



The Chinese Schema and Power Direction of the Dissemination of Korean TV Dramas

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Abstract

The dissemination of Korean drama narrative art--the exotic art form in Chinese context-- is not only a typical form of cultural output in the current social context but also the product of self-adjustment of the artistic style of Korean dramas under the foreign context. The tendency of visual aestheticism, the aesthetic text writing of daily life and the emotional appeal of universal meaning held by the Korean dramas have become the influential factors for this artistic style to enter the Chinese context and disseminate. The rising consumption consciousness in contemporary society has become the external inducement of the dissemination of Korean drama culture in China, which lays the internal driving force for spreading of this culture in China from the two dimensions of production and acceptance. Korean dramas--as a foreign cultural style of Chinese communication--not only present a unique visual landscape and mirror image of life for the development of Chinese film and television art but also provide a more diverse and more affluent world picture for Chinese film and television art atlas. But the dissemination of Korean dramas in the Chinese context also forms a specific power relationship with the aesthetic elements that stimulate audio-visual pleasure in the images or the derivative goods and fashion demands formed by Korean dramas. While laying the groundwork for their narrative style in the Chinese foreign context, Korean dramas also set up a practical strategy of intertwining art and power. The dramas aim to construct the intention of cultural identity but also provide a sample for the culture colonization. An analysis of the Chinese communication schema of this artistic style is undoubtedly of positive, enlightening significance to constructing the aesthetic orientation of the cultural subjectivity of a specific nation.

Keywords: Korean TV drama, visual communication, Chinese context, power, cultural identity

1. Introduction

As an exotic art style, Korean drama is undoubtedly the cultural form that disseminates the local culture deeply and has the most extensive influence on the local cultural structure and aesthetic consciousness of the society after the spread of western learning to the east in the 20th century. The oriental art form, which is very different from the western cultural pedigree, has changed the structural atlas of the current Chinese culture, cutting into the growing realm of modern Chinese mass culture with its unique narrative representation and expression. The art form evolved into colorful and dazzling aesthetic symbols, constructed the unique exotic landscape in the local cultural family, and triggered a pretty general convergence effect and cultural identity. Admittedly, the dissemination of Korean dramas coincides with the multi-dimensional representation of the "visual turn" in modern society. As a model of modern visual art, Korean dramas' narrative style and visual language signs not only contain the essential connotation and practical significance of modern visual texts but also extend the external schema and internal genealogy of popular culture in a sense, providing a more diversified paradigm for the modern evolution of popular culture. Here, Korean drama, a dominant art style in modern society, is focused on the aesthetic mirror of popular culture. The discussion of the dramas' unique narrative form, visual landscape, as well as the extended power structure and practical significance undoubtedly has essential reference value for the pluralistic isomorphism and meaning integration of current culture. At the same time, it will also provide practical aesthetic thinking for the narrative paradigm of modern visual text.

2. The Mass Carnival in the Image World: The Visual Representation and Aesthetic Orientation of The Narration in Korean Dramas

As a model representative of modern visual art, the dissemination of Korean dramas benefits from the rise of popular culture and the promotion of social consumption consciousness. The popular culture creates a suitable context for Korean dramas to spread in China. As a cultural form of modern society, the context of popular culture's derivation and growth accords with the pluralistic characteristics of modern society, and consumer-oriented social transformation is an essential driving force for the continuous extension of popular culture. A consumption-oriented society is not only a society with rich materials but also a society in which consumption dominates production and demand. " There is all around us today a kind of fantastic

conspicuousness of consumption and abundance, constituted by the multiplication of objects, services, and material goods, and this represents something of a fundamental mutation in the ecology of the human species" (Baudrillard, 1998). The concept of consumption constitutes a kind of ideology in the current society and has become the foundation of modern daily life. Meanwhile, consumption also changes the aesthetic consciousness of the social subject and promotes the aesthetic consciousness of the subject to understand different cultural forms actively. South Korean drama is a model cultural representative of subject aesthetic consciousness in the context of consumption.

