

Japanese popular culture and eastern media societies

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Popular culture in Japan and Eastern Media societies The world today is becoming increasingly integrated. Media technologies like communication networks that have a global reach have played a large part in the influence of the information. Media giants like Sony and Disney have had a major influence on globalization. The most understood meaning of globalization is the spread of American popular culture, military and diplomatic ideologies. However, with the economic growth of the eastern Asia societies, there has been a rise in indigenous cultures that has spread and influenced the region. The rise of a middle-class has made it possible for the intra regional sharing of the culture between Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea. To a large extent though, Japanese influence has been to a larger extent than the others. The indigenous culture is not without American influence. On the contrary, some components of the American popular culture that can be regarded as the global culture have been modified by East Asian flavors to form a culture that is globalized and indigenous to the region at the same time.

The proliferation of Japanese culture in the East Asian countries reflects an uneven influence. The fact that the Japanese culture has a greater reach than the rest of the region's indigenous cultures depicts Japanese imperialism (Iwabuchi 2001, pp. 12). During the early years of Japanese visual industry, most of the products were imports from Hollywood. However, the country realized that the best way forward was to indigenize and localize American popular culture by interpreting the American ideas to fit the Japanese context. Due to the cultural proximity, Japanese products found an audience within the other East Asia countries who could largely relate their own

culture with that of the Japanese culture albeit with much influence from the more superior American culture, which other societies consider modern and hence use it as a measure of their own culture against modernity. Since Japan's influence came from the indigenization of the western ideals, there is a consciousness that the rest of the East Asian societies could do the same. Therefore, Japanese culture remains dominant due to the realization that its greatest strength is the influence of the western ideals and their localization into the indigenous context.

The greatest weapon that the Japanese influence employs is the depiction of their culture as being superior. This leaves the consumer of a product like a TV drama craving to be part of the dream that is depicted in the drama. As such, people who cannot become Japanese are arrested by the desire to identify with the Japanese heroes on TV (Featherstone 1996, p. 8). Japan has a more superior industry and as such, inferior societies like that in Taiwan relate and desire the Japanese depictions which present them with an operational realism. The acceptance of Japanese culture in countries like Taiwan is due to the feeling of equality. The depictions in the visual industry present an opportunity for the Taiwanese to identify with the Japanese as the material gap between the rich and the poor is rapidly narrowing. This is a great thing as the region becomes integrated and the influence of one more superior can lead others to the same lifestyle which might be better. The downside however is that presently, the one-sided nature of the influence with the dominance of Japan could obliterate other cultures making them obsolete and irrelevant in turn killing the diversity.

References

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