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Great Products with Good Prices: Korean Products in Finland

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Great Products with Good Prices – Korean Products in Finland

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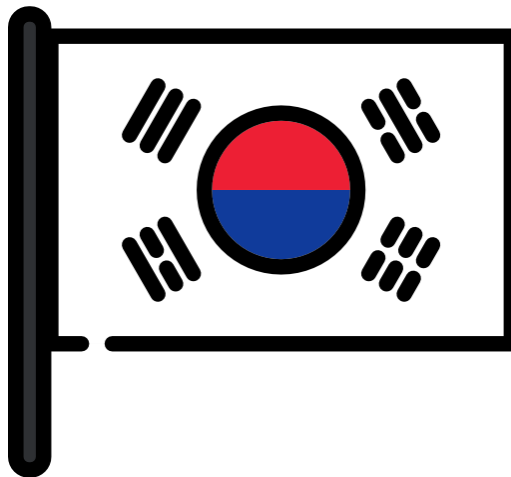


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Introduction

In 2019, South Korea (hereafter Korea) was the seventh-largest exporter country in the world, and its exports were valued at 542 billion US dollars (Statista 2020). In the same year, electrical and electronic equipment was Korea's largest export product category accounting for 28% of total exports and valued at 154 billion US dollars (Trading Economics n.d.). Vehicles (other than railway and tramway) were the third-largest export category making approximately 12% of total exports and was 62.9 billion US dollars in value (Trading Economics n.d.). These are the top export categories in Korean exports to Finland as well (Poikonen 2014). Since 2002, the added value of Korean road vehicle imports to Finland has reached over 15 million euros and Korean electronics (smartphones, audio and TV equipment, etcetera) over 10,5 million euros (Finnish Customs 2021). In 2019, four out of the top 30 Finland's most sold cars were Korean (VP-Auto shop 2020). The vehicles were Kia Ceed (1984 cars), Hyundai I20 (1285), Kia Rio (1269) and Hyundai I30 (1203) (VP-Auto shop 2020).

Korean smartphones and TVs are also very popular in Finland. When Finland's three national network operators shared their most sold mobile phones of 2020, Samsung was the most popular brand (Kemppe 2021). For two of the network operators, Samsung Galaxy A20e was the most sold mobile phone overall (ibid.). When it comes to televisions, Samsung and LG are some of the most popular brands in online retail shops (Gigantti 2021; Power 2021; Verkkokauppa.com 2021). According to Eronen (Eronen 2012), Korean electronics and car brands have been steadily gaining popularity and status in Finland since around 2004. In addition, Korean cosmetics have become increasingly more popular in Finland. This claim is supported by the creation of multiple Finnish online retail shops focusing on selling Korean cosmetics Bearel, Beautyko and Kokoskin opening in 2016, 2017 and 2018, respectively (Bearel 2021; Beautyko 2021; Kokoskin 2021). Around the same time, an influx of Korean cosmetics brands and products began in Finnish cosmetics retail shops such as K-Citymarket, Sokos, Stockmann and Yliopiston Apteekki.

However, Korean cars, electronics, and cosmetics are not the only Korean products in great international demand. Hallyu, also known as the Korean wave, refers to the phenomenon of Korean cultural products such as Korean TV dramas (K-drama), Korean popular music (K-pop), films, online games and comics (manhwa) spreading and becoming popular internationally (Jin and Yoon 2016; Kim 2019). Some other scholars also include fashion, food and beauty as products part of Hallyu (Kim et al., 2010; Kim 2015). The first places where Hallyu spread were East and Southeast Asian countries in the late 1990s (Jin and Yoon 2016,

1278). Since then, Hallyu has spread across the globe to Europe, North and South America, Africa, the Middle East and the rest of Asia (Kim 2019, 2). The term Hallyu comes from China, where it was first used by journalists in 1999 (Kim et al., 2010, 341). According to Kim, the word comes from the Chinese words *hal* (韓) and *lyu* (流) and means Korean wave (Kim 2015, 154). Initially, the Korean wave started when Korea started to export media, mainly TV dramas, to China and Japan (Park 2020, 4). K-dramas are considered to constitute the first wave of Hallyu, also known as Hallyu 1.0, K-pop the second wave, also known as Hallyu 2.0, K-culture Hallyu 3.0 and most recently K-style the 4.0 (Kim 2015, 154-8). According to Kim, Hallyu has also contributed to "a global imagination about Korea" on a larger scale (Kim 2019, 1-2). K-pop, Korean films, and K-dramas especially shape people's image of Korea and Korean culture outside of Korea. K-pop and K-dramas, or rather the good-looking idols and other celebrities, are inspiring people to look like them (Park 2020, 5). The good looks and stylish fashion of Korean celebrities have contributed to Korean fashion and beauty becoming popular as well.

Furthermore, scholars agree on the influence of the internet and social media platforms in spreading Korean cultural products, especially K-pop, but the Korean government has contributed to its spreading. As Park mentions, South Korea's government has strategically supported cultural exports since 1997, and that has been very successful (Park 2020, 4-5). BTS alone generated South Korea 3.54 billion US dollars as economic value in 2018 (Park 2020, 5). However, that is still considerably less than what Samsung, Hyundai, LG and Kia generate. According to Statista, Samsung's revenue was 13,1%, Hyundai's 5,3%, LG's 3,4% and Kia's 2,9% of South Korea's GDP in 2018, whereas BTS's revenue was 0,3% (Statista 2019).

Nonetheless, all of the previous examples demonstrate with clarity that Korea is a large exporter of both various consumer products and cultural products and that Korean products from all of these categories have become popular globally, Finland being no exception to this. For that reason, this thesis aims to understand what are the reasons behind the popularity of the "first wave" of Korean products (cars and electronics) and the "second wave" products (skincare and makeup) in the Finnish market and if those reasons are the same or different. This thesis will also research does Hallyu impact the consumption of other Korean products in Finland.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Consumer purchasing behaviour is a complex topic of study. Many things can affect brands and products' popularity and success. Brand image and the country of origin image are two essential factors alongside a product's own qualities that can have a significant effect on consumers' choice to purchase a particular product. The country of origin image stands for the representation and beliefs of a country in people's minds (Wang et al. 2012, 1041-2). The country of origin effect, on the other hand, refers to how the country of origin affects consumers' purchasing intention (Xie et al., 2018, 164). According to Zeugner-Roth et al. (2008), consumers make decisions based on their assumptions of the brand and the product country of origin. Consumers feel more positive about products that originate from countries with a favourable image and less positive about products from countries with a less flattering image (Zeugner-Roth et al. 580-2). According to some scholars, the country of origin also signals product quality to customers (Hornikx et al. 2020; Verlegh and Steenkamp 1999). According to Yasin et al. (2008), consumers tend to develop stereotypical beliefs about products and their attributes that come from particular countries (p. 40). A favorable country of origin image also helps to create a positive brand image for brands coming from that particular country (Yasin et al., 2008, 44). Positive country of origin image transfers to brand and product image, and the same applies to negative image (Yasin et al. 2008, 40). This is why a positive country of origin image matters for brands greatly. Economic competition is tough, so a distinctive brand image is important (Koubaa et al., 2013, 99). However, according to Cristea et al. (2015), consumers have a tendency to have a more positive bias towards products that come from a developed country and vice versa view products from a developing country more negatively (p. 423). Yasin et al. also argue that country of origin image has significant influence over customers' purchase decision of electrical goods (p. 44). It makes sense that people would want an electronic product from a country that is technologically advanced. Scholars seem to agree that there are some common and strong product-country of origin associations. For instance, Zeugner-Roth et al. (p. 581) and Wang et al. (p. 1042) talk about the positive image that Japan has as a country of origin. Cristea et al. note that some countries have a positive image in producing a particular product but a negative image otherwise (p. 423). On the other hand, it is essential to note that consumers' thoughts change, and thus, product, brand and country of origin images can change. Product, brand and country of origin images can also vary due to new marketing strategies, technological advances and changing trends (Cristea et

