



Media & Popular Culture

Veluree Metaveevinij

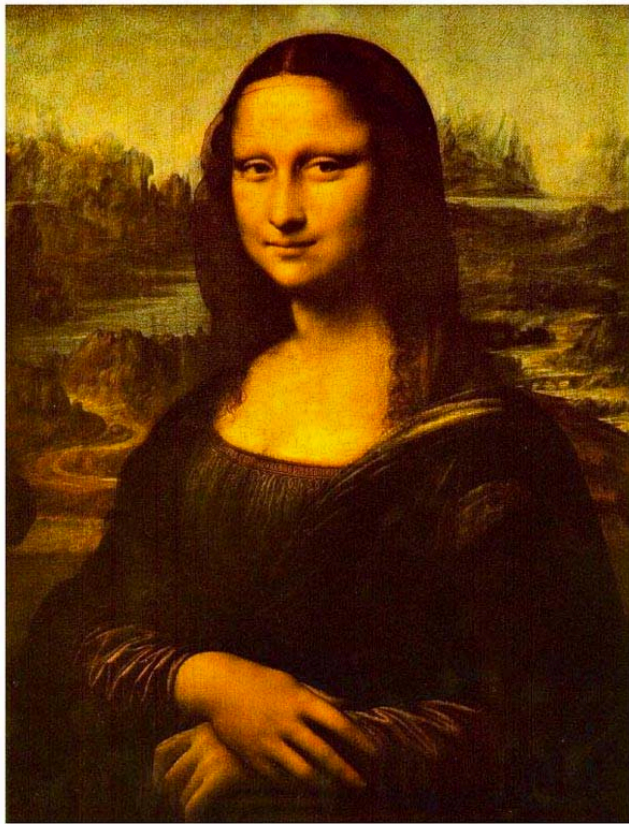
Agendas

- Popular culture and Media
- Popular culture in East Asia
- Popular culture in Southeast Asia

Which one is culture?



Which one is culture?



