

Popular Culture and Youth Consumption: Modernity, Identity and Social Transformation

Ubonrat Siriyuvasak

Faculty of Communication Arts,
Chulalongkorn University

for

The International Workshop on Feeling “Asian” Modernities :
TV Drama Consumption in East/Southeast Asia
International Christian University, Tokyo
23-25 November 2001

Published in Feeling Asian Modernities
Transnational Consumption of Japanese TV Dramas
Edited by Koichi Iwabuchi (Hong Kong : Hong Kong University Press, 2004)

The globalization of popular culture is central to the rapid growth of consumerism worldwide. In Thailand, young people are attracted to Hollywood film, Billboard chart music, world class sports, Japanese comic books and cartoon series on television, and not least, to Hong Kong television series. As we move towards a new information based economy and digital technology we begin to witness the magnitude of the flow of these cultural goods which rise in conjunction with the multiple channels of distribution of large global media conglomerates. In this paper I will focus the discussion on the increasing influence of Japanese popular culture on Thai youth. It is prevalent that the rise of youth consumerism and popular culture are closely related to the economic change of the society. The new rich or the middle-class in Thailand has become the major consumer, among other things, of information and cultural products during the economic boom years in the 1980s and early 1990s. In this process of identity formation middle-class youth are turned into consumer first and citizen later. The question is how are youth, urban youth in particular, drawn into the circle of “*global popular culture*” in search of their identity and a different future for their generation.

The first section of the paper gives a historical overview on the anti-imperialist cultural politics in the 1970s. Student activism pinpointed US militarism and US and Japanese capitalism as their foremost enemy. They called for the withdrawal of US military bases and a boycott on US and Japanese consumer products as well as cultural goods. In this struggle, nationalism was extolled to counter the imperial domination in the political and cultural spheres. The cultural experience of the student movement during this period demonstrated how youth and their consumption of popular culture was connected to the formation of their political identity. Thus, the new imaginaries could transcend the symbolic world to real participation in the material world of social transformation.

By contrast, the second section discusses the return of American and Japanese popular culture in the 1980s-1990s. Along with the new consensus politics and the rapid economic growth rate, global popular culture spearheaded by American and Japanese popular culture, is enmeshed into the metropolitan lifestyle of today middle-class youth. Instead of transforming these global cultural products into a radical political and cultural force as their predecessor a large number of Thai youth embrace the sound, the imagery and the style as their mode of modern consumption.

Nonetheless, some young people consume American or Japanese popular culture as a means to articulate their frustration against the deep-seated repressive and patronising society and not simply to catch up with the most recent trend. But would this identity politic emerge as a serious expression of a new youth counter-culture? It remains to be seen how the dynamics of today's youth cultural politics would materialise.

Thai youth and anti-imperialist culture and politics

American popular culture on television was introduced in Thailand with the advent of the first television station in 1955. Series such as *I Love Lucy*, *The Beavers*, cartoon and American films were part of the daily entertainment fare sponsored by US consumer product and feature serials contributed by the US Information Service (Sinit Sithirak, 1992, pp.103-114). On the music scene, it was the moment when rock n'roll began to stir the sensation of young people around the world. American pop and rock music made their way into the music listening stream of Thai youths without much difficulties. However, the rise of the American popular culture during this period coincided with the expansion of US imperial dominance in Asia and other regions of the world. The mid-1950s-1960s, in particular, was the decade that the US expanded her military power into Indochina with the Vietnam War at the centre of US militarism over Asia. The Thai military government co-operated closely with the US government by providing air-bases for American bombers, especially B-52, to drop thousands of tons of bomb on Vietnam soil and her people. The Thai government received US military aid and weapon as well as support on anti-Communism programme in return. This was meant to contain, theoretically, the domino effect of Communism in Thailand and Southeast Asia (Surachat Bamrungsook, 1982). Consequently, the Vietnam War ushered in thousands of US troops and their consumption culture in the areas around the military bases in the northeast - Udorn, Ubon, Korat, and the north - Takli, and the seaside resort of Pattaya near U-Tapao air base. American culture of sex and drug, food and fashion, music and night life entertainment became prevalent and having a deep and lasting impact on the society (Kuruchon, War or Peace Album).

While the Thai military government and some sectors of the society were enjoying their economic gains from the money pumped in by the US government young people and university students were attracted by American rock n'roll music and the anti-war movement (Siray, 2001). The influx of what is seen as the massification of US

cultural products or the Americanization of Thai youths. Paradoxically, the influence of the expressive music, singing and dancing style of Elvis Presley, Cliff Richards and the Shadows, the Beatles, the Rolling Stone from the UK, highly popular among Thai youths, begged the question of freedom and self expression which was completely forbidden by the military government. But on the other hand, the simple sound of acoustic guitar, the ballad and folk music of many American folk groups appealed to young students who find no room in Thai music (which mostly produced for adults). The students sought out Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Pete Seeger, for example, and began to turn these folk and rock tunes into a new Thai popular music genre called Pleng Pua Chiwit or "*Song for Life*". Most of the lyrics were about the quest for a better society and dream for a new utopia. In addition, they were filled with political criticism of the government (Jarunrat Suwanaputit, 1989). These songs were developed further into US anti-imperialist songs when students gathered on campus ground and marched towards the US embassy to protest against US bases in Thailand in 1975-1976 after the student up-rising in 1973 that ousted the military dictators.

The sentiment of anti-military dictator government was deepened and began to pick up momentum in the late 1960s and early 1970s. University students and their literary clubs distributed their criticisms on US domination in their underground publications. In 1972 the Student Centre of Thailand organised an anti-Japanese goods campaign that sparked off a series of anti-establishment rally in the university. Student activism went hand in hand with the intellectual movement outside the university. Among these independent forum the journal **Sangkomsart Parithat** or Social Science Perspective was at the forefront. The journal, started in 1963, was a publication of the Social Science Society of Thailand. The majority of the content was on history, current affairs and literature written by well known intellectuals and young academics who share the same concern about local knowledge, the relationship between Thailand and her neighbour countries and the future direction of the Thai society. But obviously one can detect the underlying resentment on the existing authoritarian regime reading at the critical tone of the editorial column and various articles in the journal. In fact, **Sangkomsart Parithat** initiated an exchange forum that appealed especially to the intellectuals for there has not been a public and critical forum as influential since 1957 when the military took absolute hold of the nation. In 1968, the journal began to publish special issues for graduates and student readers. The content addressed the

questions of education and the life and aspiration of university students. From 1970 onward the journal began a series of articles questioning the domination of the US government over the Thai military government. The editorial of **Sangkomsart Parithat** denounced the US troops on the massacre of villagers at My Lai village in Vietnam and how the Cold War destroyed innocent lives (10:7, July 1972). In 1973, the journal openly confronted the US government by publishing “*An open letter to the US President*” in its editorial (11:5, May 1973). The letter stated that,