al. 2015, 423). However, there are not many studies done on brands' deliberate emphasis on the country of origin. Thankfully, Hornikx and his colleagues have conducted research on this topic and studied how brands use country of origin cues in their advertisements to communicate to customers. Hornikx and his research team have made a list of the country of origin markers that brands use to disclose their country of origin information to their customers. The most straightforward way for brands to disclose the country of origin is using the "made in" label (Hornikx et al. 2020, 35). Other markers are the following including the country's name in the company's name, using the country's language, familiar words, flags, famous buildings/landscapes, famous people and other country symbols and references to the country of origin or its inhabitants (p. 35-6). According to their research, the most used cue in advertisements was embedding the country of origin name in the company name, L'Oreal Paris, for example (p. 40). The second most used cue was using the language of the country of origin in the advertisements (ibid). However, English was most often used to promote the global-ness of the brand rather than the country of origin (p. 40-1).

However, it is not only the country of origin that can affect brands and products' image, but many actors, such as the government, brands and even products, also are able to impact a country's image. The theory that a nation can also have a sort of a brand image is called nation branding. The general understanding of nation branding is that it is a deliberate national strategy to create a positive image and reputation (Fan 2006). This understanding of the concept views nation branding as a mechanism that is used to gain political and cultural influence in international affairs (Lee and Lee 2019, 59-60). Simon Anholt is widely considered to be one of the first and most significant people behind the nation branding theory. Scholars like Lee and Lee (2019) and Schwak (2020) employ this understanding of nation branding. However, scholars seem to agree that the theory of nation branding has not yet fully solidified into one set theory. Thus, scholars tend to understand and define nation branding in slightly different manners. Some scholars have deemed this definition of nation branding as too narrow. Thus, some scholars have suggested that economic quality must be added to the definition of nation branding. According to Lee and Lee (2019), "an attractive nation brand helps to draw in foreign investments, skilled labour, tourists and international students, as well as import-export trade by boosting the competitiveness of the nation's enterprises" (p. 59). They also argue that a nation brand has a notable impact on a country's economy and that an attractive nation brand image can draw in economic benefits as well (Ibid., 59-60). It is likely that both definitions of nation branding are correct and should not exclude one another. As

nation branding concerns the whole nation, it is likely to cover both cultural, political as well as economic aspects of a country and have an impact in all of those spheres. Moreover, Fan (2006) argues that "a nation may have more than one nation' brand'" (p. 7). He further points out that "international audiences have a different degree of knowledge and experience about the nation" (p. 9), which makes nation branding complex despite possible deliberate governmental actions to improve and (re-)from a nation's nation brand image.

On the contrary, multiple scholars have demonstrated how the Korean government has practiced nation branding and even managed to improve its nation brand image. According to Lee and Lee, since Korea's industrialisation took off, Korea's nation brand image was built on heavy industry (Lee and Lee 2019, 68-9). They argue that this heavy industry image, later on, helped Korea to succeed in the automobile industry and that a skilled labour force is part of Korea's nation brand image (ibid). On top of that, Korea has managed to improve its nation brand image from just heavy industry to a mix of excelling in the heavy industry while also being a "global high-technology powerhouse" (Lee and Lee 2019, 70-2). This demonstrates that Korea's current nation brand image has a relatively long history but also that a country's nation brand image is subject to change. As Lee and Lee (2019) demonstrated in their book, a nation's brand image is often deliberately shaped by the government. They showcased that this has also been the case for Korea, wherein in 2009 the government established the Presidential Council on Nation Branding to improve Korea's national brand image (ibid., 60-1). According to the authors, the Council put together a five-step strategy to increase Korea's nation brand value: "1. contribute to the international community, 2. embrace multiculturalism and be receptive to foreign culture, 3. become responsible global citizens, 4. promote modern technology and products, and 5. portray an appealing culture, thereby attracting tourists" (ibid). Lee and Lee are not the only scholars who have researched Korea's efforts to improve its nation brand image. In fact, a few scholars have found out and been able to demonstrate that the nation brand image of Korea has changed in recent years. The factor that scholars have observed to have changed Korea's nation brand image is Korean cultural products. Various scholars, like Sung (2010), Bang et al. (2021) and Nguyen and Özçaglar-Toulouse (2021), have researched Korean cultural products and their connection to Korea's nation brand image. All of these studies came to the conclusion that Korean cultural products have had a positive impact on foreigners' image of Korea. These studies demonstrate that Korea's nation brand image has improved due to Hallyu.

All of the above theories belong to the field of marketing research. So does advertising which is perhaps one of the oldest branches of marketing research, and it has a long history of academic research. And for a good reason. In the current capitalist society, advertising is crucial. Competition between brands is tough, so they must do everything they can to create sales and secure a market share. Furthermore, advertising creates a way for brands to reach their consumers and impact their ideas about the brand and its product. Advertising is a topic that has been academically researched a lot. However, advertising is a very broad and complex branch of marketing research. To keep the topic within the limits of this research, this literature review will only be a very generalising overview of advertising and thus will not go into any details. In the simplest terms, Cluley (2017) defines advertising as an attempt to change demand (p. 4-5). Advertising is a verb, and it can be anything from promoting a product to offering information and making a commercial. The audience can be anything from one person to a mass audience (ibid). In academia, advertising is understood to be a form of communication (Wilmshurst 2005; Cluley 2017). According to Wilmshurst, there are four qualities that must be effective in order for something to be considered as advertising. The four qualities of advertising are "1. a precise definition of to whom we are trying to communicate, 2. a clear idea of what we need to communicate, 3. some understanding of what effect we expect the communication to have, and 4. a clear understanding of how the communication process works" (23-4). Thus, advertising cannot be considered as just regular communication. But instead, it has a purpose. In everyday life, advertising manifests itself most visibly as advertisements, as pictures and film clips but also audio clips and performances, etcetera. With this definition in mind, even brands' social media presence and platforms can and will be considered as a form of advertisements. The fundamental goal of advertising is to increase product or service sales.

However, Wilmshurst (2005) points out that advertisements are often used to promote attitudes and beliefs about the advertising brand or organisation (p. 24-5). Tellis appears to be on the same line with this notion and adds his argument that "advertising is a major means of competition among firms" (Tellis 2004, 4-5). This suggests that advertising is indeed paramount and something that brands should take part in. One of the means that companies enforce their advertisements is celebrity endorsements. In his book, Tellis has a whole chapter dedicated to discussing brand endorsers in advertising. Hiring a celebrity or otherwise well-known person to endorse a brand is a common occurrence, despite it often being very costly. Yet, it seems that celebrity endorsement is worth the high payment as it appears to be quite

successful. Tellis has listed a few reasons why a brand endorsement is often a success, and they are 1. expertness, 2. trustworthiness, and 3. internalisation (p. 181-3). Consumers are more likely to purchase a product if they trust and like the brand's endorser or if they feel like they can identify with the endorser.