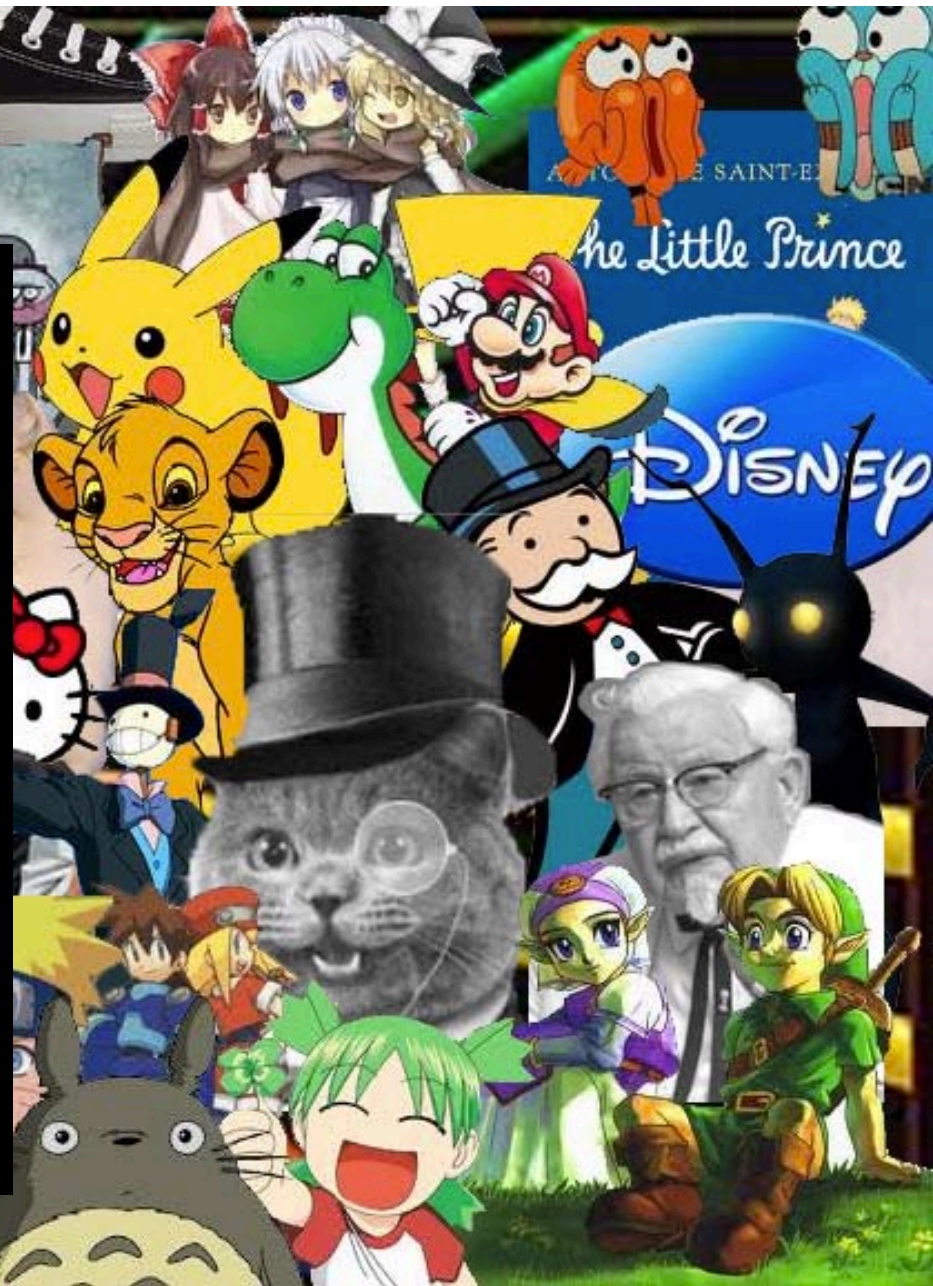
Meanings of Popular Culture

- Popular culture:
- Culture based on the taste of ordinary people rather than an educated elite.

Source: oxforddictionaries.com

Popular culture or Pop culture

- It is, of course, popular.
- It can be seen in every day life.
- It is widely circulated by media.



What can be included as pop culture?

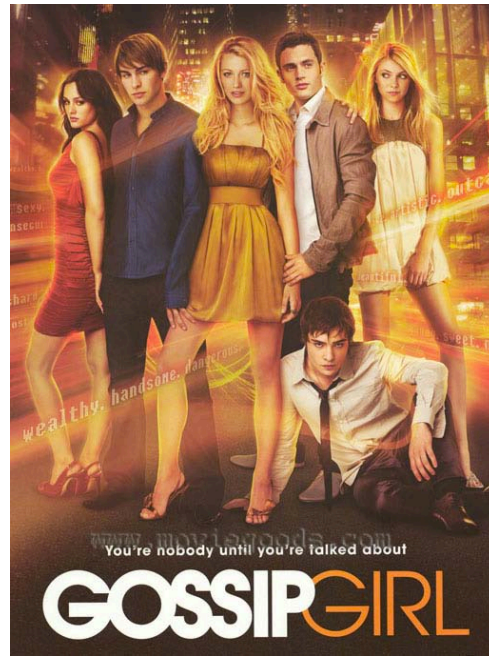
Wuttichai Kritsanaprakornkit et al. (2002) argues that popular culture can include the followings:

- Material things
- Media, for example, TV programmes, films, music, news, books
- Behaviours
- Trend
- Celebrity

