



TOURIST DISTRACTIONS

TRAVELING AND FEELING

IN TRANSNATIONAL HALLYU CINEMA

YOUNGMIN CHOE

TOURIST DISTRACTIONS

This page intentionally left blank

TOURIST DISTRACTIONS

TRAVELING AND FEELING

IN TRANSNATIONAL HALLYU CINEMA

YOUNGMIN CHOE

DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS DURHAM AND LONDON 2016

© 2016 Duke University Press

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞

Designed by Amy Ruth Buchanan

Typeset in Minion Pro by Westchester Publishing Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Choe, Youngmin, author.

Tourist distractions : traveling and feeling in transnational

hallyu cinema / Youngmin Choe.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-8223-6111-4 (hardcover : alk. paper)

ISBN 978-0-8223-6130-5 (pbk. : alk. paper)

ISBN 978-0-8223-7434-3 (e-book)

1. Motion pictures—Korea (South)—History—21st century.
2. Cultural industries—Korea (South)—History—21st century.
3. Popular culture—Economic aspects—Korea (South). 4. Tourism in motion pictures. 5. Travel in motion pictures. I. Title.

PN1993.5.K6C4844 2016

791.43095195—dc23 2015036266

A different version of chapter 2 appeared as “Affective Sites: Hur Jin-ho’s Cinema and Film-Induced Tourism in Korea,” in *Asia on Tour: Exploring the Rise of Asian Tourism*, ed. Tim Winter, Peggy Teo, and T. C. Chang, 109–26 (New York: Routledge, 2009). An earlier version of chapter 5 was published as “Postmemory DMZ in South Korean Cinema, 1999–2003,” *Journal of Korean Studies* 18.2 (2013): 315–36. Reprinted by permission.

Cover art: Detail from a tour-site marker depicting an image from the film *April Snow*. Photo by the author.

FOR MY MOTHER AND FATHER

This page intentionally left blank

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ix

INTRODUCTION. Distracted Attractions 1

PART I. INTIMACY

1. Feeling Together: Pornography and Travel in *Kazoku Cinema* and *Asako in Ruby Shoes* 31
2. Affective Sites: Hur Jin-ho's *April Snow* and *One Fine Spring Day* 59

PART II. AMITY

3. Provisional Feelings: The Making of *Musa* 89
4. Affective Palimpsests: Sudden Showers from Hwang Sun-wŏn's "Sonagi" to Kwak Jae-yong and Andrew Lau's *Daisy* 112

PART III. REMEMBRANCE

5. Postmemory DMZ: *Joint Security Area*, *Yesterday*, and *2009: Lost Memories* 143
6. Transient Monuments: Commemorating and Memorializing in *Taegukgi* Korean War Film Tourism 166

CONCLUSION. K-hallyu: The Commodity Speaks in Kang Chul-woo's *Romantic Island*, Bae Yong-joon's *A Journey in Search of Korea's Beauty*, So Ji-sub's *Road*, and Choi Ji-woo's *if* 197

NOTES 205

BIBLIOGRAPHY 229

INDEX 241

This page intentionally left blank

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The earliest drafts of this book were written as a dissertation at the University of California (UC) Berkeley. My time there was formative, and I owe much gratitude to my doctoral advisors. Chris Berry and Nelson Graburn have been models of the kind of scholar I aspire to be, and also of the kind of mentor I try to be. Without their guidance, my scholarship would not have been able to take on the forms that it eventually did, and I thank them for their continued encouragement, support, and friendship. My thanks also to Andrew Jones, for his advice over the years, and for being a wonderful teacher and friend. I am grateful to Lydia Liu, Jiwon Shin, Alan Tansman, and Bonnie Wade. Soyoung Kim, whom I first met when she was a visiting professor at UC Berkeley, continues to be a source of inspiration. The UC Berkeley Tourism Studies Working Group allowed me to participate in the exchange of scholarship through which I could vicariously travel to places in ways I might otherwise never have gone.

The year I spent at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), as a Korea Foundation postdoctoral fellow was a tremendously productive one. I feel privileged to have been able to revise the book under the mentorship of Nancy Abelmann, whose insightful reading of my manuscript was vital to the shape of its final form. I am also thankful to Poshek Fu, Jungwon Kim, Robert Cagle, Jin-Heon Jung, and the Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies, who welcomed me into their midst that year. My chapter on “transient monuments” benefited from feedback I received at the UIUC Korea Workshop, and aspects of my introduction were formed at a roundtable discussion on pan-Asian cinema with Poshek Fu, Stephanie DeBoer, and Michael Raine.

