

## GSAPS THE SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL THESIS

### JAPANESE CULTURAL INFLUENCE IN THE PHILIPPINES THROUGH ANIME'S POPULARITY AND PERVASIVENESS

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**Keywords:** Japanese cultural influence, *anime*, Philippine-Japan relations, cultural globalization

The first chapter introduced the study and started off with the background and reasons for the research. Anime's popularity and pervasiveness has been observed in the Philippines with the Japanese cartoons earning a niche in youth lifestyles and Filipino popular consciousness. The dynamics of this phenomenon in the Philippine context was this study's main topic of inquiry in view of the scarcity of writings on the subject matter. The research problems and objectives were also delineated in this chapter. The general objective was to analyze the anime phenomenon in the Philippine setting by characterizing the Japanese cultural influence that results from it and framing it within the development of Philippine-Japan relations and within the process of globalization. The specific objectives were the following: to present a historical account of anime's presence in the Philippines; to take a closer look into the cultural phenomena brought about by anime's popularity; to evaluate the Japanese cultural influence from the anime phenomenon in terms of the history of Philippine-Japan relations and to assess this occurrence in the light of contemporary processes taking place in the international scene.

In order to achieve the said objectives, a research framework was established using important concepts gleaned from the theoretical models of cultural globalization which were presented using a table of summary. The concepts of cultural transmission central to this study's analysis are Joseph Nye's soft power, Koichi Iwabuchi's decentralization of globalization and Harumi Befu's bottom-up globalization. The principles of each notion relevant to the research topics were discussed and their usefulness in making sense of the anime phenomenon was outlined. This is followed by a review of studies on anime which dealt with the subject in different angles: chronicles of its entry in specific countries; popularization and effect in specific countries; and, redefinition of the soft power approach through examples of its application on the spread of Japanese pop culture products.

The second chapter provided an account of anime's presence in the Philippines which began in the late 70s and dealt with the important highlights of its influx, its sources and channels, reasons for its popularization and mainstreaming, and practices of Filipino appropriation. The showing of mecha anime—the most famous of which is *Voltes V*-- by GMA Channel 7 in the late 70s marked the entry of anime into Filipino TV broadcast. While anime has been shown sporadically in local terrestrial channels, it only reached the biggest market segment of the Filipino society in the late 90s and 2000—a phenomenon called “anime explosion” by local journalists. The anime fever peaked in 2002 and while its apex is past, however, anime remains to be a regular part of local TV offerings and in the latter part of the previous decade, have been inspiring local productions.

The third chapter presented three examples of cultural phenomena brought about by the anime's popularity and pervasiveness in the Philippines namely: Japanese language and subject appreciation, influences on popular media culture and the creation of the Filipino cosplay subculture. In the section on Japanese language and subject appreciation, the results of

two surveys were utilized: the first were the results of a survey and informal interviews done by the researcher on university students in 2005 to 2006 and second was the results of the Japan Foundation 2009 survey. In the section on influences on Filipino popular media culture, the two levels of appropriation by the Philippine TV industry-- minimal adaptation and format re-versioning—were discussed in terms of how the Japaneseness of anime is dealt with. In the section on the creation of the Filipino cosplay subculture, a description and analysis of the Filipino take on the subculture was given, from its beginnings, development and current state.

The fourth chapter gave an account of Japanese cultural influence in the Philippines throughout history and weighed in on the question whether the influence from the anime phenomenon is a watershed within Philippine-Japan relations. It also set the phenomenon against processes that go beyond the bilateral links and connected it to the ongoing dynamics of international developments. The first part was a brief overview of the cultural influence of Japan in the Philippines from 1930s; second was a discussion of concurrent factors producing cultural influence; third was an analysis of the phenomenon as a turning point in Philippine-Japan relations; fourth, an assessment of its impact on the relations and, finally, a depiction of its connections with the globalization processes. To a certain extent, the anime phenomenon was a critical juncture because through anime, an awareness of Japan has extended to a broader and younger social base. However, it pales in comparison to the other major factors of cultural influence that has more clout especially in terms of Philippine policymaking. The anime phenomenon in the Philippines and its distinctive cultural effects has links to the following occurrences: cultural globalization, regionalization in the East Asian bloc and the third wave of middle class formation in Southeast Asia.

The fifth and last chapter provided a summary of previous chapters, a concluding remark and possible future topics as extensions of the research. In conclusion, the study states that there is a certain level of influence resulting from the anime boom but it appears rather uneven and superficial especially when other related and overarching processes are taken into consideration. It only makes it mark within cultural relations and does not seem to affect the other aspects. Recommendations for further studies were brought forth at the end of this chapter.

#### References

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