

Research on Hypermediated Images in Asian Films

Somi Nah, Timothy Yoonsuk Lee, Jinhwan Yu

Abstract—In films, visual effects have played the role of expressing realities more realistically or describing imaginations as if they are real. Such images are immediated images representing realism, and the logic of immediation for the reality of images has been perceived dominant in visual effects. In order for immediation to have an identity as immediation, there should be the opposite concept hypermediation.

In the mid 2000s, hypermediated images were settled as a code of mass culture in Asia. Thus, among Asian films highly popular in those days, this study selected five displaying hypermediated images – 2 Korean, 2 Japanese, and 1 Thailand movies – and examined the semiotic meanings of such images using Roland Barthes' directional and implicated meaning analysis and Metz's paradigmatic analysis method, focusing on how hypermediated images work in the general context of the films, how they are associated with spaces, and what meanings they try to carry.

Keywords—Asian Films, Hypermediated Images, Semiotics, Visual Effects

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background and Objects

ONE of human desires is seeing what does not exist in reality. It is probably because of humans' instinctive craving for something that they cannot possess. In this age of digital media art, spectacle aesthetics has been developed as a factor that can satisfy such a desire, and it can be expressed through the visual effects of images. In his book *Visual Digital Culture*, Andrew Darly said that spectacular experiences give sensation to the viewers [1].

In addition, visual effects in films pursue compensatory realities for the threat of realistic realities, and people are fascinated with them or concentrate their attention to isolated, mediating and phantasmal images instead of indirect experiences.

Visual effects in films have so far meant the pursuit of realities for immediation. How realistically do they express the realities? How realistically do they implement imagined worlds? Visual effects have played the role of expressing something nonexistent as if it is real, presenting a virtual world as a real world, or making a real thing look more realistic.

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In Western representation, especially during the period from the Renaissance to modernism, the logic of immediation was dominant but the logic of hypermediation had to remain in a secondary status though important. Hypermediation assumed an entertaining or destructive attitude while sometimes acknowledging the desire for immediation and sometimes attacking it [2].

Hypermediated images visualize imagined images existing only in the mental world. Because they are impossible images and only their meanings are expressed indirectly, visual effects have to be used here. In the expression of hypermediated images, visual effects are an indispensable means of expression, which connotes both in-depth meanings and symbols.

Asian films have been produced mainly based on the realities. New digital media oscillate between immediation and hypermediation, that is, between transparency and opaqueness. The oscillation is a key to the understanding of how a medium transforms preceding media or other contemporary media [3]. For making further progress in Asian films through the remediation of media, we need to study existing hypermediation films.

In this satudy, we delimited media to films, and explained the concepts of hypermediation and immediation with the collages and realities of images in visual effects.

The research questions are as follows.

First, how do hypermediated images work in the context of films?

Second, what association is there between hypermediated images and spaces?

Third, what are the semiotic meanings of hypermediated images?

Fourth, how are hypermediated images expressed in Asian films?

B. Methods

This study analyzes the representations and meanings of hypermediated images appearing in Asian films released in the mid 2000s. The basic frame of visual effects is analyzed based on images overlapping among the films, and the meanings expressing between real spaces and imagined spaces are analyzed using Barthes' directional and implicated meaning analysis and Metz's paradigmatic analysis.

Signs are divided into signifier and signified. Signifier is expanded to a form, and signified is associated with myths and produces ideological meanings [4]. By applying Barthes' concept of meaning creation as such, we analyze five films as follows and identify hypermediated images and their meanings in the context of the films.

The selected Asian films were chosen because they contained many hypermediated images and were highly popular during the mid 2000s. They also won prizes in Fantasia Film Festival [5], the largest genre film festival held in Montreal, Canada. The films selected for analysis are Korean films *Oldboy* (Chan-wook Park, 2003) and *Welcome To Dongmakgol* (Kwang-Hyun Park, 2005), Japanese films *The Taste Of Tea* (Katsuhito Ishii, 2004) and *Survive Style 5+* (Gen Sekiguchi, 2004), and Thai film *Citizen Dog* (Wisit Sasanatieng, 2004). These films develop their stories by showing the characters' mental worlds and imagined images through hypermediated visualization.

