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## Cool Japan and the Hallyu Wave: The Effect of Popular Culture Exports on National Image and Soft Power

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Cool Japan and the Hallyu Wave: The Effect of Popular Culture Exports on National  
Image and Soft Power

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14 May 2021

## Cool Japan and the Hallyu Wave: The Effect of Popular Culture Exports on National Image and Soft Power

### **Abstract**

Japan used its export of pop culture in the post-war era not only to boost its economy but also as a means to improve its national image and project its soft power. Japanese pop culture exports emphasized a positive, non-threatening image of national culture. Though Japan's pop culture export boom has been enormously successful, it has not been able to completely overcome its problematic past and erase historical tensions with Korea and other Asian nations. The pop culture boom has redefined Japan's national image but not entirely. Contradictions between Japan's curated image and actual reality, especially in the case of indigenous and ethnic minorities, also pose a challenge to Japan's efforts to create a positive national image based on peaceful coexistence. Korea's Hallyu Wave has been garnering more popularity and attention. The Hallyu Wave has innovative products and methods to spread South Korean pop-culture, it is use to create better relations with countries worldwide. It is similar to Japan's Pop-Culture Boom because the Hallyu Wave aims to promote the most positive national and international image of South Korea.

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Power “means an ability to do things and control others, to get others to do what they would otherwise not ... the ability to control others is often associated with [politicians, diplomats, territory, natural resources, economic size, military force and political stability] ... Today, however, the definition of power is losing its emphasis on military force and conquest that marked earlier eras. The factors of technology, education, and economic growth are becoming more significant in international power” (Nye 154).

Throughout history, hard power has been the primary means of defining the world and the countries that control it. Hard power has been dominant for centuries and continues to be significant, as countries continue to build up their militaries as a sign of their coercive power. The United States enjoyed dominant military and economic power after World War II, although it also excelled in projecting soft power, attracting partners and supporters through the appeal of its culture, ideals and values. As America’s relative power declined over the course of the Cold War, the United States had less leverage to control the political environment and pressure other countries into doing what it wanted (Nye 155-156). Power was increasingly diffused due to five global trends: “economic interdependence, transnational actors, nationalism in weak states, the spread of technology, and changing political issues” such as ecological changes, health epidemics and terrorism that requires new power resources and global cooperation (Nye 160-163). New communications, transportation and technology have revolutionized global markets and dramatically increased trade, as declining costs enable smaller countries and transnational companies to exchange goods and information cheaply and efficiently (Nye 161-162). Governments’ ability to control economic outcomes has diminished, as transnational companies and international financial markets now have the opportunity to shape domestic and international trade and investment. As a result, countries have increasingly turned to soft power, “a second,

more attractive way of exercising power than traditional means” (Nye 166). Through soft power, a state may achieve the outcomes it prefers in world politics with less resistance because other states hold a positive image of the soft power leader and are more willing to follow it. This less threatening form of cooptive power has grown more important as the use of military force has become costlier, less effective and less acceptable, although military power still remains an important source of bargaining power among states (Nye 160).

Culture is an extremely useful soft power resource. The United States has used the widespread appeal of its popular culture, including African American culture, to shape consumption and preferences in other countries and it has long dominated global media and information technology. Although not without critics, the general attractiveness of American popular culture made other countries more inclined to accept American leadership (Nye 168). Recognizing the benefits of enhancing a country’s soft power through popular culture, other countries have worked to develop popular culture products that will appeal to global consumers and generate good will. Japan and South Korea are two countries that have successfully exported their popular culture to the world through physical goods and modern communications technology. Japan and South Korea have changed the way that countries export popular culture, employing distinctive strategies to increase consumption and raise their countries’ international profile.

This research will focus on Japanese popular culture exports and how these have influenced Japan’s relations with other Asian countries and South Korea more particularly. Through the attraction of its popular culture, Japan has been able to improve relations with its Asian neighbors, but historical tensions and commercial rivalry continue to limit Japan’s soft power. In addition, this paper will focus on how Japan’s popular culture boom has influenced

Japan's identity domestically and internationally. Countries such as Japan and South Korea have used popular culture as a method to change their global image. It will also briefly focus on Japan's treatment of ethnic Koreans and indigenous groups within Japan, raising questions about Japan's willingness to develop a cosmopolitan identity. Furthermore, the paper will focus on how the Hallyu Wave is changing South Korea as a country and how Japan is reacting to the popularity of the Hallyu Wave.

Post-war Japan had to recover from the damages of World War II and U.S. occupation. Japan made significant improvements and recovered very quickly during this era, as symbolized during the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo, when Japan showed the world how it had changed to become a prosperous country. In 1965, under pressure from the United States, Japan and South Korea normalized relations, but this triggered protests among South Koreans, who remained hostile toward Japan. It was not until the 1970s that Japan began to supplant the United States as the dominant source of global popular culture in Asia. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Japanese popular culture was widely accepted and received by younger generations in Asia because the middle class was being to grow; thus, people had more money to spend on goods and developed new interests. It should be mentioned that countries in Asia affected by Imperial Japan placed multiple bans on the import of Japanese popular culture. It was not until the 1990s that the Japanese government began to directly involve itself in the export of Japanese popular culture, although some of these efforts provoked a backlash in other countries that felt threatened by Japan. Japan and South Korean relations have improved a little through the export of popular culture, but that does not mean popular culture is the solution to better improve Japan-South Korea relations.



The second chapter of this research discusses the history, implications, and change of Japanese identity through the export of its popular culture. Throughout the late 1970s to the first part of the twenty-first century, Japan's popular culture boom was so successful that it changed the way that other countries viewed Japan and served as a model for other countries to develop their own popular culture industries. Japan's popular culture is associated with changing its global image to a more positive image, it has changed Japan's domestic and international identity. Japan has created a positive image for itself, working to erase memories of the crimes committed by Imperial Japan; however, that does not mean that the past is totally forgotten, especially in nations such as South Korea which had experienced a negative and traumatic past with Japan. Japan had to create a hybrid identity, essentially creating Japanese pop-culture that is Japanese but not Japanese at the same time to be accepted internationally. Popular culture from Japan does not reflect the full experience of all groups within the country, offering an overly positive, stylized portrayal of the indigenous groups the Ainu and the Ryūkyū people and ethnic minorities in Japan such as Zainichi.

Japan's indigenous groups and ethnic minorities have been 'hidden' by Japan in the past and the present, with little to no acknowledgement of the dark-history of their mistreatment due to their distinctive heritage, culture, and language. The differences between culture and language were emphasized as a means to continue prolonged discrimination towards the indigenous groups and ethnic minorities. Popular culture has become a new method for these groups to become 'visible' in both Japan and worldwide. However, the Japanese government has played a prominent role in determining how the country's indigenous groups and ethnic minorities should be portrayed, prompting members of these groups to fight for more accurate and equitable representation.

While Japanese popular culture companies have been quite innovative and successful, they have also garnered some resentment due to the underlying sentiment that Japan sees itself as superior to other nations in Asia because it is uniquely capable of serving as a bridge between the West and Asia. As a result, some people in other Asian countries view the export of Japanese popular culture in negative views as a new form of cultural imperialism. Japan has inspired countries, but that does not mean countries will follow all of the steps that Japan has taken to become a dominant force in the sphere of popular culture. Other countries will try their best to maintain their own culture and develop their own popular culture export industries.

The third chapter of this research discusses how the Hallyu Wave has changed South Korean politics, economy, global image, and identity. It should be noted that during parts of the Hallyu Wave, South Korea was under brutal military dictatorships. In the late 1980s, South Korea changed from exporting raw materials to advancing its technology and popular culture sector. Thanks to close economic ties and its geographical proximity to Japan, South Korea has been able to view the methods that Japan used to export its popular culture. South Korea did place bans on Japanese popular culture due to its historical past with Japan, but that did not stop the younger generation from wanting to consume Japanese popular culture goods; they would resource to pirating and there were loopholes in South Korea's ban to Japanese popular culture. Popular culture in South Korea ranges from Korean pop-music, which is a blend of African American, American, Caribbean, and other genres, to food products. South Korea has successfully localized and created a hybrid culture that attracts both domestic and international audiences and consumers. South Korea has worked successfully to develop new technology platforms that make it easier for people to access South Korean media and pop culture products. Countries in Asia are attracted to South Korean popular culture, since South Korea shares a

similar past to other nations in Asia that were also poor and dominated by powerful countries such as Imperial Japan and the United States. However, South Korean popular culture has become extremely popular to the point that countries in Asia are placing bans on South Korean culture because it has become a threat to local culture, even though South Korean companies use localization strategies to make South Korean products more appealing to local consumers and audiences. The South Korean government has used its culture to create relationships with other countries and learn more about other cultures. South Korean identity has been changing through the government's export of popular culture, but like the Japanese government, the government of South Korea wants to promote a positive national identity, even though this may not fully reflect the diversity or challenges that the nation faces.

The final chapter of this research will summarize the arguments made in the previous chapters. Japan and South Korea have not only derived enormous economic benefits through popular culture exports, they have also used these exports to enhance their soft power and change their national identities. Popular culture in both Japan and South Korea is a hybrid, reflecting international influences as well as unique historical traits. In both countries, popular culture has become a powerful economic and diplomatic tool that their governments have sought to harness, though not always successfully. Popular culture exports from Japan to South Korea and from South Korea to Japan have generally improved relations, especially among younger generations, but they have not completely erased historical tensions. The global success of the Japanese and South Korean popular culture export booms have convinced other countries in Asia such as China and Thailand to try to launch their own popular culture booms, and the conclusion will briefly review other countries' plans to imitate the success of Cool Japan and the Hallyu Wave.

The Post War Era provides a deeper insight to why Japan and South Korea have strained relations, there are multiple factors that contribute its relationship, but the main factor the effects of WW2 on both nations. American influence, security threats posed by North Korea, and China rising to a global power has increased contact between the two nations. There are economic tensions between both Japan and South Korea since Japan was able to recover its economy that garner much success due the Japanese Economic Miracle and having a stable government. Japan was able to shift production from material items to consumer goods then to an exchange of pop culture in the eighties. Korea was divided into two nations after WW2, North Korea became a communist dictatorship and South Korea was ruled by a dictatorship then a military dictatorship that was supported by the United States. After the Kwangju protests, South Korea turned into a democracy and was inspired by Japan to follow an economic-model that gave South Korea to export its pop-culture to the world. Both Japan and South Korea wanted to change their image in the world. Japan's Pop-Culture Boom provided Japan with the opportunity to soften its image to become more cute/peaceful. Japan's export of pop-culture was successful it would influence other countries in the region to adopt similar models, but it started the process of exporting pop-culture globally. Japan would remain to be connected to its historical past in WW2.

South Korea's Hallyu Wave changed the country to be viewed not as a nation that had a traumatic past, but as a nation that is strong as well as fierce. The Hallyu Wave had access to the internet, smart-phone technology, and does not have ties to WW2; The Hallyu Wave became very successful in the late nineties it has continued to garner popularity world-wide. The

exchange of pop-culture between Japan and South Korea have created a more positive relationship with each country, but it shows how domestic and international identity would change in the region and worldwide. These changes would shape the relationship between Japan and South Korea the relationship between Japan and South Korea would remain to be strained, but there were some small signs of improvement due to mutual interests that would benefit each country. It is vital to mention major historical events that each country underwent because these the growth of each country's economy after WWII. This chapter will focus on economic and political developments in Japan and South Korea up until the 1990s, setting the stage for the subsequent emergence of pop culture industries, whose influence on the countries' domestic and international images will be analyzed in Chapters 3 and 4.

The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki brought a lot of damage to these prefectures in Japan. When the bombs were first dropped in the prefecture “40,000 of Hiroshima's 350,000 population were killed in the blast, and that at least 74,000 people died in Nagasaki” (BBC 2020). After the bombs were dropped, these prefectures suffered with the side effects of nuclear radiation that would affect both the land and the people, the survivors of the bombings are known as hibakusha. In addition, after Japan has lost the war, War Trials were commenced-to punish those who served in the Imperial Japanese Army and committed crimes against humanity. Emperor Hirohito was stripped of his power and became a figure head. Armament factories and war-related industries were dismantled and the large *zaibatsu* (economic conglomerates) that had controlled most of imperial Japan's productive and financial enterprises were dissolved (Rosenbluth and Thies, 299). Land reform was implemented, an independent trade union movement was created and women in Japan were granted the right to vote. In 1947, under pressure from occupation authorities, a new constitution was adopted that separated

Shintoism and government and guaranteed individual liberties, influencing Japan to adopt more democratic policies. The new constitution also included a Peace Clause (Article 9), in which Japan renounces its right to wage war or maintain a military (Rosenbluth and Thies, 299). In 1947, The Cold War would begin which would increase tensions between countries throughout the world.

### The Post-War Era-Japan

Nations would be divided due to a difference in beliefs and ideologies. The intensification of the Cold War, including the victory of the Chinese Communist Party in China and the consolidation of Soviet influence in North Korea, convinced U.S. officials that Japan was the “ultimate domino” in post-war Asia and a vital anti-communist ally (Forsberg 3). During the Cold War, the US wanted for more nations to become democratic to support and reinforce its ideologies. American authorities also pushed for the formation of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), a merger of centrist and conservative parties, in order to limit the influence of Communist and Socialist parties (Roskin 359-360). The Liberal Democratic Party was formed in 1955, the two main goals of this political party in Japan were to create policies that would increase local businesses production in Japan and garner support from the United States. The LDP would use a process called the “iron triangle”; in this process the LDP would work with businesses in Japan that would support their agenda, in-return the LDP would give these businesses the advantage in the Japanese economy by making them more prosperous and making it more difficult for foreign businesses to be successful in Japan (Roskin 382). This led to a “reverse course” in U.S. policy toward Japan, as occupation authorities reduced their support for reforms Japan’s reparations payments; U.S. officials also worked with the Japanese government to crack down on labor unrest and relax anti-trust measures, enabling the old *zaibatsu*

conglomerates to regroup under the new name of *keiretsu* (Forsberg 61-62; Roskin 352).

Zaibatsu are Japanese conglomerate companies that had a lot of control in Japan's economy from the Meiji Era to the end of World War Two. Japanese officials did not want the Zaibatsu to be fully dismantled; thus, they created keiretsu which are companies that have originated from zaibatsu companies, but keiretsu are multiple Japanese companies that work with banks and industrial firms to create a stronger Japanese economy by linking firms and banks together (Chalmers 174-175, 204-205). The keiretsu erases the image of Japanese companies be affiliated to Zaibatsu by re-branding and the combination of corporations/firms and banks; they serve multi-purposes for the Japanese government and economy.

## The Korean War and its Effect on the Japanese Economy

War is expensive, to any country because of the large number of costs that goes towards the military, it requires a lot of materials to produce objects that are readily available for soldiers to use on the battle field. The Korean War changed the Japanese economy as the U.S. military turned to Japanese industries to supply American troops (Forsberg 141-142). The outcomes from the American military would affect the Japanese economy significantly. America's reliance on Japan to create materials that would support the American war effort was similar to the Marshall Plan in Europe because companies such as Toyota would be creating a lot of products that have high demand and in return, they would receive a lot of profits (Forsberg 84). War can provide profits to companies that produce materials to support war efforts, the Japanese economy has the opportunity to increase profits. Through U.S. military spending in Japan declined after the Korean war, it remained significant (and would once again increase during the Vietnam War) and helped alleviate Japan's chronic foreign trade imbalances until the Japanese economy was able to generate surpluses (Forsberg 85). In the 1950s, Japan's economy grew annually by an

average of 12% and in the 1960s, the nominal GDP growth rate was 16.6% (Steinmo 116). During the Korean and Vietnam War, Japan's economy would continue to get stronger because they had produced materials that would be used by the US in massive quantities, in order for Japan to remain to have a strong economy they would do-so by favoring Japanese businesses. Import controls favored domestic production and restricted foreign goods. Government officials justified such measures by pointing to Japan's need to achieve economic stability and reverse balance-of-payments deficits, and they used import controls to protect domestic sectors such as automobiles and consumer electronics so that these could become internationally competitive (Forsberg, 6). At the same time, the 1951 Security Treaty with the United States which incorporated Japan into a U.S.-led anti-communist alliance meant that Japan had relatively low expenditures on defense and benefited from U.S. pressure on western allies to open up their markets to Japanese exports (Lairson and Skidmore 128). Japan's economy garnered success because of the US reliance on Japan for the Korean and Vietnam War that needed a lot of supplies that could be produced and have easy access. These supplies brought Japan a lot of profits to companies and businesses that were involved in this field, Japan was able to create a market that allowed for Japanese companies to be more successful than foreign companies supporting the US war effort in this period. This step was the beginning for Japan to begin to increase its economy. There are other factors such as the Ministry of International Trade and Industry that was created in 1949 to work with all types of businesses that would support the Japanese economy positively.

## Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI)

In 1868, Japan westernized to compete with the West (Lairson and Skidmore 130-131). Japan westernized to avoid being imperialized by the west because other nations in East-Asia



were affected extremely negatively by western nations. The Japanese government integrated business/companies to work with MITI and the Ministry of Finance because the government wanted to promote and support domestic production; since it was more cost efficient and to create innovative products by making them attractive to international audiences (Lairson and Skidmore 130-13). Prior to and during WW2, Japan's government sectors and industries were created to support Imperial Japan's war effort. Government sectors would support industries such as weapons, transportation, and communication in Imperial Japan such as Manchuria; profits from those colonies or in Imperial Japan would go to support Imperial Japan's war effort (Roskin 383). It should be noted that MITI is a government funded and supported program in Japan, it had more functions that to promote businesses and the Japanese economy. The purpose of MITI was, "after the war, precisely the same bureaucrats who ran Japan's war economy were given the job of economic recovery. This they proceeded to do – and do very well – in the same spirit they had displayed during the war: Economic development is too important to be left to [capitalists] (Roskin 383). MITI was created to support the Japanese by promoting Japanese businesses to be successful, at the same time it was created/ran by people who were a part of Imperial Japan's government who created policies that were used to support the Japanese economy after the war.

It is similar to the keiretsu because it uses policies that were used by Imperial Japan, but a re-branded to change Japan's image and to support the economy. In MITI, it did not like "Anglo-American doctrine of economic competition" because American businesses had dominance in markets because they created products that were sought to be more innovative than other products on the market (Johnson 81). US businesses had the opportunity to advance because the US had the power and money to create businesses that would garner world-wide

success. MITI would shift from promoting Japan to just have a successful economy, it shifted to create more innovative products to compete with US businesses to garner international success; and it would focus to embrace internationalism, but promote Japanese nationalism (Johnson 81). MITI realized through the export of culture and innovative products it could garner dominance in markets and that became the true goal of MITI. MITI and the Japanese government would have to create an image of Japan that would be attractive to other countries worldwide and in Asia. Consequently, MITI would be used as a sector to promote Japanese nationalism, which could be seen as a threat to other nations in Asia that were affected by Imperial Japan because it was run by people who supported Imperial Japan's war effort when MITI was first established. MITI would become the beginning push for Japan to change from producing materials to producing innovative products that could be used to gain market dominance.

#### Japan & the 1964 Olympics

The Japanese working life began to change because economic growth increased rapidly during the post-war era. Japan's economic miracle stemmed in part from Japan's highly educated, skilled and dedicated work force and from the fact that Japanese productivity stayed ahead of wages, allowing Japanese companies to produce high quality goods at lower cost (Roskin 398). In addition to, Japan's economic miracle transformed the country's international image, as "made in Japan" was no longer associated with inexpensive, low quality consumer goods but rather with superior technological products as cars, radios, cameras, and much more. Japan's ascendance was demonstrated at the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo. These Olympic games were more than just a normal sports event because their goal was to demonstrate Japan's technological and economic success. The Shinkansen bullet train was created, and the 1964 Olympic Games were also shown in color – technological innovations that emphasized Japan's technological advances and presented a glittering, welcoming image (Tagsold 2009). It should

also be noted that the Ministry of Education was the main promoter behind the 1964 Games, controlling the majority of the promotion and advertising of the 1964 Olympic Games (Tagsold 2009). There were some controversial choices of symbols associated with Japanese nationalism, including the opening of the games by the emperor (tennō), the use of chrysanthemum flowers associated with imperial Japan and is seen as a symbol of militaristic expansion (Tagsold 2009). However, Japan generally sought to use the 1964 Olympic games to change its image and distance itself from the atrocities that Imperial Japan committed during World War II. The torch runner of the Olympic Games, Sakai Yoshinori, was born on August 6<sup>th</sup> which was the day that the atomic bomb was dropped in Japan; by running at the opening ceremony of the games, he represented Japan as a victim of World War II and as an advocate peace and nuclear disarmament (Tagsold 2009). Japan thus sought to create a softer, more benevolent international image at the same time that it emphasized its economic success.

### The Post War Era-South Korea

“For Koreans the end of the war meant that the end of the Japanese domination, but it was not going to mean that they were free to decide their own fate” (Söderberg 4).

