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## Global justice from the lens of anime

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### Abstract

In a more globalised society, the idea of "global justice" is becoming increasingly important. For there to be global justice, there must first be a global state. For there to be a global state, there must first exist global citizens who think globally yet act locally for the common good of sustainable development in a world that is increasingly becoming more interconnected. Unfortunately, the concept of nationalism often prevents the people of a state from acting as global citizens; as a result, attaining global justice may be rather challenging. Nevertheless, it is good that certain things can bridge the gap between diverse populations located in various states, countries, and continents all over the globe. This research paper examines the development of globalisation and its transition into glocalization, as well as how Japanese animation (from now on referred to as "Anime"), typically produced in the United States, has used the concept of glocalization to bring an impact in the world. "Anime" tries to create an odourless culture that is being made in the world. Pertinently, the paper focuses on how anime tries to create an odourless culture that is being created in the world; in the context of these changes, since the "post-globalization age," a new ethical sensibility is being developed as a means of evaluating the economic, social, and moral performances of corporations. As a result, in this day and age of globalisation, there is a feeling of responsibility and accountability created in the corporate world of these corporations as well as within the industry of entertainment since it impacts the public at large.

**Research methodology:** The research carried out for this paper's purpose is considered to be of a secondary nature because the findings of the research paper are based on various documentaries, publications and articles.

**Keywords:** Global justice, globalization, glocalization, anime and culture.

### Introduction

In a more globalised society, the idea of "global justice" is becoming increasingly important. As per John Rawls's argument for global Justice, for there to be global justice, there must first be a global state. For there to be a global state, there must first exist global citizens who think globally yet act locally for the common good of sustainable development in a world that is increasingly becoming more interconnected. Unfortunately, the concept of nationalism often prevents the people of a state from acting as global citizens; as a result, attaining global justice may be rather challenging. Some things transcend geographical borders, such as music and art that link individuals from various regions of the globe. On the other side, corporations in the entertainment sector, primarily based in the Global North, are attempting to shoulder the duty of connecting with audiences worldwide to create global citizens. However, it is essential to remember that the entertainment sector will profit from increased fame and revenue, while the public will benefit from meeting their entertainment needs. However, there are occasions when a piece of art or music, or anything else for that matter, may cause someone to think unconventionally and cause them to attempt to question something. Many questions will pop up in one's head, such as, "Is the anime truly worth discussing in the first place?" Does it have any impact on the choices that are made politically? And is it possible for it to accomplish a sense of global justice? To begin, what exactly is this anime, and how does it contribute to the world's cultural landscape in any way? Let's take these seemingly straightforward questions and attempt to untangle them. Before delving into the issues, it is necessary to have a firm grasp on the compelling nature of the demand for global justice and to make an effort to comprehend the shift from globalisation to glocalization. As a result, the paper's first section will focus on the ideas and ideals associated with global justice and globalisation. On the other hand, the second section of the research will discuss how anime has changed the globe by developing a culture devoid of odours, thereby creating global citizens.

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### Globalization and glocalization

Globalization, in simple terms, is opening up the trade of the country. Globalisation and glocalization are two sides of the same coin<sup>1</sup>, and various scholars and academicians have concluded that globalisation has affected the cultural practices of local nations. These global strategies that corporations use are first to bring their products to markets worldwide. However, it is essential to keep in mind that simply bringing a product to markets worldwide will not guarantee its success because a product that has been accepted in one country may not necessarily be accepted in another country. Therefore, the product in question will need specific adjustments to be successful in the regional state in which it will be sold. In this context, the idea of glocalization becomes relevant to the discussion where global ideas and concepts are being incorporated better to serve the needs of local and regional communities. Glocalization is the underlying cause of why a particular item or service produced by the same company might seem or feel different in different locations of the globe. This idea should not be confused with the concept of globalisation. However, it does share specific characteristics with that idea. Both of these concepts, for instance, are concerned with establishing connections on a global scale<sup>2</sup>. Glocalization, on the other hand, is more about companies engaging with diverse cultures and groups than one nation relating to another country<sup>3</sup>. The development of new technologies throughout the years has made it possible to pursue this line of thought. As more advanced technology is produced, it makes the globe a smaller place by enabling individuals and companies to interact in ways that were not possible in the past. Businesses are responsible for accommodating local cultures and modifying their goods and services to meet the requirements of the customers they serve in an increasingly linked globe. Because the values and objectives of people from various cultures might differ drastically from one another, corporations have a responsibility to take this into account and tailor their offerings appropriately.