“As a small voice in the country you have befriended for a long time we would like to welcome the Peace Accord that you signed with North Vietnam and Vietcong. Although the War has not really ended but it is a promise, on paper, that you intend to withdraw from the battle ground in Vietnam. However, we are doubtful whether peace in Indochina will be a reality. On the contrary, you only withdraw the ground troops from Vietnam while bringing in your airforce from Danang, the Philippines and Okinawa into Thailand....The number of B-52 at U-Tapao has doubled and you moved the Fantom F-4 unit 4, 390 and 421 from Danang to Takli...The fighter jets from your airforce in our country has increased from 550 to 750 and the number of troops has increased from 32,000 to 49,000..we disagree with the policy of our government that subject our country to your wishes without condition.. we disagree completely and we have expressed our view earlier in 1967, before anyone else, that to allow one nation to have large military bases, in our country, to wedge war against another nation is ethically wrong and it would easily open the way for military invasion in which we could not be sure that any major power of the world would lend a hand at the time of crisis... We ask that as the leader of a powerful nation you would acknowledge our voice and our call...as a consultation from a younger brother who love humanity no less than you are... we hope that you would truly understand. We hope you would not feel that America is the leader and the Thais are only the follower.” (pp.64-66)

Evidently the open letter attacked both the US imperial power on its domination over Thailand and the Thai government for allowing the US government to do so. It brought forth the question of national integrity of a smaller ally in the face of the world super-power. The anti-imperialist sentiment ran high during the brief democratic years after the student up-rising in 1973. Capitalist exploitation in the country and foreign imperialist were singled out as the root cause of poverty in the rural areas (**Sangkomsart Parithat**, 12:9, Sept 1974). This was followed by the pronouncement of the “*Death of Imperialists*” that set the stage for mass demonstrations against US military bases in Thailand and the call for total withdrawal of US troops in 1976 (**Sangkomsart Parithat**, 12:12, Dec 1974). Pleng Pua Chiwit or “*Song for Life*” played an important part in consciousness building and holding together the youthful spirit of an anti-imperialist

ideology as we shall see below (see a parallel analysis in Lockard's "*Thailand: songs for life, songs for struggle*", 1998 and Jarunrat Suwanaputit, 1989)

Sangkomsart Parithat also criticised Japanese investment in Thailand harshly. Japan's capital domination was seen as the key to economic imperialism. In 1972, the journal published an issue on "*The Yellow Peril*" criticising the role of Japanese capital on the economic condition of the nation and on the well being of workers under the management control of foreign employers (10:4, April 1972). The journal, however, made clear that it was a structural analysis of economic relationship and has nothing to do with ethnicity or race. On the contrary, the editorial called attention to the Thai capitalist and the government who collaborated with foreign capitalists instead of merely blaming Japanese capitalist alone. The main concern was on the problem of economic dependency of Thailand.¹ The analysis emphasised that the expansion of Japanese capitalism was part and parcel of a larger scheme of imperialist domination, by both white/Western and yellow perils. The struggle to overcome this kind of economic colonization must, therefore, command real knowledge and mass mobilization (**Sangkomsart Parithat**, 12:3, March 1974).

"The struggle against these imperialists is tantamount and, of course, it would not be sufficient to demonstrate and shout on the streets...But the struggle must be well planned with a thorough understanding of theory and practice. In the long run, people of all groups must get organised. No matter how many parliament we have it has been proven, in the west especially, that they are unable to fulfill all the mandate and all the need of the people at all time..In Thailand where the political efficiency of the parliament is still low people in the rural areas must get together to build their own network of communication...efforts must be made to strengthen the new democratic rule.." (pp.79-80).

When the Student Centre of Thailand took up the issue to boycott Japanese goods in November 1972 it caught a good deal of public attention. During the 1970s, the journal continued to appeal to nationalism and economic independence as a strategy against imperialist domination. Together with the demand for the US withdrawal, the students built up the anti-imperialism campaign that totally opposed to the political and economic policies of the Thai government. Although the government refused to yield to the call of demonstrators which to them would be a 180-degree turn around, the

¹ For a more detailed analysis, see Panni Bualek' recently published **Jakrawatniyom Yipun kab Patanakarn Tuniyom Thai rawang Songkram Lok**

subsequent government after the coup d'état in 1976 finally agreed to negotiate with the US government for a total withdrawal of the American troops.

Popular culture and social transformation during 1973-1981

Modernist novels from Russia, Europe and China and popular music played a key role in showing the new democratic spirit during the booming years, between 1973-1976, of liberal politics after the fall of the military dictator. Literature on Socialism and Marxism, novels and poetry were translated in the search for a new path and ideology to transform the old regime to a more egalitarian and just society. Works of Thai writers such as Jit Pumisak, Kulab Saipradit were eagerly read and discussed in student study groups. And Pleng Pua Chiwit or "*Song for Life*" quickly became a part of student demonstration in 1973. At that time the songs were literally "*underground protest songs*". To organise large crowd for a long period of time rhetoric alone was insufficient. However, students had to rely on official propaganda songs or military marches to keep the demonstration going. They found that the tunes and the lyrics of these songs could not serve the spirit of the demonstrators. Some students, then, wrote songs and music, impromptu, to cheer up the fighting spirit (Jarunrat Suwanaputit, 1989, pp.392-395). Student bands who joined this kind of political activism took up the cultural function and music became part of the overall programme of student protests.

Some critic said that Pleng Pua Chiwit is similar to black gospel and blues which is the music of the oppressed. The majority of Pleng Pua Chiwit talked about the poor peasantry who have no hope for the future. They criticised the inequality of the education system and the exploitation of workers in the capitalist economy. But they also spell out the dream for a better and just society. A utopia whose members are free from all the shackles and an independent society without the oppression of the feudal culture nor imperial domination. Bands such as Tor Sen lae Sanchon, later Caravan,²

Krang ti 1 -2 (B.E. 2457-2488) (Japanese Imperial and the Development of Thai Capitalism between World War 1-2 (1914-1945).

² Their first album, Kon kab Kwai or Man and Buffalo, was highly popularised. The songs Kon kab Kwai, Perb Kao or Eating Rice, for example, depicting the tragic condition of the Thai peasantry were among the best of Pleng Pua Chiwit and became known as the classic songs in this genre.

Kanmachon or Workers, Kuruchon or Teachers, Kome Chai or The Beacon, Ton Kla or Young Rice, Kong Law or The Wheel and Ruam Kon or The Great Hammer grew out of student demonstrations around the country.

They wrote their own songs and music inspired by the folk-rock and ballad of the American anti-war music and not least, Joni Mitchell and Woodstock concert. Some of the early “*Song for Life*” were a close imitation of Dylan, Joan Baez, Judy Collins, Pete Seeger and Crosby, Still, Nash and Young. But the bands gradually incorporated local music instruments such as pin or Thai mandolin, klui or Thai flute and Thai drum. Some of the melodies were taken from northeastern folk music which became highly appealing such as Pan Ud Tud. As more and more worker, student and peasant demonstrations were organised the music developed into beat and rock music using electric guitar instead of acoustic guitar. The anti-imperialist songs were extremely popular among demonstrators because of the marching tune and demonstrators could clap along when they sing. The people and the music became one and the same at that particular moment. The lyrics also had very special meaning which reiterate patriotism, a lost dignity regained and people’s power.