Furthermore, with this thesis in mind, it is important to remember that advertising can be local or international. Big international brands commonly use international advertisements to promote their brand's global image (Hanger 2005, 297-300). However, international advertising is not always the most efficient way of advertising. Hanger (2005) argues that international advertisements can sometimes be considered to be attacking local advertisements and they are not always positively received. He also reminds that international advertisements must be very carefully planned and constructed and especially culturally sensitive to avoid backlash and failure (p. 298-304). Nonetheless, this notion of international and local advertising gives an important referencing point for this thesis and will be helpful later in this thesis when I start analysing Korean advertisements.

This thesis paper will build on the previously mentioned scholars' understanding of the country of origin and nation branding theories as to its theoretical framework. This thesis will primarily focus on Lee and Lee's (2019) theory of nation branding and apply it to this research. The country of origin markers identified in Hornikx and his group's research will be closely utilised in this research as well, as they give concrete tools to analyse and measure how much emphasis brands and retailers put into the country of origin of their products.

Methodology, Sources and Structure

In order to answer the research questions, this thesis will utilise discursive analysis as the method to analyse Hallyu's impact on Korean products in Finland and the differences and similarities between the products of the three Korean product categories in the Finnish market. This research will utilise brands' advertisements and social media (YouTube, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook) posts as primary sources and retailers' advertisements and social media posts as secondary sources. When it comes to cars and electronics, this research will naturally focus on Kia, Hyundai, Samsung, and LG, which are the largest Korean brands of the first wave of Korean products. To keep the research manageable, I have chosen to limit the number of cosmetics brands that will be studied. The following Korean cosmetic brands were selected to be analysed in-depth: Bbia, Eglips, COSRX, TonyMoly and Whamisa. These brands were chosen because they are some of the first brands that entered the Finnish cosmetics market, and

they are also the most widely available Korean brands in Finland. In addition, few online retailers that sell primarily Korean cosmetics were also included in this research to deepen the understanding of how Korean cosmetics do in the Finnish beauty market. The retailers that were studied are Bearel and Yeppo. This thesis will research through advertising how the selected brands and their products are marketed in Finland and what appears to be their selling points. This thesis will also analyse if Hallyu has impacted the popularity of these brands and affected their product sales. As discussed earlier in the literature review, advertising is considered to be a form of communication. Therefore, as this thesis will use advertisements as its main source, I will utilise discursive analysis as the method of research. The discursive analysis is a tool to analyse what and how people communicate, and it will allow me to analyse not only texts but also video and image, which are common forms of advertisements. Discourse analysis will give me the tools to analyse advertisements and how they represent the brands, which in turn represent and shape the nation brand image of their origin country.

This thesis will continue with the following chapter focusing on Hallyu in Finland. The next chapter will examine how big of a phenomenon Hallyu is in Finland and what sort of Hallyu products are popular in Finland, and if they are in mass consumption or more of a product of a niche market. Korean brands and their advertisements will be examined and analysed in chapter three. That chapter has been divided into smaller sections by the product category. Later on, in chapter four, Korean products will be juxtaposed to each other and reasons behind their popularity will be discussed. Lastly, chapter five will be the last chapter. Chapter five will briefly go over this research and discuss the findings to conclude this thesis paper.

Hallyu in Finland

To examine and understand Hallyu's possible impact on consumer products' popularity, it is paramount to discover how popular Hallyu itself is in Finland. As briefly discussed in the introduction, by now, Hallyu seems to have reached most places in the world. It appears that Hallyu has reached Finland as well. This is indicated by the fact that Korean TV dramas, films and music, as well as some foods, have found their way into Finnish markets, and their popularity has been increasing. To start with, K-pop appears to be the most popular product of Hallyu in Finland, at least if cosmetics are not taken into account. K-pop was most likely the first Korean cultural product to arrive in Finland. In the late 2000s, Japanese rock, also known as J-rock, was quite popular in Finland among teenagers and young adults (Yle 2008). Through

J-rock, many fans also discovered Korean pop music (Mankkinen 2010). From then on, K-pop has steadily increased its fanbase in Finland. The K-pop Suomi Ry association was founded in 2015 to bring together Finnish K-pop fans. Since then, this particular association has organised a yearly convention for K-pop called K-CON Suomi and other K-pop-themed events (until Covid-19). In addition, Korean pop music has created a new dance "style" that has also become somewhat popular in Finland. At least, there are quite a few dance schools that are nowadays offering K-pop dance classes to answer the demand. There are even some K-pop dance competitions and K-pop dance parties held in clubs as special events. However, these do not happen that often, maybe a few times a year. These events are also very exclusive in a way that they are not advertised much, and it is mostly just people who like K-pop music that go to them.

Furthermore, K-pop has become popular enough in Finland for some groups to have a concert there. For instance, BAP, a popular boy group around that time, had a concert in Helsinki in May 2016. Block B, also a boy group, has performed in Finland twice, in 2015 and 2017 (Lehtinen 2017). Other Korean groups or bands who have held a concert in Finland include Boyfriend in 2015, 24K in 2017, Teen Top in 2018 and Dreamcatcher as the only girl group in 2019, just to name a few (KoME Suomi). Korean American rapper Jay Park was one of the last ones to hold a concert in Finland (October 2019) before Covid-19 put concerts on hold only a few months later. However, all of these concerts have been held in Helsinki. The vast majority of the other events are also located in Helsinki, Tampere or Turku, which are some of the largest cities in Finland (1st, 3rd and 6th respectively). People in smaller towns and villages do not have the same opportunities to enjoy these sorts of events, and they may have to travel quite far in order to make it into these concerts and conventions.

On the contrary, Finland's national public service broadcasting company Yle, which is available to anyone with a radio or internet connection, has started to play K-pop and discuss related topics on their YleX radio station and other platforms, such as news and their YouTube channels. YleX focuses on new music and pop culture, and its largest listener audience is young adults aged 15-34 years old (Finnpanel 2021). In October 2020, YleX radio station launched a weekly 2-hour long K-pop show *Papananaaman K-pop-show*. In the show, the host (Papananaama) plays K-pop and other East Asian music and discusses topics related to East Asian pop culture (YleX 2021). The first episode of the show has nearly 12,500 plays online. In addition, the latest indicator of K-pop's popularity in Finland is the success of BTS's new single. At the time of writing this thesis, BTS's new single *Butter* is number eight on Spotify's

Finland - Top 50 list (May 23, 2021). These examples demonstrate that K-pop has slowly but steadily increased its popularity in Finland throughout the last decade. Although K-pop as a genre has not yet entered the mainstream, it is closer and closer to it. Some groups like BTS and Blackpink have attained global success outside the K-pop fandom. However, other than the K-pop radio show mentioned above, Korean music does not play on the radio in Finland. Some radio stations have sometimes played one K-pop song as a request, but that happens very rarely. Even globally popular BTS and Blackpink do not get radio play. So, it is through Spotify and other streaming platforms that people in Finland listen to K-pop.

