

**The glocalization and representation of
the metropolis and the countryside in Korean Drama
Hometown Cha Cha Cha and Malaysian novel
*Between Lives***

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Abstract

This article examines the glocalization and representation of the metropolis and the countryside in Korean drama *Hometown Cha Cha Cha* and a Malaysian novel *Between Lives*. Despite the difference of its geographical landscape, these two selected stories share similar genre of the so-called returning to the countryside plot. For research methodology, glocalization ideology, Stuart Hall's representation theory and Julia Kristeva's Intertextuality are employed in conducting research. The objectives are to contrastively compare the plot, characters, theme, dictions and effects towards audiences between the drama and the novel, to analyze and theorize the process of glocalization in the drama and the novel and to extract the representation of the metropolis and the countryside. Research results reflect the localism as a process in its glocalization strategy. In this context, practicing glocalization needs localism in commodifying the culture and the countryside. Thus, the presentation of hometown and native land brings the protagonists back to their childhood memories and experiences. This article reveals the representation of metropolis and capitalism as villains and the representation of the countryside as healer. Besides, elderly women play important role in both stories as the spirit and wisdom of the village.

Keywords: Korean drama, Malaysian novel, glocalization, metropolis, countryside

1. Introduction

This article examines the glocalization and representation of the metropolis and the countryside in Korean drama *Hometown Cha Cha Cha* and a Malaysian novel *Between Lives*. The main research question is why they have similar plots, despite sharing neither authorship nor areal connection. Due to the difference of its geographical landscape, the Republic of Korea and Malaysia have passed the period of industrialization. For Malaysia, industrialization appeared under the state's New Economic Policy (1971-1990) and the Republic of Korea industrialization emerged in Park Chung Hee's era (1961-1979). After the period of industrialization, the metropolis of Kuala Lumpur and Seoul similarly emerged as strong capitalist cities. In this regard, the hypothesis of this article is that the effect of a strong capitalist metropolis cross-regionally inspired the emergence of the 'returning to the countryside' genre in novel and TV series independently in Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia. Thus, the objective of this article is to examine the image of the metropolis and the countryside in both Kdrama and Malaysian novel. The hypothesis here is that the metropolis is representative of villains while the countryside is representative of healers. In this sense, it is related to the glocalization strategy which emphasizes localism in order to approach both local and international readers/audiences.

Hitherto, there has been there is no research which compares Korean drama *Hometown Cha Cha Cha* and a Malaysian novel *Between Lives* in terms of the glocalization and representation of the metropolis and the countryside. This has also motivated the current study to conduct a comparison regarding the utilization of glocalization in the two pieces of work as disconnected parallels between Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia. For research methodology, glocalization ideology, Stuart Hall's representation theory (Mahmud, 2009, pp.1-2) and Julia Kristeva's Intertextuality (Raj, 2015, p.77) are employed in conducting research. This research also analyzes both literary techniques in the novel and media techniques in Kdrama.

2. Definition and aspects of glocalization in media in previous studies

The word glocalization itself has been developed from global+local in order to refer to the creation of products and services intended for the global market but customized to suit the local cultures. According to Roudometof (2014), glocalization means globalization process is combined with localization process. "*The localization refers to human beings, individual subjects, organizations, communities or localities while globalization embraces the planetary processes. Glocalization also being interpreted as think globally and act locally.*" (Roudometof, 2014) (Foo, 2017, p.15) This article discusses the term glocalization as referring

to the presentation of local cultures, system of values and practices both in the novel and TV series to the international readers and audiences.

Previously, there have been several studies related to The Kdrama *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha* or the novel *Between Lives* by K.S. Maniam individually, and they discuss various aspects within the plot writing, for instance: The Narrative about Family in Korean Drama “Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha by Jiramon Sungchai (2022); Exploring Human-place Relationship in K.S. Maniam’s *Between Lives* by Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya (2010); Environmental ethics in KS Maniam’s *Between Lives* and Yang-May Ooi’s *The Flame Tree* by Zainor Izat Zainal (2017); A feminine perspective on Malaysian identity in K. S. Maniam’s *Between Lives* by Peter Wicks (2005); Healing the self through spirituality in K.S Maniam’s *Between Lives* by Awang, Mohammad Ewan and Omar, Noritah (2016); ADRIFT ON THE OCEAN: a study of K.S. Maniam’s displaced characters Susan Philip (2009). There are also several studies on glocalization concept and Korean culture and media, for instance: From Globalization to Glocalization: Configuring Korean Pop Culture to Meet Glocal Demands by Ingyu Oh (2020); Webtoon as a new Korean wave in the process of glocalization by Wonho Jang and Jung Eun Song (2017); K-pop at home: glocalization in the Korean version of “Mercy” by Leisan Luu (2019). At a more theoretical level, a dissertation Degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Hyejung Ju (2010) discusses Glocalization of the Korean Popular culture in East Asia: Theorizing the Korean Wave. In any case, it appears that there has been no research which is comparative in nature and provides transnational and transregional parallels, especially between Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia, as is done in the current study.

The current study adopts an approach to glocalization in media from a previous study “CICAKMAN: A Study on Glocalization in Malaysian Superhero Movie Genre” by Foo Mei Lee (2017). Foo describes the term glocalization in Malaysian Superhero Movie that the glocalization strategy has been adapted into the filmmaking industry. Glocalization also includes employing local actors and “*languages used in the films will make the local audience feel the sense of belonging and familiarization.*” (Foo, 2017, p.16) The result of employing Glocalization strategy incurs the coexistence and interdependent of both globalization and localization in the marketing strategy. In case of Malaysia and Singapore, Habibul H.K reveals that “*glocalization is visible in the area of mass communication especially in the television programming and it has remained appealing to many Singaporeans.*” (2004) (Foo, 2017, p.17) In the case of Singaporean Film series *Long Long Time Ago* or *Our Story* directed by Jack Neo, the glocalization strategy appears through plot, characters and setting.



Figure 1 Singaporean movie by Jack Neo *Long Long Time Ago*

Access: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long_Long_Time_Ago

The Plot of this Singaporean film series is derived from a director's childhood memories in his small hometown in Malaysia-Singapore border. It presents the countrymen and their rural ways of life in comedy genre. Jack Neo employed local actors and they speak both Hokkien Chinese and Malay languages. This film series not only aims to arouse Malaysian and Singaporean's sense of localism and nostalgia, but it also aims to present the image of countryside to the international audiences. Incidentally, this film series aims to commemorate Singapore's 50th birthday and it is promoted by Singaporean embassy for broadcasting in various countries. In the case of *Long Long Time Ago* film, it relates with Habibul's statement that "*glocalization involves blending, mixing adapting of two or more processes, one of which must be local. In addition, glocalization will only be meaningful if it includes at least one component that address the local culture, system of values or practices.*" (Foo, 2017, p.16)

Based on the literature review above, the term glocalization as is understood in the present study also relates with both localism and nostalgia. Localism is a counter concept to globalization and it is the awareness of human's ways of life. Localism emphasizes the fundamental needs of humans such as the relationship between people and their hometown, nature, cultures and community. In the case of media representation with localism strategy, it refers to the presentation of local ways of life, racial pride, strong sense of community and the awareness of the relationship between human, community and environment. To compare localism with a counter concept for instance liberalism, liberalism emphasizes individuality while localism mainly focuses on the community and local history. They value their cultural roots, history and community through culture, traditions, ways of life derived from their ancestors. Moreover, localism also puts emphasis on happiness and welfare among people in the same community. In this context, elderly people are important in localism because they are

the resource of local wisdom. In contrast, they are discouraged in capitalism which puts emphasis on the workforce of young generation.

3. Local settings, productions and the idea of returning to the countryside

This section provides information as background for understanding local settings, production processes and the idea of returning to the countryside shared by the two pieces of work under investigation. Despite the difference of its geographical landscape, these two selected stories share similar genre of the so-called returning to the countryside plot. Table 1 illustrates comparable components in the two pieces of work.

