

# Korean films: "my sassy girl" and "the classic" essay sample

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## **Korean Films: “ My Sassy Girl” & “ The Classic” Essay Sample**

We think that the characteristics that make Korean films different from Chinese films are, first and foremost, the most basic structure or skeleton that they use when making their movies. We think that Chinese movies, compared to Korean movies, are usually more complex. Chinese movies usually have many parts that needs to be put together to see the bigger picture of the movie. In contrast with this, we think that Korean movies have a more simple framework, example is in Sassy Girl, the story mainly revolves around two characters and their interactions, while in the movie Eat, Drink, Man, Woman you need to look at and analyze how the different events in the lives of all the family members affected the final scene where the father regained his sense of taste.

Another difference that we saw between Chinese and Korean movies are the main trends that were prevalent in the movies we saw in class. For Chinese movies, we saw how keen they were in the use of symbolisms. An example would be how in the movie Eat, Drink, Man, Woman, the lost of the fathers sense of taste symbolized his loss for the zest for life, while the movie Together is in a sense a symbol of or representation of the actual life experience of director Chen Kaige. In China, the use of symbolism overlaps with how Chinese people use cultural overtones in their movies, examples of which are importance of food and music in the movies we watched. If the Chinese are very particular in the use of symbolisms, the Koreans are strong in their use of the idea of ‘ fate’ and ‘ destiny’ in their movies. In particular,

the movies we watched in class used the idea of fate and destiny as a pivotal point of the story which can be said to have served as the climax of the movie. The movie, " My Sassy Girl", ended with the characters finding out that the person they were supposed to be introduced to for the past three years was each other. We see how fate brought together the characters right at the point where we felt that there was very little chance that they will see each other again. As for the movie " The Classic", we see in the end how the main protagonists' " souls" were fated to be together even if it was in the next generation through their son and daughter, linking past to present.

The last difference we saw between Chinese and Korean movie, based on the four movies we have seen, is the focus of the movies. We saw that Chinese movies focused more on the idea of filial piety or love for one's family. The movie usually showed how everyday life and our interaction with other people affected our relationship with our families. That our decisions can lead to a life where we distance ourselves from those closest to us, we see in the two movies that even when people live under the same roof there are times when they cannot interact properly. As for Korean movies, they usually focus on romantic love or the love between a couple. As said in the previous paragraph, Korean movies usually show a couple who seemingly just cannot be together no matter how hard they try only to be reunited in the end by fate or destiny.

We saw many differences between Chinese and Korean movies, but we also saw a few commonalities between the way the two makes movies. The most obvious one is the mixing of comedy with drama in their movies. We

observed this in all the four movies we saw in class, how the directors inserted comic reliefs and scenes that can alleviate the tension and help the viewers relax before giving them a sudden emotional jolt from the sudden twists in the story. Although similar, we think that the Chinese way of inserting comic reliefs is still not completely the same, Chinese comic relief is more subtle while Korean comic reliefs go for the laugh out loud reaction from its viewers.

### The Rise of Korean Telenovelas in the Philippines

As you can see, Korean telenovelas are now popular not only in the Philippines but also in other parts of the world. Most of us might observe why people started to shift their views about this. Maybe, we, Filipinos, are so tired and sick of watching murders, kidnappings, and other evil acts that can be found in our Filipino teleserye. Some of us would like to watch something new that would make them feel better. We think that the elements of Korean telenovelas contribute to that influence which makes them very famous nowadays.

First, Korean telenovelas are exciting to watch because they are usually shot in breathtaking scenic spots promoting the beauty of Korea. Like in the movie of "The Classic", they showed magnificent sceneries like the river and the pond that was surrounded by fireflies during the night. On the other hand, "Sassy Girl" also showed beautiful spots in Korea like the mountain and trees that the characters visited to read their letters inside the time capsule.

Second, Korean novels have mysterious story lines. They have interesting plots and they are well-scripted in some ways. In "Sassy Girl", there is an unconventional part that came up in the movie wherein the woman is more powerful and controlling than the man. In "The Classic", there is a bit of fairy tale aspect in the story, especially with its use of surprising ending and twists. These are some aspects of Korean telenovelas that Filipinos, in particular, are fond of.

Third, they become so popular in the Philippines because of its positive, overarching and universal themes such as the idea of an endless love, romance with a touch of comedy, and quiet sacrifice that make the audience feel good and light. Also, most of the Korean novels belong to teenage drama that invites the youth to watch them. There are first love moments that could be very memorable to the viewers. For instance, "The Classic" showed these moments when Ji-hye found out that Sang-Min left his umbrella in the shop in order to join Ji-hye to go to the library. Another example is the scene in "Sassy Girl" wherein Gyeon-woo brought the flowers to his sassy girl while playing the piano in front of the crowd.

