

**The State's Roles in the Development of Cultural  
Industries: Korean Cultural Industry Policies from  
1993 to 2021**

**by  
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Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in the  
School of Communication  
Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology

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SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
Summer 2021

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## **Abstract**

This research examines the Korean state's position in the development of its cultural industries. In contrast to doctrines of neoliberal globalization that demand that the state minimize its presence in industrial development and emphasize the market's management of cultural products, the state maintains its position in the cultural industries as their products are effective tools for the state to govern the population and exert influence overseas. Despite pressures from major market players, many states have reconfigured their roles and positions in cultural industries as major stakeholders.

Based on interviews with policymakers and cultural workers and analysis of policy documents, this study finds that the Korean state has been an important stakeholder in developing the cultural industries. In collaboration with the nation's leading conglomerates, it played significant roles in developing cultural businesses. Depending on each administration's political inclination and economic conditions, it has employed both neoliberal measures and state-interventionist methods to make cultural businesses competitive in the global market—from establishing a mega-size public organization that provided direct supports for every stage of cultural production to entrusting market players to manage the state's budget for supporting cultural businesses. This reflects the legacies of the Korean developmental state in which the state mobilizes and allocates resources to develop the economy.

The Korean state continues utilizing cultural products and their global popularity to accomplish its political and economic missions, from strengthening its soft power to increasing the number of exports. The state's emphasis on the utility of cultural products provoked criticism of the approach as hyper-instrumentalist from many cultural workers, who saw such policies as characteristic of short-termism practices and as 'window dressing' for political and bureaucratic clout. Such an instrumentalist approach saw the government suppress creators in industries if they criticized its political agenda.

The findings of this study also explore how the state continues its involvement in the cultural industries alongside the drivers of private capital and global market forces. By collaborating, managing, and even suppressing cultural production and goods, the state persists in its participation in the management of cultural industries.

**Keywords:** cultural industry policies; developmental state; Korean cultural industries; the Korean Wave; neoliberal globalization

## Dedication

*“What father among you would hand his son a snake when he asks for a fish? Or hand him a scorpion when he asks for an egg? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?”—Luke 11:11–13.*

To my Lord and my God,

To my family and friends, who laughed and cried with me during my graduate life, and

To Sanghyun Lee and Kyusup Chung, who would be proud of my achievement and whom I miss a lot.

## Acknowledgements

Upon finishing my graduate life in SFU, I would like to express my gratitude to those who have supported me during my academic journey. Firstly, thank you to my superb supervisors—Professor Dal Yong Jin, Professor Alison Beale, and Professor Zoë Druick, who have consistently supported me to further develop my research scope through their expert knowledge and encouraged me during my life at SFU. In particular, I am deeply indebted to Professor Dal Yong Jin for believing in me for the past seven years. Both his passion for research and his thoughtful guidance for my academic life made a huge impact on all my academic endeavours. I am also grateful to Professor Ahmed Al-Rawi and Professor Kyong Yoon’s kind and thorough feedback and suggestions for my research. Also, I would like to acknowledge Dr. Daniel Ahadi, who was there for my first day at SFU and acted as chair for my defence. Thank you also to Professor Andrew Feenberg for providing me a workspace at his lab and Professor Sun-ha Hong for advising my research career. Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Kee-Hyeung Lee, Professor Sang-Gil Lee, and Professor Tae-Jin Yoon, who guided me through my confusion to continue my research and study.

My thanks also go to many of my colleagues at SFU who have kindly entertained the annoyance, cynicism, jokes, sarcasm, and worries from their burnt-marshmallow colleague. Without the conversations and support from them, including Philippa Adams, Alysha Bains, Sylvia Blake, Gopa Caesar, Layla Cameron, Sibon Chen, Tvine Donabedian, Felix Lo, Hyejin Jo, Alicia Massie, Nawal Musleh-Motut, Jasmine Proctor, Anis Rahman, Aimee Rigor, and Yijia Zhang, I would have not been able to survive these past years in a new and unfamiliar place. I would like to extend my thanks to Courtney McLaren, a CMNS MA student, who helped me review and edit the language of this manuscript. Alongside my colleagues, I would like to thank Jason Congdon, Manjeet Gill, Samy Lee, Lucie Menkveld, Dimple Patel, and Amy Soo who have always kindly responded to all of my constant and sometimes repetitive questions. Also, I appreciate all the students who have had to deal with my nerdiness and weirdness during tutorials and lectures. Every conversation with students held ideas that secretly inspired my teaching and research.

My gratitude also goes to all the research participants who shared their experiences and gave feedback that went towards developing my dissertation. This

dissertation could not be made without your invaluable insights on understanding Korean cultural industries. Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my family and friends for their emotional support during the 1,692 days it has taken to get to this point. Words cannot describe the depth of my gratitude for your patience.

I am so lucky to have you in my life. This dissertation is for you. 감사합니다  
[Thank you in Korean].



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## List of Acronyms

ACFM	Asian Content and Film Market
ARFO	ASEAN-ROK Film Cooperation Organization
ARKO	Arts Council Korea
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BCWW	Broadcast Worldwide
CECI	Companies Engaged in Cultural Industries
CEIC	Creative Economy Innovation Center
CEL	Culture Creation and Convergence Belt
CIB	Culture Industry Bureau
CUSMA	Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement
EPB	Economic Planning Board
EU	European Union
FoF	Fund of Fund
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
IBK	Industrial Bank of Korea
ICT	Information and communication technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IP	Intellectual Property
IPTV	Internet Protocol Television
KAFA	Korean Academy of Film Arts
KBS	Korean Broadcasting System
KCA	Korea Communications Agency
KCC	Korea Communication Commission
KCTI	Korea Culture and Tourism Institute
KII	Korea Information Infrastructure
KOCCA	Korea Creative Content Agency
KOCIS	Korean Culture and Information Services
KOFIC	Korea Film Council
KOFICE	Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange

K-Pop	Korean pop music
KVIC	Korea Venture Investment Corporation
MCS	Ministry of Culture and Sport
MCST	Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism
MCT	Ministry of Culture and Tourism
MKE	Ministry of Knowledge and Economy
MOC	Ministry of Culture
MOEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MOFE	Ministry of Finance and Economy
MOFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MPAA	Motion Picture Association of America
MPEAA	Motion Picture Export Association of America
MSICT	Ministry of Science and ICT
MSIF	Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning
MSS	Ministry of Small Medium Enterprises and Startup
MST	Ministry of Science and Technology
NBN	National Broadband Network Plan
PCCE	Presidential Committee for Cultural Enrichment
ROK	Republic of Korea
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
SBS	Seoul Broadcasting System
SPC	Special Purpose Company
SVoD	Subscription Video-on-Demand
TBC	Tongyang Broadcasting Company
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
USTR	United States Trade Representative
WIPI	Wireless Internet Platform for Interoperability
WTO	World Trade Organization

# Chapter 1.

## Introduction

In October 2018, the South Korean (henceforth Korea) president Moon Jae-in participated in a four-day state visit to France. During his visit, the Office of the President and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted the 'Korea-France Friendship Concert: Echoes of Korean Music' at Théâtre le 13ème Art in Paris. While a few Korean and French musicians performed, including traditional music (*Gukak* in Korean) performers from the National *Gukak* Center, the most anticipated performance of the night was the closing finale by BTS (*Bangtan Sonyeondan*, Bangtan Boys in English), a seven-member Korean idol group whose songs have swept major music charts in many countries. Their performance of their two then most recent hit songs, 'DNA' and 'Idol', attracted political figures from both Korea and France as well as fans from across France and Europe, who were eager to see these Korean pop music (K-pop) idols perform in person. While BTS' participation was a highly publicized event, it was later revealed that they were not paid by the Korean state at all.

The Moon administration's utilization of cultural products as a means of promoting its political events can be found elsewhere. In 2018, the administration planned to hold a concert in Pyongyang as part of promoting a détente atmosphere among the inter-Korean relationship with North Korea, and asked Red Velvet, a five-member K-pop girl group, to join the concert. Despite Red Velvet's label SM Entertainment's initial decline due to pre-existing schedules, four of the five members ended up participating in the concert after the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (MCST)'s repeated their request for the group to perform (Lee SR, 2018, March 30). In relation to the Moon administration's bridging attempts with North Korea through popular culture, a member of the National Assembly affiliated with the ruling party insisted that BTS would also perform in Pyongyang in 2019 to celebrate the first anniversary of Moon and Kim Jong-un's summit without prior consultation with Big Hit, BTS' label company. While his suggestions were interpreted as a politician viewing celebrities as tools to satisfy the administration's political needs and faced harsh criticism, such state-led

cultural events implied the state's viewpoint of culture as an instrument of accomplishing the state's goals (Choi, 2019, January 10; Yang, 2019, January 14).<sup>1</sup>

Mobilizing Korean pop artists in state-led events is not a recent phenomenon. The nation's former presidents, such as Park Geun-hye and Lee Myung-bak, often visited foreign countries with singers, actors, and actresses as part of branding the nation, and celebrities were frequently asked to participate in government events. For instance, Song Joong-ki, a Korean actor, attended the 2016 opening ceremony of K-Style Hub alongside Park Geun-hye to endorse the exhibition and experience center for tourists designed to promote Korean culture, (Kim, 2016, April 11). Kim Jae-joong, a Korean singer who was a member of boy group TVXQ, attended Lee Myung-bak's state visit to Turkey in 2012. With Lee, Kim attended several cultural events including meeting with Turkish students learning Korean at Ankara University. During Lee's visit, Kim also hosted a fan meeting that was sold out within 30 minutes (Park, 2012, February 7). Most of all, for the past two decades, leaders, politicians, and government officials have enjoyed using the term 'Korean Wave' in public—which refers to “the sudden rise of Korean popular culture and its dissemination in Asian countries (Jin, 2016, 4)” as an outcome of the development of cultural industries and the growth of exportation of cultural products—to inspire self-confidence among the population, highlight the cultural sector's contributions to the national economy, of which exports are predominantly led by manufacturing businesses, and to promote the nation to the world (Kang, 2014).

The Korean state's mobilization of its cultural industries as means of accomplishing its political and economic goals shows how the state revisits its positions in the cultural realm and continues to instrumentalize its culture which had become increasingly globalized (Kim Y., 2013; Jin, 2016). Studying the complex relationship between the Korean state and cultural industries is important because it sheds lights on the dynamics and efficacies of the state's cultural industry policies in the era of globalization, where elements of the cultural industries are subject to market logics that often seem contradictory to the state's interventions and argue for its retreat from culture. By analyzing the roles of the Korean state in its cultural industries which have

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<sup>1</sup> In effect, Tak pointed out, artists who took part in official events could not receive effective timeline guarantees from the government, and as a result needed to clear their schedules for days if they were asked to partake in presidential international trips (Roh Moo-hyun Jaedan, 2019, June 24).



become more transnational and Westernized, the study investigates the power dynamics of the state and globalization in its cultural industries.

## 1.1. The Korean Wave: Globalization of Korean Cultural Industries

In general, the spread of the nation's cultural products overseas began in the mid-1990s.<sup>2</sup> Many television series, films, and pop idols had gained significant popularity in many countries in East Asia—including China, Japan, Taiwan, and Vietnam—and become a major cultural genre in several local markets. After establishing diplomatic ties with China in 1992, a few Korean television series such as *Jealousy* (1992) and *What Is Love All About?* (1991) were exported to the Chinese market in 1993 and 1995, respectively. In particular, *What Is Love All About?* was aired by CCTV (China Central Television) in 1997 and received the second highest rating in the nation's prime-time television history (Shim, 2008; McPhall, 2014).<sup>3</sup> In addition, Chinese radio stations began introducing Korean popular music on a regular basis. Simultaneously, a number of Chinese and Taiwanese media began to use the term 'Korean Wave' repeatedly to explain the growing popularity of Korean popular music in the region. In the early 2000s, several K-pop idols such as H.O.T, S.E.S, and Fin.K.L began to have concerts in China and Southeast Asia. In Japan, Korean female singer BoA topped the Japanese Oricon Chart, the most prominent music chart in Japan, for the first time as a foreign singer. Furthermore, *Winter Sonata* (2002), a Korean television melodrama series, recorded the highest viewing rate in the history of NHK's non-historic drama programming and caused

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<sup>2</sup> Before the mid-1990s, there were few Korean films and popular music that gained popularity overseas. For instance, NHK (Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai), the Japanese public broadcaster, invited Cho Yong-pil, Kye Eun-sook, Kim Yonja, and Patty Kim to its annual *Kōhaku Uta Gassen* (紅白歌合戦), the broadcaster's annual New Year's Eve program in 1989 (Kim SM., 2018). In addition to this, several Korean films received awards in major international film festivals. However, this was not common, and it would be difficult to consider these examples as indicative of a cultural phenomenon.

<sup>3</sup> In relation to this, Yoon (2016) explains that the Korean Overseas Information Service (KOIS), an affiliation of the Ministry of Culture with a goal to promote Korean culture overseas, played a decisive role in exporting *What Is Love All About?* to China. In 1992, KOIS secretly delivered a Betamax video of the series in a diplomatic pouch to a Korean Consulate in Hong Kong to lobby Asia Television (ATV), a Hong Kong television broadcaster, to air the series. ATV broadcasted the series twice a week and the show became a remarkable hit, which resulted in CCTV's consideration toward importing the series.

a sensation in Japanese society (Mōri, 2008; Yoon, 2016).<sup>4</sup> The popularity of *Winter Sonata* triggered Japanese media to import Korean television series for years after the show's success. Following this, *Jewel in the Palace* (2003–2004), a historical television drama, was exported to more than 90 countries and recorded the highest viewing rate in many countries including China, Iran, Romania, and Sri Lanka (Cho, October 13, 2013).

Meanwhile, as Korean popular music established a solid foothold in many Asian countries as a major pop culture genre in the early-2000s, and producers sought to pioneer more overseas markets in the late-2000s and 2010s. In the late-2000s and early-2010s, many K-Pop idols such as 2NE1, Big Bang, CNBLUE, Girl's Generation, SHINee, Super Junior, and TVXQ and released their albums in Japan, dominating local music charts, and went on concert tours in East Asian cities. In 2009, the song *Nobody* performed by K-Pop girl group Wonder Girls topped charts in many East Asian markets, while the music video recorded over 100 million views on YouTube and was ranked at 76th in the Billboard Hot 100 chart—marking the first time a K-Pop idol and Korean singer entered the Billboard chart. Finally, Korean singer PSY's *Gangnam Style* went viral in 2012 and topped the music charts of many countries including France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. Thanks to social media, which functioned as the main platform for delivering performances of K-Pop idols worldwide, K-Pop became more popular in other regions including Europe and Latin America, laying the groundwork for the current success of several K-Pop idols such as BTS, Monsta X, and Blackpink in the late-2010s to present.

Likewise, Korean television consolidated its presence in the region. For instance, *Temptation of Wife* (2008), a highly watched Korean soap opera with an average viewer

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<sup>4</sup> NHK first broadcasted this Korean melodrama through their satellite channel called NHK BS. While the viewership rate was 1.1% on average, its main characters, Bae Yong-joon and Choi Ji-woo, caused a sensation in Japan. When Bae visited Japan to promote the series in April 2003, more than 5,000 fans gathered at Tokyo International Airport to welcome him, ten times more than of fans of David Beckham during his visit to Japan. Following this event, NHK decided to re-broadcast this Korean melodrama through its main terrestrial channel at nighttime (11:30 pm), and this attracted more than 20% of the viewership. Given that audience ratings during primetime were 10% in average, *Winter Sonata*'s record was remarkable. As well, NHK sold more than 1.2 million copies of a novelized version of the drama and 330,000 sets of digital versatile discs (DVD) in the market (Mōri, 2008). Most of all, Japanese middle-age women were drawn to the male character's soft and romantic masculinity, which was a contrast to Japanese traditional strong masculinity, which was dubbed 'Yonsama (ヨン様) Syndrome' after Bae Yoon-Joon's nickname 'Yonsama' (Chae, 2014).

rating of about 26%, garnered great popularity in many East Asian countries. It received an average viewer rating of more than 80% in Mongolia, and it was remade in several countries including China and the Philippines. In addition to this, *Running Man* (2010-present), a television variety show, also became popular in China and Hong Kong. The popularity of Korean television in the Asian market laid a foundation for producers to expand into markets outside of East Asia. In 2017, US broadcaster ABC adapted *The Good Doctor* (2013), a Korean medical drama television series. In that same year, it also broadcast *Somewhere Between* (2017), which was a remake of *God's Gift: 14 Days* (2014), a Korean thriller drama television series.

Additionally, Korean film products also saw increasing popularity in overseas markets. For instance, the action film *Shiri* (1999) and the mystery thriller film *Joint Security Area* (2000) earned more than 15 million USD and 10 million USD in the Japanese box office in 2000 and 2001 respectively (Joo, 2011). The success of Korean films in the market paved the way for the increasing export of Korean cultural products to Japan (Jin, 2016). In addition to this, other films such as the comedy-action film *My Wife Is a Gangster* (2001) and the romantic comedy *My Sassy Girl* (2001) became popular in several Asian markets. Meanwhile, Im Kwon-taek's *Painted Fire* (2002) and Park Chan-wook's *Oldboy* (2003) won the Best Director Award and the Grand Prix at the 2003 and 2004 Cannes Festival respectively. *Oldboy* and several other Korean genre films won high praise from critics and achieved commercial success in some Western markets, including Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Besides, Hollywood studios acquired the remake rights to some Korean films such as *A Tale of Two Sisters* (2003), a horror-drama film based on a Korean traditional folktale (Jung, 2011).

The Korean film industry experienced a recession in the mid-2000s due to a series of state deregulations in the market—notably the reduction of the screen quota on domestic films in theatres from 146 days to 73 days per year due to the free trade agreement with the US. This caused an oversupply of Hollywood films in the market and the retreat of market share of domestic films. Meanwhile, an overflow of comedy and gangster movies from domestic producers incurred a growth slowdown of the film industry as well (Jin, 2019a). Despite ups and downs in the industry, Korean blockbuster films continued attracting foreign audiences in the 2010s. In particular, the drama film *Masquerade* (2012) and Korean action horror film *Train to Busan* (2016) both grossed more than 10 million USD from foreign box offices respectively. *Masquerade* earned

more than 3 million USD in Japan while *Train to Busan* had box office profits from Thailand (2.1 million USD), France (1.95 million USD), Brazil (1.45 million USD), and Mexico (1.16 million USD) (Boxofficemojo, n.d.a.; Boxofficemojo, n.d.b.). Finally, several Korean films such as Kim Ki-duk's *Pietà* (2012) and Bong Joon-ho's *Parasite* (2019) won high praise from critics and received grand prizes at the Venice Film Festival in 2013 (*Leone d'Oro, Pietà*), Cannes Film Festival (*Palme d'Or, 2019, Parasite*), and the Academy Awards (Academy Award for Best Picture, 2020, *Parasite*). In addition to its critical acclaim, *Parasite*'s commercial success saw earnings of approximately 185 million USD across overseas markets, a historical moment for the nation's film industry (Boxofficemojo, n.d.c.) Needless to say, the growing international profile of Korean films became, and has continued to be, one of the mainstays of the Korean Wave.

Regarding the distribution of Korean cultural products, it is worth noting that digital technologies—including the development of high-speed wireless Internet networks, smartphones, and other mobile devices—have been crucial to the Korean Wave. Most of all, they laid the groundwork for diversifying genres. For instance, audiences' habits of consuming cultural products through smartphones triggered the development of smartphone and web-based cultural genres such as web-dramas and webtoons—whose formats, including timeline and graphics, are customized to the screen size and use of smartphones (Kang, 2017).<sup>5</sup> In particular, the growth of Korean webtoons, which refer to serialized online cartoon strips which format and genre characteristics are strongly influenced by *Manhwa* (Korean comics and print cartoons), became another growth engine for the cultural industries, swiftly becoming the second-largest cultural export (Korea Creative Content Agency, 2020). In effect, Line Webtoon (currently WEBTOON), a webtoon publishing platform, expanded its market to Japan, Latin America, and the United States. Considering that many webtoons such as *Along with the Gods* (2010–2012) and *Inside Men* (2010) have been dramatized and cinematized as original content, the impacts of the webtoon business are far-reaching in cultural production.

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<sup>5</sup> Web-dramas are serialized dramas released on online platforms in which episodes are produced as 15–20-minute length episodes (Kang, 2017). Webtoon refers to a type of serialized digital comic strips that are produced and distributed through online platforms. Thanks to a high penetration rate of smart devices in the nation, they have become distinctive cultural genres.

Digital technologies and new platforms also provided new opportunities to producers of existing cultural genres such as films and television. The entry of Netflix into the production and distribution of Korean films and television series has become another force for widening the market base. For instance, *Kingdom* (2019), a Netflix original horror-thriller television series, received critical acclaim from audiences and critics and was chosen as one of the best TV shows of 2020 by the New York Times (Poniewozik, Hale & Lyons, December 1, 2020). Netflix also became beneficial for Korean broadcasters to distribute their television series globally and recoup production costs. In addition, the nation's Internet infrastructure contributed to online video games and mobile games becoming the largest export in the nation's cultural industries, accounting for nearly 70% (6.98 billion USD) of total cultural export (Korea Creative Content Agency, 2020). Other digital technologies such as visual effects and three-dimensional graphics contributed to the nation's animation industry, which had served as subcontractors of major animation studios in Hollywood, to develop its original animations such as Ocon's *Pororo the Little Penguin* (2003–2017) and Pinkfong's *Baby Shark* (2016-).

Furthermore, the advent of social media—a medium wherein 'ordinary' people could generate and share content with other users and facilitate social interaction unlike traditional media where only producers have the exclusive right to produce and distribute content (Murthy, 2012)—was pivotal to expand the Korean Wave (Jung, 2015; Jin, 2017). For instance, many K-Pop labels utilized social media platforms to promote their idols and communicate with their fans by releasing new music videos of K-Pop idols on YouTube, uploading daily life of celebrities on their Instagram, V Live, and Twitter accounts, and hosting live chats with fans. Such viral marketing strategies were key success factors in making the industry popular worldwide. In relation to this, the role of social media is important to fandom as they not only provide access to K-Pop content but also formulate fan practices that are vital to consuming and disseminating Korean pop music (McLaren & Jin, 2020). Alongside K-Pop, fan activities on social media become more important in consuming Korean films, television programs, and video games—all of which are major cultural exports (Jin, 2016). In this regard, much of the current flow of the Korean Wave could be understood as a digital and social media phenomenon (Yoon, 2020).

In this regard, the consequences of the Internet and digital technologies brought to Korean cultural industries are significant. The rise of digital technologies and platforms changed both the cultural forms of exports and the major regions where Korean cultural products were being consumed (Jin, 2016). New cultural forms such as online and mobile games and animation became the main exports of industries.<sup>6</sup> The Internet and digital platforms provided more opportunities for domestic producers to promote their content worldwide, which contributed to expanding the market from East Asia into Europe and the Americas (Jin, 2016). Indeed, much of BTS' worldwide success is owed more than in part to promotional strategies through different social media, including YouTube, and Twitter which contributed to listeners' access and interest in countries around the world. Not surprisingly, such changes in the cultural industries also reshaped the nature of the Korean Wave. As more Korean cultural products caused a sensation through digital platforms, the Korean Wave became a major non-Western cultural force in the global cultural industries.

As the Korean Wave has become a global cultural phenomenon, Korean cultural products began to develop more transnational characteristics to attract global audiences (Kim Y., 2013; Jin, 2016). For instance, Korean television series often portrayed urban and consumerist lifestyles in metropolitan cities as a way of appealing to Asian audiences while characters and storylines continued to adopt traditional cultural values such as family values (Lin & Tong, 2008). Meanwhile, the Korean music industry increasingly blended elements of Western pop genres into its music, resulting in industry characteristics including a mix of English and Korean in its lyrics, participations of foreign composers in producing K-pop music, and K-pop musicians' collaboration with foreign artists (Ryoo & Jin, 2018).

In relation to this, a recent trend has seen increasing collaboration between foreign producers and distributors in the creation and dissemination of cultural products, which has contributed to increasing the transnational characteristics of these products (Kim J. O., 2018a). Indeed, major K-Pop labels regularly partner with foreign composers

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<sup>6</sup> During the last five years (2013–2017), games (both online and mobile) made up more than 50 percent of export revenues of the nation's cultural industries (55 percent in 2013, 56 percent in 2014 and 2015, 54 percent in 2016, and 67 percent in 2017), followed by character businesses (7.5 percent in 2017). In contrast, films only consisted 0.5 percent of total exports in the same year (Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism, 2019a).

and choreographers to co-produce albums for their idols while also continuing recruiting foreign trainees. Additionally, Netflix's presence in television production becomes another crucial example with regards to funding and distributing Korean content (Kim, 2021). That said, as more foreign cultural creators, distributors, investors, and audiences become involved in the production of Korean cultural products, the globalization of Korean cultural products furthers various characteristics of both inbound and outbound globalization.<sup>7</sup>

Along with other factors—such as the state's direct and indirect interventions in cultural industries to promote Korean popular culture, the entire production chain and outcomes of the Korean cultural industries has become global and transnational, with neoliberal logics that argue for an interpretation of culture through its market values. However, such changes towards globalization raise questions surrounding the reinterpretation of culture in policy contexts.

## **1.2. Understanding the Meaning of Culture in Policy Contexts**

In policy contexts, culture has been understood as “the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features that characterize a society or a social group (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 1982, 41)”. This definition is built on two pillars—based on an aesthetic and an anthropological perspective (Miller & Yúdice, 2002). On one hand, culture is understood as outputs of artistic creativity in which evaluations are conducted with tastes of different social groups. On the other hand, anthropological perspectives see culture as “expressions of shared values and experiences (Throsby, 2010, 2)” which sets parameters for “distinct systems or structures of beliefs, practices, signification, and meaning that have an autonomous logic or coherence of their own (Garner, 2016, 53)”. In relation to this, culture and its elements, such as customs, history, language, and

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<sup>7</sup> In this context, inbound globalization is generally understood as globalization triggered by an influx of external stakeholders and pressures that results in an opening of the domestic market. Conversely, outbound globalization means an expansion of domestic stakeholders to foreign markets (Kim S., 2013).

religion, have been used as indicators of lifestyles and rituals of people that distinguish themselves from others (Garner, 2016).

Throughout history, culture has been indispensable for the state to create a collective psyche of a population that distinguishes the population from others and inspires allegiance to the state. Then, it is considered a useful tool to govern state members through providing a 'proper' way of life and historical perspective, lifestyle, ethics, etc. (Miller & Yúdice, 2002). Given that culture is understood as creating the symbolism of political relationships that exist in a society in policy contexts, many states consider culture as a constitutional obligation to protect and manage as an element of citizenship, which provides legitimation for state intervention in this domain (Yúdice, 2003; Paquette, 2019).

In relation to culture, the state designs and implements various policies, which refer to "all processes, formal and informal, where actors with different degrees of power and autonomy (Raboy & Padovani, 2010, 160)", to (re)establish the relationship between the state and cultural production through creating certain popular culture, enhancing their international prestige, and protecting domestic cultural goods and services from foreign influences, etc. (Lebovics, 2011). To make culture sustainable, states mobilize cultural institutions and heritage to work on reproducing and propagating collective identities and uniting the population, as well as implementing various types of assistance, financial support, labour and trade policies, and regulations to promote the development of domestic cultural goods (Throsby, 2010; Paquette, 2019).

Much of cultural production is commercialized and marketized as capital becomes the main patron of cultural works, replacing the state's position. However, culture becomes more important for policymakers as it is deeply involved in "everything in our social life—from economic value and state power to social and political practices and the very structure of the psyche itself—can be said to have become 'cultural' (Jameson, 1991, 48)". In this regard, the value-judgement process of cultural works has been outweighed by their external values, mostly economic profitability, rather than their artistic and aesthetic values (Yúdice, 2003; Banks, 2017; Fung, 2018). Granted, such a tendency is an outcome of neoliberalization that is heavily influenced by globalization driven by transnational capital.



The state's approach to culture with an instrumentalist viewpoint becomes more intensive in relation to neoliberal reforms that require the state to withdraw from managing society. As the state is forced to withdraw itself from various social projects, cultural resources are understood as substitutes to solve different problems in the public sector alongside market logics (Yúdice, 2003). In addition to this, recent emphases on the economic potentials of culture and artistic creativity in the market encourage the state to further utilize culture against its artistic and aesthetic origins, despite the criticism that the economic value of culture in the market has not been adequately calculated to legitimize the state's promotion of marketizing culture (Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005; Belfiore, 2009). In this regard, cultural policies become increasingly underpinned by culture's extrinsic values such as its contribution to the economy and other political and social efficacies rather than its intrinsic values of promoting artistic creativity (Raboy & Padovani, 2010; Throsby, 2010). Despite ongoing marketization and globalization of culture, the state's position should not be underestimated, as the aesthetic quality of cultural works and their political and social values have been determined by state apparatuses that have explicit and implicit mandates to establish cultural norms. Through various policy methods such as financing, labour regulation, legal and institutional frameworks, and trade barriers, the state continues to intervene in its cultural industries to instrumentalize them for the sake of its political-economic missions in the era of neoliberal globalization.

### **1.3. Key Theoretical Concepts: Neoliberal Globalization, the State, and Cultural Industries**

For decades, globalization and neoliberalism have been long-time objects of debate as they influence numerous groups worldwide. In general, neoliberalism refers to a set of political-economic, social, and cultural forces and ideas which puts competition of the market system as the main impetus of social life (Wilson, 2018). In a neoliberal world, the state relinquishes public infrastructures since they adhered to bureaucratic ideas and increased dependency on its institutions, which would result in impeding individual liberties that should be driven by free markets. As long as the promotion of an individual's property rights became a driving force of neoliberalism, the capitalist market system would mean more than a mere arena where goods are exchanged, and their values are determined. Instead, it would become the basis for every aspect of society to

promote individualism driven by market freedoms. Following this argument, the state moved to promote marketizing public resources, deregulating industries and managed social welfare with economic logics. This fostered the financialization of economy that would let the financial system be run by private capital which would control the economic system (Harvey, 2016).

As neoliberalism and its tenets became hegemonic, all elements in society, including culture, were compelled to calculate the gains and losses of market values and to seize a competitive edge over others so that they survive in the endless competition (Neyland, Ehrenstein & Milyaeva, 2019). Given that culture meant “a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development” and “the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity (Williams, 1976, 80)”, the impacts of neoliberal discourse on the cultural domain entail significant changes to both culture itself as well as state authorities that sponsored culture as major patrons. For culture, where intrinsic values were determined by their artistic creativity and symbolic values that would represent distinctive social characteristics, emphasizing its monetary value with the market mechanisms would devalue artistic and social values—which differentiated the value chain of cultural industries from other businesses and legitimized the state’s interventions (Yúdice, 2003; Mansell & Raboy, 2011).

Since ideas of neoliberalism penetrated policy contexts and became embedded in policy planning and implementation, policymakers of cultural policies had to prove how the state’s supports for artists and entrepreneurs would benefit the market. As a response, instead of providing “institutional supports that channel both aesthetic creativity and collective ways of life—a bridge between two registers (Miller & Yúdice, 2002, 1)”, they argued in favour of culture’s efficacy in various socioeconomic projects such as urban regeneration, literacy campaigns, and different social inclusion programs which the state had previously managed with its public funds (Aherene, 2009; Kong, 2014). Most of all, the state publicly expressed a new perspective where elements of culture would be major resources for generating new economic systems which would represent a new phase of capitalist development, along with buying and selling cultural experiences (Flew, 2012). Then, cultural policies had to prioritize the economic potentials of recipients with market dynamics, which resulted in policies that reflected interests from private stakeholders rather than drawing from the symbolic values of art and culture itself. In this regard, traditional roles of the state as a patron of culture

seemed to be weakened along with its retreat from the public sector, and its roles were replaced by industrial and commercial logics of the market. The conjuncture with neoliberalism and its related policies and practices brought along further instrumentalization of culture (Yúdice, 2003; Banks, 2017).

Meanwhile, globalization, which refers to “the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness, in all aspects of contemporary social life, from the cultural to the criminal, the financial, to the spiritual (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt & Perraton, 1999, 2)”, also challenged the state’s sovereignty and power in society. Thanks to the development of digital communication technologies and a growing interpenetration of capital, globalization disregards borders between nations and replaces their distinctive identities with transnational and cosmopolitan consciousness and dialogues (Kellner, 2002; Pieterse, 2015). Along with the rise of a single market economy and a single production chain of goods and services, globalization is often understood as an irresistible and irreversible phenomenon and restructuring of global order (Negri & Hardt, 2000).

Driven by the increase of interconnectedness in economy, trade, and migration worldwide, advocates of globalization highlight the importance of multinational corporations, international organizations, and transnational cultural groups that take on key roles in governing both the economy and society and serve as main players and global forces (Griva & Chrysochoou, 2015). Indeed, the impacts of globalization on individual nation-states have been unprecedented in many ways. Driven by the success of modernized countries equipped with advanced culture, political-economic and social systems, and technologies, globalization is understood by theorists and activists as an opportunity to modernize less-developed countries in the form of imitating the West through developing economies and enhancing human capital through education (Martinelli, 2005; Holton, 2016; Jin, 2020a). Furthermore, it becomes evident that multinational corporations and financial capital in industries and markets have become more important in many national economies. Based on the notion that the economy acts as “the prime mover of social and cultural change (Ampuja, 2004, 68)”, the presence of such social institutions signifies both the integration of the global economic system and the concentration of economic and cultural power in the hands of US-based conglomerates. This raises concern surrounding the intensification of existing structural asymmetries between advanced countries and less-developed countries, and the

consolidation of the vested interests of a few wealthy countries and their capital (Held & McGrew, 2007; Piketty, 2014).

As globalization and its building blocks, including transnational corporations and international organizations, became more prominent in the market and politics, many have argued that it would challenge the fundamentals of nation-states and erode their power. In detail, the growing dominance of capital-intensive industries in the global economy, and many private enterprises in finance, industry and trade began to transform the economic domain as transborder space. In this space, the rule of property rights would outweigh national sovereignty and undermine the distinction of foreign and domestic (Negri & Hardt, 2000; Jessop, 2016; Slobodian, 2018). Furthermore, cutting-edge technologies, many of which belonging to transnational capital directly or indirectly, also contributed to reforming the fundamentals of national economies as well as its capital accumulation system from territory-based to market-based (Garner, 2016). To increase control over the society and the nature of economy, transnational capital and other non-state players sought to neutralize statehood (Ohmae, 1995; Strange, 1996). Meanwhile, as the financial and market systems became more integrated, supranational, regional, and local actors become involved in the decision-making of policies along with national governments (Chakravartty & Sarikakis, 2006). For advocates of globalization, the pre-existing state system was insufficient and inadequate to new tasks that it was called upon to perform (Giddens, 2002).

Combined with arguments of neoliberalism, transnational capital—including multinational corporations, banks, and other private equity firms many of which are US-based—has attempted to penetrate domestic cultural domains and weaken the power of various states. For decades, both US cultural businesses and their government consistently attempted to override the cultural sovereignty of other states. Unlike the state's emphasis on the unique characteristics of cultural forms—which serve to improve democratic accountability, promote distinctive national identities, and develop various types of individual and social creativity, etc. as public goods—global media conglomeration pushed deregulation and privatization of cultural goods and services toward the market by proclaiming them as general goods (Chakravartty & Sarikakis, 2006; Flew, 2012). Combined with the growth of private cultural businesses in domestic markets, including broadcasting and telecommunication industries, the following

marketization of culture also challenged the state's position in cultural industries (Flew, 2012).

As globalization and neoliberalism push individual states to withdraw and replace their presence with the overwhelming logics of a single and free market system, many believed that an increase in international migration and global flows of capital, media and technologies would reshape culture as more transnational (Appadurai, 1990). Arguing that both technologies and networks are open-ended and multi-edged structures without fixed boundaries, they proclaimed that “the state becomes just a node (however important) of a particular network (Castells, 2013, 19)” along with other players that could constitute a new environment of multilayered globalization that applied to the cultural domain. Combined with the mounting pressure from the US's international trade regimes to recognize cultural products as general goods and thereby opening domestic markets, as well as the continuing dominance of US media conglomerates in the global cultural market, the changing nature of culture itself towards borderless and transnational characteristics seemed to be another challenge for state power in the cultural domain (Murdock & Choi, 2018).

Despite these growing influences, however, it is premature to conclude that the state's power in the cultural domain is in decline and that statehood is overpowered by transnational corporations backed by free-market mechanisms and their strong supporters—notably the US government. Most of all, much of the nature of neoliberalism is an outcome implemented by the state's constant efforts of privatizing and creating market societies (Jones, 2012; Wilson, 2018). Indeed, the market system, including free-market logics, is not *a priori*, and characteristics of both the capitalist system and the market are shaped not only by their inherent capitalist logics but also their relationship to state power (Polanyi, 2001[1944]). To become a society in which neoliberal doctrines rule the economy, adherents argue the government should not only deregulate or privatize public resources but also impose stricter regulations to control the population and rescue financial capital during crises as a last resort. Indeed, even in the 1990s and the 2000s when neoliberal practices and arguments were considered to be at their peak in the global arena, neoliberalism was far from having such a worldwide impact and much of its implementation depended on an individual state's active involvement (López-Alves & Johnson, 2019).

Such a paradox shows that doctrines of neoliberalism, which pressure the state to relinquish control and management of the exchange and allocation of goods and services to free market mechanisms, requires the state to perpetually engage in both making the market 'free' and implementing the 'free-market' economy (Jessop, 2016). In other words, fundamentals of this political and economic hegemony are based on a dialectical relationship—between political activities of state apparatuses as territorial power and capitalistic logics empowered by the activities of companies and their process of capital accumulation—that benefits both (Harvey, 2005). The relationship between transnational capital and states is more symbiotic than uneven or unequal (Bulut, 2016). Indeed, the state only recognizes the dominance of capitalists and is willing to yield its sovereignty to capital in the economic system because their extensive and extractive capacities of utilizing resources, combined with their vast infrastructural power, benefits the state in the control of the lives of all subjects effectively. In other words, the state adopts and engineers a neoliberal model as a mechanism of its economic growth and social reforms as the model corresponds to what the state wants (Wood, 2002; Ip, 2018).

Moreover, globalization has been contested in recent years as its credos and practices driven by market and economic integration are challenged by left-wing and right-wing sentiments. Combined with widespread public discontent with economic globalization and skepticism surrounding the increased movement of minorities—notably immigrants, ethnic, racial, and religious minorities, women, and gender minorities—anti-globalization arguments and prioritization of national interests have reshaped mainstream politics in many countries including Brazil, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Mishra, 2017; Steger & James, 2019). In these countries, both right-wing and left-wing populists gained political success by eliciting widespread support from voters who saw themselves as victims of globalization and neoliberalization, particularly surrounding the decline of the manufacturing industry due to the relocation of factories overseas, and the increasing influx of immigrants, both of which are outcomes of neoliberal globalization practices (Roth, 2018; Hays, 2019). condemning these changes, such populist politicians and their voters denounced mechanisms of globalization and sought to prioritize the interests of domestic workers and companies (Steger, 2019; Goldberg, 2020).

In effect, in countries where right-wing populists seized political power, resulting governments sought ways to reemphasize national sovereignty through the introduction of protectionist measures and stricter immigration policies (Eklundh, 2018; Stiglitz, 2018a). In the form of unilateral assertions in diplomacy, restrictions on immigration, and emphases on patriotism and traditional values, many such doctrines prioritized their own nation's interests over collaboration with other countries (Druckman, 2019; Hart, 2020). Despite differing political backgrounds among populists, their approaches to national sovereignty in governing the economy and society both questioned the triumph of neoliberal globalization in global politics.

Of course, this is not to underestimate the prevalence of neoliberalism and globalization in every aspect of people's lives. Despite populist groups' emphasis on national sovereignty and accusations of 'beneficiaries' of globalization—such as 'so-called' international financial elites who promoted economic integration and benefited from the single market at the expense of ordinary people's lives, and immigrants who would aggravate social disorder and steal jobs—both the national economy and society are highly interconnected to those of other countries and irrevocable (Steger, 2019). Much of the domestic market mechanisms is strongly influenced by the global financial system while the state exercise leverages with various fiscal and industrial policy frameworks. Such interconnectedness often makes the state foster globalization proactively to survive in the global market (Goldberg, 2020). Also, an influx of immigrants often benefits the economy by bringing higher productivity and innovation that is essential to create more jobs (Bahar, February 7, 2017). When it comes to sociocultural changes, globalization has disarmed the resistance of national communities to foreign cultures as well as the consumption of foreign products and value systems, albeit very slowly in some regions (Oberoi & Hansall, 2018).

Considering creeds of neoliberalism and globalization not only serve the interests of global forces but also some major players in domestic markets, it is premature to conclude that backlashes against globalization with prioritizing national interests undermine the fundamentals of neoliberal globalization. Despite growing skepticism and antagonism against global market integration, there are still several players in society who take advantage of globalization and their political, economic, and social power in both global and domestic arenas are significant (Hays, 2019). In that sense, it is more rational to say that the relationship between the nation-state system and forces of

neoliberal globalization is both complementary and confrontational rather than one-sided. By collaborating and colliding with global market forces depending on its political and economic interests, the state can sustain and revisit its power in the era of globalization.

Such dynamics between the state and global forces apply to govern cultural industries as well. The state cannot withdraw statehood from culture and let the market govern this domain because culture is fundamental to constructing citizenship and a sense of belonging in a given population by providing a distinctive collective identity which is its *raison d'être* of the nation-state system (Miller & Yúdice, 2002). Indeed, the state still retains various policy instruments to retain input into the future of its culture, including artists, businesses and platforms that strive to rise above national boundaries (Flew & Waisbord, 2015). Considering what differentiates cultural products from other merchandise are mandates to sustain political orders of the society such as promoting democratic virtues and propagating statist ideologies, it is not possible for the state to completely retreat from culture (Waisbord & Morris, 2001).

Despite heavy pressures from the US government and their large conglomerates, many states strive to independently manage their cultural market and industries. Many states impose various trade barriers and regulatory measures like censorship, tariffs, and quotas to protect their domestic markets from imported cultural products. Along with protectionist regulations on trade, they promote domestic companies with a variety of support programs including tax benefits, technological supports, and direct funding towards the production and distribution of domestic cultural products so that domestic players can compete with foreign players. Most importantly, many countries and groups of countries, including the European Union and Canada, have been involved in setting norms of cultural trade and have sought to secure their cultural sovereignty (Garner, 2016). By submitting lists of exemptions to free trade and protectionist measures like subsidies and institutional supports, national governments designed the form of globalization of cultural industries (Beale, 2002). As this research examines with the case of Korean cultural industries, there are ways that the state can intervene in globalizing its cultural businesses.

The state exerts its influences on the cultural domain through developing technologies as well. Although it is true that technologies open up new possibilities to



bypass the state's control, much recent technological development is in part made by the state's intervention (Oh & Larson, 2011). Despite their borderless nature, platforms and networks that serve as major impetuses of globalization, many of their achievements and activities are motivated by state actors. The state exerts its power in technological development through various support programs for domestic companies, licensing service providers, building up infrastructure, and setting up certain technologies as the standard. Besides, the state has authorities to block, filter, and regulate content in the name of the public interest (Mueller, 2013). Granted, such policy outcomes are subject to the state's political interests (Tawil-Souri, 2015). In this regard, the state takes part in governing and developing technologies as a major stakeholder. Given that much of the globalization of cultural industries is driven by cutting-edge technologies, this also makes the state engage in the cultural domain.

Hence, in the era of neoliberal globalization which prioritizes free-market principles over other rules and customs, the state remains to be a heavyweight player in the cultural domain including the market and industries. Such a globalization system serves to the benefit of the US and its few Western allies and their capital, and the state never ceases to wield its authority over controlling its society (Harvey, 2005). Its right to legislate laws and ratify treaties persists. Even in a global system, the state continues to exist as a fundamental pillar of the system and remains as a fundamental point of reference at every level from individual to supranational players (Waisbord & Morris, 2001). Both the state and the nation continue their involvement in various practices which produce, distribute, and consume cultural goods and services even as the nature of cultural production becomes more globally dispersed (Govil, 2009). In the same context, it also plays pivotal roles in managing cultural production through policy measures even if the chain of production becomes more transnational (Chin, 2003). In sum, the state continues to perform as a "significant locus of cultural identity and political-economic centrality (Aronczyk, 2013, 186)" in the cultural domain. So, what would be the distinctive characteristics of the Korean state's intervention in its cultural businesses?

## **1.4. The Korean State's Approach to Developing Cultural Industries**

There are reasons why studying the roles of the Korean state in developing Korean cultural industries is important. First of all, the nation's cultural businesses, including film and music, are now recognized as major pop cultural factories in the global market. Given that the presence of Korean cultural products was limited to the East Asian region and its effects on promoting a national image were marginal until the 2000s, analyzing the state's position in the cultural domain would be crucial to explain how the nation's cultural goods became prominent in the global market in recent years (Aronczyk, 2013; Jin, 2016). Second, compared to other hubs in the global cultural industries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, in which artists and entrepreneurs have a long history of targeting global audiences, the presence of Korean cultural industries in the international market is an interesting phenomenon because its history of exports to foreign markets is relatively short. Granted, the state's active strategies of promoting industries and various support programs were significant in promoting cultural businesses' desire to expand their market overseas. Finally, Korean cultural products are hybrid in their nature and much of their popularity is driven by digital platforms and smart devices, which are all pillars of globalization (Jin, 2017; Ryoo & Jin, 2018).

Understanding the roles of the Korean state in relation to the birth and growth of the Korean Wave is important as its policy schemes contributed to attracting investment from the nation's major conglomerates. Furthermore, it also shows how the state responds to the flow of globalization in the cultural domain, which had been traditionally considered as the state's political tool to promote its ideologies for justifying its control over the population and arousing national consciousness. Given that the nature of Korean cultural industries has become more transnational, and the market becomes increasingly borderless, analyzing their relationship with the state sheds light on how the state reconfigures its position in its cultural politics where its mechanics are subject to transnational capital and market logics that often argue for the retreat of the state from culture.

The Korean state has led the development of its cultural industries through mobilizing and allocating private and public resources and engaging in the production

and distribution of cultural goods and services with a series of direct and indirect measures. Such a state's deep involvement in its cultural industries could be possible due to its legacies of the developmental state—an economic development system in which the state wields its power and authority over mobilizing all public and private resources and legitimizes such measures in the name of developing the nation (Chang, 1999). As a developmental state, the Korean state initiated a series of pan-governmental programs to create and develop new industries in the 1960-1970s. Along with the state's financial and institutional support, family-owned major conglomerates, often known as *Chaebols* in Korean, cooperated with development masterplans and expanded their business into these industries.<sup>8</sup> Thanks to the state's support, many entrepreneurs—whose businesses had produced light industry goods including construction, cosmetics, and food products—were able to invest in new businesses such as automobiles, electronics, petrochemistry, and shipbuilding, and make inroads into foreign markets. In this regard, the rapid growth of the Korean economy in the late 1960s to 1980s was an outcome of the collaboration between the state's leadership in mobilizing and allocating resources and the private entrepreneurship of major companies. Despite criticism of a corrupt relationship between political and business circles, cooperation between the state and *Chaebols* became the main mechanism of the Korean developmental state (Lim, 2012).