It is no accident that Korean dramas landed on Chinese mainland. If the eastward spread of western culture at the beginning of the 20th century is a way for Chinese people to dispel the dimension of reality with the help of Western learning, Korean TV dramas at the end of the 20th century, as a form of Asian culture, represent a tributary in the wave of multiculturalism in modern society, and are the free choice of consumer society to cope with the multicultural needs of society. The cross-context communication is more imbued with cultural and even economic implications and lacks political motivation marked by the introduction of western learning to the east. In other words, it is the consumption-oriented social context that gives birth to Korean TV dramas as a foreign culture. Korean TV dramas, like Hong Kong, Taiwan and Hollywood movies, did not set off an upsurge when they landed on Chinese mainland at the early beginning, however, with the continuous integration of the narrative representation of this artistic style based on foreign context, with the technical support of modern media, and with its unique narrative techniques and aesthetic connotation, Korean TV dramas have constructed a specific "field" for the local extension of foreign culture in China, delineating and constantly expanding the admiration and worship of their followers, thus forming a different landscape and different elegant demeanor in the current Chinese cultural territory.

First of all, adhering to visual aesthetics is the formal tone of the mirror narration of most South Korean dramas. In the eyes of aesthetics, the primary mission of art is to provide the sensory pleasure to the aesthetic subject, following the direction of aestheticism. "Arts have only one highest law, which is the law of form or harmony" (Xu, 1988). The form can create everything, and without form participation, there will be no artist's creative feelings, and it will be impossible to create beautiful art. Therefore, South Korean TV dramas are the best samples of aestheticism. Superficially actors with excellent images are usually selected to act as plot roles, coupled with beautiful and appropriate costumes and character activity environment, but this is only one aspect of the plastic visual aesthetic tendency of South Korean dramas; however, the aesthetic landscape created by South Korean dramas is more reflected in a harmonious configuration of visual mirrors. The character image, language or activity environment, the visual level of picture composition, color allocation, or dynamic setting all follow a much stricter principle of identity. Hence most South Korean dramas present warm, coordinated, fresh, and tranquil visual images, which create a comfortable and leisurely acceptance effect. However, compared with pure aestheticism, Korean TV dramas do not fully uphold aestheticism. Because aestheticism, in order to mark the uniqueness and eternity of art, usually separates the close relationship between art and life. "Life always destroys the artistic theme with its reality. Life is a reflection, while art is real" (Wilde, 2020). In the theory of aestheticism, art and life are out of touch and out of tune. Korean TV dramas strictly distinguish the relationship between content and form, which is characterized by marked aestheticism in form, while the narrative theme is based on real life. They effectively integrate the beauty in form and the reality in theme into the modern mirror image. Then they organically unifies beauty with life, which is an effective correction and realistic promotion of the aesthetic concept of traditional aestheticism.

Secondly, the aesthetics of daily life is the inherent logic of the narration of most Korean dramas. The daily life is the most basic living state of human beings. It has always been regarded as a non-essential secondary field. The Chinese and Western philosophy before the 20th century were generally stranded in a metaphysical tradition, paying attention to the abstract world outside daily life. The "turn of daily life" at the philosophical level opened in the 20th century catalyzed the change in the field of aesthetics. Nowadays, the aesthetic of daily life is the mainstream of the evolution of modern society, which means the aesthetic in the modern sense has moved from the dimension of traditional art to the dimension of daily life. According to Jameson "the culture of the 19th century is also understood as elegant music, painting or opera, and culture is still a way to escape from reality. In the theory of post-modernism, culture has become completely popular, and the distance between elegant culture and popular culture, pure literature, and popular literature is disappearing. The post-modernist culture has expanded from the specific 'cultural circle' in the past into people's daily life and become consumer goods" (Jameson, 1986). Korean TV dramas adhere to the narrative logic of the aesthetic of daily life. Its presentation style includes two aspects: first, the internal narrative style of Korean TV dramas follows the mainstream characteristics of the aesthetic of daily life. The narrative theme, character shaping or plot setting of South Korean TV dramas follow the objective laws of real life. Exploring the true meaning of beauty from daily life has become the basic melody of most South Korean dramas. Korean TV dramas usually carry themes taken from the trivialities of daily life, rejecting bizarre plot descriptions and thrilling visual stimulation. Advocating the most precious spiritual value of human nature in the ordinary details of daily life, the dramas refocus the details of ordinary life and its human brilliance that are gradually forgotten because of the rapid speed and rhythm

of life in the real world in front of the audience, awakening audiences' gradually forgotten tenderness of life. Then the audiences truly realize the rich multiple aesthetic values in real life. Second, as a universal art style, South Korean TV dramas have entered into real life as a model symbol of the aesthetics of daily life. According to Featherstone, the British sociologist, one of the meanings contained in the aesthetics of daily life is the rapid flow of symbols and images that permeate the daily life of contemporary society. At this level, Korean TV dramas can become the most exemplary aesthetic representative of daily life in real life of Chinese society. The identity effect and extended economic driving force in modern Chinese society have become a cultural event with far-reaching influence. It has added strong Korean amorous feelings and a elegant cultural demeanor to modern social life.