Material things



TV Programmes



Films



Music



- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NpYTz4qdasY>

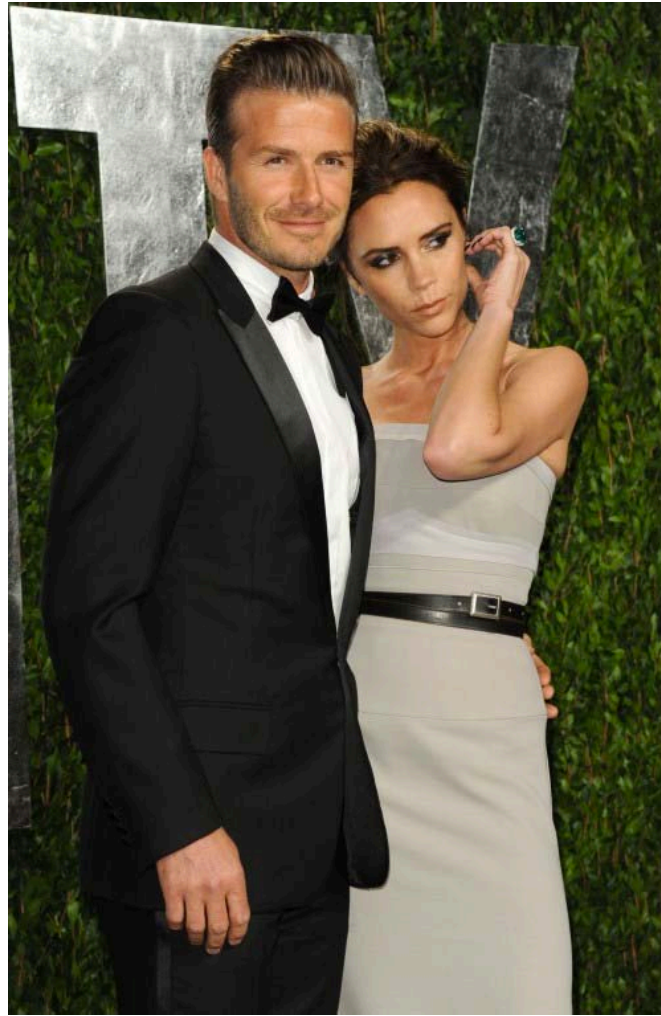
Behaviours



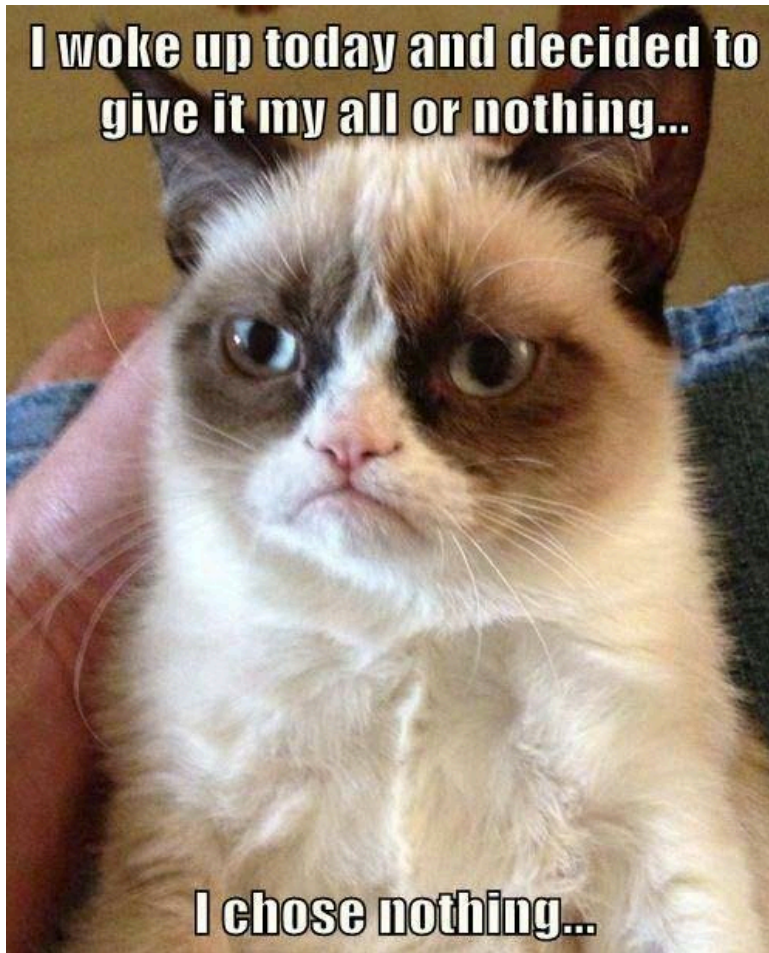
Trend



Celebrity



Popular culture & social network



Popular culture & social network

Let's Celebrate Pride



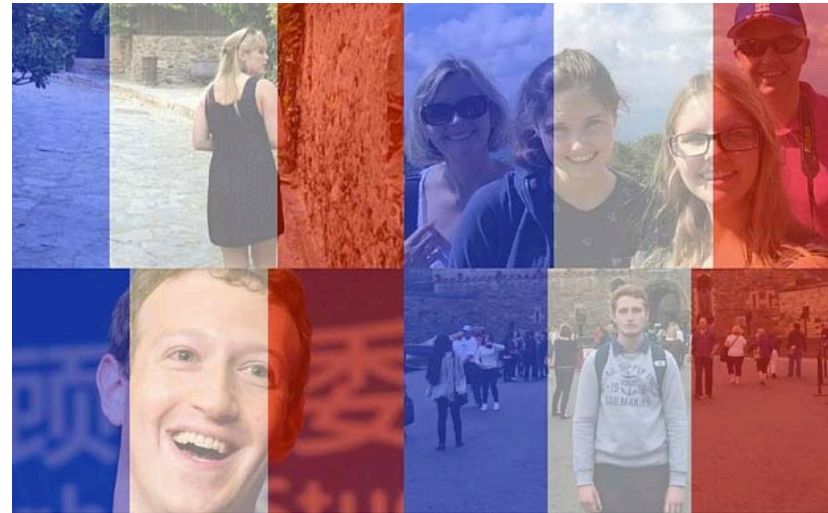
Edit Description

Your profile picture is always public.

Created with facebook.com/celebratepride

Use as Profile Picture

From all of us at Facebook,
happy Pride!



Popular culture

Pattana Kitiarsa (2003) asserts that popular culture has main characteristics as the followings:

Popular culture

