The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

From cheap comics to National Art

The image of manga in modern Japan

Thesis work for Master's degree in East Asian Studies

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Introduction

In recent year, Japan's image in the eyes of foreigners, especially those of young age, has changed drastically. As a major worldwide economic player and as a leading East Asian country, Japan has been very preoccupied with its global image.[1] Thus it has carefully created a self portray of itself to present to the world. Just like any other modern country Japan tried to rectify its military power, economic power, and cultural power. However, this changed after World War 2 when Japan consented to relinquish its military power and deprived itself of the legal means to rearm itself. Japan's self-defense force (jieitai) filled part of this gap, and is able to defend Japan itself and provide logistic assistance and humanitarian support abroad. But with the removal of its ability to threaten or coerce other countries by force Japan had certainly lost an important factor which still defines the relationships between most other modern countries. And so Japan's economic power and cultural power became to main means through which Japan can portray itself to the world, garner its attention and influence it. The cultural power of a country signifies its history, preserves its customs and religion, can distinguish it from other countries and other regions, and has the ability to provide a country with prestige in the form of ingenuity and artistic progress. Moreover in this global era and time it is important for a country to appear appealing and attractive for it to smoothly advance its business agenda and its foreign policy. This holds even truer in the case of tourist attracting models - what aspects of Japan would attract as much tourists as possible? Throughout the 1990s and in the beginning

[1] This preoccupation dates as far as 1858, when Japan was forced to open its harbors to merchants from the West on unequal terms. In order to relinquish these unequal terms, and strengthen Japan's global force, Japan willingly went through a rapid process of modernization. This process allowed Japan to become a modern country (by Western means) as soon as the 1890s. However, as a modern country Japan continues to adjust itself to the rest of the modern world is constantly aware of its international image.

of the 21st century the answer to that lied in the consciously ostentation of Japan's traditional cultural wealth, and how greatly it differed from the West (although sometimes it didn't). For example in food sushi will be advertised, fashion would advert the kimono and when asked about sports sumo would be the first to come to mind. Today Japan is, slowly but surely, expending this image in order to include the modern culture of "cool Japan". In the heart of cool Japan lays the understanding that the modern foreigner is more attracted to Japan's vanguard popular culture than he or she is to Japan's more traditional culture.

The Japanese comics, called manga, are one of the articles deemed by the majority of the academic books written about Japan's culture as an integral part of Japan's popular culture. Unlike the shallow, mostly children (and collectors) oriented comics of the U.S. and Europe, manga in Japan enjoys a wider range of readership, and is read by adults and kids alike. Manga address a wide range of subjects (including politics, history and cooking) and caters to pretty much everyone in Japan. The manga market is ever changing, seeking new grounds and rising in popularity inside and outside Japan. It cleverly and effectively gives leverage to popular subjects deemed interesting by the public, keeping its own flame ablaze. Through the years manga has also been bashing and confronting the norm, with controversial and sometimes taboo-breaking content.

One can easily dismiss manga as just another popular culture item destined to climate in popularity, be consumed, and then disappear from the cultural sphere while the consumers continue in search of new "crazes". Such is the nature of low culture products which appear and disappear at the whims of the consumers. Yet manga's origin as medium goes all the way back to the 1920s and as such cannot be perceived

as a merely temporal fad. In fact manga was never considered a fad. At its genesis manga was a cheap source of entertainment, with many of the artists producing it consisting of high school dropouts and poor kamishibai[2] peddlers looking for extra income. It was hardly popular or sought after as it is today. However, since that time manga has steadily grown to become one of the most consumed products in Japan - approximately 40% of all published books and magazines in Japan are manga.[3] Manga has become part of everyday life in Japan, and a big local market developed around it. But manga's commercial success goes beyond the boundaries of Japan. Recent years have seen manga "transforming" into a national symbol, a cultural representative of Japan. The same medium that was once infamously looked down at as a cheap (and sometimes vulgar) way of expression is now considered, by Japan itself, as high culture and a form of art to be displayed in museums and stocked in special libraries for further studies.

In this work I will analyze **how did manga transform from an unofficial and controversial art to being a national art which represent Japan in the 21st century?**

To address the unofficial and controversial sides of manga this work will not only review professional manga, but will also focus on the image of manga as influenced by amateur (unregulated) manga in Japan and manga's marketing success abroad. I will inspect the controversial side of manga by examining the amateur manga market, starting in the 70s and advancing systematically along the years leading to this day. I

[2] Kamishibai is a form of storytelling that originated in Buddhist temples in 12th century Japan. In Kamishibai the storyteller utilizes illustrated boards to tell stories. The storyteller would travel from village to village, telling his stories and showing the boards as the story progressed. The storyteller did not charge money for his shows. Instead he earned his money by selling candy to the kids who came to hear his stories. Kamishibai endured as a storytelling method for centuries and became popular again in the 1920s. This profession allowed unemployed man to earn a small income and proved to be a cheap and effective form entertainment, especially in the aftermath of World War 2. Kamishibai lost its popularity to the TV in the 1950s.

[3] Since the 1990s manga sells have remained fairly constant, and consist of about 40% of the printed market (Schodet 1995:18, White papers 2000, Gravett 2007:13).

will show that amateur manga contributed greatly to the wealth of content and to the art style of modern manga through certain elements of amateur manga that have ascended into mainstream via integration into professional commercial manga. I will also show that the unprecedented success manga, and its counterpart anime (Japanese animated cartoons), enjoyed in the U.S. in the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century has contributed to elevate manga's image within Japan.

I chose to research the image of manga in Japan because surprisingly little has been written on the subject. While the image of manga in the West, specifically in the U.S. has been described at length[4], the image of manga in Japan has yet to receive such attention. No academic work has focused on the image of manga in Japan, and how it changed along the years.

A similar case can be attested when dealing with amateur manga. Although amateur manga has existed since the 1960s, and had an important influence on the manga medium, little has been written about it. An exception is Sharon Kinsella's excellent book Adult Manga, which sheds some light on the amateur manga market. However Kinsella's book separates the professional and amateur manga markets, and does not explain how the amateur market influences the professional one. Amateur manga is part of the overall manga medium, and should be taken into account when dealing with the image of manga in Japan.

Another widely ignored subject is the interaction between Japan and the West in regards to the manga market. While the manga market has been surveyed in both Japan and the West, a symbiotic approach that shows the interaction between those two markets was not yet approached. This thesis will show how the manga and anime market in the U.S. affected the image of manga in Japan, thus showing that Japan in

[4] See Kelts 2007, Napier 2007, Patten 2009.

the beginning of the 21st century was not indifferent to the consumption of manga abroad.

I have chosen to divide this thesis into two chapters, each dealing with a different aspect of manga. The first chapter will examine the evolution of the medium in Japan throughout the years. It will center on amateur manga and dwell on its contribution to the manga medium, the restrictions with which manga artists had to work with, and the reception of amateur manga on the public and governmental levels. Consequently the friction and the integration points between amateur and professional manga will be discussed and an overview of the image of manga in Japan will be created. While this work explores the image of manga in Japan it will only briefly address professional manga artists and the manga publishing companies. Professional manga artists and publishing companies are key elements in the creation of manga's image in Japan. However these subjects were already examined in great detail in several books.[5] Professional manga deserves the same amount of attention, or even more so, than amateur manga in regards to how it affected the image of manga. However, fully exploring the inner workings of the manga publishing companies, and how they interact with professional manga artists and the consumers, is beyond the scope of this work. Instead of portraying the full spectrum of professional manga available to the public throughout the years this work will take note of specific aspects of professional manga, usually in the context of the publication of manga with adult themes, and in connection to amateur manga.