In February and July 1945, at the Yalta and Potsdam conferences were held and after the conferences, at the end of August the Soviet Union was occupying the North side of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel because the goal of the Allies was to defeat Japan (Lee 17). After WW2, South Korea became a sovereign state, it became free of Imperial Japan's colonialism and imperialism. Two days after the victory of the Allied Powers, Korea was divided into two a Northern and Southern section at the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, the USSR and the USA were supposed to disarm Japanese troops, but Korea became a place for these countries to spread its dominance and ideologies; thus they implemented their ideas through repressive leaders; the USSR influenced North Korea known as

the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPKR) in 1948 run by Kim Il Sung (Chance and Carr 63-70). The United States was unwilling to lose to the USSR, they implemented a similar policy in the southern part of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. In 1948, South Korea known as the Republic of Korea (ROK) was formed and the first president of South Korea was Syngman Rhee (Chance and Carr 63-70). Korea became a place for Western powers to compete with each other, through the difference in beliefs, the goal of the USA and USSR was to have the world believe in their beliefs that they believed would be best for the world, but they ignore the nations that they are trying to forcefully implant their ideas. As mentioned prior the USA wanted South Korea to conform to its democratic beliefs, the USA supported President Rhee to use violence on people who did not believe in democracy; in 1948 the Rhee administration passed the National Security Law that "in the first year was used to arrest or imprison 188, 621 people", this law would use violence to suppress opposite beliefs (Kraft 627-659 and 631). Tensions between North and South Korea were rising because they were being supported by western countries who had differences in beliefs and were being ruled by violent regimes. Cold War tensions contributed to the outbreak of the Korean War, as Kim Il-Sung was encouraged by his Soviet and Chinese sponsors to try to unite Korea under communist rule, expecting that the United States would not fight to defend a weak South Korean government, given that it had not intervened to support Chiang Kai-shek's forces in China; on June 25 1950, North Korea sent troops across the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel and advanced rapidly against South Korean forces (Bosco 56). The Korean War ended on July 27, 1953 through the Korean Armistice Agreement, which ended fighting between the two Korea's, but did not unite them, North and South Korea would remain as separate states. It should be noted that both North and South Korea suffered a lot during the Korean War as it took heavy physical and economic damages.

In the years immediately following the Korean war, South Korea looked like “a hopeless case of poverty, social anomie, and political instability that was destined to lose in the inter-Korea competition to become the sole legitimate government of the entire Korean peoples. In 1961, North Korea’s per capita GNP stood at \$160, twice that of the South, and the gap in economic performance was rising” (Kim and Baik, 60). North Korea’s Kim Il-Sung implemented a centrally planned economy as part of a system referred to as ‘Juche’ (주체), which translates to self-reliance (Britannica 2021). Kim Il-Sung used Juche to prevent uprisings in North Korea and to make sure that he would be able to remain in power. For example, “private property was outlawed, and markets were banned. Freedoms were curtailed not only in the marketplace, but in every sphere of North Koreans’ lives – except for those who happened to be part of the very small ruling elite around Kim Il-Sung and, later, his son and successor Kim Jong-Il”(Acemoglu and Robinson 72). North Korea remained under the same communist dictatorship from 1948 to the present-day.

#### South Korean Economy in the Post War Era

In the Post-War Era, North and South Korea had different economic policies; the South Korean economy was suffering, but the North Korean economy was flourishing in this era. There are various reasons that contribute to the decline in the South Korean economy; political instability, bribery, violence (National Security Law of 1958: used violence towards people who were against Rhee’s policies), and voter manipulation (Seth 42). Rhee’s policies focused on maintaining his power, relevance, and control of South Korea, South Korean people wanted a change in the government, but Rhee’s use of violence prevented change in the South Korean government to focus on the economy, which has not been recovered since WW2. The United States had sent 12.6 billion US dollars to South Korea to use to repair the country, some of the

money was used to fix infrastructure in South Korea, but the Rhee government used the money to for their personal finances, which created sense of distrust in the United States (Seth 42). Rhee relied a lot on US economic funding to help South Korea's economy, he relied more on the support from the US then fixing the South Korean economy.

The South Korean economy was unable to generate success because of the Rhee administration because of their use of violence and extreme reliance on US imports and economic funding to the South Korean economy. The black market in South Korea was more successful than businesses in the country because US imports would be sold to South Korea at lower prices, but then these products would be re-sold at extremely high prices as a means to live (Seth 43). The Rhee administration relied a lot on the US economic funds and imports, only people who were in higher positions could have the opportunity to be successful in South Korea, it was not applied to the general population. The United States wanted South Korea to sign treaties with Japan to create trade deals, the Rhee administration refused to create trade deals because South Korea finally became a sovereign nation freed from Japan, and was still suffering from the damage of Japanese colonization (Seth 43). On May 16<sup>th</sup>, 1961 there was a extremely violent military coup in South Korea; the result of this coup Park Chung Hee became the new president of South Korea. In fact, Park was born and educated under Japanese rule and admired the political and economic strategies implemented under the Meiji Restoration. Like Japanese modernizers, Park hoped to pull Korea out of its economic backwardness and military weaknesses through a focus on state-led industrialization and a strong defense (Moon and Ju, 117-118).

Park Chung Hee wanted to change South Korea by strengthening and improving the economy to benefit the people of South Korea. He did not like that South Korea was too reliant

on the United States for economic funds and imports, Park Chung Hee received aid from the US to train South Koreans in various subjects to become entrepreneurs that would later become known as 'chaeböl' (Seth 43-44). Chaeböl groups such as Samsung and LG would become major factors to boost the South Korean economy, they are similar to Japanese Keiretsu, but there are various differences that distinguish chaeböl's from keiretsu's. Chaeböl's are family groups that are controlled by the president/ceo of the company; they produce their own products that are exported from South Korea and while they receive government support "[they are] prohibited from owning private banks (Seth 44). Keiretsu appeared in the post-war era, most Zaibatsu which were Japanese major corporations in WW2, but after the war they were gotten rid of because of their ties to the Japanese military for producing materials towards the war effort. Keiretsu's are run by executives, high ranking executives have the most control in keiretsu's and they work or own banks to have constant money supply; they work with other groups to produce products (Seth 44). Chaeböl groups worked closely with the Park administration to, increase domestic production in South Korea.

The Park administration created other reforms to help to restore the South Korean economy. President Park Chung Hee, the majority of the farmland was owned by the *yangban* (양반) who are people of the wealthier classes, President Park allowed for the farmers to own 7.5 acres of land that could be paid back quickly due to high inflation, farmers had the opportunity to create a business (Seth 44-45). Throughout the fifties and sixties, President Park passed more reforms to support the economy. President Park would not allow for corruption to exist among chaeböl groups, he increased education to South Korean citizens by creating schools for primary and secondary education, people in the yangban funded and founded schools (Seth 44-45). The Park administration aimed to create opportunities for younger generations to pursue a secondary

education to become entrepreneurs to benefit the country, through chaebŏl groups domestic production and industries were increasing to help increase the South Korean economy.

Soon after Park's assassination, domestic security chief Chun Doo-hwan, Chun took power in a military coup of his own. Chun used violence to crack down on anyone who opposed his ideas or beliefs, sending Special Forces to enforce his declaration of martial law on May 17, 1980. Students at Chonnam University in Gwangju gathered to protest martial law and demand democracy and educational freedoms. After the student protests were met with violence and unarmed protesters were killed, more and more people joined the cause and the protests turned into an uprising. Protestors broke into police stations to get weapons to defend themselves against the Special Forces (Han). On May 27<sup>th</sup>, with the approval of the U.S. government, Chun sent military tanks and soldiers with ammunition and brutally attacked the student protesters, killing over two-hundred civilians (Han) (Shorrocks 2015). Despite such brutal repression, protests against Chun's dictatorship grew throughout the 1980s as the Korean public demanded an end to dictatorship. Given the country's strong and relatively inclusive economic growth, elite support for continued military rule waned while mass protests increased (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012). After years of being ruled by Imperial Japan and being influenced by the United States had violent leader, and various military dictatorships South Koreans yearned to have a government that supported democracy that was for the people.

In 1987, Chun stepped down and was replaced by his chosen successor, Roh Tae-woo, who initiated a transition to democracy with free and competitive elections in 1992. The decision to hold the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul proved to be a diplomatic victory for South Korea, demonstrating the country's rise in international stature, especially with communist countries



like the Soviet Union and People's Republic of China agreeing to participate despite North Korea's call for a boycott (Waxmen 2018). In reaction against this, North Korea's leader Kim Il-sung tried to sabotage the Olympic Games by bombing a South Korean airliner ahead of time, hoping that this would sow chaos and confusion and convince the International Olympic Committee to move the Games elsewhere. North Korean agents successfully detonated a suitcase bomb placed on Korean Airlines 858, resulting in over one hundred casualties (Waxmen 2018). Despite the attack, South Korea went on to host the 1988 Summer Olympics and proved to be a major milestone for South Korea; as Olympic historian Craig Greenham commented, "South Korea didn't have a well-known, and in some ways well-regarded, profile. And this changed after 1988" (Little 2018). South Korean identity has changed throughout history because of Japanese imperialism, western influences, and various violent and brutal dictatorships. During the colonialism of Korea by Imperial Japan, South Koreans were fighting back to protect and strengthen their Korean identity. Korean athlete Sohn Kee-Chung participated in the 1936 Berlin Olympics under the Japanese team, when he won a medal, he stated that "he was Korean, and that Japan was occupying his country" (Little 2018). South Koreans have been fighting to protect and maintain their identity, then their identity has changed because of forced western beliefs, but now South Korea wants to promote its country by showing its accomplishments to the world through economics, technology, and its culture.

### Japanese-Korean Relations in the Post-War Period

It was not until twenty years after World War II that relations between Japan and South Korea were normalized and relations remained strained even after the two countries signed a normalization treaty in 1965 (Söderberg 5). The legacy of the war continued to damage relations between Japan and countries in the region that it had occupied; however, the United States

pushed its two allies to cooperate with one another and Japan's economic success proved to be an attractive model as "the Japanese economy was booming in the 1960's while South Korea was a poor state" (Söderberg 5). During the 1950s and into the 1960s, historical disputes dominated relations between Japan and South Korea, with a focus on Japanese violations of human rights during World War II and Korean calls for compensation. From the 1960s to the 1980s, however, there was less focus on historical disputes. Kan Kimura attributes to the fact that many Japanese people believed that war crimes were the responsibility of the wartime ruling elite, not common people, while in South Korea, leaders like Park Chun-Hee were generally predisposed to ignore the past because they themselves had held influential positions under Japanese rule and could be defined as 'pro-Japanese collaborators' in a broad sense (Kimura 25). Post-War Japan was garnering rapid success in its economy and Japanese industrialists were interested in "locking into the commercial potential of South Korea" while both Japan and the United States were interested in stabilizing the region to prevent the further spread of communism in East Asia. For his part, President Park used security concerns and anti-communist rhetoric to legitimize his authoritarian regime, suppress political opposition and maintain U.S. support while the normalization of relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea brought a large settlement of South Korean legal claims against Japan. Japan agreed to pay an \$845 million package of grants and low-interest, long-term loans, which was roughly 1.5 times the size of South Korea's national budget at the time (Kawase 2019). With U.S. aid declining, this influx of money and the prospect of future Japanese foreign investment were vital for South Korea's economic development (Söderberg 5). South Korea has never really recovered from WW2 and then the country entered the Korean War which had significant damages on the economy, and money is necessary for South Korea to strengthen its economy. President Park wanted to create a

similar economic recovery plan that Japan had enacted after WW2 and Japan viewed South Korea as a way to export goods and create business (Söderberg 5). It should be noted that Japan's recovery plan did influence South Korea's economic recovery plan, but that does not mean Japan and South Korea had stable relations. President Park worked with a network of Japanese advisors that worked to create a similar economic plan to create economic growth, efficient businesses, and modernize South Korea in various sectors such as technology (Moon and Ju 122). At the same time, however, Park was a Korean nationalist: "the identification of Japan as a valuable source to learn from and imitate also meant that it was the target to catch up with and even surpass. The respect for Japan's accomplishments coexisted with Park's distrust of and enmity toward Japan. The two were not contradictory. They were different sides of the same coin" (Moon and Ju 120). President Park was influenced by Japan's economic success, but did not want to work or fully collaborate with Japan because of the historical past, which would continue to impact Japan-South Korea relations. Japan and South Korea would collaborate in business projects but, as mentioned before their relations would not be stable.

In Japan and South Korea relations grew closer from business relationships among elites in both countries in the 1960s and the 1970s (Söderberg 6). Business relations between Japan and South Korea increased because both states saw ways to increase their profits. However, tensions in bilateral relations emerged as Japan reacted to U.S. President Richard M. Nixon's February 1972 visit to the People's Republic of China by breaking off diplomatic relations with the Republic of China on Taiwan and working to normalize diplomatic relations with the PRC. Choi Kyungwon notes that this led to calls within Japan for the same type of policy shift toward the Korean Peninsula, which would require the elimination of the "Korea Clause" that was part of the 1969 agreement between the United States and Japan over restoration of Japanese control

over Okinawa and stated that South Korea's security was essential to Japan's security (Choi 2017). In the midst of Japan's Economic Boom, Prime Minister Sato wanted Japan to leave the Korea Clause because Japan was aiming to expand its business partners in Northeast Asia including the DPRK which would cause for unrest in South Korea (Söderberg 5-6). However, Japan's main goal was to create a relationship between North and South Korea, but a normalization between North Korea would not happen. Japan wanted for North and South Korea to have peaceful relations in the region, tensions were raised because other communist nations would not recognize South Korea as a country and Japan did not recognize North Korea being its own country to some degree until 1991 when the international community would have to recognize both Korea's as separate countries (Choi 2017). Japanese-South Korean relations also worsened after the South Korean Central Intelligence Agency kidnapped President Park's chief opponent, Kim Dae-Jung, in Tokyo in 1973 (Söderberg 6). Japan wanted to normalize its relations with North and South Korea to not have tensions in the region, but it wanted to create relations with the countries for economic benefits.

However, Sato's successor, Takeo Miki (1974-1976), chose to strengthen relations with South Korea because he viewed them as an important ally in this region, especially following the reunification of Vietnam under communist control in 1975 (Söderberg 6). In 1977 to 1983, North Korea began kidnapping both Japanese and other citizens including South Koreans. This created a negative strain in relations between Japan North Korea while relations between Japan and South Korea improved. With encouragement from the United States, President Chun and Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro held the first Korea-Japan summits in 1983 and 1984; Japan "agreed to a sizeable economic assistance package for South Korea and publicly emphasized the importance of the Korean Peninsula to Japanese security." (French, Kim

and Yu). As noted above, the 1988 Olympic Games raised South Korea's global profile while pushing North Korea into greater isolation, and North Korea's isolation increased with the end of the Cold War in 1989 and closer relations between South Korea, the new Russian Federation and China. In 1993, North Korea's refusal to allow inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency to inspect nuclear facilities and its threat to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty raised new concerns and brought closer defense ties between South Korea and Japan. Even after negotiations with North Korea produced the Agreed Framework in 1994, concerns about North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs continued to concern policymakers in both Japan and South Korea. North Korea's development of nuclear weapons poses a threat to both Japan and South Korea, as does North Korea's conventional military power and its willingness to use this, as in the sinking of the Cheonan submarine with 46 South Korean navy personnel aboard in 2010 (Söderberg 11-12). Japan and South Korea have increased their contact with each other even more as China becomes the next superpower and both Japan and South Korea have cooperated on creating and maintaining rules in East Asia concerning global investments (Söderberg 16).

Throughout Post War Era, security concerns and economic incentives led Japan-South Korea relations to become better, but the relations between these two states continued to remain strained, despite U.S. efforts to push both countries to work together. As Marie Söderberg notes, anti-Japanese sentiment is part of Korean national identity and Koreans continue to call upon Japanese government leaders to "demonstrate remorse and sincerely apologize for [imperial Japan's] colonization of Korea, as well as for what happened during the Second World War" (Söderberg 7-8). Tensions in bilateral relations revolved around the lack of a formal apology and compensation for Koreans forced to support the Japanese war effort by mining coal on Hashima

Island and for comfort women, who were not acknowledged by Japan until 1992. Other sources of tension include visits by Japanese leaders to the Yasukuni Shrine, which is dedicated to Japanese killed in World War II, including war criminals, and lack of acknowledgement of Japanese war crimes in Japanese textbooks. In addition, territorial disputes have arisen over rival claims to the Dokdo/Takeshima Islands, which have some economic value because of fishing rights but even more significance as symbols of national integrity (Söderberg 8). Because of this legacy, Japan-South Korea relations remain ambivalent Victor D. Cha notes that Japan's colonial policies created traumatic memories but also laid the basis for strong educational and governmental institutions in South Korea; he posits that this has created "[a] special admiration-enmity complex [but it] is still the enmity from the colonial period that dominates, and opinion polls show that in general, Japanese and Korean people do not think highly of each other" (Söderberg 9).

Japan and South Korea relations remains to have a strained relationship because of their historical past, while there have been efforts to create a stable relationship between the countries it has not been achieved. In October 2018, the South Korean Court wanted Japanese companies to compensate for forced laborers in WW2 (Japan-Times 2019). The Japan-Korea Basic Treaty was settled in 1965, Japan believed that they had compensated for South Korea in this treaty, thus Japan-South Korea's relationship began to deteriorate rapidly (Japan-Times 2019). President Moon Jae-in agreed with the courts final answer and National Assembly Speaker Moon Hee-sang wanted Emperor Akihito to apologize and pay compensations to the victims; Japan's pleas were not listened too (Japan-Times 2019). Then one month later, Seoul disbanded the Reconciliation and Healing foundation that was founded in 2015 to compensate the comfort women, this angered Japan because they believed it would strain their relationship (Japan-Times

2019). Then in December, a South Korea destroyer was allegedly targeting one of Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force Reconnaissance planes, the relationship between Japan and South Korea was quickly deteriorating (Japan-Times 2019). Japan-South Korea's relationship would continue to deteriorate as more problems arose between the two countries. In July 2019, Japan removed South Korea as one of their trading partners to gain leverage in exporting semiconductor material; South Korea was Japan's third largest exporter, South Korea retaliated by leaving the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) (Japan-Times 2019). Japan and South Korea's relationship is unstable because of the relationship between their historical past. Prime Minister Abe Shinzo has resigned on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 will lead to an unpredictable outcome in their relationship (Japan-Times 2019).

Despite continued tensions in Japan-South Korea relations, economic ties and business relations between the two countries have grown considerably. As the next two chapters will discuss, the lifting of the South Korean ban on Japanese pop culture exports, including music, film, manga and books, in 1998 led to a big surge in Korean interest in Japanese culture, and South Korea has been heavily influenced by Japan and its method to export pop-culture to the world through the Hallyu (Korean) Wave. Travel and contacts between the two countries have grown, and cultural exchanges between Japan and South Korea increased business relations with each other that have brought the nations closer together (Söderberg 14). For example, "in the meantime, cultural, social, and business ties continue to grow. Japanese viewers have binged on K-dramas on Netflix during the COVID-19 pandemic. NiziU a JK-Pop girl group produced by JYP Entertainment and SONY debut this year. South Korean boycotts of Japanese goods since last summer's export control measures seem to be winding down, with customers returning to UNIQLO and Toyota Lexus" (Sakata 2020). Pop-culture has brought Japan and South Korea

together to collaborate on projects that not only give artists the opportunity, but it gives the fans an opportunity to invest more in both Japan and South Korea. Throughout both of these continuous pop-culture export waves, have increased and maintained positive relations between each country, but it does not undermine the effects of WW2 on Japan-South Korea.

Japanese pop-culture has spread across the world through media, consumer goods, technology, music, fashion, and cosmetics. The success of the girl group Pink Lady (Keiko Masada and Nemoto Mitsuyo) and of Sakamoto Kyu's song "Sukiyaki" launched the beginning of Japan's pop culture export boom. In 1963, Sakamoto Kyu's song "Sukiyaki" was the first Japanese song to top the Billboard 100 and Pink Lady's hit single "Kiss in the Dark" reached No. 37 on the American Billboard charts. By the 1980s, the spread of Japanese pop culture exports was so successful that Pink Lady was the first Japanese girl group duo to perform in Seoul, South Korea, twenty-five years after the normalization of relations between Japan and South Korea. Although relations between the two countries remained tense, the spread of pop-culture became a method for Japan to fix relationships it had with other countries in Asia. Pink Lady became cultural ambassadors for Japan and their style was focused around pastel colors and a mix of a cute as well as sexy. Their looks portrayed innocence and femininity and they became an inspiration to other groups in Japan. Japan's image was softening and becoming more 'kawaii'



(cute) around the world, but in Asia it would not be enough to smooth relations with all countries due to Japan's past.