The author studies these Asian films by substituting visual effects expressing emotions for hypermediated images, namely, unrealistic elements.

II. HYPERMEDIATION, IMMEDIATION AND REMEDIATION

In their book *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, Bolter and Grusin deal with the concepts of remediation, hypermediation and immediation. Hypermediation is a style of visual expression aiming to call the viewers' attention to the media, and immediation is a style of visual representation aiming to make the viewers forget the existence of the media and believe that they are in the presence of the represented objects [6]. Remediation is implemented by combining the two logical styles.

In an epistemological sense, immediation is transparency. That is, it is the absence of medium and representation. In this concept, media think that they can remove themselves with leaving the viewers within the presence of represented objects. In a psychological sense, immediation is viewers' feeling that media disappear, objects are presented, and their experiences seem real.

In the same way, hypermediation has also two meanings. In an epistemological sense, hypermediation is opaqueness. That is, the understanding of the world is given to us through media. Viewers acknowledge that they are in the presence of media, and learn from the process of mediation or about mediation itself. In a psychological sense, hypermediation is viewers' experience in and about media. It insists that experience in media is itself real. Appealing to the authenticity of experience is something that combines the logic of immediation with that of hypermediation [7].

A hypermediated image in a film means a hyper image, namely, an image that cannot exist as a reality but only in imagination. It is expressed only through visual effect, and draws viewers' attention through juxtaposition, emphasis, addition, deletion and overlapping of existing images. Immediated images also attract attention by implementing visual effects. Because the purpose is in reality, however, phantasmal spaces and arrangements plausible from causes in reality should be distinguished from images existing only in imagination and from virtual images that are imagined but can be reality.

A hypermediated image may mean the neglect of perspective, the change of typical light, texture, size or weight, or extraordinary expression of ordinary concepts that we regarded as a matter of course. We recognize hypermediated images in a film because the film's narrative is basically based on the realities. Thus, it is a rule created when the continuity of images perceived by us collapses in the connection between autonomous shots the minimal segments seen in the ordinary sequence, and sequences the maximal segments.

III. HYPERMEDIATED IMAGES APPEARING IN ASIAN FILMS

A. Hypermediated Images in Japanese Film *The Taste Of Tea*

Katsuhito Ishii's *The Taste Of Tea* released in 2004 is a comedy or a drama about a family who lives with a somewhat unexpected problem suggested by the title implying that while water is comparable with common people's ordinary life the taste of green tea means a slight deviation from commonness.

In the film, young girl Sachiko is described as the main character. The emergence of Sachiko's big ego and her failure in the first love with pubescent boy Hajime is typical phenomena like passage rites at her age.

Through hypermediated images that have unique fragrance but not so gorgeous, the film is telling a very small story that each is running to achieve his/her goals but it amplifies trivial things and coats them with mysterious images as if seeing them from a different view. It is the huge power of story hidden under the surface of seemingly common life that gives them such a magical image. Trifle things happening in daily spaces are identified with cosmic phenomena happening in the vast universe, and stress the importance of life.

A-1. Hajime's Mental World

TABLE I
 SIGNIFIERS, SIGNIFIEDS AND CONNOTATIONS OF
 HAJIME'S MENTAL WORLD

Primary Stage of Signification		Secondary Stage of Signification
Description	Denotated Meaning	Connoted meaning
Paddy field in the sowing season	The girl whom he loved one-sidedly has gone to another school by train.	Sadness Emptiness
Train coming out of Hajime's head	The girl flying to the sky	Lingering affection Regret
Hajime's head holed	Feel as if the head is empty	Emptiness



Fig. 1 A train coming out of the head

The girl who pubescent boy Hajime loved one-sidedly has gone to another school.

Hajime runs alone to the paddy field where no one is, and calms down his heart with a sad face. By visualizing his sorrow for losing his love who has left by train, the scene shows the boy's empty head straightforward.

A-2. Sachiko's Superego

TABLE II
 SIGNIFIERS, SIGNIFIEDS AND CONNOTATIONS OF
 SACHIKO'S SUPEREGO

Primary Stage of Signification		Secondary Stage of Signification
Description	Denotated Meaning	Connoted meaning
Big Sachiko looking at Sachiko	Uncontrollable superego	Ego formation stage – curiosity, worry



Fig. 2 Superego

Wherever Sachiko is, always 'the big ego looking at her' appears and stares at her. The superego is not controllable because Sachiko is a six-year-old girl with strong curiosity about the world and her ego is being formed. She cannot stop thinking that the world is too big but herself is too small. She wonders at things happening in the world, but can do nothing but looking at them because she is still little with no influence.