Such a relationship between the state and leading conglomerates was vital to the development of Korean cultural industries (Jin, 2016). In the early 1990s, the Korean state introduced several masterplans for developing and promoting cultural industries as part of transforming the national economy into a service-driven economy with higher

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<sup>8</sup> A *Chaebol* refers to a mega-industrial conglomerate in which a system is fully controlled by the owner and his/her families. These family-controlled business groups make up many diversified affiliates and its management rights are transferred through generations in ownership, which is consolidated by cross-shareholding among subsidiaries. Much of a *Chaebol's* success and expansion of its business was owing to the state's concentrated supports with tax benefits and financial subsidies, trade protection, public-private consultation, and research and development with public institutions, etc. From the state's perspective, large and heavily capitalized corporations were effective systems to realize its export-oriented industrialization model towards economic development and they were easy to mobilize under its control. Indeed, Korea's development of heavy and chemical industries in the 1970s and the information technology industry in the 1980s and 1990s were outcomes of symbiotic relationships between the state and *Chaebols* (Lim, 2012). In return for the state's preferential treatment, these family-businesses were expected to participate in state-led development projects by investing their capitals and resources and fund major political parties. Such a close relationship between political and business circles became hotbeds of corruption throughout the nation's history.

value-added businesses. In the belief that utilizing electronics with cultural software would be more important than producing electronic equipment in the future economy, the state encouraged *Chaebols* to invest in cultural businesses including the film and television industry by providing incentives (Jin, 2011b). In detail, it enacted a series of laws and regulations to deregulate industries that had been under the state's strong political and economic control. Also, the state established several public agencies dedicated to directly support cultural businesses, which functioned as major financial sources for small and medium-size producers.

Following the state's schemes such as the deregulation of the media market in the late 1980s and the introduction of new distribution platforms such as cable television in 1995, major conglomerates including Samsung and Hyundai expanded their businesses to various cultural industries. Along with an infusion of their capital into the market, such companies' participation laid the groundwork for restructuring the fundamentals of industries that had been previously dominated by small businesses. For instance, based on its strength of home electronics in the market, Samsung merged different media production businesses which had initially been managed by its subsidiaries—including Cheil Communications (a marketing company) Samsung Electronics, Samsung Corporation (a general trading company), and Star Max (a video importer and film production company)—and established Samsung Entertainment Group in 1995 to expand its business to produce films, popular music, and television (Chung, December 17, 2007).<sup>9</sup>

Until 1999, when Samsung withdrew itself from cultural production in the aftermath of the nation's financial crisis, Samsung Entertainment Group's contributions to cultural production were significant. Notably, in film production, Samsung employed an advanced production system adopted from Hollywood that included practices such as separating financing and production tasks, and the systematization of marketing, distribution, and accounting (So et al., November 12, 2000). Most of all, Samsung

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<sup>9</sup> Prior to the establishment of Samsung Entertainment Group in 1995, the conglomerate's several subsidiaries had already been involved in media business (Chung, December 17, 2007). For instance, Cheil Communication produced television dramas such as *In the Midst of Life* (1994, broadcast by Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation) and documentaries like *Hospital 24* (1994, broadcast by Seoul Broadcasting System) (Yonhap News, April 12, 1994; Yonhap News, May 25, 1994). In addition to this, it had both a newspaper company (Joong-Ang Ilbo) until 1999 and a television broadcaster (Tongyang Broadcasting Company, TBC) until 1980 (Kim D., 2018). Needless to say, these experiences became pivotal to Samsung's entry into cultural industries.

Pictures, the company's film production studio, produced the action film *Shiri* in 1999, the first big-budget blockbuster Korean film, on which the company spent 3.1 billion KRW (2.7 million USD). The megahit of *Shiri* in the box office - raking in 36 billion KRW (33.1 million USD) - became a major touchstone in the nation's film industry and proved film businesses could make big profits (Kim JH., February 13, 2019). Along with Samsung, other *Chaebols* such as Hyundai and Daewoo invested in cultural industries in the form of owning a cable channel broadcaster (Hyundai and Daewoo), multiplex theatres (Daewoo), and newspapers (Hyundai). Despite their withdrawal from cultural production in the midst of the nation's financial crisis in the late 1990s, the entry of first-tier *Chaebols* meant heavy inflows of investment into cultural industries. Also, it encouraged second-tier *Chaebols*— such as CJ and Lotte in which cultural businesses became their core business—to expand their interests to cultural production (Jin, 2011b). As *Shiri*'s success demonstrated, their strong financial prowess not only reshaped the structure of the cultural industries as capital-intensive ones but also developed large-scale cultural goods.

The importance of cultural industries in the policy context became more crucial in the aftermath of the nation's financial crisis in 1997. A number of manufacturing businesses went bust due to rounds of the credit crunch, which led the state to improve the economic structure and lay the groundwork for economic improvement with new industries. In this regard, the government accelerated its programs of restructuring the economy with knowledge-driven businesses, including cultural industries. The growing popularity of several television series and popular music artists in China, Hong Kong, Japan, and Taiwan—the beginning of the Korean Wave—triggered the government to boost up industries as its strategic up-and-coming industry of the future.

As the state recognized the economic potentials of cultural industries, it began to become involved in the production chain of various cultural goods and services. Starting from 1999, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT) established several affiliations including the Korea Game Agency, the Korean Broadcasting Institute, and the Korea Culture and Content Agency, whose missions were to provide working spaces and mentorship, tax and financial benefits, technical supports, counselling on exports and promotion in overseas markets, etc. At often, the state's contributions in cultural businesses were pan-governmental, as various governmental branches such as the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Information and Communication

introduced programs for research and development which some companies in the cultural sector were available to apply. Furthermore, to target foreign markets, it even provided some guidelines in designing storylines and characters of content in the form of national competitions or state-led funding projects. Throughout introducing masterplans and implementing detailed schemes to develop and support cultural industries, the state became a major patron of industries (Lee, 2019a). Such a strong involvement of the state in culture for economic purposes represents the nation's legacy as a developmental state.

While the Korean Wave began as a cultural phenomenon, the Korean state understood it as an opportunity to strengthen its power and political and economic influence overseas. Various cultural forms, from pop idols and films to cuisine and traditional costumes, became instruments for improving the nation's soft power, which refers to "the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes one wants through attraction rather than coercion or payment (Nye, 2008, 94)." In 2007, following the established British Council (the United Kingdom), Alliance Française (France) and Goethe Institut (Germany), MCT established the King Sejong Institute Foundation to spread and teach Korean language and culture in foreign countries.<sup>10</sup> As of 2019, the Foundation has 180 local branches in 60 countries. Such political and diplomatic efficacy of Korean cultural products was another driving force for the Korean state to engage in the cultural sector directly so that its cultural commodities would satisfy the state's political and economic needs by improving its national image to foreign audiences (Nye & Kim, 2013; Al-Rawi, 2020). Finally, the state's interpretation of the Korean Wave is deeply related to nationalistic discourses as it has persistently emphasized the Korean Wave to promote the public's national awareness by showing off how much Korean culture is popular and valued as high-quality content globally (Whang, 2015). Combined with the state's constant effort of utilizing culture as an economic means, its viewpoints of the Korean

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<sup>10</sup> Before the establishment of King Sejong Institute Foundation, Korean language education overseas had managed sporadically by Korean Cultural Centers, which were local branches of the Korean Culture and Information Service, an MCT affiliation for promoting Korean culture and accurate information for overseas publicity. However, the lack of universal education guidelines and teaching materials and methods highlighted the need to introduce a systematic approach to teach and promote Korean language overseas. Most of all, the mounting interest in the Korean culture in the wake of the Korean Wave also pushed the Ministry to establish an institution specialized in teaching Korean language as a means of promoting Korean culture as the means of yielding the nation's soft power (Eom et al., 2019).

Wave as a political tool contributed to reducing aesthetic and creative values of culture to the basic extrinsic utility.

In short, the Korean state played pivotal roles in both developing the Korean cultural industries and utilizing the Korean Wave for its political interests through a variety of policy initiatives. In this regard, understanding the relationship between the state and the Korean Wave shows how a global cultural phenomenon can serve as an instrument for accomplishing the state's political and economic missions. This calls for a reconsideration of how we understand the state's positions in cultural industries which have become increasingly dominated by the logic of neoliberal globalization which argues for the state's withdrawal from culture and strives to manage culture with market dynamics.

## **1.5. Research Methods and Data Collection**

Cultural policies, including cultural industry policies, are crucial in the cultural domain because they are an important part of understanding culture and contextualizing the present (Miller & Yúdice, 2002). With their instruments, including media, regulations, cultural institutions, and technologies, cultural policies aim at producing cultural citizens. In this regard, as cultural policies, including cultural industry policies, are about “the promotion or prohibition of cultural practices or values by governments, corporations, other institutions, and individuals (Throsby, 2010, 8)”, cultural industry policies are subject to political and economic dynamics of a given society as well as the institution's characteristics, and embed and express preferred cultural values and represent the political power of the state. Through policies, the state decides the range of diversity and access to culture and the needs of the public (Lewis & Miller, 2003; Napoli, 2008). To coordinate, promote, and even control cultural industries, cultural industry policies, including policymaking processes and their implementations, are highly political.

Moreover, understanding the state's policies is important in the study of cultural industries because laws, regulations, and other institutional supports are important factors in defining various characteristics of the production and distribution of cultural merchandise (Druick, 2016). In this regard, policies should not be underestimated as mere instruments of the state or as basic regulatory tools (Freedman, 2008). If that is the

case, it becomes important to understand their meanings by asking “why is this policy in the form now and in whose interest is it designed? Neither policies nor their presentation should ever be taken at their face value (Garnham, 1998, 23).”

Given that culture is a place where power is exercised, reinforced, and contested and is intertwined with a variety of sociocultural, technological, and political-economic factors and agents in private and public spaces and global and local spheres, policies are simply more than reflective and technical measures which merely mirror technological changes in cultural production and distribution systems (Mulcahy, 2006). Rather, they are outcomes representing the different interests of stakeholders in a society which are then blended with policymakers’ desires (Freedman, 2008). Considering this, policy analysis aims to examine “the ways in which policies in the field of communication are generated and implemented, as well as their repercussions or implications for the field of communication as a whole (Hansen et al., 1998, 67).” Based on this explanation, this dissertation investigates how the state repositions itself through policies in its cultural industries in which mechanisms are strongly influenced by logics of neoliberal globalization, with a focus on the Korean state. In detail, this study tries to answer the following questions.

1. What are the roles of the Korean state in its cultural industries?
  - a. What are the strategies of the Korean state for promoting its cultural industries?
  - b. What are the distinctive characteristics of the Korean state’s strategies for developing cultural industries as the developmental state?
  - c. How does the state reconfigures its position and roles in cultural production in response to globalization?
2. How has the Korean state instrumentalized its cultural industries?
  - a. What are political and economic imperatives that make the state intervene in cultural production?
  - b. What are the ideological frameworks of the Korean state used to utilize cultural goods and services?
  - c. How does the Korean state interpret the global popularity of Korean cultural products?
3. What are the characteristics of the public-private relationship with the cultural industries in the era of the Korean Wave?



- a. How do players in Korean cultural industries understand the state's contributions to cultural industries?
- b. How does the private sector recognize the Korean Wave? What does globalization mean to cultural production?
- c. What are the strategies for cultural producers to make the Korean Wave sustainable, and how are they reflected in their outcomes?

Based on the above set of questions, I conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with policymakers and cultural workers, and discourse analysis as my main research methods to examine the rationales of the Korean state's approach to its cultural industries, supplemented by historical contextualization and the analysis of policy documents. To strengthen the discourse analysis, I will use newspaper articles, regulations, and other legal and policy documents to investigate both the historical backgrounds of the nation's cultural industry policies and political and economic conditions that have influence in policymaking processes.

Interviews are a useful method of asking for knowledge that resides in people's minds in an undefined and invisible manner that cannot be observed without their behaviours (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015). The use of interviews is expected to provide a better understanding of an individual's experiences and perspectives on the subject and works to validate and verify other information sources (Lindlof & Taylor, 2019). Considering that much of the policymaking processes remains invisible and offline and cannot be inferred through policy outcomes, interviews with people involved in the process of making policies are useful to explore how they interpret policies as a means of materializing their ideas (Schlesinger, Selfe & Munro, 2015). Considering that it is difficult to measure the contribution of each stakeholder to the cultural domain, interviews as a method can be an effective way of finding imperatives and implications of the state's support for cultural businesses (Mulcahy, 2006).

Given that the legacies of the developmental state and the state's leading role in developing cultural industries, understanding the presences and roles of those who formulate and implement cultural industry policies becomes more important in the Korean context. In relation to this, although policies are understood as outcomes of a process that is mediated by multiple stakeholders, much of policymaking is still governed and dictated by elites, including politicians, bureaucrats, and top figures in cultural industries, etc. (Freedman, 2008). In this regard, interviews with policymakers are a

useful method to investigate how their thoughts and attitudes on culture are realized through policymaking (Herzog & Ali, 2015). While most such policymakers are unknown to the public, understanding their perspectives on culture is important considering the formulation and implementation of cultural policies are in the hands of bureaucrats who are often armed with technocratic expertise rather than artistic knowledge (Lewandowska, 2019).<sup>11</sup>

In detail, I conducted interviews with 15 policymakers (Participant A–O) who have experiences working in the Ministry of Culture, Sport, and Tourism (MCST) and its executive bodies—the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA), the Korea Culture and Tourism Institute (KCTI), and the Korea Film Council (KOFIC), and the Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (KOFICE), etc.<sup>12</sup> In addition to this, I additionally recruited two interviewees from a state-owned financial institution under the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MOEF) which provides low-interest financing for cultural businesses and a public institution affiliated with the Ministry of Science and ICT (MSICT) that manages the Ministry’s support programs on the broadcasting industry. Finally, I interviewed a professor at a university who has participated in a number of

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<sup>11</sup> Technocrats refer to bureaucrats whose expertise is formulated and trained by techniques which are made by methods and analytics widely used in political science, economics, and management, etc. Since they shape professional self-interest of bureaucrats, such techniques are often employed to cope with public problems and improve the ‘efficiency’ of public services (Lewandowska, 2019). Combined with evaluating policies with positivist and empirical indicators in which mechanisms emphasize empirical evidence valued by scientific measurements (e.g., profitability) rather than artistic creativity or other intrinsic values of culture, technocrats shape institutional contexts of cultural institutions (Khan, 2019). Needless to say, their approach to the cultural domain often collides with private sector advocates for cultural industries and other bureaucrats who have backgrounds in the arts and media production. However, the power of technocrats is overwhelming in Korean bureaucracy, as the Korean government recruits more than 80% of the total number of bureaucrats from the pan-governmental civil service examination. Although it designates up to 20% of high official positions open to the public to reform the bureaucracy, the number is still minimal. This contributes to instrumentalizing their policy objects.

<sup>12</sup> Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) is a MCST-affiliated agency that is responsible for supporting and governing the nation’s cultural products. In cooperation with other public institutions, the agency provides various programs for cultural producers such as low-interest loans, technical training, entrepreneurship education, and the promotion of their products in foreign markets, etc. The Korea Culture and Tourism Institute (KCTI) is the Ministry’s official think-tank and is charged with evaluating and researching cultural industry policies. Korea Film Commission (KOFIC) is a state-funded self-regulating body under the Ministry that support film production through education, funding, and training. It also conducts sales promotion of Korean films in international markets. Finally, the Korea Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (KOFICE), a MCST-affiliated organization that manages cultural exchange programs and promote Korean culture overseas. Details of these organizations will be explained in following chapters.

advisory committees under the Ministry. All research participants have experience in formulating and implementing cultural industry policies and related programs that are related to the Korean Wave. The following Table 1.1 is the list of policymakers who participate in this research as interviewees.

**Table 1.1. The list of research participants (cultural bureaucrats)**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Participant A	An affiliation of MCST
Participant B	An affiliation of MCST
Participant C	An affiliation of MCST
Participant D	An affiliation of MCST
Participant E	An affiliation of MOEF
Participant F	MCST (retiree)
Participant G	An affiliation of MCST
Participant H	MCST (retiree)
Participant I	An affiliation of MCST
Participant J	An affiliation of MCST
Participant K	An affiliation of MSICT
Participant L	An affiliation of MCST
Participant M	MCST
Participant N	MCST
Participant O	A professor at a university who is affiliated with MCST's various advisory committees

In addition to this, I also interviewed staff working in cultural industries who are involved in producing and distributing cultural products. When it comes to understanding cultural industry policies, their positions and roles are important because they are major policy objects. These Interviews with cultural workers was inspired by the tradition of production studies—which involves examinations of “the cultural producers and of the organizational sites and practices they inhabit and through which they exercise their power (Garnham, 1995, 65)” —aimed at investigating how shifting experiences, policies, and structures are manifested in cultural production (Druick & Deveau, 2015). That said, voices of cultural producers can shed light on the larger contexts of industrial shifts, political-economic imperatives, and regional dynamics—all of which also serve as important considerations for planning and implementing cultural industry policies (Lee & Jin, 2018).

On one hand, understanding how cultural producers interpret policies is important as the state’s measures toward developing and promoting cultural industries

function as major elements that influence creativity and shape every process of cultural production and distribution (Jin, 2021). Indeed, the state’s measures toward culture (and sometimes other policies) can impact earnings, performance and business strategies that are subject to changes in policy outcomes (Rogers & Sparviero, 2011; Park, Lee & Seo, 2019). On the other hand, assuming that cultural workers and practitioners are subjects who contribute to making culture through the control of various settings and practices involved in production narratives, their reflections and evaluations of policy measures provides important context toward understanding the inner workings of cultural production more broadly (Mayer, Banks & Caldwell, 2009; Lee & Jin, 2018). Moreover, their practices in cultural production are deeply connected to broader social relations. In this regard, not only their goods and services but also their identities, positions, and roles are important to consider in order to better understand the nature of cultural industries (Mayer, 2011; Lee & Jin, 2018). Thus, by shedding light on their experiences, interactions, and observations, interviews with cultural workers will contribute to understanding how cultural workers reinterpret policies and what industrial needs are, which are often neglected in analysis of cultural industries (Mayer, 2016).

Based on this explanation, I interviewed 10 cultural workers who are working as creators and producers in the nation’s audiovisual businesses focusing on film, music, and television—which have led the globalization of Korean cultural industries and the Korean Wave. Each research participant has at least 5 years of experience in cultural production. The following Table 1.2 is the list of cultural workers in the field of cultural production who participated in this research as interviewees.

**Table 1.2. The list of research participants (cultural workers)**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Occupation and industrial field</b>
Participant P	Television producer
Participant Q	Television producer / distribution business
Participant R	Television producer / entertainment agency
Participant S	Television producer / distribution business
Participant T	Film marketer at a production studio
Participant U	Film marketer at a production studio
Participant V	Film producer
Participant W	Music producer
Participant X	Webtoon artist
Participant Y	Television producer / an executive of a broadcaster

All the interviews were semi-structured, one-on-one, and in-depth with an hour and a half-length on average, and all participants were extended ongoing informed consent. As research participants in this study work and represent various organizations, all interviews were anonymized, and participant information was kept confidential. Ensuing anonymity holds twofold importance: respecting participant privacy maintains the safety and reputation of participants (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015). It also provides space for individuals to comfortably discuss their opinions regarding the state's approach to cultural industries and their perspective about the relationship between the Korean state and various industries. Along with interviews, to better contextualize, enrich, or problematize responses from research participants, this study uses relevant policy documents, press articles, and interviews of leading figures in cultural industries as supplementary data to support, compare or counter statements of research participants.

The findings of interviews provide how different actors, arguments, arenas, and controversies are intertwined in policymaking and its outcomes (Freedman, 2008). By comparing the experiences and thoughts of policymakers and cultural workers all of whom are involved in the same field, this study expects to find similarities and differences how each group interprets culture and evaluates cultural industry policies. In other words, based on interviews with both policymakers who design and implement cultural industry policies and cultural workers who interpret policy outcomes in the field, the study explores the meanings of cultural industry policies—how they are constructed by policymakers and how their meanings are reinterpreted or contested by cultural workers (O'Brien & Miles, 2010; Herzog & Ali, 2015).

Then, this study conducts discourse analysis of the findings of interviews as texts. In policy studies, a discourse can be explained as “‘patterns in social life, which not only guide discussions, but are institutionalized in particular practices’ (Hajer & Laws, 2006, 260).” As a discipline and set of institutionalized practices of the state to effectively address its shared values, a discourse becomes materialized through setting the rules as a system (Streeter, 2013). Given that the practices of bureaucrats are also outcomes of constant negotiations within their ethical, intellectual, and political interests, and with broader institutional contexts, it is important to understand the rationales behind policymakers' decisions to plan and implement specific policy frameworks (Bennett, 2006; Khan, 2019). In this regard, discourse analysis focuses on the rules and meanings that shape the construction of political and sociocultural identities as historically,

contextually, and socially constructed practices by investigating “what structures, strategies or other properties of text, talk, verbal interaction or communicative events play a role in these modes of reproduction (van Dijk, 1993, 250)”. In other words, by investigating social contexts, structures, and practices surrounding the text, this method aims to reveal dominance, inequalities, power relations, and stereotypes that construct a text’s meaning (van Dijk, 2001).

Understanding discourses of policymaking and its outcomes is important since policymaking is subject to social and economic structures as well as the political ideologies the state and society pursue. This sees the formulation and implementation of cultural industry policies as outcomes of power struggles among various stakeholders (Vestheim, 2012). In this regard, the efforts of policymakers to interpret cultural phenomena and codify their perspectives through policymaking are important as long as their process of policymaking can be considered as a communicative practice with strategically articulated languages (Lentz, 2013). Their interpretation of phenomena and codification through policies, regulations, and materialization through various schemes are likely to be legitimized and reproduce the state’s dominance in the cultural domain (van Dijk, 1993; Ali, 2019). This becomes more crucial as the state’s position and influence on the cultural domain is believed to be challenged by various stakeholders of neoliberal globalization: policies indicate how the state sustains its position in the cultural domain. Meanwhile, interviews with figures in cultural production contribute to flourishing the study’s interpretation of discursive politics in the nation’s cultural industries by showing how power is exercised through policy outcomes.

In terms of discourse analysis, this study focuses on identifying specific patterns of expression used by interviewees (Streeter, 2013). Given that the language used contains more than mere description, it analyzes how such expression patterns create meaning in conjunction with relevant materials—including policy documents, regulations and legal frameworks, statements from high officials and industrial figures, and media coverages—to find connections to broader practices and logics in society as contexts. Through exploring these contexts, this study expects to identify the political, economic, and social influences underlying research participants’ articulation, thereby discovering the politics of policymaking (Freedman, 2008). Finally, it examines discursive formations of the Korean state’s utilization of its cultural industries, as well as their global popularity, which are represented by policymaking. The formations are outcomes constructed and

consolidated by ideologies and thoughts that have been politically and historically dominant in both policy contexts and society (van Dijk, 1993; Streeter, 2013). Considering the state's power, understanding the discursive dynamics of policymaking is important as they influence how Korean society should interpret its cultural industries with which knowledge, attitudes, and ideologies (van Dijk, 1993; Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

In short, by employing interviews and discourse analysis, the study aims at investigating the broader trends and power dynamics of cultural industries and how the state secures its interests and repositions its roles in culture industries against tides of neoliberal globalization. Throughout investigating broader political-economic and social contexts, structures, and practices surrounding the text, the study investigates underlying mechanisms and power dynamics of the Korean state's cultural industry policies and their relationship to society. Considering that language used by policymakers and written in policies reflect power and ideologies, discourse analysis can shed lights on how a particular discourse directs how policy actors interpret reality, recognize problems, the directions they take to arrive at solutions (Hajer & Laws, 2006; Ali, 2019).

## **1.6. Structure of the Work and Research Contributions**

The second chapter introduces how scholars have analyzed the relationship between neoliberal globalization and the state. Along with definitions of neoliberalism, globalization, and the state, the chapter focuses on controversies over the roles of states in the cultural realm. Despite skepticism surrounding state sovereignty, it concludes that the state continues to exercise considerable power in the cultural sphere and its stakeholders. The chapter also brings in discussions about the instrumentalization of culture in policy contexts. To better understand the concept of instrumentalization, the chapter introduces the rationales of cultural policies and the transition from cultural policies to cultural industry policies. While many scholars have examined the instrumentalization of culture in line with neoliberal doctrines, the chapter considers a re-evaluation of the state's reaction to an interpretation of cultural artifacts as a means of economic development and substitutes for public resources in line with deregulation and marketization. By doing so, this chapter explains the necessity of understanding both non-market aspects as well as economic objectives underlying the instrumentalization of culture. Then, the third chapter illustrates the history and characteristics of each

administration's approach to cultural industries chronologically. Throughout the chapter, it emphasizes how the Korean state has planned and implemented policies and various support programs to cultural industries and how they reflect legacies of the developmental state.

Subsequently, the fourth chapter examines the outcomes of analysis with several sub-chapters. Based on the findings, it explains how the state manages the flow of neoliberal globalization in the cultural realm through its policies, including regulations and various measures, and how they are understood in practice. Then, based on interviews with cultural workers, the fifth chapter discusses how the state situates itself and reconfigures its role in accordance with neoliberalism and globalization with respect to cultural industries, while it continues to instrumentalize culture to accomplish its political and economic missions. The concluding chapter will summarize the overall findings and arguments of the study and revisit the state's roles in cultural industries as a powerful stakeholder in the era of globalization and neoliberalism.

The findings of this research are expected to shed light on the impacts of policy measures designed and implemented by the Korean state. To date, research has examined the state's proactive roles in the development of Korean cultural industries, with findings indicating that the state's active contributions were pivotal to promoting investment from the private sector, constructing infrastructure necessary for the promotion of cultural businesses, and financing cultural production, etc. (Jin, 2011; Kwon & Kim, 2014). These and other methods used by the state as means of developing the cultural industries were far from neoliberal in practice, which demanded the state's withdrawal from the market and favoured industrial development led by market forces with (free-)market-oriented mechanisms (Kim, 2017; Lee, 2019b). This reflects both the legacy of the Korean developmental state and the efficacy of cultural products for the state's political and economic objectives (Lee J-Y., 2012; Jin, 2016; Ryoo & Jin, 2020).

While much of this research is based on previous scholars' findings, the study further explores discursive meanings of cultural industry policies which the state has designed and implemented to promote businesses in the field. The findings of this research not only reconfirm the state's strong presence in cultural production but also detail the state's responses to the changing dynamics in cultural industries as an outcome of the neoliberal globalization of industries. Based on the notion that the state's



cultural policies reflect its role of mediating different social relations among stakeholders and their representation, the study explores how the Korean state's approach to promoting cultural production cannot be understood as a simple dichotomy between the state's withdrawal from the market and the state's full control of cultural production (Beale, 1999).

The findings of this research indicate that the state's response to developing cultural businesses would be more ambivalent and symbiotic. Depending on political and economic conditions, each administration utilizes both state-developmental and market-oriented measures to develop cultural industries and reconsolidates its presence in cultural production as a major stakeholder. Through several policy imperatives as detailed cases, the findings demonstrate how the state reconfigures its position in the cultural domain and maintains power in the face of an influx of market forces and the increasing level of globalization. This study also details how the state continues to maintain its traditional objectives of cultural policies as political instruments to manage citizens and motivate national pride by illuminating how political-economic meanings of Korean cultural industry policies. In that sense, the findings provide some insights that can further understand how the state continues to utilize the cultural domain that is simultaneously commercialized and transnational in the era of neoliberal globalization.

In terms of methods, this dissertation is also genuine in its attempt to provide a comprehensive overview of how to interpret Korean cultural industry policies through conversations with both cultural bureaucrats, who make policies and various support schemes, and cultural workers—who are the main recipients of policies. Furthermore, as the Korean state has fostered the industrialization of cultural production for the sake of economic development and other political missions, responses from the field about how industrialization has influenced the production of cultural products would provide a multifaceted perspective of policy formulation and implementation as well as underlying discourses, as cultural production reflects the power dynamics among various actors including the state, major corporations, and individual creators, etc. (Hesmondhalgh, 2010; Druick & Deveau, 2015). Combined with this research's ethnographic method (interviews), their lived experiences in the field and evaluation of the state's promotion schemes can provide a more holistic understanding of the discursive meanings behind the management of the Korean cultural industries, as well as broader political and economic contexts that shape the nation's cultural production. Given that policies are

important factors that shape the political and economic climate of creativity and make space for cultural production, such an approach that analyzes both policymakers and cultural workers contributes not only to cultural policy studies but also to the tradition of production studies (Druick & Deveau, 2015; Jin, 2021).

In this regard, the analysis of both policymakers and targets of policies is important as it not only helps further understanding of how policies are interpreted in the field but also sheds light on the discursive framework of policymaking that becomes fundamental to the state's approach to cultural industries. Therefore, both methods and the findings of this research can contribute to better unpacking political, economic, and social imperatives that have incentivized state intervention in the development and instrumentalization of the Korean cultural industries.

## **Chapter 2.**

# **Neoliberal Globalization, the State and Cultural Industries**

## **2.1. Introduction**

For decades, the cultural industries of individual countries have been challenged by both transnational and national capital. Backed by the US government and several organizations which advocate free trade of all products including media and cultural goods and services and elimination of all the restrictions that interrupt principles of the free market, a handful of Western media conglomerates have penetrated a number of local cultural markets and hold positions as major stakeholders in local industries. Thanks to their cutting-edge media technologies and clusters of cultural production equipped with well-developed infrastructures, skilled labour, and financial systems, US cultural products have become prominent in the global market (Thussu, 2018). In contrast, other nations lack the resources to develop cultural products with high commercial viability, impacting their ability to compete in the global market. With the advantages of technology, infrastructure, labour, and capital, transnational cultural forces led by US capital consolidate their power in the cultural domain and threaten local states' presence in the field.

Such pressure increasingly evidences when accounting for the adoption of neoliberal ideologies and practices, particularly the viewpoint that free-market logics would direct and promote individual action (including cultural or artistic creativity) and more accurately assess the value of cultural goods and services. Meanwhile, the rise of new technologies—including the Internet, smart devices, and platforms—also enabled the penetration of US-based tycoons into domestic markets. For instance, Netflix, a major online subscription video-on-demand (SVoD) service provider, provides its service has expanded to more than 190 countries. Its growing presence in local markets often challenges players in domestic cultural industries and disrupts existing media regulatory schemes (Cunningham & Scarlata, 2020). In the meantime, over 3.6 billion people use social media worldwide, most of them are US-based social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube (Statista, 2021). Such use of US platforms consolidated the

hegemonic power of US capital in the cultural domain and weakened local businesses in many countries. In a similar vein, measures based on neoliberal ideas and globalization seemed to limit, if not incapacitated, the state's measures toward protecting and promoting domestic businesses and markets. Not surprisingly, many have expected a retreat of the state from the cultural realm and the rise of a transnational cultural sphere run by free-market mechanisms and communication technologies.

This chapter is a response to such positions which argue that, in matters of culture, the state becomes weakened and replaced by the logics of globalization and neoliberalism. Throughout a brief overview of the concepts of neoliberalism and globalization, this chapter argues that the state's power persists in the cultural realm as a prominent actor. Considering that neoliberalization requires the reengineering of capital accumulation systems to reinforce pre-existing political-economic and power structures, the state plays pivotal roles in materializing neoliberal ideas in policy contexts and interprets various arguments to satisfy its political, economic, and social mandates (Harvey, 2005).

Meanwhile, the state also maintains its ability to manage the flow of global forces into the domestic realm by employing various policy packages. When it comes to cultural industries, this prominence becomes more evident given that the cultural industries are vital for the state to retain its sovereignty over the population. In this regard, neoliberalism and globalization do not necessarily bring about the retreat of the state from its culture. Rather, the state repositions its role in relation to neoliberalism and globalization to maintain its power in cultural politics through the development of a symbiotic relationship.

## **2.2. Arguments of Neoliberal Globalization**

### **2.2.1. Ideas of Neoliberalism: A Brief Overview**

Whether officially recognized or not in policy contexts, neoliberalism is one of the most common ideologies and practices for societies and policies today. The term is widely understood as an ideology that argues for an institutional arrangement of the economy as well as society structured and influenced by doctrines of the free market, resulting in the prioritization of the market and private interests over any interventions on

the part of the state (Duménil & Lévy, 2005; Connell, 2010). In the belief that sustainable economic prosperity can only be realized through perfect competition driven by laws of supply and demand, it argues for the adoption of free-market principles based on the accumulation of resources by individual players as a fundamental mechanism to operate the society (Hayek, 2002; McGuigan, 2014). For neoliberals, an effective marketplace with free competition among private entities would be ideal for the exchange of goods and values.

Neoliberalism is fundamentally based on the notion that the state and its bureaucrats are incapable of managing the economy (Dreiling & Darves, 2016). Arguing that artificial interventions in the market by politicians would result in a malevolent influence on the market and bring terrible outcomes, Milton Friedman (1953), one of the most enthusiastic advocates of neoliberalism, called for the market to be free from intervention, believing it would create societal benefit naturally as it operated. Underlying this belief is the assumption that state policies are the result of ineffective collaboration and bargaining with and among various stakeholders—based on a compromise between the working and capitalist classes most notably in the period after the Great Depression, which harms the competitiveness of the economic system (Duménil & Lévy, 2011; Gill-McLure, 2013). Then, such a ‘collusion’ among economic players would distort the market mechanism of redistributing goods and weaken entrepreneurial spirits and morality. In this regard, neoliberals urge the state to lift ‘incompetent’ bureaucratic interventions and introduce measures of privatization and deregulation to improve the efficiency and productivity of the economy (Chang, 2004).

By removing what are seen as unnecessary restrictions, such as reducing tax rates and regulations of enterprise capital, neoliberalism expects that free-market competition will benefit every participant in the end; the quality of goods will increase while prices decrease. Neoliberal tenets also argue that those unable to compete in the system will still eventually benefit through the cheaper pricing of commodities and have opportunities in employment provided by successfully competitive businesses, who will invest in other businesses as a means of further accumulating profit. Such a system of exchanging goods and values with an efficient and unfettered market mechanism would, according to neoliberal proponents, distribute resources the best, benefitting both economic growth and social organizations (Hardy, 2014). In relation to this, believing there are no discriminatory measures within the market mechanism that suppress those

who have different political views or cultural, ethnic, and racial backgrounds, Friedman (2002) argued that economic freedom is necessary to promote political freedom. Again, for advocates of neoliberalism, economic freedom would not be guaranteed if the state was involved in producing and exchanging goods and services.

Granted, major tenets of neoliberalism—many of them developed out of distrust of state intervention—were opposed to Keynesian doctrines which provided the rationale for the state's intervention in the market for decades. Skeptical of the idea that market equilibrium would be reached by maximum freedom of production and consumption by individuals based on self-interest, particularly because demand was not always met by available supply, Keynes (2018 [1936]) promoted the state's active intervention in the market to maintain the balance of supply and demand in the form of expanding fiscal spending, increasing direct investment, and managing distribution of resources, etc. Focusing on reassuring private investors of the stability of the future economy, he believed such engagements by the state would be the essence of its fiscal policies. His ideas of increasing government expenditure became instrumental for the US to overcome the Great Depression in the 1930s. Despite claims that his arguments were assaults on free enterprise and laissez-faire economic freedom that consisted of traditional economic values, such efficacy made his argument prominent in many countries and legitimized state intervention in the market for decades (Skousen, 2007).

Not surprisingly, neoliberal proponents greatly disliked Keynesianism's domination in the market and policy development. In the belief that state intervention would discourage profit growth as a motive and weaken competition among financial sectors managing the capital market, neoliberals argued to abolish measures that interrupted free-market principles and impeded what they saw as individual liberties (Hall, 1989). They seized the opportunity to submit their beliefs into policies in the late 1970s when the British economy experienced a failure of price policies and applied to the International Monetary Fund for a bailout; while the US was in political and social turmoil over the backlash against the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal (Jones, 2012). Such political and economic upheavals in these societies created an air of anxiety and legitimized the dismantling of existing economic principles and welfare policies in the name of overcoming the crisis (Klein, 2008). Backed by the US government and neoliberal economists, international financial organizations revamped their financing

schemes to coerce structural adjustment programs falling in line with neoliberal practices of deregulation and privatization and became a governing rationality.

While neoliberalism began as an economic ideology, its consequences were unprecedented. As a method of governing society, neoliberalization was accompanied by a set of both national and international policies that aimed at business domination of social affairs (McChesney, 2001). A new type of liberalism emerged, the virtues of which were built on individualism and the protection of private property rights as well as the restriction of all exclusive power from people's lives. Following curtailments in public welfare and withdrawal of the social welfare system, individual responsibility and self-governance emerged as official policy dialogues, replacing public welfare (Gamble, 2014; Innset, 2020). This argument was based on a premise that allocation of resources would be conducted most effectively through market forces and its virtues, such as competition, credit, and efficiency, rather than moral imperatives or the state's intervention (Fitzpatrick, 2018). In a neoliberal world, consumers, not an electorate, would be sovereign (Klein, 2008). Unlike traditional liberalism which distinguished the political life and economic life of citizens, neoliberalism reduces the political lives of citizens to the economy. It compels all players in the society as *Homo Oeconomicus* to seek their exchangeable market values as individual objects through self-investment/exploitation rather than solving structural problems (Dardot & Laval, 2013; Fitzpatrick, 2018).

Thus, in the world in which an individual's avarice through free-market principles is considered as the main impetus of economic growth, it seems evident that the state would step back from its position of allocating resources to its population as a political-economic system of redistributing wealth. Such changes—that directly relate individuals to the market by blocking external interventions—are often understood as symbolizing a retreat of the state. An individual's victory or defeat in the competition is solely determined by personal competence and responsibility, while state responsibility in the society's structure and resource management would be lessened (Harvey, 2005). In this regard, the transition to neoliberalism in policy contexts means more than a transformation of pre-existing economic policies; it challenges the everyday reality of people as well as statehood (Mirowski, 2013).

Meanwhile, neoliberalization is fostered by the financialization of capitalism, “the shift in gravity of economic activity from production (and even from much of the growing service sector) to finance (Foster, 2007, 1)”. As the expansion of banking capital would be essential to deepen capital accumulation, the financialization of capitalism meant “self-perpetuating wealth creation in capital market (Bryan, 2004, 103)” and profit generation became of greater importance than producing goods and services. Such financialization signified the hegemony of financial capitalists and reflected compromises between industrial and financial capital that would be driven by financial actors (Brunhoff, 2003). The financialization of capitalism is deeply related to efforts of market integration by the US government and financial actors in the market. For decades, the US had strived to establish rules for integrating commercial trade and financial relations under its leadership with the US Dollar as a global reserve currency. Furthermore, the growing importance of finance, financial institutions and markets in the US and many advanced countries not only transformed the entire economic system and its agents, including banks, non-financial corporations, and workers, into a finance industry-based system but also became another incentive for integrating the global economic system (Lapavitsas, 2013; Nesvetailova, 2013). As long as profits from financial businesses remained in control over this system, it became crucial for these countries to liberalize capital flows—in both domestic and international markets—to maximize their financial gains (Davis & Kim, 2015).

The financialization of capitalism transformed the profit model of stakeholders in advanced economies toward the accumulation of profit from financial capital. This resulted in the relocation of their manufacturing businesses to wherever they could locate the lowest production costs, including taxes and cheap labour, and ensured repatriation of their profits. Expecting massive investment, many countries endeavoured to attract such relocating businesses, promising to provide a package of privileges such as tax benefits and exceptions from regulation, even if these measures increased wage stagnation and wealth inequality (Palley, 2007). Such changes demonstrated the power shift from producing goods and services to accumulating capital in the economy, which would become a defining characteristic of a neoliberal world. Moreover, along with the liberalization of trade, the financialization of capitalism accelerated the penetration of multinational corporations into regional economies, and it meant much of the global economy would be in the hands of transnational finance as the key major forces of



current flows of globalization (Dent, 2003; Dreiling & Darves, 2016). Then, the push for financialization and liberalization in markets outside of the US was not only a characteristic of neoliberal policies but also a profound characteristic of a newly emerging globalized economy and society driven by neoliberalization. Thus, it is important to consider the roles of neoliberal globalization in the development of this economic and ideological concept.

### **2.2.2. A Brief Introduction of Neoliberal Globalization**

Globalization is generally understood as the process of the integration of the world, which includes “anything from the Internet to a hamburger (Strange, 1996, xiii)”. Due to the complexities of the phenomenon, there are several definitions of globalization. Ritzer (2007, 1) defines globalization as “an accelerating set of processes involving flows that encompass ever-greater numbers of the world’s spaces and that lead to increasing integration and interconnectivity among those spaces.” Focusing on connectedness, Held and his colleagues (1999, 2) explain globalization as “the widening, deepening, and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life, from the cultural to the criminal, the financial to the spiritual”, while Lechner and Boli (2015, 5) define it as a multiplicity of linkages which makes “more people become connected in more and different ways across ever-greater distances.”

While there are various interpretations of globalization, it is evident that the United States government and US-based private capital have been the main drivers of the process (Jarvis, 2007; Ferguson & Mansbach, 2012; Ritzer & Stillman, 2017). Along with its allies including the United Kingdom, France, and Germany, the US has regarded itself as a pioneer guiding other countries toward the integration, showing off its advanced technologies and better economic outcomes. Based on their achievements in politics, economy, and culture, the US demanded less-developed countries to follow their lead through decoupling the relationships among state power, sovereignty, and territoriality— all of which have been understood as a founding pillar of political and economic modernization (Martinelli, 2005). Such an argument has been materialized through a series of multilateral agreements and international organizations that set up common regulations and orders that have the same legal effect as domestic laws.

Moreover, the activities of many Western financial institutions, including private equity firms, security companies, and credit rating agencies, have become a major impetus that pressures many states to follow their direction toward the market integration. The expanded trade volume and immensely mobile financial capital greatly increased the interdependence of national economies, which implied the rise of a united market system that is stimulated by capitalist motives for profit and the accumulation of capital (Ampuja, 2012; Ferguson & Mansbach, 2012). Regularly, such connections are legitimized and materialized by international market and trade regimes as well as regional economic blocs such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), Mercosur (a South American trade bloc), the European Union (EU), and Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA), etc.

Much of the current logic of globalization is deeply connected to neoliberalism, which demands the removal of barriers that interrupt the free market, such as tariffs, quotas, and any regulatory measures that give preference to domestic players. Thus, neoliberal globalization can be understood as a phenomenon and an ideology that demands the guaranteed distribution of “maximum profits to the private sector through deregulation, privatization, and liberalization while pursuing a small government function (Jin, 2020b, 2)” through integrating different political and economic systems into a single market. This type of globalization is an artifact planned and promoted by the transnational capitalist class—transnational corporations and financial capital—as new elites and a new ruling class (Nash, 2017).

Indeed, arguing that the market becomes increasingly transnational and borderless, advocates of neoliberal globalization—such as private financial institutions, multinational corporations including media and platform moguls—demand the state to remove various regulation, many of which are necessary to fulfill the state’s traditional duties to support the society and protect economic activities of citizens, such as financing domestic entrepreneurship and providing small loans for households and the middle-class. Following this argument, the US and several other nations materialize neoliberal ideologies as policies, suspending their obligations to society, and demand that other nations follow their measures (Robinson, 2017; González, 2019). Thus, under the leadership of the transnational capitalist class, advocates of neoliberal globalization strive to integrate the world into a single market operated by free-market principles, which will be an ideal situation for realizing their tenets.

Considering the power of neoliberal market forces that exert influence in the current phase of globalization, the term 'globalization' can be understood as the "integration of economic activities, via markets. The driving forces are technological, and policy changes—falling costs of transport and communications and greater reliance on market forces (Wolf, 2005, 19)." Such characteristics of globalization have strengthened the rights of many powerful non-sovereign actors—including banks, corporations, private equity funds, and regional and international financial organizations—to speak in the international political and economic system (Marsonet, 2017). As new players became increasingly influential in global politics, they demanded a new mechanism that would reflect the voices of these non-sovereign players through their strong financial power. Granted, such demands challenge the power previously enjoyed by sovereign states in global politics and blurs national boundaries that otherwise legitimize state control over a given population (Jessop, 2016; Slobodian, 2018).

In addition to this, the development of cutting-edge information and communication technologies (ICTs), notably the Internet and smart devices, provided an essential framework that enables the exchange of information freely in real-time everywhere in the world (Castells, 2013). Given that much of the recent development of ICTs is led by US-based platform giants such as Apple, Facebook, and Google, and their penetration into local markets has incapacitated numerous local regulations and weakening local companies, the development of ICTs and platform moguls that utilize new technologies worldwide to consolidate their market share are also considered as major impetuses of globalization and challenge the state's authority in controlling and managing the market (Jin, 2015; Srnicek, 2017).

In this regard, such technological advancements and economic integration toward a single market sees globalization restructuring "the ways in which we live, and in a very profound manner (Giddens, 2002, 4)" and redefines elements of modern society— "household, family, class, democracy, domination, state, economy, the public sphere, politics and so on (Beck, 2005, 50)" which had previously been characterized within the traditional boundaries of nation-states. Based on the overwhelming power of various capital, globalization constructed by neoliberal virtues has become a dominant force in the global arena and clashed with residual traditions and institutions on a worldwide scale (McGuigan, 2016).

In short, along with other factors, including the development of cutting-edge information and communication technologies (ICTs), the increasing number of immigrants, and the growing roles of international organizations, market forces and capital are key forces working toward coalescing the world under the single market system, a defining characteristic of the current flow of globalization (Wolf, 2005; Iosifidis, 2016). Although neoliberalization and globalization are not synonyms, they are co-constitutive insofar as both arguments posit the individualization of subjects and a single market system. Both concepts are also skeptical of nation-state systems, based on technological advances that enable the integration of financial systems and information exchange (Ampuja, 2012; Micklethwait & Wooldrige, 2015). However, there are some gaps between the ideals of neoliberalism and reality, which require the state's participation in both global and domestic economies and societies to realize neoliberal doctrines.

## **2.3. Rescaling the State's Position in Neoliberal Globalization**

### **2.3.1. Myth of the Free-market Principle: Neoliberalism's Skepticism about the State**

On the surface, doctrines and practices of neoliberal globalization seem to collide with the state's authority to control its territory and population. Indeed, the state's position in entrepreneurial activities has been significantly weakened in contrast to the roles of private entrepreneurship that have become more prominent in market activities (Schuster, Schmitt & Traub, 2013). Moreover, regional economic integration which promotes common trading provisions and market regulations towards free and fair trade and changes the industrial structure towards a knowledge and service-oriented economy as opposed to a manufacturing economy contributed to neutralizing the state's control of markets. Such transformations of the economic environment have forced the state to ease or lift many of its policy prerogatives such as regulations and taxations—which are major tools to exert its authority to the market—as an effort of making it more attractive to investors than other states as competitors in the market (Lucarelli, 2004; Nijs, 2016). For instance, in the aftermath of the Eurozone Crisis in the early 2010s, several European countries—notably Greece, Ireland, and Portugal, had to comply with requirements from creditor nations and organizations such as France, Germany, and the

International Monetary Fund (IMF) in return for bailouts, which included pension reforms, the increase of value-added taxes, and the control of national properties by creditors, etc. (Lapavitsas, 2019). In the meantime, low-income and underdeveloped countries deregulate their domestic financial and labour market to attract foreign investment from multinational corporations and transnational financial capital (Akkermans, 2017).

Based on the notion that much of the current flow of globalization is operated by the international monetary system sponsored by finance and banking capital that strongly supports free trade and the liberalization of capital movements, some scholars began to argue that the nation-state and statehood are, at an extreme, being dismantled or at the very least in decline, as sovereign states and global markets cannot coexist (Rodrick, 2011; Verde, 2017). As the world economy is being transformed by transnational corporations and global capital intent on gaining more rights and power to expand their markets worldwide without state interference, they explain that such changes will enable transnational market forces to bypass boundaries and overwhelm the state's authority in many markets. In this regard, they demanded that states relinquish some sovereignty to world bodies that included non-sovereign actors (Jarvis, 2007; Marsonet, 2017).

Many skeptical mantras from advocates of neoliberalism about the state's roles assume market equilibrium as pre-given (Fukuyama, 1992). In theory, the market system that is operated by full competition is an ideal structure of distributing resources most effectively so that it maximizes economic efficiency. In reality, however, it is difficult to expect such a perfectly competitive market that guarantees free and fair competition for allocating resources—including capital, commodities, and information, etc. (Madra & Adaman, 2014). Most of all, there is an issue of monopolies and oligopolies which are some of the outcomes of market competitions. Since they bring less intense competition and heighten the entry barriers of new players, monopolies and oligopolies will stifle innovation—which many neoliberals hype as the main benefit of free-market principles. Even if neoliberals are reluctant to invite the state to intervene in the market to prevent monopolies, arguing that its intervention may harm entrepreneurial merits and emphasize disadvantages of interventions, it is vital to impose anti-trust measures on the market system considering the concentration of power of few players will interrupt the entire price system and the economy (Lucarelli, 2004; Roncaglia, 2019).