Japan's economy was shifting from producing material items such as metal and cotton to a service economy that was producing consumer goods and pop-culture items to export to the world. In the late seventies and early eighties Japan went through a pop-culture boom since the country was able to successfully export its pop-culture throughout Asia and internationally. Part of Japan's early success in exporting pop culture products lay in its ability to incorporate western culture into its own, de-emphasizing Japan's distinctive national character. *By masking some of its particular culture and traditions, Japanese products were more easily accepted in other countries.* Japan was successful at promoting its pop-culture globally because it detached these products from Japan's imperial past, making it easier for people in countries such as South Korea or other nations that were affected by Imperial Japan would grow to be more accepting of Japanese pop-culture. Japan has learned to soften its image to become more cute (Kawaii/ 可愛い), marketing characters such as Hello Kitty, Doraemon; and Domo to garner international success. Pastel colors and cute, bubbly characters attracted young consumers and changed perceptions of Japan's national and international identity-

Despite this global success, Japan could not erase its historical legacy and older generations in countries like South Korea could not accept Japanese pop-culture due to the past. However, the younger generations have felt more open to accepting Japanese pop-culture items because they have not experienced the past that older generations have lived through. In addition, while the youth may be more accepting of Japanese pop-culture, it should be noted that not all of the youth are as accepting of Japanese pop-culture. Furthermore, not all groups of people in Japan are being represented in the media or pop-culture equally, with indigenous groups such as

the Ainu and the Ryukyū and ethnic Koreans in Japan (the Zainichi) portrayed in a biased manner. Thus, Japan's national domestic and international identity has changed by exporting products to the world, but despite efforts to decrease animosity and emphasize harmony, tensions remain.

## The Success of the Post-War Japan Era

Post-War Japan's strong economic growth focused on the strength of its industrial sector, and Japan developed internationally competitive exports in sectors such as automobiles and electronic goods. The 1964 Olympics demonstrated that Japan had undergone an economic miracle and was able to produce high quality, precision goods using advanced technology. Japan's rise to become the second largest economy in the world created a new, glittering international image. Japan was not "a faceless economic superpower", Japan relied on increasing its technology and economy, but Japan also focused in increasing the spread of its culture influence worldwide to garner both economic prosperity and dominance (Iwabuchi 2).

Japan faced a lot of scrutiny from its neighbors due to the traumatic historical past that is connected with Japan. It should be noted that Japan's historical past will always be connected with Japan. Japan will not be able to disconnect itself or erase the past. In order for Japan to be successful in the transmission of popular culture and media, Japan sought to shape its products so that they did not appear Japanese, but they also did not appear to be western. Dating back to prewar Japan, Japan constructed its national identity in distinction to the West as well as to other Asian countries (Iwabuchi 9). There was a slogan created called *wakon yōsai* (和魂洋才) that means "Japanese spirit, Western Technologies" (Iwabuchi 9). Japan incorporated western technologies but also sought to preserve its own distinctive culture, offering a hybrid that was

arguably better suited to Japanese and Asian consumers. One of the most famous cultural exports from Japan was the television series called ‘Oshin’ (おしん) .

#### The Domestic & International Acceptance of Oshin/おしん

The Japanese television program ‘Oshin’ first aired in 1983 through the public broadcasting company Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK). Viewers reacted positively and the series achieved very high audience shares, with a peak rating of 62.9% (Takashi144). One year later, Oshin was broadcasted in Singapore and was very successful in the viewer rating. By the late 1990s, Oshin was broadcasted to 52 countries in Asia, Africa, South America, Europe, and North America. The drama Oshin is about a little girl who lives in a mountain village who faced various struggles and misfortunes before becoming a successful business woman (Sneider 1989). This drama was a rags-to-riches story that resonated with domestic viewers in Japan and international viewers. Oshin was different from western television programs such as “Dallas” or “Miami Vice” because these dramas focused were fast-paced and characters were generally wealthy (Sneider 1989). Oshin could be considered a drama that was a ‘breath of fresh air’ because viewers could relate their personal lives to this drama.

Oshin was different from western media television that were broadcast at the time because this drama focused on the importance of hard-work. It allowed for people who were gravely affected from World War II to create dreams and achieve their goals. Oshin was extremely successful in Asian countries because audiences could personally relate to the central character’s struggles. Even the name ‘Oshin’ was correlated with “perseverance and patience” (Takashi 144). Oshin changed the viewers’ because it was able to connect to people on an emotional and personal level. As Takashi explains, the drama’s focus on “family, work and life appealed to viewers, Japanese and non-Japanese alike, transcending national, ethnic and cultural

barriers, and traveled into areas where the state power did not wield control” (Takashi 144). In addition to the appeal of its central themes, the way in which Oshin was broadcast throughout Asia was both innovative and successful. By localizing the product to specific national audiences, Oshin’s broadcaster ensured that it would be accepted by international audiences that did not have a positive view of Japan.

For instance, given atrocities committed by Imperial Japan in China during World War II, Japan had to find a way to successfully broadcast a Japanese television program in China without it seeming distinctively Japanese. Various Japanese companies such as the Japan Foundation worked with the Chinese broadcasting Station to create “Ashin”. Oshin was changed to “Ashin” was the result of the cooperation of Japanese and Chinese television broadcasting companies that worked to make the original drama Oshin more acceptable in China by having it dubbed in the Chinese language (Takashi 144-145). Ashin was accepted extremely positively by Chinese viewers because it became a drama that they could relate their personal lives too. As Takashi comments, at the time that the series was broadcast, *“When Ashin starts, people disappear from the city streets”* (Takashi 149). Oshin would be altered to be accepted by people of the country where the show was being broadcast, thus it garnered a lot of popularity and success from the audiences watching the program. Oshin was used to spread Japanese media to the world, but the program was also used to change how people viewed Japan. For example, viewers in Indonesia changed their views of Japan after watching Oshin as Takashi describes:

“Japanese people seemed to show no interests in each other, and it was felt that they were not sympathetic to other people . . . Actually, Japanese people, especially the women, were obedient and loyal to their parents and husbands . . . I only imagined what it was like to live in Japan . . . Japan is an advanced country in terms of industry and economy, which I have learned while watching this program” (Takashi 153).

Oshin had the power to change viewers' past negative opinions of Japan and Japanese people, building a more positive image of Japan. An NHK executive Yoshino Ueno commented how viewers in less developed countries could relate more to *Oshin* because prior to Japan becoming an economic, technology, and media superpower; Japan started with a poor beginning (Sneider 1989). *Oshin* was able to centered around themes that attracted the viewers emotionally because it could be related to their lives, it emphasized the emotional connection with the viewers.

Because many countries in Asia and throughout the global South did not have money to buy foreign television programs and convert them for domestic use, the Japanese government offered cultural grants to subsidize the purchase of *Oshin*. Japan used the idea of gifting *Oshin* to other countries to not make Japan seem like a media-power hungry nation, but to create a trade of media between nations that would create an equal power-structure relationship (Takashi 155). By creating an equal power-structure relationship Japan and other countries, Japan would increase Japan's positive image and it would not seem that Japan wants to create relationships with other countries for monetary or business gains. Japanese broadcasting companies even stated that "[this] exchange should be promoted without triggering 'cultural invasion'" (Takashi 154). As Japan was garnering more success from exporting its media, it did not want to re-activate its past by forcing other countries especially in Asia that would make it more difficult for Japan to have success in exporting its pop-culture throughout the region. Especially, in the seventies and eighties Japan had strained relations with various countries in the region. Localizing a product to be accepted in a country that Japan was exporting products to was one way to be successful at exporting media. As time progresses, Japan makes significant progression in expanding its technology.

## The Influence of Technology on Popular Culture

*Economic growth brought increased use of technology and allowed new media and popular cultural products to spread more efficiently and effectively, and with the spread of media products and popular culture, Japanese cultural industries created new technologies to keep up with and increase consumer demand. Japanese companies were constantly advancing new technologies that promised to make their lives easier and allowed them to escape from their long, arduous working days. As technology became more integrated into Japanese society and culture, more and more people were able to connect through technology and communicate online instead of in person, leading Iwabuchi to argue that Japanese social relations were increasingly characterized by “electronic individualism,” which meant “that Japan collectivity is increasingly based upon electronic communication and therefore becoming more precarious” (Iwabuchi 25). While technology makes people’s lives easier, consumers in Japan and in other countries were able invest more time and money into aspects of pop-culture that they preferred. Japan entered the satellite business sphere, and bought US companies that were involved in the cultural sector since the US was considered to be the global innovator in exporting pop-culture at the time (Iwabuchi 29). Japan began to break into US and other markets to export its own technology products and products that were made in Japan begin to appear in global markets:*

“Made-in-Japan global commodities. . .include not only Japanese hardware commodities such as the Walkman, instant cameras, or VCRs, but also ‘software’ cultural products such as animation and computer games, and that even the system of producing pop-idols, a process that has been predominantly exported to Asia, has come more into the foreground” (Iwabuchi 31).

The rise of a middle class also increased demand for new technologies. As Iwabuchi describes, “in the late 1950s the three treasures were the three S’s- senpūki (扇風機), sentakuki

(洗濯機), suihanki (炊飯器) (the electric fan, the washing machine, and the electric rice cooker); in the 1960s the three C's were a car, a cooler (air conditioner), and a color television" (Iwabuchi 103). Whereas consumers once saved to acquire electronic goods to make their lives easier, continued rising incomes led consumers to look for ways to forget the harder, more tedious aspects of their lives through pop culture and media products that offered them a kind of escapism (Iwabuchi 26). Japan would continue to invest in the technology sector because that correlates to the rise in success of media and pop-culture, but Japan would also begin to invest more into exporting its pop-culture and media products domestically and internationally.

### Making Culturally Odorless Pop-Culture

Japanese pop-culture was known because it originated in Japan because of its unique aspects that attracted consumers worldwide to buy these products. The innovation and attractiveness of these products made consumers wanted to have the best products on the market that were coming from Japan. Japan relied on innovative products to have a successful pop-culture export worldwide. While globalization and the spread of technology have facilitated transnational flows of popular culture and media, they have not erased national interests and influences. Japan's growing interest in popular cultural exports aimed at developing a lucrative market and improving Japan's national image. This created a dilemma, however, since Japanese cultural exports to other Asian countries could be seen as "a provocative and contentious issue in light of Japan's colonialist past and lingering economic exploitation in the region" (Iwabuchi 2002: 2). In order to increase interest and acceptance of Japanese culture outside of Japan, cultural products not only emphasized "cute-ness," but also sought to cultivate a non-offensive "cultural odor," that is, to "focus on the way in which cultural features of a country of origin and images or ideas of its national, in most cases stereotyped, way of life are associated positively

with a product of consumption process” (Iwabuchi 27). Similarly, pop culture exports originally hid their “Japanese-ness” – that is, they “do not evoke images or ideas of a Japanese lifestyle, even if consumers know that it is made in Japan ... Japanese consumer goods do not seek to sell on the back of a Japanese way of life” (Iwabuchi 28). Thus Japan’s popular culture exports needed to seem Japanese, but not Japanese at the same time. Japanese pop-culture would receive backlash in Asia because of its association with Japan since at the time of Japan’s pop-culture boom, it began to normalize relations with countries throughout Asia.

In order to accomplish this, Japan’s pop culture industries deliberately emphasized *mukokuseki* (無国籍) – “something or someone lacking any nationality, but also implying the erasure of racial or ethnic characteristics or a context, which does not imprint a particular culture or country with these features” (Iwabuchi 28) – and hybridism – “anything foreign can be domesticated into the familiar ... in which fixed and exclusive national/ cultural boundaries can be blurred” (Iwabuchi 54). Japan can appeal to foreign audiences to increase their interests in Japanese cultural products by having these products consciously or unconsciously being related to Japan (Iwabuchi 33).

At the same time, a lot of Japanese cultural products are localized to garner attraction in the audiences that they want to attract. For example, the animated television series Pokémon is known to children throughout the United States. Although there are subtle differences in lifestyle to suggest that the characters are not in the United States, at the same time nothing indicates that this is necessarily a Japanese television animation program. Onigiri (おにぎり) which is a Japanese snack that is made from rice into a triangle and wrapped with nori (のり/Seaweed)



was shown in Pokémon in the United States, but was considered to be a jelly doughnut. Japanese pop-culture is blurred to be Japanese culture, but at the same time it is erased to not be perceived as Japanese pop-culture. This allows for Japanese culture to be better received in other countries, but at the same time it is an erasure of Japanese culture and identity. Japan's goal of exporting pop-culture to the world is to become a model or the origin for other countries in the region to export their pop-culture.

## Japanese Pop Culture as Model of Success and Bridge to Western Culture

One way that Japan has successfully exported pop-culture to other countries in Asia and around the world is through the localization of its products to appeal primarily to middle classes around the world. Japan's economic success made it a model for other Asian nations that hoped to enjoy similar success and made Japanese pop culture products particularly attractive to middle class consumers. Iwabuchi explains:

“Japanese nationalists easily translate this spread of Japanese popular culture to other parts of Asia into the Asia-yearning-for-Japan. . . this view displays a belief that Asian people are now yearning for Japanese affluence, technology, and popular culture the same way that Japanese people in the postwar era yearned for the American way of life” (Iwabuchi 66).

As the middle class grew throughout Asia, more Asian consumers sought out Japanese products, which came to be considered the new standard in other markets. By creating attractive products and becoming the standard in producing and exporting pop-culture globally, Japan was able to successfully compete against western products that had been dominating the markets for year (Iwabuchi 67). Asian consumers were more attracted to products from Japan, not because they are Japanese products, but because they come from a non-western country (Iwabuchi 66-68). Japan created new commonalities between Asia and Japan:

“The era of Japan’s national identity that was constructed simply in terms of its ‘original’ and ‘unique’ receptiveness to Western modernity is over. Japan’s capacity for producing attractive cultural products and disseminating abroad, particularly to Asia, and its leading role in creating an Asian popular sphere, it is asserted, should feature in fostering the newly Asian common” (Iwabuchi 69).

Japanese products continued to be associated with Japan, but they were adapted to local markets and in order to garner international success in the region. Much like Japan historically incorporated western culture while maintaining Japanese spirit, Japan sought to market its popular culture as both Japanese and Asian.

It should not be denied that Japan feels that it has lost some of its traditional culture by incorporating western culture in order to conform to western norms and standards. At the same time, Japan sought to use its close relationship with the west to establish its own media and pop culture dominance in Asia. Japan has been accepted by the west because it has implemented aspects of western culture into Japanese culture, and Japan is seen in a much more positive light because it has aspects of western culture. Japan being accepted by the west means that Japan felt that it was best suited to spreading these ideas to other Asian nations. Japan has viewed itself as superior to other Asian nations by virtue of its successful adaptation of aspects of Western culture into its own culture and thus sees itself as a bridge between the West and Asia (Iwabuchi 66 & 69). Japan wanted to be the model that other Asian countries followed and used pop-culture exports to make Japan seem more eye-catching to other Asian nations. While Japan assimilated aspects of western culture into Japanese culture, over time aspects of western culture became ingrained into Japanese culture. Japan created a hybrid culture of western and Japanese culture that made Japan extremely successful and Japan viewed itself being better than other Asian nations (Iwabuchi 62, 66, 69).

## Expressing Nostalgia Through Pop-Culture

In contrast to regular nostalgia, regarded “as a symptom of extreme homesickness,” Japan wants to re-evoke its past through capitalist nostalgia, the “appropriation of the ‘past’ through stylistic connotation, conveying ‘pastness’ by the glossy qualities of the image” (Iwabuchi 173). Japan wants to in some degree re-live its past through the export of pop-culture:

“Through consumption, Japanese can (re) experience their lost innocence without jeopardizing the comforts of advanced capitalism that ensured its ordinary loss. Japan’s neocolonial economic dominance assures access to spiritual renewal. In the nostalgic representation of premodern ‘innocence’, Japan is not engaging in a dialogue with ‘Asia’ but consuming it for the transient pleasures of recuperation and refreshment” (Iwabuchi 175).

It is important to re-visit Japan’s history during the Edo Period (江戸時代). Shogunate Tokugawa Ieyasu (徳川・家康) had created a policy for Japan called ‘Sakoku’ (鎖国), which directly translates to self-isolation. The purpose of Sakoku was protect Japan from western imperialism which had negatively impacted neighboring states such as China. During Sakoku, the majority of Japanese people were unable to leave Japan and international trade was limited to only a few countries. However, a lot of well-known traditional culture known Japan flourished in the Edo Period such as kabuki (歌舞伎). The self-isolation of Japan lasted for two-hundred-fourteen years until, Commodore Matthew Perry arrived in 1853 and forced Japan to open itself to foreign nations. Throughout the Meiji Restoration (明治維新), Japan had to quickly and forcefully adopt aspects of western culture in order to prevent western nations from gaining total control of Japan. Japan lost a lot of its traditional culture as a result, but at the same time it was recognized by the west positively, and by forcefully adopting aspects of western culture Japan was able to garner success and power. Thus, Japan had very strong relations with the West and

by the Shōwa Era (昭和時代), Japan was powerful enough to forcefully spread its own culture to other countries in Asia. Before and after the World Wars, Japan has viewed itself as being a link to the West and has seen itself as a model for other Asian nations to follow.

Through the export of pop-culture, Japan is able to create an unequal bilateral relationship with other Asian countries that enables Japan to have the advantage in trade with other nations in Asia. At first glance, the goal of exporting pop-culture was to promote better relations with countries in Asia that were affected negatively by Japan during the World Wars and to soften Japan's image globally. Another factor of the export of pop-culture from Japan is to displace western culture and create media/pop-culture that is more relatable to Japanese consumers and other consumers in Asia. Japan wants to be the standard in media/pop-culture by having dominance in these fields and projecting that onto other nations in Asia, so that they will garner success by following Japan's lead. There is a tension between Japan's efforts to use the export of Japanese cultural products to create a better relationship with other nations, on the one hand, and its nostalgia for its past success and desire for global leadership, on the other. This has caused some concerns for the older generations in countries that were affected by Japan because it feels like they are re-living some aspects of the past. The younger generations view Japan on a more positive level because they do not have a connection to the past. This creates a difference in opinion between the younger and older generation that affects the success of Japan's export of pop-culture. Economic growth and the rise of middle classes throughout Asia have increased consumption of Japanese pop-culture and media products, as demand for art, food, fashion and entertainment has grown, especially among younger generations (Iwabuchi 126; Otmazgin 2014: 31). While the consumption of Japanese products in other Asian countries may be seen as a "more detached, superficial consumption" that reflects global mass culture more than essential

“Japaneseness,” Iwabuchi argues that Japanese popular culture is appealing to Asian audiences because it resonates culturally with these audiences (Iwabuchi 127, 130). Both cultural industries and the Japanese government view this as a very positive aspect because Japan has successfully created an image that is viewed more positively in countries that were negatively affected by Japanese colonization.

## The Innovation of the Export of Japanese Pop-Culture Throughout the World (History and Process)

The sphere of popular culture (pop-culture) consists of various product and sub-product genres that are used to attract all types of consumers into various aspects of a country’s pop-culture. The production, dissemination and consumption of these products are increasingly dominated by new forms of information technology and social media (Otmazgin 2014 2). Japanese pop-culture and media-related exports have come to play an important role in Japan’s economy. In contrast to other economic sectors that suffered a slump in the early 1990s as Japan’s economy went into recession, pop culture exports became the fastest-growing part of the economy (Terada 2003). The global expansion of Japan’s cultural media products soared in the second half of the 1990s and has remained strong ever; in 2018, Japan had the third largest sales of media culture in the world, behind the United States and China (Otmazgin 2020, 41-42). In addition to its economic importance, pop-culture exports provided Japan with a new way to spread its culture and improve. The export of pop-culture became one of the best ways for countries to export their culture world-wide because consumers are not always focused on historical or political ties between countries, but rather on the innovation or attraction of pop

culture products (Otmazgin 20146). In his 2014 book on the political economy of Japanese popular culture in Asia, Nissim Otmazgin explains that popular culture commodities “have greater potential to shape people’s identities and images” such as “the impact of Japanese anime on Asian youngsters’ fascination with Japan (Otmazgin 2014 8). Japanese pop culture exports not only offered huge economic profits but also enabled offered a way for Japan to make an impact on the world and develop its soft power.

Japan’s success in exporting pop-culture stems from creating appealing products as well as innovative methods for marketing and disseminating these, taking advantage of technological advancements to lower costs and make pop-culture products affordable to people of all economic classes. For example, high culture such as kabuki and other Japanese traditional arts was no longer restricted to people from a higher class, but available to the public more generally and exported throughout all of Japan and internationally (Otmazgin 2014 10). Thus, producing pop-culture became attractive to businesses because of the economic success associated with the export of pop-culture to local and international markets. Japan was constantly being innovative in producing its pop-culture because Japan wanted to create a lot of trends that attracted consumers to all aspects of Japanese pop-culture goods (Otmazgin 2014 16).

Because of the nature of pop-culture, the development of attractive cultural and media products requires more creativity and is less subject to direction from company managers or government officials; as Otmazgin explains, “Conventional methods of fostering the development of manufacturing industries, such as investing in research and development or in human resource training or technological and physical infrastructure, do not necessarily work to promote artistic and cultural creativity that thrives on freedom and flexibility” (Otmazgin 2020, 41). Japanese cultural industries worked to identify creative individuals who wanted to express

their ideas to the world to work in this field (Otmazgin 2014 15). Japan worked to develop pop-culture at the local, grass-roots level, which is different from Western-style pop-culture that is often managed by large corporations. Anyone who had an idea and that expressed their ideas by any form of pop-culture could become a part of Japan's pop-culture industry. Since pop culture products are generally less costly to produce and do not necessarily require specialized training, more people have access to the field, making it more flexible and open (Otmazgin 2014 15-16).