The second chapter of my work will address the globalization of manga and anime, and how the spread of these mediums to the West effected Japan's own perception of

[5] See Schodt 1984, Schodt 1996, Gravett 2007 and Kinsella 2000.

both of them. This chapter will follow the growth of manga and anime's popularity in the West, and explain why and how it developed to the point it is in today. I will suggest that marketing problems have prevented manga and anime from becoming widespread and popular in the U.S. prior to the 1990's. Japan's reactions to the success of these mediums in the U.S. will also be examined, and a connection between this success and the elevation of manga's image in 21st century Japan will be suggested.

Throughout this work frequent references to political activities and the media will be used. In-depth explanation or analysis of specific manga series will be mostly avoided. Names of Japanese will be written surname first.

Part One: Dōjinshi and the controversial aspects of manga

Manga until the 1970s

The roots of manga are dated to the late 1920s, when comic columns intended for children and adults started to appear in newspapers and the words manga and mangaka (manga artist or artists) became widely known to the public. The intervention of governmental bodies in the nature and themes of manga was evident as early as 1931, when mangaka were pressured to confirm the national political objectives. The 1930s were characterized by the unstable nature of the Japanese government at the time, which only aggravated in the face of World War 2. The result was that from the beginning of the 30s until well after the end of World War 2 manga was effectively manipulated by the state and couldn't contain personal opinions nor imaginative thinking (with the exclusion of using manga as a propaganda tool to aid the nationalization and military efforts Japan had partaken). Only after the war did manga evolve into a cheap entertainment product for purchase or rent. The late 40s and 50s saw a rapid growth in the consumption of manga which was on par with the fast evolving new techniques applied by mangaka. Manga changed from short comic strips to long story driven arcs which unfolded for many pages. This development is greatly attributed to the mangaka Tezuka Osamu. Tezuka implemented cinematic elements into his manga in order to create more consist storylines and strengthen the emotional expression of characters. He accomplished this by using several images with slight changes of angle or body/facial expression, which in turn created fluidity.[6] Through this ample use of images the page count of manga grew exponentially. In

[6] For an example of Tezuka's cinematic elements in manga see Gravett 2007:26-27.

1959 the first post-war magazines that catered to the manga reading audience were introduced (Magazine by Kōdansha and Sunday by Shōgakukan) and the medium kept growing. However, reception, ever-growing as it was, was far from sufficient to be recognized by the public. For starters manga's image was still negative. Manga was widely considered to be made for children, and was still overlooked by adults. Moreover it was looked down upon as a cheap entertainment medium with vulgar, brutal, and pornographic content. Parents halfheartedly allowed their kids to read manga as it was believed to distract kids from their education (Kinsella 2000:133). Secondly, the sheer volume of manga being printed was far too scarce. In a country with more than 90 million people at the time the fact that manga books were usually printed by their hundreds and manga magazines by the thousands meant that the medium was not widely spread enough to be recognized by the masses (Gravett 2007:40). Because of that the censorship and boycotting of manga weakened considerably after World War 2. For the first time mangaka not only had the techniques needed to artistically draw their stories, they also had the freedom to do so. The 60s showed a wide range of manga that dealt with complex notions such as ideology, political views, individualism, women and minority rights, and the occult. Yet still, the power to draw, publish and gain attention (and sometimes praise) from the masses was at the hands of a minor group of mangaka and editors. This does not go to say that only rich people could afford to draw and publish manga. On the contrary - most mangaka at the time were poor people with "no real jobs". Potentially even the poorest of artists could draw manga, but those who actually indulged in the risky business of printing the manga and publishing it were big publishing companies that systematically chose, and then nurtured, a selected number of mangaka. This in turn made the 60s into a potential heaven for manga creation while at the same time

rendered the ability of most aspiring mangaka to publish their works ineffective. There were some exceptions however. Several small independent magazines sought to give amateur mangaka a place to publish their manga. The most prominent among those were Garo and COM. Garo was founded in 1964 by Nagai Katsuichi and serialized gekiga[7] manga. Garo allowed amateur and professional mangaka to express themselves freely, and in exchange they did not receive payment for their creations. Garo continued to be serialization on a small scale until it was sold in 1997. COM was established in 1967 by Tezuka Osamu as a magazine intended for amateur mangaka. Like Garo it too supported the free use of expression, including sexual depictions. COM was conceived to allow mangaka who were not affiliated with gekiga (mainly mangaka who previously only drew manga intended for children) to experiment with more mature subjects and situations. COM was self-funded and went bankrupt in 1972 (Kinsella 2000:103-104). Garo and COM were both on the boundary between professional and amateur. They were official publications, but were not meant to be financially effective (with COM not even managing to earn the minimal income needed to sustain itself). They promoted amateur and experimental comics but featured professional mangaka. Garo was created to allow professional mangaka (specifically Tsuge Yoshiharu and Shirato Sanpei) to publish their creations without the need to relay on the big publishing companies. COM also featured professional mangaka and featured manga created by Tezuka himself as well as Tezuka's assistances and students, such as Nagashima shinji, Ishinomori Shōtarō and Fujio Fujiko (ibid). Nonetheless these magazines were the first platforms available to

[7] Gekiga was a comic genre separated from manga in which more adult themes were dealt with. It was considered to be an alternative to regular manga and the artists in this genre initially sought to distinguish their comics from manga. Gekiga leaned toward a more realistic drawing style and did not refrain from showing all manners of violence, crime and sex. In the 50s, 60s and 70s gekiga was an alternative to the more child-oriented standard manga. However, as time passed by manga as a whole came to encompass those adult themes as well. Today it is hard to differentiate between gekiga and manga, as the differences between them have all but vanished.

amateur mangaka. Garo showcased darker and more mature comics than manga did. It portrayed social and human struggles, and was popular among university students. In the 50s and 60s manga was still considered to be meant for kids. However Garo caused older teens to read manga due to its more adult oriented content (Galbraith 2009:84-85 b). COM had a different effect on the manga medium. It served as a magnet for the amateur manga movement. COM portrayed amateur manga in a good light and called for amateur mangaka to come forth and publish their creations. Following COM's influence "manga research" groups (manga kenkyūkai) began to sprout in high schools and universities across Japan. Those groups created amateur manga, some of which COM later compiled and published (Comic Market preparation committee 2005:26). In this way Tezuka, which was already an important mangaka in the professional manga world, helped stimulate the creation of the amateur manga world.

The appearance of dōjinshi and "young" manga

COM and Garo served as prequels to a much bigger movement that started in the 70s. Amateur manga distribution and consumption changed dramatically in the 70s due to the introduction and increasing availability of cheap offset printing and photocopy facilities. These facilities enabled artists to produce mass amounts of copies for a relatively minimal price, thus granting the ability to produce manga without the need to depend on magazine editorial approval. Manga produced by amateurs, or without the backup of a relevant manga company, began to be referred to

as dōjinshi.[8] Dōjinshi brought forth unprecedented enrichment of plot and artistic expression to manga. Special conventions for selling, buying and trading dōjinshi sprung up. The biggest, most renowned of them is Comic Market (usually abbreviated to Comiket or Comike), a dōjinshi convention that started in 1975 and was held for two or three consecutive days twice a year in Tokyo. Around the 70s most of the dōjinshi sold at Comic Market were original, as opposed to fan based parodies of famous series which were still uncommon (but gained momentum during the 80s, and became the majority in the 90s). By the end of the 70s general attendance at Comic Market had reached the 10 thousand mark. Circles - the clubs that made the dōjinshi and later sold them - reached a maximum of 500 after which a lottery system for admitting circles had to be implemented[9] (Comic Market preparation committee 2005:88). The majority of the public was still oblivious to dōjinshi, making it an art form with no constrains aside from common behavior patterns relevant to that time. For example the portraying of lesbians at all was forbidden by common sense, while manga about gay couples were viewed in a positive light, to the extend that in 1976 the first commercially produced "boys' love" manga was created (Masami 2007:27).[10]

During the 70s a big portion of mangaka started their careers as dōjinshi artists and were later recruited by big publishing companies. This shows that dōjinshi did not go unseen by the manga community in the 70s, even if the scale they were published on was still minuscule when compared to professional manga publications. Since dōjinshi-producing mangaka were mostly women the artistic style of dōjinshi drifted from the then widely popular boys comic drawing style to a more feminine drawing

[8] In English dōjinshi are sometimes mistranslated as "fanzines", even though a significant amount of dōjinshi manga have original storylines unrelated to any other present manga series. Furthermore dōjinshi manga does not contain articles and never take the form of a magazine, thus rendering the definition fanzine inappropriate.