I am most grateful to my colleagues in the East Asian languages and cultures department at the University of Southern California (USC). As chairs, Dominic Cheung, David Bialock, and Audrey Li have been generous in their support of junior faculty. I thank Brian Bernards, Geraldine Fiss, George Hayden, Namkil Kim, Satoko Shimazaki, and Andrew Simpson for a congenial environment to work in, and Christine Shaw for everything she does for our department. Special thanks to Bettine Birge, Sonya Lee, and Lori Meeks

for their guidance. Above all, I have benefited enormously from the intellectual engagement, mentorship, and friendship of Akira Mizuta Lippit, Kyung Moon Hwang, and Sunyoung Park. I also thank David James, Stanley Rosen, Panivong Norindr, Aniko Imre, and Ruth Chung. David Kang and Elaine Kim at USC's Korean Studies Institute have fostered an inviting research community at the Dosan Ahn Chang Ho Family House, as has Grace Ryu at USC's East Asian Studies Institute. I thank Joy Kim, Sun-Yoon Lee, and Ken Klein at the Korean Heritage Library for ceaselessly drawing my attention to new additions to an already wonderful collection. I also want to acknowledge the former and current graduate students Crystal Mun-Hye Baik, N. Trace Cabot, Melissa Chan, Wooseok Kang, Kathryn Page-Lippsmeyer, Gladys Mac, Jinhee Park, Young Sun Park, Yunji Park, Myoung-Sun Kelly Song, Chad Walker, Shannon Zhao, and the visiting scholar Jinim Park.

Many friends and colleagues have shared their thoughts through collaborations and conversations that helped shape this book: Jinsoo An, Charles Armstrong, Chua Beng Huat, Michelle Cho, Steve Choe, Kyeong-hee Choi, Steven Chung, Stephen Epstein, Chris Hanscom, Todd Henry, Ted Hughes, Kelly Jeong, Alice Kim, Kyu-hyun Kim, Su-yun Kim, Youna Kim, Nayoung Aimee Kwon, Jin-kyung Lee, Nam Lee, Sohl Lee, Hyung Il Pai, Aaron Magnan-Park, Albert Park, Hyun Seon Park, Michael Robinson, Youngju Ryu, Andre Schmid, and Jun Yoo. I am grateful to Suk-Young Kim and Clark Sorensen for their critical comments on individual chapters, and to Christine Yano and David Desser for extensive comments on the entire manuscript. I am greatly indebted to Kyung Hyun Kim for his indispensable criticism and caring support. I thank him not only for the many opportunities he gave me to present chapters-in-progress at UC Irvine, but also for the chance to work together on something larger than my own monograph. The book's clarity and readability is thanks to the sage advice of Courtney Berger, my wonderful editor at Duke University Press, with whom I feel fortunate to be working. Christine Riggio, Amy Ruth Buchanan, and Danielle Szulczewski also deserve special thanks.

The writing of this book was made possible by generous financial support from the UC Berkeley Center for Korean Studies, the UC Berkeley Institute for East Asian Studies, the UC Berkeley Department of Asian Studies, the Korea Foundation Dissertation Fellowship, the 2008 Korea Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship, a 2008 Northeast Asia Council Travel Grant, the Academy of Korean Studies Grant (AKS-2010-R-23), and at USC, the Korean Studies Institute Faculty Research Grant, the Sejong Society Research Grant, and the 2013 James H. Zumberge Individual Research Award. In its final stage, it was

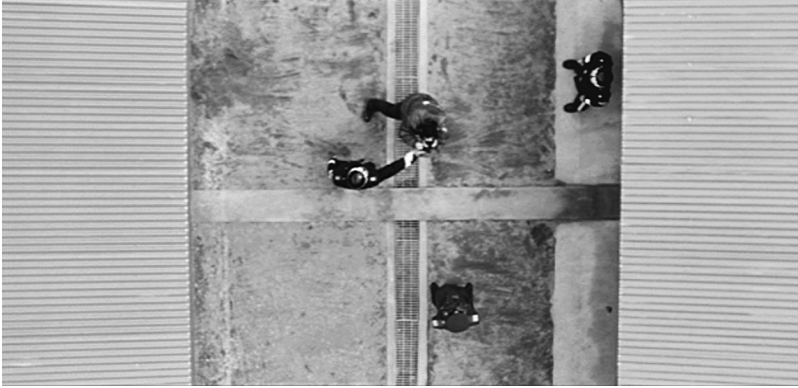
supported by the Yonsei University Future-leading Research Initiative of 2015. I thank Noh Suntag for his generous permission to reprint photographs from his “reallyGood, murder” series, and Lee Mun-woong, professor emeritus in the department of anthropology at Seoul National University, for sharing photos from his fabulous archive of exhibition photos.