Because of the importance of artistic and creative flexibility, the Japanese cultural industry began with local companies to spot local talent and identify what worked with local consumers (Otmazgin 2014 15). Before exporting its products to other countries, Japanese companies expanded from local to national markets, determining what worked with its own domestic markets before expanding into international markets. Similarly, as Japanese companies expanded into international markets, they worked with local companies that had a deeper and better understanding of trends in local markets (Otmazgin 2014 100). As they did so, Japan emphasized the localization of Japanese products by adapting products to particular markets, as first seen in the collaboration between Japanese and Chinese companies (Otmazgin 2014 100).

For Japanese pop-culture to become more successful in other markets, Japanese and local companies collaborated to translate products into the other country's mother language (Otmazgin 2014 101). One of the most important aspects for Japanese pop-culture was to start with local and smaller companies. Then the success garnered from local companies could be adopted by national companies and then international companies. Large Japanese companies that have successfully marketed Japanese pop-culture have deliberately acted like smaller companies in order to avoid the impression that they were taking over local markets (Otmazgin 2014 104). The innovative, ground-breaking quality of Japanese pop-culture exports successfully persuaded

many people outside of Japan, especially young people, that Japan was “cool” and that it no longer posed a threat to other countries the way that Imperial Japan had done. By the 1970s, the Japanese government began to recognize the economic and diplomatic potential of cultural exports:

“In the postwar period (昭和時代), another form of overseas cultural promotion was undertaken by the Japan Foundation, which was established in June 1972 as part of the Japanese government’s attempt to pay more attention to cultural aspects of international relations” (Otmazgin 2014 79).

*Initially*, the Japanese government was not heavily involved in promoting Japan’s pop-culture sector, considering this to be less important than the technology and automobile industries (Otmazgin 78). However, in the 1990s, the government recognized the success of Japanese pop-culture and began to actively support these industries (Otmazgin 77). One of the many goals of Japan’s export of pop-culture was to change negative views of Japan, developing a positive “brand” for the country:

“Japan’s Branding Strategy. [This] strategy [is] a state-sponsored campaign to advance the branding of Japanese products in tandem with broader policy initiatives designed to upgrade the country’s image overseas. It reflects the brand consciousness of nation building efforts that are primarily concerned with projecting the image of the nation to a global audience” (Otmazgin 2014 80).

As interest in Japan’s pop-culture commodities grew, consumers sought out Japanese anime, manga, music and video games even when governments such as South Korea’s imposed bans on these exports; indeed, bans on Japanese pop-culture products increased their desirability, leading to a flourishing piracy markets (Otmazgin 2014 45). As technology became more advanced, people were able to access illegal pirating sites to view their favorite types of Japanese pop-culture media (Otmazgin 2014 45). The internet created new ways for people to access pop-culture quickly and easily, and often illegally (Otmazgin 2014 45). Currently, societies rely more



on websites on the internet rather than physical copies of television programs, movies, or dramas; the internet has made it convenient for people to access global media with one Google search legal or through a pirating website. There were even loopholes for people to access Japanese pop-culture in Asian countries when they were under a ban. For example, in South Korea, people could access Japanese music through bars and internet cafes (Otmazgin 2014 45). However, when pop-culture is accessed through pirating websites, it means that creators do not receive royalties for their intellectual property and the companies that produce this content lose out on profits. Thus, this caused the Japanese government to call for stricter enforcement of copyright laws and Japan is working with its neighboring countries to create ways to combat piracy (Otmazgin 2014 47-48). Piracy provided benefits because Japan began to work with countries in the region and it increased the popularity of Japanese pop-culture products, but it created a loss of profits and creators were not getting credit.

### Japanese Television Programs: One of the First Pop-Culture Exports from Japan

Japanese television programs were some of Japan's first cultural exports. As discussed above, one of the most famous television programs was the export of the TV program called *Oshin*. Asian audiences enjoyed this show because they could relate to the experiences and values that were presented by the characters in *Oshin*, which conformed more closely to Asian values than Western television programs did (Iwabuchi 130). Japanese television programs offered media representation of Asian lives and allowed people throughout the region to identify with the characters, especially the programs were translated into other languages. This kind of localization helped audiences to feel more of a connection with the programs and at the same time it erased to a degree that it was a pop-culture product from Japan. In addition, the styling,

music, plot, and acting made Japanese television programs popular throughout Asia and the rest of the world.

Japanese television programs were ground-breaking due to their format and their effectiveness in marketing other pop-culture products. They used advertising to promote various Japanese pop-culture products that would garner popularity because the audiences who watched Japanese TV programs would want to buy those products (Iwabuchi 142). As mentioned previously, Japanese television programs allowed for people to dream that they could achieve their dreams through hard work, just as the characters on the television programs did. Japanese TV programs used escapism or made relatable stories so that audiences felt a personal connection to the characters in the show (Iwabuchi 143-144). Japanese television programs were particularly aimed at younger generations since younger consumers were more interested in new and innovative products and willing to spend more money on these (Iwabuchi 143-144). Japanese television programs were innovative because they provided plot lines that allowed for the audiences to create conversations with one another which increased the spread of Japanese pop-culture throughout other countries (Iwabuchi 142). The way that emotions were acted out by the actors and actresses in Japanese television programs appealed to viewers who thought that “love is expressed more eloquently” (Iwabuchi 144). As mentioned previously, Japanese television programs wanted to create that connection to gain more viewers to watch programs from Japan. Moreover, Japanese television programs created fashion trends that the audiences preferred, particularly with the younger generations (Iwabuchi 143).

In addition, the shorter length of Japanese television programs proved to be popular since they could be watched without taking too much time. Specifically, they were aimed to the members of the rising middle class who had long working days but could still make time to

watch Japanese TV shows because they were much shorter and more convenient to watch (Iwabuchi 146). This was truly ground-breaking because people could take time to relax and enjoy TV programs. Another innovative aspect of Japanese TV programs was the theme song because they were always included in the beginning and ending of a show so that people could remember and identify the show by listening to the song (Iwabuchi 146). Japan wanted to promote its music and did so by including theme songs for Japanese TV programs or anime that helped both media programs and music garner more attention and profits.

### Fandom Definition & Importance

Fans became vital to Japanese pop-culture because they created communities of people in Japan or world-wide who shared a common interest and were able to talk about their favorite aspects of Japanese pop-culture from TV programs, manga/anime, J-Pop, Fashion, Kawaii culture, and much more. The definition of a fandom is “a term which describes communities built around a shared enjoyment of an aspect of popular culture, such as books, movies, TV shows, bands, sports or sports teams, etc. Fan cultures are examples of participatory cultures. Participatory cultures involve fans acting not only as consumers but also as producers and creators of some form of creative media” (Grinell College). Fandoms influence Japanese pop-culture industries because they can decide what they like or dislike and what changes they would like to see. In addition, fandoms are vital to Japanese pop-culture because without fans, Japanese pop-culture would not have had the amount of success that it has had and continues to have.

### Japanese Pop Music (J-Pop/ジャポップ) Definition & Important Themes

J-Pop: “J-Pop, represents another production format constructed in Japan through the process of borrowing, mimicking, and hybridizing American pop and rock music” (Otmazgin 2014 135).

Japanese pop-music would change the way how music is consumed in Asia through three steps that have made it unique from other types of music in the world.

1. “[It] is overwhelmingly, idol-driven. It is not listening to the music per se that is important, but rather the practice of being a fan of the artist that has become indispensable” (Otmazgin 2014 135).
2. “[Diverse] means of communication are utilized as part of promotion” (Otmazgin 2014 135).
3. “[Japanese] pop-music was the first in this region to include casual English lyrics in songs-catchy phrases that are repeated in a stanza” (Otmazgin 2014 135).

Throughout history, Japan has imported foreign elements and incorporated these into its own culture so that over time these come to be thought of as Japanese rather than foreign. J-Pop is similar. It has changed Japanese by offering a style that is more relatable to audiences in Japan and in other parts of Asia. It provided the opportunity for Japanese artists to sing in their mother-tongue, but at the same time it could attract international fans with the use of English which is extremely innovative. The incorporation of English allowed for foreign audiences to relate to J-Pop (Otmazgin 2014 135). In the 1990s, other sectors of Japanese pop-culture such as manga and anime were growing, but J-Pop was growing as well, garnering a lot of popularity from international audiences. J-pop would change how to produce or manage idols in Japan and Asia because it created a system that would influence a lot of countries in Asia.

Japanese pop-culture offered ordinary people the chance to become successful. Japanese music companies used the slogan that “anyone can be a star” (Otmazgin 2014 131). This attracted the youth to try out auditioning with hopes of becoming a J-Pop idol. However, auditioning to become a J-Pop idol does not mean that the process is easy. J-Pop idols are

expected to wear exquisite clothing and costumes and to be perfect in various fields such as dancing and singing (Otmazgin 2014 131 &135). J-Pop idols are expected to be trend-setters for the younger generation and encourage fans to buy the kind of technology, fashion, cosmetics, and anything that the idols use. J-Pop companies work hard to make sure that fans have opportunities for close interaction with idols during the live performances and that fans feel welcomed at their shows (Otmazgin 2014 131). It is vital for all aspects of Japanese pop-culture to be advertised because that garners fans, media coverage, profits, and helps to change Japan's image to be accepted more positively worldwide. J-Pop is intertwined with other aspects of Japanese pop-culture because it allows for J-pop idols to have more opportunity to commercialize/spread their music to new fans and companies can receive more profits by doing sponsorship with J-Pop idols because fans will want to buy the products that they sponsor or use (Otmazgin 2014 136-137). Japanese pop-culture emphasizes for its products to have a lot of media attention to garner popularity and profits. Companies protect their artists' music by insisting on strict copyright laws and restricting fans from taking their own videos of performances (Otmazgin2014 132). Japanese music companies make sure that there are all types of merchandise ranging from t-shirts to CD's (Otmazgin 2014 132). Fans who are a part of the fandoms will spend a lot of money on merchandise to support their favorite artists, especially on limited edition merchandise items sold only at concerts.

One of the most famous J-Pop groups in Japan and worldwide is a group called AKB48 (Akihabara/ 秋葉原) which has multiple sub/sister groups that are in Japan such as SKE48 (Sakae, Nagoya / 栄市、名古屋市), NMB48 (Nanba, Osaka/ 難波、大阪県 ), and HKT48 (Hakata Fukuoka/ 博多区、福岡市 ). AKB48 is one example of how J-Pop was able to

become popular throughout Japan and internationally. The producer created the Japanese idol group with the idea of selecting teen girls to perform daily in a theater of their own (Otmazgin 2014 133). *By recruiting and training teams of girls*, AKB48 is one of Japan's most famous J-Pop groups because they produce a variety of merchandise from T-shirts to playing cards, and they are heavily advertised in various media outlets, including commercials and TV shows (Otmazgin 133). In addition, AKB48 fans have both physical and online access to their music, thus fans can get their favorite AKB48 hard-copy albums that are accompanied with a photo book or download the songs through authorized music streaming apps (Otmazgin 2014 133).

One of the most ground-breaking tactics that AKB48 used was to create groups that are more local to certain prefectures to gain more popularity in these regions to increase AKB48's success throughout all of Japan. AKB48 also had fan signing events that would allow for the fans to get the opportunity to interact with their favorite idols of AKB48 by buying their merchandise. The more merchandise that the fans buy, the more chances they have to win lotteries for special events held by AKB48 or their sub/sister groups (Otmazgin 2014 133). Interactions with the fans are vital because the more fans that AKB48 has and the more that it creates domestic and international fandoms talk about their interests in AKB48 and spread the word about AKB48 to others, the higher the profits for the group.

AKB48 even created fan cafes where fans who are involved in the fandoms or normal fans can meet up and learn more about AKB48 (Otmazgin 2014 133). The idea of fan cafes changed the way that music companies advertise for their groups/idols to fans by using the enticement of limited promotions to increase fans' interest and encourage them to spend more money and buy more products. that increase the fans desires to visit them and spend their money on the provided services. The producers of AKB48 have sold this idol selection process and

group promotion to other music companies in Asia. Currently, there is JKT48 (Jakarta, Indonesia), SNH48 (Shanghai, China), TPE48 (Taipei, Taiwan), BKN48 (Bangkok, Thailand), and MNL48 (Manila, Philippines). In addition, Japan attracts foreign consumers in Asia by producing the best of J-Pop to spread the most well-known Japanese pop songs to garner more popularity and attention in Japan (Otmazgin 2014 111). J-Pop uses the idea of working locally, then nationally, and finally branching out internationally through media or advertisements. At the same time, it encourages people to dream of becoming an idol, even though the actual chances of becoming a star are remote. J-Pop also created spaces where fans could interact with each other, at the same time that it allows for J-pop idols or groups to gain more publicity. J-Pop idols and groups create an experience that allows for genuine interactions between the fans and the artist making it unique to Japanese pop-music.

## Manga & Anime (漫画とアニメ): Terms and Influence to the Export of Japanese Pop-Culture Domestically & Internationally

The Japanese manga and anime industries are very interesting because they allow fans to participate directly. Both amateurs and professionals work in these industries because professionals are able to aid the process of creating and editing manga and anime, while amateurs are able to create new concepts that can be tested with fans (Otmazgi 2014 56).

Japanese pop-culture relies on the fans because they could create fandoms that help to spread Japanese pop-culture nationally and internationally. Manga and anime producers provide fans with the opportunity to express their views on the kinds of changes that they would like to see in their favorite anime and the opportunity to create their own adaptation of their favorite manga. This creates an extremely close connection between producers and fans, which is different from the approach of western companies-

The term otaku (おたく) is “Japanese slang coined in the 1980s [and] refers to people [with] an obsessive interest, generally in video games, anime, or manga (Otmazgin2014 60). Like J-pop fandoms, otaku are vital to Japan’s manga and anime industries. Together with amateur freelancers called “freeters,” a neologism composed of the English word “free” and the German word “arbeiter” (laborer), they form the grass-roots of this industry because they often provide trends that fans want to see in manga and anime (Otmazgin 2014 60). The work of such amateurs is published by dōjinshi (同人誌), “publishers that allow fans and amateur creators to issue small-scale editions of manga that parody characters and story lines already in the market without being sued for copyright violation” (Otmazgin 2014 59). By allowing fans and amateurs to express their views and contribute to the field, manga and anime companies win loyal customers and generate creative new ideas that may become popular trends (Otmazgin 2014 59). Japanese pop-culture, emphasizes working with people who dream of using pop-culture as a way to express their creativity and has created new industries that empower amateurs who have potential to identify trends and increase the export of Japanese pop-culture worldwide. During Japan’s ‘lost decade’ (economic recession), there was an increase of people who wanted to work in the manga & anime industry because they wanted to escape the harsh realities of the Japanese work-life that often required a lot of overtime (残業) and stress (Otmazgin 2014 61). For both consumers and creators, Japanese pop-culture offers an opportunity for people to escape from their real lives and have the power/opportunity to dream about their interests. It also gave hope to people who want to become famous because Japanese pop-culture sends the message that anyone could have a chance.



Some of Japan's most famous manga creators started working on *dōjinshi* before becoming professional artists such as Akamatsu Ken, CLAMP, Takahashi Rumiko, and many more. This inspires the younger generations that if they have the potential or with hard-work they can enter into this field to become a famous mangaka (漫画家/ manga artist). In addition, like other aspects of Japanese pop-culture, *dōjinshi* relied on creating manga and other merchandise to increase sales. If a *dōjinshi* becomes popular, it creates a demand among the fans who desire the product because *dōjinshi* manga can only be produced in limited copies to avoid getting sued for copyright violations (Otmazgin 2014 59). Like J-Pop, the fans are just as important to producing manga and anime. In comparison to Western media products, fans have more of say in the preferences that they would like to see in these products.

As Japan was recovering from the damages of WWII, there was an increase of the middle class in the Post-War Period (昭和時代) and a rising middle class is significant because that means the number of consumers are increasing to purchase more commodities or aspects of pop-culture in Japan. Throughout this period, the number of creators and fans significantly increased for manga and anime because people had the time and money to invest in these products (Otmazgin 2014 61). The number of otakus also increased and this translated into larger profits for the manga and anime industries. Otakus are important to the success of manga and anime because they are the first fans to buy new products, know about all of the new trends in the industry, and companies began to work with otakus to attract more fans and conduct market research to determine the kinds of products that would sell the best (Otmazgin 2014 62). Collaborating with otakus is significant to this industry because it gives otakus the opportunity to work with companies; the manga and anime industry were ground-breaking because companies

worked directly with fans who are more passionate about these products. ~~In~~ Japanese pop-culture companies recognize that the success of pop-culture goods comes from the fans who invest their time and money into these products, thus companies seek input from fans about what they want to see and buy. Currently, with the increase in of advancements in technology such as (manga apps or streaming services), fans in Japan or international fans can access their favorite products with the click of a button. This has increased the spread of Japanese pop-culture throughout Japan and worldwide.

## Kawaii Culture (可愛い文化) : Definition & Importance to the Export of Japanese Pop-Culture

Kawaii culture (可愛い) has been a part of Japanese pop-culture since the beginning of its export boom. Otmazgin explains that this concept has been vaguely defined as:

the primal innocence of childhood, epitomized by playful designs in ‘ice cream cherry-blossom pink and [green tea] colors. [*Kawaii*] is ‘attractive by reason of daintiness or picturesqueness in manners or appearance a child or a small animal. [*Kawaii*] initially driven by teenagers and younger women but in recent years it has spread to other segments of Japanese society (Otmazgin 2014 133 & 134).

In the seventies stationery and other merchandise items were made to advertise these products throughout Japan and worldwide (Otmazgin 2014 134). During the seventies, as Japan was recovering from WWII, they were garnering economic success, but at the same time Japan was trying to change its image into a ‘softer’ Japan. In the eighties, Kawaii culture began to expand to wearable everyday type of clothing primarily in pastel colors, increase in stationery products, and stuffed animals were created to spread Kawaii culture throughout Japan (Otmazgin 2014 134). It should also be mentioned that Harajuku’s iconic kawaii fashion started in the 1970s and has grown to become known as one of the main sources of Japan’s kawaii culture. ~~Then~~ In

the 1990s, kawaii culture began to be incorporated into manga and anime, which significantly increased the spread of all aspects that are a part of kawaii culture throughout Japan and the world (Otmazgin 2014 134). Japan is known to be softer due to the creation of ‘kawaii’ culture and products that resonate with people in Japan and the world who want to be reminiscent of their childhood or invest into cute products.

### Cool Japan (クールジャパン) & Japan’s Identity

Japan’s pop-culture exports grew rapidly throughout the 1970s and 1980s without much government involvement or support. They continued to grow while the rest of Japan’s economy suffered a major decline the so-called lost decade (失われた 10 年) – a period from the 1990s to the first part of the twenty-first century when Japan’s economy suffered a major recession. After the lost decade and the 3/11 earth quake, the Japanese government came to recognize the economic and diplomatic potential of the Japanese pop-culture export boom (Tamaki 123). The Japanese government worked to promote the country’s pop-culture products abroad, hoping to increase interest in Japan’s unique and attractive culture and rebrand the nation using cultural means to boost its image and attraction. Tamaki describes nation branding as follows:

“the reputation of countries. . . behave like the brand images of companies and products, and they are equally critical to the progress, prosperity, and the good management of those places . . . good products, services, cultures, tourism, investments, technology, education, business, people, policies, initiatives, and events produced by a country . . . acquire a positive brand image, which eventually, reflects on the country, and perhaps also becomes its principal asset” (Tamaki 110).

The success of Japan’s pop-culture export boom led the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) in 2011 to establish “the Creative Industries Division, better known as the Cool Japan Division, to supervise the internationalization of Cool Japan and assist Japanese small and

mid-size culture-related firms to pursue a global strategy” (Otmazgin 2020: 43). That same year, METI launched its “Cool Japan” campaign, inspired by the British campaign launched by Prime Minister Tony Blair called ‘Cool Britannia’ (Tamaki 113). Cool Japan was introduced in Singapore, India, China, South Korea, France, Italy, the United States, and Brazil in order to promote Japanese fashion, food, and anime, and encourage tourism to Japan (Otmazgin 2020: 43). The Cool Japan Fund, “a twenty-year public–private fund ear-marked for overseas promotions via the internet and other media platforms,” was approved in 2013 and Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the Japan Foundation, sought to link the marketing of Japan’s pop-culture exports with efforts to improve Japan’s global image through creative campaigns featuring famous pop-culture characters such as Doraemon and Hello Kitty (Otmazgin 2020: 43).

From the government’s perspective, the “Cool Japan” campaign was designed with two primary goals: (1) “promoting a Japan brand that is established on the reputation of Japanese products, particularly the contents industry” and (2) “using Japan’s international appeal in an effort at leveraging post-3/11 reconstruction efforts, and to prepare for the gradual- and steady population decline that challenges Japan’s performance” (Tamaki 117). The government hoped that the Japanese pop-culture industries would help the economy recover from the Lost Decade and the 3/11 earthquake, restoring economic prosperity, and that these industries would promote an extremely positive image to the world.

To grasp a better meaning of ‘Cool Japan’, one needs to determine what is considered to be cool. In Japan, as in much of the world, American culture is and was ‘cool’ and trends in the United States, from fast food chains to American style clothing, quickly become available to any part of the world (McGray 2002). It should not be denied that American pop-culture has been

dominating the world market for a long time and heavily influences countries around the globe. While American power helped spread its culture around the world, the United States also benefited from the positive national branding that came from its pop-culture exports.

