

**Globalization & Anime Music**

**Research Proposal**

MUS211H1S World of Popular Music

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Over the recent years, the market in North America and Europe for Japanese animation (anime), Japanese comics (manga) and merchandise related to anime and manga has increased drastically. This increase in market size may be partially attributed to the large number of fansubs and scanlations currently available in various languages. Fansubs and scanlations are fan-made translations of anime and manga respectively [1,2]. It is important to note that fansubs and scanlations are generally done by a group of fans; these groups are fansub groups and scanlation groups respectively. These fansubs and scanlations serve as one medium of dissemination. On the other hand, sometimes, anime series and manga series get licensed for distribution outside of Japan; that is, a company purchases the rights to distribute the series elsewhere. In the case of anime, licensed distributions are translated and usually dubbed prior to dissemination via TV or DVDs. As for manga, they are generally translated and distributed as books of several volumes. In addition to anime and manga being distributed worldwide, merchandise such as plastic model kits, figurines, stuffed animals, soundtracks, singles, etc. are also sold worldwide. In general, for each anime series, there exists at least one opening theme song and one ending theme song; as such, it is conceivable that this kind of popular music has a fan base throughout the world. In addition to mp3 downloads, each of these opening and ending themes are also sold as CDs in singles and compilations. It is the music in these singles and compilations that I will be considering as Japanese popular music and how it is influenced by “the west” and globalization.

By consulting academic sources on the topics such as “Japan and Globalization”, “Japan and Westernization”, “Orientalism”, I will be able to refine my conception of globalization, westernization, and popular music; as such, I will be able to better analyze information in regards to the influence of globalization and westernization on Japanese popular music. By interviewing my fansubbing peers and examining various blogs, forums, and websites, I will find what attracts people to this music and compare it with my own reasons for liking anime music. By examining various “stars” and the art accompanying their CDs, I should be able to gain some understanding of how globalization

and “the west” affects the music. In addition, I will be analysing the Japanese music I currently listen to (mp3s and CDs) for any western and global influence. Furthermore, I will be contacting Record Companies (ie. Miya Records, Geneon, Lantis), and Importers (ie. YesAsia.com, various stores in Toronto) about what considerations they make in marketing this music worldwide, if any.

## **References**

[1] Anime News Network, “Fansub”, *animenewsnetwork.com*, 2006. [Online]. Available: <http://www.animenewsnetwork.com/encyclopedia/lexicon.php?id=63> [Accessed: 04 Feb 2009].

[2] Anime News Network, “Scanlation”, *animenewsnetwork.com*, 2006. [Online]. Available: <http://www.animenewsnetwork.com/encyclopedia/lexicon.php?id=71> [Accessed: 04 Feb 2009].