Moreover, the market cannot manage public goods because of their non-excludable and non-rivalrous characteristics—like the air or knowledge, they are available to everyone, and their supplies are not affected by consumption.<sup>13</sup> Such characteristics make logics of revenue-expenditure processes less effective in controlling these resources. Without proper interventions from outside, this may result in depleting or taking advantage of them without collecting exchange values (Johnson, 2015). While many neoliberal proponents recognize the state's position of managing public goods, they argue the state's allocation of public goods should be non-selective and encourage more private investment (Lucarelli, 2004). However, such an approach to allocate and manage public goods often neglects qualitative aspects of accountability and responsibility of stakeholders given that much of the procedure is driven by quantitative measures (Neyland, Ehrenstein & Milyaeva, 2019).

Such variables indicate the market system is imperfect in nature and much of neoliberalism's imaginary of the 'invisible hand'—a metaphor that explains optimal equilibrium of distribution through the market's pricing mechanism operated by free competitions among individuals that will eventually allocate resources justly—is defective in reality (Roncaglia, 2019). As there is no guarantee of a fully competitive market, free-market mechanisms only benefit predominant financial capital and may cause a market failure, when resources in the market are allocated inefficiently to actors in the economy and equilibrium becomes disrupted. This would delay economic growth and erupt a financial crisis that negatively impacts the lives of people, marking the inevitability for the state to intervene in the market system to oversee whether it distributes resources effectively or not (Lucarelli, 2004; Medema, 2009).

Doctrines of neoliberalism have political discrepancies in their logics. Again, advocates of neoliberalism expect the state to transform the preexisting society into a fully marketized one through marketizing publicly controlled resources, deregulating both industries and capital to promote competition and for private interest, and marketizing more public welfare schemes in the name of consumer choice and economic efficiency (Wilson, 2018). Based on their distrust of the state, they claim that a state-interventionist economy, in which dynamics are determined by political negotiations to stabilize the

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<sup>13</sup> Unlike private goods where values drop in supply as more people use them (rivalrous) and are not available to all citizens (excludability), the values of public goods do not dwindle in their supply regardless of the amount of consumption and every citizen has access to use them.

society through guaranteeing interests of different interest groups, only increases rigidities in the economic system (Jones, 2012). Labelling them “institutional sclerosis”, they insist such coalitions will end up resisting necessary changes for economic development (Olsen, 1982). Much of this argument is based on the premise that any unproductive political activities would generate additional expenses because they would result in privileging specific groups at the expense of market profits. In a similar vein, neoliberalists viciously attack inefficiencies of public expenditures and state-owned enterprises and argue to privatize and marketize their structure and management which had been controlled by bureaucrats (Chang, 2004; McGuigan, 2014). As a consequence, commodification and privatization of public resources become key characteristics of neoliberal reforms; a number of public institutions—schools, hospitals, and even prisons—have become privatized and many of them are forced to manage themselves as competitive entities (Connell, 2010).

However, if neoliberals discredit the state’s intervention as disrupting market equilibrium by favouring certain interests from different interest groups including trade unions and consumer organization, then it becomes paradoxical for them to urge the state to prioritize the interests of private enterprises and capitals (Chang, 2004; Lucarelli, 2004). Granted, this paradox is used to restrain opponents of neoliberalism from insisting on their rights and criticism of free-market principles in the hands of economic development. If so, ideas of a free-market economy, which is a practical impossibility, serve to privilege financial and rentier interests for the sake of the working class and industrial capital (Davidson, 2018; Peters, 2018). This only can be realized through another intervention from the state.

Again, much of this paradox stems from the perspective that views the marketplace as a self-governing and pre-given system of exchanging goods and services. However, the market cannot be self-regulatory as it is a socially constructed mechanism made by industrial change and the state’s sophisticated plans to perform as a means of driving the capitalist economy. It has never been truly free and self-regulating (Polanyi, 2001[1944]). This means that the state’s interventions in the market exist in principle to allocate resources in more effective ways. By the same token, the free-market economy cannot be realized due to its deficiencies in the market system which stem from the uncertainty and unpredictability that exist in valuing goods and services explained above (Stiglitz, 2018b). If that is the case, then doctrines of free-

market and relevant arguments of free-labour and free-trade instead reflect an ideology that privileges the interests of certain industrial and financial capital and pushes the state to serve their profits (Harvey, 2005; Nijs, 2016).

In this regard, the state continues to exert sovereign authority over global forces through regulations of the market and foreign, labour, and trade policies. Despite various limitations, the effects of its actions and decisions in economy and society demonstrate how the state can actively manage and appropriate the penetration of neoliberal doctrines into its territory and population (Rosina, 2019). In this regard, nation-states continue to serve as the most significant force in shaping the global economy (Dicken, 2015). This incentivizes proponents and beneficiaries of neoliberal mechanisms to work with and exert pressure on the state to further neoliberal goals, often requiring private neoliberalists to align their profit and goals with state interests.

Capitalists, armed with neoliberal doctrines and the goal of capital accumulation, need a large market without state intervention. However, they still want a multiplicity of states to manage and control different resources which cannot be controlled by a single, gigantic entity (Wallerstein, 2004). Thus, they try to cooperate with governing elites of the state, who determine the form of capitalism that the society would pursue and exert their authorities through executing policies so that they can mobilize its resources and authority to restructure the economy and society (Harvey, 2005; Schmidt, 2009; Major, 2013). As long as the market is not a self-regulating organ, the state still has mandates in designing and implementing measures on neoliberalization while maintaining autonomy to guide and discipline actors in society as the neoliberal state (Dreiling & Darves, 2016; Maron & Shalev, 2017).

### **2.3.2. The Neoliberal State: An Architect of Managing the Paradoxes of Neoliberal Reality**

The neoliberal state would be understood as “an interventionist state that works to actively promote and construct a free-market society (Wilson, 2018, 37)” based on pre-existing relationships among institutions and characteristics of political-economic regimes. The state’s measures are valid as long as they serve the interests of economic actors and coincide with market logics (Madra & Adaman, 2014). The neoliberal state reconfigures its positions and functions to enforce pro-market, neoliberal agendas to



cope with both transnational and national-local capitalist classes (Robinson, 2001). Policy authorities mobilize their ability to secure private property rights and promote freedom of capital by maximizing free-market frameworks and reducing its pre-existing interventionist methods, if market interests coincide with the state's interests (Harvey, 2005).

The neoliberal state often highlights virtues of meritocracy that contend that social justice is realized by fair competition where the best and most diligent people succeed under the assumption of equal opportunity and mobility for all individuals to utilize their abilities freely (Littler, 2016). In accordance with meritocracy, fundamental principles of managing the state such as equality and liberty are reinterpreted by outcomes of competitions. As long as an unfettered free-market system, which is believed to incarnate doctrines of meritocracy most justly, becomes sanctified as the venue of assigning and managing values of all resources—including humans, the state should abide by its mechanisms. In this regard, the neoliberal state attempts to change economic orders and the public welfare system through the introduction of competitive systems in the belief that 'improper interventions' in the name of non-market virtues like social justice only infringe on individual acts that should be arranged by contracts in the marketplace (Plant, 2009). While neoliberal elites extend their interests by deregulating influxes of financial institutions, their belief reduces the bargaining power of trade unions and other interest groups in the name of fair competition (Littler, 2016; Roncaglia, 2019).

In conjunction with the neoliberal ontology of reorganizing society with free-market principles, it becomes an important task for the state to cultivate an enterprise culture by enforcing more schemes in society driven by competitive logics. Also, it must control citizens' choices of collective activities that shape possessive individualism which drives a neoliberal society (Harvey, 2005). Arguing that the future of both the state and its citizens depends on their gains from global market competition, the state argues for the creation of a climate customized to good businesses or investment and profiteering of its citizens. Presuming an active role of the state, this becomes the essence of governmentality the neoliberal state should pursue although it sounds paradoxical to a *laissez-faire* style of governance (Wilson, 2018). Under the neoliberal regime, citizens are transformed as human capital that appreciates themselves in the market and are trained to satisfy private enterprises.

When it comes to enforcing neoliberal ideas, the neoliberal state often employs authoritarian and coercive measures on the society. In the name of the rule of law that represents the interests of corporates and financial capital, they suppress opponents of neoliberal reforms (Nijs, 2016; Plant, 2009). Moreover, as remedies for curing hostile sentiments against draconian changes in the economy and society, and diverting the public's attention, the state puts emphasis on restoring traditional values and historical legacies to citizens (Harvey, 2005). The resurgence of traditions and nationalist sentiments became a useful tactic for the neoliberal state to shift public responsibility onto individuals and attract other factions of conservatives who adhered strictly to restoring national and traditional values. Given that the global market with minimal restrictions and barriers is believed to be a utopia for neoliberals, the revival of national values to control the population seems contradictory.

This reinforces that the neoliberal state is a joint and subtle effort by different facets of the conservative camp in many Western capitalist societies rather than a rigid doctrine of pure neoliberalism (Wilson, 2018). Despite different perspectives of understanding the position of the state and nation, neoliberalism seized hegemony in conservative politics because their ideas were deemed to be useful tools for defending against Communists (Harvey, 2005; Jones, 2012). For many conservatives, any collective actions of workers would be considered as potential threats to rulers and representing collectivism. Traditional conservatives—who adhered to traditional values, social norms, and orders—did not have much ideological objection to neoliberalism in the belief that it would defend their values from the rise of subversive ideas and countercultures which argued for the liberation of oppressed classes (Hackworth, 2012).

This was similar to religious conservatives because many ideas of class liberation seemed to be against religious instructions and traditions. For them, neoliberals, who insisted on disassembling the welfare state established by class compromises, would be saviours to secure the elite's vested interests and protect their states from communization (Jones, 2012). Indeed, neoliberals were actively against the locating of resource control in the hands of the party-state system and the production of goods and services only for their use-values. According to neoliberals, such an approach would inhibit innovation and waste taxpayers' money (McGuigan, 2014). Finally, the triumph of capitalism over communism has made neoliberalism an inviolable ideology of governance and legitimized any attempts of the state to enforce neoliberal

measures on the society in the name of ‘reforms.’ Meanwhile, cutbacks in public spending such as education, health, and other welfare programs following neoliberal doctrines of limited government and free enterprise revived an old role of households as a basic unit responsible for taking care of individuals (Cooper, 2017).<sup>14</sup>

Such internal dynamics imply that the construction of the neoliberal state represents local characteristics, including political conditions within its territory. In other words, along with paradoxically active roles of the state in free-market mechanisms, this indicates that the neoliberalization of each country is subject to its local institutional characteristics. There is no such state which only rubberstamps laissez-faire policies for the sake of capital against all odds. The state approves neoliberal virtues only if they coincide with the interests of the ruling elites and manageable in local contexts (Dicken, 2015; Dreiling & Darves, 2016; Maron & Shalev, 2017). If so, the state’s sovereignty in its political and economic milieu does not vanish or weaken. Rather, it should be explained as a re-articulation of sovereignty along with adopting the logics of free-market principles as long as they do not infringe on the ruling class’ interests, which are deeply connected to financial capital and corporate expenditures (Nijs, 2016).

The state is also responsible for setting norms and rules of international organizations, including monetary authorities, which attenuate its authority from various economic activities and manage a single market (Dicken, 2015). While more organizations invite non-state actors to their governance systems and engage in decision-making processes, the position of newcomers remains still marginalized compared to states which enjoy the rights of full membership (Major, 2013). Among states, several powerful states often disregard the decisions made by international organizations which also limit their authority in governing other nation-states. A recent

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<sup>14</sup> In the US, neoliberals’ emphases on families and other traditional norms and values appealed to advocates of neoconservatism, who were against countercultures inspired by the left and insisted on restoring and prioritizing traditional Western values based on Christianity, patriarchy, and American exceptionalism—which rested on the belief that “America’s values, political system, and history are unique and worthy of universal admiration (Walt, 2011, para. 2)” that would legitimize the nation to lead and discipline the world as a virtuous country. Under the presidency of Ronald Reagan (1980–1988), neoconservatism provided an emotional, ideological foundation of the administration’s neoliberal projects of reducing public expenditures in the name of individual freedom by describing welfare recipients, immigrants, feminists, and progressives as antitheses of American values. Such a connection to neoconservatism played a pivotal role in neoliberalization and reshaping the entire US politics and society (Konings, 2012; Drolet & Williams, 2020).

resurgence of protectionist measures on trade under the Trump administration and the UK's withdrawal from the European Union demonstrates how ideas of a single, integrated, and borderless free market become fragile when they collide with political interests of individual states (Melchior, 2018; Jin, 2020b).

Based on this explanation, the state's mandates and commitments to neoliberalization are far from neoliberal ideals which demand the state to let free-market principles operate society as bystanders with minimal intervention. Even if advocates of neoliberalism expect minimal state participation, the state remains largely active to serve the interests of corporate actors and capital (McChesney, 2001). Indeed, the state becomes an architect of reshaping the society following neoliberal rules. It sets up laws, regulations, and institutions to characterize economic freedom and rules of the competition that its citizens should follow (Harvey, 2005; Nijs, 2016). If so, the state's 'withdrawal' from the economy can be better explained as the reconfiguration of its position. While it seems to devolve some power to private enterprises and financial capital market principles, it is better understood as a strategy of profiteering its resources in concert with neoliberal elites who transcend borders. This is related to what Ong (2006, 78) calls as 'graduated sovereignty', which refers to "the effects of a flexible management of sovereignty, as governments adjust political space to the dictates of global capital, giving corporations an indirect power over the political conditions of citizens in zones that are differently articulated to global production and financial circuits."

In sum, although it seems to outsource some sovereign decisions to non-state actors in the name of maximizing economic efficiency with market logics, the state considers itself to be a regulator of connecting its economic spheres and populations with global markets. If the state is a subject of neoliberalizing its economy and society, it becomes more important to understand how it redefines its position in the cultural domain because it has resisted the neoliberal demand for the state to yield its cultural sovereignty to global market forces as it is vital to govern citizens through producing distinctive collective identities and legitimize its authority as sovereign.

## 2.4. The Position of the Neoliberal State in Cultural Industries

### 2.4.1. Neoliberal Globalization of Cultural Industries

Given that globalization equips “the multilayered realities of communication systems, networks, and regulation (Raboy & Padovani, 2010, 156)”, its impacts on domestic cultural businesses are unprecedented—from the production and distribution system to characteristics of individual cultural goods. Combined with doctrines of neoliberalism, global forces in cultural industries have called for deregulating the market and reregulation to better serve corporate interests (McChesney, 2001). For decades, the US government and its media conglomerates have sought ways of enforcing free-market principles in cultural trade. They argue the removal of barriers to cultural goods and services, including trade restrictions and censorship on foreign imports and information, would promote freedom of the press and satisfy consumer demand (Freedman, 2008; Throsby, 2010; Murdock & Choi, 2018). In the name of the free flow of information, the US has stepped up the pressure on countries to open their markets and deregulate their media and communication domains.<sup>15</sup> Backed up by international trade regimes such as WTO which insist on categorizing cultural merchandises as general goods, the notion of a single market of culture that embodies neoliberal globalization of cultural industries becomes concretized (Leiva, 2017).

In relation to this, the issue of defining the status of cultural products in international trade—whether to continue their status as exemptions or recognize them as general goods—exposes again a fault line between transnational market forces and the state (Garner, 2016). Such disputes embed ideas of commodification and instrumentalization of culture that understand culture as commodities in which values are judged by market dynamics and converted into currency. On one hand, the US has

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<sup>15</sup> The free flow of information referred to a principle that countries should not impose any barriers to control or limit the flow of information—including the press and cultural products (Thussu, 2018). Arguing that production, distribution, and consumption of information should be free from the state’s intervention, its supporters anticipated that information would promote people’s right to communicate. Granted, the US government endorsed this principle to exert pressure on liberalizing media system and adopting free-market principles to other countries—which would consolidate the dominance of US cultural products thereby strengthening its political hegemony worldwide (Thussu, 2015).

pushed countries to lift trade barriers that restrict the import of US cultural products in the name of the free flow of information and free and fair trade. In line with the digitalization of cultural industries, the US urges countries not to impose restrictions on digital networks—which are to be key platforms for distributing and consuming cultural goods—arguing that they are part of the digital economy (Gagné, 2019). On the other hand, other countries have demanded a space for domestic industries against the US' pressures even though many domestic markets have opened their cultural market increasingly to foreigners. They strive to legitimize their protectionist measures on the market because of non-commercial values of cultural products that are vital to protect their distinctive cultural heritages and promote citizenship, education, national identity, and social cohesion (Goff, 2017; Jaramillo, 2019).

Alongside the pressure from the US, new communication technologies are another driving force of globalization in the cultural industries that often bypass and neutralize boundaries and regulations of individual states (Raboy & Padovani, 2010; Mansell & Raboy, 2011). Moreover, innovations led by new media technologies developed by US companies have reshaped the nature of media production and distribution systems worldwide. For instance, the emergence of SVoD services such as Netflix, Disney+, and Amazon Prime incapacitates pre-existing broadcasting schemes in many states initially designed to protect their own broadcasting businesses because new players use the Internet, not airwaves or cables, to aggregate their catalogue to subscribers. Such a bypass—direct transactions between US platforms and local customers—becomes a fundamental risk for both domestic businesses and regulatory bodies. While local broadcasters launch their own SVoD services like BBC iPlayer (UK), Globoplay (Brazil), iQiyi (China), Salto (France), and Wavve (Korea) to counter the penetration of US SVoD giants, their positions in the market are marginal except for a few countries (Lobato, 2019). In this regard, new media technologies serve as advance guards for reinforcing the US cultural hegemony. It realizes the idea of the free flow of information—a long-cherished wish of the United States government—through declawing all the major obstacles imposed by other states globally (Jin, 2015; 2019).

While states strive to defend their domestic industries from the growing penetration of US cultural products, globalization's influence on local cultural production is enormous. Indeed, the impacts of American cultural industries and their products—films, popular music, television is very prominent and visible everywhere (Giddens,

2002; Yúdice, 2003; Yoon, 2018). Moreover, their distribution and consumption mechanisms have become more subject to US-based social media platforms such as Twitter and YouTube, which makes it difficult for the local music genre to create its own cultural force (Jin, 2019). As a contemporary example, Korean pop music (K-Pop) is strongly influenced by US mainstream pop and African American music genres such as rhythm and blues (R&B) and hip-hop, and major K-Pop agencies invite many composers from the US and European pop music businesses as producers to globalize their music. Combined with lyrics from domestic lyricists, a distinctive trainee system, and visual impact and presentation of individual singers, the case of K-Pop demonstrates how local cultural production is influenced by US pop culture (Elfvig-Hwang, 2018).<sup>16</sup>

Apart from the case of K-Pop, numerous local cultural businesses have adopted genre characteristics of US cultural products and blended them with local cultures, thereby producing new and hybrid cultural forms and identities. In the television industry, the export of US television formats worldwide has become more prominent in many television markets and their local versions are popular in many countries (Ganguly, 2019). In addition to this, as more local cultural production promotional strategies become dependent on US-based platforms, this disrupts the creation of distinctive cultural forces. In the case of Korean television, there is an increasing desire on the part of producers to co-produce their content with Netflix, a US online subscription video-on-demand platform to recoup production costs and promote their products in global markets (Kim, 2021).

In this regard, combined with the US government's pressure on free trade in cultural goods and services, the impacts of US popular culture on local cultural production and the dominance of US distributors in the global market reinforce structural imbalance between US-led global forces and local players. Furthermore, this indicates

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<sup>16</sup> The Korean music industry's in-house trainee program is based on a cycle of auditions and scouting, training, and debut. A trainee is chosen either by auditions or street-casts and offered a long-term contract by the agency; the company pays all costs of the traineeship; from language schools to and vocal and dance lessons in return for his or her hours of practices—which may take up to years and long-term affiliations after their debut. However, the debut process is very competitive and only few trainees get opportunities to appear on television (Lee & Jin, 2019). Besides, successful trainees are often required to live in dormitories and maintain panoptic lifestyle controlled by the company (Elfvig-Hwang, 2018). Such a labor-intensive manufacturing system has been criticized by many critics as slave contracts (Lee & Jin, 2019; Chong, 13 February 2020).

that the current flow of globalization in cultural industries consolidates the dominance of US cultural products and challenges an individual state's authority in its cultural domain. Driven by new media technologies and the penetration of smart devices, the power of American media corporations and platforms in the global media production and distribution chain is becoming more dominant than ever (Raboy & Padovani, 2010; Jin, 2015; Jin, 2020b). Although there are different perspectives in interpreting the dynamics of local responses to the dominant and global cultural force led by US-based media conglomerates, there are various eclecticismisms in the cultural production of locals depending on how much individual organizations can negotiate with US cultural capital and overcome various structural advantages which US cultural businesses enjoy in the global market (Kraidy, 2002; Haynes, 2016). This also leads to the homogenization of cultural products from local industries to follow US mainstream products as a standard (Throsby, 2010). Then, globalization becomes an opportunity for US-based media conglomerates to further penetrate in many countries.

However, it is premature to interpret neoliberal globalization as a complete reincarnation of cultural imperialism because it also provides spaces for local cultures to promote their distinctive cultural characteristics (Throsby, 2010). Although US-led transnational cultural forces enjoy their comparative advantages in the global market and seek to reinforce their dominant position, it is still worth noting that there are a number of stakeholders in the cultural domain which counter, collaborate, and respond to globalization and lead local movements in defending, appropriating, and absorbing such foreign infiltrations (Ritzer & Stillman, 2017; Jin, 2020b). Indeed, despite the overwhelming power of US media conglomerates in global markets backed by technological and funding power, there are a series of regional players that hold a strong presence in local markets, competing with US cultural products. Although many locally produced cultural goods and services are heavily influenced by the influx of US popular culture, local producers succeeded in blending global and local characteristics into their products, gained successes in their domestic markets, and even exported products and genres to overseas markets, including the US market (Artz, 2015).

For instance, Japanese television producers have consolidated their market power in many Asian markets and succeeded in exporting their original television formats such as *Funniest Home Videos* (TBS) and *Iron Chef* (Fuji TV) to many countries including the US. Also, in collaboration with US companies such as Disney and Warner



Bros., Japanese animation studios such as Studio Ghibli and the genre of manga comics penetrated global markets (Artz, 2015; Chalabi, 2015). Meanwhile, we can observe that telenovelas—a serialized soap opera produced in Latin America with similar stylistic and thematic genre and narrative characteristics such as improbable storylines, melodrama, and romantic liaisons—have become a major television genre in the US (Miller, 2010; Ribke, 2017). Thanks to the popularity of telenovelas, Rede Globo, a Brazilian media conglomerate and the largest telenovela production studio in the world, announced to launch streaming service Globoplay in the US in 2020 (Hopewell, January 17, 2020). In this regard, the growing popularity of Korean pop music in the global marketplace could be another case exemplifying how local cultural products penetrate the US and other Western domestic markets (Yoon, Min & Jin, 2020).

Examples of Japanese television formats, telenovelas, and K-Pop indicate that there is a growing number of ‘contra-flows’, originated from the peripheries of global cultural industries that penetrate the US and Western marketplaces, contrasting the dominant flows emanated from the US and several Western countries (Thussu, 2007). Although it is evident that production and distribution activities of local producers and distributors are connected to global trends largely managed by US-based media conglomerates, the ascent of non-Western cultural exports and their penetration into the US market demonstrate that globalization of cultural milieus is rather a multidirectional and complex than an omnidirectional phenomenon, which presumes un-reflexive Western dominance and the following cultural homogenization (Sigismondi, 2020).

Furthermore, many producers and distributors in local cultural businesses have introduced new types of ‘hybrid’ popular culture through blending cultural forms and styles of US popular culture with local characteristics. Describing the mixing of cultures, Bhabha (1994) explains that cultural hybridity refers to ‘a third space’ that is something new and different cannot be explained with the dichotomy of same and other but has characteristics of making the dominant culture estranged through signifying ‘in-between’ and is a space where new forms of meaning and production are created. His ideas presume pivotal roles of local forces in creating and developing ‘in-between’ cultures. The concept has been vital to the reconsidering of the cultural binaries between the West and the Rest.

In terms of interpreting interactions of global and local forces that formulate cultural hybridity, Kraidy (2002, 317) argues for an understanding of the process as “a communicative practice constitutive of, and constituted by sociopolitical and economic arrangements”, which is subject to “the mutually constitutive interplay and overlap of cultural, economic, and political forces in international communication processes (ibid, 333).” In this regard, cultural hybridity and its outcomes should be understood as more than a mere mixing of different cultures. To simply understand cultural hybridity as a mixing of (West-driven) global culture and local culture is often criticized for depoliticizing the formation of local cultures, without considering contexts of cultural production. Without considering that the structure of global cultural production is highly asymmetrical, ideas of cultural hybridity can be exploited as a means of celebrating the Americanization of culture, which refers to “commodifying cultural phenomena and colonizing language and thereby generating a culture which people learn to treat as objective reality (Jarvis, 2007, 59)”, given that the structure of global cultural production is highly asymmetrical. To examine the epistemological and political implication of hybrid culture requires an understanding of the forces which shape forms and styles of hybridity as it creates a third space that “displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom (Bhabha, 1990, 211)”.

When it comes to the local-global encounter, the hybridization of different cultures is largely twofold. According to Kraidy and Murphy (2003), the process accompanies both fusion and fragmentation of culture. While different forms, identities and styles of heterogeneous cultures are blended, this also disrupts a fixed notion of culture (Yoon, 2018). This process embeds both the homogenization of local cultures and the birth of a unique culture, which is an outcome of transformative local practices through creating indigenized modernity different from the West’s (Iwabuchi, 2002). Again, the outcomes of hybridization and their ontological meanings would depend on political-economic and social contexts surrounding the cultural domain and its stakeholders (Kraidy, 2002). Hybrid cultures are the outcomes of longstanding negotiations among stakeholders in cultural production—both local and global producers and distributors, audiences, and governments (Ribke, 2017).

Despite controversies over interpreting some contemporary local cultures as hybrid, we can observe the rise of new cultural genres, forms, and styles in many

markets. For instance, the dominance of Bollywood movies in South Asian film markets and their penetration into Western markets. A portmanteau derived from 'Bombay' and 'Hollywood', Bollywood refers to Hindi cinema with unique genre characteristics well-known as *Masala*—mixed genres of action, comedy, melodrama, and romance with musical numbers and dance sequences, that became popular in the 1970s (Richards, 2011). Although many of these elements are influenced by Western cinema, Indian film producers asserted local sensibilities and indigeneity to their films. Rather than distinguishing Western and Indian characteristics, Bollywood represents a new hybrid cultural form that reflects both global and local political-economic and sociocultural characteristics (Wright, 2009). In this regard, regardless of personal backgrounds, Bollywood has become almost a way of life for many Indian audiences (Barat, 2020).

Thus, globalization not only fosters cultural assimilation and reinforces cultural imperialism but also promotes different cultural identities and diversities in local areas (Giddens, 2002; Ampuja, 2012). Depending on local characteristics, it may trigger new cultural practices from local spheres by mixing distinctive mentalities and other unique characteristics with Western cultures as contra-flow. Then, globalization should be understood as the nexus of transnational and national forces, while neoliberal regimes and orders strongly privilege US cultural products and their hegemony. If so, a question remains: How should we understand the state's position in its cultural domain in relation to neoliberal globalization as a key role in mobilizing national forces?

#### **2.4.2. Prevailing Position of Nation-states in Cultural Industries**

As aforementioned, the paradoxical nature of free-market mechanisms and political tensions against neoliberalization need the state to intervene in the market and control stakeholders even though it contradicts neoliberal ideals of limited government and the prevalence of free capital and enterprises. While keeping close ties with economic elites who include private corporations and financial institutions, the state takes steps on reregulating industries and the market while also propagating neoliberal ideologies of competition to citizens (Nijs, 2016). Given that neoliberalization is a political project of consolidating the power of economic elites through re-establishing the conditions for capital accumulation, the state's position cannot be reduced to that of a 'bystander', and instead is invested in the neoliberal project as it benefits the state interests as well as those of the governing elite (Harvey, 2005). This also applies to

cultural industries in which production and distribution systems become more penetrated by transnational market forces; state sovereignty prevails despite some changes (Ong, 2006; Dreiling & Darves, 2016).

Indeed, many local cultural markets are under the control of US-led media conglomerates that enjoy a variety of advantages over local competitors such as competitive price, cutting-edge technologies, human resources, international distribution chains and marketing systems. It is also true that many states have been forced to deregulate their domestic market, which resulted in consolidating the dominance of private businesses in communication markets and further commercializing their intrinsic, aesthetic, and cultural values (Yúdice, 2003; Jin, 2020b).

Despite such dominance, however, the state cannot withdraw itself from its cultural domain and let foreign players rule its cultural market considering its political and economic importance. For centuries, culture has been mobilized by the state to legitimize its authority and rules over its citizens as a means of cultivating a national identity, propagating the ruling class' arguments, and uniting the population, etc. Throughout modern history, rulers with Enlightenment backgrounds—who seized political and economic power following the industrial revolution and the print revolution that transformed the political-economic system characterized as agrarian, feudal and divinely ordained kingship—strove to link its population by constructing a collective identity to legitimize its rules (Gellner, 2006; Anderson, 2016[1983]).

This creation of a collective identity that would unite their population and distinguish them from others would become the main narrative of its citizenship. In this regard, they mobilized nationalism—“primarily a political principle which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent (Gellner, 2006, 1)” to mobilize exclusive connectedness among citizens and inspire their loyalty. For them, culture—including heritages, history, language, and religion—was instrumental to mobilizing such emotional and exclusive connectedness with common concepts as core characteristics of nationhood because it was widely shared in the public and represented distinctive local characteristics. As long as the nation is an “imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign (Anderson, 2016[1983], 4)”, the state has endeavoured to cultivate, formalize, and sometimes even fabricate culture as a means of letting citizens conceive themselves as members of this imagined kinship with

faith.<sup>17</sup> This has been the foremost political responsibility of the state's cultural policies and it has strived to mobilize culture as a means of normalizing and socializing its population as ideal citizens along with state expectations (Miller & Yúdice, 2002).

Moreover, in recent years, culture has come to the fore as instruments for the state to solve various problems in the socioeconomic realm. Along with neoliberal reforms in the public sector which were accompanied by budget cuts, suspension of public works, and privatization of public services, public authorities expect socioeconomic benefits from supporting culture (Yúdice, 2003). In this regard, policymakers strove to find instrumental values of cultural artifacts, which urged a number of cultural creators and entrepreneurs to participate in public projects such as urban revitalization, civic education, and multicultural citizenship, etc.

In particular, as the rise of the term creative industries in many policy dialogues exemplifies, market opportunities in the realm of culture led policymakers to further instrumentalize their cultural resources as potential 'cash cows' to drive the post-industrial economy. Generally speaking, the term creative industries refers to "those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property" that include "advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, interactive leisure software, music, the performing arts, publishing, software and computer services, television and radio (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2001, 5)".

While there are not many differences between the creative industries and cultural industries in terms of categorizing their boundaries, 'creative industries' implies a more

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<sup>17</sup> In relation to this, Anderson (2016[1983]) highlights how novels, which were full of familiar cityscapes and environments which their readers could identify, contributed to making emotional bond among themselves. Alongside other literature genres and newspapers, he explains the revolution of printing that enabled bulk printing followed by a mass literacy, triggered a cognitive paradigm shift in the population to feel connectedness and define something common in many American and Asian societies. Meanwhile, Gellner (2006[1983]) describes economic changes led by the industrialization necessitated to standardize and homogenize its population as potential labor. Moreover, labor-intensive characteristics of new industries fostered urbanization, which also made the population's lives more interconnected in many European societies. Despite some differences—Anderson highlighted nation-building as an outcome of societal process which could yield positive power to unite populations while Geller put emphases on it as an elite project of fabrication, both are compatible as long as they deny the nation as a primordial concept. They agree the nation is a socially constructed entity rather than heavily influenced by the elite.

pragmatic, economic, and policy-oriented approach than cultural industries as it officially declares the market value of a cultural product as the value system of policymakers in the name of intellectual property (Flew, 2012; Banks, 2017). In relation to this, by including software businesses and other industries which previously were not considered as cultural industries, the term implies the prioritization of the monetary value of an individual's creativity over other intrinsic values embedded in cultural artifacts (Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005). Despite the vagueness of the term, many countries including the United Kingdom, Australia, Korea, Canada, and France have proclaimed their nations as creative nations and promised to cultivate their creative industries as potential strategic industries to drive their respective economies (Kong, 2014).

In addition to this, despite reluctance in accepting or promoting strong statehood, advocates of neoliberalism prefer to utilize nationalist sentiments from the population as an antidote to cut-throat competition in society (Harvey, 2005). In that sense, cultural assets serve as key catalysts for the state to stimulate such feelings. Such an instrumentalist approach to culture, in which the state puts more emphasis on social and economic benefits of culture than its intrinsic values like aesthetic quality and creativity as the touchstones for supporting culture, has become a mainstream policy imperative of designing and implementing cultural policies (Miles, 2007; Behr, Brennan & Cloonan, 2016; Fung, 2018).<sup>18</sup> All these practices and influences push the state to maintain a presence in the cultural domain and defend it from foreign penetrations.

Today, many countries argue that culture is instrumental in shaping a distinctive national identity that distinguishes a society from other nation-states and contributes to legitimizing its sovereignty over a population (Miller & Yúdice, 2002; Raboy & Padovani, 2010; Iosifidis, 2016). Based on widespread anxiety over the penetration of US media conglomerates with overwhelming financial firepower and technological advantages into their cultural domain which might wipe out local businesses and homogenize local identities, various states have resisted ideas of the free flow of information (Yúdice,

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<sup>18</sup> Artistic creativity, which shapes the fundamentals of intrinsic values of cultural artifacts, involves "imagination and a capacity to generate original ideas and novel ways of interpreting the world, expressed in text, sound, and image (Throsby, 2010, 15)". In this regard, intrinsic values of culture are consisted of aesthetic, authentic, historic, spiritual, and symbolic values, etc. This is different from value-judgement of commercial goods (Kong, 2014; Marks, 2017). Given that cultural assets play pivotal roles in communicating symbolic ideas and promoting the freedom of expression, they cannot be same as other creative activities which merely seek to people to purchase their products (Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005).

2003).<sup>19</sup> In a similar vein, they have strived to carve out exceptions on cultural goods and services when they set out protocols for international trade (Garner, 2016). The backlash against US-led globalization projects for cultural industries can be seen from both less developed countries or countries ruled by authoritarian regimes, but also many Western European countries with advanced market economies such as Canada and France, arguing their right to develop and preserve culture and cultural policies as they play pivotal roles in promoting diversity and developing identities which are foundational to their societies (Gagné, 2019; Goff, 2019).<sup>20</sup>

Granted, the impacts of globalization on cultural industries differ from society to society depending on each one's institutional contexts (Flew, Iosifidis & Steemers, 2016). No matter the outcome, however, many countries still define culture as their core interest and strive to defend and promote their local businesses. To protect their domestic cultural products, many states impose a variety of actions to control foreign imports and promote local products in their domestic cultural markets (Gagné, 2019).

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<sup>19</sup> Notably, a number of countries in the South expressed that the free flow of information would reinforce structural and technological imbalances in information flows between the US (and its few allies including the United Kingdom) and other countries. For them, it would reinforce the dominance of the Western-based media conglomerates in their societies and reproduce a core-periphery relationship between the West and others that would lead to further imperialism (Masmoudi, 1979). In relation to this, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) introduced the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, so-called MacBride Commission named after an Irish politician Sean MacBride who served as the chair, in 1978 to develop schemes of the global flows of information. In 1980, the Commission submitted its report, which strongly endorsed to democratize the structure of flow of information through strengthening independence and self-reliance of individual states. In detail, the report suggested developing countries to "take specific measures to establish or develop essential elements of their communication systems (UNESCO, 1980, 255)" through supporting domestic news agencies and cultural producers and demanding fairer distributions of media resources such as the electro-magnetic spectrum and stationary satellites that should be "shared as the common property of mankind (UNESCO, 1980, 258)".

While the report's recommendations received widespread support from many countries, several Western countries, led by the US and the United Kingdom, strongly condemned the report as an abrogation of organization's basic duties of promoting the right to communicate and protecting free coverage activities of journalists to government control of the media, which resulted in withdrawals of the US (1985) and the UK (1986) from UNESCO (Thussu, 2015). Despite backlash from UNESCO, the US government continues to argue the free flow of information and abolish state interventions from media and cultural industries in international trade negotiations (Jin, 2020b). Meanwhile, many of the MacBride Commission's suggestions were included in UNESCO's following multilateral agreements like the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Cultural Expressions in 2005 (Garner, 2016).

<sup>20</sup> In the fear of cultural homogenization, Canada and France have argued cultural exception, demanding that cultural goods and services should be exempted from their trade negotiations. In detail, the French government mobilized this principle in trade negotiations, including a proposed trade agreement between the European Union and the US (Garner, 2016).

This includes quota systems on foreign imports and domestic cultural products in the distribution system as well as tariffs on imported cultural goods and services (Jin, 2011a; Garner, 2016).<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the state protects its cultural production with indirect regulatory methods including introducing different technology standards, consumer protection policies, and rating systems to filter foreign cultural products (Jin, 2017). Then, if the state implements free-market and profit-driven logics to its cultural industries, it is only because further commercialization and marketization benefit state interest (Freedman, 2008; Jin, 2013). In relation to this, Cerny (2000) argues that globalization increases the state's roles in the economy to promote the competitiveness of domestic industries and adjust marketization.

Apart from restrictions on imported cultural products, there are ways for the state to retain its authority and exert its influence on domestic cultural production. Alongside trade regulations, the state can manage the entire production and distribution chain with regulations and can exert influence over the content of cultural products. For example, the state manages the rating system for audiovisual products affecting the content of various products in distribution systems. Public authorities can restrict or prevent the circulation of content for indecency or obscenity, and despite controversies over the definition of what is considered obscene and limitations on freedom of expression, such measures of prior restraint are generally understood as constitutional (Havens & Lotz, 2017).

In addition to content regulation, the state involves in cultural production by giving subsidies or presenting tax benefits to local producers and distributors who produce cultural goods and services. Moreover, it often directly engages in producing cultural goods and services through the cultural ministry and public organizations. For instance, when it comes to the broadcasting industry, public broadcasters function as the main carriers of locally produced television content in many countries, including Australia, Canada, Denmark, Ireland and so forth (Taras & Waddell, 2020; Verboord & Kristensen, 2020). Moreover, public organizations in the motion picture world deeply engage in promoting domestic films by commissioning, funding, and marketing individual film

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<sup>21</sup>In relation to this, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), a legal agreement prescribes rules of international trade, granted exceptions in cinema films. For instance, according to its Article IV, there is a provision which allows contracting parties to impose internal regulations in domestic film markets such as screen quotas (World Trade Organization, n.d.).



production (Druick, 2014; Jin, 2020a). Despite criticism of restricted budgets, limited authority, and bureaucratic approaches to cultural production, public institutions serve as major patrons of local cultural production, which is key to defending local producers from US-based big capital.

In conjunction with existing industrial regulations, public authorities manage the media environment by regulating the structure of cultural businesses. For instance, many countries regulate cross-ownership in media businesses—a single corporate entity’s ownership of multiple media companies—as a way of maintaining the diversity of voices and preventing monopoly in media. In addition to this, the state has the right to license broadcasters on the basis that airwaves are deemed as natural resources that should be managed by the state to allocate them fairly (Lee & Jin, 2018). Meanwhile, some countries require distributors in the domestic market to broadcast and screen a certain amount of film, music, and television produced by domestic producers. Combined with other special treatment for domestic cultural producers, including subsidies, tax benefits, and other institutional supports, these measures have been vital to protect and promote local producers (Spalding, 2016; Leiva & Albornoz, 2020).

The state even engages in technological development, which is the main stimulus connecting different cultural productions and integrates the production chain into a single global one. With funding, laws, regulations, infrastructures, and promotion programs, the state constantly intervenes in developing technologies for the sake of its interests (Sadowski, 2020). Indeed, the state still has the mandate of adopting standards of various technologies used in mobile broadband, radio spectrum, and ultra-high-definition television, etc. For instance, by constructing high-speed broadband network and setting detailed standards of broadband technologies that service providers should satisfy, the Korean state safeguarded domestic telecommunication businesses and played a decisive role in the rapid growth of the nation’s Internet penetration in the 2000s (Oh & Larson, 2011; Jin, 2017).<sup>22</sup> It also sets details of net neutrality—the principle which Internet service providers should treat all data, hosts and users the same without any discrimination—which are fundamental to the development of global cultural

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<sup>22</sup> In detail, the government imposed a series of regulation for limiting infiltrations of foreign industrial actors by introducing the Wireless Internet Platform for Interoperability (WIPI), a distinctive standard for domestic wireless mobile internet in the early 2000s. Although the government lifted the mandatory use of WIPI in 2009, this was effective in terms of delaying the entry of foreign telecommunication players (Jin, 2017).

industries. For example, the Trump administration repealed net neutrality in 2018 making broadband providers enable to influence Internet traffic by blocking or slowing down websites or charge extra fees on certain web hosts, which many of their measures are illegal in Canada (Zimmer, 2018).

Given that technologies are socially constructed artifacts, the state influences technological development to reflect its interests through technology governance (Nuechterlein & Weiser, 2013; Briggs & Burke, 2020). Moreover, the state is directly involved in the technological domain to secure its political and economic interests, such as hacking data from other countries (Follis & Fish, 2020). This results in re-setting borders within digital space and shows how the path of technological development is influenced by the state (Tawil-Souri, 2015). Such direct and indirect engagement of the state and its public organizations are vital to local producers and distributors who compete against US media conglomerates armed with financial muscle and cutting-edge technologies.

Considering all this, the conceptualizations of both neoliberalism and globalization, as well as the active practices of both in society—including in cultural industries—cannot be generalized across states and cultures as they are subject to local influences and characteristics. This provides a space for the state to redefine neoliberalism and globalization as a means of implementing both in society and various industries, leading to characteristics that would depend on local contexts and the state's political, economic, and social interests. Then, it becomes premature to conclude that neoliberal globalization of cultural industries driven by US media conglomerates and the US government neutralizes the state's sovereignty in the global market. Rather, the state continues to engage in its cultural domain by re-establishing relationships with private companies and capital which reshape the mechanisms of cultural production at both the national and global levels (Flew & Waisbord, 2015). Despite the flow of neoliberal globalization in which forces urge the state to retreat from its cultural governance, many states still retain their policy instruments and give orders to their cultural assets (Jin, 2013; Flew, Iosifidis, Steemers, 2016). Therefore, by mobilizing domestic regulations and infrastructures which provide a customized environment for local players and protect them from their competitors with overwhelming capital and technological capacities, states continue to play a role as an important stakeholder in both national and global cultural industries. That said, the following chapters explain how the state persists in this

role through exercising its political-economic power over cultural industries which become more multilayered by global forces.

## **Chapter 3.**

# **The Korean Developmental State's Development of Cultural Industries**

### **3.1. Introduction**

Since the establishment of the Republic of Korea in 1948, the Korean state has strived to increase ethnic and national consciousness and to mobilize its population in the name of national development. In this regard, like other newly developing countries that gained independence in the aftermath of World War II, the Korean government considered culture an instrument to manage its citizens by promoting proper lifestyles and work ethic and propagated a 'righteous' historical perspective to the population (Miller and Yúdice, 2002). In addition to this, as a result of the Korean War (1950–1953), fierce ideological competitions between North Korea and South Korea contributed to the exploitation of culture for consolidating authority on the part of both regions to gain the upper hand in the ongoing conflict. Finally, the authoritarian regime which ruled the nation from 1961 to 1987 also regarded culture as an instrument to establish its otherwise vulnerable legitimacy as the nation's leadership. These factors justified the Korean state's mobilization of all available resources seen as necessary to develop the nation, and culture was not an exception (Kim G., 2018). Such distinctive historical moments played major roles in the formation of the backbone of the Korean developmental state, whose legacies continued after the nation's democratization in 1988 and are still seen in contemporary Korea today.

Based on the explanation, the chapter introduces the history of Korean cultural policies from the 1960s, when the Korean state began to design and implement policy measures in the cultural realm. First of all, the chapter defines the concept of the developmental state in the Korean context. Then, it explains the trajectory of the nation's cultural policies from 1961 to 2021 in relation to the developmental state. Throughout the chapter, it concludes that Korean cultural policies are inextricably linked to the nation's legacies of the developmental state, whose policies aimed to mobilize all available resources in the name of national interest and developing the nation. This relationship

between the state and the cultural realm is deeply embedded in the rise of the Korean cultural industries.

## **3.2. An Overview of the Developmental State Model in East Asia and the Korean Developmental State**

### **3.2.1. The Model of the East Asian Developmental State**

Developmentalism is an economic theory that emphasizes the state's capacity and authority to develop its economy by handling market forces. In that sense, the developmental state refers to a centralized state with preeminent authority in relation to the private sector to secure its development objectives (Johnson, 1982; Wade, 1990). The developmental state presumes active roles of the state to create and regulate the nexus of the national economy and politics that support sustained industrialization and mobilization of resources (Haggard & Moon, 1993). In the name of national interest, the developmental state takes the role of an active coordinator for mobilizing resources and managing stakeholders to develop a national economy by implementing measures and policies, influenced by entrepreneurial perspectives, that lead to large-scale changes. The state's intervention in the industries through various policy measures and control of various stakeholder interests in the socioeconomic realm led to an increase in the scale of production (Chang, 2001). In this regard, the developmental state can be explained as a type of state that prioritizes economic development over other public policies in the belief that state-led industrialization is more effective than market-driven approaches (Amsden, 1989; Haggard & Moon, 1993; Suh & Kwon, 2014).

A successful developmental state is often characterized by autonomous and competent bureaucracy, political leadership based on executive dominance, close relationships between state agencies and leading figures in the industries, a large pool of policy measures that give impetus to economic growth, and the state's political ability to insulate the decision-making surrounding economic policies from diverse stakeholders in terms of managing resources and instruments (Haggard, 1990). In particular, the developmental state operationalizes the concept of economic development in terms of competitiveness, growth, and productivity, rather than public welfare. It intervenes in the market by mobilizing resources and disciplining economic actors through various policy sets such as financial incentives and protections from

foreign capital to accomplish its missions (Johnson, 1982; Wade, 1990). Thanks to a body of competent bureaucrats, the state was able to govern the market and construct synergic connections with private companies who expected the co-existence of market competitions and active administration (Chan, Clark & Lam, 1998). For example, the Korean government has regularly called monthly meetings with high authorities from banks and other industries to consolidate its close relationship with them and to manage their strategies for both domestic and foreign markets so that they could reduce transaction costs and adopt new technologies in industrial fields (Amsden, 1989).

Much of the concept of the developmental state is based on Keynesian economics which emphasizes the roles of a strong state in controlling the flow of demand and supply in the belief that the market is an unstable system (Radice, 2008). If so, the state's presence becomes important when striving for long-term economic growth by managing various stakeholders in the market to stabilize the economic system by nurturing infant industries (Hirschman, 1958). In this regard, scholars presume the institutional arrangements as a driving force in explaining the rapid growth of East Asian countries (Moon & Prasad, 1994). For instance, In the 1950s, the Japanese government recognized its role in creating competitive advantages in the market not only by incubating new businesses but also by pushing them toward innovations in the global economy. As markets were supervised by the state, such an interventionist approach might conflict with tenets of economic rationalism; however, this was an effective method to boost industries that otherwise required rapid technological progress and high labour productivity in a short period of time (Johnson, 1982; Wade, 1990).

Under the strong guidance of their respective governments, several East Asian states including Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore transformed their economies with export-oriented cutting-edge technologies and capital-intensive businesses (Haggard, 1990). In response to the success of East Asian economies, Ward (1990) argues that the state's additional investment in several key industries and forcing them to address global competition through cutting-edge technologies and other aspects of high productivity triggered by state interventions were adequate measures for export-oriented countries. Such successful economic development challenged the conventional wisdom of free-market-led industrializations (Castells, 1992).