Furthermore, the Finnish audience has discovered Korean TV dramas and films alongside Korean music. Korean dramas have found their way into Netflix, and other streaming platforms and even some Korean films have run in the film theatres in Finland. Since Netflix launched in Finland in 2012 (Yle 2012), it appears to offer increasingly more K-dramas each year. At the latest check (May 24, 2021), there are 65 Korean dramas available on Netflix Finland. All of them except one have the red "N," signifying that the series has been produced by Netflix. Different K-dramas have appeared on Finland's ten most-watched list every once in a while, which indicates that K-dramas are also becoming more popular in Finland. Korean films, on the other hand, are not nearly as common. Yle Areena, Yle's free video and audio streaming service, has just recently June added three Korean movies to its film collection. These three films are the only Korean films in Yle Areena, and they are *The Good, the Bad, the Weird* (dir. Kim Jee-woon), *The Gangster, the Cop, the Devil* (dir. Lee Won-tae), and *Train to Busan* (dir. Yeon Sang-ho). All of these films have been relatively popular. Thus far, *Train to Busan* has been watched 67,500 times, *The Good, the Bad, the Weird* 66,600 times and *The Gangster, the Cop, the Devil* 43,600 times. Yle Areena is the second most popular streaming service in Finland, coming second after Netflix (Kartastenpää 2021). Compared to Netflix, Yle Areena has a smaller selection of streamable films and series, but the selection is also strictly curated and free to watch.

What comes to films in film theatres, Hollywood and domestic films dominate the scene, and only very few Korean films have premiered in Finnish film theatres. The Korean films that have played in the Finnish film theatres have been acclaimed in European or American film festivals and/or award shows. There are basically two Korean movies that can be guaranteed to have been playing in Finnish film theatres. These two are *The Handmaiden* (dir. Park Chan-wook) and *Parasite* (dir. Bong Joon-ho). Both films are made by successful directors and, perhaps more importantly, were surrounded by large international attention. In

fact, *Parasite* was the fourth most-watched film in Finnkino theatres (the largest movie theatre chain in Finland) in 2020 (Finnkino 2021). However, it must be emphasised that when these two films were promoted in news and/or film theatres in Finland, there was a lot of attention on their success in prestigious western film events. For that reason, it is likely that these films were shown in theatres because of their strong success in other western countries. As said, there have been very few Korean films that have premiered in Finnish film theatres. If *The Handmaiden* and *Parasite* had not had the international success that they had, it is quite accurate to assume that they would not have played in Finnish film avenues. But because big international film festivals, such as Cannes, Venice and Berlin, as well as the Academy Awards, are also so well-known in Finland, they can give publicity to any film that would not otherwise premiere in Finland. Thus, Korean films seem to travel to Finland through other western countries, carried by international success.

In addition to music and films, Korean cuisine is generating wider interest and is becoming borderline trendy. This change is seen in the increasing number of Korean restaurants and Korean food and food products becoming more widely available in Finland. The number of Korean restaurants has increased, and restaurants are also opening in other cities than just Helsinki. For example, there was a pop-up Korean restaurant in Tampere, and bibimbap is being sold in the Turku Market Hall (Fingerborg 2020). Bibimbap appears to be a very popular dish as most Korean restaurants have it on their menus. In addition, some Korean food products have entered regular supermarkets. For example, not until very recently, gochujang, the Korean chilli paste integral for many tasty Korean recipes, was only available in Asian supermarkets. However, these days many local supermarkets and even some smaller stores carry it in their selection (K-Ruoka 2021). Other Korean products, such as instant noodles, dumplings and kimchi, can also be found in some stores. On top of that, some Finnish food production companies have begun making Korean dishes or products with a Korean taste profile. There are, for instance, a bulgogi and rice ready meal from brand Via and Kimchi mayonnaise from restaurant Naughty BRGR that are widely available.



Figure 1. An advertisement photo of Via's bulgogi and rice ready meal.
Source: <https://viamaailma.fi/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/triple-image3.jpg>.



Figure 2. Kimchi mayonnaise from restaurant Naughty BRGR.
Source: <https://public.keskofiles.com/f/k-ruoka/product/6416812062145>.

Furthermore, Korean cuisine is getting visibility in the media. Various food and lifestyle magazines have been inspired by Korean cuisine and are now including Korean recipes in them. For instance, in Soppa365, a Finnish food community and "social cookbook," the word "Korealainen," meaning Korean, produces 874 hits from the recipe search at the time of this research. Soppa365 is a part of a large Finnish media company Sanoma Media Finland. The site collects recipes from various magazines owned by Sanoma Media Finland. It also includes recipes from other sources like cooks and ordinary consumers. However, a closer look at the search results shows that many of the recipes are actually not Korean cuisine or even Korean fusion foods in any way. Nonetheless, this does not take away the fact that most of the recipes that are actually Korean are from magazines. Kimchi especially is one of the most well-known Korean foods. One reason for that is the health benefits that kimchi has. Fermented foods like kimchi are known to be healthy and good for the stomach, so it is not a surprise that kimchi too is getting popular at a time when people are crazy about superfoods and healthy ingredients (Maksimainen 2018). From these examples, it is safe to conclude that Hallyu has undoubtedly spread to Finland. However, as the examples demonstrate, the Hallyu is still a quite new phenomenon in Finland. Korean dramas, music and food do have some avid fans in Finland, but they are not yet fully integrated into the mainstream. Moreover, as I will demonstrate in the next chapter, Hallyu is only very loosely, if at all, related to the popularity of Korean consumer products.

Korean Consumer Products in Finland

In the previous chapter, I have established that Hallyu is (still) only a relatively small, non-mainstream phenomenon in Finland. Later on, in this chapter, I will examine if Hallyu has any impact on the sales of Korean products from the three chosen categories. However, before I go into that, I will start this chapter by researching what Finnish consumers typically look for in their purchases. Following that, I will begin the research analysis with Korean cars. I am following up with Korean electronics and finishing with the analysis of Korean cosmetics. This chapter will end in a discussion about Hallyu and its impact on the popularity of other Korean products.

To begin with, according to Santander Trade's consumer profile of Finnish consumers, the most important determinant for purchase is quality. Santander Trade also listed security, the country of origin of the product and the brand image as the other important factors for Finnish

consumers (Santander Trade 2021). Santander Trade is not the only one that has reached this conclusion about Finnish consumers. Also, the studies conducted by The Association for Finnish Work and Kuudes, a design consultancy company, have arrived at similar conclusions about typical Finnish consumers. Finnish consumers are increasingly more interested in sustainability and seek to buy products that have a good quality-price ratio (Kuudes 2019; The Association for Finnish Work n.d.). Finnish consumers are also looking for products that increase their and their family's well-being and products that do what they promise. These studies also found out that Finnish consumers tend to favour domestic brands and choose local products when they can. Thus, for Korean brands to become popular in the Finnish market, they must meet at least some of the Finnish consumers' requirements.

Korean Cars

Let's start the analysis with Korean cars. Both Kia and Hyundai are popular car brands in Finland, as stated in the introduction. Both of the brands have been exported to Finland since the early 2000s, so they have been in the Finnish market for a while now. For that reason, both Kia and Hyundai are well-known Korean brands in Finland. Hyundai and Kia are not the same company even though they have fused together in 1998 (Kia n.d.). Hyundai Motor Group is the parent company of Kia Motors. However, Hyundai Motor Group and Kia Motors operate independently and have different manufacturers. Thus, they are considered as two different brands, which this thesis has taken into account and thus, this thesis will treat them as two separate brands.