Thirdly, the value demand for the supremacy of emotion and the tragic artistic structure is the mainstream thread of the narrative art of Korean TV dramas. So far as the prevalent themes of Korean TV dramas are concerned, the mature and customized joint creation and the motif pattern of emotion supremacy have become the established narrative framework of Korean drama art. Even though the themes of South Korean dramas are quite extensive and related to all aspects of social life, the cores of the dramas by the diversified plot framework often shared a standard color--the deep thinking of people's emotional world and the value of existence. Either the personal life experience or the philosophy of trivial daily life in South Korean TV dramas contains actual emotional demands which achieve a high degree of emotional sublimation in the seemingly ordinary and even aesthetic plot designation to meet the emotional expectations of modern people who are increasingly squeezed and gradually lost in modern society.

If the pursuit of emotional life experience is the eternal topic of Korean drama narration, the tragic plot settings and tragic artistic rendering have become the unique framework of Korean drama narration. The rendering and worship of tragic art in South Korean dramas are different from the emotional tone worshipped by the local culture, which make the art form more attractive and changes the established "sense of joy" foundation of the local traditional culture. Compared with western culture, the local culture belongs to the category of "sense of joy," but western culture is more "guilty". Although the essence of "guilt" permeates with the feelings of "tragedy," the respect for tragedy has not become the mainstream of western culture. The narrative style of Korean TV dramas has undoubtedly broken the inherent atlas of Chinese and Western cultures and added new seasoning to the cultural feast of the domestic audience. Wang Guowei, a modern Sinology master said: "the spirit of our people represented by operas and novels does not go without this happy day color--begins with sadness, finally joyful; begins with the separation, finally reunion; begins with the poor, and finally enjoyment" (Wang, 2021). The people who are accustomed to the "sense of joy" no longer adhere to the existing taste of traditional culture and art. Those people are eager to experience the sad feelings of exotic style in the pluralistic and open art map and then expand the aesthetic field of vision and artistic sentiment. It is worthwhile mentioning that the sad feelings rendered by South Korean dramas are pretty different from the tragedies of western culture. Most tragedies in the West should be character tragedies, such as Hamlet and Macbeth. The tragic plots designed by South Korean TV dramas are no longer based on character tragedies. To some extent, it is no longer the characters' character but the plots themselves that causes the tragic plots and endings in South Korean dramas. Both the enrichment and even perfection of the characters leading to tragic plots and endings are more in line with the aesthetic demands of the Chinese people. Therefore, it is natural to gain recognition and resonance.

3. Homogenization of Receptive Context: The Realistic Dimension of Aesthetic Identity of Narrative Art in Korean TV Dramas

The internal reason that why Korean dramas can gain a local cultural identity as a foreign art form lie in the unique artistic representation of the dramas' narration, while the external reason that why Korean dramas are highly sought after and admired in the Chinese context is the agreement between the receptive context of Chinese culture and the internal value and aesthetic orientation of Korean dramas. To some extent, the compelling motivation for promoting the cross-context spread of this art form is that the value system implied in Korean TV dramas is accepted, recognized, and even infatuated in the context of Chinese culture, resulting in a certain aesthetic and value.

Admittedly, the success of Korean dramas in the Chinese cultural context benefits from the horizon and even emotional fusion produced by the cultural vision held by the creative subject of Korean drama narration and the common vision of the aesthetic subject in the cross-cultural context. The internal mechanism of constructing the horizon fusion is the cultural homogeneity of Korean context and Chinese context, because the two cultures share the foundation based on Confucian culture. In the history, the spread of Confucian culture in China and South Korea is a source and flow relationship. In the early period of Koguryo, Confucian culture has formed a comprehensive coverage and in-depth influence on this nation. The rulers of this nation practiced promoting the absorption of Confucian culture from the perspective of official administration. Therefore, Confucian culture which is a foreign culture and ideological system has also built a solid ideological foundation in traditional Korean society. Although the Confucian trend of thought have been created and changed by Korean ancestors, their inherent

ideological tone is consistent, which is the potential premise that cannot be ignored in the cross-context communication of modern Korean dramas.