Table 1 The comparison between the Malaysian novel and Kdrama

Structure	Malaysian novel <i>Between Lives</i>	Kdrama <i>Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha</i>
Plot	A protagonist could not stand capitalism in the capital city and returned to the countryside.	A protagonist had been cheated in the capital city and returned to the countryside.
Theme	Countryside and natural ways of life can heal human from trauma and spiritual illness.	Countryside and natural ways of life can heal human from trauma and spiritual illness.
Conflicts	Sumitra and her colleagues broke down from living in the capital city. They returned to the countryside.	Dr. Yoon and Hong Du Sik had been cheated and decided to return to their hometown in Kong Jin province.
Crisis	Sumitra could not adjust herself to the environment of the countryside. She had been taught local wisdom by Sellamma.	Dr. Yoon could not adjust herself to the environment of the countryside. She had been taught local wisdom by Kamni and Hong Du Sik.
Ending	Sellamma, an elderly woman who represented a wisdom of the community died. Sumitra and her boyfriend continue living in the countryside.	Kamni, an elderly woman who represented a wisdom of the community died. Dr. Yoon and Du Sik continue living in the countryside.
Protagonists	Sumitra (young working woman) Sumitra's lover, colleagues and family	Dr. Yoon (young female dentist) Hong Du Sik (young working man)

Structure	Malaysian novel <i>Between Lives</i>	Kdrama <i>Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha</i>
	Sellamma (elderly woman living in the countryside)	Kamni (elderly woman living in the countryside)
Setting	Kuala Lumpur (The capital city of Malaysia) Anonymous countryside in Malaysia (the forest)	Seoul (The capital city of South Korea) Kong Jin (a city in Gyeongsang province)

The detailed presentation of each work starts from the Malaysian novel *Between Lives* by K.S. Maniam (Section 3.1) and then the Korean drama *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha* (Section 3.2).

3.1 *Between Lives*

The author of the novel, K.S. Maniam is an Indian Malaysian academic and novelist. He has been writing since his early teens. His stories have appeared in numerous journals around the world. His first novel, *The Return*, was published in 1981 and the second, *In a Far Country*, in 1993. He won the first prize for *The Loved Flaw: Stories from Malaysia* in The New Straits Times–McDonald short-story contest (1987) and *Haunting the Tiger: Contemporary Stories from Malaysia* in The New Straits Times–Shell contest (1990). He is the inaugural recipient of the Raja Rao Award (New Delhi, September 2000) for his outstanding contribution to the literature of the South Asian diaspora. He has been lecturer (1980–1985) and associate professor (1986–1997) in the English Department, University of Malaya, in Kuala Lumpur. His famous works are *The Return* (London: Skoob, 1981, 1993), *In A Far Country* (1993) and *Between Lives* (2003).

Set in contemporary Malaysia, the novel *Between Lives*, by K.S. Maniam, a young social worker Sumitra is the protagonist, whose task at hand is to persuade an old woman, Sellamma, to vacate her ancestral land in the countryside for the development of a theme park. Sumitra suffers from this task and is bored with the materialistic society she lives in. Most of her office colleagues have broken down and encountered mental illness. After she met with Sellamma, Sumitra's life was changed. Living with Sellamma in the countryside without electricity and modern technology, Sumitra finds her surreal experience of bathing in the river, caught in the zone of nothingness giving her a sense of the baptism of an objective, city girl into one reaching out for her own roots.

Through memory, flashback, myth and history, the novel celebrates the intriguing space between reality and surrealism. As Sumitra and Sellamma journey into lost history and ancestral heritage, they come to define nationhood and multiculturalism. By the end of the book, Sumitra

has also inherited Sellamma's property and local wisdom. Furthermore, K.S. Maniam also celebrates nature in the manner of a romantic. Sellamma is the representation of nature and values. While Sumitra gradually transforms from Queen Blue Ice (her name in the office) to a traditional local woman. A novel *Between Lives* reveals Malaysian multi-ethnic society and how a person can conserve his or her own racial identity among this diversity. The author uses a feminine perspective intentionally through the protagonist Sumitra. This character represents experiences in an extended Indian Malaysian family and also modern contemporary office life. Sumitra is torn between the modern working woman role and traditional Tamil woman ideology. She faces the dilemma between urban and rural ways of life. At the end of the story, Sumitra chooses to live in the rural area and continues Sellamma's ecological-conscious ways of life instead of returning to capitalism.

3.2 Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha

The Kdrama *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha* or the Korean name 갯마을 차차차 (Seaside Village Cha Cha Cha) produced by STUDIO DRAGON, broadcasting on tvN channel on Saturdays and Sundays at 21.00 PM from August 28, 2021 to October 17, 2021. It has also broadcasted on a streaming platform NETFLIX until now. A famous Korean actress Shin Min Ah (신민아) acts as a female dentist Yoon Hye Jin (윤혜진) and Kim Seon Ho (김선호) acts as Hong Du Sik (홍두식). This Kdrama series is in the so-called genre of 'the local life drama' or 농촌 드라마 in Korean language. It is very popular both in the Republic of Korea and in Thailand, with 16 episodes and a nationwide viewership rate in the Republic of Korea as high as 12.665% and viewership hours rate on NETFLIX reaches about 300,580,000 hours.

The synopsis of the drama, Dr. Yoon Hye Jin (윤혜진) has a dispute with the director of the dental center because Dr. Yoon cares for the low-income patients, so she offers only essential dental treatments at a low cost. So, a director is dissatisfied because she only cares for benefits and money from patients. That night, in a state of drunkenness, Dr. Yoon condemns the unethical behavior of the director in the public online platform. She ends up being fired and rumored to discourage her job seeking at other dental centers in Seoul. With a lot of debt from her luxurious lifestyle (driving a European car, buying brandname bags and shoes), she decided to return to the birthplace of her deceased mother. The local setting of Kong Jin (공진) is a

provincial city on the seaside. Dr. Yoon decides to establish her own dental clinic with her close friend, Pyo Mi Sun (표민선).

Hong Du Sik, a male protagonist but he is also known as Chief Hong (홍반장) in the village. In his childhood, Hong Du Sik was a genius talented boy both in education and his behaviors. He was nominated as a role model of Kong Jin's son. Hong graduated from Seoul National University and worked in a famous company. One day, due to his mistake, a security guard who lost his stock and had a lot of debt committed suicide. Hong abandoned his life in the capital city and returned to work as a part-timer in Kong Jin. Although Hong Du Sik had a cheerful expression to everyone but in his heart ever since the day he returned to his homeland, he had been immersed in pain and suffering from his mistake in Seoul.

Both Dr. Yoon and Hong have traumatized experiences in the capital city and return to their hometown. Living in Kong Jin, they have a new community especially, elderly women group. The protagonists learn to live with local people and change their materialistic mind to naturalism instead. They find the relationship among local people and how devoted they are to conserving their homeland. Dr. Yoon has learned the core value of humans and discards her individuality for the community. Hong Du Sik has learned to abandon capitalist ideas for self-sufficiency as well as learning to forgive himself in the past. At the end of the story, both of them fulfill their lives with the simple happiness of rural ways of life in Kong Jin.

4. Methods for data analysis: representation theory and intertextuality

The processes for data collection in this research are performed as follows:

1) Watch the Kdrama *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha* or the Korean name 갯마을 차차차 (Seaside Village Cha Cha Cha) produced by STUDIO DRAGON broadcasted on a streaming platform NETFLIX from 1-16 episodes in original Korean dubbed version.

2) Employ the close-reading methodology for the novel *Between Lives*, by K.S. Maniam written in English.

3) Compare and contrast the plot, characters, theme, dictions and effects towards audiences between the drama and the novel.

4) Analyze and theorize the process of glocalization in the drama and the novel.

5) Extract the representation of the metropolis and the countryside in the drama and the novel.

6) Analyze all pieces of evidence from collected data and discuss the results.

For data analysis, two theoretical frameworks, representation theory and intertextuality, are adopted and employed.

