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Title: "Floodgates for Transnational Cultural Flows Are Open! Hollywood  
Accidentally Breeds Tiger in South Korea, 1985-2006"

This study examines the opening in the mid-1980s of the South Korean market to Hollywood films. Arguably, this is one of the key variables behind the current roaring success of the South Korean Cinema – known as "Hallyuwood" – and subsequent spread across East Asia of Han Ryu (or Hallyu): the so-called Korean wave. Archive documents from the US Department of State and Motion Picture Export Association of America (MPEA) are used to show how in the mid and late 1980s Hollywood interests pressured the South Korean government to liberalise the film market and to lift its ban on foreign films. A brood of American films immediately flooded the market. Without showing any prior awareness of the golden age of silent cinema in Korea (1926-34) and golden age of South Korean melodramas the 1960s, Hollywood ironically raised a tiger from its slumber. Despite fears of what was then (and still) considered by cultural diversity advocates as a US threat to national culture, the South Korean film industry began its rise to local and global fame. This presentation discusses this phenomenon in terms of narrative quality, domestic box office might and international co-production strategies, and shows how the contemporary South Korean Cinema is invigorating the swell and popular flow of the Korean wave – not just in East Asia, but also across the globe.

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Latest publication: "Systematization of Film Censorship in Colonial Korea:  
Profiteering From Hollywood's First Golden Age, 1926–1936" *Journal of Korean  
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