Price wise, Korean cars are in the middle range. They are not the cheapest on the market but are not considered luxury cars either. Even compared to other regular cars, Kia and Hyundai are not as expensive as Audi or Mercedes-Benz, for example. For instance, if the prices of electric cars are inspected, Kia Niro Electric and e-Soul and Hyundai Kona Electric and IONIQ Electric cars are priced between 35,000-40,000 euros compared to the cheapest electric cars from Skoda and Seat (both 19,389€) and the Porsche Taycan which was the list's most expensive car being nearly 114 000 euros (Autio 2020). On top of the reasonable price tag, cars from Hyundai and Kia are considered to be quite safe cars.

A factor that is an indicator of their good quality is the long warranty that the brands offer. In fact, they offer the longest warranty any car brand offers. Kia offers a seven-year warranty / 150,000 km and Hyundai a five-year warranty without a kilo meter restriction. They

also offer a broad selection of add ons that are already included in the basic car offer without any extra costs that are common in the auto market.

Many of these qualities are advertised on Kia and Hyundai's websites and in their car advertisements. For example, Hyundai's television commercial for their renewed I30 car highlights the car's safety properties such as emergency braking and technological improvements such as touch screen and Bluelink connection that enables a smartphone to be connected to the car to improve things like navigation and even lets the user lock their car doors by using their mobile phone (Hyundai n.d.). Those cars that have done well in-car tests advertise that fact. It becomes apparent from some of Hyundai's advertisements that they have been made specifically for Finnish customers. For example, the advertisement for Hyundai i30 and Bluelink includes a Finnish voice-over and subtitles (Hyundai Finland, n.d.). However, it is most likely also filmed in Finland, as the car's navigation system is in Finnish as well. The advertisement does not only advertise the Bluelink system but also demonstrates how it works and how it can be used to improve the driving experience. From a customers' viewpoint, this may be crucial as it is likely that a Finnish driver would be likely to prefer and use the navigation system and the touch screen in Finnish. Being able to use a system like a Bluelink in a customer's native language can be a big selling point for many people. Kia too advertises for a local Finnish audience. For instance, Kia's very recent video advertisement includes a Finnish comedian and actor Andre Wickström spending his midsummer in a Kia car in a middle of a forest with his three children (. The holiday and the surroundings are typically Finnish, so there is no doubt that this advertisement was meant for a Finnish audience. With an advertisement like this, Kia tries to appeal to Finnish consumers as a relatable brand, almost as if it too was Finnish.

Korean Electronics

Moving on to Korean electronics, they too have been in the Finnish market for a while now and enjoy the dominant position in television and mobile phone sales, as showcased in the introduction. Just a quick look into Finnish electronics retailer's online shops gives proof of that. Electronics online shops like Gigantti and Verkkokauppa.com are full of televisions from Samsung, and LG Korean electronics seem to benefit from Korea's high-tech nation brand image, just like Korean cars. Samsung and LG both keep up with technological development. Both brands are quick to come out with new releases and upgraded qualities. Their advertisements make sure to portray that fact as well. For instance, the first thing that can be

seen when the front page of LG Finland opens up is an advertisement banner for LG's new OLED TV. Up on the right corner of the photo, LG promotes itself as the "World's No. 1 OLED TV Brand" (LG Finland n.d.). Funnily though, LG also advertises some of its OLED TVs as ecological, despite them having European Union energy label rating G, which is the least energy-efficient rating (LG Finland n.d.). LG might try to appeal to consumers' increasing demand for sustainable and ecological products, or perhaps that is the most ecological OLED TV that can be made. Nevertheless, this was an interesting demonstration of how brands overall may try to appear more ecological than they are in reality (just yet). Samsung or LG do not have as much localised advertisement video content as Hyundai and Kia do. LG, for example, has an Instagram profile that is dedicated to a broader Nordic audience instead of having an account for Finland exclusively. This means that the advertising content that they have on their Instagram is a mixture between international advertising and localised advertising. Luckily for LG, the Nordic countries have sort of similar culture, and LG's advertisements can in a way be localised for Nordic consumers. LG Nordics' Instagram does include some content that is more relatable for people from certain countries. For instance, the brand has posted celebration posts for Sweden and Norway's independence days (@Ignordic). Overall, LG and Samsung do not promote their Korean origin very much and instead focus on localised and international advertising.

Furthermore, Korean brands cover both price ends in electronics. Samsung and LG both sell televisions that are over 5000 euros and some of the priciest in the market. Both brands also sell some televisions that sell for less than 300 euros, although Procaster and Sony sell some models for a little over 100 euros. Nevertheless, both brands offer a great selection of television models in various price ranges. This means that most consumers in Finland are able to find a television from Samsung or LG that fits their price range. The same goes for Samsung's mobile phones as Samsung offers various phone models of which some are high-end and some a bit less high-tech and therefore also a bit cheaper. Overall, both Samsung and LG are considered to be of good quality by Finnish consumers. This argument is supported by their popularity that has been discovered in various news reports and shops' lists of most popular products (verkkokauppa.com n.d.; Gigantti n.d.). For example, Tekniikan Maaailma listed Samsung Galaxy S21 Ultra mobile phone as the second-best Android smartphone of 2021. In addition, Samsung advertises that two of its Galaxy Note phones have received CES 2021 Best of Innovation awards and that two other Galaxy phones received honourable mentions (Samsung n.d.). For a while now, television from Samsung and LG and phones from

Samsung have done well in multiple tests and their products are considered to be on top of the newest technological advancements. Thus, they match Finnish consumers' requirements for high-quality products. On the contrary, LG and Samsung are not domestic brands, which usually appeal to Finnish consumers. However, there are no viable Finnish options, as Nokia is not a competition against Samsung's smartphones, and there are no Finnish televisions either. Therefore, it is no surprise that Samsung and LG are so popular in Finland.

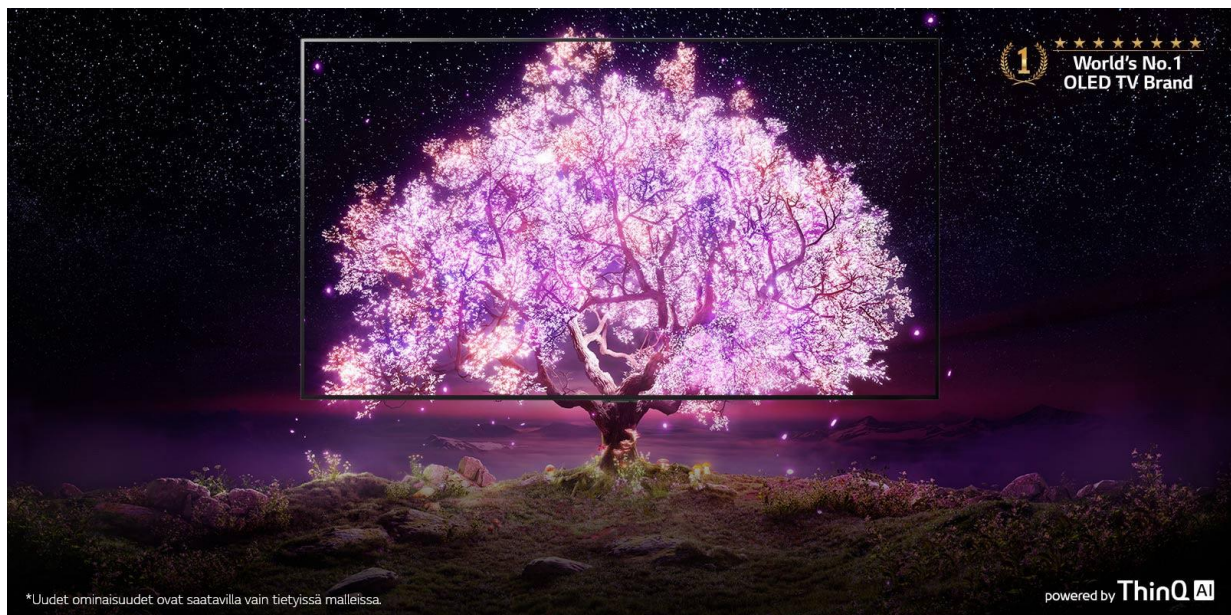


Figure 3. LG's advertisement banner for OLED TV. Source: <https://www.lg.com/fi/images/ecovadis/TV-OLED-Super-Category-Banner-Desktop.jpg>.

