

**‘The Version of Record of this manuscript has been published and is available in *Journal of Korean Studies* 22:2 (Fall 2017): 343-364 10.1353/jks.2017.0016**

## **Destination Hong Kong: The Geopolitics of South Korean Espionage Films in the 1960s**

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### **Abstract**

As the apparent progeny of Cold War politics in the West, espionage films witnessed unprecedented popularity around the globe in the 1960s. With the success of *Dr. No* (1962) and *Goldfinger* (1964)—along with French, Italian, and German copycats—in Asia, film industries in Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea recognized the market potential and embarked on churning out their own James Bond-mimetic espionage films in the late 1960s. Since the regional political sphere has always been multifaceted, however, each country approached genre conventions with their own interpretations. In the US-driven Cold War political, ideological, and economic sphere, developmental states in the region, particularly South Korea and Taiwan, vigorously adopted anti-communist doctrine to guard and uphold their militant dictatorships. Under this political atmosphere in the regional sphere, cultural sectors in each nation-state, including cinema, were voluntarily or compulsorily served as an apparatus to strengthen the state’s ideological principles. While the Cold War politics that drive the narrative in the American and European films is conspicuously absent in Hong Kong espionage films, South Korea and Taiwan, on the other hand, explicitly promulgated the apparent enemies; North Korea and People’s Republic of China (PRC) in their representative espionage films. This article casts a critical eye over South Korea-initiated inter-Asian coproduction espionage films produced during the time, with particular reference to South Korea-Hong Kong coproduction *SOS Hong Kong (SOS Hongk'ong)* and *Special Agent X-7 (Sun'gan ūn yōngwōnhi)*, both produced and released in 1966.

### **Keywords:**

Korean Cinema, Hong Kong Cinema, James Bond, Espionage Films, Coproduction

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### **The Espionage Craze in 1960s South Korea**

As many have already argued, the James Bond film series has been extremely popular not only in English-language territories but also in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. It is roughly estimated that half the earth’s population has seen at least one James Bond film.<sup>1</sup> First appearing with the publication of Ian Fleming’s *Casino Royale* in 1953 and crossing over to the big screen with the screen adaptation of *Dr. No* in 1962, James Bond emerged at a turning point in British postwar history. It was a moment of cultural change, as Christopher Lindner argues, that saw “Britain’s decline as a superpower and its reinvention as a swinging mecca for music, fashion, shopping, and youth culture.”<sup>2</sup> Likewise, Raymond Durnat claims that Bond was “the last superman in the British Empire” and hence a sop to the painful postwar realities of imperial dissolution—the realization that Britain was “no longer a world power.”<sup>3</sup> Therefore, as the most and perhaps one of the last influential cultural products from Britain, the James Bond series, both films and novels, had to maintain and show the British Empire’s ability to supervise the world’s problems even though the empire had already been profoundly dismantled. One of the ideological functions of the Bond narrative is thus “to construct an imaginary world in which Pax Britannia still operates.”<sup>4</sup> Bond is presented as being on the front line of the conspiracies directed against Western civilization. The CIA and

the role of the United States, as a result, are at times completely marginal or even absent in both Fleming's original novels and at least the early screen adaptations during the 1960s.

The James Bond series is certainly a perfectly tailored global product.<sup>5</sup> Renowned James Bond historian James Chapman claims that *Goldfinger* (1964) marked the beginning of Bondmania as a truly international phenomenon.<sup>6</sup> Unlike the first two films, *Dr. No* (1962) and *From Russia with Love* (1963), *Goldfinger* penetrated the world's popular culture, not only in "more advanced" Western countries but also in Asia, including Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and, finally, South Korea. It was *From Russia with Love* (1963) that ignited Bondmania in South Korea. Instead of the series' first installment, *Dr. No* (1962), *From Russia with Love* arrived first and was officially distributed at the Paramount Theatre in Seoul, the capital of South Korea, on April 25, 1965, under the Korean title of *007 wigi ilbal* (close call). It instantaneously became the number-one foreign film of the year, drawing a record-breaking three hundred thousand patrons in Seoul alone. Following the rave reception of *From Russia with Love*, *Dr. No* (Korean title: *007 sarin pōnho*) opened just four months later. By the end of the year, the two Bond movies brought a whopping five hundred thousand moviegoers to the theatres in Seoul, where only three million citizens resided around that time.

With the unparalleled success of *From Russia with Love* and *Dr. No*, the South Korean cultural sphere faced a sudden explosion of James Bond-style espionage (*ch'ōppo*) films and literature, which I have named *the espionage craze*, in South Korea. Most major newspapers and publishing outlets in South Korea competitively embarked on serializing "Korean Bond" stories and comics, along with translated original novels. Only eight months after the introduction of *From Russia with Love*, thirteen James Bond novels by Ian Fleming were translated under the title *The Complete 007 Collection (007 chōnjip)* in December 1965.<sup>7</sup> Even radio stations joined the craze by airing copious dramatized daily shows based on the espionage novels on the market. The espionage craze reached its zenith in 1966. KBS (Korean Broadcasting System) TV, the nation's government-owned major network television station, aired a special program called *The World of James Bond* instead of the station's hugely popular *KBS Grand Show (KBS kūraendū syo)*.<sup>8</sup> In December 1966, the third James Bond film, *Goldfinger* (Korean title: *007 koldū p'inggō*), was released.

Film distributors were eager to import anything related to espionage, and over twenty James Bond copycats from Italy, the United Kingdom, the United States, and France were released in the market almost simultaneously. Among them, *To Trap a Spy* (Korean title: *0011 nap'olleong sollo*, 1964), a feature-film version of *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*, and the France-Italy coproduction of the OSS 117 series, both films and literature, were the most successful.<sup>9</sup> Local film producers noticed the trend after they witnessed the audiences' ardent reception of the espionage films and actively adapted this Bond-style espionage film to their local audiences. Fourteen locally produced South Korean espionage films were released in 1966 alone—compared with one in 1964 and two in 1965—including *A Female Spy, Elisa (Yōganch'ōp Erisya)*, *Shanghai 55 Street (Sanghae 55-pōnji)*, *Spy Operation (Kanch'ōp chakchōn)*, *Starberry Kim (Sūt'aberi Kim)*, *Tokyo Correspondent (Tonggyōng t'ūkp'awōn)*, *Secret Agency (Pimil ch'ōppodae)*, *Red Line (Chōksōn chidae)*, *The International Spy (Kukche kanch'ōp)*, *Special Agent X-7 (Sun'gan ūn yōngwōnhi)*, and *SOS Hong Kong (SOS Hong'ong)*.

As shown above, from the mid- to late 1960s, the espionage craze was so vibrant that every cultural sector was obsessed with this particular film cycle. However, the cultural, economic, and political logic(s) that gave rise to and modified the sudden popularity of espionage films in South Korea has long been neglected and forgotten in history. I argue that the espionage craze in the 1960s was shaped by Cold War cultural politics, the first intensive postwar interregional cultural network, the rise of popular culture boosted by the advent of

radio, television, popular magazines, and genre novels, and the nation's vigorous involvement in and holistic attitudes toward the Vietnam War.

