



The Sonic Forging of the Bubble: Cultural Production and Media Ecology in Japanese City Pop

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<i>Keywords</i> City Pop; Cultural Production Theory; Media Ecology; Japanese Popular Music; Bubble Economy; Auditory Culture; Digital Revival <i>Published</i> 02 March 2026	This study aims to move beyond the reductionist narrative that simplistically views Japanese City Pop music as a passive reflection of economic prosperity by integrating the perspectives of cultural production theory and media ecology. This paper proposes that City Pop was the product of a deep intertwinement between the specific industrial capital logic of 1980s Japan and the emerging technological environment of privatized, mobile media. Through a meticulous analysis of four core artists—Kawai Naoko (かわい なおこ), Matsubara Miki (まつばら みき), Murashita Kōzō (むらした こうぞう), and Aran Tomoko (あらん ともこ)—and their representative works, it empirically reveals how economic capital was transformed into an audible "polished sound" through the Fordist production system of the recording industry, and how media technologies like the Walkman and car audio systems inversely defined the music's listening aesthetics and urban imagery. The research further indicates that the global revival of City Pop in the digital age is not merely a nostalgic resurgence. Instead, it represents the value circulation and re-creation of its intrinsic properties as high-fidelity "sonic capital" within the new media ecology constituted by streaming and digital sampling, while also serving as contemporary material for Japan's "Cool Japan" cultural strategy. This study provides an analytical model rich in both theoretical depth and empirical density for understanding the dynamic, non-deterministic constructive relationships between the economic base, technological media, and cultural forms.

1. Introduction: Problem Genesis, Theoretical Entry Point, and Research Path

The symbiotic relationship between Japanese City Pop music and the cultural milieu of the 1980s bubble economy has become a consensus in academic and cultural discourse. However, prevailing explanatory paradigms suffer from significant limitations. Mainstream research often falls into two forms of reductionism: firstly, economic reflection theory, which views musical style as a direct cultural projection of economic prosperity, emphasizing its lyrics and aesthetics as depictions of "new wealth and new lifestyles" (Hei 2024); secondly, stylistic genealogy theory, which focuses on tracing its fusion with American AOR, Funk, Jazz, and other musical elements (Satomi 2025). These two paths either stop at "descriptive association" or lack empirical inquiry into the intermediary mechanisms of "how economic variables concretely shape unique auditory styles," and risk leading to an "overly deterministic" causal framework that neglects the complexity

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of cultural production.

To break through this theoretical bottleneck, this paper introduces an integrative analytical framework, juxtaposing cultural production theory and media ecology as dual perspectives. Cultural production theory guides us into the "backstage" of music-making, examining the institutional field in which it is formed as a cultural commodity—including the risk logic of capital investment, the organizational forms of record companies, the operation of the star system, the division of labor between producers and creators, and marketing strategies targeting specific social strata (Gao 2011). Media ecology compels us to confront the material shaping power of technological media. It emphasizes that specific media, represented by the Walkman, car audio systems, and high-fidelity FM radio, are by no means neutral content carriers. Their physical properties, contexts of use, and sensory biases actively participate in shaping auditory habits, defining the time and space of listening, and even reconstructing the ontological form and aesthetic standards of music (Zhong 2022). The combination of these two perspectives allows us to simultaneously capture the "hand" (industry and capital) and the "field" (technology and environment) that shaped City Pop, thereby enabling a dynamic analysis of the subtle, concrete transformation process between the "economic base" and the "cultural superstructure."

This paper selects four musicians—Kawai Naoko, Matsubara Miki, Morishita Kōzō, and Aran Tomoko—as key case studies. This choice carries strategic theoretical intent: they represent differentiated quadrants within the City Pop spectrum—"idol pop," "foundational urban ambiance," "folk narrative," and "audio-fidelity purism"—collectively mapping the rich texture and internal tensions of the genre. Through detailed Musico-social analysis of works such as 《ハーフムーン・セレナーデ》 (Halfmoon Serenade), 《真夜中のドア〜Stay with Me》 (Mayonaka no Doa ~Stay with Me), 《初恋》 (Hatsukoi), 《踊り子》 (Odoriko), 《浮遊空間》 (Fuyū Kūkan), and 《Midnight Pretenders》, this paper will empirically trace how the aforementioned dual logics interweave and negotiate, ultimately answering the core research question: How were the signature "sound" and "feel" of City Pop collaboratively "produced" and "coded" by the specific industrial logic and media ecological environment of its time? How does its global digital revival in the new century reveal the tenacious vitality and adaptive mutation of cultural products as they traverse disparate media ecologies?