Caravan published its second long play album, ***Dangerous American***, in 1974 with the skull face of Uncle Sam wearing a US flag top hat on the cover. The song questioned why US imperialist was allowed to dominate the Thai nation. They came in order to destroy the brothers and sisters in our neighbour countries. The key phrases repeatedly said that “*Thailand belongs to the Thais not the US imperialist....all Thais must unite, the US must go, we want our sovereignty on our land*”. The same theme appeared in Lam Plern Kab Lai America or Expel America sang in the northeastern folk dance tune. The US and the Thai government were charged for robbing and exploiting the people. In the song Korat Kab Sai Ai Kan or Korat expels American the narrative gave the full history of the US expansion and Thai-US relationship during the military regimes in the 1950s and 1960s and their involvement in the war in Indochina. The song was sang in an angry and aggressive tone calling the Thais to expel the Americans from Thai soil. Another well known band, Kuruchon, were student from Suan Sunanta teachers’ training college. They borrowed the melody of the Korean song, Aridang, in their own song, War or Peace, to expose the US war aggression in Korea and Indochina. And in their Nitan Muang Thai or The Story of Thailand the song described in great

detail how the US exploited the resources and the culture, especially women in all regions of Thailand. Peasants must leave their land to work in the factories of Taiwanese and Japanese capitalists. They, too, were exploited. But their voices were never heard. These are some examples of the anti-imperialists songs that informed as well as trying to mobilize for popular support on the anti-imperialist campaign.

After 1976, students and their Pleng Pua Chiwit bands, intellectuals, journalists joined the Communist Party of Thailand in their guerilla warfare. They produced their music in the jungle and broadcast through the underground radio station, the Voice of the People's of Thailand. The songs were strong in their emotional appeal to fight and liberate the country from the '*fascist regime*' which suppressed all dissidents groups. Some of the music received the influence of Chinese music, through the close relationship between the Thai and Chinese Communist Party. And some music was influenced by the music of the indigenous people in the north.

Students' political activism died down as they were disillusioned by the hierarchical and centralised culture in the Communist Party. The government was also able to win them over by open the way for amnesty as the students left their armed struggle to come home. Hence, radicalism from below during 1973-1981, as Kasian (1999) called it, took a new turn. The politics and culture of the past two decade (1982-2001) has shifted towards a new consensus politics. The process of political reform from above was formalised and the new "*People's Constitution*" was promulgated in 1997. Along with this structural change, the way youth and popular culture, i.e. Pleng Pua Chiwit, connects itself closely with the political and social movement in this country became history of yester years. Pleng Pua Chiwit, the underground, highly politicised music entered the commercial music industry as one of the local popular music genre. It is no longer banned from radio and television.

The youthful Japanese popular culture

While Western pop rock music in the 1960s led the students to the peace movement and their protest music middle-class youth in the 1990s are attracted by dance and techno music and Japanese pop rock as well as local alternative and mainstream music. This section looks at the identity politics of middle-class youth and their effort to form a distinctive culture by drawing from sources which they see as '*modern*'. The identity formation, however, is organised around the

consumption of a range of cultural products that gives youth a sense of freedom despite the rigid social and political control of the parent and the state.

If a teenager were asked about the anti-Japanese goods campaign in 1972 he/she would not know about it. Most teenagers today have no idea about the student activism against Japanese imperialist thirty years ago. Even fewer would remember the Japanese imperial military aggression on 8 Dec 1941 which took over Thailand, then Burma in the Pan Asia expansionist war. On the contrary, as the economic development gathered speed and grew at a high rate during the late 1980s and early 1990s urban youths and youths from middle-class families consume a wide range of imported products including popular culture from the West and Japan (Ubonrat Siriyuvasak, 2000 and Ockey, 1999). Comic books for children and cartoon series on television are among the most popular type of cultural product. But of late, Japanese comic is gaining more popularity among students. Comic book rental store could be found outside schools and the major universities in Bangkok. The trend on the popularity of music and television drama among youth is slowly changing towards consuming more Japanese music and drama series along with Thai, US and Western popular culture. Despite the comments that global popular cultural products demonstrate the decadent culture of the wealthy nations and would have a deep consumerist effect most young people disregard this kind of comment as old fashion (Chetha Puanghat, 1998, Kulini Mutakalin, 1998).

The emerging popularity of Japanese culture in recent years in Bangkok could be testified by the mushrooming of Japanese restaurants and fashion. For adults Japanese food has a particular appeal of taste and class. But for teenagers Japanese fashion is what strike them most. There are shops in Siam Square catered especially for youths on clothes, cosmetics, handbags, shoes, accessories and magazines showing the new trend. And there is Centre Point for which the latest fashion is being displayed and youth mingle happily in the space they called their own. Centre Point is located at the heart of youth activities in Bangkok Siam Square. Teenagers come here to promenade in their Japanese hair-do and fashion showing rainbow colour, yellow, pink or blue shock of hair and tight sleeveless t-shirt, laced female bodice or midriff blouse with fur boots. At a glance, they look like they are popped out of Japanese fashion and youth magazine (Thippimon Kiatwatiratana, 2000).

Youth feel free to display their richly decorated clothes, painted bodies and bright-coloured hair among those who share similar ‘*subculture*’ or language. They have found themselves a space to communicate their style which to them is cool and modern. The signification of it all is that “*the intentional communication...stands apart, - a visible construction, a loaded choice, it directs attention to itself; it gives itself to be read*” (Hebdige, 1979, p.101). Japanese pop style is being used to communicate a finely graded distinction of class and status, self-image and attractiveness as opposed to the normal and boring others who do not share the same language. Their message is very loud and vivid in a society whose understanding of and permissiveness for youth subculture is scarce. Youth are seen as immature, irresponsible members of the society who must either be patronised or strictly disciplined by the family and school. Unsurprisingly, Centre Point has been dispersed after a short-lived celebration of youth freedom in their own public space. This is well in line with the government newly launched “*regime of social order*”. The purpose of the campaign is to wipe out drug and deviant in the Thai society (**Puchadkarn**, 3 Sept, 2001). Nonetheless, youth groups find their meeting places in the small range of pop magazines and radio and television programmes and special clubs, music events and concerts for which their identity, taste and style of subculture could continue to be retained and enriched.

Music

Compare with Thai pop music and Western pop rock from the US and UK broadcast on more than a dozen FM stations in Bangkok Japanese pop music is at the margin. Most radio programmes for Japanese popular music in 2000-2001 are on air during Saturday and Sunday morning and evening. There is one daily programme on FM 102.5 at 22:00-23:00. These programmes such as Club-J, Tokyo Calling, Tokyo Club, play exclusively Japanese pop rock music. They play the hit tunes from the pop idol playlists and some of the popular rock group. The programmes are open for listeners’ request and the djs give news up-date on the Japanese pop scene and invite audience participation on their quiz and game. One programme, Club-J, is bi-lingual. The Japanese dj translates what the Thai dj said into Japanese. Some programmes have small section on Japanese vocabulary. The large majority of listeners enjoy the music without actually having any knowledge of Japanese language.