Korean Cosmetics

Compared to cars and electronics, Korean cosmetics advertisements stand out more. Korean beauty product brands try to appeal to Finnish customers in a multitude of ways, but also promote their Korean origin much more visibly in their advertisements than Korean car and electronics brands. For example, makeup brands Bbia and Eglips use a mixture of Korean advertisement photos and photos of local makeup influencers and consumers. Their official advertising photos feature mostly Korean models, and the brands seem to use those same photos to advertise internationally. However, both Bbia and Eglips also include photos from their Finnish (or other Nordic country) customers. A common way to advertise cosmetics, especially makeup, is to include "swatches" of their products as an advertisement of a brand's products' (good) quality. Some of the K-beauty brands under examination have used this advertising method. For example, Bbia has lot of photos of their product swatches, which can

be useful for consumers when they wonder what the cosmetics product is likely to look like. The argument about using a mixture of Korean, international and local advertisements applies to COSRX as well. Out of these brands, COSRX is the most well-known brand internationally. COSRX uses a very well-known actor Kim Soo Hyun as their brand ambassador, and he is the face of the brand as well. Perhaps due to its size, COSRX has also managed to collaborate with a few more or less well-known "western" YouTube and Tik Tok personalities such as James Welsh (1,28 million followers on YouTube) and Bella Poarch (74,9 million followers on Tik Tok). TonyMoly and Whamisa advertise largely by using only their products in their advertisement photos.



Figure 4. Screenshot advertisement photo from Eglips.
 Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/CMuySjCne3f/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link.

Furthermore, most K-beauty brands are not considered to be premium brands. Instead, they K-beauty brands are collectively considered to be reliable quality at a reasonable middle-range price. Perhaps just for that reason, Korean beauty products have managed to find an opening in the Finnish (and international) cosmetics market for innovative and good products that are not too expensive but have higher quality ingredients and work better than common supermarket brands. Arguably, Korean cosmetics brands have benefitted from Korea's nation brand image of an outstanding high-technology nation, which Korean electronics and car

brands have helped to create. Because these cosmetics brands are from Korea, they are also considered to be produced with high tech equipment and the innovative practices that Hyundai, Kia, Samsung, and LG follow are considered to apply to Korean skincare too.

However, on their own most of these K-beauty brands are not that well known, especially if compared to how well-known brands Samsung, Kia, Hyundai and LG are in Finland. On both Facebook and Instagram, all of the K-beauty brands that have a dedicated account for Finland or the Nordics had less than 5,000 followers. The only brand to surpass that is COSRX, but it has only one international account and does not have an account for Finland or the Nordic countries. The K-beauty retailers Yeppo and Bearel both had more followers than any of the brands had on their accounts. This suggests that instead of being loyal to one brand, people who are interested in K-beauty are more likely to try out multiple brands. Logically, this makes sense as one person often uses multiple skincare and makeup products. For instance, it is common to use multiple skincare products like toner and moisturiser for example. There are even more products to be used if one wishes to do their makeup in a "traditional way" which would mean using at least one product on face, eyes and lips each. For that reason it does not come as a surprise that consumer might be more likely to purchase products from various brands instead of staying loyal to one brand. It is different to buy a car or mobile phone because usually one item is enough. The lack of brand loyalty can be caused by other reasons as well. One possible solution for that is K-beauty brands relative newness in the Finnish market. Due to the sudden influx of multiple new and exciting K-beauty brands there might also be relatively high amount of competition, as different cosmetics brands compete against each other and then with Finnish and other European and "western" beauty brands.

Furthermore, one thing that drastically differs from advertising Korean cosmetics compared to cars and electronics is the platform of the advertisements. It is common to see advertisements of Samsung, Kia, LG and Hyundai on the television. Their advertisements show up on newspapers and online as well. Korean cosmetics brands on the other hand, mostly advertise online and in social media. They do not have advertisements showing in television or popping up in newspapers. The majority of K-beauty retailers are also "niche" online shops that have been dedicated for K-beauty. Thus, Korean brands have not used the same methods to advertise themselves as Korean electronics and vehicles. Despite that, Korean cosmetics brands have succeeded in advertising and increasing their market share in Finland.



Figure 5. Screenshot of Bbia lip tint swatches.
 Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/CMCm9pDhHPb/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link.



Figure 6. Screenshot of COSRX's advertisement with Korean actor Kim Soo Hyun. Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/CKiwRjtpt8X/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link.



Figure 6. Screenshot of Bella Poarch posing with COSRX products on COSRX's Instagram post. Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/COWf1CQJpkP/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link.

After analysing each product category individually, it has become apparent that there are some similarities between the products popularity. However, it can be said surely that there is a clear difference between the first wave of Korean products and the second wave. Compared to many of the popular Korean cosmetics brands, Korean cars and electronics brands can be considered old. For example, Kia Corporation was founded in 1944, Hyundai Motor Company in 1967, Samsung Group in 1938 and Samsung Electronics in 1969 and LG Corporation in 1947 and LG Electronics in 1958. The inspected beauty brands, on the other hand, are much younger. Bbia and Whamisa were founded in 2004, TonyMoly in 2006, Eglips in 2007 and COSRX in 2013. This also means that Korean cars and electronics have entered the foreign markets comparatively a lot earlier than Korean cosmetics. By the time that these cosmetics brands were founded, Korean cars and electronics were already common in international markets. Hyundai, for instance, expanded into foreign markets in the early 1980s (Hyundai 2019). Around the same time, both Samsung and LG are making and selling televisions abroad. Samsung became the number one seller of televisions already in 2006. In the following decade, it remained as the best television brand and also launched many popular and innovative smartphone models that secured its success in that product category as well. Compared to that, Korean cosmetic brands that have branched into international markets in the

2010s have done so relatively late. With a long international history and large market visibility, Samsung, LG, Kia and Hyundai are well-known names in their respective fields and are large internationally recognised brands.

Hallyu and K-Products

To comprehend Hallyu's ties to products' success, let's begin with brands and the celebrities associated with them. As established in the literature review, many brands use celebrities to endorse their products or the whole brand itself. Collaborating with a fitting celebrity is important as the brand's image becomes associated with the celebrity. In their advertisements as well as on social media accounts, Korean brands visibly favour collaborating with Finnish celebrities instead of Korean celebrities. Car brands Hyundai and Kia use Finnish athletes in the advertisement photos and videos. Kia, for instance, promotes their partnership with the Finnish alpine skiing national team on its official Finnish Instagram. Since October 2019, Kia Finland has actively posted about this partnership, and the Finnish national alpine skiing team is a visible part of the brand's profile. Hyundai, on the other hand, has a strong rally presence on its Hyundai Finland Instagram. Rally is a popular sport in Finland, so it is not a surprise that the brand promotes itself through the rally and Hyundai Motorsport. In addition, Hyundai's Finnish brand ambassador is Finnish former pro boxer Eva Wahlström. On a global scale, Hyundai promotes BTS to be their international partner. However, BTS is only included in two posts on Hyundai Finland's Instagram. The same applies to their Hyundai Worldwide page, whereas Hyundai Lifestyle is filled with promotional photos with BTS.