Throughout the article, it is my aim to show that South Korean espionage films are more complicated than just the “good” and “bad” spy confrontations in American and European ones. In contrast to the plot structures in the James Bond films in the West, which pit a single “free” Western individual spy against a whole evil empire of terrorists, subversives, and megalomaniacs under the leadership of a tyrant-dictator or communist regime (in many cases the USSR), South Korean espionage films are telling, quintessentially Korean experiences. They are transnational in the modes of production, set in exotic locales such as Hong Kong, Macau, Taipei, and Tokyo, but South Korean espionage films primarily targeted the South Korean film market, and thus, they passionately waved a national flag. Put differently, the North-South division system and its aftermath—separated families, war orphans, and traumatic memories of the colonial past and the Korean Civil War—functioned as major plot drivers in many South Korea-initiated espionage film productions in the 1960s.

That said, this article primarily focuses on two South Korea-Hong Kong coproduced espionage films—*SOS Hong Kong (SOS Hongk'ong)* and *Special Agent X-7 (Sun'gan ūn yōngwōnhi)*, both produced and released in 1966—along with several more examples and will scrutinize the sudden explosion of the espionage craze in South Korea. I will first examine the phenomenon by tracing the history of espionage films and literature from the colonial period to the Cold War cultural sphere in the 1960s. Then, I will explore the ways in which Cold War South Korean espionage films reflected the transformation of the geopolitical imaginaries of the United States-led “free Asia,” anticommunism and the nation's involvement in the Vietnam War, the sorrow of Civil War, and the North-South division system.

### **Cold War Politics, Popular Culture, and South Korean Espionage Films**

The development of the espionage film in the twentieth century should roughly parallel that of the spy novel. Some of the similarities are obvious. Both genres were turn of the century phenomena, originating in the pre-war mania of the 1890s (the novels), and events of the First World War itself (the films). Each featured certain common plot elements: adventure, suspense, politics and romance; and both incorporated similar themes: good vs. evil, loyalty, betrayal, patriotism, xenophobia and war. Both were reflections of the times and societies which produced them  
- Alan R. Booth<sup>10</sup>

The public's sudden obsession with espionage films should be deciphered from manifold perspectives. First, espionage literature or detective novels, if not films, had a long history of enthusiastic reception in the local cultural sphere. In the early twentieth century, detective novels, particularly the Sherlock Holmes series, influenced the Japanese colony's intellectuals and mass public. United States-educated Ohio State University graduate Kim Tongsōng first translated and introduced Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet (Pulgūn sil)* in 1923, which was followed by a series of translated and locally created detective and spy stories in the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>11</sup> As many literary historians have argued, the beginning of the genre—espionage /detective—was attributed to Kim Naesōng. His *White Mask (Paekkamyōn)* was serialized in *The Boy (Sonyōn)*, a children's magazine, from June 1937 to May 1938. *White Mask* was categorized as children's literature and was labeled a *detective novel (t'amjōng sosōl)*.<sup>12</sup> *White Mask* tells the story of child detective Yu Pullan (homage to Maurice Leblanc, a French novelist who created Arsène Lupin) who fights

against the thief White Mask and international spies whose purpose is to steal the confidential documents of a Korean scientist. Kim serialized and published more detective novels, including *Main* (1938) and *Typhoon* (*T'aep'ung*, 1943).

*Typhoon* depicts an intelligence war for the latest weapon of mass destruction (WMD) between Chosŏn, Japan, China, India, France, and the United Kingdom, and our protagonist, detective Yu Pullan, travels beyond the boundaries of the colonized Chosŏn: London, Paris, Delhi, and Shanghai. Why and how could the colonized Chosŏn's intellectual Kim Naesŏng create such an epic-scale adventure story? Literary scholar Chŏng Chonghyŏn explains that *Typhoon* indicates how the geopolitical imagination, expanded by the Pacific War and the logic of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere (*taetonga kongyŏngkwŏn*), could align popular tastes with *detective*, a code of popular epic literature. *Typhoon* was created under the influence of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.<sup>13</sup> Ironically enough, however, after liberation, the geopolitical boundaries of Korea did not allow for the writer's transnational imagination. The world around Kim had changed completely. Korea was divided into two states. "Evil spies" of the West were now the nation's new mentors. A new country, the Republic of Korea, resided in the United States-driven world order that enunciated the new map of "free Asia."

This anticommunist bloc was controlled by the new hegemonic regime, the United States, by way of financial aid, cultural domination that disseminated the American way of life, and military base camps in various cities in Asia, particularly in Okinawa, Korea, and Taiwan, which Bruce Cumings pertinently terms the "Archipelago of Empire" that in fact established a "territorial empire."<sup>14</sup> The "free Asia" bloc contained vast networks of newly sovereign nation-states in the region, ranging from Indonesia and the Philippines to South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, and Hong Kong, but gradually narrowed its boundary down to a core group—Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan—which we now call East Asia. As a metastable geopolitical entity, borrowing from Zbigniew Brzezinski, East Asia is a temporized regional order that has effectively subsumed, through the Cold War, two preceding brands—Far East and Greater East Asia—which were shaped by the colonial forces of Great Britain and Japan, respectively.<sup>15</sup>

Developmental states in the region, particularly South Korea, vigorously adopted anticommunist doctrine to guard and uphold their militant dictatorships. Under this political atmosphere in the regional sphere, cultural areas, including cinema, voluntarily or compulsorily served as apparatus to strengthen the state's ideological principles. Following this logic, South Korean special agents—such as the Korean "Bond" in *SOS Hong Kong* and *Special Agent X-7*—act passionately against the communists of North Korea and the People's Republic of China (PRC) to protect allies: Japan, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. Remarkably, in two decades, the fear of Japan's remilitarization in South Korea had fully converted into the logic of anticommunism. Consequently, the animosity toward the Japanese empire during the occupation period turned into fear of communism, and under this consensus—the anti-Red matrix—Japan emerged as an adopted "reeducated" son of the United States and the financially self-sufficient "big brother" in the metastable regional entity, at least in the realm of the film industry.

Second, the rise of the middle class in 1960s South Korean society ignited popular cultures different from the intellectuals' highly selective cultural tastes. The number of city residents spiked, and accordingly, these new patrons boosted the film industry. Along with the overflow of migrant workers to the metropolis, South Korea faced a rapid influx of American culture, that is, "core" modernism. Unlike prewar intellectuals who had been educated by the Japanese school system, this "new" generation, called the "4.19 generation,"<sup>16</sup> was eagerly consuming Western—predominantly American—cinema and music. Western-style music such as the *mambo* and the *cha-cha-cha* were popular among

college students, and many popular songs had American-style titles, such as *San Francisco*, *America Chinatown*, *Arizona Cowboy*, and *Shoeshine Boy*.<sup>17</sup> The 4.19 generation had reached approximately one hundred thousand in number in 1960, and they became the dominant consuming power in postwar South Korean society.<sup>18</sup> Contemporary Western ideas and literature were imported to university campuses, along with the Beatles, Cliff Richard, and Elvis Presley. Hollywood cinema became the norm, and Hollywood's young rebels James Dean and Marlon Brando and their French counterpart Alain Delon became the icons of the young generation. Radio, television networks, and the motion-picture industry, in tandem with the growing number of college students, all contributed to the spread of popular genre films such as spaghetti westerns, martial arts, and espionage.<sup>19</sup>