Despite such achievements in economic development, it is still worth noting that the roles of the Korean government as a developmental state have been contested in Korean society. Most of all, many opposition politicians and activists who fought for democracy argued that state-led developmentalism served as an ideology for rulers to legitimize the suspension of the liberal order and to dissolve contradictions and disparities in Korean society with heavy-handed methods that will be discussed in the following paragraphs (Chang, 2019). In detail, the way in which politicians secured and maneuvered space for bureaucrats to maintain the state's autonomy to manage the economic system is often accompanied by soft authoritarianism that suppresses different voices from stakeholders (Wade, 1990).

### **3.2.2. A Brief Introduction of the Korean Developmental State and Its Approach to the Cultural Domain**

The Korean developmental state can be understood as “systematic and comprehensive action plans for a certain period of future to rationally utilize resources so that the state can accomplish its missions defined from its economic plans (Kang, 2001, 5)”. Park Chung-hee, who served as the head of state from 1961 to 1979, launched a series of masterplans to develop the economy with top-down, state-directed policy frameworks. Arguing that the market-driven economic growth would contradict the state's intentions, he legitimized the developmental system as state-guided capitalism in which the state leads economic and industrial development (Park, 1970).<sup>23</sup> The Park administration established the Economic Planning Board (EPB) in 1961 to design and direct the development plan and allocate the budget. As the main architect of constructing the developmental state, the position of EPB was strong since it implemented valorization schemes, set up international economic policies, and administered policy-makings of other governmental agencies to align with its developmental plans. While the Korean economy recorded a remarkable success in the 1960-70s under the direction of Five-year economic development plans, such style of

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<sup>23</sup> Despite his notes, one of the core characteristics of Korean developmental state is its close cooperation between family-owned business conglomerates known as *Chaebols*. This is partly due to how the nature of the developmental state is based on negotiations of goals and policies with private sectors and the support of growth through resource allocation. Such close ties were based on the state's allocation of resources and negotiations with major companies.

governance resulted in the mobilization of the entire government system to prioritize economic development over other agendas.

As a former army general who took power in a 1961 military coup, followed by the presidential election in 1963, the Park administration continued to use authoritarian rule and military resources to enforce measures to achieve the developmental state's missions in the name of efficiency alongside economic bureaucracy led by technocrats, who were often bureaucrats with technological expertise. Thanks to such measures, the state bureaucracy became strong enough to resist pressures from private sectors and political oppositions and improved its control over capital mobilization (Kim H-A., 2011). Such a concentration of executive power toward economic development could be characterized as a developmental state since the state often transcended the various interests of different social forces in terms of formulating and implementing development strategies (Evans, 1995). The state-led developmentalism and its five-year developmental plans, which were renewed until 1986, succeeded in industrializing the Korean nation with heavy-chemical industries and export-led structures.

Despite its success, this development model brought serious side-effects to both the economy and society. For example, while the state's stance on mobilizing and allocating resources to develop the industry was useful for boosting businesses in a short period, only a handful of private companies could enjoy the resulting benefits. Such a concentration led to structural imbalances between several major conglomerates and other small-medium businesses where the entire economy became dependent on their performance. This resulted in 'back-scratching' alliances between politicians and a handful of conglomerate leaders, resulting in serious corruption (Doucette, 2015). In addition to this corruption, much of the state's mobilization was based on forcing low-wage policies and long working hours on the labour force with minimal welfare and protections. This approach provoked labour disputes between workers and companies, but the state maintained their restrictions toward labour that weakened the rights of employees (Lee, 2015).

As long as the developmental state was a human artifact, the design and implementation of the developmental state demanded a series of political and sociocultural devices to legitimize such mobilization of resources. Since the economic development was considered as core to political campaigns of 'the modernization of the



fatherland (*Jogukgeundaehwa* in Korean)' through political campaigns, it was necessary to design ideological devices to legitimize such a definition and prioritization of the economic development as the dominant means of modernization. Moreover, as long as the state suspended the constitutional rights of the citizenry, such as freedom of expression, and exploited labour in the name of economic success, there was a need for ideological measures to support an authoritative governing style of the state. This became the foundation of Korean cultural policies in the 1960s (Lee, 2019a).<sup>24</sup>

Legacies of the developmental state, particularly in the cultural domain, are still prominent in Korea's contemporary industries. Since the 1990s, the state has utilized different strategies to develop cultural businesses and promote their cultural goods. Depending on each administration's political orientation and changes in the international market, the state used both hands-on and hands-off measures to mobilize culture as a tool of accomplishing its political and economic ends (Jin, 2011b). On one hand, liberal-progressive administrations under the presidency of Kim Dae-jung (1998–2003) and Roh Moo-hyun (2003–2008) understood culture as vital to propping up the nation's democracy. Since many leading figures from cultural fields who participated in these administrations had a long history of fighting against previous authoritarian governments, they believed the state should not interfere with culture or the arts (Kang H., 2015; Lee, 2019a). In addition to this, a series of neoliberal reforms that led the state to withdraw from public sectors and instead introduce free-market system measures in economic policies also influenced the reluctance of these administrations to directly participate and manage their cultural sector (Ryoo & Jin, 2020).

In this regard, both the Kim and Roh administrations emphasized the virtues of creativity and diversity of culture and implemented more indirect and passive methods to develop industries, such as lessening the entry barrier of private capital into cultural businesses, reducing protectionist measures on the domestic market, and introducing private-led public funds to support cultural products instead of direct subsidies (Kim J.

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<sup>24</sup> In this regard, the term developmental state in Korea is hardly accepted as an ideologically neutral concept in Korean society considering its legacies of authoritarian rule in past decades that resulted in suppressing democracy. At times, the model of developmental state brings up deficiencies in democracy and legitimizes the exploitation of labor in the name of economic development. Moreover, connections between politicians and businesspeople established unhealthy, collusive political-economic cartels that brought serious corruption to Korean politics and society (Woo-Cummings, 1999).

S., 2011; Jin, 2020a). Also, in proclaiming the autonomy of culture, they supported arts and culture through autonomous councils that were managed by cultural experts. Considered as arm's length principles, public funds were distributed by experts and practitioners in the cultural domain to secure institutional autonomy of culture and prevent interventions from the paymaster (Gray, 2012; Lee, 2019a). In relation to the Korean Wave, both administrations chose strategies for managing potential anti-Korean sentiments overseas in which the popularity of Korean cultural products might be seen as another cultural invasion like the entry of Hollywood had been understood in the region (Kim & Jin, 2016). Despite such measures, the state continued to intervene in cultural industries by encouraging more investment from major capital and negotiating with various stakeholders in the cultural domain as a facilitator.

On the other hand, conservative administrations led by Lee Myung-bak (2008–2013) and Park Geun-hye (2013–2017) were more active in utilizing culture, focusing on its potential political and economic contributions to the national economy. Recognizing the popularity of Korean pop idols and television series in foreign countries, both administrations established governmental organizations such as the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) and the Presidential Committee for Cultural Enrichment (PCCE) to develop strategies and programs to develop various cultural businesses and encouraged investments from major conglomerates. In the name of producing content with high commercial viability in the global market, these administrations were directly involved in the entire production chain of cultural goods, taking more proactive and direct measures such as providing subsidies on designing content and its production as well as promoting domestic cultural products in the distribution market (Ryoo & Jin, 2020). In this regard, the state itself became a patron of producing and distributing cultural products globally (Lee, 2019a).

Meanwhile, both Lee and Park believed that the Korean Wave would benefit the nation's international reputation and improve its international competitiveness. Accordingly, they often mentioned the success of Korean cultural products in public and focused their administrations' efforts toward utilizing popular cultural goods for strengthening the soft power of the nation. Given that much of soft power rests on a nation's cultural resources, the popularity of Korean cultural products in global markets was a vital tool to pursue various political agendas aimed at projecting Korea's political-economic power in the global arena (Nye & Kim, 2013). Not surprisingly, such

usefulness legitimized conservative administrations' ability to wield its influence over cultural industries with more direct methods in the name of cultural diplomacy and national branding (Nye, 2008; Republic of Korea Government, 2008; Kim & Jin, 2016). Such a utility of culture for political projects led the nation's cultural ministry and its affiliated organizations to urge artists and entrepreneurs in the field to produce content with high chances of success in the global market. This became another reason for the state to employ hands-on measures on directing its cultural industries to follow its guidelines. As both the Lee and Park administrations strived to instrumentalize culture for developing the national economy and fostered marketization of cultural values, their presences in the cultural domain were more significant than their liberal-progressive predecessors. Such an instrumentalist and interventionist approach often collided with figures in the cultural domain and brought the state's oppression of anti-governmental cultural producers.

In short, much of the development of the Korean cultural industries was achieved by various interventions by the Korean state. Indeed, the state played pivotal roles in creating strategies for developing industries, mobilizing resources, and introducing preferential schemes to support businesses, directing companies and artists and promoting their cultural works in the market, etc. Despite some differences based on how each administration responded to neoliberalism and globalization and its political tendency, all administrations after the 1990s showed strong willingness toward developing cultural industries and recognized that state action would be vital to building up these emerging businesses. The following sections explain the major development strategies of each administration since the 1990s and how their approaches to cultural industries are connected to the nation's legacies of the developmental state.

### **3.3. Cultural Industry Policies in Pre-Korean Wave Era: The Birth of Cultural Industry Policies under Roh Tae-woo (1988–1993) and Kim Young-sam (1993–1998) Administrations**

After a series of nationwide democracy movements in 1987, the Korean government promised to reform the constitution and political system towards full democracy, including a direct presidential election system. Due to the fragmented opposition vote, Roh Tae-woo, a former army general, was elected as president by

popular vote. As part of political democratization, the Roh administration lifted and eased censorship on cultural products such as the publisher registration system and ‘the Basic Press Law’ that restricted freedom of expression (Jin, 2011b; Lee, 2019a). Also, market liberalization was intensified during Roh’s presidency. For instance, the Roh administration attempted to have *Chaebols*—family-owned large conglomerates which dominated the nation’s economy—focus on their core businesses to reduce competition and excessive investment. Due to fierce backlash, however, the state’s attempt to reform *Chaebols* failed despite the public’s skepticism stemmed from regular uncoordinated diversification, unethical economic activities, and corruption among Chaebol-run businesses (Uttam, 2014). Major tycoons including Hyundai and Samsung criticized the inefficiencies and incompetence of Roh’s economic team. This signified the power *Chaebols* held against the ruling political elites (Jin, 2011b).

The state’s retreat from the political-economic sphere in line with the democratization and the rise of private stakeholders served as a catalyst for further industrialization of the cultural domain. In 1990, the Roh administration established a separate ministry for cultural affairs for the first time—the Ministry of Culture (MOC)—and initiated a series of cultural policies which aimed at disarticulating the pre-existing government’s propaganda from the state’s approach to the cultural domain. In line with political democratization, providing the population more access to culture would be at the core of the state’s new agenda in its cultural policies. This became detailed in its masterplan, ‘Ten-year Plan for Cultural Development’ in 1990. To provide more accessibility to culture, the administration promised to provide more art education in schools and to expand infrastructures for artists who worked in both rural and urban areas, including increasing subsidies to traditional cultural heritages. Also, in line with its recent Olympic Games in 1988, the Ministry promised to promote Korean culture overseas and host various events to position the nation as a hub of Asian culture (Ministry of Culture, 1990).

While the administration put emphasis on culture and the arts as a means of improving quality of life, a number of measures presumed that the state would spearhead the proposed changes rather than cultural workers or the market. Unlike other countries that discussed ways how to preserve people’s rights to create and enjoy culture, this plan was introduced without a consensus of cultural workers, who were

ready to develop relevant schemes to respond to the state's new framework despite not being initially consulted (Lee, 2019a).<sup>25</sup>

Meanwhile, the administration introduced several measures to liberalize the cultural market. For instance, because of trade disputes with the US, the Roh administration abolished the exclusive rights of domestic film companies to import and release foreign films in 1988, which allowed the direct distribution of imported films (Jin, 2019). Although several conglomerates showed interest in opening cultural businesses, there were few major players during Roh's tenure, which resulted in the state taking the lead in reorganizing the cultural milieu after the democratization. In other words, as long as both the market and cultural activists did not have enough authority to fill the power vacuum in the cultural domain due to their inefficiencies and incapacities, the state could continue to architect the field. Although much of Roh's plan was not successful due to the suspension of certain measures, such as the local self-governing system—which was scheduled to be introduced in 1991 but was waived until 1995, Roh's approach implied that legacies of the developmental state would prevail after the democratization. The succeeding Kim Young-sam administration saw detailed plans of industrializing cultural industries emerging from the Korean state in earnest (Jin, 2016).

In 1992, a long-time democratic activist and the ruling party candidate Kim Young-sam was elected as Roh's successor. Inaugurated in early 1993, he began to implement a series of measures to deregulate the economy in line with discourses of neoliberal globalization. Based on his criticisms of previous authoritarian governments, which developed the economy at the expense of civil liberty and democracy, he

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<sup>25</sup> When it comes to disseminating cultural works to the public, societies debated whether to adopt the democratization of culture or cultural democracy as the keynote for their cultural policies. At one hand, based on universalism which characterized human nature with universal norms, supporters of the democratization of culture demanded that the state would have to disseminate qualified cultural works to audiences who had not have enough chances to access them due to lack of financial means or knowledge. On the other hand, advocates of cultural democracy understood the subjective and relational nature of actors in the cultural domain and argued to promote the rights of individuals to prefer certain culture freely and recommended that policies should guarantee free choice through providing relevant distribution channels and information. Depending on the model, the state's roles in cultural policies would be different—the democratization of culture model would ask the state to generate supply for cultural works by increasing overall capacity of the population via propagation and education directed from the state, and cultural democracy would minimize the amount of intrusion into cultural goods and services so that the public would express their cultural capabilities throughout the society (Evyard, 1997).

proclaimed that his administration would manage the economy based on the principles of free markets such as competition and deregulation with highlighting freedom of individuals (Kim, 1993; Kwon & Kim, 2014). Directed by the World Trade Organization—which proclaimed free-market trade as the main tool for economic development and argued for the state to abolish restrictions on trade and other inadequate macroeconomic and monetary policies that harmed the market—his cabinet introduced policies to open the market and cut back the role of government (World Trade Organization, 2009; Jin, 2011b).

In addition to this, Kim established the Presidential Committee on Globalization and began to materialize his plans for globalization. While Kim's emphases on globalization was a response to the United States and its Western allies pressuring the Korean government to open its domestic market, he believed that globalization would bring new opportunities to incentivize domestic players to innovate their businesses, which would be crucial to revitalizing the economy (Kang, 2000). As an outcome, the administration announced to both partially and fully liberalize 47 industry sectors, which had originally been under the state's direct control, by 2000 (Baek, May 22, 2017).

However, the state continued to direct private companies on how to restructure their businesses. Despite its emphasis on market liberalization and deregulation, the administration kept its interventionist standpoint to implement neoliberal ideas in both policy contexts and the market. In the name of globalization, Kim and ministers in his cabinet often convened meetings with heads of conglomerates and provided guidelines to them on how to restructure their businesses in line with the state's missions, such as foreign investments, price freeze on daily necessities, and the development of new businesses that the state preferred. Although the administration removed or relaxed regulations in the market, the state still had some degree of authority over such regulations through the state's inspection agencies and government-run banks. In this regard, even if *Chaebols* gained more power, they still had to respect the state's leadership in the economic realm (Baek, June 4, 2017).

The co-existence of both market liberalization and state-interventionist tendencies was also seen in changes to cultural industry policies. During his tenure, Kim eased censorship on cultural products and the media. For instance, in 1995, the administration lifted the pre-rating system on popular music that had been abused to

cancel songs and singers. In the following year, it also replaced the same system on films with a newly implemented rating system. Many local newspapers and broadcasters were established, and a handful of journalists who had been laid off by authoritarian regimes were reinstated to their companies. Considering Kim's political background as a political activist against authoritarian regimes in the 1970s and 1980s, such measures on liberalizing the press were natural consequences (Kwon & Kim, 2014). Moreover, they accorded with the state's emphases on liberalizing the market (Kim D., 2018).

Throughout these measures, the administration sought to expand cultural industries and integrate its cultural businesses into the global market (Jin, 2006).

Meanwhile, the Kim administration employed state-interventionist strategies to develop the nation's cultural industries. In 1994, the Presidential Advisory Council for Science and Technology suggested a strategic plan for developing high-tech media content production, particularly in the film industry, noting that Hollywood blockbuster *Jurassic Park's* total revenue exceeded the sales of 1.5 million cars manufactured by Hyundai Motors (Kim, 1994; Shim, 2008). Based on his recognition that "it would be inevitable to open the market to foreign cultural products (Kim, 1995)", the Ministry of Culture and Sport (MCS) installed the Cultural Industry Bureau to develop strategies for globalization and market liberalization of cultural industries in 1994. The bureau was formed with four divisions, and each division would develop policy schemes to promote films, videos and music, publishing, and policy planning, respectively.

In the belief that cultural products could be more profitable than other products from manufacturing businesses such as automobiles, policymakers in MCS were eager to industrializing cultural businesses that had been under the state's protection as tools of preserving traditions and propaganda (Shim, 2006; Ryoo & Jin, 2020). As a result, the National Assembly established several legal frameworks to support cultural businesses, such as the Promotion of the Motion Pictures Industry Act in 1995 and amended the Culture and Arts Promotion Act to include cultural industries within the boundary of culture and arts so that MCS could support the development of cultural businesses. That said, while the state continued to deregulate and open the cultural market, it also introduced several legal frameworks like the 'Motion Picture Promotion Act (1995)' so that the state would be able to support cultural industries by providing subsidies and tax benefits (Han, 2010).

When it comes to raising investment, the Kim administration invited conglomerates to reshape the cultural industries and to mobilize private money. Indeed, the entry of *Chaebols*, including CJ, Hyundai, Samsung, SK, and Tongyang, into the market contributed to increasing revenues and the number of employees, notably in broadcasting and film businesses. For instance, Hyundai set a joint venture with France's Canal Plus and entered the film distribution industry, and CJ invested 300 million USD into Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks (Kang I., 2015). Meanwhile, Samsung strived to produce several films like *Shiri*, the first Korean blockbuster film about the confrontation between South and North Korea, with a total cost of 8.5 million USD (Shim, 2008; Jin, 2006, 2019). Such a method of developing cultural industries, which the state mobilized conglomerates for promoting a new industry, was nothing new compared to the pre-existing industry promotion policies. This meant that the state's viewpoint on its cultural milieu began to change as industrial policies from previous policies aimed at preserving cultural artifacts and controlling popular culture with censorships, with new policies crafted around the expectation of economic benefits and the export of cultural products.

The Kim Young-sam administration's roles in and approach to developing cultural industries were important as it recognized the economic potentials of culture and began to promote the industrialization of popular culture, laying the key groundwork for what is now contemporary state cultural policy (Yim, 2002; Ryoo & Jin, 2020). In retrospect, authoritarian governments understood cultural products as tools for propagating their political agendas and controlling the population, which became the basis of policymaking. However, such a repressive approach became obsolete after the political democratization period when the Korean state introduced a new framework for cultural policies that would better fit into a system of more democratic governance and satisfy the nation's new cultural identity in the post-authoritarian era (Yim, 2002). In this regard, in line with the administration's masterplan of economic globalization and creating new industries with information and communication technologies, emphasis on the economic potentials of culture saw a profound shift in attitudes toward cultural policies from regulation to promotion (Kwon & Kim, 2014).

As mentioned, the Kim administration's approach to developing cultural industries had characteristics of both market liberalization—which Kim sought to introduce with his agenda of globalization—and state-led developmentalism, which were



legacies from the previous authoritarian period. On the one hand, such characteristics reduced censorship of cultural products, including films, popular music, publication, and television programs, etc. Moreover, to attract investment of major financiers, including *Chaebols*, entry barriers into the cultural industry market were lowered, removing remnants of authoritarian government restrictions meant to control the domestic media market (Kwon & Kim, 2013; Kim D., 2018). Granted, in line with the administration's plans of economic globalization, these measures triggered further commercialization in cultural production and brought about industrialization led by major market forces.

In the meantime, the administration continued to be involved in developing cultural industries through setting masterplans, utilizing public and private resources, and providing both direct and indirect support. The administration reorganized the cultural ministry by establishing several sub-branches that would deal with industrial planning and support (Kwon & Kim, 2014) and reclassified audiovisual production as a manufacturing business. This meant that producers would be able to apply more subsidies, tax exemptions and other institutional supports that had previously only been available to manufacturing companies since they had been recognized as key sectors leading the nation's export-led economy. Such measures allowed cultural producers to receive loans from major banks as their outcomes could be recognized as products with commercial viability (Parc, 2017). Furthermore, unlike other countries that focused on subsidizing creators, the Kim administration also constructed various infrastructure and introduced new distribution channels (Jin, 2011; Parc, 2017).

Finally, *Chaebols'* entry into film and television businesses was managed by their close cooperation and alignment with the state's masterplans. While the administration advocated for the roles of market forces in industry development, it retained regulatory power to manage the direction of *Chaebol* activities in this burgeoning industry so that their entries into cultural production would benefit the state's purpose of developing economy. In relation to market liberalization, the state not only deregulated barriers for foreign capital and the influx of foreign cultural products but also promoted major companies in cultural production to pioneer overseas markets (Kwon & Kim, 2013; Ryoo & Jin, 2020). Granted, these measures on cultural industry policies and support in the industries with interventionist approaches were vital to increase the nation's cultural exports, which became the fundamental framework of the Korean Wave in the mid-1990s.

Hence, despite the Kim administration's emphases on globalization and the following steps to deregulate and liberalize the market, the state never withdrew its roles as an architect in shaping a new industry. Rather, by cooperating with pre-existing big players in the nation's economy and with its political-economic leverages in trade negotiations and domestic regulations, the state continued to manage economic actors in ways that served its primary interests (Jin, 2016; Lee, 2019a). The administration's approach to culture, by emphasizing economic potential, established the growth of the cultural industries. Also, while it highlighted the roles and contributions of market forces and private sectors in developing cultural industries through deregulating the cultural domain, the administration collaborated with *Chaebols* and other private stakeholders so they would serve to benefit the state's mission of economic development. That said, Kim's approach followed a utilization of neoliberal arguments for the sake of the state's developmental interests (Ryoo & Jin, 2020). In the aftermath of the nation's financial crisis in 1997–1998, Kim's liberal successor Kim Dae-jung was forced to carry out neoliberal reforms, which became another pivotal moment in the state's developing cultural industry policies.

### **3.4. Cultural Industry Policies in the Korean Wave Era**

#### **3.4.1. The Kim Dae-jung Administration (1998–2003): Foundation of the Korean Cultural Industry Policies with Neoliberal Imperatives**

In the aftermath of the nation's financial crisis, Kim Dae-jung (1998–2003) was elected president. Under the guidance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the new Kim administration implemented a series of neoliberal reforms, including deregulations in the labour market, liberalizations of the financial market, and privatization of public organizations to revive the economy.<sup>26</sup> Bitten by the credit crunch, many financial institutions and several manufacturing conglomerates went bankrupt. This led the administration to introduce the 'knowledge-based economy' as a new narrative of its

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<sup>26</sup> In relation to this, Jin (2011) explains that political factors also contributed to privatizing government-owned corporations. Kim promised to privatize state-owned enterprises including the Korea Telecom (KT), the state-owned telecommunication service provider, as a way of raising government revenues and enforcing anti-corruption policies on the public sector. During his presidency, this telecom mogul became fully privatized. This brought an opening of the nation's local phone market to private players.

economic policies to replace bankrupted businesses and develop high value-added information and technology-oriented industries that would be fueled by venture companies (National Economic Advisory Committee, 2000). While the administration continued to carry out a large-scale restructuring of major conglomerates, it distributed a large budget to knowledge-based industries with interventionist policies to recuperate the nation from economic downturns (Yim, 2002; Jin, 2017; Lee, 2019a).

In this regard, Kim recognized its cultural industries as high value-added businesses (Kwon & Kim, 2014). Kim often considered himself as the ‘President of Culture (*Munhwadaetongryeong* in Korean)’ and showed off his insight about the importance of culture. After his inauguration, he had a conversation with high-ranking officials and urged the necessity for supporting the cultural industries as follows,

If the strength of a nation depended on its economy and military force in the 20th century, economy and culture will determine the nation’s strength. Cultural industries, in particular audiovisual media, have great added value. Their values are like those of automobiles or shipbuilding... Cultural industries not only gain profits but also promote Korea’s image to the world. In terms of competing with others, national image, as well as quality of goods, is crucial. (Kim, 1998).

Based on his visions, the administration began to design and implement various programs to support the cultural domain. In 1999, it established the Korea Film Commission (KOFIC) as a core public agency to support its film industry. In 2000, The Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT) introduced a five-year plan named ‘Cultural Industry Vision 21’, which was the Korean state’s first comprehensive policy framework to develop its cultural industries. Citing an American consultant Peter Drucker’s emphasis on the role of cultural industries in national economies in the coming century, the Ministry stressed that cultural industries were core pillars of the knowledge-based economy and the promotion of these businesses would be a key agenda of the administration to increase the nation’s competitive edge. Defining cultural industries as “industries relevant to produce, distribute, and consume cultural products that refer to commodities and services which accumulate cultural elements to create economic added value (MCT, 2000a, 5)”, the Ministry necessitated introducing supporting programs such as the Cultural Industry Promotion Fund to nurture industries in the belief that “there should be fundamental changes in planning and implementing objects,

methods and goals of cultural policies as the cultural domain becomes more important in society and the economy (MCT, 2001, 2).”

In detail, it categorized five industries—audiovisual (including animation, broadcasting, and film), game, music, publishing, and cultural goods (e.g., character-related businesses, fashion, and souvenirs)— and introduced strategies for developing each category, which included the establishment of marketing agencies to promote exports, the construction of infrastructures, restructuring distribution platforms, and the foundation of education programs. In 2001, MCT announced ‘Content Korea Vision 21’ to emphasize digitalization in the cultural industries. Along with pre-existing measures, the plan introduced the establishment of the Korea Culture and Content Agency, a state-managed comprehensive executive agency under MCT to implement and manage government-funded programs to develop and promote domestic cultural businesses and whose annual budget would be 100-billion KRW (90.5 million USD). Also, the administration would invest another 100-billion KRW for the Informatization Promotion Fund managed by the Ministry of Science and Technology in developing digital cultural content.<sup>27</sup> While both plans implied the institutionalization of supporting cultural industries similar to the state’s previous plans of promoting different industries, MCT’s budget reached 1% of the national budget in 2000. Public agencies established during Kim’s tenure executed various programs for developing the cultural industries and promoted their cultural products overseas (Shin, 2005).

While such interventionist methods were related to the developmental state’s way of developing the industry, the Kim administration implemented market-friendly and less-interventionist hands-off methods to shape the fundamentals of its cultural

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<sup>27</sup> According to the Framework Act on the Promotion of Cultural Industries enacted in 2009, the Korean government defines the term ‘content’ as “data or information, such as codes, characters, voice, sounds and images (Article 2-3)” and the term ‘cultural content’ as “content where cultural factors are embodied”. This legal foundation also provides definitions for ‘digital content’ and ‘digital cultural content’ as “data or information, such as codes, characters, voice, sounds, and images, which are produced or processed in digital format to raise the effectiveness of the preservation effectiveness of the preservation and use thereof (Article 2-5)” and “digital content where cultural factors are embodied (Article 2-6).” Given that term content industries implied the disjuncture of content from materialized media conditions and the rebranding as intellectual properties along with digitalization, the Korean state’s use of the term ‘content’ in policy contexts is based on an assumption of combining culture with the digital environment, expecting synergies between cultural industries and information and communications technologies (Jin & Otmazgin, 2014). Not surprisingly, this indicated the state’s strong willingness of exploiting culture as commodities (Lee, 2019a).

industries. Based on his political orientation as a liberalist, he proclaimed the arms-length principle with the rhetoric of ‘support but not intervene’, which the state would not be involved in allocating government subsidies or intervene in cultural work of creators as arbiters of taste, and this rhetoric would be the motto of the administration’s approach to the cultural domain. During his presidency, the administration abolished film censorship in 2001 (Shin, 2005; Jin, 2019). It also sought to implement neoliberal cultural policies, aimed at avoiding direct interventions but also freeing the cultural market with indirect and inactive supports. In a similar vein, it continuously engaged in reshaping the media and cultural industries with several hands-off measures (Jin, 2016; Lee, 2019a). Also, the administration gave considerable autonomy and freedom to its agencies so that they could support cultural entrepreneurs and their projects with less intervention from the state (Kwon & Kim, 2014).

Unlike his conservative predecessors, this long-standing opposition politician was critical of *Chaebols*, and this brought withdrawals of top-tier conglomerates from the media industry in the name of restructuring their non-core businesses from the market. Believing that *Chaebols* formed cartels with major newspaper outlets and distorted the public opinion, the administration made conglomerates like Hyundai and Samsung disclaim ownership of their newspaper subsidiaries like Munhwa Ilbo (Hyundai) in 1998 and Joong-Ang Ilbo (Samsung) in 2001. Alongside this restructuring, Kim argued the necessity of media reforms aimed at securing the freedom of editors from the ownership and uprooting unfair commercial activities of major newspaper outlets in the market (Kim, 2001a). He also strived to diversify the broadcasting market by promoting the entry of new local producers and independent production studios.<sup>28</sup> Given that the nation’s broadcasting market had been dominated by two terrestrial broadcasters which were under the state’s control, this measure implied that the Korean state would also employ market-led methods to promote competition as a way of improving the industry’s overall competitiveness (Jin, 2016).

Kim was also the first president who officially used the term Korean Wave. During his remarks addressing the nation’s Independence Day in 2001, Kim (2001b) proclaimed that “The Korean Wave in East Asia including China and Vietnam makes us

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<sup>28</sup> According to the ‘Broadcasting Act Enforcement Ordinance’ mandated network broadcasters—which dominated the broadcasting market—to broadcast 40% of their programs from independent producers (Ryoo & Jin, 2018).

propel the development of cultural industries, which are chimneyless businesses vital to economy.” Considering that politicians and the media interpreted the popularity of Korean cultural products in the region with cultural nationalism, such an expansionist explanation provoked anti-Korean sentiments from neighbouring countries. This led the administration to decrease its direct support to its cultural industries so that exports of cultural products would not be seen as a cultural invasion (Ryoo & Jin, 2020).

In short, during his tenure, Kim and his administration pursued neoliberal reforms and strove to transform the country’s economic structure into a more market-driven system (Yim, 2002). However, in terms of carrying out reforms and developing new industries, it continued to employ state-interventionist measures derived from past legacies of the developmental state due to the unpredictable nature of the cultural industries, in which most of them would hardly survive in the global market without the state’s support (Chang, 2019; Lee, 2019a). Such a tendency was also identified in the administration’s cultural industry policies (Ryoo & Jin, 2020; Chang, 2019). While the administration kept introducing interventionist plans, such as the ‘five-year plans’ of developing cultural industries and established public agencies to plan and execute supporting programs to develop this burgeoning industry, its goals were to globalize the cultural domain with market-driven fundamentals. This was often exemplified by the administration’s efforts of abolishing direct interventions in the industry, such as censorship, diversifying stakeholders, and lessening the market power of first-tier conglomerates. Hence, the administration expected to have the cultural domain driven by fairer market principles with fewer interventions on the part of the state. Despite all this, such measures of freeing the market with less-interventionism did not mean that the Korean state lost interest in these fast-growing businesses with political-economic potentials (Kwon & Kim, 2014). Many of Kim’s tendencies toward the cultural industries were succeeded by his liberal replacement Roh Moo-hyun (2003–2008).

### **3.4.2. The Roh Moo-hyun Administration (2003–2008): A Further Restructuring of Cultural Industries with Neoliberal Doctrines**

After taking office in 2003, Roh appointed several liberal-progressive figures from cultural fields as the heads of MCT and its affiliations to plan and implement cultural policies and programs. For instance, Lee Chang-dong, a film director who won the Best Screenplay Award at Cannes Film Festival, was appointed as the Minister of Culture and

Tourism. Following this, the Roh administration recruited people from the progressive party to manage its cultural organizations such as the Arts Council Korea, the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, and the Korea Culture and Tourism Institute (KCTI) (Lee, 2007, February 23). While Roh continued to support the arm's length principle towards cultural policy much like his predecessor, he invited liberal-progressive non-governmental organizations and artists who had been marginalized from mainstream cultural politics to policy dialogues (Lee, 2019a). By doing so, the administration expected to further cultural diversity, reinforce local cultures, and expand infrastructures as a means of promoting participatory democracy (Park K-M., 2013).

Under the arm's length principle, both the Kim and Roh administrations institutionalized a British-style arts council to create an autonomous funding system and a policy realm managed and executed by artists and experts themselves with self-regulations, rather than being managed by politicians (Lee, 2019a). In particular, the Roh administration attempted to include perspectives and participation from liberal-progressive artists who were deeply related to the president's political backgrounds as a human rights lawyer and his vision of designing post-authoritarian politics through and with civil society (Park Y-A., 2014).

Apart from his demand of instrumentalizing culture for political objectives, Roh also recognized the potential of cultural industries for the economy. In this regard, MCT announced the 'Cultural Industry Policies Vision' in 2003 as the Roh administration's long-term policy framework for developing cultural industries. Unlike his predecessors, however, he put more emphasis on the roles of market systems in leading the development of these burgeoning businesses. The following statement delivered by Roh himself during the Ministry's briefing session about this policy framework in December 2003 characterized how his administration would approach the development of these businesses:

We have a tendency that the government will provide economic supports, give money [to develop the business]. That is going to happen. Funding is important, but I believe it should be distributed to businesses that can budget effectively with proper structures and resources in the market...What the government can do is only invest some seed money and trigger some trickle-down effects. It is the market's role to generate capital [to develop cultural industries] (Roh, 2003).

Rather than paying direct subsidies or other 'hands-on' measures for developing industries, Roh pursued more 'hands-off' approaches, arguing that the development should be led by private sectors including *Chaebols*, creators, and entrepreneurs in the market. He believed that the state should focus on building 'soft infrastructures' such as introducing education programs, enforcing copyright laws in the market, raising private-public funds, building cultural infrastructures in local areas, and deregulation (Roh, 2003; MCT, 2004b). Moreover, the administration felt burdened by the changing nature of the international trade regime that argued for a reduction of the state's direct support on cultural goods and services (MCT, 2004b).

In 2005, the Ministry introduced 'C-Korea 2010', a comprehensive cultural industry policies framework that would replace the Kim administration's 'Cultural Industry Vision 21'. Aimed at becoming part of the top-5 powerhouses of cultural industries, the plan indicated that MCT would transform the nature of cultural industries in a market-friendly manner, based on a governance system among corporations, universities, and public organizations, etc. According to the plan, MCT (2005b) specified itself as a regulator who would adapt regulations to the digital environment and globalization so that industries would upgrade their distribution systems to global standards, a market developer who would promote its cultural products overseas, and a patron who would craft strategies for developing new industries such as eSports and build infrastructures such as education programs and other technological development. Finally, it officially proclaimed that the Korean Wave would be used as branding to promote the nation through launching the *Han Brand*.<sup>29</sup> Unlike the government's previous plans of developing cultural industries that assumed direct state subsidies and interventions, 'C-Korea 2010' positioned the development of major cultural sectors such as films and music as being led by the market dynamics.

One of the most remarkable schemes that indicated Roh's reluctance to direct support and other state-interventionist measures was the introduction of 'fund of funds' (FoFs) in 2005 and the Special Purpose Company (SPC) in 2006. FoFs referred to a pooled investment fund in which the portfolio consisted of investing in other funds

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<sup>29</sup> In 2002, the Korean government established the National Image Committee chaired by the Prime Minister aimed at improving the national image overseas with cultural heritage and popular cultural products. However, the Committee was criticized for its administrative methods since it convened once a year without implementing follow-up measures to Ministries (The Presidential Office, 2009).



instead of bonds or stocks (Kim Y-J., 2014). Following the Special Measures for the Promotion of Venture Businesses enacted in 2005, MCT allocated its budget for subsidizing industries as seed money in the form of FoFs to attract venture capital to invest in cultural works.<sup>30</sup> Meanwhile, an SPC was a limited financing investment company that operated temporarily only for conducting a project and distributing profits to investors and staff after project completion, which would make the financing system more transparent and facilitate the division of profit more efficiently (Ju, 2017).

In this regard, FoFs indicated that the state's subsidies would be managed by market dynamics and SPCs would transform the structure of cultural industries towards more project-based methods (Lee SM, 2018). Indeed, after introducing FoFs in 2005, MCT repealed its Cultural Industry Promotion Fund in 2007, a major funding scheme of the Korean state designed to support creators and entrepreneurs. In the belief that the state's main role in developing cultural industries would be facilitating investment capital to produce cultural goods and services, the administration withdrew its hands-on methods from the market. Besides, the growing concerns of neighbouring countries that recognized the penetration of Korean cultural products as a cultural invasion contributed to further hands-off methods (Kim & Jin, 2016).<sup>31</sup> In 2006, the National Radio and Television Administration of China, an affiliated organization under the State Council of China that censors, monitors, and manages all media products distributed in the country, demanded that broadcasters suspend broadcast of Korean television in response to the growing popularity of Korean television dramas like *Miss Mermaid* (2002-2003), and *See and See Again* (1999) in China. In relation to this, there were accusations toward

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<sup>30</sup> Following the Special Measures for the Promotion of Venture Businesses, MCT's investments in venture capital were managed by a public company called Korea Venture Investment Corporation (KVIC) as a 'mother fund'. Once an FoF is set, KVIC proposed the contribution from the market in the form of raising private funds. MCT and its several affiliations, including the Korea Film Commission (KOFIC), utilized FoFs to finance cultural works. In terms of distributing profits, private investors had priorities to gain revenues and the Ministry would reinvest the remaining fund as future seed money (mother fund). As of 2014, the total amount of 10 major FoFs were approximately 280 million USD (Kim, 2014).

<sup>31</sup> In the early stages of the Korean Wave, both the Kim and Roh administrations aimed at managing anti-Korean sentiments against the popularity of Korean cultural products in the East Asian region. That said, Roh and Kim used rhetoric of 'cultural exchange' and 'cultural diversity' to reduce tensions and introduced several measures toward promoting cultural diversity, such as the establishment of the Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (KOFICE) in 2003 and the Asia Culture Center in 2005 (Kim & Jin, 2016). Despite their emphasis on interpreting the Korean Wave as an interactive cultural phenomenon, cultural policy frameworks prioritized the marketing of cultural products abroad (Kang H., 2015).

Chinese audiences who enjoyed Korean television as 'unpatriotic' (Park, January 9, 2006). Meanwhile, several far-right activists in Japan began to introduce *Kenkanryu* (嫌韓流, anti-Korean Wave), urging citizens to be aware of the cultural invasion from Korea, as several K-Pop stars - such as BoA and TVXQ, and Korean television melodrama series became popular in Japan (Onishi, November 19, 2005).

Despite its hands-off approaches to its cultural industries, the Roh administration continued to involve itself in the activities of the nation's cultural entrepreneurs by creating 'soft infrastructures'. For instance, MCT set up a unit within its branch and established the Korea Copyright Commission to protect the copyright of domestic cultural businesses in both domestic and foreign markets during Roh's presidency. The Commission opened branches overseas including in China, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam to safeguard intellectual property rights of cultural industries in these markets. Meanwhile, the Ministry established a series of task forces to nurture the next generation of businesses in the cultural industries; cultural technologies, gaming businesses, and new media, respectively (Kwon & Kim, 2014). For instance, many of the Ministry's 'soft infrastructures' construction efforts became materialized when the Korean government signed the free trade agreement with Southeast Asian countries in 2007, stipulating the responsibility of preserving intellectual property rights of Korean cultural products (Republic of Korea Government, 2007).

In addition, the administration emphasized the importance of the convergence of culture and technologies, or cultural technologies.<sup>32</sup> According to MCT (2004c)'s report of 'Creative Korea [*Changeuihanguk* in Korean]', the convergence between culture and technology would be vital to improve the nation's overall industrial competitiveness which would be necessary to transform further to a knowledge-based economy. During his tenure, the Roh administration promised to support the digitalization of its cultural

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<sup>32</sup> In relation to this, Woo Jong-sik (2004, August 27), who served as the President of the Korea Game Development and Promotion Institute under the Roh administration, defined cultural technologies as "technologies necessary to develop cultural industries in a narrow sense, and all technologies including not only science and engineering technologies but also knowledge and knowhow of humanities, sociology, design, and art in a broad sense." While he acknowledged that culture and technology have conflicting meanings, he insisted that dynamics of cultural industries became more complex due to the rise of digital technologies. In this regard, he categorized "software, the Internet, wireless telecommunication, computer, content (film, broadcasting, game, music), lifestyle culture (fashion, toys, craft, sport), art industry (visual and space art, performance), cultural heritage, tourism, medical and welfare businesses" as relevant to the administration's cultural technologies.

products and train technical specialists in universities (Roh, 2007). Furthermore, Roh asked the Ministry of Science and Technology (MST) to consider including cultural and tourist businesses as part of its major strategic industries which would then enable entrepreneurs in the cultural industries to access public funds for developing information and communication technologies (Roh, 2003). Following these suggestions, MST introduced a 1 billion KRW fund for promoting eSports businesses. This again indicated legacies of developmental state strategies in that the state would mobilize its pan-governmental resources to support industries.

In short, the Roh administration succeeded in furthering much of his predecessor's approaches to the nation's cultural domain, such as arm's length principles. However, contrary to expectations from liberal-progressive artists and creators in the field who endorsed Roh, his cabinet further deregulated and implemented market logics in governing the cultural domain. Perhaps most concerning was the Korean government's reduction of its film screen quota from 146 days to 73 days in return for automobile markets when it signed the free trade agreement with the United States (Jin, 2019). Given that major figures in film businesses endorsed Roh, it was not surprising that the administration's measures on opening its domestic market to Hollywood provoked a serious backlash from the cultural domain (Jin, 2008). Despite the administration's strong preference for liberal-progressive political agendas and hostile relations with conservative media outlets, such a controversial attitude on cultural industries through the implementation of market-friendly schemes exemplified the paradox of 'leftist neoliberalism' during Roh's tenure, signifying the administration's neoliberal practice toward political and economic issues while the president and his aides used many rhetorical expressions from the liberal-progressive camp. However, the administration's legacy of market-driven measures on the cultural domain for the sake of economic benefits with political autonomy marked a turning point when Lee Myung-bak, a Conservative politician, won the Presidency in 2007.

### **3.4.3. The Lee Myung-bak Administration (2008–2013): A Reiteration of the Developmental State in Cultural Industry Policies with Neoliberal Characteristics**

Unlike the previous Roh and Kim administrations which set up several frameworks to develop cultural industries in line with market dynamics, the Lee Myung-

Lee administration expected to instrumentalize the nation's cultural resources for its political and economic missions. When Lee assumed the reins of government in 2008, the Presidency introduced its '100 state affairs' that the cabinet would accomplish during his tenure. Despite his emphasis on "developing our competitiveness in our contents industry, thereby laying the foundation to become a nation strong in cultural activities (Lee, 2008a)", there were only two policies relevant to the cultural industries—the convergence of information and communication technologies and the broadcasting sector, and the promotion of cultural content businesses. As a former businessperson, Lee promised that his administration would be 'business-friendly' and asked bureaucrats to plan and implement policies that the market preferred. However, the methods that the Lee administration employed in developing industries were more state interventionist than previous liberal administrations.

Criticizing Roh's approaches as insufficient to improving the quality of cultural products, the Lee administration necessitated more measures to raise the competitiveness of domestic cultural commodities in the global market by providing comprehensive policy packages geared toward promoting export and finding more materials with potential for commercialization (MCST, 2008b). Compared to the previous Roh administration in which cultural industry policies focused on developing infrastructure, providing education services, and improving distribution systems, Lee's conservative cabinet implemented more interventionist measures into the cultural domain.

In this regard, after Lee's inauguration, the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (MCST) installed the Commission on Content Korea, an advisory board to develop strategies for cultural industries. The Commission highlighted various potentials of content as "living national brands" and their contributions to improving the national image (MCST, 2008c). The Commission reported its 'Strategies and Visions of Content Industry' to the president and emphasized the content industry, which refers to businesses manufacture cultural goods and services through digital methods, as high value-added businesses that would satisfy the tenets of 'Low-Carbon and Green Growth'—a key economic principle of the administration. Indeed, the Commission requested the development of computer graphics, virtual reality, the convergence of broadcast and telecommunications, and online gaming. While most of the Commission's proposals were based on the convergence between cultural industries and the nation's

strong information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and industries, it also recommended the administration cultivate *Killer Content*, a type of cultural content that had significant ripple effects throughout the economy.<sup>33</sup> Arguing that they would be vital to developing strategies for national branding and economic development, it asked the administration to expand the Korean Wave and its impacts on “improving the image of Korea, purchasing Korean products, and attracting more tourists to Korea (MCST, 2008c, 18)”.

In 2011, MCST introduced ‘the First Basic Plan of Promoting the Content Industry’, a comprehensive policy framework for developing cultural industries. As its title indicates, the plan aimed at transforming the nature of the cultural industries into more digital and online-based ones, with the plan’s core program was dubbed ‘Smart Content Korea’. In the belief that the future of global cultural markets would be driven by smart devices with digital content, one of the Ministry’s key objectives with the promotional plan was to support the digitalization of domestic cultural products and content customized for an online environment and the development of state-of-the-art technologies. Alongside schemes of developing the digitalization of cultural industries, the plan also included state sponsorship of cultural businesses in foreign trades, as well as job creation as its keystones (Content Industry Promotion Committee, 2011).

When it comes to developing *Killer Content*, MCST (2008c) announced its intent to invest 50 billion KRW (45.2 million USD) for the next five years to find cultural archetypes that could be used as original sources for storytelling. Also, it would directly invest an additional 1 trillion KRW (892 million USD) by 2012 to commodify original storytelling sources with a goal of creating a ‘Second Mickey Mouse’ industry, and to construct the production system of ‘Killer Content’. In relation to this, MCST and Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) hosted the ‘National Storytelling Competition [*Daehanminguk Story Gongmo Daejeon* in Korean, currently the Korea Content Awards]’ in 2009. When its judges released the winners of the competition, they mentioned

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<sup>33</sup> Up to date, a number of mega-hit cultural products, including films, television series, and animation, etc. received funding and other supports from the government. A recent example of Killer Content would be *Descendant of the Sun* (2016), a television series broadcast by Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) that was exported to more than 30 countries. In relation to this, the Export-Import Bank of Korea, a state-owned bank and an export credit agency, expected the success of this television series would result in more than a trillion KRW (equivalent to 892 million USD) in revenue based on the increased export of consumer goods and the number of tourists and their resulting ripple effects (Export-Import Bank of Korea, 2016).

“potential popularity, the possibility of foreign exports, and their level of brilliance (KOCCA, 2010, May 1)” as their judging criteria. In the name of “institutionalizing and routinizing creativity and innovation (MCST, 2009b, 11)” in cultural industries, these schemes implied that the state would be involved in selecting and valuing certain cultural products particularly for their competitiveness in the global market.

One of the most significant outcomes that signified the administration’s interventionist approach was its establishment of KOCCA in 2009. Based on an amendment of the Framework Act on the Promotion of Cultural Industries in 2009 that provided a legal ground for the state to support cultural industries, MCST established KOCCA to “efficiently support the advancement and development of cultural industries (Framework Act on the Promotion of Cultural Industries, Article 31, 2009)”.<sup>34</sup> As the state’s key organization in managing cultural industries, KOCCA was responsible for planning and implementing promotion policy packages for animation, broadcasting, character development, cultural technology, comics, fashion, games and the music industry as well as relevant human resources development and overseas promotion services.<sup>35</sup> In effect, along with other public organizations like Korea Trade Insurance Corporation, KOCCA was directly involved in the production of various content, including the comedy film *Last Godfather* (2010), and discovered original materials such as the animation *Red Shoes and the Seven Dwarfs* (cinematized in 2019). Again, such direct intervention by the state in cultural industries to marketize their outcomes through mobilizing various resources resembled how the developmental state promoted the industries before the 1990s.