But the most significant part of the programme is the music and the exchange of taste between the fans and the djs. In addition, the programme is valuable in the sense that audience get to listen to the most recent trend and new releases which are not available in music shop. Also due to the expensive price of cds and tapes some djs would tell the audience to get ready to record their favourite music. Japanese music fans listen to the music on the FM dial and get together from time to time for the music events in pubs and concert venues. Another major forum which fans communicate are the pop and rock music magazines. Nippon Idol and Idol - J-Rock, Japan rock mania magazine, the monthly magazine started in 1997, sell more than 10,000 copies on some special issue. Although the magazine is priced at 120 baht which is expensive compared with Thai music and other pop magazines youth are willing to spend their money on their idols. During the last few years Johnny's music idols and the junior idols become the trend for young listeners. Some of them appear on the drama series to synchronize their popularity.

However, the group which breakthrough the listening stream of music aficionado was X-Japan.³ It is so popular that an X-Mania Club was organised and a 40-page newsletter was published for X fans every month. Hide and Yoshiki are the most adored member of X-Japan. The other members are Toshi, lead singer and Pata, bass guitarist. When X-Japan announced their separation in 1997 fans were shocked. Hide's suicide which followed in 1998 caused so much grief among X fans, most of whom are women. They gathered at his mock funeral and prayed. The society was startled by the news that some Thai youth were so much saddened by a Japanese rock star. Other rock groups which are well known among J-rock fans are Luna Sea, L'Arc en Ciel, Malice Mizer, Glay, Lucifer, Dir en grey, Penicillin and Lareine, for example. But none could surpass X-Japan so far.

The interesting phenomenon of X-Japan is described by Noraset Mudkong, well known dj, that their music is good, in terms of technique, artistry and authenticity and unique in its style of speed metal-cum-visual rock. Although X-Japan was influenced by David Bowie and Glam Rock, for instance, they created their own style of visual rock that paved the way for other J-rock groups to follow. Their heavy metal music is

³ X-Japan started as an independent rock group in the 1980s. The group became popular in the late 1980s and caught a worldwide audience for about 10 years until the break up in 1997.

melodramatic lamenting on sexual desire, love and despair. Some of their hit numbers are *Silent Jealousy*, *Desperate Angel*, *Endless Rain*, *Sadistic Desire* and *Dahlia*. But it is their eye-catching appearance of androgynous or feminine image, sometimes as if jumped out of a manga or Japanese comic book, which is the cause celebre for the female fans of the group. Steve McClure (1998) described the '*weird look*' of Yoshiki, the drummer, as tres decadent complete with pearl necklaces and lace stockings or sometimes appeared in his glam-goth image with over-sized crucifix, tacky jewelry and bondage gear. Despite their break up in 1997 fans still cling to the group album and the solo album of its members.

For the Thai listeners both the music and the visual image of X-Japan caught their imagination at the moment when they are searching for a way of growing up '*freely*' in a society which youth could have a real voice. Although it seems the society is free and open under the new liberal politics and urban abundance during the decade of economic growth in the 1990s. Yet youth realize that it is unreal. They still find the problem of how to cope with the psychology of growing up, how to ease the gender and sexual frustrations and the desire for speed and instant pleasure. More importantly, the need to express and to find the means of expressions for all these emotions both individually and collectively. For the middle-class youth living in the transmetropolitan mediascape they are faced with the structural conflict of modernity and post-modernity of globalisation at the same time. In Frith's term (1997) music seems to be a key to youth identity because it offers, so intensely, a sense of both self and others, of the subjective in the collective. Hence, the speed and the beat of rock music, the sound and the long hair, glam costume of X-Japan contained messages that make youth feel liberating.⁴

If we compare this with the popularity of some pop rock groups in the past such as the Beatles we find certain similarity. As Jon Savage (1988) described in his "*Sex, rock, and identity*" that the Beatles salespoint was their visual androgyny. The group was well packaged living dolls from England as an external signifiers of American rock 'n' roll stars in the 1950s. He pointed out that during the period there had been no

⁴ Prior to the popularity of X-Japan local rock scene has some well known rock groups such as Micro, Hi-Rock which capture the imagination of rock fans. Their music is sensual and their performance are hard hitting. The lead singer of Micro, Ampol Lampun, is famous for his gesture of holding up the left hand with one finger pointing high up in the air.

broad counter-culture to the middle-class conformity demanded by deep, Cold War fears of communism. Rock 'n' roll was a subterranean, working-class culture that cut across class reaching out for the youth community.

The present generation of Thai teenagers, aged between 13-16, are the newly enfranchised in an economic sense. A seemingly new classless youth united in consumption through the global culture industry. Nonetheless, amidst the global dominance of fast food, brand name fashion and cosmetics, film and music some youth groups spotted the different sound and imagery of X-Japan that represent the androgynous self in a world dominated by male culture. Their appearance break the rules of conformity the Thai society laid upon its youths. It caught the youthful spirit in search of novelty and sensation, energy and dreamworld at the moment when the Thai middle-class rise to their economic success.

But the spirituality of the 1990s rock 'n'roll, with X-Japan as the example par excellence, was fragile and neurotic. The short-lived tres celebre gradually die down. It would seem that if the teenager's moment was not based on real structures but the wishful thinking caused by a rush of possibility it would become vulnerable. In pop music, where the dynamo of an emerging counter-culture had been there would be a sudden emptiness.

Drama

Modern Japanese television drama series made a recent return in 1995 on Channel 3, one of the two major national commercial channel. After 2 years it was dropped from the schedule due to the small audience size. At present, Japanese series are shown daily (Monday - Friday) on Channel 7 in the afternoon (15:15-16:15) and on ITV in the evening (Monday & Tuesday at 22:30-23:30). Prior to this there were series such as Oshin and period drama that did not appeal specially to the youth audience. Channel 3 is known for its keen selection for imported popular series. The Western and Hong Kong drama series are the main staple during the 1970s and 1980s while Thai drama production was at the early stage of forming itself into a viable industry. In the mid-1980s Thai drama could compete well with the imported series and had already established itself on the prime-time slot of the evening programme. The industry grow rapidly as the series grow more popular among the audience around the country. All of

the commercial channels, Channel 3, 5 and 7, place Thai drama on its evening slot and compete for the highest rating on a daily basis.⁵

At present, ITV which set out in 1996 to be the news channel has stepped in to race with the other commercial channels. In 1999, Japanese, Hong Kong and Korean series as well as locally produced Thai series are lined up to compete for a slice of the audience share. But the series are shown at a later time slot than the Thai series on Channel 3, 5 and 7.⁶

In the latest ITV audience interactive survey on www.itvdramas.net the audience preferences are; Korean and Japanese series. Thai series rank 3rd while American and Hong Kong series trail behind. After about 2 years the Japanese series begin to have a steady group of audience. ITV's strategy is aimed at young viewers, ie. teenagers, students and young working women. The series, *Imagine*, on air between July and August 2001 picked up over 400,000 viewers which nearly doubled the previous series, *Long Vacation* (ITV Rating Japan Series, July and August, 2001). Viewers watch these series because they like the major actors and actresses, the story and the music. From the survey, the audience specified that the series they would like to see the re-run during the day are, *Long Vacation*, *Anchor Woman*, *Power Office Girls*, *Imagine*, *Love Generation*, *Sweet Daddy* and *Power Office Girls* (special).