A-3. Sunflower

TABLE III
 SIGNIFIERS, SIGNIFIEDS AND CONNOTATIONS OF
 SUNFLOWER

Primary Stage of Signification		Secondary Stage of Signification
Description	Denotated Meaning	Connoted meaning
A huge sunflower swallowing up Sachiko	A yellow sunflower embraces the girl like nice and warm light. Sachiko's question is solved.	Ego formation
A gradually enlarged yellow sunflower in the universe that swallows up the village and the earth	There is a yellow sunflower like nice and warm light in the universe. Light existing in the universe	Answer to the philosophical question of who I am – tell the meaning of existence



Fig. 3 An enlarged sunflower

As Sachiko succeeds in bar swinging, the superego watching over Sachiko disappears and a sunflower appears in the place.

The sunflower begins to swallow up Sachiko and then devours the whole village, the earth and the universe. By repeating the configuration of the infinite space and the awfully growing sunflower and connecting incremental shots, the film bases itself on cosmology.

Here, the sunflower is a dream and light. It tells the theme that we should not lose dreams but see the wider world.

Under the copy 'All saw the sunset glow in the edge of the universe,' the film shows from six-year-old girl Sachiko's eye and in the form of initiation drama that time, air, space and story will be filled continuously by someone and with something.

B. Hypermediated images in Japanese film Survive Style 5+

Survive Style 5+ released in 2004 is a film full of novel imaginations. In the movie, Gen Sekiguchi creates a world filled with humors utilizing the codes of Japanese popular culture to the full.

By showing through hypermediated images the roles of a man as the head of a family under heavy stress and a critical position against a violent wife in Japanese family life, this film awakes people from indifference to the world and leads them to find the warm world full of love and passion.

B-1. Ishigaki Suffering the Wife's Violence

TABLE IV
 SIGNIFIERS, SIGNIFIEDS AND CONNOTATIONS OF
 ISHIGAKI SUFFERING THE WIFE'S VIOLENCE

Primary Stage of Signification		Secondary Stage of Signification
Description	Denotated Meaning	Connoted meaning
A thrown frame	Speed	Feeling of being victimized
A horse painted to run toward the frame	Expansion of aggressiveness	Reflection of realities in Japan
The wife's arm is amputated and flies away.	Body functions are used as weapons. Strong violence	Feeling of being victimized
Low angle		

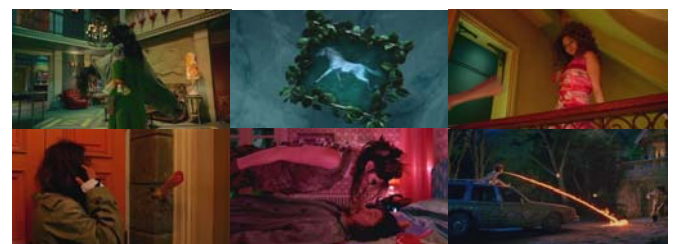


Fig. 4 Unreality of violence

At his house, the space for rest and private residence, Ishigaki always suffers his wife's violence. She sometimes flings Ishigaki down in a hand, or amputates her arm from her body and her fist flies away and strikes Ishigaki. The frame thrown by the wife flies to him even faster, and she sometimes sits on top of the car and breathes out fire. The wife's violence is an enormous and absolute power insurmountable to Ishigaki.

The hypermediated images in this film show satirically women's violence, a problem emerging in Japan as women's status has been elevated.