I reserve my deepest gratitude for my family, Sehyo Choe, Youngjae Choe, and my parents, Jun-seok Choe and Soon-nyu Choe. My parents have shared their love of travel with me for as long as I can remember, and I thank them for their sustained interest in the places and forms of travel I have found on my own. My father especially has been my greatest intellectual supporter, and it is thanks to my mother that I have never questioned the possibility of having both family and work. I also thank my parents-in-law, Sang Joong Jeon and Chung Ja Jeon, for their kind support. My life with Joseph Jeon is inscribed in various ways throughout the book. His boundless intellectual generosity and unstoppable quick wit enlivens and grounds our every day together. And Izzi—I know you can read this now—I am most thankful for you.

This page intentionally left blank

INTRODUCTION

Distracted Attractions



There is a moment in Park Chan-wook's *Joint Security Area* (*Kongtong kyöngpi kuyölk*, 2000) when the routine duties of choreographed conflict are disrupted. Soldiers stand guard at the heavily guarded Panmunjöm, a cluster of buildings that form the demilitarized zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea. A group of foreigners on a guided tour of the southern side are surveying the Military Demarcation Line that runs through the middle of the DMZ, separating the two sides, when a sudden gust of wind blows a baseball cap off one of the tourist's heads, and over the 38th parallel into North Korea. A North Korean soldier picks the red cap up and stretches his hand out to return it, while the American military tour guide reaches over the demarcation, takes the cap, and thanks the soldier. The film's perspective switches at this moment, from a close-up shot taken from the point of view of the cap's owner to an aerial view hovering directly above the demarcation line (see fig. I.1). Just as the U.S. military guide retreats, leaving the frame, a tourist abruptly rushes up to the line, taking photographs, which are prohibited. We see a South Korean

I.1 A tourist gazes through his camera across the border
between North and South Korea. *Joint Security Area*.

soldier leave his post at the left of the frame and move toward the center to block the tourist's gaze by holding his hand in front of the camera. The tourist keeps clicking in spite of the warning until the soldier finally pushes him back toward his group, who are outside of the frame, and then returns to his position. Witnessed aerially, with only the sound of a camera shutter audible, the scene then ends with a return to a long shot as the tourists leave the site.

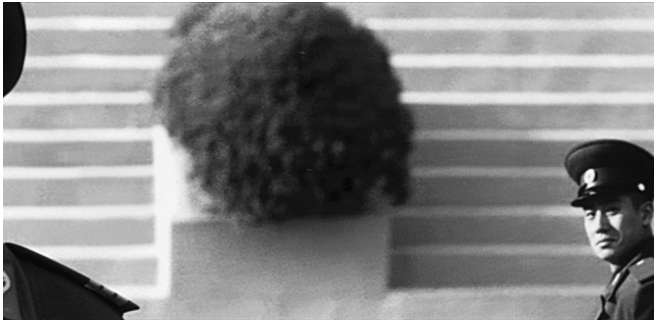
The significance of this scene, in which the gaze of the tourist and the perspective of the film camera overlap in a site of conflict and surveillance, is not apparent until the end of the film. The film's end is signaled by a return to the shot of the North Korean soldier returning the cap and the sound of the camera shutter. The film freezes at this point on one of the tourist's photographs, and proceeds to zoom in to various elements of the image, panning from figure to figure within the otherwise still shot (see figs. I.2–I.7). The photograph fades gradually from color to black-and-white, and in the panning we see a condensed version of the story that the film has just narrated. *Joint Security Area* (J.S.A.) as a whole chronicles a murder investigation in the demilitarized zone in which both North and South Korean soldiers are implicated. In the repeated close-up shot over the U.S. military tour guide's shoulder, the North Korean soldier who has just handed over the cap is recognizable as Sergeant Oh Kyöng-p'il (Song Kang-ho), the older of the two North Korean soldiers who befriend two South Korean soldiers throughout the course of the film; behind him to the right, captured in mid-march and mid-smile, is his junior comrade, Chöng U-jin (Sin Ha-gyun), one of the men who gets killed when their fraternization with South Korean soldiers is discovered by a North Korean commanding officer. The camera continues to pull back south of the demarcation line and out to the left, where we see Private Nam Söng-sik (Kim T'ae-u), the soldier who instigates the bloodshed in the film's climax by firing at the visiting commanding officer. The shot pulls further back to the hand that had blocked the tourist's camera, which belongs, we now see, to Sergeant Yi Su-hyök (Lee Byung-hun), the South Korean soldier who had originally initiated the border-crossing friendship. Finally, the shot ends with a full view of the entire picture taken by the tourist, an alternate version of the scene that we had witnessed earlier from an aerial angle. This photograph seen at the end of the film displaces our limited view of the North as mediated by the U.S. military presence with a more revealing view remediated by the tourist gaze.