2. Theoretical Framework: An Integrated Model

The integrated "Cultural Production-Media Ecology" mode bridges two under explored areas in City Pop research:

The Production Black Box: While studies adeptly analyze City Pop's stylistic elements (Satomi 2025) and its contemporary digital revival as "automated nostalgia" (Fadya & Daniel 2024), they seldom detail the original production apparatus. How did capital become sound? This model foregrounds the industrial machinery—budgets, studio technologies, session musician economies—that materialized aesthetic choices.

The Agency of Media: References to the Walkman or car culture are common but frequently treat them as passive consumption tools. Informed by the premise that audio is central to constructing urban imagery (Zhong 2022), this model argues these technologies were formative. Their physical and experiential constraints (e.g., private headphone listening, road noise) actively

shaped musical composition, arrangement, and production.

Table 1 The framework operates across four interconnected dimensions:

Dimension	Cultural Focus	Production	Media Ecology Focus	Integrative Inquiry
Creation & Sonic Materiality	Capital allocation for studios, synthesizers, musicians; pursuit of "high-fidelity" as a budget-dependent standard.		Impact of multi-track recording, digital samplers; the studio as a sonic laboratory.	How did economic and technological capital combine to define the "City Pop sound"?
Distribution & Commodity Form	Idol marketing systems ; release strategies ; cross-media tie-ins with fashion/magazines.		Technical requirements of FM radio ; materiality of vinyl/cassettes ; visual aesthetics in the MTV era.	How were music commodities shaped by the media channels that carried them?
Reception & Scenic Definition	Targeting the new urban salaried class ("office ladies," "corporate warriors").		The Walkman's "mobile auditory bubble"; the car as a "private listening room."	How did target demographics and new listening scenes co-determine musical style?
Meaning & Trans-Temporal Flow	Lyrical themes of cosmopolitan leisure, romantic melancholy.		Media-constructed "non-place" (e.g., West Coast imagery); digital music as a sampleable "database."	How were cultural meanings produced, and how do they mutate across media epochs (e.g., analog to digital)?

3. Case Study Analysis: Mechanisms in Practice

3.1. Kawai Naoko (かわい なおこ) & 《ハーフムーン・セレナーデ》 (Halfmoon Serenade): Industrial Craftsmanship and Hi-Fi Aesthetics

Kawai Naoko's career epitomizes the idol industry's sophisticated production model. 《ハーフムーン・セレナーデ》 (1986), from her self-composed album *Scarlet*, marked a strategic shift from performer to singer-songwriter—a move to enhance artistic legitimacy and commodity value within the star system (Gao 2011). The arrangement by Seo Ichizō, featuring lush strings and polished electric piano, required significant investment in studio time and elite session musicians, directly converting economic capital into sonic opulence.

Media ecologically, the song is engineered for the domestic high-fidelity (Hi-Fi) listening experience. Its careful dynamic range and expansive digital reverb are optimized to showcase the clarity and spatial imaging of high-end home audio systems, which became status symbols during the bubble era (Bryan 2019)]. The music's aesthetic is inextricable from the media environment it was designed to flatter and inhabit.

3.2. Matsubara Miki (まつばら みき) & 《真夜中のドア 〜Stay with Me》 (Midnight Door ~Stay with Me): The Automotive Soundscape

Released in 1979, this track is a foundational City Pop text that demonstrates the genre's early calibration to new media scenes. It successfully hybridizes American AOR sophistication with Japanese lyricism (Satomi 2025).

Its true innovation lies in its symbiosis with car audio culture. The steady, four-on-the-floor rhythm, melodic bassline, and synthesized textures create a seamless auditory companion for nocturnal driving. The song doesn't just describe a mood; its very structure is tailored to the rhythmic, spatial, and emotional experience of the private automobile—a key bubble-era consumer durable. This intrinsic "drive-compatibility" explains its enduring potency in digital algorithms that pair it with nighttime cityscape visuals (Fadya & Daniel 2024).