B-2. Kobayashi who Became a Bird

TABLE V
 SIGNIFIERS, SIGNIFIEDS AND CONNOTATIONS OF
 KOBAYASHI WHO BECAME A BIRD

Primary Stage of Signification		Secondary Stage of Signification
Description	Denoted Meaning	Connoted meaning
Kobayashi roasted in a reddish oven	The thought that he might be devoured by the family The unbearable hot space	An ordinary salary man's pressure and burden from the realities
Kobayashi carrying Ishigaki who is flying the blue sky over a gray city	Symbolize the freedom of Kobayashi and Ishigaki felt in the daily life of a dreary city	Symbolize a hope impossible in daily life



Fig. 5 Man as food

Kobayashi, an ordinary head of a household who is hypnotized to believe that he became a bird, sees the roasted chicken cooked by his wife, and feels pains imagining that he is being roasted in the oven.

The image of his family looking at him naked and roasted in the oven through the window of the oven expresses his shame at the exposure of his disgraceful parts and the pressure from the life that he had to bear alone as the head of the family. Even the cannibalistic image of being eaten by his family is horrific. These scenes describe the role of a family head who has to take sole responsibility for his family in the present age of dual-income family in a capitalistic country.

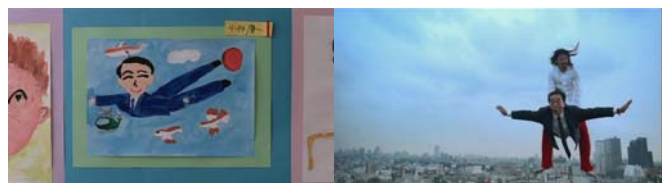


Fig. 6 Kobayashi flying the sky

Kobayashi's young son is not disappointed with his daddy who became a powerless bird, but turns the poor father into a hero by painting him flying the sky. He raises a hope by seeing the world from a different viewpoint.

The film finishes with the somewhat unexpected scene that Kobayashi who became a bird flies the sky with Kobayashi on its back.

This film shows an ordinary salary man's sense of isolation and his desire for a hope impossible in reality.

C. Hypermediated Images in Thai Film Citizen Dog

Wisit Sasanatieng's *Citizen Dog* released in 2004 depicts the reality of Thai people who call life a fantasy.

The movie sublimates third-world refugees' anxiety and colonial natives' desire to settle in their homeland into images and spaces. Through hypermediated images, the film shows its theme, which is Thai people's belief "If you look for something too much it runs away but if you stop looking it may come by itself," reflected in the life of Thailand, an agricultural society, where people plant rice and wait harvest patiently. Plastic bottles gathered one by one from a mountain and the urban space becomes utopia all of a sudden. These contents carry the message that love comes as a matter of course after a time of waiting passes.

The film comforts the viewers by saying that deficiency or loneliness is not a mortal disease but merely a sore like a hurt on a finger and if it is wrapped cordially everybody can be happy. Things get their life from people's care and even death is not a tragedy.

It is the cultural product of Thailand that its people do not think much of any pressure from outside but try to solve problems by themselves. City, bleakness, love, imagination ... The only way for hopeless lonely urban people to save themselves is dreaming and imagining.

C-1. Fingers and Sardine

TABLE VI
 SIGNIFIERS, SIGNIFIEDS AND CONNOTATIONS OF
 KONG

Primary Stage of Signification		Secondary Stage of Signification
Description	Denoted Meaning	Connoted meaning
A sardine can containing fingers	There are body parts in a place for food.	Absence of human dignity No welfare Nothingness
Act of attaching his own amputated fingers	Treat human body parts like machine parts Solve problems without relying on medicine	Absence of human dignity No welfare Nothingness



Fig. 7 Finger can

Pod, who came to a city with a dream, is employed by a can factory. While working with a machine, his fingers are cut and packed in a can through the automated process. Pod finds his unique fingers among the cans and stitches them up to his hand, and judging that his job is inhumane, he quits the can factory.

The hypermediated image that a factory worker's body parts are amputated by a mechanical process reflects Thai workers' situation that treats humans as machines and does not assume responsibility for accidents.