Similarly, in Japan's case, Japan's strong post-war economic growth made its popular culture industries more attractive, and the attraction of its pop-culture contributed to further economic growth. Throughout the 1970s and the 1980s, people outside of Japan were drawn to Japanese pop-culture because of its attractiveness and innovative products. However, that did not mean that Japanese pop-culture was universally accepted and it should be noted that it was aimed towards the youth in Asian countries who did not have similarly negative views of Japan since they did not personally experience the hardships of war.

While "Cool Japan" offered a catchy slogan, it was not completely clear what it actually entailed. The term is vague and does not lend itself to a single definition (Tamaki 118). For the government's purposes, Japan's cultural brand can include virtually anything so long as it fosters a positive national brand. In order to be well received globally, characters in Japanese anime and manga were initially designed with a deliberate lack of ethnic features, as described in the term *mukokuseki* (Iwabuchi 28). At the same time that Japan takes pride in its uniqueness (珍しい), it also has adopted western cultural traditions and sees itself as a bridge between Asia and the West (Tamaki 112). Not surprisingly, the Cool Japan campaign has been promoting these ideas in its advertisements for the 2020 now 2021 Tokyo Olympic Games:

“[For] the 2020 Olympic campaign invoked similar language, suggesting that Japanese ‘culture and tradition are unique’, pledging that Tokyo would facilitate the merging [*iyūgō 融合*] of East [*Tōyō 東洋*] and West [*Seiyō 西洋*]” (Tamaki 113).

Cool Japan is ultimately about using pop culture to project a positive image of Japan

“The proposal suggested that Japan has an inherent ‘value’ (*kachi* 価値), that can be distilled down to core cultural attributes such as ‘spirituality’ (*seishinsei* 精神性), ‘agreeability’ (*kyōkanryoku* 教官力), ‘acceptability’ (*juyōryoku* 受容力), and ‘sustainability’. It also claimed that Japan is a mountain of treasures (*takara no yama* 宝の山) that contained pop culture, food, design, architecture, and contemporary art, along with traditional arts, including regional specialties” (Tamaki 115).

Japanese identity is being redefined by the government and Cool Japan, not through the people or expressing all groups of people who live in Japan (Tamaki 122). Rather than accurately representing Japan’s people in all their diversity and complexity, a mutually reinforcing relationship between economic growth and positive national identity is emphasized (Tamaki 120).

### Japan’s Indigenous Groups: The Ainu and Ryūkyū

“「見える日本」と「見えない日本」 {The Japan that is able to be seen and the invisible Japan}” (Banno et al 293) .

Japan has been exporting its popular culture globally since the late seventies through the Japan’s popular culture boom. Japan’s popular culture boom has impacted Japan’s image and identity extremely positively because Japan is exporting a carefully curated image that it wants the world to see, which focuses on superficial aspects of popular culture and national identity。

However, that means the ‘invisible Japan’ becomes more difficult to find because only the positive aspects of Japan are shown throughout Japan and worldwide. The indigenous minority groups the Ainu and Ryūkyū as well as the Korean ethnic minority known as the Zainichi have been and are continuing to fight for their equal representation in Japan. The Ainu, Ryūkyū, and the Zainichi have become more noticeable in Japan through their culture, but it is not represented

accurately. The export of popular culture allows for people to learn more about other countries, but it is hiding the ‘invisible problems’, to continue to promote a positive image of a country. It also focuses on superficial aspects of a country’s culture sakura, geisha, and Mount Fuji (Fuji-san 富士山). Japan continues to promote superficial and positive images of the country, but it continues to hide the problems regarding the Ainu, Ryūkyū, and the Zainichi who are aiming to become ‘visible’ in Japan and fighting to stop discrimination and to receive equity in Japanese society.

### Incorporating the Ainu: Creating a Myth of Ethnic Harmony

Begin by noting that the Ainu are indigenous people residing in northern Japan, especially in Hokkaido.

“[The] Ainu saw themselves as ordinary people: the word ‘Ainu’ is the word for ‘human being’. Ainu society was structured around small self-organizing communities called kotan. Each kotan had defined areas where its members hunted and fished . . . Particular areas of the land were therefore with particular communities, but not ‘owned’ by individuals or groups in the modern legal sense” (Morris-Suzuki 1998 11).

The Ainu had an oral rather than written language and passed along their history and cultural traditions through story-telling (Morris-Suzuki 1998 11). The Ainu had differences in social organization and appearances from Japanese culture. The Ainu shared the land with their group, the Ainu had their economy revolve around hunting, gathering, and using seeds to plant crops for both monetary and survival purposes (Morris-Suzuki 1998 11,18). In addition, the Ainu had a different appearance in traditional clothing, hairstyle, and accessories; Ainu women would wear facial tattoos that are important to Ainu culture (Morris-Suzuki 1998 19). Ainu culture, language, and lifestyle, made Ainu culture distinctive from Japanese culture. However, Japan

would view Ainu culture as being too 'different' from Japanese culture, "[social] commentator Tokutomi Shohō [argued]: 'the concept foreign nations brought forth the concept Japanese nation'" (Morris-Suzuki 1998 19). Japanese nationalism rose because Ainu culture was different from Japanese culture, this would lead to the erasure of Ainu culture as well as identity.

Early interactions between Ainu and non-Ainu Japanese settlers were friendly, but the Ainu subsequently fought to prevent encroachment on their land (Morris-Suzuki 1998 11-12). Japanese forces were able to put down Ainu revolts and Hokkaido was officially incorporated into Japan in 1869 (Morris-Suzuki 1998 11-12). Non-Ainu settlers controlled much of the region's development, taking over the best land and making it difficult for the Ainu to maintain their way of life (Morris-Suzuki 1998 18). In the 1740s, the Russians began to expand towards the Kuril Islands, which are also home to Ainu people, triggering competition between Japan and Russia over this territory (Morris-Suzuki 1998 21). In response, the Japanese government sought to convince the Ainu people to adopt Japanese cultural practices and the language. The Japanese government, "organized public ceremonies to 'celebrate the improvement of customs' (kaizoku no gi) at which cooperative Ainu were paraded in their new costume, treated to Japanese style-banquets, and sometimes presented with assimilation medals' (kaizoku hai)" (Morris-Suzuki 1998 22). Japan glorified the Ainu willing to, assimilate into Japanese culture and language because the Ainu were being used for Japan to expand its territory northward on the Kuril Islands. The Ainu received a lot of pressure from Japan to assimilate into Japanese culture which then they were praised, but those who did not assimilate fought back were punished by Japan (Morris-Suzuki 1998 22-23). Once the Russians left, the Japanese officials in Hokkaido forced the Ainu to adopt Japanese culture and language to protect the Kuril Islands for Japan's benefit as well as from (Morris-Suzuki 1998 23). Although certain parts of Ainu culture were praised,



including their hunting and fishing skills, the Ainu were generally criticized for being different. Throughout this era, there was a constant erasure of Ainu language and culture because they were forcefully assimilated to be Japanese and their land was taken by Japanese settlers for monetary and territorial purposes. Japan wanted Hokkaido as a part of Japanese territory because “with the establishment of a new, centralized, modernizing state in 1868, Japan turned to Hokkaido as a source of natural riches, and as "untamed wilderness" ripe for colonization by land-hungry migrants from rural areas further south” (Morris-Suzuki 1999). If Hokkaido were to become a part of Japan to become more recognized by the West, and Japan wanted global recognition through western standards. Thus, Japan would fight to claim Hokkaido, Kuril, and Sakhalin Islands from Russia (Morris-Suzuki 1999). Japan viewed the Ainu as “pre-historic gathers”, the Ainu were forced to have Japanese names and speak Japanese, their land by the Japanese government and given to Japanese settlers who moved to Hokkaido for the resources (Morris-Suzuki 1999). This changed the demographics of the Ainu population significantly because “by the early 1880s, the Ainu population of Hokkaido, officially estimated at around 17,000, was already vastly outnumbered by a Japanese settler population of approximately 250,000” (Morris-Suzuki 1999). The Ainu were moved to land that was more remote and prevented them from having materials that they needed to survive (Morris-Suzuki 1999). The forced movement of the Ainu would allow for Japan to increase its nationalism and garner more support to Japan being a homogeneous country and it would continue as Japan would ‘hide’ the problems of the Ainu.

In 1899, the Japanese Diet enacted the Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act (Kyūdojin hogo hō), which simultaneously sought to assimilate the Ainu population and singled it out for prejudice and discrimination (Morris-Suzuki 1999). The Ainu people were subjected to

patronizing and oppressive assimilation measures and forced to move to small sections of land that was not good for harvesting the seeds that were provided from the government, it was strictly mandated by the Japanese government (Morris-Suzuki 1998 25). The Ainu were being forced to adopt Japanese language and culture, but the government did not want to have any presence of the Ainu people in Japan thus it forced the Ainu to small plots of land that were not good for living, even though the Ainu people are the closest descendants of the people from the Jōmōn Era (first era in Japan). The 1997 Ainu Cultural Promotion Law, provided recognition to the Ainu because it would recognize the Ainu, it fights for the protection and maintain Ainu language, culture and it would provide land back to the Ainu that has been a part of their culture for centuries (Morris-Suzuki 1999).

In 1997, in response to lobbying by the Ainu, the Japanese parliament enacted the “Ainu Cultural Promotion Law” to protect the rights of the Ainu and promote Ainu language and culture” (Morris-Suzuki 2018 1). In 2008, Japan adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which had been adopted by the United Nations the year previous year (Morris-Suzuki 2018 1). The purpose of both of these laws is to protect Japan’s indigenous groups, advocate against discrimination, and promote indigenous culture as well as language. These laws were a major step forward for Japan because they obligated the government to increase understanding of the traditions of the Ainu, acknowledge the importance of the diversity that ethnic groups contribute to society, and adopt measures to ban discrimination against the Ainu. The Ainu Culture Promotion Act requires the national government to subsidize local government efforts to preserve the traditional culture of the Ainu and grants special rights to the Ainu people over national lands, rivers, and trademarks to preserve Ainu traditions and culture (Umeda 2019). In accordance with this, Japan began planning in 2009 for the “Symbolic Space

for Ethnic Harmony (Minzoku Kyōsei Shōchō Kūkan), also known as the Upopoy National Ainu Museum, which was made to promote Ainu culture and combat against discrimination towards Japan's indigenous groups, with the goal of completing this museum by the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo (Morris-Suzuki 2018 4). During the planning process of the museum, Japan's Ministry of Education was not going to have a single member of the Ainu be a part of these process, until protests arose that demanded to make a change by having thirteen members of the Ainu a part of the committee (Morris-Suzuki 1999). The museum is heavily supported by the Japanese government, MEXT, and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure on the board that was planning the construction of this museum (Morris-Suzuki 2018 5). Six people from the Ainu were a part of this committee, but three of them are officials of the Ainu Association of Hokkaido (Morris-Suzuki 2018 5). It is important for people who are Ainu to be included in the process of making of the Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony, but it does not mean that it is representative of all people who are of Ainu descent. While the Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony was created to teach people about traditional Ainu culture and language, Ainu critics claim that the museum fails to address contemporary struggles for equity and does not represent all of the Ainu (Morris-Suzuki 2018 6-7). The museum is strategically located near an international airport, suggesting that it may be designed for tourists rather than as an authentic reflection of Ainu preferences; as Morris-Suzuki comments, "while tourism provides the strongest driver to restore, protect, and promote indigenous cultures, it has the potential to diminish and destroy those cultures when improperly used" (Morris-Suzuki 2018 12).

This has raised concerns that Ainu cultural heritage will be presented in a deliberately "apolitical and unthreatening" way by focusing on traditional elements such as dance and religious ceremonies rather than on historical struggles and contemporary political activism on

behalf of Indigenous political and economic rights. Since Japanese textbooks fail to mention the oppression that the Ainu have suffered for centuries, it is uncertain whether the museum will mention the stories of the Ainu helping forced Korean-laborers escape Japan or acknowledge that the Ainu, Ryūkyū, Zainichi, and other indigenous or ethnic minorities in Japan continue to be denied the rights to use and control land that is fundamentally connected to their culture (Morris-Suzuki 2018 8-9). It seems that the Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony will “perceive [the] Ainu identity only in the performance of traditional or neo-traditional culture in spaces of spectacle and entertainment set aside from the world of everyday life” (Morris -Suzuki 2018 8). At the museum, there is a spot called the Resting Place which has bones of ancestors from the Ainu, it is extremely controversial because the bones are on public display, garnering the Japanese government profits, and continues to ignore the voices of the Ainu who have been fighting for the return of the bones for a proper burial (Morris-Suzuki 2018). The Council for Ainu Policy Promotion are fighting for an apology, because the museum is extremely unethical by having the bones on display, as stated by Edward Halealoha Ayau (Hawaiian repatriation) and Honor Keeler (Cherokee activist) “there is no established period of time by which human skeletal remains lose their humanity and become property (Morris-Suzuki 2018 10-11). The museum continues to silence the voices of the Ainu and even go against their wishes by contradicting the unethical process of Ainu remains on display. The Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony promotes and teaches people about Ainu history, culture, and language through the perspective of the Japanese government or through certain perspectives of the Ainu. It was made for the purpose of tourism and teaching the world about Japan’s indigenous groups through a ‘positive’ myth.

## Assimilating the Ryūkyū

The people who migrated to the Ryūkyū Islands, the largest of which is now called Okinawa, are generally thought to have been deeply influenced by China. Until Japan invaded the Ryūkyū Kingdom in the early seventeenth century, the kingdom was a tributary of China, although this did not prevent the Ryūkyū from developing trade relations with Japan, Korea and other parts of Southeast Asia as well as China (Morris-Suzuki 1998 16). After the feudal lord of Satsuma province invaded Okinawa in 1609, the Ryūkyū Kingdom became a vassal state of Japan and began to forcefully take the Ryūkyū profits from trade as well as tax the Ryūkyū, which created profits for the Satsuma domain (Morris-Suzuki 1998 18). The Satsuma Domain imposed restrictions to have control over the Ryūkyū territory and rights, but in order to not harm Japan's relations with China the Satsuma Domain, but allowed for contact between the Ryūkyū and Japanese (Rabson 1996). The Satsuma domain forced the Ryūkyū to go to Edō (Modern-day Tōkyō) following the Satsuma domain's orders on how to act, what to wear, and who could appear in this 'ceremony', the Satsuma domain would make the Ryūkyū wear their traditional clothes and carry "Chinese-style" weaponry (Morris-Suzuki 1998 19). Traditional headwear, jewelry, and tattoos that are a part of Ryūkyū culture, as well as traditional dances as well as ceremonies; these cultural differences between the Ryūkyū and Japanese was emphasized by Japan that continued discrimination against the Ryūkyū (Morris-Suzuki 1998 20).

However, in the beginning of the Meiji Era, the Ryūkyū, like the Ainu, were forced to assimilate into Japanese culture and language. In 1879, the Meiji government forced the last king of the Ryūkyū Kingdom to resign as Japan extended its territorial control (Morris-Suzuki 1998 22). Historian Steve Rabson explains that the Meiji government "turned Okinawa into a prefecture partly out of concern that the kingdom posed a security problem. As an unassimilated

territory on Japan's southern frontier, it could be used as a stop-over point for outside forces threatening Japan, as Commodore Perry had already demonstrated ..." (Rabson). Tokyo's assimilationist policy drew protests not only from the people of the former Ryukyu Kingdom, but also from China, which still claimed it as a tributary state. Fearing Japanese annexation, Okinawan aristocrats asked the Ch'ing government to intercede on the kingdom's behalf, and also asked former U.S. president Ulysses S. Grant to mediate the dispute during his visit to East Asia in 1879. The Meiji government had already used a massacre of Ryukyuan sailors by Taiwanese aborigines in 1871 as a diplomatic pretext to claim that Ryukyuan were "subjects of Japan" in need of protection, and it organized a punitive "expedition" to Formosa in 1873 (Morris-Suzuki 22).

Okinawans were offended by the Japanese government because it made Japanese officials the head of Okinawa (Rabson 1996). The Japanese government and officials would imprison and use violent force to prevent or to remove Okinawans from their positions in having more control in the government (Rabson 1996). In addition, if the Japanese officials made mistakes while having control over Okinawa, they would take their anger out on the people of Okinawa (Rabson 1996). For example, Official Matsuda Michiyuki demanded that the Ryūkyū should not be angry at the forced assimilation into Japan and becoming Okinawa Prefecture, even after they offended China for doing-so because Matsuda Michiyuki stated "[he] warned Okinawans that they would 'experience the same situation as the American Indians and the Ainu if they did not change their old attitudes'" (Morris-Suzuki 1998 26). The Japanese government would use violent force to get control of Okinawa because it is in a vital spot and good for resources. It would suppress the people of Okinawa because they were not fully accepted into

Japanese society and that narrative would continue to live on and be the reason that Japan invaded Okinawa.

The Ryūkyū were not allowed to participate in elections or send representatives to the Diet until 1912 and were not conscripted into the military until 1898 (Morris-Suzuki 1998 28). Though able to retain ownership of farmland, they were taxed heavily (Morris-Suzuki 1998 27). The educational system emphasized that the Ryūkyū should act more 'Japanese' in order to be accepted into society (Morris-Suzuki 1998 28). The Ryūkyū, like the Ainu, continued to face discrimination and were generally regarded as "rustic, second-class cousins within the Japanese nation-family" (Rabson 1996). After Japan won the first Sino-Japanese War, Okinawans supported Japan, a lot of Okinawans were moving to mainland Japan for a better chance of work and education, but they would face discrimination because of language and cultural differences (Rabson 1996). The Japanese government did not believe that Okinawans were loyal enough to Japan and that Okinawans are too loyal to China which would be use as a reason to enhance the differences between Okinawa and mainland Japan (Rabson 1996). During World War Two, Japan would commit inhumane acts towards Okinawans during the Battle of Okinawa, "Japanese soldiers ordered mass suicides of Okinawan civilians to stretch dwindling food supplies, and forced others out of overcrowded caves and tunnels into heavy enemy fire. In perhaps the most outrageous betrayal of the Okinawans' determination to assimilate, Japanese soldiers shot thousands at point-blank range in their anger over defeat, accusing the Okinawans, sometimes on the basis of a few words uttered in dialect, of being spies. This worst battle of the Pacific War took the lives of more than two-hundred thousand local residents" (Rabson 1996). Okinawans were killed because of their identity and heritage, Japan dehumanized Okinawans for their personal benefits, and to prevent the war from entering on mainland Japan.

After Japan lost WWII, Okinawa was not recognized as being a part of mainland Japan, and Okinawans viewed themselves as being only used to prevent the war from occurring on mainland Japan (Shimabukuro 2015). Under the San Francisco Treaty Article 3, the United States occupied vast areas of Okinawa, seizing land and denying Ryukyu legal rights in order to build American bases that were seen as critical to U.S. Cold War plans (Shimabukuro 2015). Despite American efforts to discourage Okinawans from re-assimilating into Japan, Okinawa was reincorporated as a sovereign part of Japan in 1972. Under the terms of the 1969 reversion agreement, the US continues to maintain control over vast military bases and Okinawa continues to lag behind the mainland in terms of per capita income (Rabson 1996). In 1993, the state-owned media company Nihon Hōsō Kyōkai (NHK) presented a documentary called “Ryūkyū no Kaze” (“Dragon Spirit”), which aimed to present the history of the Ryūkyū but failed to represent this history accurately and emphasized the differences between the Ryūkyū and Japanese people (Morris-Suzuki 1998 33-34). This corresponds with assimilation policies promoted by the Ministry of Education, which have been criticized for their failure to acknowledge wartime atrocities, especially those committed in Okinawa; Rabson adds that “Teachers have also requested that Okinawa's history and culture be more fully taught in the curriculum, even as they are frustrated by an educational system geared relentlessly toward college entrance examinations on which there are very few, if any, questions about Okinawa” (Rabson). The Ryūkyū people are largely invisible to the rest of Japan, but when they are portrayed in media, they are described as different from Japanese people.

In 2014, Onaga Takehshi was elected governor of Okinawa prefecture after campaigning on a platform of uniting Okinawa, fighting for their rights, and promoting ‘Okinawan identity’ (Shimabukuro 2015). Governor Onaga emphasized this policy because of the mistreatments that



Okinawa has faced from main-land Japan and the United States and insisted that “Uchinanchu, as the Okinawans call themselves, should have the final say over the use of their own land, waters, and other resources. This has become a key argument in their opposition to the current relocation plan” (Shimabukuro 2015). Governor Onaga wants Okinawa’s problems to become more ‘visible’ in main land Japan, and is fighting for more accurate representation of Ryūkyū culture and history. In 2019, artist Higa Satoru who is born in Okinawa prefecture created 3D digital art panels in the Naha airport which showed a 3D rendition of Shurijō which was burned in 2019 (Agency for Cultural Affairs). Shurijō remains important to Ryūkyū history, identity, and culture this digital piece “ends by arriving at a space expressing the spiritual world of niraikana, which is where the Ryūkyū gods are said to reside” (Agency for Cultural Affairs). The purpose of this art is to have a new way to express Ryūkyū culture and to tell others about their culture. In addition, Shurijō may not exist physically, but by using technology provides a new way for Ryūkyū culture to be spread and not forgotten (Agency for Cultural Affairs).

