Gangnam Style Introductory Exercise for Cross-Cultural Ethics THEO 2410-101

Before our first class meeting, if at possible please watch the following 4 minute video two (2) times: On YouTube the link is http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bZkp7q19f0 or you can Google “Gangnam Style.” However, please do NOT do any additional “research” on either the video or “gangnam style,” as part of the exercise since the point of the exercise is largely based on first impressions. It’s quite okay if you already have seen or heard of this video, but for pedagogical reasons please refrain from further research. URL to this Exercise: https://www2.bc.edu/james-bretzke/GangnamStyleCrossCulturalExercise.pdf

After viewing the video the first time please jot down (for sharing in an oral class discussion) the following:

1) What seem to be the principal ethical values exhibited in the video (some of these might be in conflict with one another)?

2) What are the key cultural memes or symbols, etc. which bear a strong similarity to your own culture (whatever your native culture may be)?

3) What cultural symbols, memes, images, etc. seem to be in marked contrast with your own native culture (this question can be answered even if you are a native Korean)?

4) What are the images, values, etc., in the video that most appealed to you, and which you found most problematic?

5) What are things (besides the words to the song) that you simply do not understand?

Then after thinking about these questions and perhaps jotting down some notes, please watch the video again and see if there are any additional points you would like to add or subtract to the above list.

After you’ve done the above exercise please watch this MIT Gangnam Style Video which is a take-off of the first. Reflect on what messages, values, etc. the parody shows and see if you can “connect” the parallels that are being created. (Again, please view this video only after having watched the original Gangnam video):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JIjHNEDnryY&start_radio=1&list=RDJjHNEDnryY

In class we will watch the videos together and I will give you a couple of linguistic clues to “listen” or “watch” for as we view the video together. After this we’ll break up in small groups to go over our reflections on the cross-cultural elements and values in the video, and then we will try to identify the things we do not understand and we’ll ask our cultural experts (as I think we may have a Korean or two in the class) to help us “decode” some of these words and symbols, and then we will watch the video together one last time (so all in all you will have seen the video twice at home and twice in class).