As discussed in an article LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND SOCIETY: A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF STUART HALL'S REPRESENTATION AND SIGNIFYING PRACTICES by Mahmud Layan Hutasuhut, he explains Stuart Hall's theory of representation. Stuart Hall defines culture and discusses its relationships with language and society. He mentions 'circuit culture', that is a circulation of how culture is regulated in society through language, which then he argues it operated as a representation system. Representation, according to Hall, is a system by which language works by using 'sign' and 'symbols' to stand for or to represent ideas, thought, feeling, expression and emotion. However, the term is not limited to spoken or written language only. It is more to stand for or to represent something. For example, a musician uses music to represent his feeling and music uses notes and sounds as its sign or symbols. Spoken language uses sounds to construct meaning, while written language uses letters and words. Body language uses gestures, and traffic light system uses colors to deliver message of traffic rules. One could represent sadness to other people. Tears in this sense could be a sign or symbol to represent sadness. By this way one can communicate with other people so that they can comprehend the 'tears' to indicate a 'sad' feeling. This is how Hall explains the 'signifying system'. Furthermore, Hall argues that culture is about 'shared meaning'. Culture involves the practices of giving meaning to people, objects and events. (Mahmud, 2009, pp.1-2)

The concept of Intertextuality has also been employed in this research, according to an article Text/Texts: Julia Kristeva's Concept of Intertextuality by Prayer Elmo Raj, Julia Kristeva coined the term intertextuality. Intertextuality, though surfaced as a poststructuralist concept, existed as a universal phenomenon that elucidates the communicative interconnections between a text and the other and text and context. With the arrival of various theories, intertextuality has now acquired wider range of meanings than what Kristeva had expounded in her path breaking work "Word, Dialogue and Novel." Intertextuality maintains that a text "cannot exist as a hermetic or self-sufficient whole, and so does not function as a closed system" (Raj, 2015, p.77) In this research, Intertextuality means considering a literary work as a text that is made up of other texts or various cultural codes that have appeared before in literature. in various fields of art and in the social and cultural context, reconstructing the meaning of a text depends on the reader's interpretation or associative reading of cultural codes. The nature of intertextuality from mentioning other texts is the use of other texts that have appeared before in the social context of the author, such as literary texts, movie script, artwork, the historical narrative, the words of the person and the song are repeated in the writing and creating media.

The representation of localism in literature and drama as a part of glocalization strategy, the image countryside, local ways of life, an abundance of natural resources and elderly people are assembled significantly. Besides, in the sense of economic strategy, localism also refers to the commodification of culture and the countryside. People commodify their cultures, traditions and ways of life for tourism. They emphasize the uniqueness and the characteristics of their community in order that people who have the collective memories can re-visit their childhood experiences through returning to local ways of life. Localism also relates to the term nostalgia in the sense of bringing back the ancestors' cultures, traditions and values. Jimmy Andersson states that the word nostalgia originally emerged from Johannes Hofer's medical dissertation in 1688. He likened nostalgia to *Heimweh* - the German word loosely translated to "*the pain a person feels because he/she is not in his/her native land, or fears to never see it again, or simply, homesickness.*" (Andersson, 2011, p.9)

According to Andersson's definition, nostalgia relates to the native land, hometown and homesickness. In Svetlana Boym's *The Future of Nostalgia* (2001), Boym states that nostalgia is "*a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed.... a double exposure, or a superimposition of two images—of home and abroad, past and present, dream and everyday life.*" (Boym, 2001, p.13) Due to this definition, people who consume the so-called childhood-like experience through literature and media tend to look back nostalgically even though the past is not what it really was. Thus, the presentation of relationships between people and their hometown, nature, cultures and community in literature and drama is a part of glocalization technique. The author or the director employs localism in representing the image of countryside in order to create nostalgic scenes and experiences. Localism and nostalgia help approaching both local and international audiences. In this respect, the localism is compiled in the technique of creation and the globalization is in broadcasting their works internationally.

In this context, practicing glocalization needs localism in commodifying the culture and the countryside. Thus, the presentation of hometown and native land brings people back to their childhood memories and experiences. In this article, the glocalization and localism co-exist in Malaysian novel *Between Lives* and Kdrama *Hometown Cha Cha Cha*. Both are different in genre and origin, but they similarly represent the countryside setting and the protagonists who encounter the crisis of living in the capital city. So, this article aims to explore the representation of metropolis and capitalism as villains and the representation of the countryside as healer. Besides, elderly women play an important role in both stories as the spirit and wisdom of the village.

5. Analysis of similarities and dissimilarities between *Between Lives* and *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha*

5.1 The representation of metropolis and capitalism as villains

The protagonists in a Malaysian novel *Between Lives* and Kdrama *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha* are the representation of the victim in capitalism. In case of Malaysia, K.S. Maniam criticizes Malaysian industrialization and its effect on Malaysian modern ways of life. Similarly, in case of the Republic of Korea, Korean citizen have been affected from industrialization since the era of Park Chung Hee president.

In Mortuza Khaled's essay on "Park Chung Hee's Industrialization Policy and its Lessons for Developing Countries" he reveals that during Park Chung Hee's era (1961--1979), he transformed the Republic of Korea into one of the strongest industrialized countries. He launched the Five-Year Plan included a) Securing energy resources, including electricity and coal b) Expansion of social overhead capital including railroads and ports c) Construction of basic industries, such as cement, fertilizer and steel plants; d) Expansion of farm production e) Improvement of the balance of foreign payments and f) Promotion of technology. (Khaled, 2007, p.6) He planned for long term capital to industry and in 1961, the Medium Industry Bank (MIB) was established by the government for providing loan to medium and small enterprises. The rapid expansion of loans through this institution in 1961 resulted in a significant shift in the allocation of credit. The result of this miracle process made Park Chung Hee's era the so-called 'a harsh authoritarian system' (Khaled, 2007, p.7)

In this context, the heritage from Park Chung Hee's era is the economic growth and strong capitalism in the Republic of Korea. Korean citizens aim to be successful in their education and economic status. Living in a highly competitive society, people in Seoul tend to encounter the mental breakdown and stress. Thus, returning to the countryside is one of the choices of living in the post-capitalism era and the so-called 'local life drama' or 농촌 드라마 fulfills the need of peaceful life of urban people. With the similar background on industrialization era, Malaysian novelists also anti the industrialization and capitalism through their literary works.

K.S. Jomo states in "Malaysia's New Economic Policy and National Unity" that Malaysia's New Economic Policy (NEP) was announced in 1970 as part of a package of measures introduced after the political crisis of May 1969. It sought to 'eradicate poverty' and 'restructure society to eliminate the identification of race with economic function' in order to create the conditions for national unity. (Jomo, 1996, pp.181-200) By the early 1970s

government efforts to encourage export-oriented industries were in full swing. Free Trade Zones (FTZs) and Licensed Manufacturing Warehouses (LMWs) were established to facilitate and encourage Malaysian manufacturing production for export using imported equipment and materials based on targeting foreign firms. The existing infrastructure, political stability, large supply of trainable labor force, a friendly government and financial incentives were important factors that led to the foreign firms relocating their operations in Malaysia. (Rasiah, 1996, p.79)

According to the government's strategies, the country has been transformed to capitalist society instead of agricultural society. The effects of industrialization appear in modern Malaysian literature period, writers consider social reflection, anti-industrialization and capitalism. For instance, famous Malaysian short stories collections *Back to the country* and *Tuhfat al Nafis* (lessons from the past) presented Malaysian history, people, and folk beliefs. Malaysian novel *Television and Land Slaves* by Sanon Ahmad criticized Islamic beliefs, industrialization and capitalism and revealed the peasants' suffering. The novel *Life Wave* by Anwar Ridwan reflected human dark side and emphasized Islamic punishments. Thus, modern Malaysian literary works are based on oral tradition, myths, Islamic beliefs and Western literary techniques.

Viewed in this way, both the Republic of Korea and Malaysia have been industrialized and encounter the rapid economic growth. The magical process which transformed the country to the strong capitalist society rapidly causes the mental illness among urban people. In case of the Republic of Korea, the 'local life drama' or 농촌 드라마 is the way of escapism and leads the urban people in returning to localism. Capitalism and urban luxurious lifestyle are portrayed as villains in this drama genre. The protagonists suffer violence in capitalist society such as exploitation, high competition, rumors and treacherousness. Returning to the country is their only choice for survival. In a Malaysian novel, K.S. Maniam indicates the result of capitalist society. Maniam criticizes capitalism and industrialization in Malaysia through the 'Puan Jamal case' in the story. Puan Jamal is a rich and beautiful celebrity, but her son has a mental problem. Her son rejects the parents and criticizes his mom for not caring about his true desire. The protagonist Sumitra's duty is to persuade Puan Jamal's son to accept his own parents. This case reveals that capitalism destroys familial relationships.