Prompted by an accident (the gust of wind blowing the hat) that distracts the tourist from the regulated course of the tour, the tourist's picture becomes a privileged object, having unknowingly captured the reconciliation underway

between the four soldiers stationed at this embodiment of cold war tension. It offers a transformative view of an otherwise familiar political environment: what had seemed a photo of hostility reveals itself as one of friendship. Through the tourist's photograph, we see how easily hostility and friendship can be mistaken for each other, a point of the film that becomes clear not in the photograph itself, but in the film's narration of what has occurred in the forbidden exchanges between the four soldiers. The tourist's photo, as it is remediated within the film, comes to frame the film's larger narrative of inter-Korean reconciliation and hints at the problematic relationship between visibility, truth, and reconciliation.

In addition, the intervention of tourist photography follows the literally transnational exchange of an object, namely the red cap, which, blown by the sudden gust of wind across the border and then returned, reifies in commodity form the border crossings undertaken by the two South Korean soldiers earlier in the narrative. By the end of the film, however, we know that the civil exchange of the cap is markedly different from the exchange between the soldiers, which erupts in fatal violence. The trope of cross-border exchange recurs throughout the film: in the playful exchange of spit by the soldiers as they try to maintain their serious poses; in the letters that they attach to rocks and hurl at each other across the 38th parallel; and also in the mass-produced sweets and magazine cutouts that the South Korean soldiers bring as gifts to the North. Like the soldiers themselves, these literal and figurative commodities circulate across this national boundary, stand-ins for the perpetual movement of human bodies across all different kinds of boundaries.

From the perspective of those tourists at the 38th parallel, this crossing of boundaries is what we more commonly call travel. And it is the experience (and many ramifications) of this movement across boundaries that brings us to the heart of this book. Much of our understanding of South Korea today emerges from the much-discussed phenomenon of *hallyu*, referred to in English as "the Korean Wave." The term commonly refers to the widespread consumption of Korean popular culture overseas starting in the late 1990s. Here I attempt to find some clarity within this overused and increasingly overdetermined term, and within its abundant meanings, by focusing on one particular slice of *hallyu* creations (film) and one particular theme that abounds in *hallyu* (travel). In hinting at the links between travel and commodity exchange, all under the rubric of tourism, *J.S.A.* embodies a crucial characteristic of what I will term *hallyu cinema*. I use *hallyu cinema* to differentiate a specific group of films that is informed by the dominant characteristics of the



1.2-1.7 (*above and opposite*) A closer look at a tourist's photograph taken at the border. *Joint Security Area.*



larger hallyu, or Korean Wave, phenomenon. These films are distinct from the broad, undifferentiated category of new Korean cinema that has been subsumed under hallyu. Within these films, we will see the repeated ways in which human travel speaks to the flows of capital, material goods, and cultural products that epitomize the hallyu phenomenon, and vice versa. Just as close examination of a tourist's intervening gaze and snapshot reveals a more complicated story, travel in hallyu cinema becomes an optic through which to understand the beguiling possibilities and anxious perils of regionalism and transnationalism, two trends essential to the structures of soft power that characterize millennial Korea in an era of more flexible, border-crossing citizenship. By underscoring negotiations with the colonial and Cold War past on one hand and the neoliberal East Asian present on the other, hallyu cinema will thus help us understand key shifts in the South Korean culture industry, emerging approaches by South Koreans to Cold War history (especially their history of national division), and rapidly changing reimaginings of the East Asian geopolitical scene.

Perhaps not coincidentally then, *J.S.A.* embodies a larger trend surrounding Korean cinema, starting in the late 1990s, in which the creation (and consumption) of film was intrinsically linked to travel, not only in its representation of the tourism, but also in the material legacy of its production. *J.S.A.*'s border scenes were not shot on location, as ongoing tensions at Panmunjŏm have made any such filming nearly impossible since the signing of the 1953 Korean Armistice Agreement brought three years of war to a truce. Rather, it was filmed on an outdoor set at the KOFIC Namyangju Studios in Yangsuri, South Korea. Furthermore, the producers left the fabricated "border" at the complex long after the film was completed, since it drew tourists interested both in the film and in the historical tension between North and South Korea; those tourists who gathered in Yangsuri thus uncannily doubled the aforementioned scene in the film itself. At Yangsuri, both film and history conspired to induce tourism, and the practices of tourists, who there (and only there) were free to walk back and forth across the 38th parallel, reenacting the transnational itinerancy of the red cap.