3.3. Murashita Kōzō (むらした こうぞう): Folk Authenticity as an Industrial Niche

Murashita's work, including hits like 《初恋》 (First Love) and 《踊り子》 (The Dancer), provides a vital counterpoint. His acoustic-based, narratively driven folk-pop occupied a differentiated market niche catering to desires for "authenticity" and nostalgia, proving the industrial field's capacity for stylistic diversity (Gao 2011).

From a media perspective, his minimalist sound was uniquely compatible with AM/FM radio broadcasting and intimate live settings, requiring no sophisticated playback technology to achieve its emotional effect. His success demonstrates that even within a hegemonic, technology-driven media ecology, alternative circuits for production and reception persist.

3.4. Aran Tomoko (あらん ともこ) & 《Midnight Pretenders》 : Audio Fetishism and Digital Sonic Capital

Aran Tomoko's 1983 album 《浮遊空間》 (Floating Space), and particularly the track 《Midnight Pretenders》, represents the apex of bubble-era audio fetishism. This involved extravagant investment in top-tier fusion jazz secessionists, premium analog studio gear, and painstaking production to achieve a warm, detailed, "audiophile-grade" sound. This was a prestige-driven strategy, building cultural capital by catering to connoisseurs.

This historical production choice has yielded unexpected dividends in the digital age. The track's richly recorded instrumental phrases have been atomized into high-quality "sonic samples," most notably looped in The Weeknd's 2022 global hit *Out of Time*. Aran's reported surprise at this sampling underscores how her work, initially crafted for an analog hi-fi ecology, now circulates autonomously as "sonic capital" within the digital economy's logic of recombinant creativity. This is not mere revival but a trans-ecological value transfer, aligning with the global flows of "Cool Japan" content [12].

4. Deep Integration of Theoretical Framework and Case Analysis

This chapter aims to systematically elucidate the two core theoretical perspectives guiding this study—Cultural Production Theory and Media Ecology—and to detail how they are interwoven to form an analytical key for understanding the generative mechanisms of Japanese City Pop. This integration is not a mere superposition of theories but a deliberate synthesis designed to counter the reductionist tendencies prevalent in existing research, which often cast music either as a passive reflection of economic forces or confine its analysis to internal stylistic evolution. Our argument posits that the distinct auditory aesthetics and urban imagery of City Pop were actively “produced” through the synergistic interplay between a specific industrial formation and its contemporary media-technological environment at a precise historical moment.

Cultural Production Theory directs our focus to the “backstage” of music-making. It interrogates the social relations, power structures, and institutional logics within which cultural products are manufactured. This lens compels us to examine the institutional forces that shaped City Pop: how the surplus capital of the bubble economy flowed into the recording industry and was converted into sustained investment in studio technology, elite session musicians, meticulous arrangements, and expansive marketing; how a highly specialized production system—encompassing composers, arrangers, producers, and idol performers—operated with Fordist efficiency to ensure a reliable output of “high-quality” sound; and how record companies meticulously constructed the emerging urban white-collar demographic as their target audience, packaging the music as a consumable symbol of a “sophisticated,” “international,” and “leisurely” lifestyle. Thus, Cultural Production Theory helps dissect the economic rationality and industrial logic underpinning City Pop—the “invisible hand” that transformed capital and social aspiration into cultural commodity.

Media Ecology provides the second, indispensable set of analytical tools. Its foundational premise is that media are never neutral channels for content but are themselves formative environments that actively reshape human perception, social interaction, and cultural expression. Applying this to music studies necessitates listening beyond the melody to consider the technological conditions and material settings of audition. The invention of the Walkman created an unprecedented, mobile, and intensely private “auditory bubble,” decoupling listening from domestic or public space. The proliferation of private automobiles equipped with advanced audio systems transformed streets and highways into intimate, mobile listening salons. Concurrently, the high-fidelity standards of FM broadcasting imposed specific technical requirements on mixing and mastering. These media technologies collectively defined a new auditory ecology centered on privatization and mobility. Media Ecology, therefore, demands we ask: how did this new ecology inversely inscribe itself onto the music’s very form? Were its rhythmic drive, song length, spatial mixing, and emotional tenor subtly engineered to complement and enhance these novel listening scenarios?