[9] Although circles admission has since grown to 35,000 the same lottery system is still applied in much the same way today.

[10] "Poem of wind and trees" by Takemiya Keiko.

style. As a result of dōjinshi mangaka entering the professional manga market this feminine drawing style has become the de facto manga drawing style, and is still being used in professional manga to this day.

The late 60s and early 70s also brought forth the need to name a new type of professional manga. As the manga reading audience grew older more serious adult-oriented manga emerged. These comic books often dealt with "adult environments". In the case of manga for men that accounted for company management, economic guidance, and international politics. In the case of manga for women the managing of a family and the hardships of married women were key. The emergence of such manga is credited not only to the aging of the reading audience but also to future-thinking on behalf of the manga publishing companies. The companies, constantly trying to adjust their products to reach out to more readers, understood that manga with the proclamation of adultness will also attract the young audience. Younger readers found the notion of reading adult-oriented manga appealing since it could potentially asses their will to appear more grown up in society. The manga market introduced new categories to reflect these new demographic audiences. Until the late 60s there existed only boy's manga and girl's manga (shōnen manga and shōjo manga respectively). From these two new adult-oriented demographic categories were created: adult manga (for men) and ladies manga (for women). However, due to pressure on behalf of governmental institutions which opposed the notion of adults reading manga, large manga publishers chose to label their adult manga as "youth manga" (Kinsella 2000:46). The words adult (seinen, 成年) and youth (seinen, 青年) sound the same in Japanese and only differ in kanji, creating a compromise of sort.

The use of "young" in reference to adult manga persisted until the late 90s and the major magazines dealing with adult manga still cling to the title "young"[11].

The tools to create manga and the nature of stories depicted in manga vastly changed during the 70s. The emergence of both dōjinshi and adult manga created a way to express complex, nonconformist vanguard stories that could not be possible in earlier years. The circulation of commercial manga magazines grew constantly throughout the 60s and eventually reached millions. In 1974 the circulation of all the magazines combined reached 20 million (Kinsella 2000:31). This meant that unlike in the 50s and the beginning of the 60s, in the 70s manga was more common, more diverse and more accessible to the Japanese public. That is why the 70s present us with an important foothold and a point from which an active and fruitful analysis of the changes in the public image of manga in Japan can be made. The rest of this chapter will examine the image of manga through the censorship of manga and the growth of the amateur manga movement from that decade onwards.

Indecent genres and fierce censorship

The 70s saw the expansion of the manga medium, both on the professional level and the amateur one. More diversity was shown in the content of manga, in the form of more adult manga on the commercial market and in the form of the unregulated and censor-free dōjinshi. Commercial publishers and dōjinshi mangaka in the 70s enjoyed

[11] For example, even though contemporary bookstores label their adult manga shelves as "adult" (成年) most adult manga magazines (such as Young Jump and Young King) still have the word "young" in their names.

lax governmental regulations and could publish manga with adult themes, such as nudity, with relative ease. But that all changed during the 1980s. Unlike the previously reviewed decades the manga scene of the late 80s and early 90s proved to be a genuine epitome of a blazing war between the manga communities and the censorship busybodies. This occurrence was greatly credited to an escalation in pornographic and suggestive manga through these years. As the popularity of manga continued to grow so did the number of commercial erotic magazines and manga publications. The number of dōjinshi mangaka and participants in dōjinshi conventions also increased exponentially. The number of circles in the Comic Market grew from 32 in 1975 to 4,000 in 1985, and the number of participants grew from 700 in 1975 to an amazing 30,000 in 1985 (Comic Market preparation committee 2005:32,120).

In 1980 Azuma Hideo, at that time a successful mangaka who drew manga for both boys and girls magazines[12], created and distributed with the help of his dōjinshi circle an original amateur manga called Cybele (Shibēru). Cybele featured pornographic illustrations of preadolescent girls - a first in what will later be called the Lolicon genre. Lolicon (an abbreviation of Lolita Complex) are manga that centers around young girls, in some cases minors[13]. Although lolicon manga deals with a variety of themes the girls in them are almost always drawn in a sexual-oriented way, sometimes truly pornographic at nature. Azuma's Cybele became an instant hit among males, and caused a lolicon boom in the dōjinshi arena (Comic Market preparation committee 2008:7). As the lolicon boom took off new magazines specializing in lolicon and

[12] During the 70s Azuma's manga were serialized in Weekly Shōnen Champion, Princess, and Play Comic. During the 80s he also worked for Lemon People and Shōjo Alice. He is known to have worked for 3 magazines at the same time, drawing as much as 16 pages a day and still managing to submit his draft on time. He later retired from drawing in 1989 due to this over pressure.

[13] Although by the current definition loli (Lolita girl) are girls whose age is 15 years old or bellow the 80s standard definition of a loli character was much more flexible and 18 year old girls also appeared in lolicon manga.

catering to the general public also appeared and as time passed lolicon sipped into conventional magazines as well. The lolicon boom spread in part thanks to an abundance of popular professional manga intended for kids in the 80s. These were often used as base material for the creation of lolicon and pornographic dōjinshi. These pornographic dōjinshi soon became very popular among both men and women. Aside from these dōjinshi the number of pornographic manga published in the professional-commercial market also grew. The appearance of such dōjinshi and pornographic manga contributed to the negative image of manga in Japan. Newspaper articles in the late 80s that mentioned dōjinshi often pointed out the lewd nature of these manga, and their availability to high school students. Feminist groups complained that dōjinshi and commercial pornographic manga are contributing to the presentation of women as sex objects (ibid:156, 314-415).

The claims for the restriction of visual freedom in manga lead to stricter enforcement of the censorship laws for that medium. Until the 90s there existed a complex system to regulate, censor and condemn inappropriate manga. In 1967 the youth policy unit, a governmental agency under the control of the ministry of general affairs, was formed in order to monitor the content of manga. The youth policy unit's main purpose was to prevent politically inciting and morally degrading manga. It regularly compiled a blacklist of manga designated as harmful or indecent, which was published quarterly and distributed to publishers, libraries, the news media and cultural facilities. On the other hand the youth policy unit did little to ban the distribution of erotic manga. Japanese law symbolically accepted all kinds of erotic material as long as genitalia and pubic hair were kept unseen or censored (Galbraith 2009:95 b). Article 175 of Japan's national panel, also called the indecency act,

dictated the ban on genitalia and pubic hair, and also stated that obscene materials may not be sold to minors under 18 years of age. In order to avoid being fined for obscenity manga publishers actively restricted their own artists, and book stores refused to stock on obscene manga. However as the definition of "obscene" was vague it was usually only enforced in cases where genitalia and pubic hair were shown. Mangaka soon devised creative manners in which to depict pornographic content. They often blackened the indecent parts, not drew them at all, or replaced them with phallic objects (such as bananas and peaches). As governmental intervention was slim the pointing out of indecent manga was primarily made by concerned citizens, PTAs and women's rights groups. They inspected manga and actively reported any inappropriate material to the police and local authorities. The police mostly sympathized with these groups and issued warnings to shops carrying the mentioned books or magazines. The local authorities would then file these materials as harmful manga and forward them to the youth policy unit who added them to the blacklist. After they were added to the blacklist the police had the right to confiscate them as harmful materials, if still found. Nevertheless this process was regarded as ineffective at best. Most of the indecent manga were sold under special conventions, avoiding conventional book stores altogether. The police also faced hurdles in abolishing the blacklisted manga that did end up in book stores. In her book Adult Manga Sharon Kinsella describes the police's view on the subject:

"Police authorities also become vocal themselves, calling for a revision of local law which would enable them to remove 'harmful' manga from book shops immediately, rather then after a legal process to determine the status of each offending manga series. Police argued that the current system was inadequate because in the time it took for a

specific series to be legally defined as 'harmful' it had already sold out and disappeared from the shelves of the book shops." (Kinsella 2000:146).

