

## Completion Report

### **Japanese Women's Dojinshi Culture and its Transcultural Impact on Women's Popular Culture in Southeast Asia**

Kristine Michelle L. Santos  
Full Time Instructor  
History Department  
Ateneo de Manila University

The research I conducted and funded by the Sumitomo Foundation from April 2018 until April 2019 on *Japanese Women's Dōjinshi Culture and its Transcultural Impact on Women's Popular Culture in Southeast Asia* has been pivotal in laying the foundation on my research that explores the commercialization of informal affective fan economies in the region. Due to my Sumitomo funding, which allowed me to travel to various comic and fan events in Manila (Komiket [October 2018 & February 2019] Komikon [April 2018, November 2019, April 2019]), Singapore (Doujima [May 2018]), Indonesia (ComiFuro [August 2018]), Japan (October & December 2018), and Malaysia (ComicFesta [December 2018]), I was able to notice a remarkable shift in production of affective goods in these fan spaces. While Japan continues to focus on the production of fan literature (*dōjinshi*) which ranges from illustration books (*irasutohon*), novels (*shōsetsu*), and mostly comics, women's fan literature outside of Japan are primarily illustration books, a handful of fan comics and fan novels. To add to this, most fans in Southeast Asia produce fan merchandise (*dōjin sakuhin*) than fan literature.

The difference in the production of goods entails the following three points: first, the production of fan literature, specifically fan comics, requires the support and development of fans' comic literacies; second, there must be printers and publishers that provide fans spaces to produce fan literature at a manageable cost; and third, in the absence of the first two, new media technologies offer opportunities for more fan produced works however products shift away from cohesive narratives and focuses towards the production of various character goods. Based on the events I have attended in Southeast Asia, the third point proves to be the direction of affective fan products in the region. The range of fan merchandise produced in Southeast Asia is varied with prices that are quite accessible to young fans. That said, with the accessibility of Chinese manufacturers that can produce high-quality fan goods, ranging from acrylic stands to enamel pins, fan-produced merchandise can now compete with commercially-produced merchandise.

Despite the diversification of fan merchandise in the region, the foundations of these fan products are still grounded on the structure of Japan's narrative database which fans in Southeast Asia informally learn by virtue of affectively consuming Japanese popular media and engaging with its online fanbase. Concepts such as boys love, *moe*, *kawaii*, *tsundere*, among many other narrative and visual tropes associated with manga and anime culture are still reflected, and to a certain extent, experimented by these fans in Southeast Asia. It is important to note that due to conservatism in the region, non-normative fan concepts such as boys love are not as erotic compared to Japanese works. Female fans of boys love negotiate their works with their spaces, producing works that impact and affect fellow fans but not elicit attention from more conservative fans. These preliminary results highlight a growing shift in fan expression while also showcasing the transforming fan economy which merits further research.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

5 July 2018, ASAA 2018, University of Sydney, *Localising Transcultural Fan Literacies: The Transnationalisation of Yuri on Ice as Seen in #yoizineph*, Kristine Michelle L. Santos)

JSA-Asean (6 December 2018, JSA Asean Conference, Le Meridien Hotel, *Japanese women's dōjinshi culture and its transcultural impact on Southeast Asian young women's culture*, Kristine Michelle L. Santos )

3 August 2019, Siliman University, Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Conference 2019, *Fujoshi Bait: The Transcultural Flows of Japanese Women's Rotten Discourse in Southeast Asian Youth Culture*, Kristine Michelle L. Santos)

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

I intend to submit my research in the following journals in 2019 based on the data that I have gathered from this Sumitomo grants

Inter-asia Cultural Studies Journal, *Fujoshi Bait: The Transcultural Flows of Japanese Women's Rotten Discourse in Southeast Asian Youth Culture*, 2019, Kristine Michelle L. Santos)

Social Transformations, *Affective Economies and the Capitalization of the Fan Economy in the Philippines*, 2019, Kristine Michelle L. Santos)

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

This research contributes to the foundation for a book I am developing on transcultural affects in Southeast Asia youth culture. The data needs further research hence it is still in development and would be developed into a book by 2022.