Another case is the 'Charlie Wong club case', Charlie Wong is a capitalist who wants to transform the jungle into an amusement park. He represents an image of a Chinese Malaysian capitalist who contrasts with Sellamma's character. Wong does not care about nature or local ways of life. He values only the profit of commodifying the land. In Wong's dialogues, "What,

leave the land as it is? they said. 'Who wants to look at boring jungle? So everything was designed to fit the contours of the land. 'Not putting up all the buildings one shot?' they said. 'Who will go out to all that isolation? Who will want to work there? But people did join up, and the bartender, waiters and waitresses did stay on. Charlie Wong paid them well.' (Maniam, 2011, p.132) From this quotation, Wong devalues the land as isolated and boring jungle. He also believes that local people might resist his theme park in the first place, but they will join him because of his capital. The excerpt also reveals the hierarchy between Wong, a capitalist, and workers (bartender, waiters and waitresses). He believes that he can control his workers by paying them well.

The author also criticizes the rapid growth of capitalist society. This kind of society causes fears and anxieties among urban people. The quotation from a protagonist states *"I just have to close my eyes for a while and everything becomes clear: the problem, the social forces behind it, the subject's fears and anxieties, and, most importantly, the solution...Queen Blue Ice indeed! I think."* (Maniam, 2011, p.17) Due to Sumitra's assignment in relocating an old lady from her hometown to an almshouse. She senses that capitalist society dehumanizes people and values only the commodification of the land. The social forces cause anxieties and Sumitra wants to detach herself from this harsh environment. She transforms herself into numbness thus her friends nominate her as a 'Queen Blue Ice'.

Besides, the author presents how Sumitra and her colleagues are the victims of capitalist organization. In Sumitra's office (high-rise building in Kuala Lumpur), there is a 'Freezer' for officers to make themselves impassible after dealing with the case. The freezer machine is described as follows: *"When you switch on the equipment, red, blue and green lights blink and stare at you. By the time you push the tape into that super machine, you've forgotten who you are. That's the paradox behind the concept of the complex: be dehumanized so you can respond to anything that sounds remotely human."* (Maniam, 2011, p.24) From this quotation, technology has dehumanized officers in order that they can tolerate an exploitative work and continue supporting the capitalists. A writer points out that capitalist society causes people to lose their emotions and empathy. They have become senseless robots who work only for money. This characterizes the contradiction that workers should be humane but to work in capitalism they must be emotionless and inhumane. As the saying goes, *you've forgotten who you are* (Maniam, 2011, p.24) it reflects that capitalism makes us forget who we are and let the capitalists consume our labor. Besides, we are supporting the capitalists' exploitation towards our fellows cold-bloodedly.

Another capitalists' victim in Sumitra's office is Leong. He is an employee who has suffered from the stress of a company's assignment, and he has witnessed the degradation of society and immorality. Colleagues are cold to each other, and he feels lonely. He suppresses the pressure he gets from working and finally one day, he explodes. He screams and declares what has tortured him to all the colleagues. He cannot stand capitalist society anymore and he feels that the current metropolitan society is inhumane. From the excerpt, '*To the Freezer with me?*' he says, *when he is spent. 'The freezer is everywhere. No need to take me to a special freezer!' ... 'We've become puny. Marginal. And now, the silence. I don't know what's behind the silence.'* (Maniam, 2011, p.348)

According to Leong's words, it reflects that modern society is indifferent. He says a Freezer is not needed because human beings are cold-blooded enough. From the descriptions of today's society as *puny, marginal and silence* illustrate the effects of a highly competitive, profit-oriented society where capitalists exploit labor from their employees to the point of weakness and cold towards fellow human beings. These reflect the author's attitude, who portrays capitalism as the villain that dehumanizes people until the victims are weak physically and mentally. K.S. Maniam makes Leong's character a straightforward critic of capitalism by saying "*The violence of frustration. The violence of impotence!*" (Maniam, 2011, p.147) It reflects the structural violence under capitalism. In this context, it means a society with hidden mechanisms which prevents certain groups of people from accessing rights and opportunities to make their lives equal to others. These mechanisms will take place as part of the legal regulations, measures, norms, policies, practices that exist in political, economic, educational, medical, health, welfare, religious, cultural and customary institutions. Structural violence also arises from the neglect of the organizations and governments responsible for managing this violence, but rather the neglect of it. (Lee, 2019, p.3)

From the excerpts, "*The violence of frustration. The violence of impotence!..Patience? Leong says, almost shouting. 'Until it sours, turns acidic and eats into you? That's what grumbling and grouching do. Eat into you until nothing is left!'*" (Maniam, 2011, p.147) The personification of "*eat into you*" illustrates the impact of structural violence on people. In this regard, it can refer to cannibalism, a metaphor for violence against human beings. According to Winter and Leighton (2001), Structural violence will happen to the lives of some people. There should be a way to prevent and solve the problem, but the state ignores it and leaves various measures. Thus, structural violence is therefore a problem that humans deal with humans themselves. In addition, structural violence cannot clearly indicate who is the perpetrator or the cause because the impact is related to the measures that various groups of

people. (Winter, 2001, p.585) Leong is a victim of this violence after his mental breakdown, he speaks out and criticizes modern society. After encountering ‘Puan Jamal case’ ‘Charlie Wong case’ and ‘Leong case’, a protagonist Sumitra decides that living in the capital city is too materialistic and toxic. She finds living in the rural area with an old woman Sellamma is the true answer for her life.

In the case of Kdrama *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha*, two protagonists suffer from working in for the capitalists. Dr. Yoon Hye Jin suffers from the exploitation towards patients in dental clinic while Hong Du Sik suffers from the betrayal towards clients in financial company. Dr. Yoon Hye Jin originally works at a dental center in Seoul which earns her so much that she can live in a luxury apartment. She is materialistic and dresses up in luxury brand clothes, accessories, bags, shoes. At the same time, she encounters difficulties in working with the director, who values profit without medical ethics. Dr. Yoon has been forced to change her attitude. From the director’s dialogue in the series, she satires Dr. Yoon in discharging a poor patient *“It’s just someone who takes money from me to enjoy reading and pretending to be kind. Do you think your salary grows from the soil?”* (Translated by Paphonphat) This quotation demonstrates the capitalist position of the director. As a clinic owner, she consumes the dentists’ labor in order to make her profit without gratitude. Although Dr. Yoon argues that *“It’s me who makes money to be your salary. No patient here comes to see a director.”* (Translated by Paphonphat) It reflects the concept of capitalism in which the workers make profit for the capitalists but they themselves cannot own that profit. Concurrently, the capitalists claim to be the owner of workers’ labor and money.

Although Dr. Yoon suffers from the capitalist system (getting fired and humiliation), she herself is also deeply rooted in capitalism and materialism. She reveals that living a luxurious lifestyle will release her depression. For instance, as soon as she gets fired, she buys very expensive shoes for herself. It reflects that she believes in the power of buying and materials. The excerpt from the series Episode 3 she says to herself *“I want to lay down a mat and sip wine along the Han River”* and *“Do I have to go away from Seoul and return to the countryside again?”* (Translated by Paphonphat) Dr. Yoon’s attitude towards the countryside at the beginning of the series is negative. For an uptown woman, returning to the countryside means failure.

In this context, the representation of metropolis and capitalism as villains here is that capitalism implants itself into urban people’s mindset. Seoul is a very highly competitive city and individual success must be measured by materials. In the scene of Dr. Yoon friend’s wedding party, all her friends brag about their lavish lifestyles by showing off luxurious

accessories, spending free time on the weekends with golf and shopping. One friend shows her success by boasting about opening her dental clinic at Gangnam district (the most expensive rental area in Seoul) and showing the huge taxes paid each year (implying to her income). Another friend shows a large diamond ring on the left finger, etc. In this context, capitalism arouses people to show off their success and behave heinously towards inferior people. Living in this toxic situation, Dr. Yoon's returning to the countryside is also devalued by her friends.