Third, most South Korean civilians were fascinated by James Bond's cosmopolitan lifestyle, adventures, and dangerous missions, which took him to places very few would have been able to visit. To contemporary Korean viewers, Jamaica, Turkey, Italy, Switzerland, the Bahamas, and Yugoslavia were their "imaginary" spaces of desire.<sup>20</sup> In contrast to phantasmagoric images displayed in Western Bond movies, South Korean counterparts could only exhibit the nation's strategic and ideological allies—Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Japan. Cold War politics enabled 1960s South Korean cinema to create a new type of detective—a cosmopolitan Korean "Bond"—who could travel beyond the boundaries of the peninsula. The South Korean "Bond" fought for the "free Asia" allies. He visited such cities as Hong Kong, Macau, Taipei, and Tokyo, places most South Korean viewers could not visit, so as they watched "Bond" films, they could take pleasure in witnessing their secret agent triumph against North Korea and Communist China. Indeed, South Korea's aviation industry seriously lagged behind its Asian competitors. Korean National Airlines (KNA), the nation's first national flag carrier and only airline company at the time, only operated between Seoul and Hong Kong every Thursday until the early 1960s and then gradually extended to Japan and Taiwan by the end of the decade.<sup>21</sup> Visiting foreign countries, even an adjacent country, was reserved only for a few privileged people. The South Korean government established the Korean National Tourism Corporation (KNTCO) in 1962. Its primary aim was to create the infrastructure for the country's tourism industry. KNTCO realized the importance of tourism as an economic booster and therefore heavily emphasized mobilizing foreign visitors and their tourist dollars. South Korean nationals thus were not allowed to travel overseas purely for entertainment purposes because, as Young-Sook Lee notes, it would potentially risk the Koreans' reputation as being "hard-working." Therefore, Lee argues, "going overseas had to be related to either labor or technology interests."<sup>22</sup>

Lastly, as literary scholar Kim Hyŏn noted in 1969, the psychological need to find diversion from the gloomy political and economic situations during the period, marked by the South Korean military's dispatch to Vietnam and the brutally oppressive public domain, helped promote the espionage craze in the latter half of the 1960s.<sup>23</sup> The nation's involvement with the Vietnam War in 1964 and the massive dispatch of troops in 1966 mobilized the sense of "ongoing war" among civilians in this divided nation-state that ignited the public's interest in international politics and the "holy" war against the communists.<sup>24</sup> The public response was that the Vietnam War was an extension of global communist expansionism, and as such, people believed, it had to be resisted. However, the more serious question was about the nation's security itself. According to Se Jin Kim in his 1970 article, there were three groups of opinions. First, it was argued that the pulling out of forty-nine thousand elite troops would jeopardize the security of the country. Second, the opposition raised the question of the cost of military involvement in terms of both human lives and the budgetary burden. Third, the policy to expand military participation was alleged to be an insidious plot between the government and big business interests.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, in 1966, the Park government needed to persuade both the opposing party and the public. Indeed, 1966

was the zenith of the espionage craze in the nation's cultural sphere. *SOS Hong Kong*, accordingly, reflects the political and social atmosphere of the time. The film certainly glorifies South Korean troops, the Brave Tiger Division (*Yongho pudae*), and the nation's involvement in the war.

### Coproducing Espionage Films

*SOS Hong Kong* is a film that was coproduced by South Korea (Shin Films) and Hong Kong (Lan Kwang Pictures). Shin Films was the largest motion-picture studio of its time, and it produced and released 224 films during its operation between 1952 and 1975.<sup>26</sup> Shin Sang-ok, *de facto* owner of the studio, was a director, a producer, and a studio executive who had been one of the industry's most powerful men during the 1960s. Shin was deeply involved with the militant government's film policies through his wife, Ch'oe Ŭnhŭi, who had a long-term amicable relationship with President Park Chung Hee and the state's second authority, Kim Chongp'il.<sup>27</sup> Shin Sang-ok was, for the Park regime, a model entrepreneur. The Park regime supported Shin in establishing a modern and profitable motion-picture business that could export its outputs to foreign markets. During the 1960s, Shin actively engaged in multiple coproductions with Hong Kong and Taiwan and tried to export Shin Films' outputs overseas using his formal and informal network with Shaw Brothers of Hong Kong and other small-scale regional productions.<sup>28</sup> Shin had a keen eye for the latest trends.<sup>29</sup> Shin Films imported three espionage films in 1966: the France-Italy coproduction espionage films *Secret Agent Fireball* (1965), *Fantomas Strikes Back* (1965), and *That Man in Istanbul* (1965). With the success of the imported European espionage thrillers, Shin Films decided to produce its own espionage films. This time, it was with Hong Kong's Lan Kwang Pictures.<sup>30</sup>

Wong Cheuk Hon, president of Lan Kwang Pictures, was indeed one of the most frequently appearing Hong Kong producers in the 1950s and 1960s South Korean cinema. As a Cantonese cinema producer who had an intimate alliance with Taiwan, Wong's Liberty Pictures (renamed Lan Kwang in 1961) cooperated with Korea Entertainment for *Because I love You* (*Sarang hanŭn kkadak e*, 1958), directed by Han Hyŏngmo, a South Korean veteran who helmed *Madam Freedom* (*Chayu puin*) in 1956. Im Hwasu was the person who abetted the agreement.<sup>31</sup> The story of *Because I love You* was set in South Korea and Malaysia.<sup>32</sup> Yun Ilbong and Kim Chingyu performed with Hong Kong starlets Lan Di and Chan Wan. *Because I love You* was one of five South Korean films chosen to compete at the sixth Asian Film Festival, held in Kuala Lumpur in May 1959, and it eventually won the best dance choreography award at the festival.<sup>33</sup> Wong forthwith commenced the second alliance with South Korea. *The Flaming Mountain* (*Son Ogong*), based on one episode from *Journey to the West*, was produced in 1962.<sup>34</sup> In 1966, Wong signed multiple contracts to coproduce three more films with South Korean production companies: Asia Pictures, Jeil Pictures, and Shin Films. His long-time muse Ting Ying's starring in the films was the condition of the agreements. Ting Ying starred in three coproductions: *Deep in My Heart* (*Choyonghan ibyŏl*, 1967), *509 Tank Forces* (*Changnyŏl 509 taejŏnch'adae*, 1967), and *SOS Hong Kong*. However, Lan Kwang was not the only Hong Kong studio that coproduced espionage films with South Korean partners. *Special Agent X-7*, directed by Chŏng Ch'anghwa, was an Asia Pictures (Korea)-Yuk Lun (Hong Kong) coproduction film,<sup>35</sup> and there were many more low-to medium-budget espionage films shot in Hong Kong (and Macao) as coproductions.