Unlike the gradual decline of Confucian cultural influence in China, even in today's mainstream Korean society, adhering to and inheriting Confucian culture is still the national principle that modern Korean society has always believed in. The national concept of "loyalty to the king," "making friends with faith," and "filial piety" in interpersonal relations, "persuading good and punishing evil," and "suppressing evil and promoting good" in literature and art have always been fundamental basic norms in today's Korean society. In China, although the source and mainstream of the local culture have been continuous in the context of Confucianism, the same wind and cloud surge in history as questioning and abandonment, and this doubt and even deviation reached the peak in most of the 20th century. After the reform and opening up, the mainstream consciousness began to re-discover the historic value of Confucian culture and gradually restore the current status of this traditional culture; however, the artificial historical fracture cannot be bridged in a short period. The development of modern society witnesses the improvement of material life which promotes the social subject to have a sense of "seeking roots." But the fracture of the cultural foundation caused by the times has made the Chinese people deaf to the cultural identity, communication style and value. The western civilization introduced by reform and opening up cannot fill the gap in the spiritual level of the Chinese people because it is heterogeneous. Cultural identity crisis has become a common social phenomenon in modern society. When South Korean dramas landed in mainland China with the most authentic and straightforward source culture, Chinese people found a good medicine to heal their identity crisis from the inner spiritual system implied in Korean dramas. The ethical norms and lifestyle of Confucianism inherited by Korean dramas have formed a reasonable concept of self-identity in the interaction between themselves and others, which promotes the realization of each individual's self-identity. Confucianism carried by Korean dramas activates the cultural memory of Chinese people and awakens their pursuits for life experience and value. They gradually capture the long-forgotten spiritual relics in this art form. What Korean TV dramas bring is the form of "back-feeding" rather than the simple cultural entertainment and audio-visual pleasure. The dramas reawaken Chinese people's re-cognition of traditional culture and arouses Chinese people's search for roots. They bridge the cultural rupture of Chinese people's self-spirit in the transition between traditional and modern times and provide an ideological treasure house to awaken memory and emotion for the cultural continuation of modern Chinese people.

Nowadays, as a style of strong popular culture, Korean TV dramas bear the mission of structuring and transmitting the social values whose core is the cultural thought of Confucianism. The interpretation and admiration of Confucianism carried out by Korean dramas prompted the theory to be deeply rooted in the foreign context and continued to expand. The ethical morality, family concept and personality pursuit advocated by Confucianism have laid the foundation for the basic principles of modern Korean national culture. The scope and depth of the practice of morality advocated in Confucian culture in South Korea even far exceed the state of its mother culture. It is Korea's pursuit and worship of Confucian culture that makes the artistic form become the foundation of modern Korean culture. Based on this culture, Korean dramas convince Chinese people so that some scholars assert: "Korea today is a living fossil of ancient China" (Zhan, 2007). The Confucian culture in South Korean dramas stimulates the sense of acceptance of China's local context. It lowers the threshold for this foreign cultural and artistic form to settle in a foreign context. It promotes the recognition and acceptance of this artistic style in the Chinese context. It is undeniable that as far as the receptive groups in the Chinese context are concerned, the receptive groups familiar with the Confucian cultural ideas promoted by South Korean dramas are not unfamiliar with the Confucian cultural ideas promoted by South Korean dramas. When Chinese people find that their mother culture has taken root in a foreign country, they can derive a sense of cultural existence and cultural pride. This sense aims to promote the interaction and integration of the two national cultural contexts, which become the psychological normal for Chinese audiences to accept Korean dramas and their cultural thoughts.

