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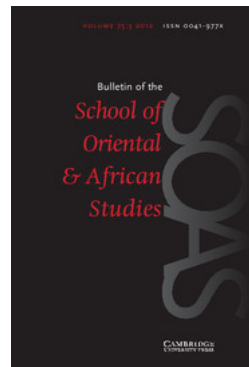
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SUN JUNG:

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This volume will likely appeal to two distinct readerships: the cultural studies fraternity, intrigued by the main title, and those interested in Korean popular culture and the rise of *hallyu*, the Korea Wave. The former will revel in the theoretical concentration, which is at its most dense in the opening chapter, while the latter will zoom in on the discussion of specific cultural productions. Within the latter, Yonsama stands for Bae Yong-Joon and the drama “Winter Sonata”, Rain (*Pi*, the stage name of Jung Ji-Hoon) for pop music, and Park Chan-Wook’s *Oldboy* (2003) for film. *Oldboy* won the Grand Prix at the Cannes International Film Festival in 2004, and was praised by the jury president, Quentin Tarantino. The concepts of masculinity shift from “soft” in the case of Bae Yong-Joon to “global” with Rain and “postmodern” in “Oldboy”, while a second thematic thread is superimposed to consider concepts of “glocalization”, regionalization and globalization, within which Bae’s Japanese fans broaden to become Rain’s Asian and the Euro-American fans of *Oldboy*.

Chapter 1 opens with a summary of the situation, detailing how *hallyu* began with the “*han/hal-*” Chinese character for “wave” and became the “*han/hal-*” for Korea, and with the TV drama “*Sarangi muöttille/What is Love*”, screened on Chinese Central Television in June 1997. *Hallyu* grew with films – *Shiri* (1999), *My Sassy Girl* (2001) and *My Wife is a Gangster* (2001) and with singers such as BoA (who, although mentioned before “Winter Sonata”, arrived on the scene much later, after the unmentioned CLON and H.O.T. had risen to popularity in Taiwan and China). Jung moves away from Homi Bhabha’s concept of hybridity towards Koichi Iwabuchi’s notion of the “culturally odorless” non-nationality of Japanese popular culture, a notion Jung renders in Korean as “*mugukjeok*”. She usefully distinguishes *mugukjeok* from Hollywood and American shallow internationalized culture, as a “transcultural hybridity . . . which is not only influenced by odorless global elements, but also by traditional (national) elements” (p. 3). By doing so, she emphasizes that Korean cultural production is similar but different, thereby silencing critics who argue Korean pop is a mimetic copy of Euro-American pop, but also setting up a discussion of how non-Korean masculinities – metrosexual, cute, and cool – have been absorbed into a hybridized version. And, through this, she arrives at “transculturalism”, which Wolfgang Welsch a decade ago contrasted with the classical concept of single cultures and with other contemporary accounts of interculturality and multiculturalism.

The theory framed within Chapter 1, verging at times on a literature survey, moves through Appadurai, Meyrowitz, Alasuutari, Drottner, Livingstone, Chua Beng Huat and many more, touching on cultural studies, anthropology, reception studies and consumerism, before arriving on masculinity. Masculinity is cast within three stereotypical images of Korea taken from Moon Seung-Sook: as patriarchal and authoritarian, as the gentleman scholar, and as military and aggressive (p. 26). These three, Jung finds, coexist as heterogeneous and contradictory masculinities but also stand alone as manufactured images. Hence, in chapter 2, Bae Yong-Joon embodies soft masculinity, soft-spoken and polite, bespectacled, and wearing a scarf tied in myriad different ways. He creates a postcolonial image of nostalgia

and retrospection – a “kind of consumption of the simulacrum of Japan’s past” – which has great impact on Japanese women. His fans reject alternative images that are presented in, for example, a photo album where he is stripped to the waist, and in the Korean film take on *Les Liaisons Dangereuses, Untold Scandal*, where he is filmed naked in coitus. Here, soft masculinity is a “transcultural amalgamation” of South Korea’s gentleman scholar (influenced by Chinese Confucianism), of Japanese *bishōnen* (pretty boy) masculinity and of the global metrosexual.

The pop icon Rain, the focus of chapter 3, to Jung symbolizes a compressed version of the second thematic thread, interpreted within regional pop-consumerism and bought into by the Asian “new rich”. Rain presents a global masculinity through his muscle-clad tanned body, and on stage, stripped to the waist, is an embodiment of cool. Korea promotes his global ambition, making much of his Madison Square Gardens concert and his role in the Hollywood film *Speed Racer*. However, Jung notes his “world tours” are Asian-centred and, initially, he was part of a glocalization process, taking American cultural forms under the guidance of his local management company and repackaging them for South Korean audiences. Over time, he broke through to a regionalized identity after acting in a KBS TV drama in 2003, building his fan base with his third album, “*It’s Raining*”; here, Jung uses the words of Singaporean fans to interpret. With his fourth album, produced in 2006, he entered a globalized phase, securing his role as a generic pan-Asian male idol in the blockbuster *Speed Racer*, where he lacked nationality or ethnicity. In sum, then, Rain epitomizes the desire for Korean popular culture to be global, but within this he, as global metrosexual, meets the gentleman scholar while simultaneously as the cute boy-from-next-door, he revels in a cool macho side.