Hong Kong was indeed the perfect country to coproduce espionage films. Hong Kong film producers and audiences saw *Dr. No* earlier than Koreans did. The craze started in Hong Kong immediately after *Dr. No*'s public release on May 9, 1963. In the Cantonese cinema world, a female version of James Bond, the protagonist in the Jane Bond cycle, came into being in the latter half of the 1960s. *Black Rose* (1965) was the initiating force of this cycle,

followed by its sequel *Spy with My Face* (1966) and other commercially successful ones, including *The Dark Heroine Muk Lan-fa* (1966) and *The Precious Mirror* (1967).<sup>36</sup> This cycle, predominantly done in Cantonese, was, according to the Hong Kong Film Archive's press releases, "likely the only one in the history of world cinema in which women are the primary dispensers of violence and where the violence is readily embraced by a predominantly female audience."<sup>37</sup> South Korean film director Chŏng Ch'anghwa's first Hong Kong film for Shaw Brothers, *Temptress of a Thousand Faces* (*Qian mian mo nu*, 1968), can also be included in this cycle.<sup>38</sup> Hong Kong film producers introduced their first big-budget Hong Kong "Bond" films in 1966.<sup>39</sup> Shaw Brothers' Hong Kong studio director Lo Wei, who later became famous for his work with Bruce Lee, embarked on his first James Bond-inspired espionage thriller, *The Golden Buddha* (*Jin pu sa*, 1966), with Paul Chang Chung and Jeanette Lin Tsui, which was shot entirely in Bangkok.<sup>40</sup>

To produce more espionage films, however, Shaw turned its attention to Japan. In fact, the mid-1960s was the last breath of the Japanese studios' golden age. In early 1966, Nakahira Kō and Inoue Umetsugu signed the contract first. Then, four more directors, Furukawa Takumi, Shima Koji, Murayama Mitsuo and Matsuo Akinori followed. They mostly worked for Nikkatsu, and all of them were well-known genre-film directors in Japan.<sup>41</sup> They worked incredibly fast. As soon as the contract was done, Inoue Umetsugu came to Hong Kong in April, and two films were already simultaneously under production. Inoue Umetsugu made *Operation Lipstick* (*Die wang jiao wa*, 1967) as his first Shaw movie.<sup>42</sup> It was a Hong Kong-style espionage film. Inoue Umetsugu's working style, indeed, stunned other Shaw directors. He completed the film in a month and began to shoot the second film, *Hong Kong Nocturne* (*Xiang jiang hua yue ye*, 1967), just a month later.<sup>43</sup> In November, Nakahira Kō was producing another espionage film, *Interpol* (*Te jing 009*, 1967).<sup>44</sup> The trend yielded the first Shaw-Nikkatsu espionage film, *Asiapol Secret Service* (1966), that was produced in two versions, Wang Yu for Hong Kong and Hideaki Nitani for Japan, under the direction of Matsuo Akinori.<sup>45</sup>

### **Vietnam War, Family Reunion, and the Birth of a (New) Country**

*SOS Hong Kong* begins and ends with newsreel footages that display the South Korean navy's heroic battles in Vietnam. After the combat footage and Park Chung Hee's speech to the soldiers, our hero, a South Korean special agent named Paek Min (played by Pak Nosik), arrives at the Korean Intelligence Agency. The chief of the department issues an order: "According to the report of the agent 'A' in Hong Kong, two North Korean spies are going to sell information (of our troops) to China. And this information is possibly harmful to us. I hope you leave for Hong Kong at once to see the info." Then, the film follows Paek Min's journey in Hong Kong. *SOS Hong Kong*, helmed by a Shin Sang-ok's right-hand man Ch'oe Kyōngok, aimlessly exhibits Hong Kong's famous Star Ferry, Tsim Sha Tsui's dark and narrow alleys, and dazzling skyscrapers. Paek indeed possesses all the James Bond-club qualities: he is a somewhat flamboyant, elegantly dressed, womanizing gentleman and a Mr. Know-It-All who is equipped with various high-tech gadgets. Born in 1930 in Sunch'ŏn, Pak Nosik, like most actors of his time, had received no formal training in the dramatic arts, nor did he have prior theatrical experience. However, following the success of *A Bloody Fight* (*P'i mudŭn taegyŏl*, 1960), *The Cash Is Mine* (*Hyŏn'gŭm ūn nae kŏt ida*, 1965), and *The Fugitive* (*Tomangja*, 1965), he was recognized as having audience appeal based on his masculine looks, colorful Chŏlla dialect, and above-average height. In the 1960s and 70s, Pak was the ultimate icon of action cinema. He had starred in over nine hundred films before retiring in 1991.<sup>46</sup>

Soon after the film begins, Paek reaches Hong Kong-based arms dealer Sha Lao Te through the courtesan Xianglan (played by Helen Li Mei), the queen of Hong Kong's nightclub scene who works for North Korea, and her vast network of social connections. Unfortunately for her, Xianglan falls in love with her very antagonist, who in turn falls for the fellow Taiwan's "Double Horse" agent, Maria (played by Ting Ying). Already consumed with jealousy and now perturbed by the increasing pressure from her boss (played by Lee Min), Xianglan lures the duo to the nightclub, where they are to meet their adversaries lying in wait. But Xianglan gets cold feet and puts her life at stake to pull Paek out of danger. Xianglan's boss, secretly in love with her, had proposed to her that they live together in Pyongyang. Deeply saddened, he asks Xianglan if she knows the consequence of her betrayal to the country. Xianglan shouts with confidence, "Of course I know. But I realize it's meaningless to live without freedom!" Xianglan is shot by her ex-lover and eventually dies. After her death, Paek bounces back to save Maria, and they seize the microfilm from the North Korean villains. But what is in the microfilm? It is a plan intended to attack the Brave Tiger Division. Agent Paek successfully retrieves the confidential documents, which could harm the South Korean troops in Vietnam, from the "evil" North Koreans. Then, the film displays the newsreel footage that demonstrates the Brave Tiger Division's victorious war achievements. Having accomplished his task, Agent Paek returns to Korea. Interestingly, Paek, once a humorous and womanizing Korean "Bond," suddenly loses all his interest in Maria, who conveniently disappears in the final sequence. Maybe there was no time to develop a romantic relationship. Indeed, the nation was in danger.

Notably, in most South Korean espionage films, South Korean agents are almost always dispatched to Hong Kong. In many cases, as seen in *SOS Hong Kong*, they team up with Taiwanese female agents or Hong Kong counterparts. In other words, Hong Kong was the place where the communist forces of North Korea and China set up their secret units and operated covertly in underground bunkers to dismantle the capitalist societies in South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan. But why was it always in Hong Kong? From the Koreans' point of view, Hong Kong, a newly emerging financial center in Asia, was a place to long for and emulate.<sup>47</sup> Since postwar South Korea's traumatic colonial past constantly negated Japan as an ideal country to follow, Hong Kong's dizzying cityscape was perceived as a blueprint for modernizing Seoul in the near future, an alternative and middle space other than the United States and Japan. Hong Kong's new Kai Tak International Airport, with its 8,350-foot runway, was completed and began operation in 1962. It was, as Tan See Kam highlights, a "'coming-of-age' for Hong Kong's postwar modernity."<sup>48</sup> Hong Kong's Cathay Pacific Airways (CPA) began in 1946 as a small and unscheduled operator. It extended its capacity as a genuine regional airline and finally opened the "jet age" by purchasing Lockheed Company's prop-jet *Electra* in April 1959. It frequently flew between Singapore, Bangkok, Tokyo, Manila, Hong Kong, and Seoul. In August 1960, CPA began flying *Electra* to much further destinations: Tokyo, Osaka, and Sydney.<sup>49</sup> For postwar South Koreans, Hong Kong was a place of wealth, fortune, and exotic beauties. Consequently, South Korean audiences saw Hong Kong's highly modernized cityscape and exotic tropical landscape through the coproduced films.<sup>50</sup>