C-2. Kong and Motorcycle Helmets

TABLE VII
 SIGNIFIERS, SIGNIFIEDS AND CONNOTATIONS OF
 HELMETS

Primary Stage of Signification		Secondary Stage of Signification
Description	Denotated Meaning	Connoted meaning
Countless pink helmets falling from the sky	The falling of countless heavy objects in pink, a color symbolizing romance, from the sky	Unexpected attack Ridiculous fear
Long shot	Symbolizes a weapon.	
Kong struck on the head by helmets	Kong's ridiculous death.	Inequality
Close up		



Fig. 8 Helmet hail

Motorcyclist Kong, who rides a motorcycle without helmet (showing a typical type of job in Thai), dies as he is struck on the head by helmets falling from the sky like hail. This suggests inequality among occupations and alienated people in the unequal society. The sky is the state, and riding a motorcycle without helmet is a violation of law. The state enforces the law more strictly on alienated classes. Kong solves the inequality problem by himself instead of appealing to the state. Kong's image as a diligent worker satisfied with his job is demonstrated by his continuous commitment to the work in silence even as a spirit after he died.

C-3. Grandmother Reborn as a Lizard

TABLE VIII
 SIGNIFIERS, SIGNIFIEDS AND CONNOTATIONS OF
 POD

Primary Stage of Signification		Secondary Stage of Signification
Description	Denotated Meaning	Connoted meaning
A lizard with the grandmother's face on the lampshade	The dead grandmother is reborn as a lizard and speaks.	Samsara
The same level of eye between the grandmother and Pod	The considerate grandmother who gives advice fittingly for Pod's level	Level-based education The importance of character education at home



Fig. 9 Grandmother reborn as a lizard

When Pod tries to kill himself by hanging, the grandmother reborn as a lizard appears and talks to Pod. The dead grandmother has returned as a lizard via rice, grasshopper and catfish, and teaches him about life. This context reflects samsara of Buddhism in Thai society and character education at home under the extended family system.

C-4. Plastic Mountain

TABLE IX
 SIGNIFIERS, SIGNIFIEDS AND CONNOTATIONS OF
 THE PLASTIC MOUNTAIN

Primary Stage of Signification		Secondary Stage of Signification
Description	Denotated Meaning	Connoted meaning
A huge plastic mountain piled up above a city	Want a space reaching the sky	Utopia, ideal Desire to rise



Fig. 10 Utopia on a city – plastic mountain

Plastic bottles collected by Jin and Pod, who became environmentalists, pile up like a mountain. After all, they agonize and achieve love in the plastic mountain, the space that they have created.

This shows the hope of realizing a better world by recycling plastic rather than disposing it in a way harmful to the human body.

D. Hypermediated Images in Korean Film Welcome To Dongmakgol

Director Kwang-Hyun Park's *Welcome To Dongmakgol* released in 2005 depicts a story at Dongmakgol, a remote mountainous village, during the Korean War in the 1950s.

The movie shows war damages happening as South Korean army, North Korean army and the allied forces enter the village intact from the world, and the reality of national division through the understanding of and harmony with others.

The phenomenon that something falls from the sky is regarded as the power of absolute God uncontrollable by human abilities. By showing the hypermediated image that grenades, which are used to contain the enemy, become popcorn, characters in the film form a consensus with one another, and they enjoy a festival with a joyous face even in the situation that missiles are dropping. The missiles are clearly contrasted with popcorn, but they show a hypermediated image of the same context, namely, a festival mood.

The film overturns the sorrow of national division and presents the joy of phantasmal harmony through hypermediated images such as popcorn, firework and butterfly.

D-1. Popcorn

In this film, popcorn is an important motive showing that weapons created for killing people in war can be interpreted differently in a different space.

TABLE X
 SIGNIFIERS, SIGNIFIEDS AND CONNOTATIONS OF
 POPCORN

Primary Stage of Signification		Secondary Stage of Signification
Description	Denotated Meaning	Connoted meaning
Yellow corn grains rising to the sky and popping into white popcorn	Despair in reality turns into a dream.	Mystery Purity
Popcorn raining from the sky	Popcorn falls like snow from the sky.	Mystery Excitement

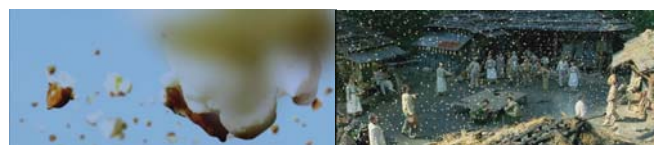


Fig. 11 Popcorn configured as snow

In the middle of the war, South Korean army, North Korean army and the allied forces encounter at Dongmakgol, and high tension is lingering. The film shows the breathtaking shot of threatening with a grenade, but in the end the grenade blows in a corn storehouse. At Dongmakgol, horrible explosive weapons are used not to kill but to attain harmony among people.