Dr. Yoon's dialogue from the series *"Seoul people are like frogs in a shell. Now the provinces are no longer rural...The clinic can make a lot of money because I am the only dentist there. Patients come continuously. Otherwise, will there be the news that rural doctors earn better than those in the capital city?"* (Translated by Paphonphat) Here Dr. Yoon argues that returning to the countryside does not mean failure. Besides, the urban is not the opposite to the rural anymore. However, Dr. Yoon still has to boast about the huge amount of money because of her clinging to capitalism and fear of failure. Capitalism does not only arouse people's toxic behaviors but also makes a person cold-blooded and isolated. In comparison, Sumitra in the novel *Between Lives* is identified as Queen Blue Ice. Meanwhile Dr. Yoon is compared to a porcupine in this series because she is cold and unwelcome. She sets her boundary until no one can approach her like a porcupine's quills.



Figure 2 A porcupine in the series

Access: <https://www.pinterest.com/shekeeshk/movie/>

Dr. Yoon's case reflects that her behavior stems from living in a capitalist society where competition, betrayal and deceit emerged. Due to the toxic environment, she loses faith in everyone. In this regard, the director of this series portrays capitalism as the cause of people's stress, inhumanity, hostility and loneliness.

In case of Hong Du Sik a male protagonist, he is another victim in the capitalist society. Hong graduated from Seoul National University and has a senior close friend named Park Jung Woo. Although he graduated in engineering sciences, Hong joined Park Jung Woo in asset management company. He believes in the company's slogan *"Fund Manager is a work which*

provides hope to the ordinary people's becoming a millionaire" (Translated by Paphonphat) The slogan reveals how capitalism works on working class's faith. This is a discourse to lure the poor to invest in meager assets and contribute to the prosperity of capitalism in exchange for a small profit. Without noticing the dark side of capitalism, Hong enjoys his job and is fascinated by being a backbone of the capitalist system with attractive compensation. The turning point is a security guard's death in his company. A guard named Kim Ki Hoon, was persuaded to invest in the mutual fund supervised by Hong.

Despite Hong's warning to Kim Ki Hoon to invest his hard-earned money in small amount, Kim Ki Hoon withdrew his home insurance and borrowed money from other people to invest in another mutual fund recommended by other manager. During the economic crisis, Hong was stressed about dealing with volatile investment conditions. He therefore neglected to answer Kim Ki Hoon's call. When he heard the news, it was found that Kim Ki Hoon had taken drugs and committed suicide. In panic, Hong could not drive then his senior friend Park Jung Woo volunteered to drive. It ended up Park Jung Woo died in the car accident. After the crisis, Hong sold all of his assets and took the proceeds to Kim Ki Hoon's wife as atonement and responsibility. However, Kim Ki Hoon's wife reprimanded him *"People who are highly educated and have a lot of money tend to do this... Really disgusting, money is really creepy even though I want to tear it to shreds right now but I'll take it. I'm going to use this money to pay off debt and move him to a better hospital."* (Translated by Paphonphat) According to this dialogue, Hong is branded as greedy person and it reflects the result of cannibalism in the capitalist's society. Rich people consume the working class's labor and money by alluring them to be a millionaire. Working class people who cling to money and success end up losing their life.

Due to this traumatizing experience, Hong realizes how living in the capitalist society destroys his life and fellows. He abandoned his life in the capital city and returned to live in Kong Jin alone. However, his past causes Hong's mental illness such as hallucination, anxiety and bad dream. In this context, both Malaysian novel *Between Lives* and Kdrama *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha* reveal the representation of the metropolis as toxic environment and the capitalism is a villain. For this reason, the representation of the countryside in both stories is opposite to the metropolis. Returning to the rural is a protagonist's only choice for survival and their lives have been changed.

5.2 The representation of the countryside as healer

In the context of Malaysian Novel *Between Lives*, the setting is in Malaysian rural area (anonymous). An old woman Sellamma lives in the land surrounded with forests. In contrast

with the villain metropolis, the author presents the countryside as pure and sacred besides it can heal people. K.S. Maniam reveals the ecological ways of life through Sellamma's character in order to present his idea of anti-industrialization. She lives in a remote land in a deep jungle without electricity. She takes a bath in the river and dries herself in the sun. She believes in Tamil ecological folktales. This woman symbolizes nature and Tamil spiritual power. In this context, the relationship between humans and nature represents the concept of eco-feminism.

Warren, J. K. states in her work "Women - Nature Connections" that showing the link of women to the destruction of nature and the environment by the status of Women are the victims in the same manner as nature. Women and nature also connect under the symbol for example, devaluation of nature is equal to the devaluation of women. It is a connection with environmental ethics. which gives importance to social practice affecting women, animals and nature. (Warren, J. K., 1993, p.15) Moreover, eco-feminism also refers to the intimate connection between women and nature. Employing the setting in the countryside highlights the relationship between human and nature related to localism under the globalization strategy. From the excerpt, *"I allowed myself to fall under the spell of a living ghost. Looking around for snakes! Thinking of a dog as a person! Just because she talked differently. Treated everything as if they breathed on you and, what's worse, whispered to you!"* (Maniam, 2011, p.8)

According to the excerpt above, Sellamma is presented as a non-human being "living ghost" and she has an intimate connection with nature such as trees, dogs and cobras. She talks with trees and animals including the sun, moon and river. In this regard, Sellamma is an anti-modernity person. Living in the jungle, she has neither money nor electricity. The author presents to the reader the example of living out of capitalism and materialism through this character. It refers to the concept of eco-feminism in which women are equal to nature and they cling to the nature instead of modernity. Sellamma here also has an ecological consciousness and believes that other beings are also equal to human beings. Thus, the presentation of eco-feminist ways of life is a part of the countryside image. However, the countryside image here is represented through the setting in comparison with the metropolis. *"Once we pass the dusum, we're into natural landscape, the age-old trees sending down low branches, their trunks networked with all kinds of thick-foliaged creepers, and beneath them, leafy bushes. I think of all those young couples, their hands clutching each other's hair, whispering, in the shadows of some shopping complex."* (Maniam, 2011, p.4) The author describes Malaysian naturalistic scenery thoroughly, the reader can imagine the difference between the countryside and the metropolis. Here Sellamma's land is pure and peaceful without artificiality, meanwhile the shopping complex is full of young couples and sensuality.

In view of the opposite side of metropolis, K. S. Maniam presents the countryside as a healer of urban people's mental fatigue.¹ After encountering Leong's mental breakdown in the office, Sumitra drives to Sellamma's jungle. Sellamma treats her with a kind of river-bathing and forest-bathing.² From the quotation, "*I immerse myself in the river several times, and feel the water swirl refreshingly around my tired body. When I finally rise, she looks at me with wonder. Then she bends down and scoops up some water with her cupped hands and pours it over my head. I stand there feeling the water drip down my face, and the current lap past my legs.*" (Maniam, 2011, p.65) Sellamma invites Sumitra to bath in the river which is a baptism-like method. In Christianity, baptism is a ritual for a new Christian acceptance by using water (bathing in a pool or sacred water). In case of a non-Christian, bathing in sacred water is for purification and the symbol of re-birth. In this sense, the re-birth of Sumitra is the removal of materialistic mindset under capitalism. From the bathing scene, Sumitra is healed by nature. She focuses on herself and tastes nature. In this process, Sumitra is pulled out from the materialistic world. Sumitra's re-birth in naturalistic ways of life heals her from what she suffers in the capital city. The usage of nature as healer is what Sellamma mentioned "*You must bring back into life what was not living properly*" (Maniam, 2011, p.289) In this regard, living in the materialistic society is not properly meanwhile living in nature is the correct one.