The negative public view of lolicon manga, and manga as a whole, aggravated in 1989 when Miyazaki Tsutomu, a 26 years old printer's assistant, was arrested for the abduction, murder and mutilation of four young girls aged four to seven. As a child Miyazaki was neglected by his parents, who were too focused on their careers, and raised by his grandfather. He was an outcast and a loner and seems to have found condolence in reading manga and watching movies. He especially liked horror and child porn movies. He chose to watch child porn instead of adult porn movies since while adult porn movies were censored due to pubic hair child porn movies weren't. He also read manga and dōjinshi affiliated with the lolicon genre. When asked about his preference for little girls Miyazaki replied: "I felt all alone and whenever I saw a little girl playing on her own, it was almost like seeing myself." (Whipple 1999) Miyazaki's case was closely monitored and extensively reported by the media. Psychologists and law experts shared their opinion on the subject and claimed Miyazaka had indulged himself in manga and videos to the point where he could no longer separate the fantastic from the real and thus did not show any remorse or understanding for his own crimes (Kinsella 2000:127-128). A discourse on the environment in which Miyazaki grew up soon followed. Although Miyazaki's case was a first the environment in which he spent his youth was commonplace in Japan. The contrast of conservative traditional upbringing as opposed to contemporary education was brought forth and parents started to fear that their children too will absorb negative ideas from manga and television shows. However the Miyazaki incident had a peculiar influence on manga's image: On the one hand dōjinshi were

blamed for being too obscene and harmful. The public frowned upon the otaku - a term that came to describe people infatuated with manga, anime and figures - which were more and more ill-affiliated with Miyazaki.[14] Professional mangaka also expressed their disdain over the dōjinshi arena and otaku (Kinsella 2000:133-134).[15] On the other hand the outcasting of dōjinshi changed the public's view on professional manga for the better. Until the 90s professional manga were still thought of as offensive and vulgar. But in the wake of the dōjinshi bashing the public acknowledged that in professional manga there existed uniformity, moderation, and most importantly - regulation. In this regard the public dismal over amateur manga separated it from professional manga and formed two distinct views on manga as a whole (ibid).

Following the Miyazaki incident the need to suppress harmful types of manga became urgent. This in turn led to the raise of tighter censorship in the first half of the 90s. In addition to the reportage of harmful manga by citizens and groups a new form of censorship - self regulation (jishu kisei) appeared. In Japan's publishers' association, with which all big publishing companies are affiliated, there existed a publishing ethics committee (shuppan rinri kyōkai). The ethics committee was formed in 1963 and its activities consisted of monthly meetings in which representatives from the publishing companies discussed the regulation of manga. Although not affiliated with the government, the ethics committee took note of the harmful manga blacklist

[14] The word otaku originated in the 80s. The etymology of the word is equivocal and it is common to refer to otaku as a general term for someone who's life centers around his hobbies. While this means all hobby "fanatics" can be considered otaku, there is strong evidence to suggest that the word was coined by manga and anime fans to describe themselves (Galbraith 2009:171-172 b).

[15] This negative feedback by professional mangaka can be considered hypocritical of sort. As noted previously, and will be explain in more detail later in this work, some of the most successful and well known professional mangaka started their careers as dōjinshi artists before being recruited into the manga industry.

published by the youth policy unit and usually adjusted itself to it. Following the Miyazaki incident the public's disapproval of indecent/harmful manga grew stronger and the publishing companies themselves sought to self-regulate their content to avoid further negative feedback from readers. They did so by upholding stricter standards of sexual depiction. Editors were asked to take special care in how their artists depict their manga, and the artists were encouraged to consciously self regulate their own works. Artists unwilling to self-regulate their manga often saw their series discontinued. Some such artists, such as Morizono Milk, continued their work in low circulation magazines that did not constrain them (Kinsella 2000:150-151). Although self-regulation in manga was not unheard of, until the 90s it was usually applied only to prevent the showing of genitalia and pubic hair. Ironically the ban on the showing of pubic hair was partially lifted in 1991 to allow artistic use of it in photography (Galbraith 2009:95 b). Another act taken by the publishing companies was to add a new "adult manga" (seinen manga) label to the dusk jackets of provocative manga to alienate them from other genres, and to wrap them in plastic covers to prevent children from casually reading them.[16] The labeling of harmful adult manga began in 1991, with books that appeared on the blacklist of the youth policy unit receiving priority. In 1992 the publishing companies started, under the guidance of the ethics committee, to retroactively label harmful manga - books who were accused of being harmful in the past were recalled for labeling; And in 1993 the publishing companies began to label adult manga books they published on their own behalf, deciding which books would be considered harmful and labeling them beforehand without the intervention or specific request from the youth policy unit or other citizen based groups (Kinsella 2000:148-149). The labeling of adult books had two contradicting

[16] The custom of casual reading (tachiyomi) is widely accepted and common in Japan, with some people picking up books and reading them inside stores only for the purpose of passing time.

results. On the one hand it greatly decreased the amount of manga reported as harmful, indicating public approval. On the other hand it hurt the overall sales of the books labeled as adult manga since the labeling induced a feeling of shame in potential buyers, often demoralizing them. Not wanting to lose face certain retailers decided to avoid stocking labeled books altogether.

In addition to the commercial manga market the Miyazaki incident also had a long-lasting effect on the dōjinshi market. Miyazaki had a history of participating in the Comic Market. He first actively participated in the convention in 1986 as part of a circle which drew an original dōjinshi. However, due to frictions between him and the other members, he left that group. In the course of the next three years he joined and quit multiple video producing circles[17]. Only in March 1989 did he participate again as part of a dōjinshi-producing circle. After the incident the Japanese press took note of Miyazaki's participation in the Comic Market (Comic Market preparation committee 2005:145). For many Japanese this was the first encounter with amateur manga. The portrayal of a dōjinshi convention in the context of the Miyazaki incident severely tainted amateur manga's name, portraying it as offensive and dangerous. The public feared that the unregulated amateur manga will corrupt the youth with its uncensored carefree attitude to sex. Police suspected that terrorist political groups have mingled with other circles in the amateur manga market and are releasing dōjinshi that promote political revolution.[18] Resentment and fear soon lead to police

[17] Circles that focus on video rather than manga also operated in Comic Market. Their activities consist of the production of amateur videos, the dubbing of foreign or local films (sometimes as a parody), and the trading and selling of video related goods. In recent years the participation of such circles in Comic Market has declined considerably due to changes in media consumption and the availability of the internet.