ITV shows 19 Japanese series between 1999-2001 most of which are selected from the successful series in Japan. A large number of the major actors and actresses in these series are mainstream pop singer known among Thai youths. The tie-in strategy of the industry has contributed to the popularity of the drama series. These series are either comedy or melodrama focusing on the lives of young people facing problems in their complex relationship with their friends, families and the world around them. Viewers enjoy a variety of story line and the diverse career of the hero and heroine in an

⁵ Statistics in 2000 shows that less than one third of the television programmes are imported. These imported programmes are mostly from the US, UK, Japan and Hong Kong. UBC cable channel which shows mainly imported programmes is an exception (Ubonrat Siriyuvasak, 2001, p226).

⁶ In 1997, Channel 5 used the same strategy by showing a combination of Mexican telenovela, Chinese and Japanese series on their evening prime-time programme (20:30-21:30). But they were not able to compete with Thai drama series on Channel 3 and 7. Channel 5 now show Thai series on this time slot but the series is one hour/episode whereas Thai series on the other channels run for 2 hour/episode.

urban environment. A large majority of the main characters of these series are in the new information economy sector such as music composer and bank clerk (With Love), photo journalist (Over Time) and anchor woman (Anchor Woman), advertising creative and marketing officers (Love Generation), lawyer/investigator and professor (Ring and Sweet Daddy) and insurance investigator and geology lecturer (Ice World), computer game designer and fashion designer (Sunday Best), high school teacher (GTO) and office girls (Power Office Girls). Some of the main female characters take the role of young girls (Ring), daughter (Sweet Daddy) or working in the service sector such as air hostess (GTO) or beach resort (Beach Boys) which feminist criticised as stereotype role for women. However, there are those who break the tradition such as the heroine role of system engineer (Love 2000), geology lecturer (Ice World), anchor woman (Anchor Woman), architect (Imagine), lawyer (The Sun Shines Forever), business management/owner (Sunday Best). The role of young high school boys and girls are also the major part of these series (Precious Time, GTO, Sweet Daddy, The Sun Shines Forever). The stories of these salaried young people or independent entrepreneurs could well represent the lives of youth in many metropolitan cities in Asia and elsewhere. Class differences, social and legal injustice, exploitation in the workplace, severe conformity (in school and in the business world, for example) and gender prejudices are some of the running theme that most youth could share in common. In addition, the images of the characters and the environment surrounding these characters are depicted as modern and trendy as the sub-genre is called, trendy drama.

In the 1980s Hong Kong series were popular on depicting the same kind of real life story, of youth fighting for a better future. It would seem that the Asian dramas from Hong Kong and Japan tend to base their stories on similar plot line and follow the formula, for the most part, to a happy ending. However, the appeal of the successful series is the intense struggle to overcome the obstacles of one's life. The underlying theme would most often reveal, in detail, how the hero or heroine is able to choose his/her own destiny or to find out the '*truth*' that plaque their lives. These series must also represent the significant value of love and romance in the lives of teenagers (sometimes tragic love). Therefore, a love triangle or a romance sub-plot would be woven into the main theme of the melodrama series. The striking difference, nonetheless, is on how these seemingly real live stories, which urban youth can readily identify with, are embodied in the daily economic and social environment. They are

shown fighting for their ideal in a world (of adults) in which the kind of youthful ideal is hardly to be found. The individual and the social are situated side by side. Viewers could see the narrative unveil in front of their eyes and to observe how the main characters must struggle against all the odds around them. Here the line of division between 'us' and 'them' is blurred although the fact that these dramas come from Tokyo-Japan, an Asian metropolitan centre, which is a location much more modern than their own is well established.

Viewers described the pleasure of viewing Japanese series aptly that the nuance in the narrative is well played out and call for close attention and sympathy from viewers. Good production quality and the swift pace of the narrative also contributed to why young viewers enjoy these Japanese series (Wasu Ukotpol, interview, 18 Oct, 2001, Kamonon Kiniman, interview, 25-26 Oct, 2001). Most young viewers watch Japanese series as well as Thai and some US series without the sense of domination from these global cultural products. They tend to choose from the range of product available in the market and pick the ones that they could identify with, sometimes consciously and sometimes, unknowingly (Thidarat Rakprayoon, interview, 26 Oct, 2001).

Compared with the Thai series we find that they are somewhat different from the cultural product from Hong Kong and Japan. Most of the story line in the Thai series would centre around the family and love/hate relationship. The major characters come from either the upper-middle and middle classes or the lower classes. The story moves around the social status of the families and the main characters (Kanjana Kaewthep, 1993, 1994). A study on the career of the main women characters in the prime-time drama in 1989 showed that their careers are in the service sector such as secretary, hotel public relations officer and house worker. The prominent career would be housewife or becoming housewife (Jarin Lertjiraprasert, 1991).

In fact, career is secondary to the plot which emphasize more on the love theme and how the heroine is successful in the end. In the Thai series, there is a lack of the representation of the emerging youth, as a group or class, taking their lives seriously. The role of youth are confined either in the school or university, in the daytime series, or under the strict patronage of the mother and father, in the evening series. Their struggle for love and freedom would mostly end up having to obey their parents since they are still largely depending on them for a living. There are few examples of youth

breaking away or disobedience that go unpunished. These are the daily social contexts of the Thai middle-classes represented in the drama series. Although the economic reality has been transformed during the past decades the drama series producers are unable to capture these changes onto the television screen, in a meaningful way. Hence, the young workers who work independently or in a wide range of professional career find themselves under-represented or unrepresented. Where the Hong Kong series filled in this gap during the 1970s and 1980s the Japanese series seem to fill this same void left by local producers in the 1990s. The growing popularity of the Japanese series on ITV, although quite small compared with the mainstream Thai series, provided the space for youth stories from an urban and metropolitan setting to be told on television in the evening time slot.⁷

The following series, *The Sun Shines Forever* and *Sunday Best*, are the most recent series on ITV.⁸ They are taken as an example to demonstrate the articulation of the power of youthfulness as opposed to the restrictive discourse on youth in the Thai series.

The Sun Shines Forever

The story of a high school boy, Nao (Hideaki Takizawa, also pop singer), whose mother (small restaurant owner) was found dead after she was operated on in a privated hospital. The doctor said that his mother died from over-worked but Nao was suspicious of the real cause of her death. He filed a lawsuit against the influential hospital (and the doctor institution) in order to find out the truth. Nao received legal assistance from Setsu (Yasuko Maysuyuki) a young woman lawyer who have had a failed experience of helping another school boy in the past. She wanted to help Nao and to overcome her own guilty conscience at the same time. In this process, Nao met Ami (Yuka), the daughter of the hospital director, and fell in love with her. Ami took the side of Nao instead of her parents. She wanted to challenge her family as well as to find out the truth for herself (about Nao's mother operation and her love for Nao). How could the love of two young school students materialise amidst the conflicting relationship in their legal struggle and their class differences? How could Nao cope with the sense of lost and the tendency to lean on Setsu for her care and love ?

