

Call for Papers: *Asian Communication Research*

Special Issue Title: Circuits of K-content: Co-productions, Collaborations, and Connections

Guest editor: David C. Oh, Associate Professor, Syracuse University

Deadline: Abstracts (500-word limit) by September 15, full drafts by December 1, 2025

Background:

After the first uses of “Hallyu” in Chinese newspapers nearly thirty years ago, the metaphor of a Korean *wave* has largely been understood as fluid movements that radiate out from South Korea. Research on the Korean Wave has largely operated on this metaphor, whether celebratory or critical. Celebratory accounts in marketing, political science, or the emergent Hallyu studies have tended to understand the import and interest in “K-contents” as a sign of soft power and neoliberal economic advantage.

In some cases, the research has been motivated by a desire to strengthen and extend the Korean Wave’s distance, desirability, and duration for the nation’s political economic advantage. These utilitarian approaches imaged K-contents as tools to extend the nation’s influence or market position. In other cases, humanistic textual questions considered ontological questions about K-contents that allowed for its popularity. Borrowing from Shim’s (2006) foundational application of Bhabha’s (1996) postcolonial theory of hybridity, it has been a popular explanation for K-contents stylistic choices, language, and ideological meanings. In other cases, different waves are constructed into typologies to explain the sociotechnological interactions that shape the contexts, or the waters, in which K-content is experienced.

Less frequently, a few critical scholars have looked askance at the wave to interrogate the machinations of geopolitical power. Writing about Japan and Korea, Iwabuchi’s (2010) theory of brand nationalism warns that the overdetermination of the “K” or the “J” hides serious problems such as global media ownership and international intellectual property regimes. These are ideological and geopolitical projects, which is a concern also raised by Korean Wave scholars who apply “subempire,” Chen’s (1999) theory about the complicity and participation by some East Asian countries with the neocolonial, neoliberal Western order.

What these approaches—celebratory and critical—have in common is the assumption of an outward cultural impact. Whether the wave just makes damp or overwhelms like a typhoon, the wave metaphor

and its unidirectionality are originating assumptions in much of the textual and production research. It is the purpose of this special issue to look otherwise and to consider not the question of flows and effects but of connections. Instead of ripples outward, the movement of K-content can be understood as currents within a complex circuit in which the contents of other nations can travel back through existing pathways and in which interactions change the nature of the current. After two decades of Korean Wave research, it is appropriate to also understand the receiving nations as not only accepting or rejecting Korean media but actively interacting with it. Although this has been explored in transnational audience research, the existing literature tends to not explore textual or industry questions that center the agency of other nations in which K-contents interact.

For this reason, the special issue is interested in understanding the mediated connections and meanings that are produced in co-productions, in metatextual narrative, in remakes and adaptations, and other forms of industry connection. The special issue particularly values new ways of thinking about co-constituted circuits with K-content rather than the metaphor of the Korean Wave, and, relevant to the journal, it is especially interested in these connections in the Asia-Pacific region. Papers that can humanistically investigate particular cases as well as theorize connections through existing and new frameworks are especially valued.

Topics might include but are not limited to:

- Remakes of K-content or Korean remakes of other nations' content
- Adaptations of K-content or Korean adaptation of other nations' content
- Co-production and textual meanings
- The production of co-productions – negotiating language, work, culture, distribution, etc.
- Industry connections and collaboration
- Narratives of inter-Asian connection, e.g., *Ajoomma*
- Diasporic narratives and documentaries – Koreans abroad or diasporas in Korea
- Film festivals – Korean film festivals abroad or Asian-Pacific film festivals in Korea

Submission guidelines:

Interested authors should submit an abstract to David C. Oh at dcogh@syr.edu, the special issue guest editor, by September 15, 2025. Selected abstract authors will be invited to submit their full papers to the *Asian Communication Review* for anonymous review. Because papers will undergo anonymous review, an invitation to submit a full paper is not a guarantee of the manuscript's acceptance.

Submissions should be formatted to APA 7th style and will have a word count of 6,000-8,000 words (all-inclusive). The special issue has an anticipated August 2026 publication date.

The *Asian Communication Review* is the first English-language academic journal in Journalism and Communication Studies published in South Korea. It is one of the official journals of the Korean Society for Journalism and Communication Studies. It is indexed in SCOPUS and KCI (Korean Citation Index).

Anticipated timeline

15 September 2025	Abstracts due
30 September 2025	Approved abstracts – invitation to submit full articles
15 December 2025	Full article deadline
31 January 2026	First round reviews returned
15 March 2026	Revisions submitted
15 April 2026	Second round reviews returned
30 June 2026	Final revisions deadline
August 2026	Special issue publication