[18] It is unknown whether or not such groups actually existed in the beginning of the 1990s. However a small number of political pamphlets and dōjinshi suggesting revolution were visible on stalls in Comic Market during the mid-1990s (Kinsella 2000:132). It is also a known fact that Aum Shinrikyo - a terrorist group which spread sarin gas in the Tokyo subway in 1995 - published dōjinshi with

intervention. In February 1991 police stormed three bookstores in Tokyo that sold dōjinshi (Shosen Bookmart, the Shinjuku branch of Manga no mori, and Comic Takaoka) on account of "distributing obscene drawings". The police confiscated 5,039 books and arrested store workers, dōjinshi artists and publishers. All in all 74 people were taken for questioning, with 45 of them consecutively arrested and pressed charges against for dealing with obscene "underground books" (ibid:198, Nagayama 2008:116).[19] Shortly afterwards a package containing ten male-oriented (presumably pornographic) dōjinshi arrived at the Chiba prefecture police. The sender had included a note, describing how these and other similar books are being sold at the Comic Market. The police arrived at Makuhari Messe (in which the preparations for the 40th Comic Market convention were underway) and persuaded the owners not to allow the convention to take place there. For the first time in 16 years the Comic Market was in danger of being cancelled. The convention organizers rushed to the Harumi international exhibition center, and after long negotiations convinced the owners to allow the use of the assembly hall for the upcoming convention.[20] There was, however, one unprecedented request the preparation committee had to abide to in order to hold the convention: they were required to collect copies of the dōjinshi from all the participating circles and to "self-regulate" them. Those who were found by the committee to be too obscene had to be altered or banned. This requirement proved quite problematic. Among the participants were just a little less than 1,000 male-oriented circles, and some of them had more than one dōjinshi up for sale in the

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information on their group, albeit for the private consumption of their own subordinates and not for public amateur market consumption (Schodt 1996: 228-232).

[19] According to another source 4040 books were confiscated, and managers from five specialist manga book shops were among the 45 arrestees (Kinsella 2000:132).

[20] Until 1996 the Comic Market changed its location frequently. The 40th Comic Market was set to take place in Makuhari Messe - a big convention site located in the outskirt of Tokyo in Chiba prefecture. However, due to the intervention of the Chiba police the convention was moved to the Harumi international exhibition center in Chūō ward, Tokyo. The Comic Market continued to take place in Harumi until it moved to the Tokyo International Exhibition Center (also known as Tokyo Big Site) in 1996.

upcoming event. Following the lolicon boom the number of lolicon dōjinshi was also on the rise, and the degree to which such dōjinshi had to be altered in order to not be categorized as obscene was yet unknown. The request for the inspection and censoring of dōjinshi in Comic Market came in April. With the convention scheduled for August the preparation committee had just over three months to receive, check, and give guidance in altering thousands of dōjinshi. The preparation committee made an emergency announcement to all circles, pleading them for cooperation. Some of the participants were unpleased with the new regulation. As a member of the committee explains: "Today the need to alter some [dōjinshi] is obvious, but back then there was no such custom. Many people asked 'why do we have to alter them?!' and we had to explain it to them. We had a lot of trial and error during the inspection of the dōjinshi, and in the end we couldn't check them all. The circles that had to alter their dōjinshi didn't know how much to change…" (Nagayama 2008:116).

Taking place between the 16th and 17th of August 1991, the 40th Comic Market was the first to execute self-regulation. Since then the Comic Market continues to monitor the dōjinshi sold within it, and request the alteration of dōjinshi when seen fit. Most other big conventions followed similar paths. In retrospective view Comic Market did not sustain such a harsh blow as it might seem - it did manage to swiftly relocate and open in time. Other dōjinshi related events were not as fortunate. Many small events were canceled in fear of public dismal. Comic City, a major convention topped only by Comic Market that was supposed to take place at Makuhari Messe in October was also canceled (ibid:117).[21]

[21] Similarly to Comic Market, Comic City too had to abandon Makuhari Messed due to a request from the Chiba prefecture police, but unlike Comic Market didn't manage to relocate and didn't open that year.

The Miyazaki incident shook the foundations of the manga world, both on the professional level and the amateur one. 1991 was a year characterized by the tuning down of overly brutal and sexual manga. It was also the first year in which professional manga gained a positive image and dōjinshi were suspected of being indecent on a national scale. The strict censorship rules, which were willingly (in the case of the industry) and unwillingly (in the case of the amateur market) enforced in 1991 loosened in the following years, particularly pertaining to dōjinshi. Nevertheless the self-regulation of manga proved far more effective then external pressure from worried groups and police intervention. Manga censorship was subsequently internalized by the manga publishing industry, while amateur convention committees paid more attention to the content of the dōjinshi sold in them.

Mislead public and biased censorship

The avid public rejection of the lolicon genre in the beginning of the 90s is a case worth further discussion, because lolicon is a valuable example of how amateur manga integrates and interacts with professional manga.

In 1991 lolicon stood as an explicit case of censorship due to public opinion. The public was offended by lolicon images and thus they were strictly censored by both the law and the industry. However, a look further into the middle and late 90s reveal a different reality: instead of losing its popularity the lolicon genre only garnered more and more attention, eventually becoming one of the most successful genres read by both males and females. In 1991 a series called Sailor Moon, which bore explicit lolicon features, began serialization and gained unprecedented popularity among

males and females, both young and old. Later in 1996 the exact same thing happened with the series Card Captor Sakura. Interesting enough those two series originally targeted little girls.[22] Sailor Moon and Card Captor Sakura are both related to a specific genre called magical girl (mahō shōjo) that consists of young girls with magical powers, who often fight an evil presence in order to protect world peace. The magical girl genre fulfills all the requirements to be labeled as lolicon:

- The protagonist is always a young girl.
- Mild nudity and sexual connotations are abundant. For example, when the protagonist changes into her magical self (a scene which more than often occurs in every episode) semi-nudity is usually shown.
- The protagonist usually winds up in dangerous situations in which she is forced to fight and sometimes gets hurt (but usually wins).

The depiction of school-aged girls being beaten alone should have sufficed to censor any attempt to draw such manga. Why was the depiction of lolicon-esque ethics in the magical girl genre widely accepted without hindrance?

A similar lenient attitude towards the lolicon genre was seen in the amateur manga front as well. Following the public's frowning upon dōjinshi and the newspapers' otaku bashing participation in the Comic Market (and other major amateur conventions) temporarily decreased. However dōjinshi circles continued to flourish and did not suffer from the same fate.[23] Albeit the police's show of force new book

[22] Both Sailor Moon and Card Captor Sakura were serialized in the shōjo manga magazine Nakayoshi, whose target demographic is young girls in elementary and middle school.

[23] A close inspection shows that the number of participants in Comic Market conventions following the Miyazaki incident indeed decreased. In 1990 a sum of 26,000 circles and 480,000 people participated in the Comic Market conventions (all the conventions that year took place before the Miyazaki incident). In 1991 (after the Miyazaki incident) 25,000 circles and 400,000 people participated in the conventions. However, by 1995 this trend was reversed and by 1996 the number of participants grew to an unprecedented new high number of 40,000 circles and 570,000 people (Comic Market preparation committee 2005:160-189).

shops catering to the amateur market continued to appear. For example, in 1994 a dōjinshi shop called tora no ana opened in Tokyo's Akihabara district. Tora no ana sold uncensored pornographic lolicon dōjinshi and did not bother to label its books as "adult manga", yet the shop proved very successful. How did the retailing of lolicon dōjinshi, which were banned in the beginning of the 90s, changed to become a profitable business as early as 1994?

The answers lie in what I believe to be the demonization of manga, in this case lolicon manga, by the public. In the following paragraphs I will describe the reasons that led me to believe the lolicon genre was only a scapegoat used conveniently by the masses who needed a target to blame upon the corruption of contemporary youth following the Miyazaki incident.