Tourism is thus doubly relevant, both as a critical thematic in *J.S.A.*, and also in the afterlife of the film, as its box-office success unexpectedly generated a good deal of travel, both to the actual DMZ and to the simulacrum as well. As the *J.S.A.* example demonstrates, the complicities between film and tourism—specifically in their relation to reconciliation efforts in Northeast Asia—are manifold. If the film suggests that the solution to historical antagonism is

travel across boundaries, and thematizes this travel via the movement of commodities and other objects across the 38th parallel, then the tourist response has seemed to take up this combination of transnational political reconciliation and transnational commerce with great enthusiasm. Thus, since the late 1990s, the thematic of travel became a way to consider, beyond just broaching the problem of North-South Korea relations, broader shifts in an era of Asianization. By Asianization, I refer to the increased regional cooperation of often formerly antagonistic nations, particularly in East Asia, aimed at obtaining a competitive advantage in the global marketplace.¹ In various forms, tourism in this period speaks to the evolving transnational political relations that such a regional transformation entailed.

In *Tourist Distractions* I explore South Korea's venture into trans-Asian cinema production and distribution in the late 1990s, and its relation to the emergence of hallyu, the undifferentiated general term for the popular-culture phenomenon in which Korean entertainment and cultural products, including film, television drama, and music, found enthusiastic international reception. By focusing on the explicit representation of travel in these films in relation to the practices of travel that emerged in relation to film spectatorship, I examine the ways in which aspects of Korean popular cinema were slowly adapted according to the hallyu market, in which films became an integral part of the ancillary market generated by Korean television dramas, and in which consumption practices associated with hallyu, such as travel, came to reformulate aesthetic concepts and shared affects with deep roots in the nation's history. I narrow the field of inquiry by focusing on hallyu cinema and set aside other forms of cultural production because hallyu cinema offers a particularly useful, self-reflexive perspective for viewing the complexities—the anxieties, tensions, and celebratory gestures—of a new East Asian affective economy. Precisely due to the nebulous and inclusive boundaries of hallyu, we need to explore the particular relationship between popular Korean cinema and hallyu, in order to contemplate the production and consumption of films in a world where new media challenge film as the dominant mode of mass culture.² And thus, perhaps the largest ambition of my study is to transform *hallyu*, which has become first and foremost a marketing category, into a bona fide critical term.

To this end, I focus on the links between filmic form and transnational commerce. In this context, one of the most notable features of hallyu's rise, especially in East Asia, was a convergence of the film and tourism industries. In much the same way that Dean MacCannell saw in tourism a new way of theorizing the leisure class in the postindustrial age, I identify travel and

tourism as an important critical lens through which to examine the affective capabilities of South Korean national cinema as part of a larger project of recalibrating the nation's position within the rapidly changing landscape of postcolonial East Asia.³ As the region becomes increasingly disconnected from the painful histories, bitter conflicts, and political rivalries that shaped affective experiences along national lines for the better part of the twentieth century, tourist films and film tourism become part of a larger project of forming the transnational emotional bonds that contribute to the shaping of a newly imagined East Asia and that might presage more concrete transnational economic bonds between nations that were fairly recently antagonistic.

I therefore think of Asianization not primarily in the political and economic terms that are most frequently mobilized to speak about the phenomenon, though these concerns of course underlie my analysis. Rather, my aim is to enlarge our vision of what Asianization encompasses and how it shapes contemporary life in East Asia. More specifically, I hope to answer Lauren Berlant's question about historical sense for the present context: "How does a particular affective response come to be exemplary of a shared historical time, and in what terms?"⁴ I am most interested in the formation of a shared *affective* experience that transnational cooperation requires in order to build its networks for the exchange of products and capital, a sense of what Giorgio Agamben refers to as the "con-sent" at the heart of friendship.⁵ By emphasizing the etymological elements of consent, which in the original Latin infers "feeling together," this formulation in the context of contemporary Asianization suggests the need for a shared sense of affective experience in order to turn once rival nations into cooperative friends. To this end, I am not merely interested in the dissemination and flow of cultural products that Asianization entails, of which hallyu serves as an example, but more significantly in how these cultural flows are suffused with affective flows. Given the tumultuous modern history of northeast Asia, Asianization demands not only these political and economic forms of partnership, but also a newly emergent feeling of cooperation and the production of an affective economy to underlie the financial one.

Hallyu-lujah!