⁷ Thai drama would place youth drama series on Saturday and Sunday afternoon or the early evening time slot. In a sense, marginalized them from the mainstream social forum.

⁸ All imported drama series are dubbed into Thai without showing the original sub-title.

The Sun Shines Forever tells the story in a reflexive style with Nao narrating to the audience from time to time, in a deeply frustrated stream of thought. Viewers watch his memory and painful experience unveil in front of us. He would do this while walking alone or just after he left Ami or Setsu. This kind of narrative style and quiet but steady progress of the narrative is rare in the Thai series. It is a style that would appeal to youths who are facing serious problems and struggling hard inside to find a way out. It also shows the pain of growing up, of having to choose between ‘truth’-righteousness, personal success (entrance exam) and love. Life is tough in every twist and turn.

The main plot of the series shows how the youthful courage could fight against the most powerful institution of doctor, the patriarch. It is an endorsement of the attempt to come to grip with adulthood and a critical comment of the private health service. The plot on the accidental death caused by the doctor and the hospital is a social reality and a common experience for many. The lawsuit, on the contrary, is uncommon yet intriguingly represents the search for justice for the damage done.

The sub-plot on the love between Nao and Ami, on the one hand, and Setsu and Nao, on the other hand, is woven into the narrative in a subtle way. Youth often experience love and the reality of class divide at the same time. The series brings up the question once again to test if the situation might be changed. But the interesting part which has been hidden is the relationship between Nao and Setsu that they did not realised how close they become. It brings us into the question of love between a boy and an older woman. A stressful experience on both sides yet not denying this kind of reality when it happened.

Obviously, all of the major characters, Nao, Ami and Setsu are challenging the limits of the social values such as the absolute power of physician, the patronising family structure, gender bias at work (hospital, legal institution) and love across class and age. . But they do it in a gentle, thoughtful narrative and style of acting. Viewers could read the subversive meaning in the story line of the series without much difficulties although some of the audience might find that the interesting theme is the struggle for love of the hero and the heroine.

Sunday Best (NHK) (sponsored by Honda, The Power of Dream)

The story of three friends who want to reach their dream. They live together in a rented house in Shinjuku area. Azuki, 25, a young fashion designer-to-be, and her parrot, Kengo, 30, the grand son of the famous kimono manufacturer, aspired computer game designer and his dog, and Suemura, 55, a failed textile business manager and his cat, all have personal memories and experiences that brought them together to seek their dreams. Azuki lost her mother as a child and had only her kimono to cling to. She has a special fondness for kimono without her being conscious of it. Kengo is shy and failed most of the job interview because he felt inconfident. He has painful memory of his father leaving him as a small boy. Suemura has been forced to accept changes in his position when the company felt that the younger staff could perform better than him. He must adapt to the new business environment to make a living. Azuki, Kengo and Suemura, the youthful and the adult, share their failures, hopes and dreams, as friends, in a world that fierce competition is the name of the game.

In this comedy series each of the major characters assume a different background and perspective on life. It is interesting to see how friendship is forged between strangers. Although a number of American series are produced on this very same theme the Japanese contexts in *Sunday Best* remains novel to the Thai audience. It also provides the view on modern Japan and its design industry. Both fashion and computer design are the aspiring career for many young people. The signification is in the imagination required by the '*creative work*' of a designer. Everyday the designer can make his/her dream come true. Life is creative, not repetitive.

The story built in a sub-plot on business struggle and the change that large traditional corporation must face. Suspense is used in the narrative in order to expose the canny nature of the business world. The important theme lies with the psychoanalysis of each of the major character. Azuki and Kengo, both orphaned as a child, have a deep identity crisis to overcome. As the series progress they learnt about their past, cleared all the doubts and turned them into creative strength. The narrative depicted their youthful power of imagination and hardwork to build their own dream. Adults in the series were given the supportive role to assist Azuki and Kengo to achieve their dreams. Hence, *Sunday best*, a light-hearted love comedy, is valuable in its representation of youth as a positive force in society. Viewers would find encouragement from the story to seek and fight for their own future.

Youth consumption and youth counter-culture ?

The paper discusses youth counter-culture during the 1960s and 1970s which was situated closely with the political and economic contexts of the Thai society. Youth consumption of Western pop and rock music touched the '*free spirit*' of a youth generation under authoritarian rule. When popular culture connected itself with student activism it became a key cultural force in the social transformation in the 1970s. The embodiment of rock music has taken a turn when youth '*creolised*' the music of the American anti-war movement and created the music of resistance in a genre called, '*Pleng Pua Chiwit*' or Song for Life. The new music was, thus, enmeshed with student activism and their anti-imperialist campaign. The historical moment of radicalism from below was formalised and it ushered in a youth power unexperienced in the Thai society. Youth consumption of popular culture which is synchronous with a new political consciousness has been able to liberate youth from their historical cultural confinement. Their ideal is to change the socio-political system towards a just society which all people are equal and free.

The student movement experienced '*social truth*' via '*good music*' in their process of cultural consumption and production as suggested by Frith (1977)

“(youth) only get to know themselves as groups (as a particular organization of individual and social interests, of sameness and difference) through cultural activity, through aesthetic judgement.....musical ‘truth’ is precisely that which is created by ‘good music’; we hear the music as authentic and such a response is then read back, spuriously, on to the music-making (or listening) process...popular music places us in the social world in a particular way...it sets up the idea of ‘truth’ in the first place...” (pp. 110-121)

But as youth power is fragile their project to transform society is short-lived. Furthermore, the Establishment quickly learnt the lesson of a rebellious youth movement and brutally crushed it in the bloody massacre of 1976. Most of those who survived fled underground to fight a liberation war with the Communist Party of Thailand. It was obviously the turning point for youth power. They were told to return to their classroom or faced harsh punishment. The free spirit of a youthful generation has been quelled for well over two decades.

The latter part of the paper focuses on the present popularisation of Japanese culture in Thailand during the economic boom years. By way of comparison, the paper

has attempted to show how middle-class youth in the 1990s are drawn into modern Japanese pop and rock music and drama. For this generation of 13-16 year-old Japanese pop culture is novel and an important trend setter. The absorption and the willingness of certain groups of middle-class youth to assimilate the consumer culture originated from the metropolitan centre of Tokyo is close to neurotic at some point, particularly on music and fashion. My argument is that youth consumption of Japanese culture is a means to demonstrate their distinctive '*modern identity*' as opposed to those who enjoy Western pop rock or local pop or alternative music and local drama. The interesting thing is that their exorbitant consumption is made possible by the wealth of their families. This is the economic abundance of a new bourgeoisie gained from the collapse of the authoritarian regime and the monopoly economic system in the 1960s-1970s. The capital accumulation during the boom years of the 1980s - mid-1990 opened the way for youth to have access to a wide range of cultural products which means the choice to consume freely. However, this could be a source of strength and weakness at the same time. It is a strength if it were to form into a '*free spirited*' youth culture of the middle-class inherited from their economic success. On the other hand, it would be a serious constraint if this wealth confines them from making independent decision beyond the sphere of consumption.