First, it seems the public as a whole was rather ill informed or plain ignorant to the dōjinshi arena at the time. This I can attest from the public's biased image of the otaku who practice dōjinshi-related activities. The otaku were thought to be unsocial, mostly male, on the verge of loosing the ability to differentiate the fantastic from the real, and potential killers just like Miyazaki (Kinsella 2000:128-131). It might seem like the last of these characteristic is an exaggeration caused by the news media's coverage of the Miyazaki incident; in fact all of the above characteristics are. Some otaku might be unsocial. However, those who indulge in dōjinshi cannot possibly be unsocial, as their common way of purchasing dōjinshi was, and still is, by way of going to dōjinshi conventions. Ironically, at the time the Miyazaki incident occurred Comic Market was already one of the biggest conventions held in Japan, shattering even the slightest doubt that dōjinshi-reading otaku are unsocial. Dōjinshi

creators must sell their dōjinshi on site and sustain their connection with their fans[24] so it goes without saying that they must be very social indeed. Furthermore the Comic Market's goal, as described by way of its biyearly manual, is:

> "[to] maintain a social forum in the shape of a dōjinshi marketplace but also to act as a gathering place for manga and anime enthusiasts." (Comic Market preparation committee 2008:26).

Furthermore, according to data collected over the years by the Comic Market committee, a participation breakdown shows that 71% of the circles are run by women and 57% of the general participants in the convention are women (Comic Market preparation committee 2005:290, 2008:21). If the audience attending the biggest dōjinshi convention is any indication the claim that all otaku are male can be discarded as false.

While I agree that a certain amount of imagination is needed to procure and to accept dōjinshi storytelling one must wonder if that leads to being on the verge of loosing the ability to differentiate the fantastic from the real. As a matter of fact some dōjinshi artists used their manga as a leaping board, later being recruited and securing jobs in the professional manga industry.[25] This means that by creating dōjinshi one can potentially be recruited by a commercial publishing company and gain a more "respected job", making attending dōjinshi conventions surprisingly pragmatic.

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[24] Until the 21st century this was done using a physical mailing list and in some cases unofficial face-to-face smaller circle related meetings. In recent years this has been mostly replaced by small information pamphlets (given to costumers upon buying a dōjinshi from the circle) and the use of an internet HP that portrays the current state of the circle and its plans for further publications in upcoming conventions.

[25] Scouts of both big and small companies in the manga industry frequently attend big dōjinshi conventions on the lookout for new talents, and will sometimes contact artists directly on site with job offers. Among the famous professional mangaka who ascended from the dōjinshi arena are Takahashi Rumiko, Kawaguchi Kaiji, Fujishima Kōsuke, CLAMP, and Akamatsu Ken (Kinsella 2000:134, Shimoku 2008:120-129) .

Thus I conclude that the public's image of otaku was false, and since the news media played a big part in stirring and manipulating the public's response to the Miyazaki incident I highly believe the media is the one to blame.

Second, it should be noted that other unconventional genres in manga existed at the time and were not treated anywhere close to how lolicon was. Since 1976 there existed a sub-genre of boys' love called yaoi. Yaoi featured young handsome couples of homosexual men in stories devoid of plot that almost always led to sexual intercourse. As opposed to boys' love dōjinshi, which portrayed male couples in love yet almost never explicitly portrayed sex, yaoi dōjinshi were pornographic in nature. The name yaoi is derived from the phrase "**ya**ma nashi , **o**chi nashi, **i**mi nashi" (no plot building, no proper ending, no meaning). This phrase was coined and affectionately used by the yaoi-drawing dōjinshi artists themselves. In the 70s and 80s dōjinshi conventions were dominated by women, and experimentation with yaoi themes was the core of the dōjinshi movement (Galbraith 2009:239 b). The yaoi genre made its debut in official magazines as early as 1978 when a boys' love and yaoi magazine called June was born. Around the year 2000 the yaoi-loving girls began to call themselves fujoshi (腐女子、rotten girls. A pun on the word 婦女子 which is also spelled fujoshi but means "a proper lady"). The yaoi genre showed the growing tendency of women's approval of sexual content in manga form (Fuji Television 2007, Galbraith 2009 a).[26] This tendency was also visible in ladies manga of which some began to actively portray sex during the 80s. Alongside yaoi another genre called

[26] The spread of the yaoi genre in Japan can also be explain in terms of women dissatisfaction with traditional Japanese expectations of the woman's role in society. However this notion only dates back to the late 90s whereas yaoi's dōjinshi roots lie in the 70s.

Shotacon[27] also formed in the 80s. Shotacon is a reverse themed lolicon, and features young boys depicted in a sexual manner (instead of girls). However, as opposed to the lolicon genre the yaoi and shotacon genres were never scorned upon by the masses and to this day the word fujoshi remains fairly obscure to the general public. When the Comic Market preparation committee was forced to self-regulate dōjinshi for the first time in 1991 it only inspected the works of circles which created male-oriented dōjinshi. There were less than 1,000 such circles at that time. However there were 10,000 additional female-oriented circles and they were spared from the inspection (Comic Market preparation committee 2005:160, 2008:116).

The public's panic and attempt to censor one "harmful" manga genre while ignoring others show the unbalanced approach the public held during these years in regard to manga as a whole. The image of the otaku in Japan remains negative to this day.[28] However, the debate over lolicon manga following the Miyazaki incident consequently abated. The Miyazaki incident triggered a new era of self-regulation, both in the amateur manga market and the professional one. Yet it did not cause the popularity of lolicon to subside. After 1991 lolicon manga continued to switch hands in amateur conventions. Even the major publishing companies, familiar as they were with the negative reactions the public held for lolicon, were reluctant to abolish the lolicon genre for one simple reason: it was selling.

[27] The word shotacon is an abbreviation of Shotaro and complex. Shotaro was a kid protagonist from a 1956 manga called Tetsujin 28-go.
[28] Otaku are still widely represented in the media as unsocial, freaky and problematic people. Examples of otaku representation in the media today can be seen in the drama series Densha Otoko and Akihabara@Deep, and in the manga and anime series Genshiken. Also see Azuma 2009.

Genre integration

Problematic as they may be controversial genres might also prove to be a source for more positive new and creative ideas. This is also true in the case of the lolicon genre. The depiction of young, yet strong, women found in lolicon manga was welcomed by the young female readers in the 90s. They could identify much more with a young and feminine girl who studied in school just like them, experienced relationships with boys just like them and is likewise indulged in modern lifestyle and pastime activities (Allison 2006:135). The harsh public reaction the lolicon genre had received convinced the publishing companies that it needs to be regulated and censored. However, the popularity the same genre enjoyed among dōjinshi fans also needed to be taken into consideration. A compromise was found in the toning down of the sexual nature of lolicon (while avoiding pornographic representations altogether) and the integration of lolicon features into existing popular genres. This in turn led to wider reception and consideration on the part of the public. The original lolicon genre didn't disappear either. It continued to exist in erotic magazines for adults only, and in the form of dōjinshi.[29] Consumption of lolicon manga in the form of both erotic magazines and dōjinshi is still legal in Japan today. In this way the lolicon genre contributed some of its elements to the development of other genres in the professional manga market and continued to be self-contained in niche magazines and the amateur manga market.