Hallyu did not come to the attention of South Korean cultural critics until early 2001, when dispatches from China on the "Korean Wave"—or "Korea mania," as it was also referred to—set off similar reports from Hong Kong, Taipei, and Vietnam.⁶ The apparent spontaneity with which hallyu had emerged

in China in 1997 was in stark contrast to the measured and carefully thought-out cultural liberalization policies South Korea had been implementing since 1998. In the wake of the devastating financial crisis, South Korea had started looking to its neighbors for interregional collaboration as a part of its recovery process, which had entailed much postcolonial negotiation and symbolic reparations. The intellectual labor of working toward an understanding of the *hallyu* phenomenon, taking place about four years after the wave's emergence, in its belated recuperation of the period essentially redefined a significant period in the initiation of interregional cultural cooperation and collaboration in film production as one marked by an unforeseen surge in Korean soft power, namely the rise of *hallyu*.⁷

The element of surprise, viewed in hindsight, has become a cornerstone in the study of *hallyu*, a central task that has entailed chronicling and investigating the underlying conditions and reasons that enabled the surprising phenomena to emerge. In fact, one theory of the etymology of the term *hallyu* suggests that it comes from the Taiwanese media, expressing surprise over the popularity of Korean dramas and K-pop (Korean popular music), and specifically their use of the phrase *hail hallyu*, a local expression that translates as “winter ice storm in summer” and refers to unexpected and unlikely events.⁸ The serendipitous nature of the phenomenon's origins, however, is posed in *hallyu* discourses more as a windfall and less as a problem, the question being “Why did it happen?,” rather than “Why didn't we notice?”⁹

Hallyu thus began not as a carefully orchestrated enterprise, but rather as a serendipitous cultural phenomenon in the late 1990s when the Korean culture industry realized that its products were beginning to have regional and international appeal. It continued in subsequent years, not only as an attempt to continue and replicate this success in cultural forms and media other than K-pop and dramas, but also in the self-conscious transformation of the trade and circulation logics that characterized the initial phenomenon into an explicit aesthetics, which attempted both to make sense of the early surprising success and to capitalize on it. Hence, I argue that tourism becomes a central trope in the films of this period because it literalizes the forms of circulation that inhere in its international success. Travel, in other words, serves to make sense of the more difficult to perceive networks of circulation that made *hallyu*'s rise possible in the first place, and in this context, travel and tourism become interchangeable terms because the movement of bodies through unfamiliar spaces (what we call travel) is inseparable in these films from the commercialization of such behavior (what we call tourism).

Hallyu, the generic term that is usually rendered in English as “Korean Wave,” has more recently been subdivided into a series of sequential waves. The general consensus is that the first wave started circa 1997 and lasted until 2003, with the unexpected impact of the television drama *Winter Sonata*.¹⁰ Though the term *hallyu*, which was coined in the Chinese press (according to some accounts), was supposedly inspired by a compilation CD of Korean popular music, the first wave was actually defined by the popularity of Korean television dramas.¹¹ Beginning in 2003, the second Korean Wave (also referred to as *sin hallyu*, or the New Korean Wave) was led by K-pop, and bolstered by the continued popularity of television dramas and by the growing popularity of Korean films and video games. In addition to the growth in the types of products between these waves, the other major transition was in the types of distribution. In the first wave, these cultural creations were circulated via television and cable broadcasts, CDs, and DVDs; in the second wave, that distribution expanded to include social-network services. In this transition, the audience also expanded, from predominantly middle-aged women to both male and female children and teenagers.¹²

Whereas the first wave is considered to have occurred spontaneously, the second was created by private entrepreneurs, supported by government initiatives, who harnessed the perceived potential of Korean popular culture.¹³ *Sin hallyu* included a conscious attempt by the Korean National Tourism Organization to bring the consumption of *hallyu* home to Korea, in the form of inbound tourism and shopping catered to tourists, fan attendance at Korean pop concerts, and travel to drama and film locations. Thus, in addition to diffusion through social-networking sites, the second wave witnessed an expansion in the nature of *hallyu* consumption. In 2012 Culture Minister Chòe Kwang-shik called for a “third *hallyu*” that would consist of “the Korean culture overall—the content, the core,” which would include in particular the marketing of traditional Korean culture abroad.¹⁴ Whether or not the distinction proves useful remains an open question; more pertinent to the present discussion is the way in which Chòe’s initiative demonstrates the extent to which *hallyu* in recent years has become the name of an explicit enterprise. Now an even more unwieldy term, *hallyu* in this context not only refers to all manner of Korean consumables, but also to the production of a highly marketed and globally distributed culture that is quite deliberately conceived of as an export commodity.

Part of the reason for *hallyu*’s ambiguity as a term is the way in which the business model of these cultural creations increasingly encouraged hybridity.