From the perspective of communication, communication as a two-way behavior has never been wishful thinking. Facing the "invasion" of a foreign culture, the audiences dominate and defend in a state of stimulation. Their understanding and meaning construction of foreign cultural texts are usually obtained through "negotiation" with the text in a given cultural context, during which the audience's ability of cultural reflection and cultural criticism should not be underestimated. Their mother culture and the values determine what kind of label they put on foreign culture and how to judge it. The cultural exchanges between China and South Korea are the convergence and collision of heterogeneous cultures. The entering of Korean dramas should be regarded as a kind of communication in cross-cultural context. The degree of influence of a foreign culture in the cross-cultural communication depends on the degree of differences in the two cultural contexts. If there are more similarities between the two cultures, the result of decoding the foreign culture tends to be more consistent with the connotation given by the original information coding. "The more people have in common, the less serious setbacks or cultural misinterpretations they encounter in communication. When the cultural differences among members of different cultural groups increase, the possibility of misunderstanding is undoubtedly greater" (Guan, 1995). Confucian culture carried by Korean dramas has

bridged the gap between Chinese and Korean cultures. Due to the rendering of Confucianism, the values, lifestyle and even spiritual pursuits advocated by Korean dramas are not difficult to be understood and accepted in the eyes of Chinese audiences. The cultural identity and acceptance channels are connected and giving rise to a robust cultural convergence effect and cultural intimacy. "Perception is an important aspect of socio-cultural factors, and the similarity of perception makes it possible to share meaning within the same culture" (Samovar, 1988). It is the original homogeneity between Chinese and Korean cultures that has led to the popularity of Korean dramas in China. In spite of gaps and ridges, the dissemination of Korean culture is much smoother than that of western culture in China.

4. The Power Structure behind the Light and Shadow: The Power Writing of The Narrative Art of Korean TV Dramas

As a foreign art style, the popularity of Korean dramas in the Chinese context undoubtedly meets the internal needs of many social elements, thus building a grand landscape of cross-context communication. The dissemination of Korean dramas behind "watching" is a process of exerting power. Korean dramas also transfer and inculcate power to the audience by conveying happiness. The dramas achieve the operation of power by following the development of happy elements in the text and stimulating the happy emotions of the audience.

As far as South Korean TV dramas are concerned, the pursuit and production of audio-visual pleasure is an inexhaustible driving force for the popularity of Korean TV dramas. Pleasure production in Korean TV dramas is realized under a certain degree of power, or it can be said that power as the core force of visual art is also the core of South Korean TV dramas. In order to exert power over the audience and control the majority of the audience, the pleasure element of the Korean drama itself is critical. Korean dramas capture the audience and stimulate the audience's interest only by showing pleasure. Under the temptation and cooperation of pleasure, the Korean drama text controls the text power and realizes its cultural influence. So far as the receiver is concerned, the recipient's understanding of the Korean drama text is no longer flat or even subversive but internalized into the life experience of the performance picture, plot details, and character modality in the text to achieve a sufficient perception of the happiness of the text. Power has been internalized into the viewer's heart. It creates the viewing subjects who need the joy of the text. Korean dramas undoubtedly can produce pleasure, whose inexhaustible source is provided by the detailed description of the plot, the careful design of the aestheticism picture, and the comprehensive presentation of life details. Those unique text features shorten the distance between the text and the audience and let the audience feel the happiness created by the text in the process of watching. Particularly, the famous theme of real life, especially the life of ordinary people in South Korean TV dramas, bridges the gap between the inner perception of the audience in the real world and the artistic text. The production of happy meaning has become common in the process of Korean dramas dissemination. In the discourse power field dominated by elite discourse, although the film and television texts describing elite discourse may also arouse the audience's happiness, the realistic gap between elite discourse and ordinary audience exists objectively. However, the degree of its influence is limited, at least in such text dissemination, the audience's direct understanding is difficult to occur, so visual legitimacy is often questioned. The majority of viewers often drift away from this influence, so the scope and extent of which text-dominated happiness is being accepted are significantly reduced.

South Korean drama texts, through creating happy elements, stimulate the audience's interest in watching and form a temptation mechanism through which obtains the ultimate operation of power. Like other visual texts, the Korean drama texts give full play to the charm of temptation in expression and transform the temptation of the text into an lasting performance of the desire. The temptation of desire does not lie in what it can express but in the continuous expression of desire itself. This continuous expression delays the goal of desire indefinitely, abstracts desire and becomes a form of desire that represents characters. The power to realize temptation in South Korean TV dramas is quite hidden, which can still bring audience groups into their symbolic violence. This is a symbolic law - which is, moreover, not a law but an unavoidable rule. We adhere to it without grounds, as something arbitrary yet obvious, and not in accord with some transcendent principle (Baudrillard, 1990). The symbolic rule of this temptation is not the logic and rules of life followed in real life, and it belongs to the rules of symbolic temptation itself. The audience controlled by this set of rules in watching becomes the slave of the temptation phenomenon gradually. Under the disguise of this temptation rule the Korean drama texts have a profound influence on the audience, and the Korean TV drama texts have become the object worshiped by the viewers so that the viewers lose themselves in front of the symbol of temptation and give up their dominance.