Jung turns, in chapter 4, to *Oldboy*, interpreting the hero, Dae-Soo, as savage but cool, lacking humanity as he seeks revenge. It is a film characteristic, she feels, of the ever-fluctuating postmodern era, harking back to a pre-modern time between barbarism and civilization. For what I consider to be an acted out version of a cartoon script, I find Jung heavy on the interpretation of symbolism. She moves from a critique of contemporary technology (omnipresent concealed cameras and microphones, mobile phones that force their keepers to act in pre-programmed ways, and gadget-filled penthouses) to a vision of neo-Orientalist reception, where Dae-Soo is fantasized by Euro-American audiences as a machinic Other who disgustingly eats a live octopus and flaunts with incest. I wonder; I note other comic book heroes such as Superman and Spiderman struggle with inner transgressive selves without inhabiting anything neo-Orientalist. Finally, a truncated chapter 5 begins by moving from the *mugukjeok* notion of non-nationality to a *chogukjeok* transnational interpretation of contemporary boy bands with “manufactured versatile masculinity” (p. 163). These work across national boundaries by mixing singers and languages, and they switch effortlessly from masculine to cross-dressing feminine, from pretty boy to sexual predator. After four pages, Jung’s theme switches abruptly, and a final four pages summarize the whole book, stitching and amalgamating a postlude to a conclusion.

Overall, Jung has provided a useful and convincing study, showing us just how far Korean popular culture has come. I am particularly aware of this since, just five years back, I edited a volume on Korean pop music that I must now admit seems outdated. Again, Jung’s theorizing on *Oldboy*, marrying a diverse array of Korean authors to a constellation of Western theorists, takes us in directions that others writing on Korean film have not yet gone. This is welcome. However, I sometimes wonder about romanization, where Jung’s preference for the South Korean government system leads to occasional puzzles such as the regularly repeated *beulleokbeoseuteo* – I challenge anybody other than a Korean to recognize that this should be pronounced

as (and means) “blockbuster”. I also wonder why the emotion or personal state of *han* is rendered as *haan*, and why Jung regularly refers to the “IMF Crisis” and “IMF economic catastrophe” rather than telling us she is describing the 1998 South Korean economic collapse. These, though, are minor points that should not be allowed to mar what otherwise is a very fascinating book.

Keith Howard

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Oxford–River Books English–Thai Dictionary.

1084 pp. Bangkok: Oxford University Press and River Books, 2010. (Second edition.) £45. ISBN 978 0 19 956291 6
doi:10.1017/S0041977X11000735

For much of the twentieth century the most authoritative English–Thai dictionary was the *New Model English–Thai Dictionary*, secretly compiled in Bangkok’s Bang Khwang prison in the 1930s by So Sethaputra, a long-term political prisoner who had gained a BSc in Geology from Manchester University in the preceding decade. So’s dictionary, which first appeared in 1938, was later successfully marketed in a number of different sizes and formats, from a two-volume “library edition” packed with illustrative sentences, to various pocket-sized editions. Although the dictionary has been updated since its first appearance, later editions preserved many quaint or dated examples of usage, some barely disguising the compiler’s contempt for the military government of the day.

In 1991 Narisa Chakrabongse, owner of Bangkok publishing company River Books, engaged the Translation Centre at the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University to produce an up-to-date, high-quality English–Thai dictionary that would reflect contemporary usage and serve the needs of Thai users of varying levels of proficiency. The project took more than twelve years to complete and resulted in a dictionary that provides accurate and idiomatic Thai equivalents of more than 110,000 words and phrases.

The layout of entries is generally clear, although of necessity the Thai font size is smaller than one would like. Each entry includes a pronunciation guide in IPA and Thai script followed by a Thai translation or explanation, and, in many cases, examples of usage. A distinctive feature of the dictionary is the use of boxed notes on a variety of topics which give related vocabulary and useful examples of the words in context. Among topics covered in this way are “age”, “clock”, “dates”, “illnesses”, “letter-writing”, “might”, “numbers”, “should” and “weight”.

Maintaining a consistent standard in a lengthy project involving a large number of participants is always a challenge. In places in this dictionary there are oversights that should have been picked up at the proofreading stage, if not earlier. The in-text “weight” box, for example, includes the English names and weight limits for international boxing divisions, but no Thai name or transcription; the foreign learner of Thai has to go to the main body of the dictionary to discover that words like “fly-weight”, “bantam weight” and so on, borrow the English word. A different problem occurs in the “numbers” box, where the Thai user will find that the English names