Asian Cultural Content in India

Research Cluster on Cultural and Creative Industries in Asia
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The Problem

• Mismatch between the white and gray/black market channels of distribution of content.

• The industry’s incapacity to recover value from the circulation of content--usually attributed to piracy but the issue might be more complex than the “leakage” of value.

• What do we make of the gap between white and black economies?
“Asian Content”: what to expect

- Negligible presence of non-local Asian content in the **white market**, circulation in the gray market (Examples: Indian cinema in Japan, Japanese animation/characters in India).
- Presence in segments marked by their **low economic worth** (Example: *The Host*).
- Is a cultural, economic and **political** resource.

- **Piracy**
  - plays a critical role in the distribution of content.
  - spawns **fan cultures** and **innovation** or **unofficial remakes** (Examples: Bangalore Anime Club, *Zinda*, unofficial remake of *Old Boy*).
Volumes and Prices in India

- Theatrical admission is under 1 US$, unit price of DVD can be as low as 1 US$.
- Hollywood films account for about 10% of the Indian box office.
- Ratio of Indian and Foreign films released: 1274: 118 (KPMG 2011).
- Number of film viewers: 2 billion; receipts 1.673 billion US$. **Revenue per viewer: 0.83 US$** (PwC 2011).
- **Game user demographics:** Male, school or college student, under 26 years of age, high income household. 80% live in 8 cities of India, 59% in top 4 metros. Has 18 months experience as gamer, plays mostly from home (rather than cyber café or gaming centre), spends less than 5 US$ per month on gaming (IMRB/IAMA, 2011).
- Low visibility of Japanese and Korean content in the white market. **2006-2010: No theatrical releases of Japanese movies.** Presence of Asian content on television largely due to its **low cost.**
Fans and Pirates
Bangalore Anime Club
Bangalore Anime Club
The pirate
The white market
Pokemon: One property, many formats
…and the Japanese “B circuit”
Fanzines but no new releases
Bollywood Dance…
and Introduction to Indian Cinema
“Korean Wave” in India: Past and Present
Korean Wave in Northeast India: Insurgency, ethnic mobilisation, perceived racial affinities

Nagaland: Audio-video store
(Photo: Neikolie Kuotsu)
Nagaland: Pirated DVDs of South Korean films and tele-dramas
(Photograph: Neikolie Kuotsu)
Fate of the Korean blockbuster *The Host* (Bong Joon-ho, 2006)
ITS STEVEN SPIELBERG’S JAWS VIA JURASSIC PARK

IN ENGLISH HINDI & TELUGU

INDO OVERSEAS FILMS PRESENTS

THE HOST
directed by BONG Joon-ho
The Project

- Cultural commodity: value & meaning; “externalities” and unintended economic and non-economic consequences;
- “Cultural economics” not limited to balance sheets of media corporations;
- Focuses on the convergences and divergences of white, gray and black economies—the pirate and fan create demand and expand markets; traces the links between these economies (anime pirates have day jobs in animation companies).