I have already discussed the similarities between the lolicon genre and the magical girl genre. The magical girl genre is a good example for a genre that was influenced

[29] During the 90s Lemon People and Manga Hot Milk - two magazines specializing in the lolicon genre - were published. Both of these magazines ceased publication in 1998, but in 2002 another lolicon specific adult magazine called Comic LO started publication (LO stands for "Lolita Only").

by the lolicon genre. The addition of sex appeal, sense of fashion and bold female attitude to the magical girl genre was viewed positively by girls.[30] As for the male readers, some were rejected by the strong, yet feminine, heroine featured in such manga, but for many others it was not a far cry from the usual super hero-esque boys' manga they were accustomed to. Cross-reading - the habit of reading manga designated for the opposite sex - is common in Japan and the prospect of having a manga series which is popular among both girls and boys, and on a very wide age range as well, is not surprising. The major publishing companies are well aware of the cross-reading phenomena and in many cases seek to design their series in a way that will make them attractive to both boys and girls.[31]

In sum, the reason why the lolicon genre stayed strong despite censorship and public dismal lies in its integration into other less provocative genres. Given the time new and potent genres tend to find their place and audience in any given media type. Some become mainstream or niche, while the truly unsupported and problematic disappear or remain in the realm of sub culture. This is also true in the case of the lolicon genre, which gradually adjusted itself to the realm of public consensus. While amateur lolicon manga can still be found in abundance, the lolicon genre has integrated fully into the professional manga medium. The same process that I have described using the lolicon genre as an example of occurred in many other instances with other genres and radical notions in manga. Since the creation of the medium new genres and new artistic ways to express one's opinion have arisen in manga. These

[30] The magical girl genre existed well before the creation of the lolicon genre. However, the emphasis on strong personality and sexuality in magical girl series is a direct result of the lolicon genre's influence.

[31] The boundaries between boys (shōnen) manga and girls (shōjo) manga are very subtle today. Some mangaka, such as Takahashi Rumiko or Akamatsu Ken, intentionally create manga that blends romance, action and comedy together to create a story suitable for both genders, and for a wide range of ages.

were later acknowledged and integrated into professional publications, reaching the general public. As I have tried to portray in this chapter the dōjinshi scene also played, and still play, an important role in the creation of manga and its consumption. The world of manga publication is a fluid one. It maintains a dualist approach of both an up to down system (publishing companies decide which genres and artists' manga to sell to the public and fans) and a down to up system (amateur manga is available to the public and is noticed and adopted by the publishing companies). As I have demonstrated above this allows amateur mangaka to influence the content and art of professional manga, and manga as a whole. The professional industry may also reassert their choice of manga publications by surveying the reception of these manga by the fans and the amateur manga community. A large amount of dōjinshi based on a certain series can amount to its popularity among the fans.

It is the avant-garde approach of creators, coupled with a mechanism of trail, error, integration and eventual reception on the part of the publishing companies that keeps manga fresh and popular. These steps help the medium to attest its role as a highly down to earth mean to criticize and portray the "real society" on one hand and to remain a fantasy-procuring mean of escapism on the other. They also help manga remain a controversial art on the underground while being widely accepted as popular art by the Japanese public on the surface. Now we can partly answer the first part of the main question of my thesis: how did manga transform from an unofficial and controversial art to being a national art which represent Japan in the 21st century? Manga never fully transformed from unofficial and controversial to official and well received. The dualist existence of amateur and professional manga allows manga to stay unofficial and controversial, and at the same time achieve public acceptance by integrating new ideas and art forms into existing popular genres.

Part Two: The Affirmation of Manga in Japan via the USA

Manga's obstacles in the West

"Most Japanese comics are unlikely to cross the cultural barrier between East and West in their original format. Those that do will probably be select classics with universal themes or works specifically created with Western audience in mind. …But in the years to come, the sheer size and momentum of Japanese comics culture may make itself felt around the world indirectly, through the commercial spin-offs of toys, animation, picture books, videogames, and even locally scripted and redrawn comics." (Schodt 1984:158).

Half a knowledgeable note and half a prophecy that will soon fulfill itself, this quote from Fredrik L. Schodt's pioneering book Manga! Manga! echo the grim state of manga in the U.S. from the 60s up until the middle of the 90s. In contrast to manga's constant growth and economic vigor in Japan the U.S. had little knowledge and interest in Japan's comic market. The American comic industry was strong at the time, exiting what was called the golden age of comic books and entering what would be later called the silver age.[32] The popularity of comic books was high, and revenues were great. However, as Schodt stated above, manga did not enjoy such popularity in the U.S. and didn't manage to gain a foothold in that market. The reasons had much to do with cultural differences between the West and Japan as they had with the conventions comics had in those markets. From a cultural point of view the fact that

[32] The golden age and silver age of comic books lasted from the late 1930s to the early 1950s and from 1956 to 1970 respectively.

manga sometimes contained adult themes, and catered to adults as well as children, contrasted with the Western notion that comic is meant for kids. From a conventional point of view manga was even foreigner to the West: manga story arcs were very long, at times stretching for thousands of pages, while Western comics tended to be short and self-contained. Manga's drawing style was built upon the mimicking of motion, emotion and action, whereas Western comics were much more text heavy and relied very little on the fluidity of motions or emotions. The icons, shapes and signs used to express emotions in manga (such as the appearance of three small rectangles on the forehead to show anger, or a bead of sweat that signifies an awkward situation) held no meaning for Western readers. Comics were drawn from left to right and in full color in the West, but from right to left and only in black and white in Japan. Furthermore the U.S. comic market itself was (and still is) significantly smaller than that in Japan. One should not forget that manga has evolved beyond the normal capacities of Western comic markets, and fitted neatly with the Japanese daily commuting way of life. The cultural acceptance manga enjoyed in Japan far outreached that of the Western comics, which were read by kids and collectors, usually in the comfort of their house. That the U.S. comic market was comparably small, and already saturated with local companies, meant that the Japanese manga industry had little to no incentive to sell their manga in the U.S.[33] All these differences created a gap that posed hurdles for manga to spread outside of East Asia.

[33] In his book Manga: sixty years of Japanese comics, Paul Gravett writes the following on the subject: "As for selling them abroad, why would any Japanese publisher bother when foreign markets for comics were so tiny by comparison with Japan's enormous home market, which seemed to be endlessly on the upsurge? Even now, after sales have leveled out somewhat, estimates put the annual turnover of the manga industry at $5 billion – that's around ten times the figure for comics across the whole of Europe." (Gravett 2007:152). Gravett wrote this phrase in 2004, during the anime bubble years in which anime and manga were considered very successful in the West and sold like hot cakes. This indicates that even after manga began to be sold in the West and reached its peak it still held little prospect for the Japanese manga industry.

In Schodt's words it was indeed unlikely that manga series would cross the cultural barrier between East and West in their original format.

Returning to the present, manga and their animated series counterparts anime have spread far and wide in the West and are enjoying popularity and steady growth in interest. Manga and anime's popularity in the West (prominently the U.S.) has manifested itself in many ways. Many Hollywood movies are influenced by, or are reinterpretations of, manga and anime.[34] Manga served as an inspiration to American comic artists, which in turn produced more Asian-looking comics.[35] American cartoon shows which featured a drawing style similar to that of manga and anime have also appeared. In fact manga and anime had a big impact on the way animation is viewed in the West, proving the Western notion that animation is strictly intended for kids wrong. The path they had cleared would soon be traversed by opportunist American companies who understood the implications and potential they heralded (Dreamworks and Pixar being the most prominent examples).

But what brought forth this change and made manga and anime known in the U.S.? And what implications did the popularity of manga and anime in the West had on Japan's own image of manga? This chapter will explore manga and anime's history in the U.S. while focusing on the infrastructure developed to support the marketing of both. All references to the West in the following pages will be pointed to North

[34] For example, the Matrix trilogy was strongly influence by Oshii Mamoru's Ghost in the Shell movie (The Animatrix 2003). The second installment of the movie Kill Bill contains a part drawn as anime (which was produced in Japan). The movies Speed Racer, Dragon Ball Regeneration, and Blood: The Last Vampire were all reinterpretations of manga and anime series by the same names.
[35] Frank Miller claims that the manga Wolf and Cub has influenced his work (Gravett 2007:155). Modern examples of manga-inspired comics can be seen in DC's Teen Titans Go! and Udon's Street Fighter comic series. The earliest example of reference to manga and anime in a Western comic might be Marvel Comics' Star Wars no. 79. Published in October 1983, this comic featured one of the characters wearing a disguise that made him look like Harlock - a character from the manga and anime Space Pirate Captain Harlock (Patten 2009: 32).