Hong Kong film scholar Stephen Teo argues that many of these films (Asian James Bond films) are mostly "cheap and crude imitations of not only the character of James Bond but also the plot structures in the Bond films." These films, Teo continues, reflect the Cold War in Asia and depict "the Cold War confrontation of the free world and communist world in simplistic, Manichean terms portraying 'good' and 'bad' secret agents who are licensed to kill."<sup>51</sup> On the surface, and particularly in the context of Hong Kong cinema, Teo locates an appropriate argument. But not all Hong Kong secret agents fight against evil communists. Tan See Kam, aptly calling this Bond-style crime thriller film cycle *bangpian*,<sup>52</sup> argues that

Hong Kong espionage films targeted the Chinese diasporic film market, “having a particular appeal for young cosmopolitans in the Chinese diaspora who sought and embraced the fun of ‘trans-ness’ that cosmo-localized pastiche, fluidity and hybridity afforded,”<sup>53</sup> and that they are therefore “apolitical” and “denationalized.”<sup>54</sup>

Furthermore, a coproduction partner’s geopolitical considerations also played out to become ideologically neutral. For example, in Hong Kong (Shaw Brothers)-Japan (Nikkatsu) coproduction espionage film *Asiapol Secret Service*, our hero Yang Mingxuan (played by Jimmy Wang Yu) is a top-secret agent in the Japanese branch of Asiapol (Asia Police Secret Service: APSS). Asiapol is a fictional pan-Asian police organization so secret that its doings are apparently unknown even to the governments and law enforcement of the countries in which they operate. The headquarters of Asiapol is located in Hong Kong. Asia-pol has five member countries: Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, the Philippines, and Thailand. Intriguingly, Asiapol’s geopolitical considerations exclude two United States-influenced developmental states: South Korea and Taiwan. Thus, in this film, Mingxuan does not dismantle the communist activities in Asia. Instead of North Korean and Chinese agents, there is a megalomaniac, George (played by Nikkatsu’s top asset Jo Shishido), leader of a criminal organization, ADU, based in Bangkok. He is planning to smuggle humongous quantities of gold into Japan in order to break down its capitalist economy. However, George is actually driven by personal revenge on Japan, where his mother had been abandoned and died miserably.

On the contrary, South Korean espionage films should be distinguished from Hong Kong’s *bangpian*, which can be characterized by their politically neutral content. South Korean espionage films, regardless of the production’s transnational nature, aimed exclusively at the local market and addressed local memories of the colonial past and the civil war. The climaxes of these films, in contrast to other global “Bond” (or Bond-influenced) films, have almost always been dramatic/tear-jerking encounters of “long-lost” families, particularly South Korean agents/fathers/brothers and North Korean/Korean-Japanese/Korean-Chinese agents/daughters/sisters. For example, in Kim Suyong’s *Tokyo Correspondent* (1968), a North Korean secret agent whose mission is to kidnap a South Korean scientist in Tokyo finds out, in the final sequence, that the South Korean scientist is his long-lost father. They were separated during the Korean Civil War. An “evil” leader of the North Korean organization already knew their relation. Having converted to the world of liberal democracy (*chayu minjujuŭi*), he (the North Korean agent) turns his gun away from his father and instead shoots the North Korean scoundrels, his former colleagues. Jang Irho’s local box-office success *The International Spy* tells a comparable story. A North Korean undercover agent Chebi (played by Yi Taeyŏp) is South Korea’s number one enemy who is based in Hong Kong. Chebi is dispatched to Seoul to carry out a mission to assassinate a leading figure in South Korea. He is performing this mission in order to meet his missing father. Again, the two were separated during the war. It is revealed that the South Korean politician is indeed Chebi’s long-lost father. Chebi turns his gun toward the other spies. He shoots them and is killed by the North Korean spies.

*Special Agent X-7*, an Asia Pictures (South Korea)-Yuk Lun (Hong Kong) coproduction, is certainly one of the most well-crafted and representative examples. *Special Agent X-7* was distributed at the Shaw Brothers’ theatre chains in Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Singapore in September 1967. The plot concerns a South Korean “Bond,” Myŏngnyŏl, known as X-7 (played by Namgung Wŏn), whose mission is to retrieve a secret document stolen by a beautiful double agent, Huang Lin (played by Diana Zhang Zhongwen). North Korean spies and a Chinese-Portuguese triad boss, Wang Tai Tu, provide the convoluted intrigue, which involves gun and bullion smuggling. North Korea’s primary purpose is to

smuggle a significant amount of gold first to Japan and then to South Korea to help North Korean agents conduct covert activities there.

Huang Lin is the hero's sex interest, but X-7 cannot forget his *Janinichi* (Korean in Japan) ex-girlfriend Yunhŭi (played by Kim Hyejŏng). X-7 first met Yunhŭi in Tokyo, and they loved each other deeply. They had to be separated when her father and brother, Chungšöp (played by Ch'oe Sŏngho), an old friend of X-7, decided to leave Japan for North Korea. Her father and brother were indeed active Choch'ŏngnyŏn (the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan; Chaeilbon Chosŏnin Ch'ongyŏphaphoe) members. She resisted, but her patriarchal father shouted, "You mean you wish to be Japanese forever?" Myŏngnyŏl (X-7) and Yunhŭi, consequently, had to be separated. Many years pass. Yunhŭi confronts X-7 in Hong Kong, but she has become a North Korean spy. Meanwhile, Lin falls helplessly in love with X-7. Interestingly, she voluntarily reveals her past to X-7, now a father/brother figure whom she trusts the most, in the middle of the film.<sup>55</sup>

HUANG LIN (HL): I need money because of my brother. He's my only relative, but he is suffering from tuberculosis. He's receiving treatment at the Tokyo hospital.

X-7: Are your parents still alive?

HL: I surely wouldn't do this sort of thing if they were still alive.

X-7: You mean they are dead?

HL: My mother died a long time ago, but I believe my father is still alive.

X-7: If this is so, then nothing will be more important than your father.

HL: But I can't remember even his features. I remember that when my mother died, I was thirteen and my brother was only two. Mother told me that it was during the Japanese occupation at Hong Kong that my father was captured by the Japanese.