Samsung, too, has chosen to collaborate with a Finnish sports star and BTS. Samsung Finland has chosen the famous Formula One driver Kimi Räikkönen as their latest brand endorser. Both Räikkönen and BTS appear to be sort of promoting the same product, which is the new Galaxy S21 Ultra 5G phone. However, in this case, also it appears that Räikkönen is the brand endorser in the Finnish market, whereas B.T.S. is the international ambassador and face for the brand. There are promotional videos and photos of both ambassadors, but BTS has made much more new promotional content than Räikkönen. Interestingly, on one Instagram promotional post, Räikkönen is described as an "uncompromising and straightforward Finn." On the other hand, Samsung did promote their previous Galaxy s20 FE (Fan Edition) phone on TV with an international commercial. The commercial had BTS's song *Dynamite* (released August 21, 2020) playing as the background music and BTS appeared in it through Samsung's Instagram profile showing on the phone's screen. The clips on the Instagram page were from

the song's music video. Despite that, Samsung appears to be building its brand image as a very international brand that is suitable for everyone. Other than having BTS as the face of the brand, Samsung does not strongly highlight its Korean origins.



Figure 7. Screenshot of Finnish Formula One driver Kimi Räikkönen in Samsung's advertisement.
Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/CNhLvHjKupS/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link.

Furthermore, what comes to LG, the brand only has a joint account for Nordic countries (Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark, Iceland is not included). So, LG promotes its brand and products to consumers in multiple countries. For that reason, they do not seem to have much localised content on their social media platforms. The few videos and posts on LG's social media platforms (YouTube, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook) that were more country-specific still were accessible and understandable to a broader Nordic audience. Overall, the brand appears very global on all of its social media sites. On YouTube, some of the promotional videos and advertisements have been translated into Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish with subtitles but the videos are otherwise exactly the same.

International brands choosing to use Finnish primarily celebrity brand endorses is not only a phenomenon among Korean brands. Just very recently, McDonald's made headlines

when they announced their BTS collaboration. McDonald's is launching their BTS. Meal on May 26 in 50 countries, including South Korea and the US (Hirwani 2021). However, Finland was not on the list of those 50 countries. According to Twitter user @BTS_army_Fin, McDonald's Finland does not intend to launch the BTS. Meal (@BTS_army_Fin, April 20, 2021). Instead, McDonald's Finland is currently collaborating with Finnish rap artist Cledos (McDonald's 2021). According to McDonald's Finland's marketing director, Cledos fits well together with McDonald's and is likely to be popular among their target audience (McDonald's 2021). This statement suggests that the company has chosen a celebrity advisor that they expect to match well with their brand and to draw in customers that the brand is seeking. On their website, the marketing director stated that their target audience is digital natives, so presumably teenagers and young adults. On Spotify, the five most popular songs from Cledos each have at least over a million plays, and the most listened song has over 5 million. These numbers are very low compared to BTS' who are international superstars. However, this showcases that other international brands also use local celebrities to endorse their brand and their products and that Korean brands are not the only ones doing so.

On the contrary, Korean cosmetics and their retailers tend to advertise Korean products with Hallyu somewhat. For instance, Yeppo, a Finnish online and shop retailer of Korean cosmetics, tends to heavily include Korea as the country of origin in its advertisements. This is often done by using photos of Korea or Korean celebrities. Korean beauty brands also use their Korean advertisements for advertising themselves in Finland. This means that the brands include some of the promotional photos that include Korean celebrities. However, the brands tend also to include local or internationally well-known influencers to promote their products. Thus, their advertising is not fully international or rely purely on Hallyu. In addition, on Facebook, a group dedicated to Finnish K-pop fans called *Kpop Finland* has 2,766 members, whereas the group dedicated to K-beauty, called *K-Beauty Suomi*, has around 6,140 members. That also strongly suggests that K-beauty has caught a larger audience than just those who also enjoy other Hallyu products. Naturally, some people may have gotten interested in Korean cosmetics and maybe even other Korean consumer products through their exposure to Korean cultural products. However, as mentioned Korean skincare and makeup have already been mentioned in various women's magazines, news articles, blog posts etcetera, thus it is likely that K-beauty has managed spread wider before Hallyu products. That observation further supports the idea tha Hallyu does not have notable impact on other Korean products in Finland.

Country of Origin Markers

Building on the research from Hornikx et al., these Korean car and electronics brands that were examined tend not to use many countries of origin markers on their advertisements or on their social media platforms. LG has the least visibly marked country of origins. LG's company name is English, as LG stands for Life's Good. The brand does not use Korean in its international advertisements, nor does it reference Korea in any obvious way either. LG, unlike Hyundai and Samsung, does not use famous Korean people to promote its brand internationally. Any of the examined promotional photos or advertisements did not include the South Korean flag or any distinctively Korean landscapes or buildings either. Thus, it seems that LG tries to implement a global brand image rather than promoting Korea as its country of origin.

Moreover, Kia too appears as a very international brand. There are no references to Korea in the brand's name or logo. Kia's car advertisements shown in Finland or on the international website do not mark Korea in any way either. With Kia, one has to also dig deeper to discover the brand's country of origin. Only on Kia's international Instagram page has the company posted promotional material from 2019 with internationally famous K-pop group Blackpink. Thus, Kia's brand image is very global, just like LG's. On the other hand, Hyundai and Samsung especially are conveying their country of origin more transparently and with more markers. Hyundai, already a brand name, sounds very Korean. Hyundai also utilises BTS's huge success and popularity and has chosen to continue its collaboration with the band. However, as already discussed earlier, this collaboration is more present on the international profile on their website and social media platforms. Hyundai Finland is more focused on promoting the brand through local ambassadors and themes rather than highlighting the brand's country of origin. Samsung uses the same amount of country of origins markers as Hyundai. Samsung's name is and sounds Korean, and they promote their products with BTS on social media and TV Samsung too seems to have renewed their contract with BTS, or at least they chose to promote their newest phone model with the band as well. This brand, like the three others, does not emphasise Korea much more than what collaborating with BTS brings with it. However, at the moment, BTS is one of the most well-known musical artists and thus is quite likely to bring plenty of attention to Samsung.

On the contrary, Korean cosmetics brands and Finnish cosmetics retailers highlight Korea as the country of origin in their advertisements. The Finnish cosmetics retailers especially emphasise the Korean origin of cosmetics. For example, Yeppo, Korean skincare,

makeup and accessories retail shop, often shares information and photos about Korea and the Korean language on their Instagram profile. They have a pinned story answering followers' questions about Korea in the story highlights. That story included information about living in Korea, getting an apartment or a room there, finding friends, the best tourist attractions and food culture, as well as going to a K-pop group's concert, among other topics. The retail shop's Instagram account also uses Pony, Korea's most popular makeup artist and YouTuber, to promote some products sold in the shop. They have shared a look from Pony's Instagram account and list some products from their shop with what using a similar look can be achieved. Yeppo retail shop's Instagram account makes it obvious that they are promoting these products as Korean products first and foremost. They use other Korea-related information further to promote the Korean-ness of these brands and products. Overall, cosmetics retailers that focus on K-beauty products tend to promote Korean-ness most visibly, even creating other Korea-related content on their social media.