In relation to improving infrastructure, the Lee administration took more interventionist actions to reshape the fundamentals of cultural industries. For instance, in 2009, the ruling Conservatives amended several laws to allow cross-media ownership of

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<sup>34</sup> Before the establishment of KOCCA, MCST had several affiliations such as the Korea Game Agency (established in 1999), the Korean Broadcasting Institute (found in 1989), and the Korea Culture and Content Agency (established in 2001), which each of them was responsible for supporting relevant businesses. However, the Lee administration integrated all agencies into a single one, arguing that the new comprehensive agency would cope with changes in the era of content industries along with media convergence and digitalization.

<sup>35</sup> Given that the organization’s amount of budget (288 billion KRW, equivalent to 257 million USD) was 7.7% of that of the entire Ministry (3.71 trillion KRW, equivalent to 3.3 billion USD), the affiliation’s status in MCST was crucial as a core public organization in the entire government administration system (KOCCA, 2012; MCST, 2012).

newspapers and broadcasting and lower the barrier to entry of foreigners and large conglomerates into the media market.<sup>36</sup> Unlike previous administrations that maintained such restrictions in the media market to preserve its diversity, the Lee administration emphasized the necessity of following the global trend of media convergence and the economics of scale by restructuring the media and cultural industries through a series of deregulations including the cross-ownership of newspapers and broadcasters as well as increasing the number of foreign stakeholders (Kim D., 2018). Following the administration's amendments, the Korea Communication Commission (KCC) granted four leading newspaper outlets licenses for new comprehensive programming cable channels with several preferential measures - including newly allowed mid-program advertising, with broadcasting set to begin in 2011. Such interventionist measures geared toward restructuring the market through amending regulations and introducing new players into the market with preferential treatments echoed how the developmental state advanced the industry through mobilizing public and private resources and favouring them in the name of efficiency (Kim D., 2018).

Meanwhile, the Lee administration showed its strong will to instrumentalize the Korean Wave to project the nation's political-economic power to the world. Indeed, in the Lee administration's '100 agenda', national branding and cultural diplomacy through the Korean Wave were stated as key strategies of the administration. MCST became responsible for branding the nation and began developing strategies of cultural diplomacy, joining projects that had previously been the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) (Republic of Korea Government, 2008). Simultaneously, MOFAT and the Ministry of Knowledge Economy (MKE) were involved in planning, discussing, and executing cultural industry policies as they were vital to MOFAT's public diplomacy programs and MKE's promotion of design industry as part of national branding, both of which were major missions of the Presidency (Republic of Korea Government, 2008). Indeed, Lee established the Presidential Council on National Branding in 2009 and consistently stressed the importance of public diplomacy and national branding as the nation's top strategy for both diplomatic and economic

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<sup>36</sup> These laws included the Broadcasting Act, the Act on the Guarantee of Freedom and Functions of Newspapers, etc. (so-called the Newspaper Act), and the Internet Multimedia Broadcasting Business Act. Following the amendment, many restrictions on conglomerates would be able to acquire up to 50% ownership in newspapers and foreigners could own up to 60% of comprehensive programming cable channels and news channels (Kim D., 2018).

imperatives. Also, MCST established units within the Ministry dedicated to working on cultural trades and popular culture with a focus on protecting the intellectual property of cultural products overseas and implementing promotional schemes for popular cultural industries in both domestic and international markets. Such pan-governmental measures indicated that the administration would employ hands-on approaches to develop these various industries (Kim & Jin, 2016).<sup>37</sup>

During Lee's tenure, he strongly argued for his cabinet to utilize the Korean Wave, highlighting its potential for improving the nation's global image and supporting various state agendas of export promotion, middle power diplomacy, and tourism, etc. As a result, many governmental organizations apart from MCST began launching programs to conduct their business in line with the global popularity of Korean cultural products. For instance, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs established the Korean Food Foundation in 2010 to promote Korean food as a means of strengthening the nation's soft power. Indeed, during his tenure, Lee often highlighted the contribution of the Korean Wave to both the national economy and the nation's soft power in the global arena as follows,

Korean broadcasts have already become worldwide, and the diffusion of *Hallyu* [the Korean Wave in Korean] exemplifies their fruits of history. With broadcast content that edges up to Asians and beyond the region, we enrich our national branding and national image. Also, our broadcasting channels which transmit all over the world give national pride to Korean businessmen and overseas Koreans (Lee, 2008b).

In short, unlike his predecessors, the Lee administration implemented more interventionist strategies to develop cultural industries and utilize their outcomes for its political and economic agendas. As cases of amending media laws and establishing KOCCA indicate, MCST and other governmental organizations were directly involved in

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<sup>37</sup> In relation to this, the Lee administration introduced the Content Industry Promotion Committee under the Prime Minister's Office in 2010. According to the Content Industry Promotion Act (2010), the committee would coordinate the efforts of developing cultural industries from various governmental ministries including the Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ministry of National Defense, Ministry of Security and Public Administration, Ministry of Knowledge Economy, Ministry of Health and Welfare, Ministry of Employment and Labor, Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs, Korea Communication Commission, Fair Trade Commission, and MCST. The Committee expanded during the Park Geun-hye administration, when the presidency added the Small and Medium Business Administration to represent interests of small businesses. Such an organization indicated that how the administration estimated cultural industries as new driving forces of the national economy (Content Industry Promotion Act, 2010).



industrial changes. In the name of developing *Killer Content*, they also provided some guidelines and directions for manufacturing cultural goods and services to cultural entrepreneurs through subsidies and other benefits. Then, the administration utilized the popularity of Korean popular culture as a way of projecting its soft power to the region and the world while also continuing to materialize cultural works for economic development. Based on political-economic utilities of cultural works, the administration employed conventional methods of the developmental state's industrial policies to direct the cultural domain so that it could accomplish Lee's agendas. Many of Lee's interventionist methods were again continued throughout the next administration, led by his party rival, Park Geun-hye (2013–2017).

#### **3.4.4. The Park Geun-hye Administration (2013 – 2017): The Proclamation of 'the Creative Economy' with a State-developmental Approach**

After winning the 2013 presidential election, Park declared that cultural enrichment—along with economic revival, national happiness, and peaceful unification—would be key pillars during her tenure. In detail, cultural enrichment consisted of three categories: expanding participation of the population in cultural activities, the promotion of culture and arts, and the convergence of culture and industries. As the daughter of Park Chung-hee, a main architect of the Korean developmental state, she believed that the development of new industries would be fulfilled only through the state's active interventions and guidelines rather than free market capitalism (Jin, 2016). To highlight her strong interests in the cultural domain and to emphasize the necessity of fostering cultural industries, she organized the Presidential Committee for Cultural Enrichment (PCCE), an advisory body to develop strategies for enhancing culture's position in society as well as further instrumentalizing cultural resources for political and economic objectives, continuing the Lee administration's instrumentalization methods.

As the main executive branch, MCST empowered its Cultural Content Industry Office, the key department in planning and implementing cultural industry policies, by shifting the Bureau of Media Policies to the Office's control. By doing so, the Ministry expected that the Office would be able to oversee both production and distribution of cultural industries (MCST, n.d.). MCST implemented schemes to lead the development of cultural industries in concert with KOCCA. Meanwhile, PCCE advised policy schemes

to satisfy people's cultural enjoyment, such as Culture Day—opening cultural facilities to the public for free of charge or at a discount on the last Wednesday of every month.

Park believed cultural goods and services were considered key assets to revitalize the economy. In particular, Park's proclamation of the 'Creative Economy' as her administration's key national agenda showed how much the state expected contributions of culture and its creativity in relation to economic policies. Describing the term as "the convergence of science and technology with industry, the fusion of culture with industry, and the blossoming of creativity in the very borders that were once permeated by barriers (Park G-H., 2013)", the Park administration established a series of pan-governmental programs to foster the convergence between technologies and cultural resources.<sup>38</sup>

Despite the ambiguous use of the term, the administration nonetheless established a series of pan-governmental task forces and urged private companies to follow its lead to pursue various types of convergences among technologies, culture, and pre-existing manufacturing businesses. While the Minister of Science, ICT and Future Planning (MSIF) became chair of the 'Creative Economy Private-Public Initiative', the Minister of Culture, Sport and Tourism had the power to chair projects relevant to cultural industries. Given that the Minister of Culture, who was ranked as 9th among ministers, had less political power than both the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs (1st) as well as the Minister of MSIF (3rd) who served as ex officio members of this council, such a measure in which the Minister of MCST would chair a pan-governmental committee meeting was an extraordinary decision (Government Organization Act, 2016).

When it comes to stimulating cultural industries, the Park administration continued to use many of Lee's hands-on measures, such as developing original cultural sources and commercializing them (MCST, 2016b). Following Lee's 'the First Basic Plan of Promoting the Content Industry', MCST announced 'the Second Basic Plan of

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<sup>38</sup> Park's definition of the 'Creative Economy' was different from that of John Howkins (2001). Although Howkins (2001, 8)' definition—"the transactions of creative products that have an economic good or service that results from creativity and has economic value"—was also based on connections between cultural creativity and economic innovation, his use of the term was more inclined to reinterpret values of cultural goods and services with market values. Most of all, he believed that creativity should be distributed through free market, which was contrast to Park's state-interventionist approaches to industrialize cultural creativity.

Promoting the Content Industry' in 2014. While much of the First plan succeeded, the Second plan put more emphasis on the importance of individual creativity as a fundamental of the 'Creative Economy', and the convergence of cultural goods with ICTs, both of which were key tasks of the administration. In addition to this, following Park's keynotes of state affairs, the plan included several schemes to increase cultural enjoyment in local areas. Compared to the Lee administration's initial plan, the second plan included programs that expanded financing for cultural production from both the government's budget and private capital, fostering the convergence of cultural industries and cutting-edge ICTs, training cultural entrepreneurs, finding new original sources, and developing new foreign markets, among others. The administration's masterplan also presumed that the state would lead the development of the cultural industries, including the entire supply chain of cultural production. By mobilizing its available assets from the entire government system, the administration sought to develop its cultural resources as a means of advancing the economy through newly equipped cutting-edge digital technologies, which would be the essence of the Korean version of the 'Creative Economy' (Content Industry Promotion Council, 2014; Kim, 2017).

As the 'Creative Economy' became the national agenda, the Park administration mobilized private capital to follow the state's imperatives and stressed the contribution and potential of culture in the agenda. One of the key programs that the administration implemented to promote the 'Creative Economy' was to establish 'Creative Economy Innovation Centers (CEIC)' in each province (17 centers in total) to trigger technological innovation in local businesses and support start-ups and small businesses as core elements of the administration's masterplan of the 'Creative Economy'. Then, the administration matched individual conglomerates to each center one-by-one depending on its core business so that it could provide technical assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises. Among the 17 centers, four of them were established to develop cultural businesses: computer and video games, film and television, and tourism.<sup>39</sup> Such

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<sup>39</sup> CEICs were established as a part of the administration's 'Three-year Plan for Economic Innovation' which Park announced during her New Year Press Conference in January 2014. As the administration's comprehensive economic policy framework, it included regulatory reforms in the public sector, along with introducing schemes of developing the 'Creative Economy' including "the convergence of culture with science and technology and ICT (Park G-H., 2014)". As the main executive organ of implementing government policies of promoting the 'Creative Economy', each CEIC would be in charge of different business labelled as 'creative' by the central government and supported by relevant conglomerates. In this regard, major corporations including Samsung (Daegu and Gyeongbuk CEICs, cutting-edge electronics and textiles), Hyundai-Kia Motors

a method of developing industries through mobilizing private resources, in particular *Chaebols*, echoed again strategies of the developmental state (Kim, 2017).

In addition to CEIC, the presidency also announced an initiative called ‘the Culture Creation and Convergence Belt (CEL)’, an industrial cluster for cultural entrepreneurs located in the Metro Seoul area. The administration argued that the cluster would provide training and funding for cultural producers and distributors to promote various types of convergence across different genres and technologies. Along with the participation of major players in cultural industries such as CJ and LOTTE in film businesses, Samsung and LG in the fashion industry, major gaming and platform businesses (Naver, Kakao, Nexon), and music (SM, JYP, and YG Entertainment), MCST introduced plans to establish four complexes in Seoul to foster the digitalization of cultural industries. The following statement from Park indicated the intention of CEL,

My administration has laid the foundation for future economic growth from the cultural industries, which would be a core element of our future economy. Beyond Asia, the Korean Wave has already penetrated into Europe and South America, and into the world. It promotes the brand of ‘Korea’ and raises our national dignity...CEL will be a creative platform that plays pivotal roles in the cultural content industry (Park, 2015).

As mentioned above, the popularity of Korean cultural products in global markets was a driving force that influenced the administration’s consideration of cultural industries as essential to the future economy as well as the nation’s diplomatic power. Like Lee, Park often utilized the Korean Wave as a means of strengthening soft power by bringing along K-Pop idols or celebrities on her international trips. Furthermore, she used the term ‘Korean Wave’ at a number of domestic events to inspire a strong feeling of national pride from the public. In this regard, both the Korean Wave and cultural industries were mobilized to accomplish the administration’s economic missions and were strong apparatuses that were used to reinforce statist ideologies (Kim & Jin, 2016).

Not surprisingly, such an instrumentalization of culture devalued intrinsic values of culture, subjecting culture to market values and political efficacy. In the name of

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(Gwangju CEIC, hydrogen-fueled automobiles), and LG (Chungbuk CEIC, cosmetics and biomedical equipments) took responsibility of co-managing each CEIC. Among 17 CEICs, four CEICs located in Seoul (CJ, lifestyle businesses), Busan (LOTTE, film and audiovisual products), Jeju (Kakao, software and tourism), and Gangwon (Naver, big data and tourism) would develop strategies and technologies relevant to cultural industries in cooperation with local authorities and businesses.

economic efficiency, both conservative administrations during the late 2000s and 2010s utilized hands-on measures on the cultural domain and were directly involved in selecting cultural materials that would receive various benefits from the state. During the Lee and Park administrations, many of the hands-on interventionist schemes that they developed to instrumentalize culture utilized coercive measures. While those who supported the administration's plans of developing cultural industries received preferential treatments through a 'Whitelist', a number of artists and businesspeople who stood against the conservative administration's political and economic schemes were blacklisted and excluded from the state's public funding schemes.<sup>40</sup> As Kim Gi-chun, Park's former chief secretary, argued that "movies and plays that mock President and slander the administration should be corrected because they harm the national pride (Kim, May 14, 2017)", the administration understood culture as an instrument for accomplishing its political and economic missions, rather than promoting intrinsic values of culture and the arts.

Not surprisingly, such an extremist instrumentalist viewpoint was deeply connected to legacies of the developmental state that instrumentalized all the nation's resources in the name of economic development and oppressed those who stood against the administration's leadership. These actions were against the constitution that prescribed culture as a medium of artistic and political expression essential to a democratic society. Moreover, corruption scandals involving Park's aides over MCST and KOCCA's subsidy programs for cultural entrepreneurs in 2016 eventually led to Park's impeachment in 2017. As a result, many of Park's administration's programs for the 'Creative Economy' cultural industries were eventually suspended.

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<sup>40</sup> In response to an anti-government protest in 2008, the Lee administration began to 'adjust balance of power' in the cultural domain by favoring conservative figures and disadvantaging liberal-progressive figures in cultural politics. To seize the hegemony, the administration covertly blacklisted a number of artists and celebrities and excluded them from the state's subsidy program and pressured broadcasters and film productions not to cast them on their programs and movies. The number of blacklisted personnel skyrocketed during the Park administration from 82 to 9,473 (MCST, 2019d).

### **3.4.5. The Moon Jae-in Administration (2017–2022): The Revival of Hands-off and Market-oriented Measures**

After Park's impeachment in 2017, Moon Jae-in, a liberal-progressive politician who served as a chief secretary of Roh Moo-hyun, was elected president. Upon his inauguration, MCST investigated the Blacklist scandals of previous administrations and promised to prevent the recurrence of such incidents by reinforcing arm's-length principles in MCST's support schemes. Given the circumstances that previous programs for developing and utilizing the Korean Wave were implicated in corruption scandals, the Moon administration was reluctant to promote the Korean Wave in official dialogue in the early phase of his term. Instead, the Moon administration's comprehensive framework of cultural policies, 'Culture Vision 2030: Culture with Humans', emphasized autonomy, creativity, and diversity as its principles for cultural policy including cultural industries (MCST, 2019c). While Moon's MCST succeeded much of Park's legacies, such as promoting the convergence of culture and technologies and constructing more cultural infrastructure, the Ministry argued that pre-existing public schemes would not be effective for promoting new ideas vital to convergence as they only focused on individual successes, and schemes to support culture should be managed by cultural workers, artists, and the market.

Compared to conservative predecessors, MCST under the Moon administration redefined its role of managing the high risks of cultural entrepreneurs in the market and investing in industrial research and technological development, rather than directly involving in producing cultural products (MCST, 2019b). Although some of Lee and Park's interventionist measures like hosting the 'National Storytelling Competition' and establishing a cluster among businesses, public institutes, and universities at Seoul (a part of Park's CEL project) continued under the Moon administration, Moon set additional policy goals aimed toward improving unfair practices in the market and protecting the rights of cultural producers (MCST, 2017b). Unlike previous administrations, MCST's measures of promoting industries were focusing on attracting the market to invest in cultural businesses, rather than direct support. For instance, it introduced a 450-billion-won (407 million USD) public-private 'Adventure Investment Fund'—a more aggressive type of 'fund of funds' which incentivized venture capitalists to invest in cultural works and entrepreneurs that were evaluated as high-risk and had otherwise been turned down by private investors—to finance cultural production with

strong incentives from the administration (MCST, 2019e; MCST, 2020). Along with the 'Adventure Investment Fund' as a new financing scheme to support start-ups and entrepreneurs in cultural production, the Ministry promised to improve regulations surrounding the protection of intellectual properties and fair trade while utilizing cultural resources as a means of increasing tourism. Such a shift from the previous interventionist approach also signaled the new administration's reluctance of involving the state directly in the cultural domain.

Granted, this tendency did not mean that Moon's administration avoided utilizing culture as a means of economic development. In particular, the growing recognition of Korean cultural products in the global market triggered the Moon administration to utilize culture as a tool for its economic development schemes, such as the Fourth Industrial Revolution that referred to "an intellectual revolution based on hyperconnectivity triggered by artificial intelligence and big data (Presidential Committee on the Fourth Industrial Revolution, 2017)". Like his predecessor who instrumentalized culture for the 'Creative Economy', Moon's MCST (2017) introduced its 'Content Industry Medium- and Long-Term Vision' in late 2017 to replace the previous 'the Second Basic Plan of Promoting Content Industry'. the policy highlighted the position of the cultural industries in Moon's economic agenda and proclaimed that the development of cultural technologies—a practice that had been used by the Roh administration—would be a major mission of the Ministry's plans for supporting cultural industries. Alongside other programs for protecting copyright, training artists, and providing financial incentives, the Ministry reified its contribution of developing cultural technologies by investing in the convergence of cutting-edge technologies such as augmented reality and virtual reality, cultural products, and research and development of private sectors.

Throughout this process, a number of cultural activists, who were albeit critical of exploiting culture as a means of the state's political-economic objectives, were involved in developing Moon's cultural policies, and many of MCST's plans were eventually based on understanding culture as potential commodifiable products. Such a perspective was materialized by the Ministry's constant use of intellectual property (IP) and copyright. For instance, the Ministry launched a new policy framework for copyright-

based industries called 'Copyright Vision 2030' in 2020.<sup>41</sup> Highlighting the contributions of copyright-based industries to the national economy, particularly contributions of export products, the Ministry promised to repair copyright laws and regulations, liberalize royalty fees, establishes branches overseas, and enforce foreign governments to protect the copyright of Korean cultural products, among other promised outcomes.<sup>42</sup> Although many of these measures were aimed at promoting the autonomy of cultural works and artists, establishing fairer rules in the market, and protecting the copyright of Korean content in international markets, the Ministry stated that "copyright would motivate our cultural development and take a key role on the nation's economic growth (MCST, 2020)". The use of terminologies in MCST's policy contexts clearly indicated this liberal-progressive administration's ongoing willingness of appropriating cultural values subject to market values.

In a similar vein, the Moon administration also revealed its desire to utilize the Korean Wave as a means of economic development. Inspired by the global success of K-Pop idol group BTS and Bong Joon-ho's *Parasite* (2019), MCST introduced the term 'New Korean Wave' to explain the global success of new mega-hit cultural products and utilize them as a way of revitalizing the national economy (MCST, 2020b).<sup>43</sup> On one hand, MCST began to rebrand its Korean Wave policies as 'Good Korean Wave [*Chakhan Hallyu* in Korean]' to diversify its global distribution networks and reduce potential hostilities against Korean cultural products from neighbouring countries who

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<sup>41</sup> Based on the Copyright Act, the Korea Copyright Commission defines core copyright industry as consisted of "businesses that solely serve in the creation, production, manufacture, performance, broadcast, communication, exhibition, distribution, and sales of pieces and other protected objects (Kim SH., 2018, 25)". They include publishing, literature, music, play, opera, film, video, radio, television, photograph, software, database, visual and graphic art, and advertisement. The entire copyright industry includes both core copyright industry and relevant business that utilize or contribute to outcomes of core copyright industry.

<sup>42</sup> According to MCST (2020c), Korean copyright-based industries experienced a rapid growth in the last decade. Their amount of exports skyrocketed from 890 million USD in 2010 to 6.6 billion USD in 2018, and improved trade balances in copyright industries market from a deficit of 0.8 billion USD in 2010 to a surplus of 1.4 billion USD in 2018.

<sup>43</sup> Such a MCST's use of term 'New Korean Wave' was far from Jin (2016) who used the term 'New Korean Wave' to explain the rise of second generation Korean Wave (Hallyu 2.0)—characterized by changes of mainstream genres that trigger the popularity (from television dramas and films to K-pop and video games), social media-driven technologies as main vehicles, changes of consumer demographics (from East Asian to other regions), and cultural industry policies (from hands-off policies to hands-on policies).



regarded the popularity as another potential cultural invasion.<sup>44</sup> For instance, the administration announced plans to strengthen cultural exchange programs such as the Republic of Korea-the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Film Fund and ASEAN-ROK Film Cooperation Organization (ARFO) to develop industrial infrastructures of international co-production that would improve the sustainability of the Korean Wave (MCST, 2019e). On the other hand, MCST would continue to host exhibitions and festivals that promote Korean popular culture both domestically and overseas to foster tourism businesses and expand its market worldwide. It also released plans to develop customized promotion strategies to attract more audiences from different areas (MCST, 2019e; MCST, 2020a).

Hence, despite the outward political orientation of the current administration, the Moon administration recognizes the potential of cultural industries for economic purposes and continues to instrumentalize culture. Despite the use of different rhetoric, Moon's instrumental perspective on culture is not much different from his conservative predecessors. While Lee and Park directly engaged in the cultural domain with interventionist measures, Moon is reluctant to actively involve the state in cultural activities and industries, as seen from the administration's emphasis on arm's length principles. Instead, by employing less state-interventionist hands-off measures, the administration sought to attract private capital and more market logics as its major policy framework of cultural industries.

### **3.5. Conclusion**

The development of Korean cultural industries indicates that the state has played a key role in planning strategies and mobilizing resources considered essential to promote the cultural industries, which are high-risk and capital-intensive businesses. Since the early 1990s, the Korean state recognized the potential of cultural products as tools for developing the economy. The state introduced a series of comprehensive masterplans and founded public organizations, including research institutes, public

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<sup>44</sup> According to the Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange, a MCST-affiliated organization which conducts researches and programs about promoting the Korean Wave and managing potential negative sentiments toward Korea in overseas, "Good Korean Wave (*Chakhan Hallyu* in Korean)" refers to the Korean Wave which mechanism is based on multilateral cultural exchange, not in a unilateral way (KOFICE, n.d.).

funds, and support agencies—to plan and enforce schemes of promoting these industries, which once had been considered as vehicles of delivering political propaganda to the population before the democratization. Throughout various administrations, the government fully employed its available assets, from both public and private sectors, to allocate and support major players to expand their business and entrepreneurs who sought opportunities in the cultural domain. In addition to this, the state engaged in the entire production chain of cultural products with various policy methods, from classical methods such as tax benefits and public subsidies to promotion activities for its cultural exports in global markets and the guarantee of cultural goods to private investors.

Many of the Korean state's measures for developing its cultural industries, including subsidies on producers in the field, tax benefits, deregulation for private capital to attract their investment in the burgeoning industry, and other practices demonstrate that state intervention remained effective and viable in developing cultural industries in a short time. In collaboration with *Chaebols* and state-owned banks, the state effectively utilized both public and private resources to develop its cultural industries. As cultural industries were high-risk and capital-intensive businesses, the state urged and invited major conglomerates to launch their cultural businesses with a variety of incentives. Although many of them withdrew from the cultural industries in the aftermath of the nation's financial crisis, their presence in the market was vital to exploring the business potential of cultural products, as cases such as Samsung's production of *Shiri*, and Hyundai's entry into the cable television broadcast indicated. After their withdrawal from industries, other conglomerates like CJ and Lotte made inroads into the cultural market and became major players in Korean television, game, and film industries. Such participation by major conglomerates in the cultural industries under the leadership of the state was obvious outcomes of a developmental state (Kwon & Kim, 2014).

As mentioned, depending on each administration's political orientations and economic situation during their various tenures, the state sometimes employed methods based on state-developmentalism and other times implemented measures driven by neoliberal imperatives. On one hand, liberal-progressive administrations preferred less-interventionist methods as they corresponded with both their political reluctance to intervene in cultural production and economic policies that emphasized roles of the market. In this context, emphasizing the self-perpetuating environment of cultural

industries, the Roh administration not only reduced screen quotas but also outsourced much of the function of allocating subsidies for cultural producers to semi-private financial organizations in the form of FoFs. On the other hand, conservative administrations undertook more active and interventionist measures of implementing their cultural industry policies in the field. Despite their preference for neoliberal virtues that could be widely seen in their economic and social policies, they preferred to engage in cultural production with more detailed planning and investment through public agencies like KOCCA. By doing so, they sought to utilize outcomes as tools of accomplishing political and economic agendas in a more explicit manner (Lee, 2013). In this regard, both the Lee and Park administrations' policy frameworks are considered as developmental neoliberalism, in which the state utilizes strong state-interventionist, hands-on measures to accomplish its neoliberal agenda (Ryoo & Jin, 2020).

Of course, it is important to not over-dichotomize and schematize the Korean state's approach and assume that conservative administrations only utilized hands-on measures and liberal-progressive administrations only introduced hands-off measures. Considering the consistency of policy schemes and policy effects, all administrations have continued many schemes that had been implemented by previous administrations. For instance, although Fund of Funds (FoFs) were introduced by the Roh administration (liberal-progressive), his conservative successors continued expanding funds and consolidated the funding scheme as the state's major financing scheme for cultural workers. Meanwhile, the incumbent Moon administration also continued his conservative predecessors' hands-on methods through increasing the budget of KOCCA and maintaining many MCST's hands-on programs such as the Korea content Awards (previously known as the National Storytelling Competition)—which are awards for best original storytelling content across different genres in the nation's cultural industries. Rather, this means that both conservative administrations and liberal-progressive administrations have favored using hands-on and hands-off measures, depending on political orientation, market conditions, and respective viewpoints on promoting cultural businesses. This reflects the Korean state's overall stance of blending neoliberal, market-led policy initiatives with its conventional state-interventionist methods as a developmental-state in promoting cultural industries (Ryoo & Jin, 2020).

Despite different approaches by liberal and conservative administrations to develop cultural industries, both direct and indirect state interventions in promoting

cultural industries and utilization of cultural products for their political and economic objectives indicate the state continues to exert its influence on the cultural domain which is otherwise operated by market forces. Regardless of each administration's political orientation, all administrations after the 1990s played entrepreneurial roles in developing systematic support for cultural industries and utilized culture as a means of revitalizing the national economy (Lee J-Y., 2012). And ideas of commodifying culture and measuring its values with market values became dominant in policymaking processes. This meant that the fundamentals of cultural industry policies became more subject to tenets of neoliberalism. The development of cultural industries confirms the state's position as a patron in cultural industries (Jin & Otmazgin, 2014; Lee, 2019a).

Hence, as policy measures of conservative administrations strongly demonstrate, the state utilizes neoliberal, pro-market, deregulatory schemes for supporting cultural industries to serve its masterplans of economic development and other political objectives. Even in liberal-progressive administrations when they implemented hands-off and market-led measures to support the cultural industries, bureaucrats and politicians endeavoured to create the right environment that would maximize policy effects, such as managing anti-Korean Wave sentiments overseas, improving laws to protect the intellectual rights of creators and small enterprises, and categorizing cultural businesses as high-tech, strategic industries so that producers were eligible to apply to funds from other ministries, etc. Liberal-progressive administrations retained capacities to manage their selective interventions, apart from their reluctance to utilize hands-on methods (Suh & Kwon, 2014).

The trajectory of Korean cultural industry policies after the Korean Wave reflects how the state retained capacities to intervene in the development of the nation's cultural industries—even as many of their mechanisms were highly influenced by the global market. In other words, the state is still able to control its neoliberal measures—which presume the state's retreat from the market—and utilize practices of neoliberal globalization for its political and economic objectives, namely economic development (Suh & Kwon, 2014; Ryoo & Jin, 2020). Under the state's strong leadership of mobilizing and managing public and private resources, developing infrastructures, and skills training and development, the cultural realm became more commercialized, commodified and instrumentalized to serve the nation's political and economic interests—either by less-interventionist measures from liberal-progressive

administrations which left power to the market or more-interventionist schemes by conservative administrations where the state would commodify culture. Based on the explanation, the following chapter examines how policymakers understand their roles in developing cultural industries.

## **Chapter 4.**

# **The State's Prevailing Presence in the Development of Korean Cultural Industries**

### **4.1. Introduction**

As mentioned in previous chapters, the rising tide of neoliberal globalization in cultural production has challenged the state's position in the cultural domain. US-based media conglomerates continue to retain their distribution power in global markets and the power of US-based social media platforms overwhelms local competitors (Jin, 2015; Lobato, 2019). Impacts of the prominence of US cultural products on local cultural spheres have profoundly recharacterized local cultures—from the birth of various hybrid genres between Western (de facto American) and local cultural characteristics to the coproduction of local cultural products with Western media capital (Ganguly, 2019). Meanwhile, the pressure to open cultural markets increases in the name of free trade driven by the US government and several international organizations (Leiva, 2017; Murdock & Choi, 2018; Thussu, 2018). Not surprisingly, the influx of global and neoliberal forces into local cultural production fosters exploitation of local culture as a means of profit-making and reduces cultural value to transferrable exchange value in markets as commodities (Yúdice, 2003).

Despite such an intensified penetration of US-led transnational capital in local markets armed with doctrines of neoliberal globalization, the state's attitudes toward its cultural industries maintain importance as such attitudes decide the importance and protection of such industries in various national contexts. Indeed, despite the growing pressures toward opening markets to foreign capital and companies, many countries continue to argue that they are entitled to protecting and prioritizing domestic cultural businesses as well as a right to control foreign imports (Goff, 2017; Jaramillo, 2019). In this regard, understanding the state's reactions to global forces and neoliberalization in the cultural domain is still important not only because of its position in protecting local culture but also because culture is a sine qua non for the state to secure its political-economic interests.

In relation to this, the development of Korean cultural industries is a case that demonstrates how local cultural businesses challenge foreign penetration in domestic markets, expand market shares overseas, and most of all, how the state contributed to such businesses' development (Kwon & Kim, 2014; Jin, 2016; Lee, 2019a). In retrospect, the state mobilized both direct and indirect methods to develop cultural businesses. Direct methods included implementing various administrative actions such as licensing, regulations, tax favours and subsidies to develop promote cultural businesses. To expand the base of the nation's cultural market, the government introduced new distribution systems in cultural production. For instance, in the case of the broadcasting industry, it allowed Seoul Broadcasting System (SBS), a private radio and television broadcast, to begin its service in 1991 for the Seoul metropolitan region.<sup>45</sup> Then, it continued introducing more distribution platforms for television producers such as the cable channel system in 1995, satellite broadcasting system in 2000, and Internet Protocol television (IPTV) in 2007, and four nationwide generalist cable television networks in 2011 (Kim D., 2018).

Along with this introduction, the state lowered barriers of entry for new players through deregulation, preferential treatment, and exceptional clauses on legal and regulatory frameworks. In relation to this, the Korean government abolished restrictions on the cross-ownership of newspaper and television services in 2009, which allowed the nation's major newspaper outlets to expand their business to broadcasting by establishing generalist cable television networks. Meanwhile, the state improved measures of protecting the copyright of cultural goods, which had been a major concern of film and music producers and distributors (Kwon & Kim, 2013). In addition to this, the state effectively controlled an influx of foreign cultural products into the domestic market to give enough time for local producers to raise their competitiveness (Jin, 2020a). Last not but least, the Korean government provided a series of benefits for creators and entrepreneurs in cultural industries such as including tax benefits, low-interest loans, etc.

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<sup>45</sup> Until 1980, there had been a series of private radio and television broadcasters, such as Tongyang Broadcasting Company (TBC, television and radio) and Dong-A Broadcasting System (radio, DBS). However, they were nationalized by Chun Doo-hwan, an army general who took power in a coup d'état in 1979 and became President the following year, as a part of his plans of suppressing the press (Kim D., 2018).

On the other hand, the Korean state indirectly also mobilized '(in)visible hands' to support cultural businesses, methods which had repeatedly been used when promoting other industries as a developmental state. In terms of financing cultural entrepreneurs, it requested major banks, which the government was a major stakeholder, to mobilize and invest in various projects or provide low-interest loans alongside the state's direct subsidies. Besides, upon the state's request, leading figures in Korean pop idol music (K-Pop) such as major entertainment CEOs Lee Soo-man (SM Entertainment), Park Jin-young (JYP Entertainment), and Yang Hyun-suk (YG Entertainment), participated in training and supporting start-ups in cultural businesses. In a similar vein, media conglomerates such as CJ ENM and Lotte Entertainment, which were major distributors of Korean films, took part in nurturing cultural creators and start-ups with training, technological support, and even financial investments (Kim, 2017). Along with detailed directions targeted toward developing the cultural industries, the state's explicit mobilization of private resources as a means of financing and supplying resources for state projects reflects the legacies of the developmental state that mobilizes both private and public resources and allocates them for the sake of developing certain businesses under the state's leadership (Jin, 2011b; Lee, 2019a).

In addition to this, the Korean state took initiatives in promoting cultural industries by constructing necessary infrastructures that would be the cornerstone of various businesses. To transform the nation's economy with cutting-edge technology and higher value-added businesses, the state launched plans for high-speed broadband Internet and wireless networks in the 1990s (Oh & Larson, 2011). As part of the plan, the Korean government developed a series of projects aimed at developing various information and communication technologies (ICTs) and building telecommunication infrastructures. While state-owned enterprises such as Korea Telecom and publicly-funded research institutes were main participants during development, the state also requested the nation's leading conglomerates including Samsung and Hyundai to take part in projects as a means of diversifying their businesses and mobilizing capital in return for fixed returns from the public sector (Jin, 2011b; Lee J-Y., 2012).<sup>46</sup> Although cultural industries

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<sup>46</sup> For example, in 1994, the Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC) implemented a plan called Korea Information Infrastructure (KII), a nationwide telecommunications superhighway project aimed at wiring high-speed broadband with 1 Gbps service (10 Mbps for mobile services) for 14 million residents by 2013. Based on its blueprint, MIC requested major conglomerates to participate in the project in return for commercialization of Internet services (Lee & Jung, 1998).



were not included in the state's masterplans of building digital infrastructures nationwide, many of their outcomes—such as one of the largest high-speed Internet market penetration in the world and mobile phone penetration—became pivotal in advancing the nation's cultural businesses. Given that digital technology brought about new business models and new modes of production and consumption, this would pioneer new markets (Freedman, 2008; Jin, 2017). In this regard, from infrastructure to individual financing, the state's presence in developing the cultural industries remains highly visible.

The case of Korean cultural industries exemplifies how the state retains and maintains power and control in its cultural businesses despite industrial structures as well as various cultural products becoming more transnational and export-oriented in the wake of the Korean Wave. Despite the legacies of the developmental state that the state mobilizes resources and allocates them to certain actors to develop its economy, the state-led development of Korean cultural industries and their globalization demonstrate the appropriation and repositioning of the Korean state in response to powers of neoliberal globalization. Based on interviews with policymakers affiliated with the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (MCST) as well as cultural workers in the field, this chapter analyzes the relationship between the Korean state and cultural industries.

The chapter consists of three sections. The first section discovers a genealogy of the state's engagement in developing businesses, focusing on the roles of MCST's approach to cultural industries. While much of the section is based on the history of the development of cultural industries in policy contexts, it sheds light on how such legacies have been naturalized in current policy schemes. The second section investigates how the Korean state utilizes the global popularity of Korean cultural products. It highlights how the state reinterprets Korean cultural products as tools for various political-economic goals as well as the increased stateless and transnational characteristics such

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As a result, the Ministry spent 6.2 billion USD and the private sector invested 16.5 billion USD to the project. Unlike other countries such as the US in which superhighway projects depended on private sectors, the Korean state's presence was crucial in constructing the nation's Internet infrastructure as it guaranteed supply provided by state authorities to private sectors (Indeed, the high dependence on the private sector delayed the US' deployment of nationwide broadband services as there was no consensus between the US government and private actors were responsible for constructing and managing networks (Pelton, 1994)). In relation to this, Lee (2012) explains that state-led supply policies could be succeeded in places which have strong legacies of an interventionist state. After KII's success, the project became a precedent for several Internet Infrastructure plans such as Australia's National Broadband Network Plan (NBN) and the US' broadband initiative during Obama administration (Lee K-S., 2012).

cultural products take on to achieve the state's goals. The final section examines the relationship among cultural businesses and producers, globalization, and the state. It is true that the production and distribution system of Korean cultural industries are shaped by market logics and that its structure has become export-oriented and dominated by a handful of private conglomerates. Despite all this, however, the state exerts its political and economic power to control or manage cultural production in the market depending on its viewpoint on culture. Throughout this chapter, I explore the nexus of the state and neoliberal globalization in the Korean cultural industries.

## **4.2. The State-led Development of Korean Cultural Industries: Legacies of the Developmental state in Cultural Industry Policy Schemes**

### **4.2.1. “From Restriction to Promotion”: A Paradigm-shift in the Implementation of Cultural Industry Policies in the 1990s**

It was 1989 when the Korean government established the Ministry of Culture (MOC) finally became an independent governmental branch, and cultural affairs were considered subtasks of other branches such as education and public information, and were understood as tools of delivering the state's political propaganda.<sup>47</sup> In this regard, for many policymakers who had understood cultural products as political tools to be used to maintain power, the nation's democratization and the following establishment of an independent governmental branch became an opportunity to re-establish the state's approach to culture. In relation to this, Participant F, who served as a former high-ranking official in MCST, explained their interpretation of the meaning of MOC's establishment as follows:

“I believe it was when cultural policies were finally set up to promote culture, art, cultural industries as an independent policy field. Before then... even

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<sup>47</sup> Until 1968, the Bureau of Culture, one of nine bureaus of the Ministry of Culture and Education, managed the preservation of cultural heritage and infrastructure and the supervision of the arts, music, theatre, dance, craft, and play (*Mungyobujikje*, Presidential Decree No. 189, 1949). Then, the Ministry of Culture and Public Information became responsible for cultural affairs. However, according to the Presidential decree that defined mandates of cultural affairs, the Ministry's responsibilities were primarily focused on censoring, guiding, and licensing the production and trade of cultural products (*Munhwagongbobujikje*, Presidential Decree No. 10585, 1981). Most importantly, the state's approach to culture put emphases on utilizing it for propagating its political ideologies and controlling the population.

Roh himself was like Chun Doo-hwan... [who understood culture] as a tool for promoting the administration. Then, the Ministry had been called the Ministry of Culture and Public Information, which meant culture had been considered as an instrument of propagating [the regime]. In this regard, the establishment of MOC was a turning point of strengthening culture's presence in policy contexts (Participant F)."

Meanwhile, the Summer Olympics in Seoul in 1988 was another turning point for the state to restructure its cultural policies (Park K-M., 2013). If democratization incapacitated the state's political interventions in the cultural domain, the Olympics prompted the state to question how to promote Korean culture and what would be distinctive Korean culture in the era of globalization. As Participant F recalled, "the Olympics provided a momentum for policymakers to discuss and reflect 'what is our culture?'" As bureaucrats had been asked to prepare both opening and closing ceremonies—as the Olympics were not only sporting events but also cultural mega-events that could show off the host country's cultural assets and resources to the world. Considering that numerous states used the televised spectacle of the Olympics as an international imprimatur to project national values and present their cultural power to the world, the 1988 Olympic Games brought a paradigm shift to cultural policymakers who were asked to design new approaches to culture with a blank slate (Mulcahy, 2017).

After the Olympics, Roh appointed Lee O-young, a literary critic who directed both ceremonies, as the head of a new governmental branch that would be exclusively responsible for cultural affairs in 1990. Lee, who had no experience in politics or administration, attempted to transform the MOC and its bureaucratic system and change a heavy and bureaucratic atmosphere strongly evident in the organization. While the Ministry established the Korea National University of Arts as a hub of the nation's culture and art education and loosened the inspection and censorship system, Lee demanded policymakers to disrupt the existing hierarchy that had made the organization rigid and risk-averse. Instead, he proposed cultural sensitivity as a new principle of policymaking to prepare for post-authoritarian and post-bureaucratic policy imperatives (Park K-M., 2013; Nam, 2019). About this, Roh introduced a new direction for cultural policies, aiming at promoting cultural creativity and diversity to encourage the public's participation and enjoyment of culture with an arm's length principle in which the state would support culture without interventions (Roh, 1990b).

Despite Lee's efforts to reform the bureaucratic system and collaborate with artists and creators in policymaking, many of Lee's attempts were not successful due to the MOC's budgetary deficits and various types of bureaucratic inefficiencies rampant in the organization. Most of all, since logics of economic development dominated policy discourse and relevant projects were given priority over allocating public resources, the Ministry's missions to promote culture often ended in empty talk. Such a marginalized position of the Ministry within the government system made it incapable of implementing its masterplan (Nam, 2019).<sup>48</sup> Participant F recalled how cultural policymakers had to persuade Ministry of Finance (currently the Ministry of Economy and Finance, MOEF) bureaucrats into supporting culture:

When MOC was firstly established, we always became a lower priority in terms of budget. We had to promote culture as 'advantageous to promote democracy' [the budgetary authority] ... Later, we promoted that support for culture would benefit the economy. We even translated a book which covered 'how much arts and culture would induce economic development' to persuade [the Ministry of Finance] (Participant F).

In addition to this, Participant C, who works at an MCST's affiliation, explained the subordinate position of the cultural ministry:

There is a common narrative within MCST...It has a mother-in-law [MOEF]. Whenever cultural policymakers request a budget for support programs and giving subsidies to the arts and cultural sector. Then, the Ministry of Finance rejects almost every project... The top priority of our institute is to provide data and evidence when cultural policymakers give briefings on new projects to MOEF as well as the legislature (Participant C).

Both Participant C and Participant F's explanations indicate that the fate of the nation's cultural ministry and its projects for the cultural sector was in the hands of MOEF bureaucrats who had the right to finalize the entire government system's budget proposal. Considering the position of the Ministry of Finance, which had been the duumvirate of designing and implementing the nation's developmentalism along with the Economic Planning Board (EPB), such a structure of the government system—that the

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<sup>48</sup> For instance, until 2000, the Ministry's budget was less than 1% of the entire administration's expenditure budget. In 2000, the National Assembly made an appropriation of 0.963 trillion KRW (761 million USD) to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT), which exceeded 1% of the administration's total annual budget for the first time. In the following year, the National Assembly earmarked 1 trillion KRW (892 million USD) for MCT (Nam, 2019). As of 2020, the Ministry manages 6.4 trillion KRW in total (5.7 billion USD), including the budget and related public funds, which is still less than 2% of the state's total budget (Kim, 2019).

economy ministry has mandates to approve the cultural ministry's budget—meant many projects by the cultural ministry had to benefit other Ministries (especially MOEF).<sup>49</sup> In other words, the reconceptualization of the nation's cultural policy after the nation's democratization had to be instrumentalist by nature as long as it was required to satisfy the inclinations of budgeteers who had been accustomed to mobilizing resources in the name of development (Lee SM, 2018).

Meanwhile, the US' heavy pressure to open the domestic market continued to increase. For instance, lobbied by the Motion Picture Export Association of America (MPEAA, currently the Motion Picture Association of America, MPAA), the US Trade Representative (USTR) highlighted the liberalization of the film market as a core issue of trade negotiation with Korea (Jin, 2020a). As a result, Korea agreed to allow foreign media conglomerates' direct distribution of US films and music in 1988 (Ko, 1994, September 29). This not only worsened the heavy dependence on US companies in the domestic market but also threatened to put many film producers out of business because much of the production costs came from redistributing Hollywood films in theatres (Ko, 1994, September 29; Jin, 2020a).<sup>50</sup> In addition to this, the Korean government further opened its film market to Hollywood by lifting quotas on screening foreign films in theatres by 1994 (Hong, 1990, December 24).

Granted, these measures brought strong backlash from cultural workers who argued that market liberalization would result in subordinating the nation's cultural industries in the hands of US capital. Along with trade liberalization, foreign investments

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<sup>49</sup> In 1994, the Economic Planning Board and the Ministry of Finance were integrated into the Ministry of Finance and Economy. Led by technocrats and a handful of economists who theorized the state-led and export-led economic development model, both branches were instrumental in planning and administering logics of developmentalism and played pivotal roles in mobilizing and allocating private and public resources in the name of economic development. Since the Ministry had authority to allocate and organize national budget, supervise all public organizations, collect tax along with establishing and executing economic policies, its presence in the government system was enormous. In order to disperse the Ministry's excessive power in the government system, Kim Dae-jung administration spun it off and established an independent branch responsible for managing budget (the Ministry of Planning and Budget) in late 1990s. However, in the name of efficiency, Lee Myung-bak administration reintegrated two Ministries into the Ministry of Economy and Finance in 2008, which continues up to date.

<sup>50</sup> As a result, major Hollywood conglomerates including UIP, 20th Century Fox, Warner Bros, Columbia Tristar, and Buena Vista began to establish their branches in Korea and began to distribute their films directly to Korean theaters. This brought a surge in screening foreign films (mostly Hollywood films); from 24 films in 1983 to 321 films in 1989. Meanwhile, only 5 films managed to grab spots in the top 100 video rental list in 1993 compared to 90 Hollywood films (Jin, 2011b; Jin, 2020a).

in the media industry continued to increase in the 1990s. As transnational corporations became more prominent in the cultural market, the state had to implement countermeasures to protect its cultural businesses.<sup>51</sup> In relation to this, Participant E, who works as an analyst at a financial institution managed by MOEF, explained how this pushed the Korean government to engage in developing cultural industries.

Before the enactment of the Framework Act on the Promotion of Cultural Industries in 1999, [the policy discourse] had been dominated by protectionist logics. There were the screen quota and wide anxiety over an influx of Japanese cultural products [among bureaucrats.] In those days, there was a common understanding 'if US or Japanese cultural products penetrate into the market, our culture might be assimilated.' [Among policymakers], there were concerns of 'Americanization', 'Japanization', and 'the demise of Korean culture', and what the term 'culture' meant was purely 'cultural' (Participant E).