Here the image of the countryside is represented through the eco-feminist idea and natural healing. Besides, the idea of new ways of life, a protagonist Sumitra has been taught about the spirit of the village or so-called 'Kampung spirit' in Malay language. Meanwhile the capital city refers to individuality, the countryside emphasizes the strong sense of community. In Malaysia and Singapore, the term Kampung spirit means "*the kampung (village) spirit refers to a sense of community and solidarity. Life in a kampung was mostly harmonious and it was*

¹ "Mental fatigue," that state of exhaustion caused by prolonged periods of focused cognitive activity, is a side effect of modern society. The tiredness of the brain, as it's sometimes called, can manifest in a number of ways—for example, difficulty concentrating and managing our moods, and even leading to angry outbursts or violent behavior. The latter was investigated in a study of public housing buildings in Chicago, IL. Researchers found that people with more small-scale nature in their immediate living environment reported lower levels of mental fatigue and fewer episodes of aggressive behavior compared to residents in less verdant surroundings. (Marcora, 2009, p.857)

² In *Nature as Healer*, Dr. Cyndi Gilbert, a practicing naturopathic doctor and author of *Forest Bathing: Discovering Health and Happiness Through the Japanese Practice of Shinrin Yoku* (St Martin's Press, 2019) To forest bathe 1. Look closely 2. Listen intently 3. Smell deeply 4. Taste nature 5. Tree breathes 6. Gratitude meditates 7. Find a sit spot (pp.3-4) For the power of healing. In the early 1980s began advising people to take strolls in the woods for better health. (Simon, 2021, p.3)

not uncommon for people to readily offer their neighbours food, help and support.”³ To make it more concrete, the Kampung spirit includes communal activities such as bathing, working, dining and watching performance together.⁴ In this novel, Sellamma teaches Sumitra about the Kampung spirit by telling Sumitra the history in the Post-colonial Malaysia. In those days, multi-racial groups lived together and helped each other defend the country. The rural people have a strong sense of community which is in contrast to the urban people in the present time. Sumitra who lives individually and sets a strong boundary towards other people, learns to appreciate the sense of community from Sellamma’s narratives and photos.

Sellamma narrates the story of her family when they settled and built their house in Malaysia to Sumitra. They might be divided due to their racial groups (Chinese, Malay, Indian) at first but at the end, they gathered and helped each other. From the excerpt, *‘We’ve been into the country together, Mat.’ ‘I don’t know whether that will help, Arokian.’* (Maniam, 2011, p.186) This reflects the encouragement of the village’s spirit. No matter what racial group you are in, you are Malaysian. Besides, the author represents the rural people’s ways of life in various scenes for instance, *“Lights were soon lit all over the lines. Children came back from their play or from watching those drunken fights and a full meal was eaten. The women sat around gossiping: the drunks fell into a stupor-filled sleep, and the children gathered around the storyteller or invented stories of their own.”* (Maniam, 2011, p.106)

According to the excerpt from the novel, the author describes how the rural people live together as a community. Sellamma character shows Sumitra the way of localism which she has never seen before. In this context, the glocalization here includes the presentation of human-nature relationship, natural setting and the strong sense of community in order to arouse the urban people to fancy returning to the countryside. Here the readers tend to believe that they

³ Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, courtesy of the National Archives of Singapore (<https://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/blastfromthepast/kampungspirit>)

⁴ In Malaysia and Singapore, Kampung spirit activities are children splashing themselves with water at a kampung (village) standpipe in Geylang Serai. Standpipes were installed in the 1960s by the government to provide water to residents who had no tap water in their houses. Courtesy of the National Archives of Singapore 2. Audience, young and old, enjoying a wayang show at an open-air stage in Kampung Bugis. Ronni Pinsler Collection, courtesy of the National Archives of Singapore 3. Women washing clothes and children bathing using underground water from ‘well’ dug by dwellers of the Cherry Tree Mosque kampung at Pepys Road. These routine activities were a communal affair back in the old days. Ronni Pinsler Collection, courtesy of the National Archives of Singapore 4. A three-generation family dinner in a Chinese kampung house, circa 1960s.

will be healed by nature and living among the rural community, they will not be isolated as in the capital city.

In case of Kdrama *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha*, although it is geographically and culturally different from a Malaysian novel, the portrayal of returning to the countryside is the same. This drama also suggests that the village's spirit is the cure for urban people's loneliness and trauma. Starting with Kong Jin's coastal setting and soothing scenery throughout the series. Youjeong Oh states in his work "Spectacular Cities, Speculative Storytelling: Korean TV Dramas and the Selling of Place" that Korean dramas have relied upon economic and cultural analysis. In this regard, Kdrama is in glocalization strategy and its representation of countryside relates to what Youjeong Oh called "*shaping and transforming material, urban and social conditions.*" In this context, the presentation of the countryside will encourage the audience to "*produce their own virtual, social, and physical spaces.*" In this Kdrama *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha*, Kong Jin city actually is Pohang city in the Republic of Korea. It is a coastal town with ocean and mountain views. The tourist places are promoted in this Kdrama significantly including Mugeunbong peak at Sabang Memorial Park, a fishermen's welfare center, Wolpo Beach, Cheongha market (Kong Jin market) and an iconic Cheongjin 2-Ri Lighthouse.

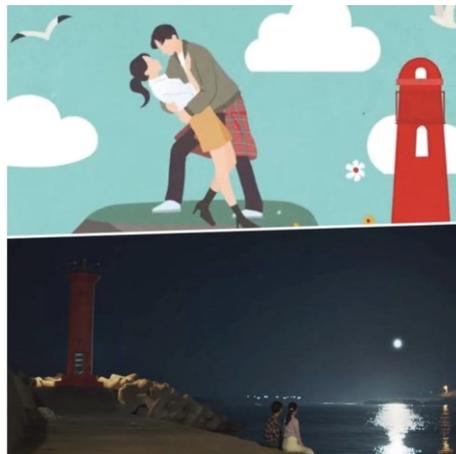


Figure 3 Cheongjin 2-Ri Lighthouse

Access: <https://www.kkday.com/en/blog/39480/asia-south-korea-hometown-cha-cha-cha-filming-locations-pohang>

As soon as this drama becomes rapidly popular, all those places are popular tourist spots. This situation indicates the influence of Youjeong Oh's term "City-sponsorship." He states that the producers benefit from the drama-sets and funding that local cities provide, while cities capitalize the affective representation of place in TV dramas that create an emotional

connection between audience and place. In this context, smaller (cities and counties) levels of government have driven them to rely on city promotion via television dramas. (Oh, 2013, p.39)



Figure 4 Wolpo Beach is the place where Hye-Jin and Du Sik first met

Access: <https://www.kkday.com/en/blog/39480/asia-south-korea-hometown-cha-cha-cha-filming-locations-pohang>

The representation of the countryside affects the audience's consumption with the glocalization strategy. Hudson (2001) addresses the conflict between *"a location as socially produced place to which its inhabitants are attached and as part of a socially produced space in which capital can make profits."* In this regard, the protagonists return to the countryside to avoid capitalism. In contrast, the Kdrama series itself is capitalized due to Hudson's explanation. This is the commodification of land and culture in the glocalization strategy. Youjeong Oh also states that the construction of affective appeal around specific locales via TV dramas can contribute to the literature on the commodification and selling of place. The latter, the commodification of space, always involves the creation of distinct images of a place through drawing historical, cultural, and local traditional elements, building the themed and spectacular built environment, or vastly applying landscape and natural elements (Oh, 2013, p.42) In tourism, visiting the drama-depicted space, visitors accept the space not merely as "fantasy space" but as an "affective site" in which they continue to feel empathy toward both the drama and the place.

Not only romanticizing the scenario, but this Kdrama series also presents how the countryside with ocean and mountain views can heal the protagonists' trauma. In the first place, a female protagonist Dr. Yoon is an introvert who sets a strong boundary to other people. After living in Kong Jin's environment, Dr. Yoon has recovered from her trauma. She has an office with the sea view instead of a high-rise building in Seoul. The setting reflects the protagonist's mood, which tends to be more relaxed in the countryside. Nowadays, this setting has been transformed into a café with a sea view. In this context, it reflects how the audience have

attached their feeling and attitude to this artificial setting due to what they have seen in the drama. Thus, this glocalization strategy by employing localism technique is successful. This Kdrama encourages the audience that coming to the countryside, they will be healed.



Figure 5 The view of Dr. Yoon's dental clinic in KongJin.