Youth consumers as we have discussed find subversive meaning in Japanese pop culture and they use it to articulate their frustration and the lack of free expressivity in a highly paternalistic society. The meticulous imitation of Japanese fashion, spike and coloured hair-do and fur boots produce a distinctive subculture and counter-culture of middle-class youth. Their image poses a direct challenge to the norm on clothing and hair-do. Youth with dyed blonde hair or blue or bright red hair wearing fur boots in a tropical country such as Thailand look absolutely crazy. Their aesthetics become surrealistic. Their images, as they walk around Centre Point, subvert the logical categories of beauty and good taste. It is a game of showing off one's distinctive group and to make a statement about their identity. The structured improvisation of bricolage in their style and everyday practice come close to a war of meaning or Eco's semiotic guerilla warfare (1972). But the state quick erasure of this freedom of youth cultural expression in 2001 is a good example of how the state is cautious about an emerging counter-culture, or perhaps a sign of possible revolt, even in the sphere of semiotic.

Consuming popular culture, be it music or drama, is a valuable activity for youth. It is not only a way of expressing ideas, it is a way of living them. The formation of identity is not so much produced but is something in the process of becoming, or the *self-in-process*. This is in line with what Frith suggested (1977) that youth form their identity through cultural activities and the possibility of experiencing ‘truth’ in popular culture which may lead the way to experiencing ‘truth’ in oneself. Therefore, the formation of identity is mobile and cultural activities produce the self and the others, the subjective in the collective. This perspective reassures us that in consuming culture youth are not simply duped nor are totally free from the structural constraints. On the contrary, there is always the possibility of finding and becoming the real self. But it is an imagined self which can only be imagined at a particular organisation of social, physical and material forces.

The key problem, however, lies with the particular organisation of social, physical and material forces of the middle-class youth as opposed to their active consumption of cultural products. My critique is that although they could articulate their modern identity they could not sustain nor negotiate their position with the state. They lack the power to control their discourse. On the one hand, the influx of popular culture in the globalised trade has actively organised youth into consumer. Their participation in the social world is, first and foremost, through consumption activities. The process is real, not imagined. As a material force, globalisation is repressive because it confines youth in the sphere of consumption. In the present mediascapes youth form their identities and organised themselves, for the most part, around popular consumption of cultural goods. Their experience of ‘truth’ is derived, paradoxically, from consuming pop culture. On the other hand, the inability to counter the forces of globalisation of culture at home vis-a-vis the moral control by the state demonstrated the powerlessness of youth. This differentiation between the active and the powerful in the imagined and the real world is critical to the understanding of youth power, resistance and social transformation. Modleski (1986), Schudson (1987), and Ang (1990), for example, criticised against the romanticising of the active interpretation of cultural meanings of audience and their symbolic power of resistance based on the optimistic discourse of cultural consumption. We are warned that an active audience could not be equated easily with the powerful audience who would and could take control of their material situation at the structural and institutional level (Ang, 1990,

pp.240-248). Symbolic power, in this perspective, is merely a marginal power in the real world. Hence, the imagined may be subversive but without the organisation of social, physical and material forces it would lack the power for real resistance.

In recent years, there have been several legal, economic and social measures to solve the economic crisis and a long series of critical analysis on the economic situation and the hegemony of the US and Japan as they are the major investor, trading partner and lender for the Thai economy.⁹ Since 1997, the economic crisis has deepened and youth could feel the direct impact upon them. There are more drop-outs, at secondary school and university levels, and more unemployment for graduates. Ironically, in this time of economic crisis, few youth groups have been able to fully expressed their frustrations and negotiate for their participation, in the public forum, to solve the problem. On the contrary, much of their activities still remain within the consumption sphere without real organisation in the public sphere. But material hardship might become real, something un-imagined, with the fading of the economic success that once protected the middle-class youth from experiencing social inequality. And taking the assumption that the formation of identity is fluid and closely connected with the material reality. The new economic reality may bring the other side of '*truth*' to actualise. What is needed is the crossing over from the symbolic world of meaning to the conscious realm of praxis. If they are unable to transcend beyond the sphere of cultural consumption to participate as citizens whatever counter-culture they may practise the connection between the imagined and the organised, material forces that set the bedrock for social transformation would still be a void.

⁹ See Setsiam (1999) **Saharat America : Yutasat Krong Kuam Pen Chao** (The United States of America : Strategy of Dominance) which exposed the US and Japan on their hegemonic strategy, for example. And Wititat publications, especially on the series Pumpanya or Intelligientia and Lokapiwat or Globalization. The issue on **Thai Yuk Watanatham Tas** (Thai in an Age of Cultural Subordination) is of particular interest in criticising global culture and its domination.

References

- Ang, I. (1990) “*Culture and Communication, towards an ethnographic critique of media consumption in the transnational media system*”, **European Journal of Communication**, 5, pp.239-260.
- Chetha Puanghat (1998) “*Chakrawatniyom tang Watanatham nai Plai Satawat ti 20*” (Cultural imperialism in late 20th century) in Pitaya Wongkul and Churairat Sanchairak (eds) **Thai Yuk Watanatham Tas** (Thai in an Age of Cultural Subordination), Bangkok, Withithat, pp.193-212.
- Eco, U. (1972) “*Towards a semiotic inquiry into television message*”, **Working Papers in Cultural Studies 3**, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham.
- Frith, S. (1997) “*Music and identity*” in Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay (ed) **Questions of Cultural Identity**, London, Sage, pp.108-127.
- Hebdige, D. (1979) **Subculture : The Meaning of Style**, London, Methuen.
- Iwabuchi, K. (2001) “*Japanese popular culture and East Asian modernities*”, **Media Development**, XLVIII:3, pp.25-30.
- Jarunrat Suwanaputit (1989) **Tamnan Pleng Pua Chiwit** (The Story of Pleng Pua Chiwit), Bangkok, Pim Tula Press.
- Kanjana Kaewthep (1993) **Maya Pinit - 1 Karnmuang tang Pes kong Lakorn Toratat** (Drama Criticism -1 The Gender Politics in Television Drama), Bangkok, Gender Press.
- Kanjana Kaewthep (1994) **Maya Pinit -2 Lok Ni Kue Lakorn rue Rong Lakorn Klai Pen Loke Ni** ((Drama Criticism -2 The World is a Stage or The Stage Becomes the World), Bangkok, Gender Press.
- Kasian Thechapira (1999) “*Yisipha Pi Sib Si Tula Yisipha Pi Kong Arai*” (Twentyfifth anniversary of 14 October twenty five years of what ?) in **Chao Sivilai Karnmuang Watanatham Thai tai Ngao IMF** (The Civilize People : Thai Politics and Culture Under the Shadow of the IMF), Bangkok, Komol Keemthong Foundation Press.
- Kulini Mutakalin (1998) “*Yuk Watanatham Boripokniyom Krong Lok*” (The age of consumerism takes over) in Pitaya Wongkul and Churairat Sanchairak (eds) **Thai Yuk Watanatham Tas** (Thai in an Age of Cultural Subordination), Bangkok, Withithat, pp.85-104.
- Lockard, C. (1998) “*Thailand : Songs for Life, Songs for Struggle*” in **Dance of Life : Popular Music and Politics in Southeast Asia**, Honolulu,