The Ainu and the Ryūkyū are related to the earliest inhabitants of Japan from the Jōmon Era. These groups respected Japanese culture and language, yet Japan viewed them as being ‘foreign’ because of their cultural differences. Throughout Japanese history, the Ainu and the Ryūkyū were forced to assimilate into Japanese culture, which led to the erasure of their own culture and language. In response, the Ainu and the Ryūkyū wants their history to be told accurately, and are fighting for equity and an end to discrimination. The export of popular culture and media from Japan aims to enhance Japan’s positive image and erase any negative aspects of Japan in the process. As a result, Japan has either sought to portray itself as a racially homogenous society, ignoring its ethnic minorities, or has cultivated an image of ethnic harmony, promoting a myth of peaceful coexistence. The promotion of Ainu and Ryūkyū culture

does not mean that Japan is portraying them accurately or listening to all of the voices or opinions. It is important for Ainu and Ryūkyū culture, history, and language to be spread throughout Japan, but through the majority of opinions of these groups, not through the Japanese government or biased opinions. Moreover, the goal of teaching others in Japan about Ainu and Ryūkyū culture and history is to fight against discrimination and promote equity for these indigenous groups that will create positive changes in Japan.

### Korean Ethnic Minorities in Japan [在日 (Zainichi) ]

Japan's invisible problems continue not to be seen because of the spread of popular culture in Japan. The goal of Japanese pop-culture is to present a positive image of Japan both inside and outside Japan, but the unequal treatment of the Korean ethnic minority known as Zainichi in Japanese society poses a problem. The term Zainichi is commonly used to refer to Koreans who came to Japan in large numbers after Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910 and their descendants. The first generation Zainichi migrated to Japan for work and they were joined by many more who were brought to Japan by force to serve the Imperial war effort. While serving, they were not considered citizens of Japan. Not all of the forced laborers returned to Korea after World War II ended and Korea gained back its independence; some did not have enough money to return to Korea and were unable to return home. Those who remained in Japan were denied Japanese citizenship and right to vote in Japan (Morris-Suzuki 190). The San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1952 allowed for Korea to garner independence from Japan, but for Korean residents in Japan would need to renew their citizenship-status in Japan; in Japan they would be forced to be fingerprinted and carry a registration certificate these were ways to increase discrimination and target people of Korean descent (Hawon 2019). If they did not follow these rules, it would lead to punishments. For example, Korean residents in Japan could be forced to be deported back to

North or South Korea (Hawon 2019). Then in 1965, Japan and South Korea relations were normalized, but Korean ethnic minorities who identified being from South Korea could obtain permanent citizenship status in Japan, but others who identified as North Korean, Korean, or Zainichi would remain without citizenship in until the 1980s when the laws were changed (Hawon 2019). Even the second and third generations of Zainichi who were raised and brought up in Japan were denied citizenship and they faced systematic discrimination because of their names or other identifiers that indicated non-Japanese heritage (Morris-Suzuki 196). Korean ethnic minorities in Japan, would begin to fight back towards the inequalities and injustices that they faced in Japan because of their Korean heritage.

The “real name” (honmyo) movement began in the 1960s by second and third generation Zainichi who were proud of their ethnic identity and did not want to hide it (Lie 4). Supporters of this movement did not want to be treated differently because of their Korean names or identities; they wanted to have more recognition in Japanese society and be treated equally (Lie 5). There were multiple movements in the 1980s that were fighting against the mistreatments of the Zainichi and promoting and having pride in their identity. The “One-Man Rebellion” started by Han Chongsok fought against mandatory finger printing (Shimon Onatsu) and against the “Certificate of Alien Registration (Gaitosho)” they wanted to be treated ethically in Japan (Lie 4). Also in the 1980s, Koreans in Osaka created a Koreatown to provide “legal and political help [and] sought to win local suffrage rights for the Zainichi (Lie 6). The Koreatown in Osaka was made to help Zainichi get equity in Japanese society; it became a place that accepted and recognized Korean culture.

The Zainichi are still fighting to be recognized in Japanese society because they still face discrimination. The Zainichi were not treated equally, but that does not mean they were not a

part of Japan's growing pop culture scene. There were Zainichi celebrities in Japan's pop-culture, including "'queen' Misora Hibari (singer), 'emperor' Kaneda Masaichi (baseball star), 'don' Yanagigawa Jiro (a local yakuza boss), and 'Japan's brilliant star' Rikidozan (wrestling champion), [although] they are not explicitly identified as being of Korean descent" (Lie 14). Even though these people were of Zainichi descent, they were forced to assimilate into Japanese culture and hide their Zainichi descent. The younger generations of the Zainichi viewed these people with awe because it provided them with representation in the media, but it does not provide the Zainichi with representation at all because they have to hide their identity (Lie 14). The celebrities of Zainichi descent offered symbolic representation because of they are of Zainichi descent, but they had to hide their identity because they were not Japanese to avoid discrimination thus they presented themselves as being Japanese. In 1958 the Komatsugawa Incident occurred, which was a murder case that would further increase a negative image of the Zainichi being murders (Martín 2011). The Japanese media used this opportunity to increase negative images and stereotypes towards the Zainichi; Zainichi celebrities had to hide their identity. Despite the presence of a few exceptional Zainichi pop culture icons, it is difficult for people of Zainichi descent to find Korean and Zainichi culture represented in Japanese pop-culture, and the second and third generations grew up with Japanese pop-culture such as by playing with Rika-chan dolls (equivalent to Barbie dolls) (Lie 18). The second and third generations were not able to grow up with Korean or Zainichi culture, some are more familiar with Japanese pop-culture because of how they were raised. Thus some of the Zainichi, do not identify themselves as being 'Korean' because of how they were raised in Japan (Lie 18). This continues to further complex Zainichi identity because there is not a single way for Zainichi identity to be defined and represented in Japanese society.

As mentioned before, the Zainichi have been fighting for the recognition and the acceptance of their culture in Japan. The younger Zainichi generations want to become more connected to their Korean culture and heritage. Some Zainichi are incorporating traditional Korean cuisine such as kimchi (김치) or p'ajong, cooking with garlic and chili peppers and wearing traditional clothing such as the hanbok because it re-creates a connection with their Korean heritage (Lie 22). The younger generations want to connect with Korean culture because there has not been a lot of opportunities for them to connect and embrace their Korean heritage. The rise of the Hallyu (Korean) Wave has been very influential throughout the world including Japan, and it has made Korean pop-culture, language, and culture more recognizable in Japan.

According to Yoko Demelius, even though Zainichi Koreans continue to face discrimination in important respects, the Korean Wave has increased the openness of Japanese society to accept a certain degree of multicultural coexistence:

“self-silencing of Koreanness in mainstream Japanese society until the 1980s resulted in the isolation and invisibility of the minority. Despite Korean residents’ social and linguistic competence, having lived through multiple generations in Japan, their invisibility impeded the presence and recognition of Koreanness in Japanese society . . . The Korean Wave was one of the turning points in mainstream Japanese society’s accommodation of perceived Koreanness. Although it was limited to the stylized form of Koreanness, accessibility to Koreanness via popular culture, media products, and food offered an opportunity to invite Koreanness into the discursive space in Japanese mainstream” (Demelius 107).

One of the first places that South Korean pop-culture was exported to was Japan, due to geographical proximity and wanting to change Korea’s overall image. The Hallyu Wave became immensely popular in Japan, as Japanese consumers came to understand Korean culture better through various types of pop-culture and media products (Demelius 103). The Hallyu Wave has been extremely successful in creating a more positive image for South Korea worldwide,

including Japan. Prior to the Hallyu Wave, Korean culture was looked down upon; for example, traditional food such as kimchi was seen as “dirty” and it was associated with the Zainichi because it is a part of their culture (Demelius 105). However, the Hallyu Wave changed Japanese perceptions on Korean culture, history, and language; people in Japan wanted to learn more about Korea in general due to the popularity of Korean culture in Japan. The Zainichi Women’s Association in Japan held public events to teach the community about how to make kimchi, the Korean language, Korean drumming, and traditional crafts (Demelius 105). In another example:

“A bunch of Japanese school kids wanted to learn a K-pop (South Korean popular music) dance, and the Korean school wanted to find more performers on stage for their cultural fair. [The] school decided to invite the Japanese kids to perform at the Korean school’s festival. And it was a bit funny. Japanese parents see their children performing side by side with Korean kids at the North Korean school . . . [Nobody] opposed it” (Demelius 106).

Prior to the Hallyu Wave this would not have been possible, as most people in Japanese society would not have taken the time to learn more about Korean culture or the Zainichi.

The Hallyu Wave promotes a lot of positive aspects of Korean culture and language, and it should be noted that some will only be interested in these aspects, but some will also be interested in learning more about Korea in a deeper level. The movement of pop-culture is able to teach people worldwide more about a culture on a surface level, but it is up to the consumer if they want to learn more about a country’s pop-culture in a deeper level. Korean culture is more visible in Japan and it provide the Zainichi with more recognition in Japanese society. Japan is slowly changing because of the Hallyu Wave and becoming more receptive of Korean culture and the Zainichi. Jung-ho who is of Zainichi descent and a school teacher at a Japanese school mentions how his colleagues interact with him more because they talk about Korean pop-culture products and have a growing interest in learning more about Korea, something that he notes did not happen before (Demelius 104).

However, that does not mean all people in Japan are accepting of the Zainichi and of Korean culture. While the Hallyu Wave has encouraged many ethnic ~~been one step to change~~ Japanese to become more accepting of Korea and Korean culture in Japan, there are still a lot of negative sentiments towards Zainichi Koreans (Demelius 106). Cultural nationalism remains strong, as Allen and Sakamoto describe: “Japanese identity and a sense of superiority were often expressed in terms of economic and cultural nationalism, which typically sought the source of Japan’s ‘economic miracle’ in its ‘unique’ national culture and characteristics” (Allen and Sakamoto 1). Japan has been trying to re-start its pop-culture boom to garner more popularity and acceptance worldwide and it has been successful to some degree, but the Hallyu Wave has been garnering much more popularity and acceptance than Japan’s pop-culture boom. This has triggered some backlash against Korean culture. In 2005, an anonymous manga called Kenkanyu, which means “Hating The Korean Wave,” became a bestselling manga in Japan. The plot of this manga revolves around the main character who is trying to find the truth of Japan’s history and believes that Japan was the main force behind Korea’s development (Allen and Sakamoto 3). This manga is extremely offensive to the Zainichi because it reinforces negative stereotypes of Koreans and the Zainichi and portrays them as enemies of Japan (Allen and Sakamoto 4,6). The main manga portrays Japan and its actions during the annexation of Korea, WWI, and WWII in a positive light; it disregards all of the war crimes that Japan has committed against Korea and other nations throughout Asia. In addition, when the Zainichi character Koichi visits South Korea, he is not welcomed into the country. Kenkanryu criticizes special privileges granted to the Zainichi and believes that the third generation of Zainichi should not consider themselves to be victims (Allen and Sakamoto 7-8). Kenkanryu is not aimed at North Korea nor China; it casts a negative light on South Korea, the Hallyu Wave and the Zainichi and

emphasizes Japanese nationalism (Allen and Sakamoto 8-9). Popular culture is extremely influential to the younger generations because it will become an aspect that they grow up with throughout their lives. The advancements in mass media including the internet have made it easier for offensive works like *Kenkanryu* to be spread across both domestic and international borders (Allen and Sakamoto 9-11). Though *Kenkanryu* is extremely offensive and both South Koreans and the Zainichi were furious with this manga, the publicity that it was garnering from the outrage increased interest and sales, and it was published virtually and in multiple languages (Allen and Sakamoto 12-13).

Though popular culture tends to present highly stylized images, it provides people with the opportunity to learn more about other countries and their culture. The Hallyu Wave has created the opportunity to have Korean culture more visible in Japan, and it allows for the Zainichi to have pride in their Korean heritage and culture. *Kenkanryu* manga, on the contrary, supports Japanese nationalism and is against South Koreans as well as the Hallyu Wave has brought benefits because it allows for the Zainichi to connect with Korean culture, but it creates negative sentiments to those who believe in Japanese nationalism. Popular culture is a double-edged sword; its superficial presentation may reinforce exclusionary nationalism, but it may also encourage people to learn more in-depth about another country's language and culture. Thus, popular culture would need to change, to promote the indigenous groups and ethnic minorities on a deeper-level that will not only teach about these groups accurately, it will be a channel to have their voices heard for society to change.



## Conclusion

Japan was and is in creating innovative methods to combat western dominance in the pop-culture sphere. In the twenty-first century, the Japanese government has worked to help export Japanese pop-culture to the world not just for economic benefits but to build better re- create relationships with neighboring countries. Japan has wanted to create a positive image of the country to attract people to its products and culture, but to disassociate itself with its horrific past in the wars. Japan was successful by creating products that were Japanese, but were odorless products (Iwabuchi 28). Once Japan was able to recover from the damage of WWII, Japan was constantly emphasizing to create innovative technology products that could be used by the world.

Japan experienced-an economic and cultural boom during the 1980s as Japanese pop-culture gained popularity throughout Asia and worldwide. Japan heavily influenced its neighbors through its innovative methods to produce successful pop-culture and Japanese conglomerates would work with local companies in other countries to help Japanese products garner more success. However, in the 1990s, Japan's economy fell into a severe recession, though pop-culture sales and exports remained strong, leading the government to become actively involved in promoting and employing pop-culture products to boost economic growth and enhance Japan's soft power. However, the Japanese government is doing more than the export of Japanese pop-culture throughout Japan and worldwide; it is redefining Japan through the commercialization of all aspects and ideologies of Japanese culture. In the export of Japanese pop-culture throughout

Japan, Asia, and the world it has been preserving ideologies from the past to the present-day. Consequently, Japan is trying to redefine itself of being ‘cool’ or trying to stay relevant to compete against other nations in the region that are currently receiving much success from its pop-culture exports. Government involvement in the export of Japanese pop-culture has led to an erasure of parts of Japanese identity because not all groups are being represented. Throughout the export of Japanese pop-culture there has not been a lot mentioning of how Japanese people feel about these government policies. The export of Japanese pop-culture and its effect Japanese identity is and will continue to remain as an extremely complex topic, even though Japan has been very successful at exporting its pop-culture in Asia and worldwide.

Pink Lady stand out more and they became an inspiration to other groups in Japan because of their femininity and cuteness through various colors. Japan’s image was softening and becoming more ‘kawaii’ (cute) around the world, but in Asia it would not be enough to smooth relations with all countries due to Japan’s past. Forty-one years after Pink Lady’s performance, the South Korean girl-group BLACKPINK (Kim Jisoo {김지수}, Kim Jennie {Jennie/김제니}, Park Roseanne [Rosé/ 로제], and Lalisa Manoban {ลลิตา มโนบาล} [Lisa/리사]) would rise to global fame. After releasing their first album titled “The Album,” BLACKPINK became number one on the Billboard 100 charts making BLACKPINK the first Korean girl-group to chart Billboard 100. Their name BLACKPINK has two concepts: a darker/fierce concept and a brighter concept that presents the girl group with a cuter concept. The Hallyu (Korean) Wave would change how people would view South Korea through pop-culture. Other groups such as the Bangtan Boys, known as BTS, have been garnering global success through their music, use of social media platforms, fan bases, collaborations with foreign countries, and advertising.

South Korean pop-culture has been exported through the Hallyu Wave which has been paving the way for South Korea's success in exporting pop-culture.

### The Ban of Japanese Pop-Culture in South Korea

The export of pop-culture is a powerful method for countries to increase the attraction of their national and traditional culture. The United States has very successfully translated the widespread appeal of its pop-culture into soft power, building a positive global image; Japan has also used pop-culture exports to build its own soft power and improved its positive image throughout the process. This does not mean that all negative connotations of both of these countries are erased; the negative aspects will continue to remain a factor in the export of pop-culture. Geographically, South Korea is Japan's neighbor, but as mentioned before, after WWII, South Korea had very strict regulations and rules that forbid the import of Japanese pop-culture. Japanese media programs and other pop-culture were not allowed to be imported into South Korea until 1998, although pirated copies were widely available (Kwak 28-29). The ban on pop-culture exports from Japan was lifted as part of an agreement reached between the two governments that sought to build a new foundation for bilateral relations, with Japan's prime minister acknowledging the damage and suffering to the people of Korea that Japan had caused and South Korea's president accepting this statement:

“New Korea-Japan Partnership for the Twenty-First Century, in which Korea agreed to lift the ban on Japanese popular culture. After this joint declaration, Japan's investment in Korea drastically increased from 265 million US dollars in 1997 to 1.75b billion US dollars in 1999 and 2.448 billion US dollars in 2000. The lift of the ban ‘provoked a grim warning of another Japanese cultural assimilation in Korea. . . ‘the memory and legacy of forceful assimilation during the Japanese colonization have made many Koreans fearful of Japanization as much as Americanization’” (Kwak 29).

The agreement came in the wake of a severe economic crisis in 1997-1998 that affected South Korea's government negatively, leading South Korea to recognize the need for

cooperation (Kwak 29). Still, in order to prevent Japanese pop-culture products from completely dominating South Korea's markets, the government implemented a four-stage process from 1998-2004 called the Open-Door Policy to gradually lift the ban on the import of Japanese pop-cultural products. Japanese pop-culture products were seen as a threat to South Korea's markets, Japan would have a lot of dominance and influence through pop-culture products and media. Both Japan and the United States understand the amount of power that the export of pop-culture can have over other countries and can use that power to their advantage.

Table 1. Four Stages of the Open Door Policy

Category	1st stage (Oct 20, 1998)	2nd stage (Sept 10, 1999)	3rd stage (June 27, 2000)	4th stage (Jan 1, 2004)
Movies	Award winners of four international film festivals	G-rated films among award winners in renowned international film festivals	All but ones rated 18 or above	Films rated 18 or above
Videos	Films screened in Korea	Films screened in Korea	Films screened in Korea	Films screened in Korea
Animation	No lift	No lift	Award winners of international film festivals	Postponed
Live Performances	No lift	Indoor performances with 2,000 seats or less	No restrictions	No restrictions
Music	No lift	No lift	All but songs with Japanese lyrics	Songs with Japanese lyrics
Games	No lift	No lift	All but console games	Console Games
Broadcasting	No lift	No lift	Sports, news, documentaries (all media) Films	Postponed

screened in Korea  
(new media only)

Source: Kwak 30.

As shown in Table 1, in the first stage it is important to realize that while South Korea did accept Japanese pop-culture products there were a lot of restrictions near the end of the economic crisis from 1997-1998. Japanese pop-culture products that had a lot of popularity such as animation, music, and games were banned from being exported into South Korea (Kwak 30). The second stage of the Open-Door Policy was extremely strict to prevent the majority of Japanese pop-culture products to be imported into South Korea. However, live performances from Japanese artists with a strict seat capacity could be held in South Korea (Kwak 30). The third-stage allows for a lot of Japanese pop-culture aspects to be imported into South Korea. This stage included Japanese animation, music, video games, and broadcasting, but each of these products/services had restrictions to prevent the total import of Japanese pop-culture products and services (Kwak 30). In the final (fourth)-stage of the Open-Door Policy, movies and videos (videos screened in Korea) were allowed to be imported into South Korea, but there were still restrictions towards animation, music, games, and broadcasting; especially with animation and broadcasting because they were 'postponed' (Kwak 30). The 'Live Performances' section had no further restrictions in the third and fourth stage of the Open-Door Policy.

Japanese pop-culture products that could be easily identified as being 'Japanese pop-culture products' such as music that had Japanese lyrics still had restrictions due to Japan and South Korea's historical past. In addition, in the final stage Japanese broadcasting was 'postponed' and similar to Japanese music, broadcasting allows for countries to have the advantage to spread media to the world through its perspective which excludes all perspectives and broadcasting is used as a way to enhance one country's image positively. Animation was

another section that was postponed in 2004 and during this time Japanese animation garnered a lot of popularity and anime such as *Bleach*, *Pretty Cure*, *School Rumble*, and many more popular anime were released in the first part of the twenty-first century. In addition, Miyazaki Hayao's (宮崎・駿) *Spirited Away* (千と千尋の神隠し) premiered in 2001 and *Howl's Moving Castle* (ハウルの動く城) premiered in 2004; both of these films garnered international popularity, profits, and increased the Japanese animation industry. In 2004, Japanese-owned Nintendo released the handheld DS in the United States and Sony released the PlayStation Portable in Japan; both Sony and Nintendo are extremely large gaming conglomerate companies that have released successful gaming products and services that give these companies the advantage over other companies. The enormous appeal of such products meant that preventive measures to restrict imports were largely undercut through smuggling and pirating. As a result, South Korean consumers did embrace Japanese pop-culture and the Japanese Pop-Culture Boom became a model for South Korea to increase its own pop-culture sector.