As such, Lin and her brother had lost their father during the Pacific War, and they were adopted by a Chinese family and then trained as communists. Lin's brother is severely ill and has been hospitalized in Tokyo. Lin needs money. A shrewd North Korean agent (played by Hŏ Changgang) promises to cover the cost of her brother's hefty hospital bills. Toward the end of the film, similar to *Tokyo Correspondent*, Wang Tai Tu turns out to be Huang Lin's long-lost father after she has become his mistress. Wang, to save his daughter, betrays his team and is killed by a brutal North Korean agent (Hŏ Changgang). Interestingly, there is a second layer of "father" story here. At the end of the film, Yunhŭi realizes that her father is now in Seoul, not in P'yŏngyang. X-7 hands a letter from her father to Yunhŭi. He explains:

X-7: I know that you're forced to do the things you're doing by your brother. If you know what is hypocrisy, then you should know what is truth . . . this is your father's letter.

YUNHUI: But isn't he in North Korea?

X-7: No. He's now in Seoul.

YUNHUI: Seoul? Is that true?

X-7: Eight years ago, your father was deceived by the enemy and went back to North Korea. Later, he found out that it was a trick, and for freedom, he risked his life and ran away back to Seoul. He's now being protected by our secret services. He's very well right now.

After Yunhŭi agrees to go back to South Korea with him, X-7 says, “Welcome to your mother country!” This repetitive theme of family reunions became South Korean espionage films’ structural archetype in the 1960s and 70s, distinguishing the South Korean espionage cycle from its Western counterparts. However, why have Korean “Bond” films been so obsessed with the themes of family reunions, war orphans, and the traumas of the colonial past? Certainly, the South Korean espionage films mobilized Confucian values to enunciate the North Korean communist forces’ vicious state of mind. Indeed, the North Korean organization lets people commit incest among families, plots a father’s murder at the hands of his son, manipulates innocent civilians in the “free” world, and kidnaps South Korean tourists, as seen in *Tokyo Correspondent*, *The International Spy*, and *Special Agent X-7*. Therefore, North Korean communists, the “evil” forces, should be exterminated. Accordingly, South Korean secret agents are fighting against the communists. In the last scene of *Special Agent X-7*, X-7, Yunhŭi, and Huang Lin are all at the airport. Huang Lin, wearing an elegant Chinese *cheongsam*, gets on the plane to return to Hong Kong. X-7 and Yunhŭi, as a couple, are waving. Now, X-7 is dressed in a conservative black suit and a tie, while Yunhŭi has her long hair back in a braid and is wearing a *hanbok*, as if the future of the country—indeed, the birth of a (united) nation—lies with them.

Likewise, in a final scene of *Golden Operation '70 in Hong Kong* (*Hwanggŭm 70 Hong'ong chakchŏn*), produced in 1970, South Korean special agent Pak Yŏngil (played by Sin Sŏngil) and Korean American CIA agent Richard Han (played by Ch'oe Muryong) are taking renowned South Korean scientist Dr. Ko to the Kai Tak airport in Hong Kong. These two agents have worked together to break down the North Korean spies’ operation to mass produce counterfeit money and rescue Dr. Ko, who is a specialist of printing technology. Han and Pak ask, “Dr. Ko, how long have you been abroad?” “It’s been 17 years,” Dr. Ko responds with a feeling of deep regret. He continues, “Seoul may look different, right?” Pak responds proudly, “You will be very surprised. Seoul is now a world city.” He then emphasizes, “Now it is time to serve the country!”

## Conclusion

*Golden Operation '70 in Hong Kong* was one of the genre’s last entries. Indeed, South Korea’s espionage craze lasted only a few years before its quick decline. After its peak in 1966, the espionage craze was precipitously replaced by a new obsession—martial-arts cinema (*muhyŏp yŏnghwa*). In 1966, the thirteenth Asian Film Festival was held in Seoul.<sup>56</sup> Shin Sang-ok was the director of the festival committee. At the festival, Shin encountered King Hu’s hugely successful martial-arts film *Come Drink with Me* (*Da zui xia*, 1966) and instantly recognized the film’s commercial value. *Come Drink with Me* was officially distributed at the Paramount theatre in Seoul in April 1967, under the title of *Pangnang ũi kyŏlt'u* (Duel of the Drifters), and instantaneously became the number-one foreign film of the year. A business-savvy film producer, Shin soon imported a series of Shaw Brothers *wuxia* (martial arts) films, and all Shin Films-imported *muhyŏp yŏnghwa* (martial-arts films) performed extremely well in the Korean market.<sup>57</sup> There were virtually no *muhyŏp yŏnghwa* produced in South Korea between 1960 and 1967, but suddenly, nine martial-arts films were produced and released in 1968 alone. Astoundingly, eighteen South Korean martial-arts films came out in 1970. In contrast, only two espionage films—*Operation Tokyo Expo '70* (*Expo 70 Tonggyŏng chakchŏn*) and *Golden Operation '70 in Hong Kong*—were released in 1970. Apparently, the espionage craze in South Korea was over. Maybe Korean audiences lost their interest in the espionage genre, as there were too many domestic films that were cheaply produced, heavily edited to meet the distributors’ needs, and hastily released.

As the apparent progeny of Cold War politics in the West, espionage films witnessed unprecedented popularity around the globe in the 1960s. With the success of *Dr. No* (1962) and *Goldfinger* (1964)—along with French, Italian, and German copycats—in Asia, film industries in Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea recognized the market potential and embarked on churning out their own James Bond-mimetic espionage films in the late 1960s. Since the regional political sphere has always been multifaceted, however, each country approached genre conventions with their own interpretations. Certainly, South Korean espionage films copied the various devices of their Hollywood counterparts, such as “the oversexed and virtually invincible super (heroic) spy, the egregious use of women as sexual objects, the pervasiveness of Western technology (through gadgetry), and the role of the megalomaniacal and ruthless villain.”<sup>58</sup> At the same time, however, these films also possess a significant amount of local interpretation with local languages (Korean), geopolitical themes (North-South Division), ideology (anticommunism), and social/historical issues (separated families, war orphans, and traumatic memories of the colonial past and the Korean Civil War). In other words, South Korean producers borrowed genre conventions to produce quintessentially local products that could only appeal to the local audiences, regardless of how transnational their mode of production was.

### Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Steven Chung, Hyun Seon Park, Christina Klein, Jinsoo An, Han Sang Kim, Yoshimi Shunya, Hyunjung Lee, Ting Chun Chun, Hye-Joon Yoon, and anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments and suggestions. Earlier versions of this article were presented at the Affects of Border Crossing in Urban Asia Workshop at Nanyang Technological University, April 1, 2016; Cold War in Korean Cinema Workshop at Princeton University, May 7, 2016; and Cultural Typhoon 2016, Tokyo University of the Arts, July 2, 2016. This research was made possible by funding from Nanyang Technological University’s Start-Up Grant (2015-2018).

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### NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Jaap van Ginneken, *Screening Difference*, 154

<sup>2</sup> Christoph Lindner, Introduction, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Cited in Klaus Dodds, “Licensed to Stereotype,” 131

<sup>4</sup> James Chapman, *Licence to Thrill*, 39.

<sup>5</sup> Balio points out that at least the first four installments of the series were financed largely by an American major studio with British film subsidy funds and shot in exotic locales featuring

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a cast of mixed nationalities headed by “a star of universal appeal.” Tino Balio, *United Artists*, 253.

<sup>6</sup> Chapman, *Licence to Thrill*.