- University of Hawaii Press, pp.163-206.
- McClure, S. (1998) **Nippon Pop**, Tokyo, Tuttle Publishing, p.120-125.
- Modleki, T. (1986) “*Introduction*” in **Studies in Entertainment**, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press.
- Ockey, J. (1999) “*Creating the Thai middle class*” in Michael Pinches (ed) **Culture and Privilege in Capitalist Asia**, London, Routledge, pp.230-250.
- Panni Bualek (1997) **Jakrawatniyom Yipun kab Patanakarn Tuniyom Thai rawang Songkram Lok Krang ti 1 -2 (B.E. 2457-2488)** (Japanese Imperialist and the Development of Thai Capitalism between World War 1-2 (1914-1945), Bangkok, Thailand Research Fund.
- “*‘Purachai’*” *employs legal enforcement to push forward the new ‘social order’* , **Puchadkarn**, Monday, Sept 3, 2001 (www.manager.co.th).
- Sangkomsart Parithat 30th Anniversary (2499-2529)**, 1986.
- Savage, J. (1989) “*The enemy within : Sex, rock, and identity*” in Simon Frith (ed) **Facing the Music**, New York, Pantheon Books, pp.131-172.
- Schudson, M. (1987) “*The new validation of popular culture : Sense and sentimentality in academia*”, **Critical Studies in Mass Communication**, 4(1), pp. 51-68.
- Setsiam (1999) **Saharat America : Yutasat Krong Kuam Pen Chao** (The United States of America : Strategy of Dominance), Bangkok, Withithat.
- Sinit Sithirak (1992) **Kamnerd Toratat Thai 2493-2500** (The Birth of Thai Television, 1950-1957), Bangkok, Krongkarn 60 Pi Prachathipatai.
- Siray (2001) **Pi Pleng : Dontri Kabot ti Plienplang Lok** (Ghost Songs : Reble Music the Change the World), 4th printing, Bangkok, Sukapap Jai Press.
- Surachat Bamrungsook (1982) **Saharat America kab Rabob Taharn nai Pratet Thai** (The US and the Military System in Thailand), Bangkok, Institute of Asian Studies.
- Thippimon Kiatwatiratana, “*Japanese style - cultural domination on youth*”, **Chud Prakaai Krungthep Thurakit**, 13:4135, Tuesday 18 January 2000.
- Ubonrat Siriyuvasak (2000) “*The ambiguity of the ‘emerging’ public sphere and the Thai media industry*” in Georgette Wang, Jan Servaes and Anura Goonasekera (eds) **The New Communications Landscape:Demystifying Media Globalization**, London, Routledge, pp.96-121.

Interview

Kamonon Kiniman, 25-26 Oct 2001.
Noraset Madkong, 30 Oct 2001.
Thanyatorn Buranathananukit, 19-20 Oct 2001.
Thidarat Rakprayoon, 26 Oct 2001.
Wasu Ukotpol, 18 Oct 2001.

Magazine

Idol Magazine	(2000 - 2001)
J-Teens Magazine	(2001)
J Spy Magazine	(2001)

Appendix 1 **ITV Japanese drama (1999-2001) ***

	<u>title</u>	<u>no. episode</u>	<u>actor/actress</u>
1.	With Love	(13)	Yutaka Takenouchi, Misato Tanaka
2.	Beach Boys	(14)	Takashi Sorimachi, Yutaka Takenouchi, Ryoko Hirose
3.	Love 2000		Takeshi Kaneshiro, Miho Nakayama
4.	Over Time	(13)	Takeshi Sorimachi, Makiko Esumi
5.	Precious Time	(13)	Takeshi Kaneshiro, Kyoko Fukuda
6.	GTO Great Teacher Onizuka	(13)	Takeshi Sorimachi, Nanako Matsushima
7.	Ring	(13)	Tomoya Nagase, Toshiro Yanagiba
8.	Anchor Woman	(11)	Hideaki Takizawa, Honami Suzuki
9.	Ice World	(11)	Yutaka Takenouchi, Nanako Matsushima
10.	Power Office Girls	(13)	Kotomi Kyono, Makiko Esumi, Atsuko Sakurai, Yumiko Takahashi, Mai Hoshino, Keiko Toda, Leo Morimoto
11.	Sweet Daddy	(12)	Sanma Akashiya, Ryoko Hirose, Masato Hagiwara, Namomi Nishida
12.	Power Office Girls (special)	(13)	Kotomi Kyono, Makiko Esumi, Atsuko Sakurai, Yumiko Takahashi, Mai Hoshino, Keiko Toda, Leo Morimoto
13.	Beach Boys (special)	(3)	Takashi Sorimachi, Yutaka Takenouchi, Ryoko Hirose
14.	GTO (special)	(2)	Takeshi Sorimachi, Nanako Matsushima
15.	Love Generation	(12)	Takuya Kimura, Takako Matsu, Norika Fujiwara
16.	Long Vacation	(13)	Takuya Kimura, Tomoko Yamaguchi, Yutaka Takenouchi, Takako Matsu
17.	Imagine	(11)	Kyoko Fukuda, Hitomi Kuroki
18.	The Sun Shines Forever	(11)	Hideaki Takizawa, Yasuko Maysuyuki, Yuka
19.	Sunday Best	(12)	

* 1999 showing one drama each week scheduled on Thursday and Friday evening at 22:30-23:30 for 2 episodes/week

From Sept 2001 showing two dramas each week scheduled on Monday and Tuesday evening at 22:30-23:30 for 1 episode/week

Appendix 2

Japanese music radio programme (2000 - 2001) *

Mon - Fri (evening)

FM	102.5	22:00-23:00	F.A.T. Radio
----	-------	-------------	--------------

Sat - Sun (morning)

FM	94.0 (sun)	10:00 - 12:30	Oh, Ho, Yo Bangkok
FM	102.5	08:30 - 11:00	DJ Eddie and ta-ngel Radio Click

Sat - Sun (afternoon)

FM	105.5 (sun)	14:00 - 15:00	Club- J
----	-------------	---------------	---------

Sat - Sun (evening)

FM	89.0	17:00 - 20:00	Tokyo Calling
FM	96.5	23:00 - 02:00	Tokyo Club

* Bangkok FM stations - programme coverage in BKK metropolitan and suburban area including the central region

programme content consisted of top music number from Japan, fan request, easy Japanese language lesson, question & answer (prize award), Japanese product advertisement

Appendix 3
Television music programme showing Japanese music video (2001)

Monday

ITV	23:35 - 00:30	Oxygen	(Western pop music with some Japanese pop)
-----	---------------	--------	--

Saturday

Channel 7	24:30 - 01:30	J-Zone	(Variety programme for youth audience with a section on J-pop music)
-----------	---------------	--------	--