Take Disney, for example, and think about it for a while. When Disney first entered the Shanghai market, it knew that to connect with consumers there emotionally, they would need to learn about the local culture and the essential things for the residents of Shanghai. By doing so, they are preserving and advancing the customs and culture of the people in the area. In other words, when people from all over the globe visit Shanghai Park, they will get a deeper understanding of the traditions and customs that are important to them. In addition, it assisted in the expansion and popularity of the park, which provided Disney with access to an additional market. The park has also stimulated economic growth and created an employment network that local residents may take advantage<sup>4</sup>. It is feasible to provide an infinite number of instances relating to glocalization, but doing so would cause us to stray from the subject at hand. As a consequence of the preceding discussions, the concepts of globalisation and glocalization are described succinctly as feasible.

<sup>1</sup> Beyer, Peter "Globalization and glocalization" London - Sage, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Johnson, Peter "Glocalization"

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, Peter "Glocalization"

### Anime on global justice and its cultural impact

The name "Anime" does not represent anything exceptional; it simply refers to animation from Japan. If we were to go into the history of anime, it would take us farther and further away from the subject at hand. One thing we can infer from the facts available is that anime continued to develop and, by the end of the 1970s, had already established itself as an essential component of Japanese-culture. The decade of 1980s was a period of explosive growth for anime. People were increasingly interested in anime overall, contributing to the proliferation of new genres within the medium. Novels, Japanese comic books known as manga, video-games, and light-novels were some of the many mediums that served as inspiration for anime.

So how exactly did this so-called "Anime" get its footing in the world? We are already familiar with the solution to this problem, and it is none other than the processes of globalisation and glocalization. It is crucial to remember that Japan turned to anime in the years immediately after the Second World War to cope with the loss of life that resulted from the nuclear bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. During the early stages, the predominant aesthetic focus in drawings and animations was on depicting cultural elements. During the economic crisis that hit Japan in 1991, which strangely occurred a year before the beginning of globalisation, many Japanese studios were forced to cease operations, and their employees found themselves without jobs. In later years, Japanese animation companies such as TOEI could not create anime that adhered to Western cultural norms. Then, they wanted to introduce "anime" internationally by using globalisation and technology, i.e., TVs; anime was able to link across the globe, and many series have been telecasted; there was even a station called Animax in India that aired many classic animes. Therefore, the corporations engaged in globalisation; well, as time progressed, these anime were dubbed in the country's native languages, the characters' names were also changed to be more westernised to appeal to western audiences and some corporations attempted to establish a culture with no odour by adding western customs. "*Culturally-odourless*" means the absence of cultural and nationalistic features in anime material. This aids in adapting anime to the target audience's regional, national, and cultural identities. To illustrate this point, there is an anime series known as "Naruto," which is widely regarded as one of the most popular series of the current millennium. Furthermore, "Naruto" is an excellent illustration of a culturally odourless anime series. The main character, Naruto Uzumaki, have blond hair, a fair complexion, and blue eyes. It is difficult to determine which country "Naruto" is from based on his looks. However, it is also necessary to emphasise the effect of global north nations since most protagonists in anime shows have a fair complexion, leading viewers to believe that the protagonists are typically from the global north. However, most anime is not particular to any culture and may be enjoyed by almost everyone. If there are cultural approaches, they will be streamlined to draw the audience's attention to more universal topics, such as love, war, friendship, climate change etc. For instance, the anime "One Piece" discusses the dire repercussions of war and attempts to argue that there are no victors in war, only losers, since all sides in the conflict would lose lives by fighting. Moreover, through several arcs, it addresses various worldwide topics of concern like climate change, pollution and even complex

concepts like what is justice and who has to exercise justice (like whether the Global North countries get to dictate what justice is to the world?) and what is freedom and how much freedom should one person have. And there are other anime, such as "Attack on Titans," that emphasizes the fact that "history will repeat itself" and also elucidates the idea of "freedom might be a delusion". This anime also tells the truth of war, where an eternal cycle of hate will be established once a conflict begins between countries and how the rest of the world will be affected by that conflict. Even the current Russian-Ukraine crisis and how the rest of the globe is suffering from the price of gas, oil, etc. may be applied to this instance.