<sup>7</sup> *Sina ilbo* [Shina daily news], December 4, 1965, 4.

<sup>8</sup> *Kyŏnghyang sinmun* [Kyŏnghyang daily news], May 4, 1966, 6.

<sup>9</sup> The first OSS 117 film released in Korea was *Furia à bahia pour OSS 117* (OSS 117: *Mission for a Killer*, 1965), under the title *OSS 117 ch'oeadae ūi wigi chakchŏn*. It is estimated that four OSS 117 films were released in South Korea between 1966 and 1970.

<sup>10</sup> Alan R. Booth, “The Development,” 136.

<sup>11</sup> It is noteworthy to mention that martial arts (*muhyŏp*) film and literature were also hugely popular in the nation’s cultural market. The first Korean *muhyŏp* film was *The Captain of Bandits* (*Sanch'aewang*, 1926), directed by Yi Kyŏngson. Yun Paengnam, one of the most prominent literary figures in Korea of the time, wrote thse script for the film. Yi Yŏngil (2004) stated that the film was made to imitate the Hollywood film *Robin Hood* (1922). The public in the colony showed unprecedented enthusiasm about the film and its primary character, Robin Hood. The film narrates the story of a righteous thief who resembles the nation’s own Hong Kiltong. Thus, it is no wonder that *The Story of Hong Gildong* (*Hong Kiltong chŏn*, 1934) was one of the first martial-arts films produced in Korea. See Sangjoon Lee, “Martial Arts Craze,” 181–82.

<sup>12</sup> Ch’oe Aesun, “Iron kwa ch’angjak ūi choŭng, t’amjŏng sosŏlga Kim Naesŏng ūi kaltŭng—ponkyŏk changp’yŏn t’amjŏng sosŏl ‘Main’ i hyŏngsŏng toegi kkaji” [Kim Naesŏng’s complication between the theory and the creation of the detective novels—the formation process of *Ma-in*],” 51–86.

<sup>13</sup> Chŏng Chonghyŏn, “Taedonga’ wa sŭp’ai—Kim Naesŏng changp’yŏn sosŏl ‘T’aep’ung’ ūl t’onghae pon ‘Taedonga’ ūi simsang chiri wa ‘Chosŏn’” [The Greater East Asia and spy-imaginative geography of ‘the Greater East Asia’ and ‘Joseon’ from the Viewpoint of *Typhoon*],” 211–47.

<sup>14</sup> According to Cumings, “We [America] do run a territorial empire—the archipelago of somewhere between 737 and 860 overseas military installations around the world, with American military personnel operating in 153 countries, which most Americans know little if anything about—a kind of stealth empire.” See Bruce Cumings, *Dominion from Sea to Sea*, 393.

<sup>15</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, “Japan’s Global Engagement,” 270–82; Brzezinski, *The Choice*.

<sup>16</sup> This term was created after the April 19 revolution in 1960 when students and laborers united and fought together against Park’s regime. See Eui Hang Shin, “Political Demography of Korea,” 171–204; Shin, “Sociodemographic Change,” 1–56.

<sup>17</sup> Yi Yŏngmi, *Han’guk taejung kayosa* [A history of Korean popular music], 125–32.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>19</sup> For more about the martial arts film and literature phenomenon in South Korea, see Lee, “Martial Arts Craze,” 173–95.

<sup>20</sup> Curiously enough, Dodds argues, many of the Bond films were not set in the former British Empire but “were located in places that British audiences could nonetheless imagine as centers of intrigue.” Klaus Dodds, “Licensed to Stereotype,” 132.

<sup>21</sup> In 1969, the publicly owned monopoly airline Korean National Airline (KNA) was privatized, and Korean Air (KAL), a private company, was formed.

<sup>22</sup> Young-Sook Lee, “The Korean War,” 165–66.

<sup>23</sup> Kim Hyŏn. “Muhyŏp sosŏl ūn wae ilk’inŭn’ga [Why we read martial arts novels],” 294–303.

<sup>24</sup> It is little known that between 1965 and 1973, the Park Chung Hee regime dispatched over three hundred thousand troops to the Vietnam War. Park needed to stabilize and solidify his

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still new and insecure military dictatorship by gaining US support. The National Assembly first requested authorization to a dispatch of a group of self-defense instructors and a medical company to Vietnam in September 1964. Nevertheless, it was in early 1966 when the controversy over the military involvement reached a high-water mark; the legislature voted on the dispatching of an additional division and supporting units, bringing the total Korean troop commitment to forty-nine thousand. See Jin-kyung Lee, "Surrogate Military," 655–56.

<sup>25</sup> Se Jin Kim, "South Korea's Involvement," 524–25.

<sup>26</sup> Cho Chunhyŏng. *Yŏnghwa cheguk Sin P'illŭm* [Shin Films: The movie empire], 30.

<sup>27</sup> Starting with the *coup* on May 16, 1961, the Park Chung Hee government accelerated economic growth, urbanization, and modernization. The Park regime comprehended the motion picture as one of the strategic industries, such as textiles and light industries, that should be controlled, planned, and driven by the government. Starting in October 1961, the Ministry of Public Information (MPI) took charge of all cultural policies. The Motion Picture Law (MPL) was enacted in 1962 and revised four times afterwards (1963, 1966, 1970, and 1973). In 1961, sixty-four film-production companies were consolidated into sixteen. Building a sound stage was part of an array of conditions production companies had to register with the Ministry of Education and Information to become licensed production companies. The MPL controlled production registration, censorship, import quotas, screening permits, and license suspensions. According to the MPL, only licensed production companies could make films. Under the law, independent productions could not exist or else they operated illegally. Thus, the law was advantageous just for a handful of film executives, and it was Shin Sang-ok who benefited most. For more about the MPL, see Kim Tongho, *Han'guk yŏnghwa chŏngch'aeksa*, 189–267.

<sup>28</sup> For example, see Ae-Gyung Shim and Brian Yecies, "Asian Interchange," 15–28.

<sup>29</sup> It was indeed Shin Sang-ok who brought spaghetti westerns into the Korean market. *A Few Dollars More* (1965) lured three hundred and fifty thousand moviegoers in Seoul alone. Unlike more sophisticated Hollywood cinema, Sergio Leone and Sergio Corbucci's spaghetti westerns attracted not only metropolitan but local audiences as well.

<sup>30</sup> Shin Films had encountered Hong Kong and Taiwan film studios in 1962 when Korea hosted the ninth Asian Film Festival. Shin Sang-ok was the head of the organizing committee. With the triumphant success at the festival of two of his films, *Houseguest and My Mother* (*Sarangbang sonnim kwa ōmŏni*, 1961) and *King Yeonsan* (*P'okkun Yŏnsan*, 1962), Shin Films energetically interacted with local film executives like Run Run Shaw, Li Han Hsiang, and Henry Gong Hong during the mid- to late 1960s.

<sup>31</sup> Huang Zhuohan, *Dian ying ren sheng: Huang zhuo han hui yi lu* [A life in film: Memoirs of Wong Cheuk Hon], 103.

<sup>32</sup> Pak Sŏngho, "Sarang hanŭn kkadak e" [*Because I Love You*]. *Kukche yŏnghwa*, January 1959, 48–49.