The originality of this study lies in its organic integration of these perspectives into a “dual-focus” analytical model. We attend simultaneously to the “hand” that fashions culture (industry and capital) and the “field” in which it is received and experienced (technology and environment). We contend that the signature style of City Pop emerged precisely from the dynamic, mutually constitutive interaction between this “hand” and this “field.” Industrial capital funded specific media technologies, whose dances and constraints then guided creative and aesthetic choices. Simultaneously, the music and lifestyles marketed by the industry incentivized consumers to adopt

these very technologies, thereby reinforcing and expanding the specific listening ecology. This relationship is fundamentally symbiotic and circular.

The following sections demonstrate how this integrative framework illuminates the four core case studies.

In analyzing Kawai Naoko (かわい なおこ)'s 《ハーフムーン・セレナーデ》 (Halfmoon Serenade), Cultural Production Theory reveals the industrial strategy behind her evolution from idol singer to singer-songwriter—a move to accumulate “cultural capital” and enhance artistic legitimacy. The song’s costly string arrangements and pristine production are direct testaments to economic capital being converted into sonic luxury. The Media Ecology lens, however, reveals that this “polish” was concretely engineered for the domestic high-fidelity (Hi-Fi) system, which became a middle-class status symbol. Its wide stereo imaging and nuanced dynamics were optimized to showcase high-end audio equipment, transforming home listening into a demonstrative “auditory performance.” Here, the industry’s quest for “quality” and the media environment’s demand for “fidelity” perfectly converged to define the track’s aesthetic core.

For Matsubara Miki (まつばら みき)'s 《真夜中のドア〜Stay with Me》 (Midnight Door ~Stay with Me), Cultural Production Theory identifies the industry’s adept localization of American AOR (Album-Oriented Rock) sophistication for the urban Japanese youth market. Yet, Media Ecology offers a more profound insight. The song’s status as a quintessential “driving anthem” is no accident. Its unwavering four-on-the-floor rhythm and propulsive bassline physically mirror the motion of a car, while the shimmering synthesizer textures evoke the neon-lit nightscape flowing past the window. The track, in essence, prefigured and actively co-created the “night drive” as a media scenario. Its formal structure was composed to inhabit and define that mobile, private cabin space, demonstrating how a media-defined listening context can generatively shape musical morphology.

The case of Murashita Kōzō (むらした こうぞう) underscores the internal complexity of the cultural production field. Against City Pop’s dominant glossy aesthetic, he achieved major success with folk-pop ballads characterized by their simple guitar accompaniment, such as 《初恋》 (First Love) and 《踊り子》 (The Dancer). Cultural Production Theory interprets this as a successful differentiation strategy and niche marketing, catering to a audience desire for “authenticity” and narrative, thereby proving the industry’s capacity for stylistic pluralism. From a Media Ecology standpoint, his minimalist sound presented low demands on playback technology, making it ideally suited for clear transmission through AM/FM radio and fostering intimacy in small live venues. This case illustrates how a seemingly homogeneous media ecology accommodates diverse auditory practices and aesthetic codes.

Finally, the work of Aran Tomoko (あらん ともこ), particularly 《Midnight Pretenders》 from her 1983 album 《浮遊空間》 (Floating Space), extends our framework diachronically. Cultural Production Theory identifies here an extreme investment in “prestige economy”—deploying peak bubble-era capital to hire elite jazz-fusion musicians and pursue analog recording perfection, aiming to create “audiophile-grade” artifacts that accrued significant cultural capital. The power of Media Ecology is spectacularly affirmed in the digital age. As the ecology shifted from analog to digital, her meticulously recorded instrumental phrases were disassembled into high-quality “sonic

samples.”The prominent sampling of her work by The Weeknd in *Out of Time* is a paradigmatic case. This shows how the “sonic capital” materially accumulated under one media ecology (analog hi-fi) can be recirculated, revalued, and repurposed within another (digital sampling and streaming), enabling a form of cross-temporal cultural circulation and meaning regeneration.

In summary, applying this dual theoretical lens to four pivotal cases reveals Japanese City Pop not as a passive echo of economic boom nor as an autonomous stylistic progression. It was, rather, a deliberate cultural-technical coproduction. The capital-driven logic and organized structures of the recording industry and the new, privatized, mobile media listening ecology were mutually dependent and co-constitutive. Capital sought realization through specific technologies, and the experiential realities of those technologies recursively disciplined sonic form. This dynamic, mutually formative relationship ultimately “forged” City Pop’s distinctive soundscape—simultaneously glossy and introspective—and laid the groundwork for its digital renaissance decades later.