Jinhee Choi has described how the demand for Korean dramas that characterized hallyu's first wave provided the Korean entertainment industry with significant crossover opportunities into other entertainment media.¹⁵ Following success in television dramas, actors such as Jun Ji-hyun, Choi Ji-woo, Lee Byung-hun, Jang Dong-gun, and Kwon Sang-woo crossed over to the film industry, which benefited immensely from the popularity of these actors, as demonstrated by the demand in other countries for the rights to distribute and export Korean cinema. These trends were further buttressed by the ubiquity of film stars in music videos and advertisements as well as the rising presence of K-pop idols starring in films and dramas, for which they also often provided original music for the soundtrack. Tourism to drama and film locations followed, as did remakes of a few Korean films in Europe and the United States. Perhaps more than any other hallyu text, the drama *Winter Sonata* (2003) set the standard for the crossover and tourist potential of hallyu texts, motivating consumption that ranged from spectatorship to tourism, both of which foregrounded affective experiences such that the more mediated experience of watching a television drama cohered with the haptic experience of visiting the sites where it was filmed.

Such opportunities were not lost on tourism promoters: the "Dynamic Korea" advertisement released by the Korean National Tourism Organization in 2003—a difficult moment for the tourism industry due to the outbreak of SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), the Iraq War, and the North Korean nuclear controversy—featured then president Roh Moo-hyun and emphasized the senses: "Listen. Can you, can you hear them? Look. Can you, can you see them? Now feel. It feels wonderful! Come feel it. Korea."¹⁶ From images of Korean traditional culture and food, it jumps to the roaring crowds of the Red Devils from the 2002 FIFA World Cup, gesturing to the affective energies it is attempting to generate. The dynamism of the advertisement is an example of the "Korea of *shinmyoung*" (*shinmyŏng*) concept that the government was promoting at the time as its national brand image, which along with *shin* and *shinbaram*, are affects that might translate as "exhilaration, delight, excitement, hilarity, joviality, and enthusiasm."¹⁷ After 2002 and the fervor surrounding South Korea's success in the World Cup, it was used to describe the energy and enthusiasm of soccer fans, but here in the advertisement, it is associated specifically with travel.

The Korean National Tourism Organization started its explicit hallyu campaigns shortly after the World Cup, in its 2003 tourism campaign, going on to designate 2004 as the year of the Korean Wave, appointing stars as ambassadors,

and maximizing the use of celebrity images everywhere from newspapers to electronic billboards.¹⁸ Most significantly for the present study, it used drama and film footage to draw tourists, and encouraged the development of new tour programs that highlighted film locations. Extending from these strategies were concerts and fan meetings in Korea, and the organization of fan clubs into region-wide networks that could be utilized as an expansive marketing base. By 2005, tourism marketing campaigns focused on creating “a structure of consciousness and feeling through which South Korea could make itself known to the world.”¹⁹ The concept of “feeling Korea” encapsulated this effort, which attempted to mobilize the affective impact of the circulating cultural products by maximizing the ancillary nature of the hallyu market.²⁰ The association of feeling with affect induced by the postcinematic and touristic becomes directly palpable in the 2006 tourism ads for Southeast Asia, Japan, China, Hong Kong, and China, launched with the slogan “Korea, something more!”²¹ In the advertisements, a female tourist arrives at Inch'on Airport, where she is met by the popular actor Ryu Si-won. She attends a Rain concert, where she is superimposed standing alongside Bae Yong-joon in a scene from the film *April Snow*, in which he plays a light technician for K-pop concerts. The female tourist takes in the serene urban nocturnal landscape of Seoul side-by-side with Jun Ji-hyun in a scene from the film *Windstruck* (*Nae yōjach'in'gurūl sogahamnida*, 2004), and the wintry nights of rural Korea trailing behind Jeon Do-yeon and Hwang Jung-min in a scene from the film *You are My Sunshine* (*Nōnūn nae unmyōng*, 2005). She walks the fields talking to Son Ye-jin in a scene from the television drama *Summer Scent* (*Yōrūm hyanggi*, 2003), and is a guest at a palatial ceremony in the drama *A Jewel in the Palace* (*Taejanggūm*, 2003), as well as in a home in the drama *Wedding* (*We-ding*, 2005).