When it comes to famous Korean people, some Korean celebrities, like BTS, are very successful brand ambassadors, even for international brands (like Louis Vuitton and McDonald's in BTS's case). However, as already indicated, Korean companies tend not to use Korean idols and film stars in Finnish advertisements. Instead, Korean brands use local celebrities when they advertise their products on a national level. However, as already demonstrated, Samsung and Hyundai make an exception to this, as they both have used BTS as their brand ambassador. Hyundai has only advertised BTS on their social media, but the Samsung mobile phone advertisement with BTS has appeared on television in Finland. However, Korean cosmetics brands tend to use a mix of Korean and local people in advertisements and on other sorts of social media posts. Korean beauty brands appear to use Korean models and occasional famous celebrities in their promo pictures. But at the same time, they also use local social media influencers and models to promote their products on their social media. For instance, Bbia shares a lot of product demonstrations from makeup content creators on their Instagram. Many of the brands examined in this thesis used even just regular customers to advertise and demonstrate their products. That is easily done on social media, where the brand or a retailer can just share reviews and product demonstrations that were published by someone online.

Conclusion

K-Beauty Phenomenon

Korean cosmetics brands and products are advertised as K-beauty and heavily promote their Korean origin. Korean makeup or Korean skincare are not just "ordinary" cosmetics. On the contrary, they come from Korea, which is known as a forerunner in high technology. Moreover, Korea is becoming more and more known as the country of K-pop and K-dramas and the good-looking and fashionable Korean stars. Korea, as the country of origin of these cosmetics, adds to their value due to Korea's positive nation brand image.

Korean cars and electronics, on the other hand, are only advertised as new products from their brand. As discussed earlier Korean car and electronics brands do not do much to draw attention to Korea as the country of origin. Instead, they highlight the brand itself. In Finland, K-beauty is a phenomenon on its own, whereas Hyundai, Kia, Samsung, and LG are considered to be just brands among other international brands. There does not exist such a phenomenon as Korean cars or Korean electronics, which would have "fans" dedicated to the phenomenon. This is not to say that Korea is not known to be a leading producer of these products. Korea has an image of being very technologically advanced and producing high technology products. However, when the K-beauty phenomenon is examined, it is clear that the status of the product as a Korean beauty product is much more important than the brand itself.

Moreover, cosmetics is the only category where there are retail shops dedicated to only Korean products. There are quite a few, especially online retail shops, that carry only or mostly Korean cosmetics and other Korean products. The same does not apply to cars and electronics, which have big retail stores selling products from many brands from many countries. K-beauty became a phenomenon, whereas cars and electronics became famous because of few brands that did well internationally. The industries are also entirely different and making skincare products is much simpler than assembling a car or phone, which can have hundreds of components and parts that may be produced separately.

Korean skincare and makeup became popular due to hype around K-beauty, and these products do well because they are Korean. One reason behind the K-beauty phenomenon is that Korean cosmetics products match these qualities and are actually good products. Thus, the hype is primarily genuine, and consumers get what they are looking for. However, the road to popularity was different with Korean cosmetics than with Korean cars and electronics. This is not surprising as first-wave Korean products, and because of the different producing processes

and product types, it makes sense that cosmetics products can more easily become popular. Social media has most definitely contributed to the hype around K-beauty, and there are blogs, for instance, dedicated just for skincare or even Korean skincare or makeup. Hallyu is also more likely to influence cosmetics, as makeup looks are an essential part of K-pop, especially but also K-dramas. Fans get inspired by idols' makeup looks and want to copy them. This is also a way to feel closer and more similar to the person that they admire. The industries are also very different from each other and function differently. Car production has been a prominent and vital part of the Korean economy and industrialisation. The Korean government has supported car production, and the car industry has been in an economically significant position. Samsung and LG are both chaebol companies and some of the largest companies in Korea. Cosmetics companies, on the other hand, are much smaller, and there are a much larger number of them. It was just recently when their products entered the international markets, whereas Hyundai, Kia, Samsung, and LG have already established positions in the world market. Korean cosmetics companies have much tougher competition in the sense that there are just many more competing companies in the market. Korean cosmetics companies are also competing with other Korean companies as well as well-established and large foreign companies. Cosmetics brands should also produce a whole line of makeup and/or skincare. The cycle of new products is also much quicker than with any other product. Smartphones come to a close these days when there can be multiple new releases per year, but makeup brands at least often release a new line quarterly, one for each season. Due to the K-beauty phenomenon, the country of origin image is more important for cosmetics brands than it is for car and electronics brands. Korea, as the country of origin, is the baseline for the K-beauty hype, and thus a good image is much more important. It seems that Korean cosmetics have promoted Korea's image, but also Korean idols and other celebrities have promoted Korea as a place with attractive people, which in turn promotes the products.

In conclusion, this thesis has analysed and compared the reasons behind various Korean products' popularity in Finland. This research also examined Hallyu in Finland and how it affects the popularity of other Korean products. This research used discourse analysis as the research method to analyse the advertisements of these Korean brands and link them to the theories of the country of origin image and nation brand image. This found out that the reason for the popularity of the second wave of Korean products in Finland is very different from the first wave. The baseline is the same as consumer behaviour does not fundamentally change however the phenomenon is very different.

Korean cars and electronics come from few distinctive and well-established brands that already have a significant share of the international market. Korean cosmetics, on the other hand, are second-wave products that have become popular because of the international hype around well-working Korean products that are endorsed and by attractive Korean celebrities. The phenomenon itself does not come to Finland directly from Korea. Still, instead, it has become popular elsewhere in the west and thus travels through social media and the internet all the way to Finland as well.

Things that often matter are a decent price, high quality and innovativeness. The same factors determine consumers' purchasing decisions no matter what product is in question. However, various Korean products are appealing for different reasons, and so the reasons behind the popularity of different Korean products also vary. First and foremost, when consumers buy electronics or a car, they are making a more considerable investment and spending more money than when they are buying cosmetics. They also most likely buy a product from a well-known brand. The number of car or electronics brands is much lower than the number of cosmetics brands. Moreover, because K-beauty is such a hyped phenomenon, some people are probably trying new products because of the hype. Thus, these brands in these categories deal with these qualities very differently, and these qualities mean completely different things in each category. Moisturiser that costs 50 euros is considered expensive, whereas there does not exist unused mobile phones or TVs at that price. Even used mobile phones can cost around 200 euros. Innovation and reviews matter in all categories. Brands and retailers disclose and promote it if their product has won any consumer review or innovation awards. Electronics products disclose the won awards and reviews on their retail advertisements or product descriptions there or on their brand website. Cars brands also advertise if their car model has won some tests. Korean skincare and makeup are advertised by consumer reviews, especially on social media either by the brand itself or by the retailer. This gives other consumers an idea about how other consumers thought about that particular product. In the end, all products must appeal to consumers and match their needs and requirements in order to be purchased. Products that do not match consumer's demands will not be purchased no matter what brand or country of origin might be in question.

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