Lastly, the appearances of good-looking men and women become a big hit for the Filipino viewers. Because of these handsome actors and beautiful actresses, viewers tend to like the shows more. As you can see, nowadays, young viewers get so addicted to these celebrities because of their fashion and strong sense of charisma. That is the reason why some of us get so fascinated with their K-Pop culture.

## “ My Sassy Girl” and “ The Classic”: Review

Both movies have surprising endings. While “ The Classic” may be more predictable than “ My Sassy Girl” because of context clues in the movie and the apparent parallelism with the relationships of the mother and the daughter with their lead men, the way to disclose the scenes leading to the ending is filled with sudden twists. On the other hand, My Sassy Girl’s controversial ending is brought about by nearly unrealistic but very funny scenarios leaving almost no trail that will broadcast what will happen in the end. Indeed, the conclusion seems to wrap up the movie in a very hasty but enlightening manner because of the way it explained the turn of events in such a short span of time.

What is even more interesting is that both films bound both the past and the present. In “ The Classic”, we can see how the past of the mother reflects how the daughter finds love in the present while in “ My Sassy Girl”, the protagonist saw her past relationship unfolding in the fresh face of her male counterpart (who happens to be directly related with her ex-boyfriend). Such routing found in both flicks showed the timeless character and interconnectedness of love making it a theme that is universal and widely appealing.

Furthermore, “ My Sassy Girl” shows funny and unconventional scenarios in the movie. There is a progression of the relationship from the sassy girl using the Gyeon-woo, to her needing him, and finally to them wanting and needing each other. It adds a thrilling experience in the scene wherein both

characters met again in the last part and it serves as a proof that they are really destined with each other. However, the movie shows violent dating relationship that we think is not good for young viewers. Although it shows woman empowerment in some sense, it still makes us curious why the characters act that way. Maybe, that is why " My Sassy Girl" is really an unconventional movie.

In the movie " The Classic", the story had a fast pacing at the end of the film. Sometimes, the scenes of the past and the present confused us at some point because we hardly understand what is going on especially on the last part of the movie. Although we experienced confusion in this film, we still enjoyed it because of its storyline wherein the mother and daughter have a connection with each other. We see how their lives changed when they experienced this unconditional love with their partners.

#### " My Sassy Girl" vs. " The Classic"

Our group has different opinions regarding the film that affected each one of us. Some of us like " The Classic" because like for Xavier, it makes us want to love again and again given the obvious theme of the film about timeless and destiny-ridden love. It makes us believe that the love resides where barriers can be overcome and there is always something prepared on the table for everyone. While " The Classic" can be this occupying, My Sassy Girl is elicits a romantic effect in a different way. It seeks to show love in a compassionate manner, willing to wait and willing to transcend time despite the uncertainties and lingering memories of the past.

For Dharyl, she also likes the movie, " The Classic" because she saw the parallelism of heartbreak, adventures, and lessons learned between daughter and mother. It seems that the fates of the mother and daughter are interconnected. The director of the film tried to show to the viewers the kind of environment that the mother and daughter had. Even though they lived in different times, they still both experience internal and social pressures that prevent them to express their feelings and emotions towards the person they love and cherish the most. It also made her realize that looking up with the past would be helpful for a person to fully understand the present times. Moreover, she finds " The Classic" more thrilling than " My Sassy Girl" because of its unexpected storyline.

On the other hand, Lester likes the movie, " My Sassy Girl". For him, he found the twist in the story much more unpredictable as compared to the twist in " The Classic". Also, he found the characters in " My Sassy Girl" to have more colorful personalities, personalities that are in the opposite sides of a spectrum and they are also personalities that we do not see every day. On the other hand, he thinks that the characters of " The Classic" were a representation of the status quo, they represented the personalities that were usually expected from the youth during their respective eras. Also, he likes how love is portrayed in " My Sassy Girl" as compared to how it was portrayed in " The Classic". For him, love, as seen in the movie " The Classic", can be described as unchanging, unaffected, unending, and perfect. He thinks that the love portrayed in " My Sassy" girl is a little bit more realistic. He describes the love in Sassy Girl, compared to the one in The



Classic, as imperfect yet unbreakable. He thinks that it would be easier for viewers to relate to this kind of love, because in reality people in relationships finds fault in their partners, there will always be conflict, but the challenge is to be able to accept those faults and to overcome those conflicts. The hope is that even if this imperfect love is challenged, fate will always find a way.