Access: https://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/ATR/SI_EN_3_9.jsp?CID=2725343&cid=2806912

Incidentally, the protagonists Dr. Yoon and Hong Du Sik are healed by the spirit of the village. Kong Jin, despite being a rural seaside community, everyone in the village is united. They help each other like family which differs from the urban people. At First, Dr. Yoon sets a strong boundary towards neighbors and she unfriendly shows uncomfortable expressions to them. In contrast, Kong Jin people live in close community and everyone in the village knows how to help each other. They also know who is the descendant of whose family? Where they live, they know each other very well. After mingling in the Kong Jin community, Dr. Yoon has learned their strong sense of community or the so-called *Kampung* spirit in Malaysian term.



Figure 6 Behind the scenes of *Hometown Cha Cha Cha*

Access: <https://www.cosmo.ph/entertainment/hometown-cha-cha-cha-behind-the-scenes-photos-cast-a4575-20211018>

Here the spirit of the village is represented clearly in various scenes in the series. Empathy is a distinctive characteristic of Kong Jin people. For example, the owner of a grocery store in the village needs to go out and he asks his neighbors to look after the shop without wages. People in the community care about the quality of life for each other and the community itself. In the series, Kong Jin's village committee emphasizes the importance of elderly people and children. They provide the annual Singing Contests at the Lighthouse Festival. This activity arouses unity and cheerfulness among the people. Besides, the village committee also organizes the village big cleaning each week. All villagers come to help each other willingly and in unison. The Village representatives meet regularly to solve problems and to develop the community. A series director presents the power of the community through various scenes. A case study is, one day a dangerous person comes to Kong Jin and he stalks a girl and hurts her. As soon as the villagers hear the news, male volunteers start monitoring the strangers and they finally arrest a villain.

Among the villagers, they understand the problems of each other and are ready to consult and forgive each other. Due to this Kong Jin villagers' characteristics, Dr. Yoon and Hong Du Sik are recovered from their traumatizing experience. Not only the countryside setting and the village's spirit can heal the urban people, it also protects people from the influence of capitalism. In this drama, a character named Choi Eun Sol is a case study. In contrast with Hong Du Sik, Choi Eun Sol was born and lives in Kong Jin city for his entire life. Working as police, Choi adheres to traditional ideas and anti-capitalist. He is not ambitious even though he has won a 1.4-billion lottery prize. He lives the way he was in the past and only clings to the ideals for the development of his homeland. Since the day of winning the lottery, he has consistently divided the winnings for donations.

Choi Eun Sol is a typical young man of the countryside who maintains a very conservative notion of gentleman-to-lady sexuality. Although he is in love with Pyo Mi Sun, he always respects her. They did not express their feelings of love explicitly, quickly, without compromise, or focusing on uncommitted sex. On the other hand, Pyo Mi Sun expresses her affection for Choi Eun Chul obviously. She even asks questions about love with Choi Eun Sol without a hitch. Choi teaches her of how a woman should behave and to value the core of life instead of materialism. From the dialogue in the series, *"I think people are too impatient. Assistant Pyoyang doesn't know me very well. Yes, of course, young people nowadays like each other easily. And can be in a relationship comfortably. I know that in this era, having a girlfriend is easy in the blink of an eye. But I'm outdated and probably can't do that. I hope you*

will understand me.” (Translated by Paphonphat) According to Choi’s dialogue, he is the representative of traditional norms and values which the urban people lack at the present time.

This can be assumed that Choi is a strong character who has never been attacked by capitalist ideas. It can be implied that living in the rural offers him a strong characteristic and he values the community more than the value of money. He is on the opposite side of success, being billionaire ideas and he is proud of his career path. He does not compare himself to other people’s success. Even though he is challenged by winning the lottery, the huge amount of money cannot change his way of life. In comparison with Dr. Yoon and Hong, they both are destroyed by the capitalist society. In this glocalization strategy, the presentation of natural setting and the strong sense of community as the ways of healing urban people arouses the fantasy of returning to the countryside.

5.3 The representation of the elderly woman as the wisdom of the village

Not only young characters are emphasized in Kdrama *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha*, but elderly women play important role in the series. In the process of glocalization it emphasizes cultures, local wisdom and local characteristics. Especially the traditional wisdom of that community. Elders are therefore used to represent the traditional wisdom of the community. Although the capitalist system excludes the elderly and prioritizes young people who can still be economic workers. In the Malaysian novel *Between Lives* and the Kdrama *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha*, the elderly women characters are cherished and played an important role as the wisdom of the village. They are the center of the village’s spirit. In this context, Malaysian elderly woman Sellamma and Korean elderly woman Kamni will be explored.

In Kdrama *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha*, a character grandma Kamni is an elderly woman who lives alone in Kong Jin village. This reflects the neglect of rural elderly people since young people abandon their hometowns and come to make a living in the capital city. In other words, they are victims affected by capitalist-worshiping young generation. Kamni’s son went to study in Seoul and worked as an accountant. He has a family and sends his children to study at Harvard university in the United States. Meanwhile, he abandons Kamni to live alone in the countryside and denies paying living cost for her. Kamni’s son always postulates on his necessary payment for his own family. In this context, Kamni is neglected because she is not an economic workforce for the family. However, this series shows the important role of elderly woman as ‘the ancestor of the villagers.’

Being neglected by her son, Kamni nurtures a male protagonist Hong Du Sik and helps him releasing his trauma. In the scene when Hong is committing suicide, Kamni’s advice prevents him from his death. Hong realizes that living in the capital city is not his happiness. After returning to

Kong Jin, he takes good care of Kamni and she nurtures him mentally and physically. In Kong Jin village, Kamni is respected by the villagers as ‘an ancestor of Kong Jin.’



Figure 7 Grandma Kamni (the center)

Access: <https://www.dramabeans.com/2021/09/hometown-cha-cha-cha-episode-2/>

In various scenes, Kamni helps young generation in solving their problems. She was also portrayed as Hong Du Sik’s grandmother since he was a child. She is a spiritual shelter to him. In Korean social context, there is an idiom, ‘*taking care of those around you. To embrace and comfort society like they are your own family.*’ (Translated by Paphonphat) Besides, the word ‘Uri (우리)’ means ‘Us’ which emphasizes the unity and strong sense of community. In this context, Kamni character embraces anyone who comes to the village as her own descendants. She gathers all the young generation together and she is the center of the village. Kamni plays an important role as the wisdom of the village such as the process of making best dried squids. She also teaches Dr. Yoon a newcomer how to prepare squids. Kamni’s role as a wisdom of the village is emphasized when a TV producer Ji Sung Hyun chooses Kong Jin as his TV program’s shooting location.

Ji Sung Hyun enjoys living at Kamni’s Korean traditional style house and her cooking. Kamni can answer his question about what the essential ingredients for cooking fresh Pollack fish soup are, a question which young people could not answer. Not only transferring the local wisdom to young generation, Kamni also advises them for instance, the dialogue “*One has to live among others, sometimes living among others is hard. If you choose to live among others, you need someone to carry you on his back like the way you carry me.*” (Translated by Paphonphat) According to this dialogue, Hong realizes that sometimes he needs to be supported by someone who cares for him. In the same way, on the day Hong Du Sik decided to commit suicide and was about to try to step over the railing of the bridge. He received a message from Kamni, “*Look, I’m in Seoul now. Can you meet me? I bring your favorite rice. I almost forget your face. I really miss you so much.*” (Translated by Paphonphat) Kamni’s short message

reflects love and care despite the fact that he is not her own son. Her message reminded Hong that living in the city makes him self-centered and he forgets an important person in his hometown.

According to Kamni's advice, she is a supporter of young people in the village. Besides, she finds living until old age is beneficial. She gives a good lesson for elderly people that they should not focus only on the deterioration of old age.

"I really like this moment, there are so many good things, we have eaten so many delicious things, seen so many beautiful views and met so many good people, what could be happier than this? ..." Be happy. Yeah, I even went on TV with him. I'm also tried to go to a singing contest at the village fair. Now having a conversation with them like this is fun to death, not just that. Today the sunset is spectacular. The squid eaten at dinner is delicious too. When I look around me, I find that I'm surrounded by many precious things. Every day I'm excited. Just like the day before the picnic."