<sup>33</sup> *Kukche yŏnghwa*, April 1954, 32–33.

<sup>34</sup> Ting Ying (丁瑩), Wong's best asset and one of the most beloved Cantonese movie celebrities during the 1960s, played a princess named Iron Fan. Korean actors Ch'oe Muryong, Kim Hŭigap, and Yang Hun arrived in Hong Kong along with Kim Suyong, who codirected the film with Hong Kong's Mok Hong-si, in February 1962. *The Flaming Mountain* was the founding film of newly established Hanyang Pictures. It was shot completely at Lan Kwang's sound stage in Hong Kong in March. Shot in color cinemascope, the film was distributed in Hong Kong and Korea in July and September 1962, respectively. See Huang, *Dian ying ren sheng*, 145. Kim Suyong later directed two films, *Merry Wife* and *Flower in the Rain* for Shaw Brothers in 1972. For more about the procedure of making the film, see Kim Suyong, *Na ũi sarang ssinema: Kim Suyong kamdok ũi Han'guk yŏnghwa iyagi* [My love my cinema: Kim Suyong and the story of Korean cinema], 27–35.

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<sup>35</sup> It was released on August 26, 1967, under a different title, *International Secret Agent* (國際女間諜). Oddly enough, Shin Sang-ok was credited as the film's director.

<sup>36</sup> Hong Kong Film Archive had a retrospective of this cycle entitled *Licensed to Kick (Men)—The Jane Bond Films* from January 26 to March 2, 2008. See the retrospective catalogue for further research. Apart from the retrospective, Sam Ho presented a wonderful essay on the popularity of espionage films during the 1960s at the conference on the Cold War and popular culture in Hong Kong. See Sam Ho, "Spy Films minus Spies."

<sup>37</sup> "Film Archive."

<sup>38</sup> This Mandarin spy film was more male-oriented than its Cantonese counterparts. The Jane Bond figure in this film is a cop with all the requisite trimmings, yet she is regularly paraded in situations that highlight actress Tina Chin Fei's sensuality.

<sup>39</sup> Shaw Brothers' Malay production, and its contract director Jamil Sulong, had produced a Malay version of James Bond, *Jefri Zain: Gerak Kilat*, in 1966. For more about *Jefri Zain* films, see Raphael Millet, *Singapore Cinema*, 38–39.

<sup>40</sup> "Hong Kong's Bond," 32–33.

<sup>41</sup> Before being hired by the Shaw Brothers, the extremely prolific director Inoue Umetsugu had produced over seventy genre films that ranged from jazz musicals, spy pictures, and comedies to *taiyozoku* films. Furukawa Takumi directed the first *taiyozoku* film, *Season of the Sun* (1956), and Nakahira Kō made *Crazed Fruit* (1956). For more about Inoue's Hong Kong career, see Darrell W. Davis and Emilie Yeh Yueh-yu, "Inoue at Shaws," 255–271.

<sup>42</sup> "Spycatcher Pei-pei's Deadly Mission," 4–5.

<sup>43</sup> "Japanese Directs Society Exposé," 28–31.

<sup>44</sup> Nakahira Kō, who made the critically acclaimed *Crazed Fruit* in 1956, worked for the Shaw Brothers between 1967 and 1969 under the Chinese name Yeung Shu Hei. He made four films for the Shaw Brothers: *Interpol* (1967), *Trapeze Girl* (1967), *Summer Heat* (1968), and *Diary of a Lady-Killer* (1969). Apart from *Trapeze Girl*, the three films above were, in fact, remakes of his previous films in Japan. See "Interpol," 24–25; "Jenny in Love Triangle," 30–33.

<sup>45</sup> "Asiapol." Shaw also recruited action-genre directors from South Korea. After the impressive box-office returns of *Special Agent X-7* in Hong Kong, Chōng Ch'anghwa joined Shaw Brothers in 1968. For more about Chōng Ch'anghwa's Hong Kong career, see Aaron Han Joon Magnan-Park, "Restoring the Transnational from the Abyss," 249–83.

<sup>46</sup> According to his biography page on the Korean Film Archive-managed Korean Movie Database (KMDB).

<sup>47</sup> Economist Catherine Schenk argues that Hong Kong emerged as an International Financial Center (IFC) like its precedents, London, Tokyo, and New York, by the late 1960s. Her argument is particularly significant since most conventional history of HK in the international economy skips from the early twentieth century to the 1970s. The financial history of the 1950s and 1960s is usually neglected in favor of the more dynamic and easily documented period of the 1970s. See Catherine R. Schenk, *Hong Kong*.

<sup>48</sup> Tan See Kam, "Shaw Brothers' *Bangpian*," 207.

<sup>49</sup> "Airlines in Asia."

<sup>50</sup> Kim Soyoung, "Genre as Contact Zone," 97–110.

<sup>51</sup> Stephen Teo, "The Liaozhai-Fantastic."

<sup>52</sup> "In Hong Kong *bangpian* is industrial parlance for contemporary actioners inspired by James Bond movies: *bang* (which sounds like Bond in both Mandarin and Cantonese) signifies both Bond movies and global Bondmania, while *pian* refers literally to films." Tan, "Shaw Brothers' *Bangpian*," 196.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 198.

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<sup>55</sup> It is noteworthy to mention that there were many “Huang Lins” in South Korean espionage films. *A Female Spy, Elisa* (Yöganč’öp Erisya, 1966), for example, is a story of the North Korean spy Elisa whose mission is to seduce “allied” people for intelligence purposes. Elisa, however, helplessly falls in love with a South Korean agent Pak Ho (played by Pak Nosik) and reveals her true identity. She spills North Korea’s top secret to Pak.

<sup>56</sup> As the first inter-Asian film organization in the region, the Federation of Motion Picture Producers in Asia (FPA) began in 1953 with Japanese film executive Nagata Masaichi, president of Daiei studio, who went on a tour of Southeast Asia and met film executives in the region, which resulted in the formation of FPA on November 17, 1953. A year later, FPA’s annual event, the Southeast Asian Film Festival, which was renamed the Asian Film Festival in 1956, was held in Tokyo in May 1954. From the beginning, the Asian Film Festival was not a conventional film festival per se but a regional alliance summit among Asian film executives, predominantly Nagata Masaichi, Run Run Shaw (Hong Kong), Shin Sang-ok (Korea), and Henry Gong Hong (Taiwan). The festival was, at least during the first two decades, the single most important annual cinematic event in Asia and played a crucial role in revitalizing the region’s cinematic network by way of coproducing films, exchanging stars, learning the latest technical inventions, and gauging each other’s state of filmmaking. For more about the history of the Asian Film Festival, see Lee, “The Emergence,” 232–50.

<sup>57</sup> They were *One-Armed Swordsman* (*Du bi dao*, 1967), *Magnificent Trio* (*Bian cheng san xia*, 1966), *The Golden Swallow* (*Jin yan zi*, 1968), and *Return of the One-Armed Swordsman* (*Du bi dao wang*, 1969). Shin Sang-ok dominated the network with Shaw Brothers.

<sup>58</sup> Leong Yew, “Traveling Spies,” 290.

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