When Kim Young-sam was sworn in as President, his cabinet implemented a more provocative approach to instrumentalize culture. Inspired by the worldwide success of *Jurassic Park*, which garnered profits equal to that of selling 1.5 million *Sonatas*, a car brand made by Hyundai, the Presidential Advisory Council on Science and Technology published a policy report on the potential of culture to act as higher value-added businesses with huge ripple effects (Shim, 2006). Called the 'Sonata Effect', the presidency established a task force for promoting cultural industries in 1993. The advisory board consisted of 30 members and was responsible for several key tasks: basic principles and policy tasks of promoting cultural industries, the improvement of laws and regulations, globalization of traditional cultural products, the development of cultural products with cutting-edge technologies, and international promotion of Korean cultural products and training specialists for managing cultural infrastructures. The majority of members consisted of professors and technologists along with several businesspeople and bureaucrats (Kyunghyang Shinmun, September 2, 1993).

Such an approach where the state began to reinterpret culture as an instrument for economic development, was deeply connected to Kim Young-sam's political orientation. Indeed, since his inauguration, Kim strongly emphasized the liquidation of authoritarian legacies and attempted to replace them with more liberalistic standards and

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<sup>51</sup> In regard to the backlash against opening the film market, the national assembly proposed Act on the Promotion of Film s in 1989. After years of negotiations, the government agreed to loosen film classification, simplify registration of film production, and create film promotion fund in 1995 (Ahn, 1995, December 9).

measures. Under his leadership, the Ministry of Culture and Sport (MCS) criticized the state's previous approach to culture that had been based on excessively tight regulations, derived from the colonial period, and consolidated by authoritarian governments. Instead, the Ministry made a case for change that would redefine the state's roles from a controller to a patron through deregulation and promotion of an individual's cultural activities (Korea Culture and Arts Foundation, 1994). Compared to previous administrations that had paid attention to traditional folk culture or pure arts, the Kim administration's approach to culture with an emphasis on the promotion of popular culture was different (Moon, September 3, 2020). In relation to this, Participant F explained that the emergence of popular culture in policy contexts implied changes to the state's attitude toward recognizing popular culture, which was an outcome of political democratization.

Despite its liberalistic slogans, however, to develop cultural industries that would be in the hands of artists and private stakeholders was not an easy task. Because of the high degree of uncertainty about gaining profits in the market as audiences' reaction to products is neither known in advance nor easily influenced afterward, as well as high initial costs of developing and producing content, to begin developing cultural industries without effective market essentials and resources would be difficult (Havens & Lotz, 2017). Most of all, since culture had been suppressed by the state's authoritarian rule for decades without enjoying autonomy, it was questionable whether the cultural domain, including creators, producers, and distribution systems would have enough potential to lead the development and survive in a fiercely competitive market. In other words, the conditions of promoting the cultural creativity of individuals and generating revenue through producing and distributing outcomes based on market dynamics and managed by the cultural domain itself, which would potentially be a textbook process of developing cultural industries, were insufficient and vulnerable in the Korean context. To promote the cultural industries, it was both inevitable and necessary for the state to be involved in developing cultural businesses to promote them as new growth engines of the national economy. In other words, such industrial characteristics incentivized the state to restructure the market and build foundations for cultural businesses.

In this regard, the way that the state utilized promotion for this sunrise industry was path dependent. Based on his predecessor's plans, the Kim administration announced a 'Five-year Plan of Cultural Promotion' in 1993, the state's first masterplan

dedicated to developing cultural industries. While much of the plan echoed the previous one, it officially proclaimed a goal to develop cultural industries, notably the development of audiovisual businesses, new media, publishing, and gaming businesses. To materialize the plan, MCS established the Cultural Industry Bureau under the Ministry in 1994 as the main organization to plan and implement policies and programs to develop cultural businesses (Kyunghyang Shinmun, September 2, 1993; Ahn et al. 2017). Its establishment reflected a widespread desire among the administration, as Lee Min-sup—the head of the Ministry—proclaimed that “audiovisuals, which had been only considered as part of culture, would be recognized as part of industries that had been a *long-cherished ambition of cultural figures* (Seo, October 21, 1994, stress added)”.

In accordance with the five-year plan, the bureau began to implement several schemes to promote cultural industries. Most of all, it categorized audiovisual businesses as part of the manufacturing industry in 1994. This meant that they would be entitled to get financial and tax benefits equivalent to benefits that manufacturing businesses received. In a similar vein, it defined audiovisual and graphic technologies as ‘cutting-edge technologies’ so that they would receive public funds from the state. In addition, schemes to construct infrastructures such as the national film studio, integrate culture with cutting-edge media technologies through training technological experts, building databases, and overhauling relevant regulations such as the protection of intellectual properties were also initiated (Arts Council Korea, 1993; Ko, January 21, 1997). In relation to this, the Ministry introduced a bill called the ‘Framework Act on the Video Industry Promotion’, which provided a legal basis for promoting audiovisual businesses, which was passed in the National Assembly in 1995. Last but not least, the Kim administration recognized *Chaebols* as major funding sources and encouraged them to invest in cultural businesses. Arguing that the industrial structure—which had been led by small-scale businesspeople—could not progress without further investment, the state strongly demanded major conglomerates enter the industry (Kim, May 17, 1994). To facilitate their entry, the number of regulations that had restricted the entry of large companies into media and cultural markets was lifted.

Along with economic needs, Kim expected that cultural industries “would contribute to the nation’s *Segyehwa* (globalization in Korean) (Kim, October 10, 1997)”, another core political slogan of his administration, to replace old legacies from authoritarian governments and further integrate the nation into the world. Kim believed



this would be realized through liberalization of the market and society and the development of advanced technologies and new industries. For him and his cabinet, cultural industries, of which success would be based on individual's freedom of expression and creativity and outcomes could achieve tremendous income and international fame, would be ideal businesses to satisfy their political goals (Maeil Business Newspaper, September 1, 1995). In this regard, Participant H, who served as a senior executive in the Ministry, explained the primary existence of the Cultural Industry Bureau.

Since Kim Young-sam administration, the government had begun to stress the importance of cultural industries... [Before growing to the Bureau], the team had been a mere division called as Cultural Commodity Division under Culture Policy Bureau. [The Bureau] meant the Ministry equipped a stable system to implement policies for promoting cultural industries (Participant H).

The nation's political democratization in the late 1980s saw the Korean government shift away from its traditional approach of controlling and regulating cultural production, riddled with authoritarian rules and strict censorships on cultural products and artists, and the mobilization of cultural materials for state propaganda. This shift saw the establishment of the MOC as an independent governmental branch to replace previous schemes and develop new strategies for a post-authoritarian society. Despite its marginalized position in the central government, cultural bureaucrats initiated several schemes for developing the creativity of individual artists and producers in the field. Meanwhile, several external factors, such as intense trade pressures to open the domestic market, led to political leadership's interest in the economic potential of industrializing culture becoming mainstream in policy planning. Such political and economic changes became fundamental structures of the nation's cultural industry policies.

In spite of the tides of neoliberal globalization and the growing presence of market forces in cultural production, the state continued supporting and engaging in the development of the cultural industries. Considering the legacies of the developmental state and the notably strong role of bureaucrats in formulating businesses with the power to mobilize private and public resources, there are distinctive characteristics that demonstrate the state's continuing strong presence in the development and maintenance of Korean cultural industries. Through several examples and cases, the

following sections discuss how the state has engaged in promoting the cultural industries and how policy practices were utilized in a market subject to the flows of neoliberal globalization.

#### **4.2.2. Strong Presence of Elite Bureaucrats in the Development of Korean Cultural Industries**

Since the mid-1990s, the Ministry of Culture and Sport began to implement industrial logics in its policies, seeking new opportunities to produce cultural goods (Moon, 2020, September 3). The Culture Industry Bureau (CIB), a new branch under the Ministry, became responsible for investigating the economic potentials of cultural businesses. In detail, the Bureau consists of four divisions: Film Promotion Division, Game and Record Division, Publishing Promotion Division, and Cultural Industry Planning Division. In relation to this, Participant N, a senior bureaucrat at the Ministry, considered the establishment of the Bureau as a pioneering outcome as “major Western states began to pay attention to industrial aspects of cultural industries in the late-1980s at most”. The Participant recalled expectations held during the Bureau’s establishment as follows,

The main impetus of cultural policy could be summarized as ‘from restriction to promotion’...Such a shift toward promotion was important as films, games, and popular music had been major targets of such regulations, like the restriction of direct distribution of foreign films, and the mandatory sequencing of ‘public songs’ in music albums and preliminary review of lyrics... In this regard, the Bureau would focus on promoting ‘for-profit’ cultural industries that had the potential for self-reliance [without the state’s support] that would be led by private businesses (Participant N).

Following CIB’s foundation, the Ministry began to mobilize its resources in expectation of CIB’s success. It not only made commitments to fund this new branch but also assigned high-ranking bureaucrats to materialize the state’s ambitions of developing the nation’s cultural businesses as an up-and-coming industry. In the belief that cultural industries would not develop successfully solely in the hands of private businesses, CIB stipulated the state’s support for cultural businesses through enacting the Culture and Arts Promotion Act. Following this legislation, the Bureau introduced masterplans for several sectors—including film, publishing, and television—that included professional training, infrastructure development such as industrial clusters and theatres, technological support, and subsidies for cultural production projects. In this regard, CIB’s

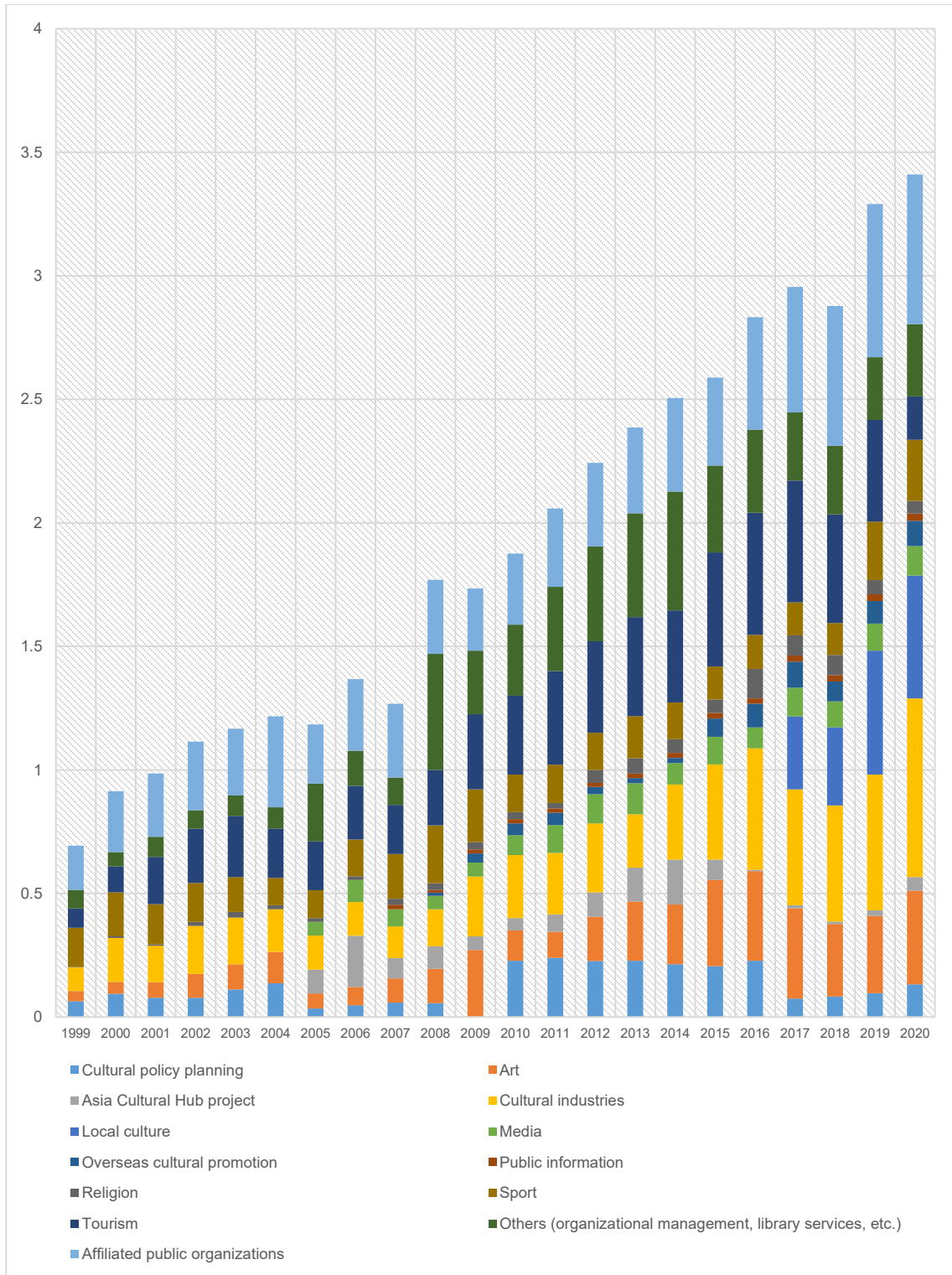
main tasks were more than deregulation of censorship and other restrictions placed on producing and distributing activities of cultural production. It functioned as both a major think-tank for the Ministry to develop policy measures on promoting cultural industries and the main implementing agency responsible for administering policies.

Many of these plans were to be interrupted or suspended due to the nation's financial crisis in 1997–1998. As a few leading manufacturing conglomerates that drove the national economy went bankrupt during the financial crisis, the newly elected Kim Dae-jung administration had to fuel future growth engines of the Korean economy with new industries. Also, Kim recognized the economic potentials of cultural industries and understood that popular culture would be beneficial to pioneer new overseas markets for other industries (Nam, 2019). Under the Kim Dae-jung administration, CIB was expanded to a key organization in the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT), and many of its policy measures on developing cultural industries were revitalized. Following the presidency's expectations, the Ministry began to prioritize the promotion of cultural industries as a key mission and focused all its resources on the Bureau and its projects of developing cultural industries. The following recollection by Participant H well-explains the Bureau's position in the Ministry:

I believe [CIB is] the place in which staff work the hardest [among the Ministry's bureaus]. It sounds strange...but it scouts the best employees in the Ministry and the Ministry assigns high performers to the team. They work around the clock... that's the Bureau. Not everybody can join an organization. Only those who received recognition for their abilities could be part of the team...So [CIB is] a key branch in the Ministry. In the belief that content would play key roles in the future economy, they are self-respecting (Participant H)

In relation to this, Participant O, who has participated in a number of supervisory committees relevant to cultural industry policies of the Ministry, responded that “the Ministry's bureaucrats are recognized as outstanding human resources within the government organization as their entrance scores on the Public Administration Examination are higher than those of other ministries.” In this regard, Bureau positions are highly regarded when compared to other bureaus in the Ministry, and Bureau members are considered elite leaders among other bureaucrats. Such placement of outstanding employees to CIB teams that take charge of developing and implementing strategies of promoting cultural industries reflects how an autonomous and competent bureaucracy is a major characteristic of the developmental state (Johnson, 1982).

In a similar vein, the following Figure 4.1 demonstrates how the Ministry—the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (1998–2008) and the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (MCST, 2008–current)—allocated its budget to each policy sector, including the promotion of cultural industries, support for ‘pure’ art, funding for sports infrastructure and athletes, etc. The graph shows the prioritization of support for cultural businesses, including media and tourism, while support for pure arts, religion, and the promotion of local and traditional culture—which had previously been regarded as major elements of the nation’s cultural policy—stagnated. Given that budgets are a political outcome that demonstrates the state’s commitment to particular projects expressed quantitatively, the tracking of the Ministry’s expenditure indicates the willingness to monitor the support and development of cultural industries (Wildavsky & Caiden, 2004).



**Figure 4.1. Cultural ministry's allocation of its budgets from 2000 to 2020 (trillion KRW)**

Source: MCT, 1999; 2000b; 2002; 2003; 2004a; 2005a; 2006; 2007; MCST, 2008a; 2009a; 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016a; 2017a; 2018; 2019a; 2020a

In 1997, the budget for promoting cultural industries was only 6% of the Ministry's total budget (Heo, January 5, 1999). However, starting from the Kim Dae-jung administration, the budget dedicated to promoting cultural businesses, split among various bureaus, began to expand rapidly. In 1999, the budget for the Culture Industry Bureau was 97 billion KRW (86 million USD), 13% of that of the entire Ministry of Culture and Tourism—694 billion KRW (616.8 million USD). In 2004, as the size of the nation's cultural businesses expanded, MCT separated into several divisions in charge of advertisement, broadcast, and publishing from CIB and established the Culture and Media Bureau (CMB) to improve the specialty of bureaucrats and promote media convergence of different media (Ahn, May 12, 2004). Combined with CMB's budget, the ratio of both bureaus increased to 18% in 2010 (336 billion KRW out of 1.87 trillion KRW, equivalent to 300 million USD) and became 24% (843 billion KRW out of 3.41 trillion KRW, equivalent to 753 million USD) in 2020, exceeding each of the budgets allocated for pure arts (379 billion KRW as of 2020, equivalent to 338 million USD), sport (247 billion KRW as of 2020, equivalent to 220 million USD), and other sectors. Considering that the Ministry's budget does not include that of public organizations such as the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) and the Korean Film Council (KOFIC) which execute various promotion programs in the field, the state's support for the cultural industries exceeds that of the Ministry's direct budget for its various branches as a whole.<sup>52</sup>

Along with the budget of MCST (as well as its affiliations), the nation's cultural bureaucrats strove to categorize cultural industries as technology-based industries so that individuals and corporations in industries would be eligible for various public funds supporting cutting-edge technologies managed by the Ministry of Science and ICT—the governmental branch which holds the largest research and development funding program in the entire government system. Such an approach in which the government appropriated the budget dedicated to other ministries through recategorizing cultural industries as technology-intensive businesses, not only contributed to digitalizing cultural production but also demonstrated the state's strong interest in developing cultural industries (Moon, September 3, 2020).

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<sup>52</sup> For instance, in the year of 2020, the National Assembly appropriated 476.2 billion KRW (431 million USD) to KOCCA and 101.5 billion KRW (90 million USD) to KOFIC. Considering the legislature appropriated 3.41 trillion KRW (30 billion USD) to the Ministry, the state's supports on the cultural industries through public organizations is significant.

In that sense, to develop and implement promotional strategies for cultural businesses as a new engine of the nation's future economy has been MCT and its superseding MCST's top priority for decades. As mentioned in previous chapters, all the presidencies after Kim Young-sam announced their masterplans for developing cultural industries, all of which focused on developing the industrial potential of cultural production so that the state could instrumentalize their outcomes for political and economic purposes. Following doctrines from each presidency, the Ministry has expanded the Culture Industry Bureau to several branching bureaus. In 2004, the Culture and Media Bureau was established alongside the Culture Industry Bureau, and the organization became three bureaus in 2017: The Copyright Bureau, Content Policy Bureau, and Media Policy Bureau,<sup>53</sup> and following the organization's expansion, more bureaucrats were recruited. Given that MCST currently consists of 9 bureaus under the first Vice Minister who is responsible for cultural affairs, such a structure represents the increasing role of cultural bureaucrats in industrializing culture.<sup>54</sup>

While the Ministry's mobilization of available resources to promote and support cultural industries is evident, a question remains: How is the state's intervention in the cultural realm legitimized in a post-authoritarian, democratic era? Responses from participants showed three themes in relation to this question. Firstly, bureaucrats point to the brief history and relatively small size of the Korean cultural industries as justification for their direct engagement in cultural production since they lacked both funding and industrial structures. Considering the capital-intensive and high-risk nature of cultural industries, cultural bureaucrats believe the state's active role in protecting and promoting cultural production is required to help Korean businesses thrive in both domestic and international markets. In that sense, they regarded themselves as not only patrons who

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<sup>53</sup> In detail, Copyright Bureau is in charge of policies on cultural trade and copyright protection of cultural products. Content Policy Bureau is responsible of policies on film, game, and music industries as well as the development of strategies to expand the Korean Wave. Finally, Media Policy Bureau implements policies on advertising, publishing, and television businesses.

<sup>54</sup> Among 9 bureaus, Culture Policy Bureau and Policy Planning Bureau oversee the entire cultural policy framework as well as the management of the Ministry. Emergency and Security Management Bureau is an organization that is responsible for setting contingency plans for managing the Ministry's function in times of national crises. Apart from three bureaus set up policies on cultural industries, there are Arts Policy Bureau and Regional Culture Policy Bureau—which each of them is responsible of pure arts sectors and regional cultural infrastructures. The second Vice Minister is in charge of public information and sport affairs.

support the development of cultural products but also helmsmen guide cultural businesses toward development (Cho, December 13, 1999; Lee, 2019a).

Secondly, some participants point out a long-standing tradition of the nation's market system where the state has been involved in allocating resources among stakeholders, rather than yielding to the market. In the developmental state, the capitalist market system is often maintained by a hierarchical relationship between the state and individual stakeholders in the market, including consumers, corporations, and trade unions. Despite the ongoing implementation of neoliberalism, such a mechanism continues to operate in the Korean context to manage various types of conflicts among market players (Kalinowski, 2015). As long as the state has the authority to distribute resources and mediate crises, some actors expect active participation by the state in resolving issues regardless of skepticism from others. Such a situation results in the state's continued engagement in the market, which includes cultural industries. In relation to this, Participant G explained:

Unlike other countries, however, in Korea, whenever there is a conflict in the market, all stakeholders ask the Ministry to solve the issue without attempts of rectifying it by themselves. Industrial associations, which have mandates to work out problems, lack trust from their members and often force the Ministry to intervene on their behalf. Thus, the government is always blamed from both sides; some accuse the state of incompetence while others criticize the state as having fingers in every pie (Participant G).

Last but not least, there is a collective psyche among cultural bureaucrats which prioritizes national development, rather than supporting an individual's cultural production or prospering the arts and creativity. According to Miller and Yúdice (2002), the state's cultural policies, as a privileged terrain of hegemony, have political missions focused on developing a distinctive national identity that citizens recognize as transcending certain interests. By defining the standards of cultural tastes, the state expects culture to function as an essential tool of governing the population. As culture is believed to be indispensable to manage society, it becomes inevitable for bureaucrats to be involved in the cultural realm. Through regulations, support programs for individual cultural products, and various cultural institutions such as art galleries, museums, public media, and schools, they set up guidelines for producing and consuming culture.

Such a mechanism becomes more powerful in Korean society as the state retains significant power in the cultural realm. In spite of political democratization, its



promotion of cultural industries was influenced by industrial policy logics and legacies of the developmental state. Given that both ideas and practices of the Korean developmental state had been driven by a national psyche of 'living well', or leaping into the ranks of developed countries, the state's proclamation of cultivating cultural businesses as new growth engines for the national economy meant bureaucrats would continue to mobilize cultural products as both political and economic tools (Yim, 2002; Kang, 2011). For bureaucrats—who were the main architects of realizing political-economic missions of 'living well' through institutionalizing the developmental state system in both policies and the market—the pronouncement became an order to direct the industrialization of cultural businesses (Kim, 2020). Of course, their interventions into culture would differ from that of previous authoritarian governments.

Korea's bureaucratic approach to cultural production was twofold. Firstly, policymakers of the cultural ministry were granted the initiative in planning policies and implementing them in the field. Based on the logic that culture would contribute to the state's political and economic agendas, they set up policy goals and drew up schemes to develop industries, established and designated public organizations to execute their ideas, and met and encouraged stakeholders—from individual artists to large corporations—to follow their masterplans. Regardless of which administration was in power at a given time, these roles granted to bureaucrats have not been changed, although the presidency set up broad guidelines that characterize the administration's masterplan for promoting cultural industries. As Participant N explained below, bureaucrats could retain the power to formulate and implement policy measures, which reinforced their position in the field:

Many of the presidency's directions are set up by bureaucrats [detached to the presidential office from the Ministry] ... Then, the Ministry has initiatives for policymaking and implementation of policy outcomes... Based on my experiences in the Ministry for decades, the Ministry's voice is strong [in policymaking] (Participant N).

Similarly, Participant J, who works at an MCST's affiliated organization, added that most support programs for cultural businesses and the Korean Wave are overseen by the Ministry are fixed—in other words, managed by bureaucrats. In relation to this, both Participant G and H explained that all presidents after democratization have been supportive of the Ministry's ideas for industrializing culture as they have recognized the potential of instrumentalizing culture. Although each administration had different ideas

and objectives for said instrumentalization from exchangeable goods in the market to tools of statist ideologies, all their goals presumed the industrialization of culture and export promotion of cultural products to foreign markets. Other than a few major changes by incoming administrations that would result in prioritizing certain goals over others, depending on political orientation, there is no incentive for administrations to replace the entire policy framework of instrumentalization, commercialization, and industrialization of culture, which has been developed by bureaucrats for decades.

Secondly, officials in the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MOEF) are involved in policymaking as they approve MCST's budget proposals. Throughout history, MOEF and its former ministry, notably the Economic Planning Board (EPB), was the main architect of constructing the nation's economic system as the developmental state. Led by a small number of technocrats—bureaucrats who manage policymaking with scientific and professional expertise rather than political insights, EPB was devoted to implementing logics of the developmental state system into the public sector (Wade, 2018). It also played a key role in building a theoretical foundation of 'national development' based on state-led developmentalism to legitimize their influence over the economy, as well as the society (Kang, 2011). As both legacies of the developmental state and the Ministry's presence are strong in the government structure, MOEF is engaged in all government policy development, including cultural policies. Such an omnipotent position of the Ministry comes from the right to allocating each Ministry's budget and other resources. This means that cultural industry policies are double bound to the tastes of cultural bureaucrats as well as those of MOEF's technocrats who have strong beliefs about the development of the national economy. In relation to this, Participant F reflected an antipathy to MOEF's interference in cultural industry policies.

To put it bluntly, it means that MOEF participates in cultural affairs. Without seeking advice from us, it just decides cultural policies by itself. ...MCST had no say in every administration's decision-making process. Why? Because presidents had to consider bread-and-butter economics... to 'live well' had always been their top priority. To stay in power, they had to follow the logics of economic ministries (Participant F).<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> The strong initiative of MOEF's bureaucrats is another legacy of the developmental state. Up to date, vacancies at the Ministry have been regarded as the place for only elites who have the highest exam score from the Public Administration Examination. In relation to this, Participant F recalls as follows; "Starting from the Park Chung-hee administration, technocrats from EPB ruled the entire government system. This continued when EPB became MOEF... As only the most

Not surprisingly, the global popularity of Korean cultural products and resulting economic and political contributions of the Korean Wave satisfied both bureaucratic parties. For MCST's members, the Korean Wave provided evidence for how culture could contribute to the long-cherished mission of 'living well' through increasing exports and improving the national image and national pride. Expecting that it would improve the position of both culture and the Ministry in policy contexts, Participant H recalled:

The Korean Wave was a piece of exciting news for us. The entire ministry was in a festive mood. As mentioned before, in the government system which only prioritized economic successes as successful policy outcomes, the Culture Industry Bureau was the key organization in the Ministry... We have a sense of duty that the success of cultural products, as well as the arts, is vital to reinforce our national dignity through improving our national image (Participant H).

For example, inspired by the success of Korean idol group BTS and *Parasite*—a Korean thriller film directed by Bong Joon-ho—in the US market, MCST set up a pan-governmental Hallyu (the Korean Wave) Cooperation Committee in 2020 that would include representatives from 13 ministries. Park Yang-woo, the Minister, emphasized that the Korean Wave built confidence in becoming one of the leading countries with immense cultural influence. Following his statement, the Ministry established the '*Hallyu* (the Korean Wave in Korean) Support and Cooperation Division' as a dedicated branch to manage this cultural phenomenon. In relation to this, Participant M, a cultural bureaucrat, explained the Ministry's reasoning behind the Division's establishment as follows,

Starting from the current minister, [everybody] regards the Korean Wave as the Ministry's top priority mission... In that sense, the Division gets priority in budget allocation, and it is considered as a core team within the Ministry along with content [policy] and tourism because they have industrial values. We have been looking for new growth engines for our economy where export growth became stagnated (Participant M).

In the meantime, such contributions of the Korean Wave satisfy MOEF's technocrats. Participant M continued,

When it comes to the budget... we have to discuss with the budget authority. Our budget is subject to reviews by MOEF, then the National Assembly. However, both recognize the Korean Wave as a top priority. For

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brilliant people [in the government system] can work at the Ministry, they have had a sense of duty that they would lead the country towards the mission of 'national development' with elitism."

next year's budget, the Ministry's budget review [with MOEF] gave preferences to spending on the Korean Wave. I believe there will be not much change in budget for cultural production and the Korean Wave [regardless of whoever is in power] (Participant M).

As long as the state recognizes both cultural products and their global popularity as instrumental in projecting statist and nationalist ideologies, bureaucrats are obliged to direct and engage in cultural production, even if much of the system is already under the control of the free-market mechanism. Since the discourse of national development was not interpreted as an economic motive but functioned as a political hegemony that legitimized the system of the developmental state for decades, this rationalization to mobilize cultural products for policymakers' political and economic motives. In this regard, many cultural bureaucrats who I spoke with expressed pride in and satisfaction with the Korean Wave because it is an outcome which they strove to accomplish for decades. A result of this is that Korean cultural products and the Korean wave continue to become impetuses for cultural bureaucrats to participate in cultural production in the name of further instrumentalization.

A recent example that demonstrates this would be the incumbent Moon Jae-in administration's plans of establishing a film production organization between Korea and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Dubbed the ASEAN-ROK (the Republic of Korea) Film Cooperation Organization (ARFO), the organization would promote Southeast Asian film through co-production with Korean film studios which equip advanced technologies and have more experiences with capital. Arguing that "co-production between Korean and ASEAN film businesses would make them a global trend (Moon, 2020, 58)", Moon announced his initiatives of film co-production would bring prosperity to Asian culture. Granted, Moon's suggestion was a strategy of the administration's public diplomacy project to attract leaders of ASEAN countries. The Korean Film Council (KOFIC), a state-supported and self-administered public organization that manages and promotes the nation's film production, became responsible for materializing this initiative. To promote the establishment of ARFO as its achievement, KOFIC even broadcast a television commercial to commemorate the new organization based on the success of Korean films. In relation to this, Participant I, a staff member at an affiliation of MCST, explained the commercial's success as follows,

The ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit was held, and [the establishment of ARFO] was a major outcome of the Summit. ARFO was

KOFIC's achievement, so [the television advertisement was broadcast] to promote the success of Korean films to the public. Without Moon's statement on ARFO, I do not think television advertisements would be effective as it costs too much. I believe... it was because of the Summit (Participant I).

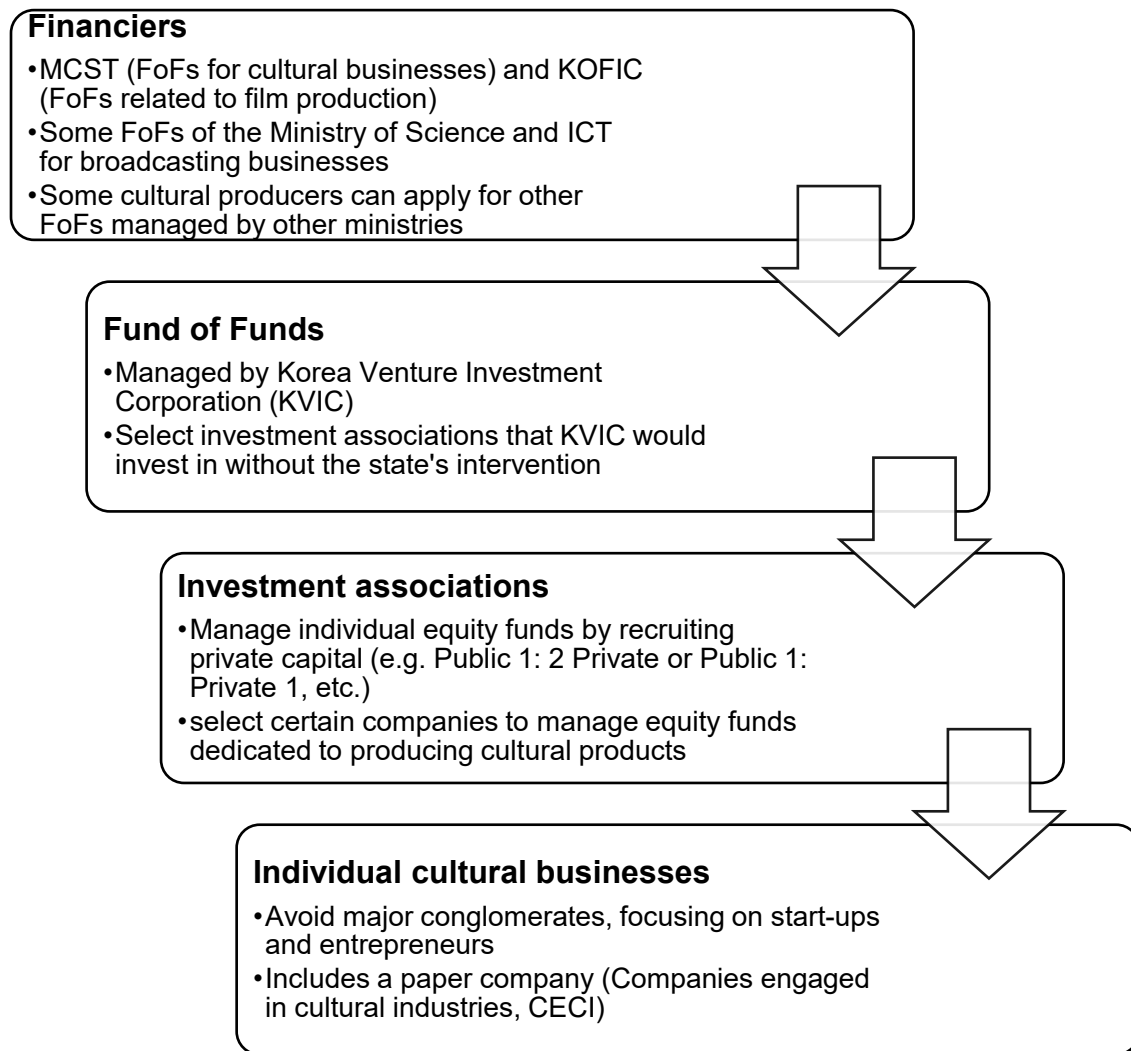
In this television commercial, KOFIC promoted the launch of ARFO through instrumentalizing Bong's achievement in Cannes as a memorial achievement of Korean films. Given that a television commercial was a highly unusual event for the institution, the commercial demonstrates the Commission's strong willingness to utilize both the centennial history of the nation's film production and Bong's achievement in Cannes with *Parasite* as a successful outcome representing the state's political and economic missions, particularly its efforts of increasing its regional influence in Southeast Asia—a key diplomatic agenda of the Moon Jae-in administration. The way in which Participant I connected the success of Korean films in the global market with KOFIC's success also exemplifies a widespread belief among bureaucrats that all national resources, including culture, should benefit the state's grand masterplan of national development, as well as the administration's national agenda. The following sections investigate two major tools the Korean state employs to engage in cultural production: *Motae Fund* (Fund of Fund) and the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA).

### **4.3. The Korean State's Methods of Developing Cultural Industries: Nexus of Neoliberalism and State-developmentalism**

#### **4.3.1. *Motae Fund* (Fund of Fund): The State's Utilization of the Market Mechanism**

In response to the question asking which scheme of the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (as well as its former branches) was the most useful method for promoting cultural production, a number of policymakers replied a *Motae Fund* (fund of fund, FoF). A *Motae Fund* refers to a private-public fund in which the government invests its funds or budget in venture capital finance that manages a variety of funds, instead of directly investing in a particular company or a specific fund. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism introduced an FoF as a funding mechanism for cultural production in 2006, following the abolishment of the Cultural Industries Promotion Fund, a major subsidy for cultural producers established in 1999. Instead, MCT designated cultural industries as 'start-up

businesses' to make them eligible to be subject to 'Act on Special Measures for the Promotion of Venture Businesses', the state's main legal framework supporting technology start-ups as well as FoFs as the main budget program. As an outcome, the Ministry introduced FoFs for investing in cultural businesses in 2006 and FoFs for the film industry in 2010, which would be primarily funded by KOFIC. As of 2020, FoFs for cultural industries are set up with approximately 230 billion KRW (197 million USD) alongside FoFs of 45 billion KRW (39 million USD) for films (MCST, 2020d). The following Figure 4.2 briefly introduces the management structure of FoFs.



**Figure 4.2.** A schematic diagram of Fund of Funds (FoFs) relevant to cultural production (the cultural account, the Film account, and the Broadcasting account)

The government firstly invests its budget in Korea Venture Investment Corporation (KVIC), a public organization supervised by the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Startups (MSS). Then, KVIC selects investment associations to manage specific equity funds and invests the seed money from the government in those associations. Once KVIC decides to invest in certain investment associations, these associations then recruit private investors to fund their equity funds. All equity funds are designated to be invested by venture capital as a means of raising production costs for cultural production. In terms of selecting investment associations and their equity funds (as well as relevant venture capital), KVIC enjoys autonomy without the Ministry's interventions. If funds become profitable, KVIC and investment associations divide them based on the investment ratio, and the Ministry reinvests them in other FoFs. In case of loss of investment, the remaining balance would be used to compensate the loss of private investors to minimize their risks. In relation to this, Participant E explained the FoF's mechanism of managing public funds in the hands of private capital.

Since [bureaucrats] were not very aware of the film industry, letting the private sphere manage the budget was a smart move... Once the government entrusts its budget to KVIC, KVIC announces a series of FoFs and invites venture capitalists who have plans to run private equity funds matching the amount of investment equivalent to or above that of its investment. Moreover, [partners] collect commissions from managing equity funds and get earnings...Such favourable conditions increased private players' investment in FoFs, contributed to exponentially producing a number of Korean films (Participant E).

Considering the management system as well as the terms of revenue share, such conditions attracted the attention of private capital interested in investing in equity funds under FoFs. These private-public funds were essential to cover the production costs of different cultural businesses, including animation, popular music, television, and webtoons, etc. Among them, film producers became major beneficiaries. Indeed, investment associations funded by cultural and film FoFs have spent 1.06 trillion KRW (0.94 billion USD) in film production from 2010 to 2019, which composed 25% of the total production cost (Im, 2020). In relation to this, Participant E detailed how these equity funds attracted private capital.

I would say that films became the largest beneficiary from FoF, as they were needed when investing in funds for film production...because investors are allowed to redeem their funds in three months to a year [as the duration of film production is generally shorter than other start-ups in

other cultural genres]. Huge sums of money went to finance film production, which contributed to making an effective industrial ecosystem (Participant E).

In terms of raising production costs, FoFs have become important in the nation's film market, as their annual investment in film production is approximately 133 billion KRW (119 million USD)—which consists of more than 30% of the total production cost of all Korean films produced per year (Sung, September 18, 2019). Indeed, many blockbuster films including *Snowpiercer* (2013), *Miss Granny* (2014), *Assassination* (2015), *Extreme Job* (2019), and *Time to Hunt* (2020) were supported by FoFs. As FoFs become effective schemes in film production, FoFs also become important for producers of other genres, including television drama, music, and musicals to raise production funds. For instance, venture capitals affiliated with FoFs become major investors for musical production companies as well as television drama (Oh, October 8, 2013). In relation to this, MCST announced that it would contribute 144 billion KRW (128 million USD) to FoFs dedicated to cultural production in 2021 (Kim, January 14, 2021).

The Ministry's introduction of FoFs as major funding schemes of cultural production meant the government would employ hands-off methods and adopt market-oriented mechanisms into its development policies. Indeed, both Participant C and Participant E pointed out that the Ministry of Finance and Economy (MOFE, currently MOEF)'s strongly preferred the state's indirect support for developing industries when considering the government's financial stability. This also demonstrates the budget authority's reluctance to interrupt the market with the state's intervention. Such an attitude of MOFE reflected neoliberal doctrines which were widespread in the policymaking process of bureaucrats who favoured market-driven, less state-interventionist approaches in policymaking (Ryoo & Jin, 2020). Moreover, given that its leading figures had political backgrounds condemning the authoritarian government's interference in cultural production as a non-democratic behaviour, actions of the Roh Moo-hyun administration—which replaced the Cultural Industries Promotion Fund with FoFs—on delegating management of its subsidies on cultural industries were not a surprising outcome (Kim & Jin, 2016; Lee, 2019a). This also coincided with its emphasis on the arm's length principles in promoting the arts.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> In detail, the Roh administration emphasized autonomy, decentralization, and the public's participation as key pillars of its cultural policies. In 2003, MCT established the Committee on



MCT's introduction of FoFs could be understood as a subtle strategy for developing cultural industries (Lee SM, 2018). Although the Roh administration expressed an unwillingness to employ direct measures for developing cultural businesses, considering the small size of the home market and domestic companies compared to foreign competitors with overwhelming market power, the state's withdrawal from the industries would bring a major failure to the nation's cultural production. Besides, despite its market-led schemes for promoting cultural businesses, MCT could not fully let market forces develop the cultural industries as they had been recognized as a core sector to develop the post-industrial economy.

In this regard, MCT's efforts of categorizing cultural production as 'technologies' in policy contexts represented the state's consistent involvement in developing cultural industries. Before the Roh administration, the Kim Dae-jung administration had already chosen cultural industries as a major high-tech industry required to advance the national economy in 2001.<sup>57</sup> Despite the administration's emphasis on the importance of cultural industries to the economy, the state's support for cultural production remained marginalized compared to other technologies.<sup>58</sup> Considering that MOFE continued to prioritize the state's supports for technological development to boost the economy, MCT's legal categorization of cultural industries as technology start-ups and the following introduction of FoFs implied that it would not suspend or reduce support for the sector. Along with FoFs, the Ministry also allowed paper companies (special purpose

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Innovation of Cultural Administration under the Minister. Consisting of external specialists alongside bureaucrats, the Committee suggested the reorganization of the Ministry and the establishment of cultural policies with figures of the cultural realm. As an outcome, the Korean Culture and Arts Foundation, the Ministry's public agency of subsidizing artists, was reorganized to the Arts Council Korea (ARKO). Unlike the Foundation's budget allocation to artists which had been decided by the organizational head, ARKO's decision-making would be based on a collegiate system of council members consisting of figures from the art world. The introduction of a private-public governance system in policymaking was a major shift in the Ministry's cultural management (Nam, 2019).

<sup>57</sup> In 2001, the Kim administration announced plans to promote six cutting-edge technology-based industries that would prosper future lives of people in the nation. Called 6T, this included information technology (IT), biotechnology (BT), nanotechnology (NT), environmental technology (ET), space technology (ST) alongside cultural production which was called as cultural technology (CT). Created by Kwangyun Wahn, a professor at Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), the terminology has been widely used in policy contexts to demonstrate the needs of convergence between culture and technologies (Choi, August 17, 2004).

<sup>58</sup> As of 2003, the Korean government spent 2.213 trillion KRW (1.9 billion USD) to develop '6T'. However, only 42 billion KRW (36 million USD) was invested in supporting cultural technology (Jeon, 2005, April 7).

companies, Companies Engaged in Cultural Industries, CECI) in cultural production to facilitate project-based investments, expecting to reduce the risks of private investors. Participant C explained the implication of these measures to the field.

I believe that the most important turning point in our cultural industry policies would be the introduction of FoF in funding cultural businesses... Venture capitalists made a specialized fund investing in a CECI's production and the fund would be invested by FoF managed by KVIC [which could offset some risks with the Ministry's investment] ...Alongside KVIC, such type of fund for raising expenses would be an attractive investment product for private investors as its turnover was rapid compared to other products (Participant C).

Through inviting private capital and their market logics to govern businesses in the form of equity funds, the cultural ministry sought market-led investment mechanisms as standards of funding and developing cultural industries. This approach satisfied not only the budget authority that favoured less-interventionist industrial policies and indirect measures toward the market but also private investors who were finding investment outlets. However, it is worth noting that the implementation of market-led initiatives in the cultural realm did not result in the state's full retreat from cultural production as it sustained its rights to assess how FoFs are managed. An example would be the earnings rate of FoFs. Compared to other equity funds, their returns are not high since the Ministry expects funds to be allocated in order to raise production costs made by entrepreneurs and start-ups rather than large corporations. Considering private investors who expect to maximize their profits, these guidelines become a dilemma for KVIC, as Participant E explained.

If KVIC generates higher returns from FoFs, it is accused of investing only in lucrative businesses like [blockbuster] film productions since they are designed to support startups and risky projects in which profit-making is at stake. However, if the fund suffers a loss, politicians blame KVIC as 'wasting the taxpayers' precious money'... As the last resort, it often aims to set rates of return lower than the average. Despite its efforts, FoFs are hardly predictable to manage as the box office and movie investment highly fluctuate year by year (Participant E).

The state's implicit management of funds implies that it continues to oversee the direction of funding of cultural production in implicit ways. Apart from FoFs, the state has many public organizations that have participated in cultural production. For instance, the Industrial Bank of Korea (IBK), a state-owned commercial bank managed by market logic, has been a major investor of cultural businesses. In the year 2020, it announced a

630 billion KRW (541.5 million USD) investment and a low-interest loan to cultural production (Yoon, May 19, 2020). As long as their presence in the market is crucial and the state continues to encourage the Bank to support cultural producers, their investment is considered as part of the state's hands-off engagement in the production as well.

Moreover, the Korean state utilizes its state-owned investment funds to support cultural industries. Notably, the National Pension Service of Korea (NPS), the third-largest sovereign wealth fund in the world with 600 billion USD in assets, is a major stakeholder of a number of major companies in industries. It is the second-largest shareholder of a major K-Pop label SM Entertainment (8.54%) and SBS (9.97%)—a major terrestrial private broadcaster. Also, it is a major stakeholder of CJ ENM (5.01%), the largest film distributor as well as a major television broadcast and other K-Pop agencies including JYP Entertainment (6.12%). Given that NPS' presence as a shareholder has influence over corporate behaviour in Korea, NPS' investment in cultural businesses demonstrates how the state can support cultural production through market-oriented measures (Jun, 2016). Along with FoFs and investment from other public financial institutions, this indicates how the state still utilizes neoliberal market mechanisms for the sake of its developmentalist objectives. such 'indirect' methods are often also used as a way of direct intervention by the state in cultural production, as MCST recently announced that it would require recipients of FoFs to improve the working environment for staff such as signing employment contracts and penalties for overdue wages, etc. (Kang, December 17, 2018).

FoFs and other forms of investment from public agencies in cultural production reflect what Mazzucato (2015) calls the 'entrepreneurial state', which refers to a state that shapes and creates the market through the encouragement of private capital innovation and socializes risk-takings for the sake of profit. In effect, various investments drawn from public agencies but operated by market-oriented mechanisms have functioned as catalysts encouraging private stakeholders to participate in cultural production (Lee, 2019a). As the profit distribution system of FoFs indicates, the state makes up for potential losses of private investors from its share. Such a structure has been a strong impetus for private capital to invest in this risky high production cost business. It also reinforces the state's presence in cultural production with implicit and hands-off methods as these tools are operated by the market., In addition, the state

continues its involvement in the cultural production and distribution process with more explicit methods, as the following case of KOCCA demonstrates.