There are anime depicting a strong sense of justice, such as "The Death Note," in which the protagonist/antagonist "Light" first uses the Death Note for virtuous causes by testing its power on convicts awaiting execution. But later on, he got tangled in the web of lies he created in his ideal world. This basically conveys that, even if you believe you are using power for noble purposes, power will eventually begin to consume us. One may also remark that nations of the global North who use their influence in international forums often get entangled with their sense of justice and are often consumed by it. Moreover, there are often fewer representatives from the global south to articulate their conception of justice.

Some may see these as frivolous and juvenile, but this is not the case, as it influences many audiences from different parts of the world. Anime is a niche product in Japan that is growing more competitive and, consequently, relies heavily on worldwide sales.

Anime attained its pinnacle due to collaborative efforts between Japan and the United States, such as when companies like Crunchy Roll were granted licences to make anime. To offer anime to the rest of the world, corporations based in the United States essentially recruited workers from Japan. Because of this, businesses in the United States take on greater responsibility for the products they produce. It is interesting to consider the complicated history of the United States and Japan. However, companies continue to attempt to promote ideologies while still making money, which is any company's ultimate purpose and ambition. Now, even Netflix has added anime content to their platform. Despite the perception that anime is "culturally-odourless", anime writers nevertheless rely on cultural factors to shape their material, whether they draw from Japanese or Western ideas. In a global capitalist market, media companies are under pressure to peddle a particular brand of ideology, even though its odour is masked by cultural ambiguity. Although anime originated in Japan, most anime fans today have never claimed that it was a kind of Japanese cultural colonialism. The rise in popularity of anime is a worldwide cultural phenomenon that should not be associated with Japanese culture. The globalisation of anime should be regarded as a cross-cultural success between its global perspective and Japanese culture, as it has brought communities worldwide willing to think for the common good. Thereby creating a sense of global state, hence global justice.

### The Issue

The power that international corporations, especially that of global north countries, wield a power greater than any international organizations as there aren't any or few laws

that govern the international media sector as a whole. Hence, it is the companies that decide their policies internally regarding the ideologies they wish to sell and in turn earn money for doing so.

There is a greater sense of responsibility not only among the companies, but also among the creators, as they are aware that their work can be viewed by nearly 8 billion people as a result of globalisation, so, the ideologies they sell should enable the global citizen to unite to achieve a common goal i.e., Global Justice.

### Conclusion

Questions yet to be answered are: Is the anime worth discussing in the first place? Yes, in this day and age of globalisation, where people are not far from each other and are connected via technology, the community of anime is growing at a faster phase, which eventually creates a responsibility among corporations, especially those located in global north countries such as the United States and Japan, to take many precautions on what ideologies they are selling in order to make money. Does it have any impact on the choices that are made politically? Well, it doesn't impact political decisions made in the world. However, we need to understand that the golden age of anime fuels Japan's economy; hence at least in Japan, we can say that anime impacts political decisions. For instance, on 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2022, the Ukraine government posted a tweet on the Twitter quoting from an anime show called "One Piece" – "Power isn't determined by your size, but by the size of your heart and dreams" by Monkey D. Luffy, this shows how anime has grown, where a government organisation taking support from an anime. And is it possible for it to accomplish a sense of global justice? Entertainment industries around the world, if they work together, can achieve a sense of global justice. And one sector, which is still in a growing phase, from Japan cannot alone create a sense of global justice. However, it is an irony to note that country like America promotes the concept of global justice in the world, where it has committed genocide towards its indigenous people.

Based on the discussion in the paper, one can assert that, as time passes, things like anime can transcend boundaries by utilising the ideas of globalisation and glocalization to create an odourless culture, thereby removing the impediment of nationalism in the process of achieving global justice. As a result of this process, a new ethical sensibility is being established as a method of assessing corporations' economic, social, and moral performances. Accordingly, in this day and age of globalisation, a sense of duty and accountability has been created in the corporate world of these businesses and the entertainment industry since it impacts the masses at large. From the deliberations, one may conclude that anime is the new music and art that aims to build global citizens who contemplate the common good of sustainable global development.

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