### Influences of Japan's Pop-Culture Boom on South Korea

Geographical proximity made it easier for Japan to export its pop-culture to other nations in Asia, even South Korea despite having various restrictions and bans on the import of Japanese pop-culture. During the 1990s, media transmission through the internet was rapidly expanding and people could access pop-culture products from Japan much faster and quicker. Through the internet, South Koreans could pirate their favorite Japanese pop-culture products. There were loopholes for Japanese pop-culture products to enter South Korean market collaborations with Japanese and South Korean companies. Some extremely well-known South Korean dramas were based off of Japanese manga. For example, the South Korean drama called *Boys Over Flowers*

(꽃보다 남자) was based off of the Japanese manga *Hana Yori Dango* (花より男子) by Kamio Yoko (神尾・葉子). This drama was extremely successful in South Korea, but also garnered a lot of recognition throughout Asia, including Japan.

*Boys Over Flowers* is regarded as one of the most successful crossovers between South Korean and Japanese companies. This drama is one example of how South Korea localizes its pop-culture media products to be successful in other regions in Asia and worldwide (Chung 16).

“[South Korean] entertainment scene without the influence of Japanese cultural items such as manga, anime (animation) and television dramas, which frequently provide the creative source of successful showbiz products. . . Japanese manga and anime series often contribute to commercial success when the works are converted into television shows and movies” (Chung 16).

Geographic proximity did play a major role of making it easier for Japan to export its pop-culture products to South Korea, but there were restrictions to Japanese pop-culture products, which were not accepted by everyone in South Korea. Japanese products had to be localized and adjusted to the preferences of South Korean consumers in order to be successful in South Korea. Localization became a major component for Japan to export its pop-culture to South Korea to be successful in the country. Japanese and South Korean companies worked with each other to create successful products, but there were differences in the products that were introduced into each market and the strategies used for marketing these. In Japan, pop-culture companies relied a lot on broadcasts to sell their cultural products, whereas pop-culture goods in South Korea relied a lot on the advancements of the internet to reach consumers; both countries used advancements in technology to send their products throughout Asia and the world (Chung 16).

Collaborations between Japanese and South Korean companies were major to the success of South Korean pop-culture products. South Korean companies created online games that were based off of successful Japanese mangas, and these companies advanced rapidly to convert Japan's 2D images into 3D images for online gaming platforms (Chung 17). South Korea was influenced by Japanese pop-culture imports, but it was able to transform the influences into South Korea's own unique pop-culture products. For example, Toriyama Akira (鳥山・明) the creator of *Dragon Ball* (ドラゴンボール), has been working with other Japanese and South Korean creators to create *Dragon Ball Online*, an online game based off of the extremely successful manga and anime *Dragon Ball* (Chung 17). The export of pop-culture between Japan and South Korea allows for companies to work together and create products that cater to local consumers' preferences:

“What is the biggest strength of Japanese content? It is creativity. In Japan, popular cartoons or novels are frequently adapted into television dramas and films, creating synergy effects between different platforms” (Chung 17).

The previous chapter discussed how Japan created innovative ways to export its pop-culture primarily throughout Asia then worldwide. Japanese pop-culture exports were different from American or Western pop-culture products because they were made to be unique/attractive to audiences in Asian countries. Manga and anime are one of Japan's largest pop-culture exports that have garner a lot of success and popularity worldwide. Manga and anime provided South Korean viewers with unique genres and plotlines that were different from pre-existing media; this attracted regular and otaku fans in South Korea who enjoyed Japanese manga and anime (Chung 17). The export of Japanese pop-culture and collaborations allowed for Japan-South Korea relations to become a little bit better, but tensions in Japan-South Korea relations



remained due to divisions over the issue of the comfort women, territorial disputes over the Dokdo Islands, controversy over Japan's coverage of the past in school text-books, visits to Yasukuni Shrine, and more.

## A Brief History of South Korea's Export of Pop-Culture: Including the Hallyu Wave 1.0 & 2.0

In 1965, Japan and South Korea signed the Treaty on Basic Relations Between Japan and the Republic of Korea, but not everyone in Korea supported this treaty, especially in Korea due to continued trauma over Imperial Japan's colonization of the Korean Peninsula and its efforts to erase Korea culture and language. Prior to the Hallyu Wave 1.0 and 2.0, South Korea began working in its cultural sector in 1974 with The First Five-Year Cultural Development Plan. The purpose of The First Five-Year Cultural Development Plan "focused on preserving cultural heritages and traditions. The major direction of the Fifth-Republic established, in 1981, was not much different from the Park Chung-hee regime that considered culture as parts of the national arts" (Kim and Jin 5520-5521). In the 1970s and 1980s, South Korea was ruled by brutal military dictatorships, and these governments preferred for South Korea to maintain its traditional culture (Kim and Jin 5521). Under these governments, cultural diplomacy had a restricted view of "culture as a component of traditional diplomacy, and it had been mostly confined to the promotion of one nation's culture abroad to strengthen relations with other nations, to enhance cooperation or to promote national interest" (Kim and Jin 5515).

It was not until 1987 that South Korea democratized; after this, South Korea changed drastically and began to develop various spheres of pop-culture and technology. In 1988, South Korea held the Olympics in Seoul which would represent how South Korea wants to present its new image to the world.

“President Kim Young-sam demanded cultural competitiveness with the notion globalization and the emergence of the information society . . .the government launched an official *segyehwa* (globalization) policy as a way of actively responding to external pressures “ (Kim and Jin 5521).

The South Korean government understood that for South Korea to compete with the United States and Japan in the pop-culture and technology sectors, it needed to increase its positive image. In addition, South Korea needed to create major advancements in its technology because technology allows for states to accumulate power and wealth. During the late 1980s, South Korea increased its broadcasting technologies and created the 10 Representative Korean Cultural Symbols as a way to spread Korean culture throughout Korea and worldwide (Kim and Jin 5521). Broadcasting is a powerful instrument of the media because it transmits media across national & international borders and it becomes easier for people in foreign countries to access Korean media products. The 10 Representative Korean Cultural Symbols allowed the government to choose aspects of Korean culture that it believed were fundamental to South Korea and it gave the South Korean government control over promoting South Korea’s identity domestically and worldwide (Kim and Jin 5122). During the 1990s, South Korea began to increase even more of its pop-culture and media contents throughout Asia and soon to be worldwide.

The Hallyu Wave (Korean Wave/ 한류) is the term used to describe the major exports of all aspects of South Korean pop-culture across South Korea and worldwide. The Hallyu Wave can be divided into two parts the Hallyu Wave 1.0 and Hallyu Wave 2.0. The Hallyu Wave 1.0 began in 1997, some of South Korea’s first exports were television dramas from broadcasting stations such as *What is Love All About* (*Sarang-i mwogille*) and *Stars in My Heart* (별은 내 가슴에) that garnered a lot of popularity throughout East and South East Asia (Jin 23).

Throughout the Hallyu 1.0 Era, South Korea increased its dramas through broadcasting them throughout Asia and worldwide. Some of the most famous dramas from Hallyu 1.0 are *Autumn Fairytale* (가을동화), *Winter Sonata* (겨울연가), and *Dae Jang Geum* (대장금). These dramas further strengthened South Korea's drama and broadcasting industries (Jin 24). In the late 1990s to early 2000s South Korean popular culture exports began to become extremely popular throughout Asia. One difference between Hallyu 1.0 and Hallyu 2.0 is Hallyu 1.0 did not have direct support from the government, but the government did provide in-direct support for the country's pop-culture wave under President Kim Dae-Jung (김대중) who served from 1998 to 2003, which was the peak years for the Hallyu Wave 1.0, which lasted until 2007 (Jin 27).

As mentioned, prior South Korea experienced an economic crisis from 1997 to 1998 that motivated the government to find a way to prevent the economy from falling into a more severe economic crisis. During Kim's presidency he began to promote South Korea's cultural industries because these brought South Korea a lot of economic profits/successes (Kim and Jin 5522-5523). Following Kim's presidency, President Roh Moo-hyun (노무현), who served from 2003 to 2008, increased support for the Hallyu Wave. President Roh emphasized that the Hallyu Wave should be used to share and exchange pop-culture with South Korea's neighbors to create more positive relationships and business ties (Kim and Jin 5523-5524). At the same time, President Roh did not want South Korean culture to not come across as overpowering because that could cause tensions with South Korea's neighbors.

“Roh relatively connected this term with cultural diversity, which focused more on the mutual exchange while preserving equalities among each culture. He stressed this approach to domestic audiences, reviewing the development of Korean industries as a result of the nation's democratization, which accelerated diversity (Kim and Jin 5524).

In the forceful spread of American culture worldwide, there is an emphasis on promoting American culture to show how American culture might be better than other cultures. However, President Roh wanted to use pop-culture as a way to promote cultural exchange and foster better understanding between South Korea and its neighbors: “Hallyu has become an international and cultural trend sharing hearts and friendships” (Kim and Jin 5527).

Lee Myung-Bak (이명박) was the next president of South Korea from 2008 to 2013.

Before becoming the president of South Korea he was the CEO of Hyundai. President Lee also supported the expansion of the Hallyu Wave, but differently from President Roh.

“[President Lee] demanded the industrialization of culture with the modernization of traditional culture and the advancement of the culture and arts industries, along with developing the creative contents industries ... as a method of improving national image” (Kim and Jin 5524).

South Korea’s Hallyu Wave was beginning to link the export of pop-culture to its national image that was being supported from President Lee because he wanted to expand South Korea’s pop-culture throughout Asia and world-wide. The export of pop-culture can be used as a tool to export a more positive or attractive image of a country that changes the perspectives of others and increases interest in the country that successfully exports its pop-culture. Creative, unique, and attractive pop-culture garners a country a lot of success and prosperity. President Lee began to work with some of the biggest electronics industries (Samsung & LG) and some of most well-known music companies (YG, JYP, and SM), using these sectors to spread attractive/unique pop-culture from South Korea that would obtain domestic and international popularity (Kim and Jin 5524-5525). The two main sectors of pop-culture that were combined were the electronics and music industries; combining the two allowed both industries to maximize their success.

Park Geun-hye (박근혜) was the next President of South Korea from 2013 to 2017.

President Park wanted to increase government support for the export of South Korea's pop-culture through the Hallyu Wave. In her inauguration speech, President Park mentioned "cultural enrichment" meaning the policies that President Park would enact would be focused on the promotion of the Hallyu Wave, South Korean pop-culture, and technology industries by increasing government involvement financially and through government support (Kim and Jin 5525-5526). In 2013, YouTube was gaining a lot of popularity through viral videos such as *The Fox (What Does the Fox Say?)* by Ylvis and by this time a lot of Korean Pop music and music videos could be accessed on this platform making Korean pop music to become well-known worldwide. President Park wanted companies in the technology sector to update and become more advanced to promote/export more South Korean pop-culture to the world because this was gaining a lot of success of on online platforms such as YouTube (Kim and Jin 5526). The access to the internet and technologies allowed not just South Koreans, but people worldwide to have easy and quick access to South Korean pop-culture products. The Hallyu Wave was changing South Korea's image; because of its pop-culture exports, attitudes toward South Korea were becoming increasingly positive. President Park made South Korea's Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism expand Korean Cultural Centers and King Sejong Institutes overseas as the Hallyu Wave garnered more international popularity (Kim and Jin 5527). Through the Hallyu Wave, technology, and Korean Cultural Centers have made it easier for people to access aspects of Korean culture, language, and media.

Hallyu 2.0 began in 2008 and is currently the on-going process of the export of South Korean pop-culture (Jin 23). There are differences between Hallyu 1.0 and 2.0 because South Korean industries are shifting to the technology and pop-culture sectors. President Lee and

President Park both supported the expansion of the Hallyu Wave which include the technology industries through funding and with government support/involvement. Hallyu 2.0 focuses on the integration of the government and the pop-culture industries and sectors. In addition, the technology industry increased which included the production of smartphones in South Korea so that South Koreans and people worldwide could have easier access to South Korean pop-culture (Jin 165-166). South Korea used both physical methods of exporting pop-culture, but South Korea placed even more emphasis on exporting its pop-culture through the internet and technology. Korean pop-music (K-Pop) has become one of the largest factors of the Hallyu Wave because it had easy access through social media and K-Pop is a hybridization product of Korean and other cultures (Jin 112, 118, and 121). There are a lot of successful components of the Hallyu Wave, but one of the most or the most successful component of the Hallyu Wave is Korean pop-music or known as K-Pop.

### Korean Pop-Music (K-Pop)

“The flows of K-Pop, which has become popularized to refer to Korean popular music, primarily youth music equipped with dynamic dance and consumed by the younger generation, around the world in the 2010s suggests that K-pop exists as a hybrid modernity mixing Western and Korean cultures. But it also seems to be increasingly becoming a unique local culture, distancing itself further from Western culture and representing more of Korean culture” (Jin 111).

K-Pop is one of South Korea’s most popular exports throughout South Korea and worldwide. In the quote above its mentions the goals/ what makes up K-Pop. Some of the most important aspects are that K-pop is targeted to younger generations by making it attractive or something enjoyable that younger generations can enjoy by learning the dances (Jin 111). South Korean pop-culture is making products specifically for younger generations because in South Korea it

was ranked 14<sup>th</sup> out of 196 countries for an increase in its GDP. There was a rise of the middle class in South Korea because the country meaning South Koreans had more money to spend on unique/attractive objects. K-pop is seen as being something attractive/unique because it is a mix of Korean and Western culture, but K-pop is associated as being Korean culture rather than being a hybrid culture (Jin 111). South Korea was influenced by American culture more specifically music because it was spread worldwide and it should be noted that American music is influenced by African American music and culture. K-pop is a mix of Western and African American culture, but it uses Korean culture to enhance its uniqueness and attractiveness to fans just not in South Korea, but to fans worldwide.

Korean music has changed styles and its meaning from the seventies, eighties, and nineties. During the late nineties and onwards, was the development of K-pop. In the 1970s, President Park Chung-hee censored other genres in Korean music that were not deemed as being trot or traditional sounding like traditional Korean music (Jin 114). Trot (트로트) is a genre of Korean music that appeared during Imperial Japan's occupation/colonization of Korea this genre was influenced by Japanese Enka, US, European music influences. Currently, in South Korea trot remains a popular genre among the older generations. Through the Hallyu Wave, trot has been getting more recognition and trot singers are just as famous as BTS in South Korea in 2019 (The Economist 2020). The Hallyu Wave allows for the older generations to join the Hallyu

Wave by making their preferences more accessible. The older generations utilize social media to have the opportunity to vote for their favorite trot singers to win on music shows; South Korean music companies that produce trot music want to utilize The Hallyu Wave to garner just as much success as K-pop (The Economist 2020). Even older genres/styles of Korean music are able to gain recognition through The Hallyu Wave, it is making older pop-culture objects seem new/attractive to both generations.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, South Korean music would change significantly in its sound and style. In the early 1980s, South Korean music would change from the trot sound to more ballad sounding songs that focused on innocence and love (Jin 112). South Korean ballads have a very soft, but powerful sound to them that makes it different from trot music to attract fans. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the sound of South Korean music would change again because South Korea as a country was rapidly changing by increasing its pop-culture and technology sectors (Jin 112). In addition, South Korea was aimed to become a democratic nation thus in the late eighties, South Koreans were fighting to change their nation to end the military dictatorships. It was in the earlier nineties that South Korea began to appropriate western and Caribbean music genres/styles (Jin 113-114). The early 1990s are the start of K-Pop becoming a genre of music in South Korea that began to take other cultures and blend it with Korean culture.



“*Kim Gun Mo (김건모)* introduced reggae . . . Seo Tajin and the Boys (*서태지와 아이들*) in 1992[, they] were one of the first groups to incorporate rap music and hip-hop sensibilities into Korean popular music” (Jin 113).

These performers changed South Korea’s music scene because they were incorporating Western, African American, Caribbean & Jamaican style/genres of music into South Korean popular music.

Seo Tajin and the Boys became the first K-pop group in South Korea with their debut in 1992 with the song *I know (난 알아요)* this song garnered immense popularity throughout South Korea. Seo Tajin and the boys emphasized the appeals of boy and girl group music that could attract to younger generations who enjoyed unique styles of music, this would continue to influence future K-pop groups (Jin 113). Korean popular music was becoming popular among younger generations and that increased the popularity of this music genre throughout South Korea it also created a generational gap between the younger and older generations.

“The change in Korean popular music in the early 1990s was coincident with the rise of a new generation (known as *shinsedae*), whose values, customs, lifestyles and mind-set were different from the older generations (the *kisungsedae*), partially because of the growing economic prosperity” (Jin 114).

Younger and older generations preferences of music were changing because of American influences in South Korea. The “*Shinsedae*” were heavily influenced by American pop-culture, music, food, and media (Jin 114). The younger generation in the late eighties and early nineties were able to have more money because of the rising middle class. Both the younger and older generation were influenced by American and African American culture and it shows how both American, African American, and Korean culture were changing their styles. The meaning of music was changing between the younger and older generation. Music by the Seo Tajin and the Boys and other K-Pop music were used to protest against the government and Korean music of

the nineties was associated with democracy and popular music became censored against the government (Jin 114). South Korea popular music was used as a way to show dissent, protest against the government, and to fight for democracy.

After the Seo Taiji and the Boys disbanded three major companies would appear in the K-Pop industry. YG Entertainment (YGe) formed by Yang-Hyun suk (양현석) who was a former member of Seo Taiji and the Boys, JYP Entertainment formed by Park Jin-young (박진영), and SM Entertainment founded by Lee Soo-man (이수만). Lee Soo-man created methods to produce successful boy and girl groups; Yang Hyun-Suk and Park Jin-young used Japanese style auditions to recruit people who were interested in becoming a K-pop star (Jin 115-116). These methods were used to attract not just fans, but to attract people particularly of the younger generation that was interested in becoming a star if they had experience or not.

These three companies are known as the 'Big Three' in the K-pop industry because they were extremely successful by using various methods to create unique approaches for the younger generations to accept K-pop. The Big Three created innovative methods to export South Korean pop-culture domestically and internationally to garner a lot of promotion. These industries began to localize CDs also use online platforms to localize K-pop domestically and internationally (Jin 120-121). Especially, with YouTube which allowed for K-pop to spread rapidly that helped for K-pop to garner a lot of attention and popularity. There were four major parts that were used: (1) glocalization Production (Jin 122), which worked to create businesses that understand local and international consumers; (2) collaboration with foreign companies (Jin 122); (3) incorporation of English into K-Pop songs (Jin 122); and (4) focus on creating K-pop for the youth and younger generations (Jin 122). Korean music companies emphasized localizing South Korean culture into

other markets to make K-Pop more successful. The strategies that they used was to work with others, attract the youth/younger generations, and used English to make K-pop more accessible to other international markets. Especially, the use of English into K-pop spread the music to international markets and South Koreans could enjoy K-pop with English lyrics because more people speak English; companies created aesthetics including the artists fashion that made K-pop unique from other styles of music (Jin 124). Korean music companies were using every type of means to successfully export K-pop throughout Korea and the world to garner more attention and popularity to South Korean pop-culture.

“Sony in Japan and Walt Disney in the United States pursued internationalization, these domestic powerhouses appropriated the ‘think globally, act locally’ (Jin 123).

South Korean music companies were influenced by Japan and America’s style of exporting pop-culture to make it unique and attractive to younger audiences around the world. Especially with Japan, because South Korean music companies were using methods that Japanese companies were using and due to geographic proximity Japan was one of the first countries to import South Korean pop-culture. The first Korean artists to be promoted in Japan is an artist called BoA Kwon Bo-ah (권보아) from SME. BoA was a revolutionary artist because she promoted her music and style was a blend of American, Korean, and Japanese culture and the goal was to attract more Japanese people to be interested in K-pop (Jin 116). SME relied a lot on localization to promote K-pop and other forms of South Korean pop-culture in Japanese markets by making products attractive/unique to Japanese markets/abide to the consumer preferences in Japan. BoA increased K-pop’s success in Japan and it helped for South Korean dramas such as *Winter Sonata* to garner a lot of success in Japan (Jin 117). YG, JYP, SME, and

other South Korean music companies create Japanese albums of popular K-pop songs and have Japanese members in K-Pop groups to help fans in Japan relate better to K-pop.

K-pop is a hybridity of African American, American, Caribbean, Japanese, and South Korean cultures. It became a unique genre of music that was made to be for the younger generations, use the English language in songs, and work with companies worldwide to spread K-pop domestically and internationally. South Korean music companies were influenced by Japanese music companies' methods to recruit new idols and make the idea of being a celebrity attractive to the younger generations. K-pop became a hybrid culture product that was aimed to be attractive to other local cultures by abiding to local consumer preferences and would create products for the consumer. K-pop garnered massive popularity throughout Asia because it used English in its songs, attractive for consumers, geographic proximity, and the music blended from various cultures (Jin 118). K-pop allows for fans interact with each other because it appeals to worldwide by creating a pop-culture that is for consumers that had unique and attractive aspects. K-pop like other aspects of South Korean pop-culture objects were being to spread through technology that helped increased the success of the Hallyu Wave.

## Technology & The Hallyu Wave 2.0

*Technology Hybridity*- “[digital] technologies provide new applicants for the endless transformation and fusion of data and identities that emerge in conjunction with increasingly interactive network-based media (Jin 153).

