

Korean novelas: now a
better media than
local teleseryes?
assignment



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Eventually, some would start to watch every episode of these shows, seeing it as “ something new’. In contrary, Korean dramas, locally known as Cornflakes, have been aired in our country for more than a decade now. In fact, a lot of people grew up watching them. These shows are really nothing new to us, but why do we patronize them? Why do a lot of people prefer them over our own shows? It’s mainly because we’re seeing something different, better and fresh in Cornflakes.

Cornflakes are undeniably one of the latest trends in our country, making us one of the places greatly hit by the throng current of the so-called Halley wave or Korean wave, that refers to the rapid spread of Korean entertainment in Asia. The Halley wave consists of mainly Cornflakes, Korean pop (Kop) music, fashion, cosmetics and home appliances, though it is believed that Cornflakes are the ones that started it all. Cornflakes have reached our country in the year 2003, Bright Girl being the first show of this type to be shown.

Cornflakes aren’t an instant hit here in the Philippines. It only reached the first peak of its popularity through the show entitled Endless Love. The said drama is greatly known through the say recognition of the names Johnny and Jenny, the Pipelined names of the characters of the story. This was greatly followed by the success of Lovers in Paris, Full House, Jewel in the Palace, Stairway to Heaven, and many more. Since then, Filipinos have been keeping an eye out for the next Cornflakes to be shown in the country.

Though we are greatly aware of the popularity of Cornflakes in our country, there has been no concrete idea or concept on why these have gained a

great number of Filipinos patronizing them. (For You In Full Blossom, 2011)

There are two possible reasons behind the fast entry and widespread patronizing of Cornflakes in the Philippines: (1) Cultural globalization of Korea and (2) Cultural neo-colonialism of Korea in the Philippines.

According to weeklies, cultural globalization is the rapid movement of different ideas, attitudes, and values across national borders that results to the standardization of cultural expressions in different countries. The Halley wave is one example of cultural globalization. Now that it is considered as a big part of Koreans export materials, their culture and ideas involved in the wave are rapidly spread all throughout the globe, specially in its neighboring Asian countries. Neo-colonialism, on the other hand, refers to an extension or maintenance of influence of a country over another (Merriam-Webster, 2014).

In a study conducted by Aimer Associable and Johnson Eosin of the Mindanao State University entitled "Koreans Philippine Invasion", it stated that the Philippines is now under the neo-colonization of South Korea. It is described as a form of colonialism that uses diverse art and culture to influence another country or area. Such colonialism is described as enjoyable and exciting and not bloody or catastrophic and that is the reason why Filipinos are not fighting against it, but instead are patronizing it. (Associable, Eosin, 2013) As part of our culture, Filipinos are very accommodating, not only towards new people but also towards new ideas.

This is one of the reasons why we welcome the perspectives of other countries easily and without hesitation and thus forming the idea that "

anything foreign is good". Even before Cornflakes reached the Philippines, there has been a number of foreign TV shows that have been aired here in the country, such as Marimba (1996) from Latin America, and Meteor Garden (2003) from Taiwan. For You In Blossom, 2012). Popularity in our country mainly refers to the number of viewers of the show, and the shows mentioned were considered successful due to the high number of followers that watched them.

In the same way as people in the Philippines welcomed Marimba and Meteor Garden, we accepted Cornflakes with open arms, even though the ideas from their shows are very different from ours and new to us. For example, Philippines was never an imperial country and the idea of a kingdom or an empire was not ordinary to us. But Cornflakes have offered to us stories of Koreans different misdoings and dynasties. Since this concept was not ordinary, it lead to people becoming more curious of it, budding questions like, " What does it look like? " and " How does it work? " and they watch the new shows to gain answers.

In terms of new people, Cornflakes have offered to us new actors and actresses to idealize. Idealization refers to the excessive admiration of or devotion to a person (Merriam-Webster, 2014) and it has been a part of the behavior of Filipinos who love watching television to idealize. Idealization, in simple terms, means imitating their idols' way of dressing and speaking and itching their every move and this is very evident nowadays, especially to the teenage generation. We can see people now on the streets wearing clothing and (sometimes) hair with cheerful colors, imitating their Korean idols.

Not only are those, but people also are now very fond Of eating Korean food and some also learn the Korean language, also known as Handful, which are commonly seen and heard in Cornflakes. In this whole process of cultural globalization and neo-colonization, Koreans striver to improve a lot of aspects in their dramas. Now, its not only because Cornflakes are a part of the Halley wave. It is now about having the high quality sets, artists and plots that piques the interest of the eyes of the Filipinos.

Though both of the dramas from Cornflakes and our local telemeters are good sources of entertainment and cultural knowledge, Korean dramas are better than Filipino dramas in terms of the different elements involved in the production of these television series such as the story line and pace, staging and blocking of scenes, and the actors and actresses that portray the drama's characters. Despite the growing popularity of Cornflakes, their ratings on our local Hansel have remained low, relative to our local telemeters.