Admittedly, behind the popularity of any cultural text style, there is a deep ideological drive. As Frederick Jameson said, "At the most basic level, every text is a political fantasy" (Jameson, 2004). An interactive relationship exists between the film and television script, which is also the carrier of media information and ideology, that is power. In the process of dissemination, media information not only reflects the pattern of benefit distribution formed by the media information itself and the firmly established power but also "is organized in a way to fundamentally represent a unique view of world construction. This information is usually processed in dominant or consultative codes. Furthermore, it is shared by most people as a form of

common sense” (Baldwin et al., 2007). Power usually manipulates visual discourse in micro form to achieve the purpose of controlling the audience in Korean dramas narration. The micro form can be interpreted in the following aspects, such as the operation of the lens, the editing of the visual pictures, the technical processing of the plays, and the choice of the narrative mode of the play. Employing the microcosmic operation, power is digested into every detail of Korean drama narration: lens, editor, color, language, action and scene. The characteristic portray of the details in Korean dramas lays the foundation for the unique representation of Korean drama. The portray also exerts the implied power weight to the extreme.

According to Bourdieu, power usually works in a power field. The possession of these powers also means the control of the special profits of this field (Bourdieu, 1997). Power constructs a workplace with the help of artistic texts. Power permeates the micro details of artistic texts and drives the audience's aesthetic taste, life habits, emotional representation, and even the reconstruction of the audience's self-identity. The popularity of Korean TV dramas has undoubtedly built a solid cultural field, which also has a built-in mechanism of power operation. Influence by this power, the aesthetic taste of the audience gradually converges, their life habits are gradually assimilated by the plot, and their evaluation criteria of visual discourse and lifestyle that are commonly used in the field are circulated. The visual discourse and the life mode often break through the barriers between the artistic world and real life. The visual discourse gradually evolves into a fashion in the real world. Power is a way to prevent people from having the slightest grievance by shaping people's ideas, perceptions, and preferences and making them accept their place in the existing order (Baldwin et al., 2007). Through the unified allocation of style, interest, and sentiment, Korean dramas have built a tremendous visual landscape and interest order, which is gradually presented in a fashionable style. The social individuals are classified by the fashion in the form of field whose external embodiment is unique language styles, dress styles, or behavioral characteristics. Those unfamiliar with and do not accept this fashion form are often excluded from the established field. Fashion shows a special charm in the restriction, which has the charm of the beginning and the end simultaneously, novelty and instant charm (Simmel, 2001). Almost every polar Korean drama has set off a fashion trend in the Chinese context, from beer and fried chicken to popular clothing and even Korean-flavored famous words, without exception, triggered a wave of convergence of the pursuit effect.

Definitely, as a foreign art form, the hidden power operation of Korean TV series directly promotes its inheritance and acceptance in the foreign context and constantly expands its acceptance field. Superficially, what it presents is only a foreign spread of cultural and artistic style, which is nothing more than a successful case without suspicion in the modern society with increasingly close globalization. But the role of this power cannot be underestimated in terms of its influence. Culture promotion is often based on the premise of occupying, weakening, and even destroying the existing field of other cultures. The continuous dissemination of Korean dramas brings not only the exotic amorous feelings of the visual senses but also a collision and intersection of the two cultural forms. A culture carries the values and world outlook of a nation. One foreign cultural form encroaching on the existing field of the local culture will undoubtedly tamper with the national identity and value orientation behind the established culture. The result is that the original local cultural map is weakened, forgotten, or even questioned, and the national character of the cultural foundation is challenged, let alone the material fields such as the economic level behind the culture. Those economic benefits produced by the Korean dramas are the direct testaments. Each successful Korean drama is the extraordinary driver of economic effects.