- Ordinary/common culture in realm of every day life



Popular culture

- Culture of the youth



Popular culture

- Hybrid culture



Popular culture

- Fragmented culture



Popular culture

- Consumers' culture



Popular culture

- Mass media-saturated culture



Popular culture

- Culture of fashion and popular trend



Popular culture

- Battles of/for cultural identities/selves



Why do we need to study pop culture?



- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_3UYncNwz4

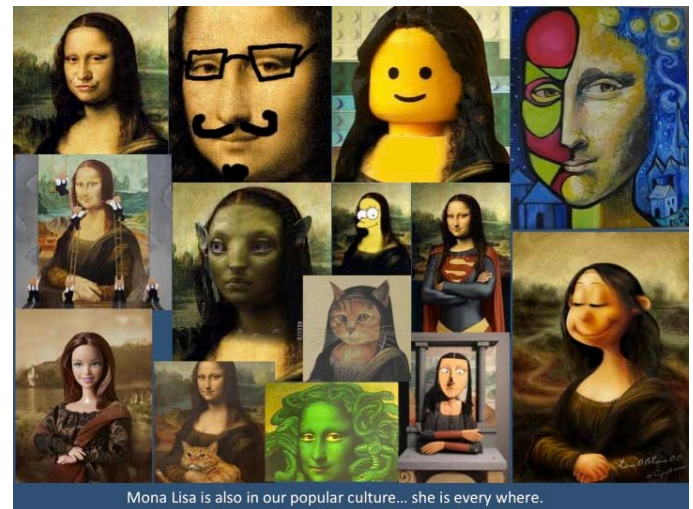
Origins of Popular Culture

- Industrial Revolution + Capitalism
- Mass Production for the masses.
- Culture is standardized for mass consumption.