The use of technology provides another reason of how the Hallyu Wave garnered a lot of domestic and international success through the exports of South Korean pop-culture. The Hallyu Wave 2.0 becomes more accessible and interactive for fans. Through technology and smartphones people now have the opportunity to talk, buy, sell, interact, and learn from others;

South Korean pop-culture and media has now become endless because it can now be exported digitally (Jin 152-153). Smartphones and the internet created new ways for people to consume and have better access to South Korean pop-culture products, it creates more of personal experience because people who are interested in South Korean pop-culture can now interact with others who share the same interests. The Hallyu Wave 2.0 garnered a lot of success and popularity from using the advantages that the internet and smartphones provide worldwide access to South Korean pop-culture products. In 1995, President Kim Young Sam (김영삼) increased the technology sector budget to over forty-five million dollars and encouraged for the advancement of technology because technology brings success (Jin 155). South Korea was upgrading its technology significantly to compete with other nations. Korean Information Infrastructure was established in 1995 the purpose of this program is to create better software technologies, technology, and provide better internet services to have the advantage in the technology sector for businesses (Jin 155-156). Advancements in the technology sector, apps, software, and internet increased significantly because the internet could be used as a way to export South Korean pop-culture domestically. Technology brought the world closer to South Korean pop-culture because the internet provided easier access for fans worldwide and the internet allowed for the rapid spread of South Korean pop-culture.

South Korea used physical means to export pop-culture, but it relied even more on the internet, software, and technology to spread South Korean pop-culture; as Jin notes, “Korea’s tech-savvy market was about twice as fast of that of other overseas markets that adapted the phone earlier” (Jin 157). It should not be denied that the smartphone has changed societies worldwide because people now have the opportunity to access their computer from a small hand-held device that could make phone calls, use applications, take photos, and access the internet.

Two of the largest conglomerate technology companies in South Korea are Samsung and LG they increased the number of technologies they sold including smartphones. Samsung and LG used technology as a way to export more South Korean pop-cultural products because smartphones were deemed as being a part of The Hallyu Wave because it had apps that made it easier for fans to access South Korean media (Jin 159). KaKaoTalk is a South Korean messenger app that was created in 2010 by KaKaoCorp. KaKaoTalk was different from other messenger apps because it could be downloaded for free and send free messages over Wifi (Jin 160). KaKaoTalk is primarily used throughout South Korea, but the increase of South Korean pop-culture has made the app more popular to be used in countries worldwide. Line was another South Korean messenger app that was created in 2011 by Naver, like KaKaoTalk it is a free to download and allows for its users to send messages for free by using Wifi. However, Line is the main messenger app that is used in Japan, Thailand, and Taiwan. Both KaoKaoTalk and Line use localization to become attractive for foreign users to download and it works with local celebrities to promote local as well as South Korean pop-culture (Jin 160). For example, in 2017 Line and BTS which is a world-renowned K-pop boy group created a collaboration called BT21 that has a variety of products from plushies to online stickers available on the Line app. This collaboration was enacted due to BTS large fanbase known as Army's both Line and BTS wanted to create products that was made for the fans; they promoted these objects in both physical and online stores to provide easier access for the fans to purchase these objects (Friends Creator). Line and KaKaoTalk used technology and localization to their advantage; they were able to successful spread South Korean pop-culture through the virtual space.

Jin explains that “smartphones have become a battle ground for major telecommunications corporations that want to increase their influence and dominance” (Jin 165).

Smartphones, similar to broadcasting, provide the opportunity to control what is being shown in the media including pop-culture. The introduction of social media platforms such as YouTube and Facebook have increased the dominance of smartphones. Countries are competing to create the best/most attractive smartphones because the object itself is very expensive; that can garner profits. In 2009, the first iPhone was exported to South Korea, it garnered a lot of popularity. Samsung and LG were preferred in South Korea, but the iPhone became a fierce competitor; Samsung and LG created more advanced smartphones to keep-up in the smartphone technology field and to protect the domestic market (Jin 156-157). South Korea rapidly takes action to protect its domestic markets and in the late nineties' smartphones became a weapon of competition. South Korea did not want foreign competitors to have the advantage in domestic markets. However, Korean smartphones are a mix of Korean and American technology because of the operating systems they use a produced by Apple (IOS) and Google (Android); Samsung is working to create Tizen OS which would be a Korean software system because Korean companies want to end the American monopoly in Korean technology (Jin 164). American companies were able to garner profits from Korean companies because of software systems that are used in phones, technology/smartphones create the advantage through media or through software that gives companies power.

### LG's Successful Localization Strategy

Smartphones give countries power and media dominance. In addition, technology products garner high profits that help countries thus countries want to create the best products for both local and international consumers. For example, LG exported its products to Brazil, India, China, and Russia; other major corporations have been exporting their products to these regions, but there is a difference between their localization and LG's localization. LG created a variety of

technologies that could be purchased by people of different social classes; they went to other markets where other companies have somewhat tried to garner success, but they would leave if it was deemed to not be successful to the contrary LG would try to localize as much as possible to create long-term success (Ramaswamy 3-4). The goal of long-term success became a vital part of LG's plans to localize in different regions because they realized the importance of long term benefits and working with people to adhere to their preferences; to not seem overbearing or trying to create market dominance.

Brazil was one of the country's that LG wanted to export its products to because it could garner long-term success, but learn more about consumers in Brazil. LG went to underdeveloped regions in Brazil to build up LG's presence in Brazil; they supported football events and worked with local companies to spread their products and to enhance their presences in the country (Ramaswamy 5-6). However, LG was different from its competitors because it continued to work with countries even when their economy was in a recession. LG created factories in Brazil during an economic recession and worked with the Brazilian government to prevent the recession from becoming worse (Ramaswamy 6). LG stresses the importance of long-term success, localization, and creating products for the consumer. In India, LG had to work with local companies so it created LGIL (LGE India Ltd.); they created products that made the consumers lives better like Brazil; LGIL produced products in rural India because a large number of the population lived in this area (Ramasway 6-8). LG had to change its methods to garner success in India, but it worked to provide to a larger market by creating products that can be afforded by people of different economic classes. In addition, LGIL supported cricket events and hired local employees (Ramasway 7-8). LG was garnering a lot of popularity throughout these countries and worked to expand its company.



LG produced local products that were suited to Russian consumers, hired locally, and helped Russia by placing investing into the market (Ramasway 9). LG works with countries during economic crisis to help the people to prevent the economic crisis from worsening. China was another country that LG successfully exported its products; LG had to overcome various hurdles to garner market/consumer success. LG had to localize itself in order to be accepted by Chinese consumers because of their preferences; LG worked with Tianjin and was able to create factories in other provinces which helped to increase their products in China (Ramasway 10). LG would expand their localization process in China by presenting themselves as a local company rather than an international company. For example, 98% of employees at LG are Chinese, LG embraced Chinese culture/practices, and provided to those in need in China (Ramasway 10). LG would be a company that helps countries they are working for in need, give-back to the community, and localize themselves as being a local country by hiring locals. LG would find the most effective way to provide to their customers by abiding to consumer preferences. The case of LG is a prime example of how South Korean companies were entering other markets through localization and working to provide the best for the consumer. However, LG is a unique case because they gave back to community and provided aid to countries. Technology it's a tool, but at the same time it is used for power/dominance because it can spread media or pop-culture worldwide through the click of a button. South Korea used technology to increase its presence of pop-culture, to garner more international markets which helped them to gain success.

## Conclusion

The Hallyu Wave 1.0 and 2.0 is a blend/hybrid culture that mixes South Korean culture with other cultures to make a new/unique culture that preserves some of Korean culture.

According to Ryoo, it creates a kind of “Third-Space” – an “‘in-between’ incommensurable (that is, inaccessible by majoritarian discourses) location where minority discourses intervene to preserve their strengths and particularity” (Ryoo 138). The third-space gives non-western companies and countries the opportunity to preserve their culture, although western companies and cultures continue to have a major impact on power dynamics and global trends (Ryoo 138). Consequently, the Hallyu Wave 1.0 and 2.0 was inspired by the US and Japan because they were garnering success through the export of pop-culture, but South Korea was able to create its own hybrid culture that allowed for it to become its own entity. Especially, Japan in the 1980s was the beginning of its Pop-Culture Boom, Japan had a very strong economy, Japan used pop-culture to create better relations with its neighbors, to become the bridge between Asia and the West, and Japan used pop-culture to disassociate itself with its past that negatively affected nations throughout Asia (Ryoo 146). South Korea viewed Japan as a threat, but it took South Korea much longer to reach the point of exporting pop-culture because of the Korean War and various military dictatorships. However, once South Korea was able to rebuild its economy and launch its own pop-culture boom, South Korean pop-culture products were widely accepted in other nations, in part due to the attractive, hybrid quality of the Hallyu Wave (Ryoo 146). South Korea used both physical and digital means to export its pop-culture; it placed more emphasis on the technology sector and use of social media platforms/internet because the transmission of South Korean pop-culture could be accessed from any place in the world. South Korea overcame a lot in its past, but it has changed its image worldwide to becoming a unique, attractive country (Ryoo 145). The Hallyu Wave 2.0 allowed for the export South Korean pop-culture from K-pop to fashion to even food products. K-Pop is a blend of African American, American, Caribbean,

and Japanese culture; the hybridity of K-pop makes it attractive to fans worldwide; but it remains the aspect of being South Korean pop-culture.

The Hallyu Wave 1.0 and 2.0 allows for the South Korean government and companies to promote then export South Korean pop-culture, not only for monetary gains but also improve foreign relations with other nations. The Hallyu Wave is strengthening Korean identity and nationalism because it is promoting both Korean and hybrid Korean culture to the world with a lot of success (Ryoo 149). As mentioned previously, South Korea has a very harsh past of being taken over by China and Imperial Japan; South Korea was influenced by force by the United States, it had multiple harsh/cruel military dictatorships. However, South Korea was able to recover and now it has garnered global success challenging both Japan and the United States. South Korea's Hallyu Wave has been banned in countries because of its power/success, but unlike Japan, South Korea does not have a past of colonizing other nations; it creates relationships with other nations in Asia, South Korea localizes its culture to prevent it from seeming overpowering: it "challenges dominant and dominated cultures" (Ryoo 149). South Korea's Hallyu Wave continues to break boundaries and continues to garner international success. It has enjoyed government support, but its success lies much more with the innovative products and strategies developed to appeal to both domestic and global audiences. The Hallyu Wave has both promoted and changed South Korean identity. Its success rests on developing creative, innovative and appealing products and marketing these through sophisticated, cutting-edge technology as well as through localization and hybridity. It will continue to appeal to consumers across the globe by adapting to reflect these strengths.

The export of pop-culture has become a way for nations to shape the preferences of consumers and citizens in other countries, not only to earn large profits but also to increase their soft power by building an attractive image. It should be noted that American popular culture has long enjoyed a dominant position and has had a profound influence on popular culture in both Japan and South Korea; nonetheless, both countries have promoted distinctive pop-cultures of their own that are a hybrid of international and domestic influences. Japan began to promote its pop-culture in the 1970s and by the late 1980s, it had entered markets in East Asia on a massive scale. Japanese pop-culture was hugely popular and was not restricted to music or video games; it encompassed television programs, dramas, fashion, art, media, manga, anime, and even food. Japan's pop-culture and media industries were noted for their quality and sophistication and served as a model for other companies in the region.

However, Japan's neighbors, especially those most severely impacted by Imperial Japan, continued to harbor resentments due to their traumatic past. Perceptions that Japan considered itself superior to other nations in Asia and wanted to impose its own model of pop-culture on other countries led to a certain amount of resistance, including bans on imports of Japanese pop-culture products in some countries. Older generations were more skeptical of Japan's motivations and feared that the Japanese pop-culture boom could be a new form of cultural imperialism. Japan had to make its pop-culture attractive to these nations by localizing and hybridizing its pop-culture to be accepted by the younger generations in these countries.

Japanese pop-culture companies pursued localized, hybridized strategies in an effort to win over audiences in different countries. While production companies were Japanese, they collaborated with local companies and artists. Characters in pop-culture products were stripped of identifiably Japanese features so that they were associated with Japan, but were not exclusively Japanese. Japan used sophisticated communications and information technologies to make its pop-culture products more easily accessible to global audiences but it also welcomed input from fans and collaborated with free-lancers and amateurs. Anyone with interest, talent and creativity was welcome, regardless of experience. There was not a single way to define Japanese pop-culture but rather a multitude of products that appealed to a wide range of interests.

Given the success of the pop-culture industries, the Japanese government became more involved and worked to promote pop-culture exports as a form of soft power. The increase of government involvement and support helped to expedite Japan's pop-culture domestically and globally. Pop-culture exports are being used to promote a positive image of Japan's national identity to convey to the world. Japan makes itself more attractive and sells its image to international consumers to garner a positive image. Japan was able to create a cute, non-threatening national image of itself through its pop-culture export boom, but this does not mean that Japan has been completely forgiven or forgotten by the groups who were most affected by Imperial Japan.

Japan's indigenous groups and ethnic minorities have been 'invisible' for too long in Japanese society. The 'positive myth' continues to hide the history of mistreatment and oppression that these groups have suffered, using government resources to portray a positive image of peaceful coexistence that ignores continuing problems. Japan's indigenous groups and ethnic minorities are pushing back against their lack of accurate representation, using popular

culture as a way to criticize the ‘positive myth’ promulgated by the Japanese government. In addition, technology has provided the indigenous groups and ethnic minorities of Japan with more opportunities to spread information and fight to have their voices to be heard.

South Korea’s pop-culture sector began to grow after the country became a democracy in 1987 and has continued to expand ever since. South Korean cultural companies used new technologies and practices, including social media and fandoms, to develop growing markets for pop-culture products as well as the Korean-made electronic devices necessary to run them. Geographic proximity and Japanese pop-culture and technology products have influenced South Korea to create its own unique pop-culture. South Korea has localized its pop-culture to become very attractive to international audiences, adapting Korean pop-culture products in order to follow consumer preferences. Companies in South Korea tried to understand other countries better by learning more about their consumers’ preferences, and South Korean companies localized production so as not to seem overbearing or threatening. South Korea created a hybrid culture from its pop-culture, the most notable example is K-pop that blends African American, American, Caribbean, Japanese, and South Korean cultures. The purpose of South Korean products is to attract not just domestic audiences, but to attract international audiences too. South Korea rapidly adapted to trends in pop-culture to increase the popularity and attraction of its products. In addition, countries in Asia were more accepting of South Korean pop-culture because they share a similar historical past, it was similar to Japanese culture, but something new for consumers because of its uniqueness. South Korea worked with local companies to make its pop-culture successful in Asia, it was made for the consumers. South Korean culture has been banned in countries such as China because it is viewed as threat to Chinese culture, but not to the extent that Japanese pop-culture was banned in China.

Another aspect that was emphasized in the promotion of South Korean pop-culture through the Hallyu Wave was the integration of technology. The internet was invented in the 1960s, and internet is now able to transmit ideas, information, and pop-culture in less than one second. It has become more accessible and more people own technologies that have access to the internet such as smart phones that act as pocket computers. South Korea advanced its technology and internet services to tie into its pop-culture exports. Especially, companies such as LG and Samsung worked to create better smartphones that had internet access and smartphone commercials promoted pop-culture products. In the promotion of South Korean pop-culture, physical copies were important, but exporting pop-culture through the internet and technology garnered more success as well as profits. South Korea placed heavy emphasis towards exporting pop-culture through the internet. Currently, smartphones now have applications (apps) that allow users to have easier access to South Korean media and pop-culture contents. South Korean companies also marketed their products by having South Korean celebrities utilize social media to connect with both domestic and international fans, and this also provided artists with the opportunity to spread their music or films. South Korea was recognized in an extremely positive image because of its pop-culture, and like in Japan, the South Korean government promotes an image that it wants to portray to the world.

Exchanges of pop-culture between Japan and South Korea have increased interactions with both countries. Companies in both countries have collaborated to create pop-culture products that can be attractive to both Japanese and Korean consumers. This allows for artists in both fields to learn more about different styles of production and promotion which could then be incorporated in either form of pop-culture. However, even though relations between Japan and South Korea have become a bit more positive through pop-culture, that does not mean that they

are on great terms. As mentioned before, various countries in Asia placed bans on imports of Japanese pop-culture, which were seen as a threat to their own local culture. South Korea will not forget the atrocities that occurred in the country from Imperial Japan because it has left scars on the country. In addition, there have been several instances that have caused relations between Japan and South Korea to worsen. Although Japanese affection toward Koreans increased due to the popularity of Korean music and TV dramas in Japan, anti-Korean sentiments returned after official calls by South Korean politicians for an apology by the Japanese emperor for colonial atrocities. Unresolved territorial disputes continue to flare up periodically, putting a chill on relations. More recently, a South Korean court ruling ordered the Japanese government to pay reparations to comfort women, rejecting a 2015 “final and irreversible settlement” negotiated between the Japanese government under then Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and former South Korean President Park Geun-hye in which “Japan expressed responsibility and apologized anew to the women, promising to set up an \$8.3 million fund to help provide old-age care,” but did not admit “legal” responsibility or provide official reparations (Sang-Hun 2021). Together with another South Korean Supreme Court ruling in 2018 that ordered Japan to compensate Korean forced laborers, the South Korean government has protested visits by various ministers in Japan to the Yasukuni Shrine where World War II war criminals are buried, lack of acknowledgement of Japanese war-time atrocities in Japanese school textbooks (Sang-Hun 2021). The Japanese government insisted that wartime claims had been resolved and imposed export controls on South Korea, leading South Korea to retaliate by imposing a boycott on Japanese products and companies.

Significantly, however, pop-culture exchanges have continued to be strong between the two countries, with the Japanese manga “Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba” topping bestseller



lists in South Korea and the “Demon Slayer” anime movie very successful in the box office as well. With this release, Japanese movie company demonstrated sensitivity to its South Korean audience, editing out the earrings of one of the main characters, which resembled the Rising Sun Flag, regarded as a symbol of Japanese militarism and imperialism by Koreans (Lee 2021). Meanwhile, the South Korean romantic drama “Crash Landing on You” was so popular in Japan in 2020 that it was credited with helping spark the fourth Hallyu wave in Japan (Lee 2021). The popularity of Korean dramas is not something that is new in Japan; in the Diplomatic Bluebook published by the Japanese Foreign Ministry on April 27, “Crash Landing on You” is credited for helping to spark the fourth “Korean Wave” boom in Japan. The drama was popular enough to be selected as a candidate to for the buzzword of 2020. The Diplomatic Bluebook also suggests that Korean dramas, along with K-pop, are now widely accepted among different generations. In sum, popular cultural exchanges may not permanently lead to improved relations between Japan and South Korea, but they are able to thrive despite worsening relations.

The success of pop-culture has been recognized by other countries and more countries are using pop-culture to promote a positive image, economic gains and soft power, creating attractive pop-culture objects that have people interested in their culture that becomes hybrid culture and localized to attract the most domestic and international consumers.

“It is only with reference to J-Pop or K-Pop that we have a clue as to what the word ‘T-pop’ could possibly mean: an attempt at cultural export – film, music, and other forms of entertainment—to create a ‘Thai Brand of Cool’ (Pongpipat 2016).

Thai pop-culture has been influenced from both Japan and South Korea’s popular pop-culture exports, Thailand wants to create its own pop-culture to garner a lot of media success, change of image, and economic benefits. Thai dramas have been garnering more popularity in South East Asian countries such as Myanmar (Burma), Cambodia, and Laos (Pongpipat 2016). It should

also be noted that China is one of the largest consumers of Thai cultural products. In 2016, Thai dramas have been garnering more popularity in China because Thai dramas and films have LGBTQ+ themes and they are forbidden in China, but Thai dramas provide Chinese people with the opportunity to have access these media products (Pongpipat 2016). Thai companies are using similar branding strategies to the ones used by J-Pop and K-Pop companies, holding out the possibility that T-Pop could become just as easily identifiable. T-Pop is a blend of Japan's Cool Japan & Pop-Culture Boom and South Korea's Hallyu Wave; it uses unique cultural, geographical, and other attractive objects to make it stand-out from both Japan and South Korea (Pongpipat 2016). Thailand is identifying aspects that make the country unique from Japan and South Korea, creating innovative pop-cultural products to promote a positive image of Thailand.

“I believe in Thai culture but not the Thai culture through the eyes of Ministry of Culture,” said Pijitra. . . We have to research what foreigners really like about Thailand and work from there” (Pongpipat 2016).

Consequently, like both Japanese and South Korean pop-culture, Thai pop-culture is using localization and hybridity to attract more to international consumers than domestic consumers. In addition, Thai culture is being supported by Thailand's Ministry of Culture; it is creating an image that is aimed to promote what the government wants to promote to the world. The goal of Thai pop-culture is to attract international consumers; it does not promote the perspective or views from all people in Thailand.

Pop-culture helps countries strengthen their soft-power and can help them change their global image, garnering economic success as well as diplomatic power. Pop culture can increase countries' ties, but pop-culture is not the final solution for smooth relations between countries. The export of pop-culture allows for global consumers to learn more about other countries, but this knowledge tends to be superficial. Pop-culture has become a double sword with both

positive and negative aspects for countries that successfully export pop-culture products to the world.

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