#### **4.3.2. Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA): The Persistence of State-developmental Methods in Policy Schemes**

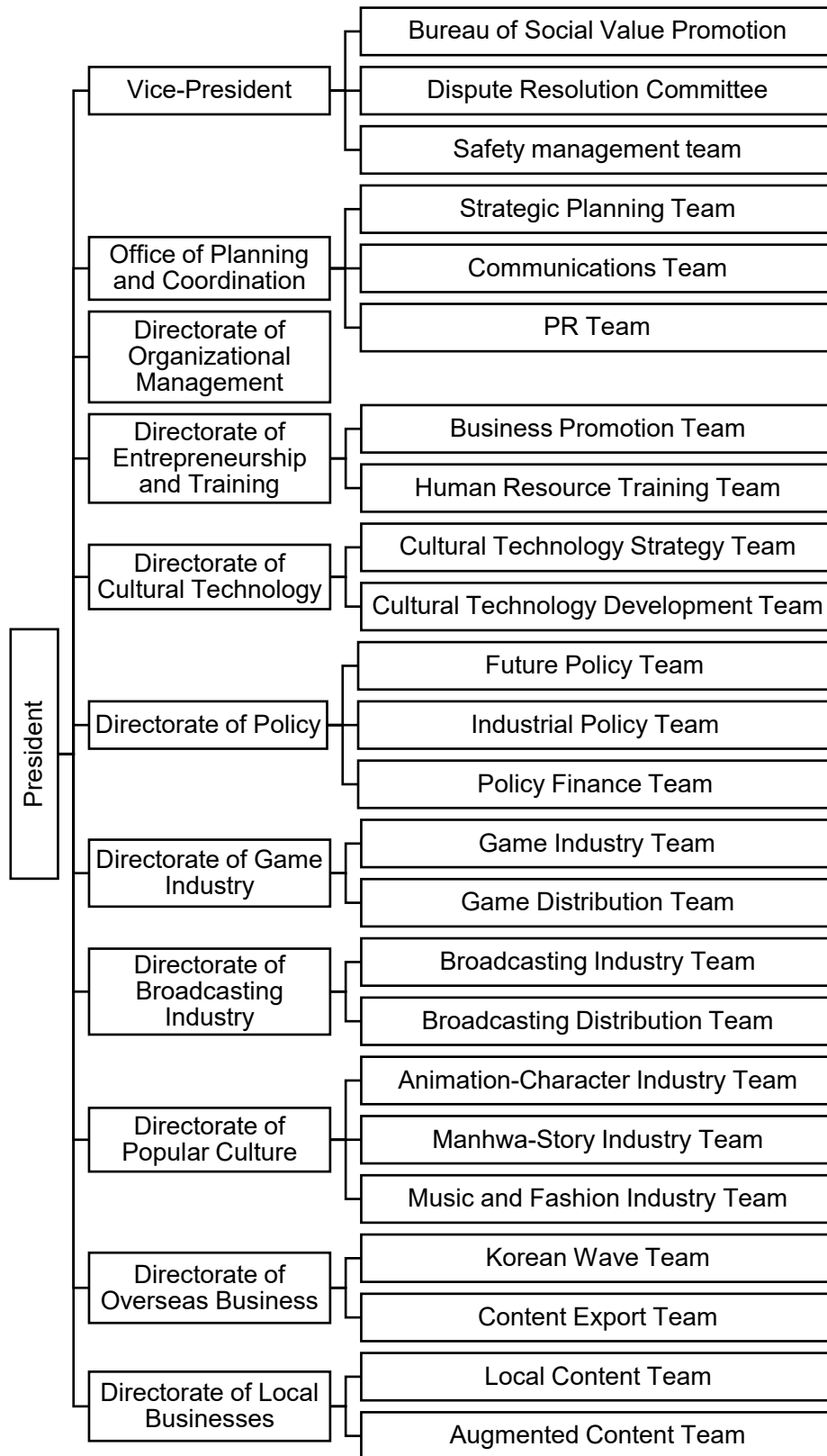
Arguing that the increase of industrial competitiveness of content would be key to becoming a cultural powerhouse, the Lee Myung-bak administration demanded a convergence among different cultural genres as a focal objective of its cultural policies (Lee H-K., 2020). Pursuant to the nation's Framework Act on the Promotion of Cultural Industries (2009) that requires agencies to 'efficiently support the advancement and development of cultural industries (Article 31)', MCST merged several existing public organizations that had previously independently promoted each cultural genre such as animation, broadcasting, game, and music, into a single agency—which became the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA). Other than film businesses, which continued to be managed by the Korean Film Council (KOFIC), KOCCA has played pivotal roles in implementing policy actions to promote cultural production.<sup>59</sup>

Since its establishment in 2009, the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) has provided a number of business projects and funding programs for cultural production as the Ministry's main executive agency. In detail, it has implemented a variety of programs to support the production and distribution of various cultural genres, including animation, broadcasting, character licensing, comics, fashion, games, music, musicals, publishing, and next-generation content like augmented reality and virtual reality products. Moreover, KOCCA manages its regional branches overseas to develop inroads for Korean cultural products into foreign markets and held roadshows and showcases in local markets to promote them. In terms of overseas expansion, the

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<sup>59</sup> When the Lee administration decided to merge several MCST's affiliations including the Korean Broadcasting Institute (television), Korea Culture and Content Agency (animation and character businesses) Korea Game Agency (game) into KOCCA in 2009, KOFIC remained as an independent agency. Participant I explained that this was mainly due to different legal frameworks and funding revenues that these agencies were bound by. In effect, KOFIC was pursuant to the Promotion of the Motion Pictures and Video Production Act while other agencies were pursuant to the Framework Act on the Promotion of Cultural Industries. In terms of financial sources, unlike other agencies dependent on the state's subsidies, KOFIC had mandates to manage the Motion Picture Development Fund—a 3% charge of ticket sales which the Council collects from theaters. Last but not least, unlike other cultural products, films were understood as political and artistic products in politics unlike others which often treated as commercial commodities.

Agency also provides support for domestic businesses in the form of business consulting, product localization such as dubbing, subtitling, and translating, etc. It also invests in technological development relevant to next-generation content and provides a series of training and networking programs for start-ups and individual artists. In relation to this, the following organizational chart of KOCCA (Figure 4.3) exemplifies the range of the organization's activities in supporting cultural production in the market.



**Figure 4.3. KOCCA's organizational chart (as of 2020)**

KOCCA consists of nine Directorates. Excluding the Directorate of Organizational Management and several teams under the direct control of both the President and Vice President that conduct KOCCA's internal affairs, each Directorate is dedicated to implementing programs for promoting individual cultural genres with high commercial potential and supporting technological development and overseas promotion of cultural products. Both the organizational structure and its programs indicate that this agency seeks to manage the entire production chain of all major commercial cultural genres in industries, from the production of cultural goods and services and training creators to marketing and overseas distribution.

Many of KOCCA's programs are dedicated to promoting the production of cultural goods and services across different genres that have high economic potential in the market with more hands-on and interventionist measures. For instance, under the sponsorship of the Korea Credit Guarantee Fund—a public institution that provides credit guarantee services for small and medium enterprises' liabilities, the Agency provides credit to each production phase, from planning content to production and commercialization. Aimed at reducing risks cultural enterprises face when producing cultural goods and services, KOCCA guarantees a return of the production cost up to 1 billion KRW for promising companies. However, the program's requirement clarifies that pure arts performances are not eligible for funding since their sustainability as businesses is uncertain. Given that KOCCA's annual budget —476.2 billion KRW (411 million USD) in the year 2020—far outweighs the budgets of MCST's other affiliated executive agencies for promoting pure arts such as Arts Council Korea (ARKO, 272 billion KRW from the government budget) the Agency's size reflects how the development of cultural industries remains a top-priority agenda within the Ministry.<sup>60</sup>

Along with its support to produce cultural goods and services, the Agency is involved in promoting Korean cultural products in overseas markets. It also hosts international-level business conventions such as Broadcast Worldwide (BCWW) and the Asian Contents and Film Market (ACFM)—Asia's largest broadcast and film content

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<sup>60</sup> Many of ARKO's programs are run by the Culture and Art Promotion Fund. Apart from the government's direct subsidy (272 billion KRW (237 million USD in 2020), it also finances from commissions collected from bicycle and motorboat racing and rental fees from galleries and theaters owned by the organization, and a mandatory fee from landlords who build new architecture, remaining balances, etc. The entire amount of funds in 2020 is 543 billion KRW (471 million USD in 2020) (ARKO, 2020).

market respectively—and invites foreign investors and distributors to attract investment in and finances for cultural production. In this regard, this state-led agency acts as an intermediary introducing foreign buyers and distributors to domestic companies who seek foreign markets for their products in various exhibitions. Meanwhile, the agency also offers consultations on managing publication rights in foreign markets for producers. In relation to this, Participant B, a researcher at an MCST affiliation, highlighted the Agency's presence in foreign exports.

Other than a few major companies, most experience difficulties in exporting their products or distribution rights even if the products are high-quality... There is no organization like us in other countries. Foreign companies are really envious of [Korean companies] and say, "how come the state brings companies to exhibitions and introduces them to foreign buyers... It is really amazing that the state cultivates new markets." I think Koreans have the frontier spirit with a strong sense of national pride. This makes [us] spread something Korean [to overseas] (Participant B).

KOCCA's direct involvement in cultural production and their variety of programs for creators and companies—including market analysis, credit guaranty and financing for producers, the provision of infrastructure for creators, the promotion of cultural products in overseas markets, assistance in technological development, and expert training and mentorship—demonstrate the state's strong willingness for developing cultural industries. The case of KOCCA, as a state-led agency offering comprehensive packages for the production and distribution of cultural products with direct guidance, is rarely seen in other countries which assume cultural production should be free from the state's direct intervention. In relation to this, Participant B described the organization below:

KOCCA connects various stakeholders in the cultural realm including audiences, businesses, and creators with the state's policies and it is responsible for 'promoting' content... Foreigners often ask: "What makes you stick to the job so much? You are public officials." [To produce data in the field and implement customized programs for businesses] we frequently conduct surveys on audiences, too... Only KOCCA conducts extensive research about audiences on a national scale (Participant B).

Participant D, a staff member at an MCST affiliation organization who has participated in a series of promotion programs of Korean cultural products in foreign markets, echoed similar sentiments:

Many countries have public institutions for promoting cultural industries. However, I can say there is no such organization that is strongly driven by



the state like KOCCA. At most, some agencies are co-funded by state and private investors, including major corporations. But the funding from the private sector to [KOCCA's projects] is minimal as they don't bring in the profit for major corporations (Participant D).

Granted, the Korean state has been an enthusiastic supporter of developing cultural businesses and promoting the nation's cultural products overseas. In this regard, KOCCA represents how the Korean state has formed a centralized structure for its direct engagement and support in cultural production, which is rarely seen in other countries. Combined with the state's overwhelming power of allocating resources in the national economy which reflects legacies of the developmental state, MCST and KOCCA's influences and impacts on resource allocation in the field was more than minimal (Jin, 2011b; Lee H-K., 2020). This, therefore, raises the question: why does the state continue its hands-on participation in the business of culture through KOCCA and other public agencies? Participant G, an executive of an affiliation of MCST, described some political and economic rationales that the Korean state employed to justify its involvement in developing cultural industries compared to other countries.

We can let the market develop cultural businesses. There are several committees in the United Kingdom that promote cultural industries. However, unlike our projects in which individual programs are targeted at specific cultural production and creators, UK's supports for cultural production often remains at the level of suggesting the overall framework and letting the market work. In that sense, [the Korean government's] programs can be valued as 'kind' ones. It is because we believe cultural industries are still infant industries that need to grow in the arms of the state's supports. Also, the Korean Wave increases the expectation of improving the national brand image (Participant G).

Alongside KOCCA, many public agencies have been involved in cultural production. In 1984, as part of the film promotion plan, KOFIC (then the Korea Film Promotion Agency) established the Korean Academy of Film Arts (KAFA), a public film school for training a small number of students who are willing to work in the film production. To date, the Academy has produced several individuals of distinguished talent to the field, including Bong Joon-ho, Choi Dong-hoon, and Im Sang-soo—all of whom have led the commercial film market in the nation and have well-regarded reputations among foreign critics. Also, KOFIC's funding schemes and its policymaking regarding production and distribution systems have significant impacts on the film industry even if the film market, as well as its production system, is run by free-market logics (Jin, 2020a).

Rather than being a bystander and leaving the task in the hands of producers and distributors, the state is also actively involved in advertising and distributing Korean cultural products. The Korean state has been eager to mobilize resources from different public institutions and encourage major corporations to take part in publicizing the nation's cultural products. In detail, MCST mobilizes cultural organizations—such as the Korean Culture and Information Services (KOCIS), which manages 32 Korean Cultural Centers worldwide, and King Sejong Institute Foundation which operates 213 Korean language institutes in 76 countries—to promote Korean popular culture. Granted, Korean Cultural Centers and King Sejong Institutes played pivotal roles in raising awareness of Korean popular culture among the local population (Eom et al., 2019). In regard to Bong Joon-ho's *Parasite*, Participant O, a professor who has participated in a number of MCST's advisory committees for two decades, explained how the Ministry directed support for *Parasite* at the Academy Awards—which have become a milestone for the globalization of Korean cultural industries as well as the Korean Wave, Participant O recalled MCST's efforts during *Parasite*'s ultimately successful run at the Oscars.

I believe that MCST [and its affiliations] did their jobs at the Oscars. After receiving the *Palme d'Or* award at Cannes, the Korean Cultural Center in Los Angeles had several events introducing *Parasite* to American audiences. Alongside the Consulate General in Los Angeles, it also hosted a series of receptions for important figures of the Oscars before the ceremony. This contributed to *Parasite*'s wins at the Oscars (Participant O).

As long as culture is recognized as a key instrument of the state to achieve its political and economic purposes to develop the national economy and show off national power, the state continues to participate in the cultural realm, feeling the need to guide creators and entrepreneurs in accordance with its missions. In the era of the Korean Wave, the state utilizes not only MCST and its affiliations but also other ministries and public organizations to push their agenda of promoting and exploiting the cultural industries, regardless of which administration is in power. Ironically and interestingly, the Ministry established public agencies because there had been widespread scepticisms toward the perceived excessive role of the state in the field and the market. Participant A, who has an executive position in an MCST's affiliation, explained why such public organizations such as KOCCA managed programs for promoting the Korean Wave instead of the Ministry.

There were concerns over the state's roles in expanding the Korean Wave. We had to answer questions like 'why does the state interfere in the Korean Wave?' which criticized the Ministry's engagement as a highly nationalistic approach... It might also bring concerns over misinterpreting the Korean Wave as a patriotic phenomenon, which had been condemned by the general audience. Thus, [the Ministry] entrusted their tasks to public organizations so that they can continue managing businesses related to the Korean Wave without the Ministry's title (Participant A).

Of course, as long as KOCCA is a public organization that is supervised by MCST, its activities—including the development and implementation of various programs and projects to support cultural production—are subject to how each administration approaches culture (Lee H-K., 2020). In relation to this, Participant B defined KOCCA's promotion packages as "materialized outcomes of MCST's policies that are motivated by the incumbent President's perspective on culture and lawmakers at the National Assembly who are involved in legislating them." In detail, Participant G reflected how political backgrounds of the presidency influence the Agency's activities.

Each administration has its own agendas and appoints the head [of KOCCA] who is well-aware of the political stance of the administration. Let's say, conservative administrations put emphasis on the success of cultural products in the global market. Then [KOCCA] focuses on projects for supporting a few leading corporations in cultural industries to trigger a huge success, expecting trickle-down effects from several smart moves. In contrast, under liberal-progressive governments, we focus on projects that strengthen the abilities of small and medium enterprises or promote people's rights to enjoy culture... (Participant G)

In this regard, many of KOCCA's programs for supporting cultural production are subject to the administration's viewpoint of culture and indicate how the state directly intervenes in cultural production as a major patron. Indeed, as Figure 4.3 demonstrates, KOCCA's organizational structure and its programs encompass all the major cultural genres. Given that the organization is MCST's main executive body responsible for implementing its cultural industry policies and is the main hub of managing state-led research and development projects related to cultural production, its presence in the industrial field is important. Alongside its subsidies and other direct support schemes for creators and businesses, KOCCA is also crucial to industrial players because its extensive research and reports about cultural production are the main resources for the Ministry to develop regulations and policies that shape business environments (Song, 2021). That said, such comprehensive roles and functions of KOCCA in which support programs encompass every stage of production and distribution of different cultural

genres reflect the state's legacies of setting the pathway of industrial development through various hands-on programs.

#### **4.4. Conclusion**

Unlike common assumptions that see the state reducing its role and even withdrawing itself from its cultural domain in the era of neoliberal globalization, the case of Korean cultural industries demonstrates that the state continues to be a major stakeholder in cultural production by facilitating and utilizing the market and its elements. Since the 1990s, the state recognized the economic potentials of cultural industries and initiated a series of masterplans to develop these burgeoning businesses. Combined with competent bureaucrats and the state's various benefits to *Chaebols*, which were major financiers in the economy, the nation's cultural production that had been run by small-scale businesspeople began to be further industrialized. Such a process reflects how the Korean state previously developed other industries such as automobiles, electronics, and telecommunication by being involved in allocating private and public resources under a series of detailed masterplans that presumed the leadership of the bureaucracy.

The findings of the chapter demonstrate that the Korean state utilizes both market-oriented neoliberal measures and state-interventionist methods to develop cultural industries, depending on the market condition and political orientation of each administration. On one hand, the Roh Moo-hyun administration's introduction of FoFs indicates both the reluctance of liberal-progressive administrations to directly intervene in cultural production, due to political backgrounds and understanding of neoliberal reforms. On the other hand, the establishment of KOCCA in the Lee Myung-bak administration exemplifies how conservative administrations approach cultural production within the framework of industrial development. Despite their different viewpoints and methods with which they implement to develop cultural industries, both conservatives and liberal—progressive governments interpret and utilize culture as a means of furthering political and economic agendas. The utilization of successful outcomes, exemplified by the Korean Wave, demonstrates how the state refuses to retreat from cultural industries and is willing to utilize culture to satisfy its needs. As contributions of FoFs to cultural production show, the state's presence in cultural industries is important.

The findings of this chapter demonstrate that cultural bureaucrats have strived to materialize their masterplans of developing cultural industries with hands-on and hands-off measures. Depending on political, economic, and social situations, they employ both direct and indirect methods to exert their influence on cultural production. Along with hands-off measures like FoFs and deregulation, public agencies implement and manage a variety of programs to support every stage of cultural production. Granted, they are the state's legitimate tools of leading and guiding cultural businesses for the sake of ideas of national development that include both political and economic agendas. As the following chapter explains clearly, such an attitude of the state and its policy practices of support for cultural businesses has been both crucial and controversial in the field.

## Chapter 5.

# Cultural Politics of State-led Development of Cultural Industries

## 5.1. A Widespread Desire for the Globalization of Korean Cultural Products

Interviews with cultural bureaucrats indicate that the Korean state sets its sights on exporting cultural products to foreign markets as its standard of success. They expect the development of cultural industries and the following increase of cultural exports will expand the Korean Wave and enhance national prestige worldwide, which will contribute to the state's longstanding agenda of joining the ranks of advanced nations. In other words, since it provides political and economic benefits to the state, the globalization of Korean cultural products has become a golden rule of the state's cultural policies (Huh & Wu, 2017). Indeed, one of the qualification criteria when MCST and its affiliations choose recipients of their support programs, both through direct and indirect measures, is the potential for export.

In relation to the economic feasibility of Korean cultural industries, the promotion and export of cultural products to foreign markets have been one of the foremost tasks for producers and distributors. Like other industries in the Korean economy in which the prevailing structure became export-oriented, this is mainly due to the small size of the domestic market that prevents manufacturers from gaining effective profit margins and investing capital in production. As the nation's cultural production became more industrialized in the 1990s, competition among domestic producers became fiercer. Granted, such competitiveness led to genre diversification of media products and the production of big-budget films and television series. Thus, it became necessary for major companies to seek larger markets to recoup increased costs and expand profits (Shin, 2009; Chung, 2018). Participant T, who works as a staff member at a film production company, briefly described how the size of a small market restricts the studio's performance.

Let me explain with the animation business. In the US, Pixar and others... spend at least 200 billion KRW (\$175 million) on producing an animated

film. However, [Korean] producers spend at most 5 billion KRW (\$4.3 million) to make a film, usually 3 billion KRW (\$2.6 million). They do not have other options. It is not because they do not have techniques. It is because our market is small (Participant T).

Korean pop idol music (K-Pop) began to penetrate neighbouring markets like China, Hong Kong, Japan, and Taiwan in the late-1990s. A number of K-Pop idols became popular in East Asian countries, and this became a major revenue source for their agencies. In the 2010s, major K-Pop entertainment houses sought opportunities to expand their markets worldwide. Thanks to YouTube and other social media platforms, many idols succeeded in promoting themselves in local markets and held a series of major concerts in Latin America and Europe (Kang, August 5, 2011; Park, January 4, 2019). As an outcome, a few K-Pop idols like Blackpink (YG Entertainment), BTS (Big Hit Entertainment), Monsta X (Starship Entertainment), and SuperM (SM Entertainment) gained decent fandoms in the US, the largest pop music market in the world. In relation to this, Participant W explained the necessity of globalizing the market for K-Pop production.

I believe I think it becomes harder for producers to make money in the domestic market as it becomes saturated. The number of teenagers will decline amid low birthrates and they have other things to entertain themselves... For many producers, the Japanese market is understood as a place of earning a stable profit if they successfully penetrate the market. About the US and European markets, many believe there are people who have strong potential to become K-Pop fans (Participant W).

Similarly, Participant R, a television producer at a K-Pop entertainment agency, explained the importance of foreign markets for production companies to accrue profit.

In terms of making profits, I would like to say approximately 50-50. Let's say, if we spend 10 billion KRW on producing a drama series, we get 5 billion KRW from the broadcaster and 0.5 billion KRW for product placement. The rest, 4.5 billion KRW, comes from selling distribution rights to foreign markets (Participant R).

As Korean cultural products, notably films, K-Pop, and television dramas, are recognized as distinctive genres in many Asian markets, the popularity of Korean cultural products, as well as their fandoms, have become important factors for producers to consider. Not surprisingly, more producers began to prioritize the possibility of export and popularity in foreign markets from their initial planning stage. Indeed, more production studios are eager to cast K-Pop idols in their films and television series

regardless of their performing ability because they expect the fans to consume such products (Ahn, October 22, 2019). In relation to this, Participant P, an executive of a television production studio with ten years' experience, described an experience of producing a series in which K-Pop idols starred as major cast members.

It was planned as an export-bound project from the beginning, and we cast idols. It went well. Its presales were tremendous, recording the highest price. Foreign fans were so excited because its performance in overseas markets was remarkable. We made much money as we earned twice the production cost (Participant P).

Since the potential of exports became a top consideration for cultural production, it became vital for producers to demonstrate their success in overseas markets to attract investments (Ju, 2019). In recent years, this has become more materialized in the form of co-production with foreign capital, where foreign investors finance the production cost in return for profit distribution or distribution rights in global markets. For domestic production, to reimburse the production cost and secure the entry into foreign markets, more Korean film and television producers seek coproduction with foreign capitals as a high-reward strategy (Yecies, 2016; Park, Lee & Heo, 2019). For foreign stakeholders, to invest in Korean cultural businesses appeals to their expectations that Korean products would be attractive merchandise easily available in many Asian markets unlike Hollywood products that often suffer from cultural discount—a phenomenon in which cultural products suffer a devaluation in foreign markets due to differences in sociocultural norms and values—and provoke controversies among local audiences (DeBoer, 2014; Kim J. O., 2018a).

Granted, the entry of foreign players brought an influx of foreign genre characteristics and styles in cultural production to attract more foreign audiences and globalize its outcomes to expand their markets (Lee D-H., 2020). In this regard, the Korean Wave and growing demand for Korean cultural products from foreign markets provided an increasing incentive for producers to embed hybrid and transnational characteristics in their products (Iwabuchi, 2002). Such a market-oriented approach, which reduces signifiers of Korean-ness from cultural merchandise and emphasizes the universality of their themes, has been expected to attract more foreign audiences and investors, as several participants have stated. In relation to this, several research participants, both from the public sector and the private sector, pointed out that the future of Korean cultural products in the market would be at producing K-Culture (Korean



culture) without 'K'. Participant S, who is a producer and runs a television production studio, emphasized the reduction of Korean 'flavour' from media products as a prerequisite of making the Korean Wave sustainable.

Maybe in five or ten years, I expect there will be no films or television series in which casts solely consist of Korean actors and actresses. We have to cast actors and actresses from other cultural powerhouses in Asia—China, Japan, and Taiwan—and produce television series aimed at the entire Asian audiences... Then either US or Chinese capitals will invest in production (Participant S).

In several cultural genres, developing the nation's cultural products as hybrid and more universal has been considered as an effective strategy for producers. major K-Pop labels already have recruited foreign nationals as members of their boy and girl group lineups. Apart from K-Pop, Locus Creative Studio, a major animation studio in the industry, released *Red Shoes and the Seven Dwarfs* (2019)—an animated fantasy film about the parody of the tale of Snow White) and exported it to 123 countries. Kim Hyung-soo, the head of the studio, noted the use of characters and plots from the story of *Snow White* that is familiar with global audiences and its production in English with a cast of Hollywood stars as its main success factors. He added that “such a success would not be possible if the studio focused on Korean sentiments and characters—which would also lower the price (Yoo, July 23, 2019)” in a press interview.

When being asked about globalization strategies of Korean popular culture, many policymakers expressed opinions similar to those of the producers. Participant K, a policy analyst of an affiliation of the Korea Communications Commission, explained the key to make the Korean Wave sustainable is “making products in which subjects and themes are universal so that they can appeal to the global market.” Combined with their compulsion to raise cultural exports as the main impetus to expand the business and maintain the longevity of the Korean Wave, many research participants stressed the importance of producing hybrid products. In relation to this, Participant I explained,

Hollywood studios can put their enormous budget into *Frozen* and collect revenues from distributing the movie worldwide. We cannot do it like them as we have issues like language differences. It is difficult. Then, how can we overcome [cultural barriers]? We should encourage the remaking of Korean products like *Miss Granny* (2014) in 10 countries, 20 countries for

20 and 30 years.<sup>61</sup> If we have good original intellectual property, it could be translated into different cultural contexts. Through recognizing and respecting cultural differences, we should produce things with universal cultural values (Participant I).

Indeed, producers in the field have strived to develop cultural products that can appeal both to domestic and foreign audiences. For instance, broadcasters have begun to develop original television formats, “the sum of the essential elements to generate the central characteristics of a program in production—a recipe with all the necessary ingredients to produce a TV program (Ju, 2019, 97)” and license them to foreign broadcasters. As an outcome, the country succeeded in exporting several formats, including *I Can See Your Voice* (CJ ENM) and *The Masked Singer* (MBC), to foreign broadcasters.<sup>62</sup> Considering that a format is “rooted in cultural values that transcend the national (Waisbord, 2004, 368)” where “global audiences can paradoxically feel at home when watching them (ibid., 378)”, the recent success of licensing deals shows how the nation’s creators approach the international market with products that can appeal to audiences with universal and transcultural elements such as emphases on family, the desire of fairness and justice, and so on.

A similar phenomenon could be found in the popular music industry as well. The nature of K-Pop production and its outcomes are already hybrid and difficult to pinpoint Korean-ness that reflect traditional and unique local characteristics. K-Pop, as a distinctive music genre in the pop world, could be characterized as a highly visual dance-based blending of musical sounds and genres with high production value. Such elements are heavily influenced by both American – notably African American, pop

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<sup>61</sup> *Miss Granny* is a comedy-drama film about a woman in her 70s experiencing unexpected time travel. The film had more than 8.6 million admissions in the box office. After its success in the domestic market, a series of remakes has been made, including a Chinese remake (*20 Once Again*) and a Vietnamese remake (*Sweet 20*) in 2015, a Japanese remake (*Sing My Life*) and a Thai remake (*Suddenly Twenty*) in 2016, and an Indonesian remake (*Sweet 20*) in 2017. Alongside Asian markets, it contracted a remake deal with German producers (Kil, October 6, 2015).

<sup>62</sup> *I Can See Your Voice* is a music game show franchise produced and broadcast by MNet, a cable channel owned by CJ ENM. Premiered its first season on 2015, the broadcaster signed license deals with more than 10 broadcasters worldwide, including RTL of Germany, BBC One of the United Kingdom, and Fox of the United States which all premiered their first season shows in 2020. Meanwhile, *The Masked Singer* is also a music game show franchise made by Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), a Korean terrestrial broadcaster. The format was exported to more than 40 broadcasters, including Australia (Network Ten), Belgium (VTM), France (TF1), Italy (Rai1), Mexico (Las Estrellas), Russia (NTV), Spain (Antena 3), the United Kingdom (ITV), and the United States (Fox), which all began to broadcast their local series in 2019–2020.

music genres such as rhythm and blues and hip-hop, and a Japanese idol management model that consists of a multiple year contract, traineeship that mentors potential idols in music, acting, dance, and public relations, and strong control over celebrities' every aspect of public image, etc. (Anderson, 2020; Jin, 2020c). Moreover, as part of their strategies to attract international audiences, entertainment agencies have recruited foreign adolescents to form idol groups. Additionally, they collaborate with foreign artists and producers for songs and albums by K-pop stars. In relation to this, Participant X firmly asserted the need for making Korean popular culture to appeal both domestic and international markets as a hybrid genre.

We have to discover talents and recruit more artists from foreign markets... Amazon and Apple do not introduce or highlight something American. They are just doing their businesses and providing services. We have to dismiss such a compulsion [of promoting cultural products as 'Korean']. Let's say, a number of K-Pop songs performed by idols are composed by foreign composers...If we emphasize cultural pureness, then there is no future. We should strive to make it so our genres can be adopted in other markets (Participant X).

The prioritization of export has made producers restructure their production systems to suit foreign market characteristics. For instance, aimed at simulcasting in Korea and China to prevent illegal distribution, the Korean Broadcasting System (KBS)—the nation's public broadcaster and the distributor—and its co-production partner Studio New pre-recorded a television melodrama series *Descendants of the Sun* (2016). This was due to the Chinese authority's regulations which requires pre-screenings of all television programs before their broadcasting. As the majority of Korean television series are produced alongside the broadcast schedule, to produce the entire series before the scheduled broadcast was a big challenge for producers. Thanks to their efforts, producers could regain much of the production cost—13 billion KRW (\$11.3 million)—including 4.8 billion KRW (\$4.2 million) from iQIYI, a Chinese online video platform, in return for simulcasting the series in China (Ko, March 25, 2016). In addition to this, Netflix, which has co-produced several Korean films and television with local production studios, also urged them to accept its book-length rigid production protocols in return for its investment, which is not common for local producers who are used to a more flexible environment (Yoon, January 18, 2018).

The presence of Korean cultural products in the global market in the era of the Korean Wave has been significant (Jin, 2019). Then, what does the Korean Wave mean

to producers? When being asked about the impacts of the Korean Wave on cultural trade, Participant Q, a producer at a broadcaster who has been involved in both production and overseas distribution for almost 30 years, recalled their experience in selling Korean television programs for the first time.

[Before the Korean Wave], Korean television series were considered as 'one of them' and I felt we were the third wheel between North American and European televisions. Now, I feel that Korean cultural products are evaluated as a major brand and make me think we are a major player in global cultural production. Like *Parasite*, which won *Palme d'Or* at Cannes, foreign buyers recognize Korean products as something different from Western content but valuable all the same (Participant Q).

Such a sense of achievement expressed by Participant Q cannot be solely translated as an economic success of Korean cultural products in overseas markets. Rather, it reflects the mentality of Korean cultural producers as second movers in the global market, whose products have become on par with those of other front-runners such as Japan and the US. Given that many Korean cultural products, from K-Pop idols to television entertainment shows, have been understood as imitations of Japanese and American popular culture in foreign markets, the recognition from the market as a distinctive brand meant a major recognition for creators in the field, regardless of their commercial success in the market (Korea Times, June 18, 2018). In relation to this, Participant W, who works as a music producer at a major K-Pop label, discussed how cultural producers feel about recognition as a success.

There used to be a time when music producers thought their recognition in the Japanese market, like ranking the first place in the Oricon Charts, was an indicator of success. Now, the target has changed to the US market, at least for major K-Pop agencies. Since Japanese and American [popular music] have been major influences on K-Pop, there are desires on the part of producers to expand their target to US audiences as a [form of] recognition (Participant W).

Similarly, the state's drive for promoting cultural exports is more than just an economic policy imperative. Rather, arguments for increasing exports have been used to legitimize the state's strong interventions in the market and society to mobilize resources, including labour and private capital, for the sake of its political and economic interests. For decades, the state has promoted export not only as evidence of the quality of Korean merchandise but also as a signifier intended to increase patriotism by highlighting the contributions of individuals to the state's masterplan of national

development (Kang, 2011). To justify state-led developmentalism under strong leadership as an official ideology, the state is obligated to ensure that citizens do their utmost for the nation's economic development and serve its agenda of national development (Rhyu, 2014). Arguing that poverty would see the state self-destruct and become subservient to the World powers, the state highlighted the increase of exports to the public as the only way of reducing poverty alongside the development of human resources.

That said, individual contributions to increasing export-oriented products were interpreted as a form of patriotic behaviour and reflected the utmost dedication to the country. In addition, the entire government system has dedicated resources and time to increase the export of Korean products and used their recognition in foreign markets as a way of inspiring and enhancing national pride among citizens. Given that the nation's economy is structured as export-oriented, the state's emphasis on promoting exports is not surprising. Indeed, every administration has highlighted the importance of export, regardless of conservative or liberal-progressive background.<sup>63</sup> In this regard, the export of products is understood as an important recognition of the quality of 'Made in Korea', and cultural exports are ideal objects for the state to recognize their political and economic achievements. Not surprisingly, considering the state's long history of exploiting culture as a tool of promoting its objectives, such an interpretation of promoting cultural exports and the Korean Wave as the nation's achievements is deeply related to ideas of state-developmentalism prevalent in Korean bureaucracy.

Of course, it is worth noting that such an export-led business model that argues to customize media products for foreign audiences may distort or endanger the entire ecosystem of cultural production. There are concerns about the subordination of Korean media production in the hands of foreign capital (Shin, October 22, 2019). Moreover, as producers and distributors are keen to make their products exportable, the industry would be polarized between a few large companies that are able to afford the expensive

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<sup>63</sup> For instance, the government marked and celebrated November 30 as a statutory anniversary called "Export Day (currently Trade Day)" in 1961, when the nation's export profits exceeded 100 million USD. Every year, the president attends the ceremony and confers medals to businesspeople whose companies have exported more than 500 million USD. As the size of national economy increased, the Korean government re-marked December 5 as "Trade Day" in 2012 when the amount of annual export exceeded 1 trillion USD. Hosted by the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Energy, the ceremony is one of few events in the business world that the head of state celebrates annually.

salaries for A-list performers and top directors and screenwriters that are well-known in foreign markets and smaller firms that would not be able to bear such costs (Kim, September 19, 2019). Last but not least, as the majority of increased production costs are spent on paying top celebrities, there has not been much improvement in the production environment, which questions the sustainability of cultural production (Ahn, July 3, 2018). Participant P explained how the Korean Wave has worsened the production environment, where only a few famous celebrities and cultural workers saw significant benefit while most staff struggled due to the increased production cost and the potential profit, and continued working in poor conditions, including unpaid overtime, job instability, the lack of protection, and so on.

There has been high inflation in the production cost. After *Winter Sonata* (2002), the first [Korean Wave] was led by the Japanese market. But the sensation was gone soon after. Then, the second one was triggered by China, but now it is gone. But the production cost increased several times as the salaries of A-list actors and actresses, top screenwriters and directors have jumped. Arguing that the market became larger, they demanded higher wages... It makes sense only when foreign markets are brisk. This made producers and broadcasters suffer (Participant P).

Also, dependence on foreign markets would be a double-edged sword for producers considering their unpredictable nature. At times, cultural imports provoke political and social controversies in recipient countries as they can be understood as sensitive issues to local audiences as well as state authorities. This means that cultural exports are vulnerable to external factors such as political tensions between countries. For instance, in 2017, China—one of the largest importers of Korean cultural products—suspended imports of Korean media products and restricted its local companies from cooperating with Korean companies when the Korean government deployed the US' THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) missile system to defend itself from the North Korean threat. Arguing that the missile system would detect some of the Chinese territory, Chinese authorities unofficially retaliated by banning cultural imports alongside other unofficial measures that restricted activities of Korean companies—such as the ban of Chinese tourism to Korea and boycotts against Korean goods in China (The Economist, October 19, 2017). Termed *Hanhanryeong* (限韩令, the doctrine of restricting the Korean Wave), Chinese countermeasures put many Korean producers at risk. In effect, the amount of film and television export to China fell by 55% and 75% respectively in 2017 compared with the previous year (Korean Foundation for

International Cultural Exchange, 2018; 2019). In relation to this, Participant R recalled how it jeopardized their company directly as well as the industry more broadly.

We signed a contract with a Chinese online platform for exporting two television programs. But the Chinese counterpart just broke contracts due to *Hanhanryeong*. We could not even receive compensation for our loss because it was argued that the order from the Chinese government should be considered as an uncontrollable event same as natural disasters... The loss was significant and resulted in our CEO and other executives being laid off. Other than television production, we had to cancel all concerts [of K-Pop stars affiliated to the company]. It was a nightmare. Small companies would not survive with such a financial loss (Participant R).

Despite some concerns over the system, the implementation of an export-led business model in cultural production has become irreversible. The small size of the domestic market saw creators and entrepreneurs in cultural industries turn to foreign markets and a number of stakeholders—businesspeople, celebrities, and a few top directors and screenwriters—have gained huge profits from exporting cultural products. Triggering the Korean Wave, cultural exports expanded the size of the cultural industries and granted creators the ability to produce cultural goods with bigger budgets along with investment from private and foreign capital. As the possibility of export has become the most important value in terms of investment, domestic producers and distributors strive to reduce the Korean cultural characteristics of their productions and substitute more universal values believed to be appealing to global audiences.

Meanwhile, state authorities strongly endorse and often urge creators and entrepreneurs to consider foreign markets when they plan and produce their cultural products. Indeed, many state-funded programs for cultural production are customized to support cultural exports by funding promotional activities in foreign markets, hosting international exhibitions and markets like BCWW and ACFM, and other financial and technical supports. While the state's all-encompassing efforts of increasing the number of cultural exports are deeply connected to its strategies for managing and expanding the Korean Wave, such bureaucracy is criticized for being preoccupied with its objective of raising exports as key performance indicators that can instantly indicate achievement. This often leads bureaucrats to focus their support on 'ready-made' production projects—that already have high expectations in the commercial market—so that they can show off their possible export to foreign markets as achievements. This method can improve bureaucrats' productivity in the eyes of the budget authority, media, and

politicians, but does little in terms of diversifying genres and strengthening the production capability of different stakeholders in the field. Most of all, such short-termism and window dressing of the bureaucracy neglect other production projects that need support.

## **5.2. Ready-made Content Only: The Window dressing of Bureaucracy**

Thanks to the Korean Wave, the contribution of cultural industries to the national economy has become more significant as the amount of cultural exports exceeded those of home appliances, and became the 13th largest export category—the largest export among non-manufacturing business in 2018 (Export-Import Bank of Korea, 2019). In this regard, the Korean Wave, as much of its contemporary popularity is primarily driven by foreign audiences, can be explained as a successful outcome that is aligned with the nation's longstanding export-driven economy. It also demonstrates how the state's visions and initiatives of developing cultural industries in collaboration with *Chaebols* and other major private capital have made the state's presence persist in the cultural domain as a major stakeholder. While admitting that much of the success of Korean cultural products in the market is owed to the creativity and entrepreneurship of individual creators and businesspeople who have striven to pioneer new markets and produce new products, this indicates the state's overall direction and contribution to promoting cultural businesses and that the potential in the international market has been validated and achieved expected results.

Based on a premise that the state's presence in cultural industries is substantial, it is important to know how producers recognize the state's role(s) in the field. While much cultural production is increasingly driven by market mechanisms that seemingly contradict the state's engagement, the state continues to exert its power in the field with direct and indirect measures in the name of the development of cultural industries. In this regard, by examining how the state's approach and its methods are interpreted and understood by producers, whose activities become more dependent on foreign and market forces, the state's impacts on producing and distributing cultural products can be interrogated. Also, participant reflections on the state and bureaucracy may provide insight and lead to a better understanding of both the state's contributions and its instrumentalization of the Korean Wave.



All participants from cultural production positions had experience working with public authorities. While most of them agreed that MCST and its affiliations offered a number of support programs for producers and distributors to promote cultural production, their responses were mixed when asked for an evaluation of their experiences. Some participants recognized the Korean government's programs are well-organized compared to its rivals such as Japan and several Asian countries. In detail, Participant Q had a good opinion of state-supported schemes for funding airfare, setting up booths at foreign exhibitions, and translation services when companies sought to pioneer new markets, all provided by KOCCA and other government agencies. In a similar vein, Participant T recalled how their project benefited from state programs.

Whenever our directors and executives met investors, they always asked whether we could finish the project and make it happen. They seemed anxious and reluctant to finance our project. Our seniors told us that it was more difficult for them to raise the first 5 billion KRW than to collect the rest of our production cost—15 billion KRW. To attract investment, we needed some amount of initial investment which would reassure other investors and put their money toward our project. We already had an award-winning scenario—the grand prize from MCST—and we already got some support from KOCCA. Such recognition from the state gave investors some reassurance that the project would be finished (Participant Q).

Alongside the state's measures toward tax benefits and financial supports including FoFs, some participants acknowledged how the state recognized their cultural work and became supportive when they were attempting to attract investors. Participant X, a cartoonist whose works have been adapted as television series and films, explained that the state's recognition for their works became useful when they met venture capitals to ask for investment. As long as they did not know details of the industry, X recalled the state's recognition gave investors a strong impression of X's portfolio. In relation to this, Participant U, a colleague of Participant T who deals with marketing and promotion of films in the studio, detailed how state support benefited their project.

Our scenario got first place in the National Competition [hosted by MCST]. Then we received support from a research and development program of KOCCA for three years. We also attracted a 0.9 billion KRW investment from KOFIC to develop and support our production. Finally, we also applied to a head-hunter program from the Institute for Information Communication Technology Planning and Evaluation [a public institution that manages research and development of information and communication technologies under the Ministry of Science and ICT] when we recruited a director from

overseas—it supported their cost of living and salary. All these programs helped us to offset our costs (Participant U).

In spite of benefits and contributions to cultural production, however, many participants pointed out that the bureaucratic management of supporting programs often undermined the state's effort to promote cultural production. Most of all, several participants emphasized the lack of expertise on the part of cultural bureaucrats in the field. At times, the way that cultural bureaucrats implemented policies and communicated with the field has frustrated their counterparts in the industries, resulting in out-of-touch policies and creators becoming reluctant to work with them. For decades, the nation's bureaucracy system has aimed at nurturing generalist bureaucrats rather than specialists, as part of the state's efforts to centralize bureaucratic capacity and concentrate the executive power (Kim, 2020). While this was an effective measure for preventing some common issues such as trained incapacity of bureaucrats—which refers to an idea that certain education and training may prevent individuals from performing their abilities beyond their knowledge system—many interviewees including Participant S criticized generalist bureaucrats who did not recognize the unique characteristics of the culture industry.

We often go to seminars held by KOCCA. I agree that the state provides a variety of support programs and research and development programs. What I want is that bureaucrats should develop their expertise in cultural production. Also, I believe it is important for them to know how the field operates... There was one time that I called KOCCA to ask something, and a staff member replied "I don't know. Please contact the cultural ministry." Then I called MCST, but the officer said "I am new here. Please call me tomorrow." So, I just contacted a lawyer (Participant S).

Participant S' response seems contradictory to the previous explanation of the bureaucratic system in Korea. Again, competent bureaucracy has been an impetus of the Korean developmental state (Kim, 2020). In the Korean context, bureaucrats, who undertake the Public Administration Examination, have been considered as leaders in society through recognition of their abilities. Moreover, the way that they implemented effective policies was a linchpin of economic development. Likewise, cultural bureaucrats are not only involved in planning and designing effective policies but also mobilizing resources and effectively allocating such resources to stakeholders, whose roles were essential to developing cultural industries (Lee, 2019a). Indeed, Participant O, a professor who has participated in many advisory committees for the MCST,

highlighted the expertise of Korean cultural bureaucrats in understanding both the mechanism of cultural production and up-to-date data about industries. O added that the professionalism of MCST's staff is better than those of other ministries.

Despite their competence in designing support projects and allocating budgets, there are several reasons that the expertise of cultural bureaucrats has been brought into question by industrial figures. As bureaucracy functions based on existing regulations and legal frameworks that require a substantial amount of deliberation and approval by the legislature and other authorities, there is limited opportunity for bureaucrats to respond to rapid changes in industries and the needs of various stakeholders promptly. Since the dynamics of the cultural industries have become more complex and multilayered, so have said actions expected of cultural bureaucrats. While the state is asked to continue developing innovative strategies for promoting cultural industries and expanding their markets, such complexities often made bureaucrats reluctant to introduce new and radical initiatives that might cause outrage from industrial stakeholders. In relation to this, Participant X, who has experience working with state authorities for years, said that "bureaucrats should be more active in adjusting clashing interests among industrial players." Also, Participant O exemplified this with their explanation of the Ministry's advisory committee system.

Based on my experiences, I believe the main objective of an advisory committee is to minimize the number of complaints [from the field]. Whenever MCST introduces a new policy framework, some always accuse bureaucrats of ignorance about reality. Then, the committee's mission is to gather different opinions... But this does not lead to better ideas as there are too many voices. Then, it becomes harder [for bureaucrats] to develop differentiated schemes or innovative ideas. At often times, this ends in bureaucrats reiterating current or previous frameworks or revising existing policy frameworks at the most (Participant O).

In addition to this, as part of the nation's bureaucracy, cultural administrators are also subject to norms and logics of the bureaucratic system that emphasizes rigid procedures and stability in implementing policies in pursuit of minimizing risk. At times, this tendency becomes red tape—an idiom describing conformity to formal rules that are often expressed by excessive, rigid, and redundant procedures. Filling out excessive paperwork, requiring approval from various people prior to confirmation or submission, and other miscellaneous rules, such practices overtask workers in the field who are interested in receiving state support, are all examples of red tape faced by cultural

bureaucrats. In relation to this, Participant X urged the state to reconsider its way of executing and managing support programs so that more people in the field would benefit from state-funded schemes.

When we apply to state-funded projects and receive a 100 million KRW subsidy. Then we need to attach all the details of expenditures and relevant receipts and upload them to the system. There are some creators who quit projects as the amount of paperwork is excessive. I understand that we need to submit details of spending and other stuff because the money is from taxpayers. So, some companies have staff only dedicated to paperwork... At least there should be some system that could support how to do paperwork so that individual creators or small companies would be able to apply and get support from the public (Participant X).

In relation to the norms and logics of bureaucracy, interviewees also indicated various types of empty formalities prevalent in the nation's bureaucratic system, such as strict protocols and structural hierarchies, which contribute to the window dressing by cultural bureaucrats. Participant X recalled an experience of visiting several international events with cultural officials and how their activities and behaviour were restricted by rigid bureaucratic orders that were incompatible with general practices in the field.

I went to Angoulême [International Comics Festival], Comic-Con in San Diego, New York, and the London Book Fair [with bureaucrats]. But I think that they didn't understand the event...When I first went to Angoulême, everybody came without dress codes and met creators and buyers. Only staff from KOCCA stood up at their booth with full business attire. They dressed up because the Minister was coming. It was breathtaking... If they want to encourage their staff, they should have visited their counterparts like the head of the organizing committee (Participant X).

Regarding window dressing, participants also criticized how state authorities paid greater attention to issues that would catch the public's attention and produce results in a short time, rather than tackling underlying problems. At often, this would lead the Ministry to focus on several key figures in the cultural industries by emphasizing achievements or criticizing controversies that needed quick correction. Individuals I spoke with such as Participant X worried that such an approach driven by short-termism would result in real issues that the majority of creators and entrepreneurs experience in the field being ignored.

Most of the so-called large corporations do their jobs to adhere to legal and regulatory frameworks to protect rights and revenues of creators. Problems come from middle-sized firms. State authorities should investigate disputes

and issues that creators suffer from these companies... However, whenever the Office of the President, MCST and other ministries host meetings, I felt that they only discuss a few major stakeholders in the industry since they are well known to the public. Also, media would not cover misconducts by medium-size firms that affect more creators who struggle to make ends meet (Participant X).

Such an attitude on the part of cultural bureaucrats, who pay more attention to major productions or projects that are well known to the public, can be seen in instances where bureaucrats focus their budget on cultural production. Several participants expressed their discontent with state-funded projects as public authorities have focused their support on cultural productions with high export potential. The prioritization of exports, which has been a long-standing objective and the Geist of the Korean developmental state, is reconfirmed in the state's funding schemes to support the production of cultural goods. In spite of private investments from both domestic and foreign markets, popular projects with high export potential also receive additional support from the state over smaller productions and minor-league producers, exacerbating the inequality gap between major and minor cultural producers. In relation to this, Participant P questioned the rationale behind state-funded programs.