Arguments that oppose 'pop culture'

- Pop culture is opposite to high culture.
- Pop culture is created by lower class/working class.
- Pop culture is a non-existence of disciplines and regulations.
- Lack of morality.



Mona Lisa is also in our popular culture... she is every where.

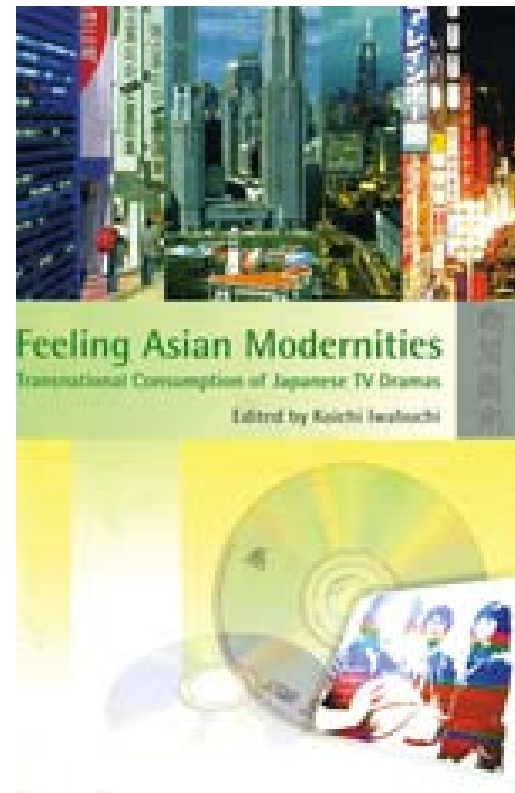
Arguments that support pop culture

- It is democratization of culture that ordinary people can create and consume culture.

CASE STUDIES OF POP CULTURE IN EAST ASIA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

How can we explain Pop culture in East Asian countries?

- Koichi Iwabuchi studies Popular Culture in East Asian countries (i.e. Japan, Korea, and Taiwan).



Popularity of Japanese dramas

- The type of Japanese drama that is most well-received in East and Southeast Asia is the one that depicts youths' love affairs, friendship, and working life in urban settings (i.e. Tokyo) (Iwabuchi 2004: 9).

“Trendy Dramas”

- “Trendy dramas” coined by Star TV is commonly used in Japan.
- Example: Tokyo Love Story (1991)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4g8ngKMz104>

“Trendy Dramas”

- Example: Long Vacation (1996)



Reasons for Popularity

- Ito (2004: 11) argues that “these dramas represent a new attractive femininity... – femininity that is not submissive to men but independently and actively seeking love and work, yet, in final instance not quite disobedience to men”.



Reasons for Popularity

- The emerging sense of cultural similarity between Japan and other Asian nations experienced as such seems to be based upon a consciousness that both live in the same modern temporality (Iwabuchi, 2004).
- For example, the development of consumerism, the expansion of middle class, changes in gender, sexuality relationship

Reasons for Popularity

- Therefore, viewers in East/Southeast Asia can experience and feel “Asian modernity” through Japanese TV dramas (Iwabuchi, 2004).

Viewers in East and Southeast Asia

- For Taiwan viewers, Japanese dramas conjure up the intertwined perception of “dream” and “reality” of urban modernity (Ko cited Iwabuchi, 2004)

Viewers in East and Southeast Asia

- In Singapore and Bangkok, where local dramas that sympathetically depict young people's concerns in life are relatively uncommon, Japanese youth dramas to some extent appear liberating and emancipating (Iwabuchi 2004).