(Translated by Paphonphat)

Kamni's dialogue reflects her positive thinking and she is suitable to be an ideal elderly woman of the village. Moreover, an elderly woman character is a healer for young people. In the scene when Hong is attacked by Kim Ki Hoon's son about his faults in the past. Hong locks himself in the house, meeting no one and eating nothing. Kamni brings a boiled corn attached with a letter to Hong's house. The dialogue, *"You ate the rice cooked by me until you grew tall. Do you know how proud I am? Remember how you told me what parents should do for their children the most? Don't be sick. It's the same for parents. Parents' hearts are almost broken when their children get sick. You are both my son and my brothers. Don't ever forget about that."* (Translated by Paphonphat) Due to Kamni's messages, Hong recovers from his trauma.

Not only being a healer and a treasurer of local wisdom, but an elderly woman character is also a representative of traditional norms and values. Kamni reveals her attitudes towards young generation that young people should believe what the elder teach them for a peaceful society. In the Episode 2 of the series, Kamni saw Dr. Yoon's jogging in tight pants. She complained that *"Damn it, this world. It's so perverted."* *"How can someone dressed like that run around outside? be embarrassed the belly here also pops out."* (Translated by Paphonphat) Afterwards she met Dr. Yoon and taught her about ideal women rules of behaviors. Even Kamni is a good supporter for young generation, but the image of her is also presented as an elderly woman who locks herself in the past. Kamni is surprised with Dr. Yoon who works as a dentist

since in her generation women were not educated. Moreover, Kamni also clings herself to the old value of seniority strongly. In the scene at the village's town hall, Kamni wrapped the pork in kimchi with her hand and offered it to Dr. Yoon. As soon as she refused, Kamni showed a dissatisfied expression on her face. Due to the traditional Korean eating culture, when adults give something to the younger ones, they must accept it without hesitation.

In this context, Kamni is represented as a conservative person which is related to the localism methodology. In order to present the local ways of life, cultures and values, an elderly character is important as the representative of originality. Moreover, the character Kamni is not neglected definitely because she herself supports her descendants' living in the capitalist society unconsciously. She collects the money frugally and devotes all her money to her son's career and grandson's education instead of paying the cost of her medical treatment. She does not even use a washing machine and washing by hand in order to save electricity bills. Kamni lives her life under the statement of *'parents must devote for their children and shouldn't be their burden especially in the cost of living.'* In this case, Kamni is an ideal person for capitalism since she realizes that she is not an economic workforce in society anymore. In contrast, she tries to make money and devotes it to her descendants' spending. Even she is neglected by her descendants who live in the capital city. However, living in the countryside offers her an important role since she is related to the localism process under the glocalization strategy.

In case of Malaysian novel *Between Lives*, K.S. Maniam's Malaysian nostalgia is presented through semi-historical events since WWII. The nostalgia narratives were presented through family pictures, Indian wedding, the experiences of WWII and Japanese invasion, Thanksgiving ceremony and Sellamma's storytelling about the British colonization. The author presents his desire in bringing the Tamil young generation back to their own ancestors' past through Sumitra's trying to fix Sellamma's gramophone. It relates to bringing the past back to life and also creating a new one which symbolizes her own identity. The excerpt, *"But getting the gramophone needles is another story. There is that eccentric and stubborn old woman, sitting still as a statue, and thinking I can easily get them. Bringing back to life what was not living properly, is it?"* (Maniam, 2011, p.75) According to the excerpt, an old woman is bringing Sumitra to her world in the past. Listening to the gramophone needs specific needles. Sellamma orders Sumitra to find gramophone needles in order to bring it back to life. The quotation *"Bringing back to life what was not living properly"* appears many times throughout the story. It refers not only to an inoperative gramophone, but it also means young generation who lives improperly with the capitalist mindset. The role of elderly woman here is bringing young generation back to their own root and old ways of life outside capitalism.

Sumitra's calling an elderly woman Sallemma a "*Living Ghost*" refers to Tamil ancestors or the past which haunted the young generation. In the beginning of the story, she is living the present and rejects her Tamil heritage or the past. Living only the present cannot create a perfect identity thus when Sumitra lives with Sallemma she absorbs the past which makes her identity fully constructed at the end of the story. The author presents that racial pride can be created from recalling childhood, tracing back to ancestors' memories and living like the ancestors. In this case, Sumitra imitates Sellamma's sister's voice, and it is the beginning of her assimilation with Tamil ancestors. In the scene when Sumitra helps Sellamma in arranging her house, Sumitra experiences the ancestor's nostalgia. "*Her voice thickens with nostalgia as she speaks about the sister who went away from her.*" (Maniam, 2011, p.25)

Sumitra experiences Tamil ways of life by living with Sellamma, listening to Ramayana story, wearing Tamil dress, committing Friday pujas, visiting the Rama-Sita Grove, baptism in the river and the worshipping of Ganesha and Hindu gods. These activities reveal her cultural assimilation and the renovation of Salemma's house also represents bringing back the past into life by the young generation. Living with Sellamma, Sumitra is brought to the primitive Indian ways of life which she calls it a tour. "*It is a tour, I feel, taking me through the fringes of her memory, or of her delusion..She says 'If you have been away from a place for long, you take time to know it again.'*" (Maniam, 2011, p.42) From this quotation, Sellamma wants to bring a young woman to a place she has been away for a long time. It refers to young people's neglecting their ancestors' cultures and values. Living in a so-called primitive way of life with no capital is a lesson for young generation. Thus, Sellamma is a representative of village wisdom especially Tamil Indian originality in Malaysia.

At the end of the story, Sellamma is dead and young people realizes that Sellama does not just occupy her land but "*hovers about the place — she is everywhere.*" On her deathbed, she says "*now I will truly belong to the land, Amma.*" Sellama's ashes are scattered all over the landscape, to connote sacrosanct belongingness. In this regard, Sellamma died after she had transferred her wisdom, values and cultures to young generation including Sumitra's family and friends (Sumitra brings all of them to live with Sellamma). She is dead but she has offered the emergence of the young generation's new ways of life. Young generation have learned valuable lessons from Sellamma's life. At the end of the story, Sumitra and friends find the true answer for their life. "*We must follow every twist and turn of our memories, fearlessly, so we won't be easily put off our tracks. We've been had once; we must not let it happen again.*" (Maniam, 2011, p.191)

According to this quotation, the young generation realizes that they live their life wrongly in the capitalist society. After living with Sellamma, they know how to continue their life properly by peeling off their capitalist mindset. Here, an elderly woman is a wisdom of the village and a teacher for young generation. In comparison with Kamni in Kdrama *Hometown Cha-Cha-Cha*, Kamni is dead at the end of the story. Her son realizes neglecting his own mother meanwhile Hong and Dr. Yoon find the true answer for their life. They have recovered from their trauma and know how to live their future. The similar ending of elderly woman's death in two stories, reflects that despite the elder plays important part in the localism and glocalization but they are not economic workforce anymore. After consuming their workforce (when they were young) and wisdom, they have to be driven away. Only the young generation will continue their life with their transferred wisdom from the ancestors.

6. Conclusions

According to the previous analysis, the metropolis is representative of villain while the countryside is representative of healer. In this sense, it is related to the glocalization strategy which emphasizes localism in order to approach both local and international readers/audiences. The emergence of the 'returning to the countryside' plot both in novel and TV series reflects the tiredness of the urban people. The representation of the countryside arouses the audiences' fantasy of living in the nature. In this context, it also relates to city-sponsorship and tourism. Bringing back the past and local ways of life encourages the urban people to invest in the marginal cities. The urban people dream of peaceful life and low-competitive society as they have seen in the novel and TV series. However, the anti-capitalist image of the countryside cannot be definitely separated from capitalism itself. Localism refers to bringing out the unique characteristic of the rural and commodifies it as a product for tourism. Thus, under the glocalization strategy, localism and capitalism are co-operative. On the other hand, the presentation of the countryside highlights the elderly women as a wisdom of the village. They play important roles in the plot meanwhile in other genres, the elder characters have less meaning in the plot. Thus, this article emphasizes the presentation of the metropolis and the countryside under glocalization strategy. In this context, the localism and the village's spirit are important factors in these representations both in novel and TV series.

The present study demonstrates another pair of disconnected parallels between Northeast and Southeast Asia which are observed in contemporary media and production in entertainment industry representing various aspects related to glocalization and romanticizing the contrast between metropolitanism and localism.

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