5. Research Prospects and Multidimensional Implications

This study, by constructing an integrative analytical framework of “cultural production—media ecology,” has systematically decoded the production logic of Japanese City Pop music during the bubble economy period. The research confirms that the rise and decline of this musical genre were far from being merely an evolution of artistic style or a reflection of economic cycles. Instead, it was a highly self-conscious cultural production practice, deeply interwoven with industrial capital, institutional arrangements, technological media, and collective psychology at a specific historical juncture. Its contemporary global digital revival further reveals the tenacious vitality and adaptive mutations of cultural products as “recyclable capital” traversing different media ecologies. Based on these core findings, this chapter will expand upon more in-depth and extensive prospects and discussions across multiple dimensions, including theoretical paradigms, research methodologies, industrial practices, and cultural policies, aiming to outline the rich future research landscape and practical implications of this topic.

5.1 Theoretical Paradigm Expansion: From Specific Case Study to Construction of a Universal Analytical Framework

The significance of the theoretical integration attempted in this study lies in providing a transferable mid-level analytical tool. Future research can test, refine, and deepen this framework within broader spatiotemporal and theoretical dialogues along the following paths.

First, conducting cross-cultural, cross-regional comparative sociological studies of music. City Pop is an excellent sample for observing cultural production in non-Western societies during specific phases of modernization. Future research can systematically compare it with contemporaneous popular cultural phenomena in the “Four Asian Tigers” (e.g., the urban romanticism of Cantopop in Hong Kong, the transformation of urban ballads in Taiwan following the campus folk song movement). The focus should not be on tracing direct influences but on analyzing how, under similar global economic waves and technological diffusion, different local industrial systems (e.g., TV station-dominated star-making in Hong Kong, the commercialized folk song system in Taiwan), divergent social structures, and distinct political-cultural contexts uniquely interacted with similar media technologies (cassettes, Walkman’s) to catalyze distinctly formed and emotionally nuanced “modernist” auditory expressions. Such comparative research would powerfully challenge Western-centric narratives of cultural modernity and help formulate theories

of multiple pathways in cultural production for the Global South.

Second, deepening long-term theoretical exploration of “intergenerational shifts” in media ecology and transformations in cultural forms. This study focuses on the specific ecology at the late stage of analog technology and the eve of digital technology. However, dramatic shifts in media ecology are continuous. Future research can dynamize and historicize this framework to analyze periods of more radical ecological transformation. For example, how did the shift from 78 RPM shellac records to 33 RPM Long Play (LP) vinyl records couple with the rise of post-war middle-class “living room culture,” reshaping the listening practices and work lengths of classical music and jazz? Currently, we are in an ecological fault line between an “ownership-based” model (buying records) and an “access-based” model (streaming subscriptions), where algorithmic recommendations, playlist culture, and fragmented dissemination via short videos constitute a new dominant environment. Future theoretical work should focus on dissecting how this new ecology, centered on data flows and the attention economy, is systematically restructuring the fundamental units of music creation (from “albums” to “singles” to “clips”), the criteria for aesthetic judgment (streaming metrics vs. professional criticism), and even the labor models and identities of musicians.

5.2 Methodological Innovation: Towards Deep Integration of Archives, Materiality, and Interdisciplinarity

To overcome the limitations of traditional music research, which often overemphasizes textual analysis or grand narratives, future related research must achieve breakthroughs in methodology, moving towards more materialistic, historical, and interdisciplinary empirical paths.

The primary task is promoting the integration of in-depth historical archival research with material culture analysis. Research should not stop at listening to finished music but should archaeologically excavate its production traces. This involves systematically collecting and utilizing: record companies' annual financial reports, production meeting minutes, artist contracts, studio equipment lists, and engineers' notes; industry reports and recording technology reviews in music magazines; advertising and marketing campaign proposals and consumer research reports; as well as the design philosophies, marketing strategies, and user manuals of key media devices (e.g., specific models like the Walkman D-50 or car audio systems). These material archives can concretize abstract concepts like “capital” and “technology” into traceable decision-making processes, cost accounting, and technical application scenarios, providing irrefutable “hard evidence” for connecting theory to music.