5. Aesthetic Disenchantment after Carnival: Cultural Enlightenment and Rational Reflection on the Narrative Art of Korean Dramas

As a flashing exotic symbol in the cultural field in modern transformation of Chinese society, the occupation of the Chinese market by Korean drama art and the capture of the audience in the context of Chinese communication are successful. The extended cultural influence, the resulting economic, and even political forces cannot be ignored. Those who benefited from the dissemination of Western learning to the east in the 20th century may not take the wave of Korean dramas in China for granted, and the dominant events located in the pure cultural boundary seem to be challenging to explain the impact of this cultural phenomenon. The right way to treat the surging of Korean drama art in a foreign context and even the charismatic performance of this art form is not to echo and imitate others. What we should do is to make a calm and objective analysis and judgment, putting aside the layers of fog scattered by the art of Korean dramas. We can see the real mirror image constructed by this art form through this enchanting figure.

As an outstanding feature of the period in social transformation, the binary opposition trend at the cultural level is becoming increasingly evident. The increasing resolution of traditional ideas and the continuous emergence of cultural thoughts of the times are intertwined. It seems that deconstruction has become the most fashionable subject word in social development. The re-establishment of the new value system and the choice of the traditional deconstructed ideas coexist with deconstruction. A mutual connection and relay of the two value systems often lead to the swing and loss of the cultural acceptance groups, which provides a space for the “other” to enter the culture. Especially those who lack the basic cognition and scale of discriminating

and screening cultural codes are easier to become the trend of foreign cultures. An in-depth acceptance and spiritual infatuation of foreign culture are usually based on forgetting the mother culture, especially when the old and new cultures are at the barrier of transformation, which constitutes the evaluation symbol of social fashion. They are likely to lead to the absolute negative consciousness of the mother culture and the values it carries. We can assert that any nation that ignores, forgets, or even abandons its cultural traditions and values is terrible. If the forgetfulness and abandonment become a collective unconsciousness of the society, the hidden crisis is even more self-evident. Korean drama is a foreign cultural form whose opportunity to enter the Chinese context is that China is at the joint orifice of its social transformation, including cultural transformation. The traditional cultural concept has been questioned, and the new cultural form has not been established yet, which provides a port for Korean TV dramas to cut in. The Chinese complex held by Korean TV dramas themselves has undoubtedly paved a broad road for this cultural form to go straight forward. In China, however, the values carried by Korean dramas are, after all different from the local culture, and their molded social life is also very different from the Chinese life. If the Chinese audiences are infatuated with the life patterns and values in the mirror for a long time, there may be social problems and even mental confusion in real daily life probably.

Definitely, as a scientific attitude, we do not need to label the local popularity of South Korean TV dramas as cultural imperialism or cultural colonization, nor do we need to be too anxious about the tide of "Ha-Han" caused by South Korean dramas. Unlike economic and political exchanges and interaction, a majority of cultural exchanges are mental activities. The essential elements of their inherent cultural concept and artistic representation are the reason why the art of Korean dramas has been popular in foreign contexts for a long time. Compared with South Korean TV dramas, the domestic film and television production, and even cultural creation in recent years are lack of high-quality works but with higher expansion of profit-oriented consciousness. The production concept of "short and fast" affects the subjectivity of the producers. The criticism for domestic film and television production, and even the cultural field is the lack of in-depth excavation of traditional cultural ideas, ignoring the aesthetic of daily life and details under the guidance of quick success and quick profit. The leading factor of film and television art cannot be separated from entertainment, but "while attaching importance to the function of entertainment, we cannot ignore the educational function of mass culture" (Zeng, 2007). The practical strategies to deal with the exotic culture occupying its own living space should be endowing culture with profound connotation, promoting the educational attribute of culture and art, overcoming the superficial, planarization carnival, and demagogic representation of modern culture, and genuinely improving the connotation construction of culture itself.

As a result, the art of Korean dramas caused a wave of visual "shock" in the Chinese context under its glamorous shadows and costumes. They smashed the memory bunkers of Chinese people and constructed a mythological palace of commodity fetishism, thus creating a virtual world in an intoxicating real space. Korean dramas plasticize the subject consciousness of foreign space, guide the aesthetic subject to realize the generation of subject consciousness by glancing back, and present it in the form of a "perfect landscape" in an atmosphere of "self-romance." As the collective symbol of youthful fetishism, the charm of Korean TV dramas in the Chinese context lies in that it is good at applying diverse and rich characters and stories to show a high degree of homogeneity of spiritual hardship. They spare no effort to cut the "beauty" in real life into sporadic, impulsive moments to realize the recognition of the meaning of life. The vast differences from real life that constructed a kind and distant, utopian world.

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