Whenever I apply to KOCCA's programs, a question goes through my mind— "what is the program about?" [KOCCA's] money does not go to projects where it is needed. It goes to projects with major corporations, top-class screenwriters and directors, A-list actors. They are going to make fortunes without KOCCA's supports. I am curious about the selection criteria. Is it performance-based? Do supported projects have to always be successful? Of course, it is great if all goes well...But why does [KOCCA] supports them?... I think it is because they are likely to export their products to foreign markets and earn lots of money (Participant P).

While the nation's cultural policy scope broadened to diverse genres of cultural industries and adopted more expansionist policies, the state continued to set up its own goals that are often independent of what the industry expects. Such a tendency, in which state authorities tend to highlight a small number of leading figures in the field, is an elitist approach that reflects a bureaucratization of the cultural sphere (Girard, 2002[1978]). Considering the Korean state's long-standing strategy of industrial development that concentrates resources on a few leading corporations or individuals to maximize the efficiency of policies in a short time, this approach reconfirms that the same kind of management traditions and structure of the government system applies to the state's cultural management (Cummings & Schuster, 1989). Even if cultural

bureaucrats have strived to avoid censorship and propaganda after the nation's democratization, they still have mandates of satisfying public expectations and producing tangible results with available budgets—including producing world-class cultural products (Cummings & Katz, 1987). However, as Participant X said, this approach may conceal or overlook more structural matters in the field including employment circumstances, unfair contracts between individual creators and agencies, and other issues in production and distribution for the sake of window dressing for bureaucrats.

Window dressing by cultural bureaucrats based on the 'almighty export principle' becomes more problematic when the Ministry connects its support for cultural production with the Korean Wave. As the state prioritizes the export of cultural products to foreign markets and promotes the expansion of the Korean Wave worldwide, it may provoke antipathy towards Korean popular culture (Joo, 2013).<sup>64</sup> Indeed, Participant P raised concerns over the state's excessive emphasis on the boom of Korean cultural products and an overinterpretation for the sake of its political and economic goals.

It makes foreign audiences feel "Aren't we spending too much money [on Korean products]?", "Are we become subjugated by Korean culture?", "Is our culture infiltrated?" Let us say if too many Chinese television dramas are imported to Korea and the Chinese media and state argue 'Chinese television conquers the Korean market'. Nobody would like it, but that is [what] the [Korean] state and media have done for the decade... I think we need to change our attitude [on the Korean Wave] if it means foreigners like the same cultural products as us (Participant P).

With MCST as the central figure, the Korean state had provided a number of support programs for cultural production. MCST and its affiliations such as KOCCA and KOFIC offered a variety of programs for all phases of cultural production—from planning to overseas distribution. They also implemented various policy packages for supporting start-ups and small-size companies, from mentorship to workspace provision. Apart from Fund of Funds (FoFs), there are several ways that creators and companies could benefit

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<sup>64</sup> In relation to this, MCST established the Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (KOFICE) in 2003, a public agency to promote cultural exchange between Korea and other countries. Participant A, who works at an affiliation of MCST, explained that a major mission of this organization is to address antipathy towards the Korean Wave from imported countries with a series of cultural exchange programs, including co-hosting overseas volunteering by well-known celebrities with companies in the industry. In relation to this, Participant N also expressed that the moderation of potential anti-Korean sentiment should be a task of MCST.

from the state assisting with production costs, including low-interest loans from state-run banks, credit guarantees from public institutions, and other direct funding from public agencies. Many research participants from industrial backgrounds agreed that such support for cultural production from the Korean state outperforms that of other state's roles in numerous other cultural industries.

However, much of the way that cultural bureaucrats manage these supporting schemes is subject to mechanisms and norms of the nation's bureaucratic system. The findings of interviews indicate that shortcomings of the bureaucratic system such as excessive paperwork, complicated administrative procedures, and other hurdles necessary to work with state authorities reduced the effectiveness of state-funded programs. In addition to this, the issue of window dressing in implementing cultural industry policies in the field reinforces the idea that the state (as well as bureaucrats) exploits cultural production as tools for accomplishing various political-economic goals. By prioritizing the potential of exports when selecting state funding recipients and publicizing the sponsoring or regulation of a few major stakeholders in the industries, the state demonstrates its interest in low-risk high-reward returns. Such a way of managing available support programs discourages small-size businesses and individual creators seeking to attract investments from raising their production costs. In contrast, it benefits major cultural production projects with a high potential of success in the market in the name of promoting the Korean Wave.

In short, with expectations of expanding the Korean Wave and promoting cultural exports, cultural bureaucrats opt for the low-risk route of supporting 'ready-made' products with a high chance of success in foreign markets. Combined with the window dressing of cultural bureaucrats—that only consider showing off their achievements to the public by exploiting ready-made content of producers, this is a highly instrumentalist approach as the state chooses to support cultural producers who would satisfy the Korean state's long-cherished political-economic desire of joining the ranks of advanced nations through maximizing exports. Since the popularity of cultural goods boosts the nation's global image and also promotes the exports of other industries, to support cultural production becomes an incentive-driven decision for the Korean state. However, the promotion of the Korean cultural industries by the state does not benefit or positively impact all creators and producers in the field. The following section illustrates how the

state understands cultural industries as a means of accomplishing its political-economic initiatives through a discussion of the 2008–2017 blacklist scandals.

### **5.3. Blacklist Scandals and *Gookppong*: Dark Sides of the State’s Hyper-instrumentalist Approach to the Cultural Industries**

Since the mid-1990s, the Korean state has put its emphasis on culture in economic development. Unlike other state governments that strive to protect their markets from globalization, the Korean state aimed at promoting the globalization of Korean cultural products. Expecting that the global popularity of Korean cultural products would benefit its long-cherished mission of improving the national image and increasing export of domestic products, the state introduced various policy frameworks and support programs to strengthen cultural businesses in the global market. To strengthen these capital-intensive and risky businesses in a short period of time, the state’s leadership and ability of mobilizing resources were necessary (Jin, 2011b; Drab-Kurowska, 2018). In this regard, while it requested major conglomerates in the market to invest in cultural production, the state established several public agencies to materialize its support in the form of providing proper education and training for creators and entrepreneurs, funding for production and distribution of cultural goods and services, and the construction of infrastructure, etc. as a patron (Jin, 2020a; Lee, 2019a).

The Korean state’s strategies reconfirm that many mechanisms of the developmental state—where the state strongly intervenes in economic development by controlling and allocating resources through extensive regulation and planning—are still prevalent in the nation’s industrial policies. They also demonstrate how the state understands cultural products as sources of profit and as a means of promoting the nation among the global community. In that sense, the way that the state has intervened in its cultural development is far from what some advocates consider state interventionism in culture, where the expectation is placed on the state to safeguard the democratic nature of cultural development through regulating market players (Raboy, Bernier, Sauvageau & Atkinson, 1994). In other words, the Korean state’s interventionist approach to developing its cultural production is highly motivated by market values and diplomatic virtues of cultural exports.



This approach, in which the state presumes culture as a means of accomplishing the state's vision of becoming an advanced country, neglects other intrinsic values of cultural products which cannot be converted to market valuation or subject to political consideration. In effect, many governments strive to instrumentalize their cultural resources as substitutes for their retreat from the public sector following neoliberal reforms (Yúdice, 2003). While the Korean state does exploit its cultural production for the sake of its political-economic initiatives, it also pressures cultural businesses to produce things that would satisfy the state's needs. This is well-demonstrated through the recent blacklist scandal that accused conservative administrations of restricting access to state support for opposition-leading creators and entrepreneurs.

In detail, conservative administrations led by President Lee Myung-bak (2008–2013) and Park Geun-hye (2013–2017) blacklisted a number of celebrities and staff in cultural businesses and restricted them from getting the state's support. After the inauguration, the Lee administration believed the nation's cultural politics had been dominated by so-called 'left-leaning figures' and demanded state authorities suspend funding on various production projects (Kim & Kim, February 20, 2017). This materialized after several anti-government protests led by liberal-progressive activists in 2009. The National Intelligence Service (NIS), the nation's chief intelligence agency, ran a task force to select and manage left-wing celebrities. As an outcome, the task force selected 82 individuals and put pressure on public agencies and media corporations to suspend support for their production activities. The number of blacklisted personnel skyrocketed to 9,273 during the Park administration (MCST, 2019d).<sup>65</sup> During their years in power, state authorities conducted preliminary screenings on applicants for state-funded projects and excluded those who had been blacklisted. A research participant (who requested to not have the Participant's name associated with the following comment), who was blacklisted during the Park administration shared their experience with the application process:

I wanted to apply to a state-funded program when I tried to set up a company. One day, our vice-president told me that they had received a phone call from KOCCA saying that "it would be difficult [to receive the

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<sup>65</sup> After two years of probing into the scandal, MCST (2019d) announced that 8,229 people were blacklisted by the Park administration because they had endorsed liberal-progressive political leaders in elections and issued statements criticizing the administration's response to the Sewol ferry disaster in 2014, which resulted in the death of 304 people.

funds] because of the research participant.” I never told this story to others. Our company wanted to get the state’s support and I was a major stakeholder. But they said [we would not be able to get support] because I was the second-largest stakeholder (Participant’s information is anonymized).

Controversies over blacklisting cultural luminaries is not a recent phenomenon in the Korean mediascape. During the Roh Moo-hyun administration, several celebrities accused the government of blacklisting them because of their conservative political backgrounds (Park, July 12, 2010). In terms of appointing heads of cultural organizations, conservative artists accused the administration of favouring people who were members of Korea Peoples’ Art Federation (KPAF, *Minyechong* in Korean), an organization of artists with progressive backgrounds (Lee, 2019a).<sup>66</sup> In this context, Participant O explained how the nation’s cultural politics are ideologically polarized.

I want to point out there is a huge ideological gap among cultural producers, unlike other countries. When there is a turnover of power, all cultural organizations and public agencies [relevant to cultural industries] become reorganized. This is not only limited to pure arts. It happens in every cultural genre; films, animation, comics... Cultural governance is highly politicized and ideologically divided as if a microcosm of Korean society (Participant O).

In contrast to liberal-progressive administrations, Lee and Park administrations’ blacklisting had been systematically conducted by state authorities. Despite its ineffectiveness in the field which is driven by market logics, the administration’s attempt to block people with perceived anti-government backgrounds from state support and restrict their activities is highly unconstitutional and supra-legal. Indeed, many of those blacklisted by the Lee administration expressed how much they had suffered from the

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<sup>66</sup> Founded in 1961, the Korea Federation of Cultural and Arts Organizations (*Yechong* in Korean), the nation’s largest artist organization, endorsed the state’s mission to cultivate a statist mentality of self-reliant and modernization of the public through reviving traditional cultural values and critically assessing foreign culture. Being critical of the state’s statist hegemony, artists who strove to practice political progressivism in their cultural practices and were devoted to democratic movements established the Korea People’s Artist Foundation (*Minyechong*) in 1988. Concerning favoritism of supporting *Yechong* within the bureaucracy, the Roh administration reorganized the existing Korea Culture and Arts Foundation to the Arts Council Korea (ARKO) in 2005 to prevent the state’s direct influence on subsidies and promote the arm’s length principle of supporting arts. Suspicious of Roh’s introduction of the committee system as an attempt to privilege progressive artists, *Yechong* strongly criticized the administration’s plan (Lee, 2019a). Indeed, the amount of state subsidies on *Minyechong*, with a membership of 100,000 people, increased from 50 million KRW in 1998 to 2.2 billion KRW. In contrast, its supports on *Yechong*, which had a membership of 1.2 million people, increased from 580 million KRW to 1.9 billion KRW in the same period (Kim, March 2, 2017).

exclusion as well as the lack of explanation for such negative treatment. For instance, Moon Sung-keun, an actor and a liberal-progressive politician who was blacklisted by the Lee administration, expressed his feelings to the press that he felt astonishment the blacklist had been revealed and described the practice as beyond deplorable (Kim, September 19, 2017). Kim Mi-hwa, a comic actress and comedian who also had been blacklisted, demanded individuals and groups responsible for the blacklist be held accountable to prevent such a practice from reoccurring (Kim, September 15, 2017). Even Bong Joon-ho had been blacklisted by the Lee and Park administrations due to plots with the anti-American sentiment, incompetent governments, and left-wing messages in his films. In a press conference, he expressed that the lifetime of conservative administrations “was such a nightmarish few year that left many South Korean artists deeply traumatized” and “many are still reeling from the trauma (Jung, May 18, 2017).”

Believing that the hegemony of cultural politics had been overwhelmed by so-called left-wing figures, conservative administrations sought ways to support pro-government figures. According to a series of classified documents written by the Office of the President during the Lee administration, the administration had plans for concentrating state funding toward conservative artists, laying off staff with anti-governmental backgrounds from public agencies, and encouraging enterprises to invest in cultural infrastructures dedicated to pro-government personnel.<sup>67</sup> So-called ‘whitelisting’, the administration argued that the state would institutionally favour pliant artists and creators that aligned with its political agenda. Many of its plans were materialized during both the Lee and Park administrations (Kim & Kim, February 20, 2017). In relation to this, Participant V, a film producer who runs a production studio, expressed how the state’s special treatment of artists and celebrities who supported the administration’s political stance made people feel a sense of self-deprivation.

Let’s say I am blacklisted. But I am not sure the reason why my project fails to attract investment and cast actors and actresses: Is it because of the

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<sup>67</sup> In relation to this, the Lee administration pressured heads of MCST’s affiliations who had been appointed by the Roh Moo-hyun administration to resign from their positions. In-chon Yu, an actor who served as Lee’s culture minister, argued that those who had similar political backgrounds with the previous administration should resign even if their tenure were guaranteed. Indeed, after Lee’s inauguration, several figures who had led cultural organizations like Yoon Soo Kim (the National Museum of Contemporary Arts) and Jeongheon Kim (Arts Council Korea) were removed from their posts (Lee & Roh, February 21, 2011).

blacklist? Or does it lack artistic value or is not entertaining? Basically, most films go down like lead balloons... Since it is difficult to succeed, I would think 'what was my mistake?' rather than 'am I blacklisted?' In contrast, there are films that make me think 'what the fuck...both the film and the narrative are shit. But how come it could attract such a high budget?' Then, it becomes suspicious. In terms of equality of opportunity, privilege is another word for disadvantage (Participant V).

Given that much of the industry is driven by market mechanisms, it is worth questioning the impacts of the state's blacklist in cultural production. Based on conversations with colleagues, Participant V explained the blacklist would be devastating for cultural workers who are occupied with producing less commercial and more artistic cultural genres, saying that "since their outcomes do not expect profits from the market, their budget depends on public organizations." However, when being about potential damage to cultural activities in the production of commercial cultural goods, the participant, who had been blacklisted three times by the government, shook their head and said,

No. I thought [state authorities] worked so hard [in a sarcastic tone]. Because if you wanted to blacklist someone and make it effective, you should have targeted a few figures and caused them real damage. But they blacklisted thousands of people... It does not make any sense. I want to ask [authorities] whether they really knew these people.

Admitting that the impact of the blacklist on commercial cultural markets would be hard to measure, Participant V explained how the field is influenced by commercial logics determined by multiple stakeholders, including producers, distributors, and audiences. According to the Participant, this made the administration's covert efforts of forcing out blacklisted people from cultural production difficult.

Let's say, Song Kang-ho [a Korean actor] is a blacklisted performer, but audiences come to see his movies. The state cannot force audiences not to come to see his movie. Of course, it might give some directions to Korea Venture Investment Corporation (KVIC), saying 'Do not finance films in which Song appears', but it cannot dictate [KVIC] and other investors. It cannot intimidate KVIC and investors with measures like suspension of their business. At least, I don't believe there has been a serious impact on cultural production (Participant V).

The Blacklist scandals during conservative administrations laid bare how the state continues to instrumentalize popular culture as a political tool. By suppressing those who do not follow their political stances, the state attempted to instrumentalize

popular culture to serve its interests. In a similar vein, it utilized the Korean Wave to celebrate international recognition that enhances the nation's international dignity (Heo, 2015). Dubbed *Gookppong* (jargon referring to the promotion of extreme national pride in English), the nation's politicians, as well as bureaucrats, interpreted the success of Korean cultural products as evidence of how the nation's dignity and status in the global community have improved to citizens. At times, they have employed the term Korean Wave and several cultural products to give the population a sense of pride and show off the strength of the nation's political and cultural power worldwide (Kim & Jin, 2016; Kim & Lee, 2018). For them, the success of Korean popular culture merchandise in the international market could be appropriated as a signifier of nationalism by promoting national glory even if many cultural products are already hybrid and transnational. As Participant C says below, such a phenomenon became intense during conservative administrations as they strove to inspire national pride among the public.

Under the presidencies of Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun-hye, conservative administrations sought ways of implementing ideas of advancing the nation into policies. With the Korean Wave and cultural products which raised awareness in the global community, both attempted to cultivate self-confidence among the population by delivering messages of 'how we are great in cultural businesses.' They exploited the Korean Wave and cultural products with global popularity to mobilize *Gookppong* in the population. They appropriated the Korean Wave as recognition of the nation's achievement throughout the past decades (Participant C).

In this regard, Korean cultural products and their global popularity became major sources for the Korean state to inspire national pride among its populace while also satisfying mechanisms of both commercialism and globalization (Volcic & Andrejevic, 2011). Given the Korean Wave's status as a media product that takes pivotal roles in representing national identity and carries a reputation in the global community of 'hitting the jackpot', such products are ideal materials for the state to raise patriotism and cultivate national pride. Combined with its dedication to strengthening soft power, the Korean state consumes the Korean Wave and relevant cultural products. By doing so, it can continue to sustain one of the key objectives of cultural policies—to govern citizens by providing a collective and national imperative for revisiting and nurturing a sense of

belonging—in the era of neoliberal globalization where cultural products are increasingly marketized and transnational (Miller & Yúdice, 2002).<sup>68</sup>

Indeed, the interpretation of this global cultural phenomenon and cultural products as global recognition of Korea's achievements is already prevalent within the bureaucratic system as well as among cultural producers. Despite their marginalized position in the government system where logics of developmentalism prevail in budgeting mechanisms, cultural bureaucrats pride themselves on the success of Korean popular culture by identifying with how it promotes national pride worldwide. Given their backgrounds of implementing cultural policies that recognize cultural and artistic creativity and their social values, such a sense of accomplishment could not be solely interpreted as expressions of desire to create market profits. In relation to this, Participant H described how MCST's bureaucrats responded to the Korean Wave.

Like the arts, cultural products have more meaning than making money. Their success leads to promoting our culture and eventually raised the nation's prestige in the global community. Since cultural products are vital to improving national image, cultural bureaucrats have a strong vocation for promoting cultural industries (Participant H).<sup>69</sup>

In that sense, unlike other countries such as the US where cultural bureaucracy is rather decentralized and dispersed and subject to opinions and interests of various stakeholders in the field (Redaelli, 2020), and where bureaucrats are reluctant to

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<sup>68</sup> In relation to this, nation branding becomes a useful strategy for the state to motivate its population, whose lives are overwhelmed by transnational and commercial mechanisms, through recreating and exploiting specific national images that “means to be nationally competitive and nationally competitive *for* globalization (Aronczyk, 2013, 10)”. As society and its norms are further commercialized and national borders become blurred among citizens thanks to neoliberal globalization, each nation-state has to ‘brand’ itself to appeal to its population as customers (Aronczyk, 2013; Kim & Lee, 2018).

<sup>69</sup> It is worth noting that Korean media also tend to interpret the success of Korean cultural products in the global arena as an indicator of national pride and a major recognition from the global community to the nation's achievements. When Pinkfong, a Korean education company released the musical animation *Baby Shark* on YouTube, based on a song that originated from an American campfire chant, it attracted billions of viewers worldwide (7.1 billion views as of November 16). Thanks to this success, the company hosted a concert tour in the US and began to co-produce animation series with Nickelodeon, a US cable television channel. Despite controversies over the copyright of the song *Baby Shark*, mainstream Korean media praised Pinkfong and *Baby Shark* as another sensation of the Korean Wave “like BTS (Park, October 22, 2019)”. Likewise, Korean media and politicians praised the critical success of *Parasite* as not only a success of Korean cinema but also a milestone in the entire cultural industries signifying the Korean Wave becoming increasingly mainstream in the global community (Lee, Kim & Yoon, February 12, 2020).

intervene directly in developing their cultural businesses as they believe that any state intervention would be temporal and necessary (Drab-Kurowska, 2018), Korean cultural bureaucrats are instead rather dirigiste and retain substantive power as a major stakeholder in the field. In that sense, the blacklist scandal indicates how some political figures and bureaucrats continue to understand culture as a tool of propagating the state's objectives even after 30 years of political democratization. It is ironic that conservative administrations were accused of reviving an authoritative approach to governing culture since it promoted cultural businesses vigorously as the up-and-coming industry of the future. While they were eager to commodify individual cultural creativity for the sake of the state's desire to become an advanced country, their exploitation of culture in practice was far from promoting creativity (Kim J. O., 2018b). Such an uncanny way of governing culture demonstrates an extreme case of how far the state can instrumentalize cultural production to accomplish its political and economic objectives.

## **5.4. Conclusion**

Interviews from both policymakers and cultural workers clearly demonstrate that the Korean state continues to intervene in the development of the cultural industries and has pledged its support and management of the future global popularity of Korean cultural products. Unlike several cultural powerhouses where market forces take the initiative in promoting industries or other countries in which foreign products dominate their domestic markets, the Korean state continues to reshape its market and supports creators and entrepreneurs in the cultural realm to produce cultural goods and services which have enormous political-economic potential. For instance, its funding schemes such as FoFs are crucial to many producers in industries as major funding sources.

As the development of the cultural industries and the expansion of the Korean Wave in global communities become more important among policymakers, several ministries including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT, currently the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and the Ministry of Information and Communication (currently divided to the Korea Communications Commission and the Ministry of Science and ICT) as well as non-cultural public organizations like the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA), a state-funded agency for promoting exports of Korean goods and services, became involved in subsidizing cultural production and promoting Korean cultural products overseas. Furthermore, several state-owned banks such as the

Industrial Bank of Korea (IBK) set themselves up as patrons of cultural goods production. Considering that a majority of cultural production had been done by small-scale companies that were otherwise incapable of manufacturing blockbuster products, the development of cultural industries in a short period of time could not be achieved without the state's leadership and allocation of resources (Chung, 2019; Lee, 2019a). In other words, the state was vital to laying the groundwork for cultural businesses and their performance in producing and distributing products.

Indeed, as interviews with participants about the state's grants and subsidies exemplify, even small grants and recognitions from the state could be used as tokens to ensure confidence when attracting investment from private capitals. Moreover, contributions by state-owned financial institutions such as the Industrial Bank of Korea (IBK) for cultural production are significant. Such diverse and comprehensive funding schemes for cultural producers, which are provided either directly from state authorities or public-private matching funds (FoFs), indicate the state is involved in mobilizing private and public resources to support cultural production. Combined with additional institutional support managed by KOCCA and other affiliations, the state's direct and indirect funding for producers reaffirms the state's persistence in its intervention in the field through the mobilization and allocation of resources, which are legacy practices of the developmental state.

In terms of exporting cultural products to foreign markets, public organizations are involved in promoting cultural exports through various support schemes such as the support for translation and dubbing of products into different languages, full or partial reimbursement on travel expenses during overseas promotion, and legal support for contracts, and organizing international-level exhibitions, etc. In addition to this, KOCCA has regional offices in Abu Dhabi, Beijing, Jakarta, Los Angeles, Paris, Shenzhen, and Tokyo—all major hubs of global cultural production and epicentres of Korean cultural product popularity—to support the promotional efforts of cultural businesses abroad. Also, the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA), a state-funded trade organization under the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy, has hosted the Korea Brand and Entertainment Expo for years, expecting that the promotion of the Korean Wave would benefit both cultural businesses and other industries. Alongside support for the activities of businesspeople, MCST also pledged to introduce Korean cultural products through its cultural institutions such as the Korean Culture and Information



Service (KOCIS) and King Sejong Institutes. Combined with other institutional support for exporting cultural products, these examples demonstrate how the state is involved in marketing cultural products overseas.

As discussions of 'ready-made' products explain, it is not surprising that such a stance on the part of the state often discourages some cultural creators whose work is considered to have low export potential. As several research participants with industrial backgrounds expressed in the previous chapter, public authorities favour cultural production with a high potential of gaining popularity in overseas markets. Based on what Participant P said about the state's preference of supporting only those who already have enough resources to produce their works, this demonstrates a tendency of bureaucrats to prefer the works of production studios which have experiences and expertise in promoting their previous products in foreign markets or whose portfolios include A-list performers, screenwriters, and directors well known in the market. This also coincides with the reluctance of bureaucrats to take risks when spending taxpayers' money on uncertainty to the risk of their careers. Although public organizations have many programs dedicated to promoting the production of start-ups and small companies, this becomes another reason why bureaucrats tend to be more attentive to projects managed by major production studios or ones that will be distributed by major distributors because they are more likely to be exported over other products. Such an attitude by the state, which favours 'ready-made' cultural products that would correspond immediately to its political and economic goals, is linked to criticisms of short-termism as well as window dressing of the bureaucracy.

Controversies over blacklisting anti-governmental creators in the cultural domain during Lee Myung-bak (2008–2013) and Park Geun-hye (2013–2017) administrations further demonstrate how the state's approach to cultural production can be extremely instrumental. Arguing that the nation's cultural politics had favoured progressive figures, they blacklisted and restricted workers and creators from state support. Regardless of the effectiveness of their implicit crackdown on anti-government figures, the blacklist itself represented how the then-conservative state understood culture through an outdated and unconstitutional perspective—as an object of propagating ideologies approved by the administration so that culture would contribute to legitimating the state's exercise of power (Kim D., 2018). Meanwhile, the state further instrumentalized popular culture by utilizing the international popularity of Korean popular cultural products as a

means of inspiring the self-confidence of Korean citizens. Such logic not only contradicts neoliberal doctrines that required the state to withdraw from managing the cultural industries and acquiesce to market forces but also violated constitutional rights of freedom of expression.

Despite criticisms of short-termism and ‘window dressing’—which accuses bureaucrats of only being interested in exaggerating and showing off their achievements and performances by favouring ready-made content for their supporting programs—the state’s commitment in collaborating with leading enterprises in the market to promote the cultural industries strongly reconfirms its obsession over raising export as a hegemonic discourse in policymaking, as its emphasis on the Korean Wave and its contribution to many of state agendas shows. Considering that the nation’s economy is export-oriented due to the small size of the domestic market, the state needs to mobilize all available resources to increase overseas export. Not surprisingly, to increase exports has been a key component of the Korean state’s macroeconomic planning and a major rationale for managing state-led economic development for decades.

## Chapter 6.

### Conclusion

#### 6.1. The Korean State as the Main Architect and Patron of Cultural Industries

Let's go back to the story of BTS' performance at the 'Korea-France Friendship Concert: Echoes of Korean Music' in Paris—a cultural event hosted by the Office of the President to celebrate President Moon Jae-in's visit to France—introduced in the first chapter. As the Korean Wave expanded to different regions, to hold a cultural event became part of the official presidential schedule during international trips. In effect, for the last decade, the Office of the President and the nation's cultural ministry have given cultural events during the president's overseas trips, and many K-Pop singers and celebrities have appeared in them. A participant (who requested to not have the Participant's name associated with the following comment), who has experience in planning cultural events during the president's international trips, expressed their opinion about such exploitation of celebrities for international cultural events:

State authorities always request K-Pop idols participate in cultural events. However, they pay much less than the market price, appealing to patriotism [by] saying, 'you are doing good deeds for the country'... I believe this is an extreme version of the state's window dressing. Despite a turnover of political power from conservative to liberal-progressive administrations, there is not much difference in exploiting celebrities for the sake of the state's missions without fair compensation.

The Participant's remark on the state's exploitation of K-Pop artists demonstrates how the Korean state continues to exploit the popular culture products and artists that triggered the Korean Wave. Indeed, the story of BTS' performance in Paris shows that there are ways that the state can still mobilize the cultural domain in an era of neoliberal globalization where much of the production and distribution processes as well as products have become transnational and subject to (free-)market mechanisms. Considering that cultural industries are promising businesses in the nation's service and knowledge-based economy and their outcomes are useful sources to promote the nation in the global arena, the state's willingness to intervene in and exploit popular culture—notably cultural products that have established a solid foothold in world markets such as

BTS, Bong Joon-ho's film *Parasite*, *The Masked Singer*, and *Baby Shark*—is still present and continuous. Due to such an object's use value and applicability to state objectives, the state persists with its engagement in the cultural domain as a patron and a major stakeholder even if it does not produce products itself.

In this context, this research examined the relationship between the Korean state and the Korean cultural industries where production and distribution processes are driven by global forces and market logics. Based on interviews with twenty-five cultural bureaucrats and cultural workers, it investigates the reasons behind the state's persistence in its intervention in cultural production and the various policy methods and practices that it utilizes to promote cultural production in accordance with market forces. It also explored how cultural workers recognize and negotiate the state's intervention in their work, and from these findings develops an understanding of the characteristics the state's interventions in the cultural domain hold. Furthermore, by exploring the meanings of globalization and neoliberal market dynamics in policymaking and policy outcomes, the study investigates how the state revisits the process of instrumentalizing culture to accomplish its political and economic objectives in spite of the extent to which the cultural realm follows the logics of transnational market forces that cannot be fully controlled by state authorities.

The state's turn to highlighting the potentials of commercial culture—rather than conventional approaches that focus on the preservation of traditional culture or supporting the high arts—implies the rise of neoliberal imperatives with a market-oriented mentality in policymaking (McGuigan, 2005). Instead of valuing culture for its artistic creativity or communal virtues, the state increasingly gave prominence to the economic contributions of cultural products. Moreover, cultural bureaucrats preferred to use terms such as 'the audiovisual industry', 'cultural industries', and 'creative industries'—all of which would imply economic-reductionist models that would exploit culture for the sake of market profits (McGuigan, 2016). As noted, the presence of the Culture Industry Bureau—which took charge of industrializing popular culture—has become the most important team in the cultural ministry. This interpretation, which combines culture with the economy, has become prevalent in policy contexts as neoliberal imaginaries are normalized in the discourse of policymaking (Valentine, 2018).

As part of restructuring the manufacturing-driven economy toward a service-oriented one, the state employed developmental mechanisms to develop cultural industries. As introduced in previous chapters, it intervened in the development process with various policy frameworks including the construction of infrastructure, selection of certain private stakeholders—notably *Chaebols*—to expand their business in media and cultural sectors, the introduction of a variety of training programs for creators and entrepreneurs in the field, the establishment of private-public funds dedicated to investing in cultural production, a series of direct subsidies and other support programs, etc. Although the state encouraged the private sector to invest in producing cultural products through a series of deregulations and available benefits, such measures belied their goals of laying the groundwork to develop cultural industries and designing the modern foundation that forms the current industrial structure.

Depending on each administration's political orientation and attitude on the cultural sector, there are significant differences in approaches to the development of cultural industries. Conservative governments underlined the success in the global arena as stemming from concentrating state support on a few leading companies with high potential in overseas markets, while liberal-progressive governments emphasized their role of supporting small and medium-size enterprises and safeguarding the right to enjoy culture. As conservative and liberal-progressive administrations had different expectations from cultural businesses—the mobilization of national pride from successful cultural exports and the preservation of cultural diversity with fairer competition in the market respectively—the methods each administration employed were different, reflecting various political backgrounds and policy objectives.

In relation to the Korean Wave, conservative and liberal-progressive administrations also approached their management of this transnational cultural phenomenon differently. Although both political blocs utilized the Korean Wave to empower national pride among citizens, conservative leaders utilized this as an opportunity of showing off national prestige in the global community while liberal-progressive politicians sought less robust ways of managing the phenomenon in order to not provoke anti-Korean sentiments overseas (Kim & Jin, 2016). In this regard, all the measures implemented by the Korean state for cultural production and the Korean Wave reflect the different political orientations of each administration.

Despite these differences, however, it is worth noting that all administrations have been influenced by doctrines of neoliberalism and utilized many neoliberal ideas to promote the cultural industries. In general, the implementation of market principles into the state system blurs the boundaries between the state and market, private and public, and political and commercial in the public sector (Miller & Rose, 2008). Nevertheless, neoliberalization of the public sector, including cultural management, does not stop the state from intervening in the process. Given that neoliberalism is “a political project seeking to extract value from economic processes by acting on political systems and structures to transform them to its advantage (Valentine, 2018, 148)”, the state’s presence is vital to materialize and implement neoliberal doctrines in the public domain as well as society. In the same vein, it legitimizes the state’s continued objective of cultural industrialization, the promotion of cultural exports, and intervention in the form of facilitating capital accumulation and restructuring fields which are deemed to be less profitable or not aligned with the state’s masterplans (Purcell, 2009; Karvelyte, 2018). In this regard, the disjuncture between theories of neoliberalism and neoliberalization in practice is clearly seen in the development of the Korean cultural industries, even if their production and distribution processes are highly marketized and globalized.

The case of the Korean state’s cultural industries development project and promotion of cultural exports suggests that the practice of neoliberalism is subject to the state’s interests. Although cultural production is in the hands of the private sector—including production studios, private capital, and creators—and driven by market mechanisms, the state persists in its exploitation of cultural products for the sake of its objectives. Unlike neoliberal doctrines that require the state’s withdrawal from cultural production, the state retains its authority and governing abilities to promote, manage, and even sanction cultural businesses even if much of cultural production becomes transnational and operates through market mechanisms. This indicates that the Korean state acts in concert with free market mechanisms and ideas of neoliberal globalization selectively so that they can serve its political and economic goals (Suh & Kwon, 2014). In other words, even the adoption of neoliberal logics and the following implementation of market mechanisms to develop cultural industries are subject to the state’s preferences if they satisfy its needs.

## 6.2. Globalization of Korean Cultural Products: The Fate of Both the State and Cultural Businesses

Many of the state's schemes to support cultural production prioritize cultural exports. As cultural industries became the up-and-coming business of the nation's knowledge-based economy in terms of the amount of export, it is no surprise that cultural bureaucrats regard the potential of export as an overriding consideration when they introduce and implement policy measures for promoting cultural businesses. In effect, commercial viability in overseas markets has historically and continues to be a key priority during application reviews for state-funded programs to support the production and distribution of cultural products. Since export has been interpreted as the best indicator efficacy of the state's expenditures in the nation's bureaucratic system—which is also a major legacy of the developmental state that institutionally prioritized export as the best virtue within the system—cultural bureaucrats were not exempt from the influences such interpretations have had on cultural policymaking (Kang, 2011; Rhyu, 2014). However, such emphasis on cultural exports when selecting recipients of state-funded programs often exacerbate the gap between major production studios, who have the ability to recruit A-list performers and staff that are already popular in foreign markets, and other producers. As several research participants with industrial backgrounds critically observed, this is often linked to bureaucratic 'window dressing', describing projects and policies that create immediate tangible results that can be interpreted and presented as consistent achievements.

Despite skepticism, however, the globalization of Korean cultural products through expanding into foreign markets has been understood as a major strategy for producers to recoup their costs and further revenue. Producers and entrepreneurs strive to make their products attractive to broader audiences by adding more transnational and universal elements to their products. In addition to pre-existing hybrid characteristics of popular culture heavily influenced by U.S. and Japanese cultural products, both the state's institutional support for cultural exports and the strong willingness of cultural workers to depend on cultural exports influences the desire to appeal to ever broader audiences. Due to the small size of the domestic market, many cultural workers consider cultural exports to recoup their production costs from the initial stages of production. Expecting overseas markets to be major revenue sources, more cultural producers utilize various methods to globalize their products—including casting foreign personnel,

co-production with foreign distributors, and producing their cultural products with universal themes to appeal to diverse audience groups worldwide. As noted, all these efforts contributed to the hybridization of Korean popular culture to attract global audiences. The findings of this research show that efforts to make popular culture content appear more universal and hybrid to appeal to larger audiences worldwide are strongly endorsed by state authorities that have craved cultural export as a major policy objective.

In effect, the growing presence of the nation's popular culture worldwide becomes useful for the Korean state to show off the nation's success to the population and serves to inspire national pride. Again, given that the state has promoted export as the best virtue through which economic actors could contribute to the nation, it is hardly surprising that it interprets the amount of export as an object of inspiring national pride among the population. Combined with its market values and ripple effects of improving the national image in the global community that could benefit other industries who seek to export their merchandise, the Korean Wave is an ideal tool for the state to demonstrate its political and economic success in the global arena. In relation to this, political leaders and bureaucrats highlight how the success of Korean popular culture in the global arena verifies the state's vision of joining the ranks of advanced nations and its mission of national development. For cultural bureaucrats, the presence of popular cultural products in the global community became a successful recognition for themselves to improve their status in the government system. Successful cultural products became symbols of national image and tools for the Korean state to expand its political power to the region as a means of strengthening its soft power.

Given the political significance of cultural products as tools for delivering the state's particular values and ideology to other countries, the popularity of Korean cultural products in foreign markets becomes useful for the state to attract foreign citizens so that their support for cultural products will benefit its goals of expanding political leverage in the global community (Mirrlees, 2020). Indeed, as the case of incumbent Moon Jae-in administration's ASEAN-ROK Film Cooperation Organization (ARFO) initiative exemplifies, the Korean state utilizes its cultural production to attract the population of Southeast Asian countries so that it can consolidate its political and economic presence in the region. In relation to this, Participant I explained the state's motive of introducing ARFO as a reciprocal approach to attract local producers.



[The introduction of ARFO] was a political decision... If we send Korean culture, cineastes, film production systems, and companies overseas, there will be revenue... But we want to highlight that our proposal to Southeast Asian countries is different from what Hollywood studios have done to them. Hollywood did nothing for Korean film production. Did it invest in Korean films or co-produce movies with Korean producers? Or did it send staff to Korea and train our staff? No. But we are going to offer these things to them. We are going to do that and show how our suggestions are different from Hollywood's (Participant I).

Southeast Asian countries, including Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam were among some of the first countries where Korean films, music, and television drama gained popularity since the 1990s. In this regard, there have been consistent efforts on the part of the Korean state to utilize such popularity to gain political and economic influence over the region, including increasing the export of Korean merchandise, diplomatic support from ASEAN countries in relation to inter-Korean relations and the power dynamics in Northeast Asia between China and Japan, etc. In a similar vein, the establishment of ARFO and President Moon Jae-in's promises of strengthening cooperation between the Korean film industry and its counterparts in the ASEAN market can be understood as part of strengthening Korea's soft power in the region, as Participant D explained when discussing the implications of Moon's initiatives.

Based on the premise that Korea is a key middle-power in the global arena, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has already developed strategies of strengthening diplomatic relations with middle-power countries [including ASEAN and India] ... In this regard, to help the development of cultural industries in the Southeast Asian region would make a narrative of 'if Korea did it, so as we.' By making them as 'partners', we can make the Korean Wave a sustainable phenomenon... Making 'ASEAN-wave' is different from the previous one-sided approach (Participant D).

In this regard, despite the increasing power of global market forces in its cultural businesses and transnational and universal characteristics of cultural products, the Korean state continues utilizing them to wield strong influence over the population and the world. Since the 2000s, all administrations have interpreted the Korean Wave and popular culture to the public as evidence of the nation's success in the global community to varying degrees depending on their viewpoint of culture (Kim & Jin, 2016). Also, they implemented national branding and soft power strategies by utilizing well-known cultural products to improve the national image and attract foreign audiences to favour Korea and its cultural products (Kim, 2016). This means that the more cultural production

becomes globalized, the better it would be for the state to serve its political missions alongside economic profit.

### **6.3. The State's Instrumentalization of Popular Culture as a Political Tool**

In relation to the political efficacy of Korean popular culture, findings also indicate each administration's strategies for promoting cultural industries and approach to the Korean Wave have been different. Depending on each administration's expectations from cultural production and its political backgrounds, conservative governments preferred to formulate more hands-on and interventionist measures. Defining the state's role as the control tower leading industrial development for the sake of its political and economic missions, they established and expanded existing public agencies such as KOCCA so that they could effectively materialize the state's support and guide cultural businesses to follow their lead. In contrast, based on skepticism of the state's interference in the cultural domain, liberal-progressive governments employed more hands-off measures by highlighting the autonomy of the cultural domain from the state. In the name of arm's length principles, they invited market mechanisms to manage the allocation of public resources as exemplified by FoFs.

Such willingness on the part of the state to appropriate culture to benefit its interests has often led to an excessive intervention in cultural production, as blacklist scandals during conservative governments exemplify. As long as the state interprets cultural products as tools for accomplishing its missions, it often attempted to determine detailed directions of producing cultural goods to comply with its needs. While state authorities urged producers to follow its guidelines, they also suppressed creators and entrepreneurs who disagreed with their political directions. Although administrations' informal measures on blacklisting figures in the cultural domain from the state's supports were against the constitution, controversies of blacklisting hundreds of people and restricted them from approaching public resources showed the extent to which the state would go to instrumentalize its cultural domain as a means of ruling society (Kim J. O., 2018b). While the impacts of the state's blacklists in the commercial market are still in question, it withered the artistic creativity of individuals and put many artists and performers at economic and social risk.

The findings from the analysis indicate that the state's roles are far from that of a bystander. Instead of withdrawing from the cultural domain and letting market forces develop and manage cultural production, the Korean state initiated a series of masterplans with details of how to promote cultural businesses. Based on its plans, it mobilized public resources and encouraged private stakeholders for its project of industrializing popular culture. Public agencies materialized the state's plans into a variety of programs that aimed at supporting every phase of the production and distribution of cultural products. When Korean cultural products became popular overseas resulting in the Korean Wave, state authorities introduced a series of initiatives to prevent possible anti-Korean sentiment while they provided institutional support for increasing cultural export. Hence, the Korean state has served as an architect of designing much of the domestic market and has acted as a major patron of producing and distributing cultural goods and services.

Admittedly, it is important to not overstate the state's contribution to the Korean Wave and Korean cultural industries. All research participants, both policymakers and cultural workers, agreed that creativity and entrepreneurship of individual workers have been the foremost factor which paved the way for the success of Korean cultural industries. It is worth noting that a number of individual creators and junior staff in cultural production continually experience heavy workloads and suffer from low salaries and poor working conditions. Notably, behind the growing presence of K-Pop in global music download stores, there are approximately one million underpaid idol-hopefuls who train for months and years hoping for an opportunity to debut. Also, the success of Korean films, popular music, and television cannot be explained without the trials and errors of numerous cultural producers who initially attempted to penetrate foreign markets.

What this research attempts, instead, is to demonstrate how Korea has and could continue to become a cultural powerhouse in the region with a focus on the state's roles. As a second mover that did not have either the infrastructure or capital needed to industrialize, its intervention was vital to industrialize popular culture and foster cultural exports in a short period of time. Indeed, despite widespread skepticism and criticism of its instrumentalist approach to cultural production, cultural workers recognize that the state's participation is still vital for their future. Most of all, the state continues to be one of the biggest investors in cultural production as a strong presence of Fund of Funds

(FoFs) in film and television production indicates. In addition to FoFs, direct investment and credit guarantee from state-owned financial institutions are also important for producers to attract other private investors as quality insurance. Last but not least, as outsiders from a non-Western culture, they often experience difficulties in promoting their animation, films, idols, and television series in foreign markets and exhibitions. For them, support from public institutions to finance their promotion costs, broker foreign buyers, and develop translations of their works, are vital to globalize their products. Indeed, during interviews, many research participants with industrial backgrounds expected more support from state authorities to pioneer new markets and finance initial planning phases.

## **6.4. Looking Forward**

During the investigation of the state's presence in Korean cultural industries, this project identified several areas for future research. First, follow-up studies could be conducted to examine further impacts of the state's policies on cultural production. As long as there is no sign of the state's retreat from cultural production and producers strive to pioneer new foreign markets, the state's interventions in the market will be challenged constantly. In particular, how the state responds to an influx of foreign capital—including Netflix's co-production of television and films with Korean local production studios and the entry of Chinese capital into the entertainment management business—is important to monitor. Since this study focused on the state's willingness and practices of increasing Korean cultural products global appeal, follow-up research on the state's reaction to the entry of foreign capital into the domestic market would be helpful to understand the dynamics between state interests and cultural industries who's nature become even more complex with the entry of foreign stakeholders.

Secondly, while this research focuses on common elements that the state utilizes to develop cultural industries based on legacies of the developmental state with export-oriented strategies that are common to all commercial genres, it is worth studying how individual cultural genres understand and evaluate the state's supports and intervention in their production. Considering each genre has unique industrial characteristics and different market strategies, to investigate the reactions of each genre to the state's approach to promote and exploit cultural businesses with a more micro perspective

would be useful to deepen insights into the state's instrumentalization of culture and how it influences each cultural business and its products.

Finally, a comparative analysis between cultural powerhouses is recommended. While this study focuses on the case of Korean cultural industries, where much of the development of cultural industries is driven by state-led initiatives and policy frameworks, many states—which have advanced democracy and free-market economies—retain different methods to exert their influence on cultural production. In this regard, comparative analysis between countries can bring insight and a better understanding of the complexity of the relation between the state and players in the global market as well as underlying power dynamics between the two forces. This is important as other states also try to mobilize cultural resources for the sake of state interests as their approaches are subject to political, economic, and sociocultural contexts of individual countries.

To sum up, throughout this analysis, this research explains how the Korean state has intervened in the development process of the Korean cultural industries and what imperatives the state utilizes to justify its engagement in supporting the nation's cultural production. Although much of such production and distribution has become transnational and subject to market forces as more producers expect to make profits from overseas markets, the state persists in its involvement in the process to support producers and instrumentalize outcomes. Along with traditional methods of hands-on and interventionist measures based on legacies of the developmental state, it has formulated market mechanisms into its funding schemes aiming at encouraging more participation of private capital and further globalizing cultural products. Most of all, it has been a driving force of industrializing popular culture for the last 20 years and endorsed and supported efforts by producers to expand the market through the transnationalization and globalization of their products.

The findings of this research demonstrate that it is premature to conclude that the state's power in global cultural industries is in decline as the market is dominated by doctrines of neoliberal globalization. In addition to this, the case of the Korean state and its relationship with cultural producers indicates that there are many ways the state exercises political and economic power rather than implementing a series of 'defensive' tools to protect domestic markets such as regulating cultural imports through trade pacts and subsidizing domestic cultural production. Also, given that mechanisms of neoliberal

globalization often require the state's performance to realize its doctrines, the state retains the power to interpret its tenets for the sake of its interests. This legitimizes and intensifies the state's instrumentalist interpretation of cultural products as tools for seeking its political expediency and economic profitability in the name of promoting the Korean Wave. This also implies that the state (as well as each administration)'s political clout can exist in the cultural domain; even much cultural production is driven by (free-) market logics and its production and distribution chain has become increasingly transnational. However, it is worth noting that protecting political and economic interests does not necessarily correspond to protecting the interests of other stakeholders in the field and often collides with the state.

This critical analysis of cultural bureaucrats and cultural workers across the fields of Korean cultural industries suggests the need for more subtle and critical approaches to investigate the nexus of neoliberal globalization and state interests in cultural industries and policies, rather than a linear interpretation of the state's retreat from the market or vice versa. It also expands the discussion of the state's instrumentalization of culture by broadening scopes to the state's political and statist interpretation of cultural products and their transnational popularity as well as how ideas of globalization contribute to benefiting state interests. By finding the nexus between state interests and neoliberal globalization in cultural production, this study sheds light on how an individual state exploits its cultural production to fulfill its political and economic objectives and examines how global market forces and their arguments contribute to realizing such objectives of instrumentalizing culture for the sake of state interests. Through laying the grounding framework that became the contemporary domestic market and revisiting its policy mechanisms in accordance with changing market dynamics, the state retains its position and interests in cultural production as a merchant, patron, and stakeholder, creating a relationship between the state's political and economic interests in the cultural domain and the logics of neoliberal globalization driven by (free-) market forces that are symbiotic, rather than contradictory, in nature.

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