Furthermore, advocating for the establishment of a substantive interdisciplinary collaborative research paradigm. A holistic understanding of complex cultural phenomena like City Pop must convene scholars from diverse fields such as musicology, history, sociology, economics, media studies, and the history of science and technology (STS). For instance, historians of technology can clarify the technical lineage and global diffusion networks of digital sampling synthesizers (e.g., the Fairlight CMI). Economic historians can analyze the capital structure and merger activities of the Japanese recording industry during the bubble period. Sociologists can interpret the changing social spaces and consumer behaviors of urban youth at that time. Musicologists can then meticulously connect these external factors with internal evolutions in harmonic vocabulary, timbre choices, and rhythmic patterns. Only through such teamwork can disciplinary barriers be broken down, weaving an explanatory web capable of discerning both macro-structures and micro-practices.

5.3 Dual Implications for Industrial Practice and Cultural Policy

The findings of this study offer direct lessons for understanding the operational logic of the contemporary cultural industry and formulating forward-thinking cultural heritage strategies.

For the contemporary digital music industry and content creators, the history of City Pop is a textbook on "niche innovation." It reveals that the formation of hits or classics often stems not from simply catering to existing market tastes but from keen foresight and aesthetic investment in the "imminent media scene." Faced with new ecologies like short videos, podcasts, immersive audio (e.g., spatial audio), and AI generation, practitioners today should not view them merely as distribution channels but as core variables defining new product forms for creative consideration. What kind of audio content should be designed for voice-interaction scenarios with smart speakers? What kind of auditory journey should be provided for the prolonged, high-fidelity listening environment of a car? This mindset of treating the media environment as the meta-logic of creation is key to breaking through homogeneous competition and pioneering the next "sound of an era."

Formational and regional cultural policymakers, archives, and museums, the contemporary revival of City Pop provides a strategic paradigm for "digital revitalization of cultural heritage." It proves that the contemporary value of cultural heritage extends far beyond preservation and display, lying also in its transformation into "structured data" and "elemental material libraries" for sustainable use by future creative industries. Policies should go beyond simple digital preservation and promote: (1) High-standard audio restoration and metadata indexing, making instrument timbres, rhythmic patterns, and signature phrases in historical recordings retrievable through tagging. (2) Establishing appropriate "Creative Commons" copyright mechanisms, encouraging musicians, scholars, and artists to engage in non-commercial or commercial re-creation and research of classic materials under specific agreements. (3) Supporting contemporary media art creation and transnational collaborations based on local cultural heritage elements, actively embedding historical sounds into new contexts like video games, films, and contemporary art. Through this series of measures, cultural heritage can be transformed from a "static specimen" of history into a "living gene bank" "participating in future cultural production, continuously releasing its unique charm and soft power value in global cultural dialogue.

In summary, the in-depth analysis of Japanese City Pop is like opening a window to observe how modern culture is "manufactured" and "reborn." It reminds us that beneath any moving melody and fashionable trend flow the profound undercurrents of industry, technology, and society. At a time when artificial intelligence is poised to reshape all creative fields, re-examining this history holds ultimate significance in fostering a critical awareness: allowing us to embrace new technologies while remaining vigilant of the new power structures and commercial logics behind them, and maintaining a clear understanding of the production mechanisms of cultural products amidst waves of nostalgic sentiment. Only in this way can we become not merely consumers of historical echoes but conscious shapers of future culture.

6. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Japanese City Pop was neither a spontaneous cultural expression nor a deterministic economic product. It was the systematic output of a historically specific "production-media complex." The genre's characteristic sound was forged where the bubble economy's industrial logic—with its capital-intensive, quality-obsessed, market-segmented production—converged with the era's new media ecology of private, mobile auditory consumption.

The rapid diminution of City Pop's mainstream relevance after the bubble burst attests to the disintegration of this supporting complex. Conversely, its potent digital-era revival confirms the latent value embedded in its initial material production. The high-fidelity "sonic capital" originally manufactured for one media environment (analog hi-fi) has been successfully repatriated within another (digital streaming and sampling), fueling both global nostalgia and contemporary soft power [11, 12]. Ultimately, City Pop serves as a compelling case study in the durable, yet mutable, relationship between economic forces, technological media, and the forms of culture they collectively produce.

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