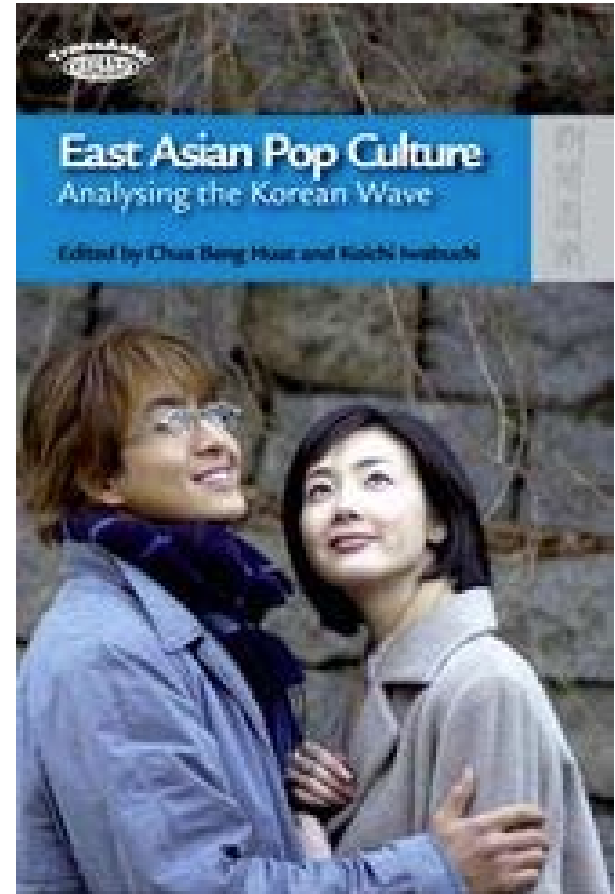
Viewers in East and Southeast Asia

- Singapore:
- Local programmes generally deal with Singapore everyday life...which can be 'tiresome' rather than 'entertaining'.
- So, foreignness and the 'exoticism' of imported products is part of the local audiences' desire and viewing pleasure.

(Chua Beng Huat, 2004: 213)

Korean Dramas

- Comparing to Japanese dramas, Korean dramas provide less feeling of modernity.
- Nonetheless, they present Asian values that viewers in East Asian and Southeast Asian can relate to.



- References to the family as institution have largely disappeared in Japanese ‘trendy’ dramas, but continue to have significant presence in Korean urban drama series, and strong version of Confucian filial piety are often still scripted into such series (Chua Beng Huat, 2004: 216).

Korean Dramas

- In some cases, Korean dramas offer ‘nostalgia’ feeling. And these is one of main reasons of their popularity among Japanese middle aged housewives.



Thai dramas as popular culture in Southeast Asia





Thai soaps dubbed in Shan have become the most popular form of entertainment among Shan communities throughout Shan state in Burma.

- ‘The consumption of “images” that constitute “modernity”, drawing those shan viewers to a wider world from which their present marginality...allows viewers to imagine themselves beyond the territorialized boundaries of the Burmese nation-state’ (Amporn Jirattikon, 2008: 57).

- A sense of Shan “imagined community” (of shan nation) has been intensified (Amporn, 2008: 57).



- People decide to move to catch the fantasy provided by Thai soaps (Amporn, 2008: 58).



Conclusion

- Popularity of any 'Popular culture' is not about only 'culture'.
- There are also political, economic, and social aspects of the popularity.

Further readings

- Amporn Jiratikorn (2008) “Pirated” transnational broadcasting: the consumption of Thai soap operas among Shan communities in Burma. *Sojourn*, 23(1), 30-62.
- Chua Beng Huat (2004) Conceptualizing an East Asian popular culture. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 5(2), 200-221.
- Koichi Iwabuchi (2004) *Feeling Asian Modernities: transnational consumption of Japanese TV dramas*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.