The prominence of tourism in these marketing efforts is symptomatic of a national desire to represent, in aesthetic terms, the mobility of hallyu commodities—an example of what Arjun Appadurai describes as the social life of commodities. The problem with the current critical discourse about hallyu is that it ignores what Appadurai describes as “the constant tension between the existing frameworks (of price, bargaining, and so forth) and the tendency of commodities to breach these frameworks” due to the fact that “not all parties share the same interests in any specific regime of value, nor are the interests of any two parties in a given exchange identical.”²² By characterizing and populating the networks of hallyu’s transnational circulation with the actual movements of actual bodies, the films examined in this study make visible

these frameworks as well as the points of their breaching. Such dynamics are especially important considering the various postcolonial or otherwise asymmetrical power relations of the region in which these products circulate. The social life of hallyu is inseparable from this regional history.

In this context, I attempt to historicize the phenomenon by focusing on the production and circulation of film from 1998 to 2006, a period toward the end of which the Korean film industry began to suffer from a downturn and tourist self-consciousness in its cinema begins to decline. Sketching the intersection during this busy period—defined by the surge of hallyu, a renaissance in Korean film, and Korea's interregional reconciliation efforts—I examine the way film both represents and negotiates this changing terrain along with what is at stake as hallyu rapidly morphs from a descriptor of a specific phenomenon into a generic term that applies to all things Korean. The films examined herein are situated in and speak to the development of the hallyu moment, as marketing begins to subsume history. Hallyu cinema both responds to and takes advantage of the hallyu phenomenon, but in so doing, it also tries to think about what hallyu is and its relationship to the new forms of inter-Asian communality emerging in the period.

Korean film has not been the progenitor of any of the subwaves within hallyu, and it is fair to say that, as a whole, Korean film's ascent is not directly indebted to hallyu. To indiscriminately incorporate directors associated with the socially conscious films of the Korean New Wave cinema emerging in the late 1980s, or the noncommercial auteurs connected to international film-festival circuits, and even some of the "high-quality" directors of the "Korean film renaissance" or "New Korean cinema" garnering renown abroad as commercially appealing mainstream filmmakers within hallyu is to suspend critical evaluation of the relevance of the term *hallyu* and to buy into the convenience with which it has become a catch-all phrase.²³ It is only later, and gradually, that these various starts from different corners of the cultural industry converge and begin to cohere under the category of hallyu. Paradoxically, to eschew or minimize mention of hallyu at all in analyses of contemporary Korean cinema now is also to risk treating the cinema industry as if it were insulated from the influences of hallyu that now reach beyond the cultural spheres into the social and historical.

I thus regard film as a microcosm of larger phenomena and argue that hallyu's aesthetics self-referentially reflects its own transnational distribution, constructing out of this reflection an affective sensorium that validates emerging transnational economic relations through the positive emotions

one associates with travel. That tourism induced by television dramas, films, and music has become a defining hallyu characteristic is not coincidental or merely the outcome of successful marketing of destination images; rather, it is the manifestation of a tourist imaginary produced in the interregional discourses serving postcolonial reconciliation in East Asia following the 1997 financial crisis, specifically the films and dramas coproduced by different countries as part of larger efforts to promote friendship, intimacy, and increasing mobility across borders. In this context, the desire to travel becomes inseparable from an economic desire for increased transnational exchange of goods and services. In turn, the hallyu aesthetics of travel affect makes transnational consumption appealing, helping to fuel the demand for hallyu cultural products.

Film tourism is a particularly useful way to examine the transnational flows implicit in hallyu not only because it helps us think about the movement of bodies and cultural products across national boundaries, but also because it foregrounds the multivalent practices of consumption on which the hallyu phenomenon depends; such practices involve economic transactions, everything from the purchase of movie tickets, DVDs, airfare to film sites, and entry passes to film theme parks, as well as affective transactions, in which consumers cathect to once-foreign emotional states. In this context, film tourism becomes a way of figuring both the material transnational flows of hallyu as well as the equally significant immaterial flows that reconnect, realign, and reimagine the networks that connect Korea to the world in late capitalism. In addition, the films examined herein seem to anticipate the travel of their audiences, who would subsequently become tourists, often presented as if to a non-Korean audience. Although it is too much to say that hallyu is fundamentally about tourism, it is not too much to say that understanding the tourist imagination is crucial to understanding hallyu.

The emergence of hallyu is not the story of the emergence of a coherent style or content that subsequently finds audiences abroad, but rather the story of a developing style and content that emerges *because* of its surprising transnational appeal.²⁴ Its distribution and circulation outside of Korea is fundamental, not ancillary, to its very being, and we might say that it self-reflectively speaks to its own “commodity situation,” which Arjun Appadurai has described as “the situation in which its exchangeability (past, present, or future) for some other thing is its socially relevant feature.”²⁵ We know in retrospect that hallyu was a highly unplanned, consumer-centric phenomenon driven by the mass production of *commercial* culture.²⁶ Although they are often cited as