D-2. War

TABLE XI
 SIGNIFIERS, SIGNIFIEDS AND CONNOTATIONS OF
 WAR

Primary Stage of Signification		Secondary Stage of Signification
Description	Denotated Meaning	Connoted meaning
Numerous white butterflies flying the night sky	Purity rises to the sky.	There is the light of hope even in despair.
Explosion of missiles falling from the sky	The image of firework	Sublimate the despairing reality into the image of a festival through harmony and peace in mind



Fig. 12 Phantasmal interpretation of war

In the space where missiles are falling down at random, the film configures the mood of festival firework instead of a dark and gloomy mood. People from different situations stand side by side in the same place and meet their last with a look of great joy. This shows the theme that Korean people's tragedy of leveling a gun at each other may be solved through the unity of mind.



Fig. 13 The role of butterflies

From the beginning to the end of the film, butterflies appear as an important motive. Butterflies imply the hope of a new world to descending airplanes, and from the middle part, they rise to the sky and defeat parachuting enemies and save Dongmakgol. In the last scene, butterflies fly around the dreary traces of the war covered by snow, and suggest the postwar future that is not totally despairing.

E. Hypermediated Images in Korean Film *Oldboy*

Director Chan-wook Park's *Oldboy* released in 2003 is a fusion of drama, mystery, crime and thriller.

This film describes the somewhat dark and gloomy mental world of a person who plans revenge for the wound he got from the situation that he had to choose death due to 'words,' but it suggests a hope through hypermediated images.

Mido configures ants, which came out of Oh Daesu's words, in her own sense, and this forms a consensus with Oh Daesu, and they fill each other with the meaning of loneliness given by the ants.

The green grass where Oh Daesu chooses a new life after he was released from the confinement room symbolizes the air of spring, and the space where he makes a new start in order to erase his memory at the end of the film symbolizes midwinter. This means that the time intended by the film is a cycle from spring to winter and the start of another cycle.

E-1. Ants

TABLE XII
 SIGNIFIERS, SIGNIFIEDS AND CONNOTATIONS OF
 ANTS

Primary Stage of Signification		Secondary Stage of Signification
Description	Denotated Meaning	Connoted meaning
Ants coming out through Oh Daesu's arm skin	Ants inside Oh Daesu come out of Oh Daesu.	Expression of loneliness Craving for freedom Desire to go outside
Oh Daesu's face covered with numerous ants	The ants as a mass are still in contact with Oh Daesu's skin.	Yearning for people Fear for the continuity of loneliness
Ant staring at Mido	Oh Daesu visiting Mido	Defeat of loneliness
Mido and the ant looking at each other	Looking at each other, Oh Daesu and Mido feel sympathy with each other.	Emotional assimilation Resolution of loneliness

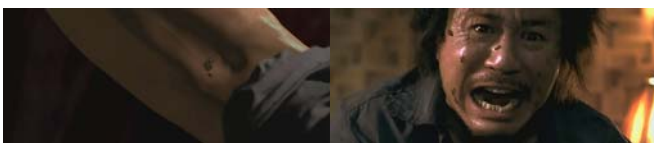


Fig. 14 Ants configuring a mental world

In Oh Daesu's situation kept in a confinement room, ants symbolize Oh Daesu's dreary loneliness and fear. The distance between Oh Daesu and the ants is only the thickness of his skin. The ants are Oh Daesu's another ego, and the ants' escape and roaming around indicates his mental state choked in the confined space and his desire to pour out his inside.

When Oh Daesu says that a lonely person sees the illusion of ants, Mido replies that she has never felt, and just after that, an ant looks from a distance at Mido crying alone in a subway train.

To Mido, the ant means Oh Daesu. Mido and the ant, left by themselves in the same space, show that they are each other's companion who will walk the same road. Although they are far away from each other within the frame, they look at each other without any obstacle between them. This suggests that they are not close yet but have a good feeling toward each other and their relation may develop further.

Through the motive ant presented as a hypermediated image, the film suggests that Oh Daesu and Mido are connected to each other by a spiritual string.



