-housoukyoukai housou bunka kenkyujyo(1990-), Sugaya(2005), Mouri and Morikawa, ed.(2006), pp.188-195.
- 4) For Japan's soft power, the reader is referred to MacGray(2002), Katzenstein(2005), and Leheny(2006).
- 5) For more detail about the Korean cultural policies, see Shim(2006) and Korea Culture and Content Agency's web page(<http://www.kocca.kr>). See also the web page constructed by the Japanese METI, especially the page titled 'Kaigai Shuyoo Koku: Chiiki no Kontentsu Seisaku' (http://www.meti.go.jp/policy/media_contents/).
- 6) See Min(2003) and Jin(2006) further.
- 7) At the same time, there appeared a new wave of fabulous filmmakers in the 1980s, partly because the nations in Northeast Asia began to allow more freedom of expression. New directors expressed themselves in untraditional ways and were praised all over the world. A new Chinese style was created by the 'Fifth Generation' represented by Zhang Yimou, who shot *Red Sorghum*, and Chen Kaige. Taiwan produced Hou Hsiao Hsien and Edward Yang while in S. Korea directors like Lee Chang-Ho and Bae Chang-Ho explored new possibilities.
- 8) See Mori, K. and Morikawa, Y., ed.(2006), p.195
- 9) 'Feature film' is a movie that has a story and is acted by professional actors, which people would usually go to see in a theater. (quot. Longman American Dictionary)

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