Fig. 15 A new space transcending time

When Oh Daesu comes out of the confinement room, Oh Daesu on the bed is moved to a green field and the scene is switched by the camera panning technique. The transition from a closed space to an open space is depicted by the act that he has been trapped in a trunk and gets released.

Harassed by the memory of incest, Oh Daesu tries to delete the memory through hypnosis. As he is hypnotized, the season is changed to winter and Oh Daesu is laid on a space entirely covered with snow. Here, the motive snow means cleanness that purges Oh Daesu of his sin.

The two images are both extremely long shots, but they provide a view different from daily life using bird's eye view shot that do not show the place.

F. Analysis Results

In analysis results derived from the case study of the five films as above, hypermediated images are all indirectly related to the themes of the films. All of the five movies make their end with hypermediated images, and the images express utopia, fantasy, dream, hope, etc.

The sunflower appearing as a hypermediated image in *The Taste Of Tea* configures light wrapping the world, the man flying the sky in *Survive Style 5+* configures a dream, and the plastic mountain piled up in a city in *Citizen Dog* symbolizes

utopia. The snow-covered white worlds in *Welcome To Dongmakgol* and *Oldboy* show the healing of wounds and hopes.

Furthermore, hypermediated images such as the superego and the train coming out of the head in *The Taste Of Tea* and the ants in *Oldboy* represent the mental world of the characters in the film and are closely associated with the themes of the films.

In addition, social ideologies are reflected in the sunflower wrapping around the universe in *The Taste Of Tea*, the violent wife and the family head who became a bird in *Survive Style 5+*, the amputated fingers, the lizard grandmother, and the plastic mountain in *Citizen Dog*, the popcorn and the image of festival in *Welcome To Dongmakgol*, and the white snow in *Oldboy*.

The meaning of the same hypermediated image is different according to the context in which the image is used. For example, an amputated body part is a tool of domestic violence in *Survive Style 5+* but symbolizes a powerless worker in *Citizen Dog*. With regard to the concept of something falling down from the sky, popcorn in *Welcome To Dongmakgol* symbolizes the repair of national division but helmets in *Survive Style 5+* represent unequal society.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the case study above, answers to the research questions raised in the introduction are as follows.

First, how do hypermediated images work in the context of films? Hypermediated images appear with strong plausibility as something indispensable in the whole context. By amplifying the characters' mental world, they clarify relations among the characters or between the characters and the themes. This shows that when we want to understand the ideology of a social context presented by a film we may grasp the film's theme easily through analyzing hypermediated images in the film.

Second, what association is there between hypermediated images and spaces? Hypermediated images function as motives transcending time and space. A mental space penetrates into their daily space and appears in a gigantic form, and it moves heterogeneously in reality. A defined relation is presented by showing the entire space of the film through the repetition of hypermediated images, or by switching the time and space of hypermediated images through camera movement. What is more, hypermediated images appear with neglecting usual perspective, or form a new space within the real space.

Third, what are the semiotic meanings of hypermediated images? By analyzing motives configured by hypermediated images semiotically, we may derive meanings inherent in the mythological aspect. In studying how to express images necessary to configure mental worlds, semiotic studies can analyze diverse subjects including the characters' mental world, relation with the theme, and ideology expression method.

Fourth, how are hypermediated images expressed in Asian films? Human bodies used in hypermediated images are sometimes used in different meanings as in amputated body parts or cannibalism, or symbolize ego itself. Something falling down from the sky and how it works on the characters show

Asian people's religious consciousness and expand the divine space from the sky to the universe. Culturally familiar animals or plants are expressed in a gigantic image or in a human-like image to establish a psychoanalytic connection, or social ideologies are expressed using Oriental meanings inherent in formless materials such as snow, rain, water and fire.

As discussed above, hypermediated images expressed in Asian films are closely associated with the themes of the films, and use motives meaningful in the political, cultural, and social contexts necessary in interpreting the themes. Hypermediated images in Asian films reflect the current situation of Asia, and images and connection links represent Asian thoughts and ideologies.

Although immediated images pursuing realism still prevails among Asian films, people are responding positively to films using hypermediated images that have been tried actively since the mid 2000s. It is wished that, initiated by this study, there may be diverse studies on the expression of culture, thought and ideology in Asian films.

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