America (hereafter the U.S.). That is not to say that other countries outside of the U.S. did not import manga or showed anime series. In fact France and Italy were already actively importing manga years before the U.S. did. However, three important facts led me to limit this chapter to the U.S. The first was that the number of manga and anime series exported to the U.S. until today far outnumber those in other non-Asian countries. The second was that the nature of the American-Japanese relationship over the years led to closer political and economic ties between the two; Ties that Japan does not share with any European country. And third, I intend to prove that the U.S. is used as a testing ground for the publication of manga and anime in the West, and therefore represent the West in that perspective.

In the following pages I will first explain how, through the gradual sipping of anime into the U.S. market, manga gained its status in the U.S. Next, I will suggest that Japan is using the U.S. as a testing ground for exploring the potential exportability of manga and anime series to Western countries. I will then change my point of view and explain how the positive reception of manga and anime in the U.S. has triggered a steep rise in the image of manga as a cultural asset of Japan, in Japan.

Growing interest in Japan's "cool" culture

Manga owes much of its exposure in the West to Japanese animations, which are called anime both in the West and in Japan. In the second half of the 20th century manga had seemingly too many obstacles in its way to make its transition from East to West possible. The same cannot be said, however, in the case of anime. For while American comic books flourished the American cartoon market was entering tough times. Animated cartoons were not unheard of in the first half of the 20th century, and

existed both in the shape of animated "shorts" that were screened before movies, and in the shape of full feature films. However, by the 60s the American animation industry saw a decline in both the quality and quantity of its productions, resulting in the gradual disappearance of theatrical animation. Shorts had been discontinued by all studios between the mid-50s and late 60s, and Disney features became lackluster after the death of Walt Disney's in 1966. Comic books became more popular in the 60s thanks in part to more sophisticated plots and characters, which extended the age of readership into high school and college. However, due to increasing demand for gentler child-oriented TV shows the animated versions of those popular comics were dulled down. Violent parts of the story were removed, often damaging the continuity of the plot or "softening" it. And so, while Western comic books as a whole adopted a more mature tone and a more mature audience, animated cartoons continued to be childish. They reinforced the notion that animation is meant for kids, a notion that remained undisputedly common in the U.S. until the 90s.

But soon enough a new type of animated cartoons gave the comic book and science fiction fans a more realistic and less restricted experience; And it wasn't a cultural product of the U.S. It was Japanese animation.[36] Japanese anime series first appeared in 1962, with Tezuka Osamu's Astro Boy series. Early anime were designed for kids, and some of them were sold to companies outside Japan and Asia, such as in France, Germany and the U.S. However the Japanese animation companies produced primarily for the Japanese market. This became evident in the 70s, when the content of Japanese and American animation began to differ. To make sure the produced

[36] Japanese cartoons that crossed over to the West during the 70s and first half of the 80s were simply called Japanese animation, or Japanimation. In the late 80s these were replaced by the word anime. The word anime is an abbreviation of animation and was the original word used by the Japanese to describe their animations. Its use in Japan originated in the 70s (Patten 2009:66. note 14).

cartoons are appropriate for children stricter rules on the showing of violence, suggestive language and nudity were imposed on animation studios in the U.S. Such rules were not imposed on the Japanese studios, as animation was not considered a children-only affair over there. The Japanese studios created their cartoons with Japan's demography in mind, and so the number of anime series which were imported and broadcasted in the U.S. (a small selected few to begin with) plummeted until it reached the zero point. During the early and mid 70s anime was only broadcasted in the West via Japanese-community TV channels. These channels were not interconnected and each showed different programs on different hours. They broadcasted anime in native Japanese, and sometimes did not bother to add English subtitles.

Even though anime series were shown only within major U.S. cities, and on specific Japanese channels at that, they garnered the attention of comic and science fiction fans. The fans recognized these cartoons were different from what was produced in America. The animated series from Japan featured mature themes, followed a plot which spanned multiple episodes (unlike the self-contained episodic nature of American cartoons), and used visual effects which were at the time affiliated only with movies and TV dramas (tracking shots, dramatic close-ups, and camera related effects such as lens flares). There were other reasons why anime gained a following in the U.S during the 70s. One was the immediate connection sci-fi fans found between anime and non-animated American TV shows and movies at the time. In the 70s a large portion of Japanese manga (and consecutively anime) made use of concepts such as space travel, space fighting, and giant robots and machines. Sci-fi fans too were accustomed to these concepts from cult series such as Star Trek, and later from films like the Star Wars series. Hence although anime was a product of a culture

distinctly different from that of the American viewers there was nothing foreign about the themes that were incorporated within it. It also helped that anime series at that time tended to be simplistic, and were sometimes easy to pick up and understand even if viewed in their original non-translated Japanese (Patten 2009:67, note 19).[37] Another, more technical, reason dealt with the availability of anime. In October 1975 the first VCRs hit U.S. shores and made the recording and sharing of TV programs much easier to the public. Using video tapes was cheap, and they were widely accessible. This allowed the early anime enthusiasts to tape their shows, show them to friends, and trade them with fans from other cities (which had different anime series broadcasted in their local region). Some anime fans even traded cartoons with their Japanese friends. They received the latest anime on tape from Japan, and in return sent tapes of American cartoons such as Hanna-Barbera's (ANNCast 2010: 12:25). In the late 80s and early 90s tape traders also appeared. These were people who sold bootleg tapes of anime they had translated and subtitled. They sold their tapes at science fiction conventions for a low price, and although these tapes were considered a form of piracy most companies chose to ignore the sellers as long as they refrained from selling licensed series or series already on the market. Tape traders helped spread anime fandom in the pre-internet age (Galbraith 2009:217 b).

The Japanese cartoons introduced to the Western world were but one example of a global growing interest in Japan's culture. Whereas Japan's economic power slowed to a stop during the 90s and entered a crisis, Japan's "cool" culture began to flourish in the West. Sushi was no longer an exotic culinary oddity enjoyed by the higher classes. It became a popular fast food accessible to all. Japanese modern literature, both

[37] This changed in the 90s when much more sophisticated and mature anime series started crossing the borders and arriving to the U.S.

authentic (such as Murakami Haruki's books) and fabricated (such as Arthur Golden's Memoirs of a Geisha), fascinated the West; And Harajuku became the new Mecca of the fashion world. In her book From Impressionism to Anime, Susan Napier describes this peak in interest as continuing other similar waves of interest in Japan's culture in the West, which have been prominent since the late 19th century. She also raises the opinion that one aspect in which this new wave differs from prior ones is in that it does not derail to orientalism; And the main agents that enabled this difference were anime and manga, and the surprisingly unbiased opinion on Japan held by their fan base (Napier 2007:210). I will discuss the influence of this untainted view of Japan in greater detail later in this work. For now let us return to the spread of the Japanese culture of cool.

The seeds of anime in the West were planted in the 70s, but did not sprout until the late 90s. Just like the other components of Japan's popular culture that I mentioned earlier anime's growth in the West was a gradual one. Anime fandom in the U.S. was a grassroots phenomenon and in the 70s foreign cartoons such as anime were financially insignificant in the West. During the 80s U.S. TV stations were already saturated with domestically made cartoons. They had no incentive to adopt foreign cartoon shows, which had to be translated, dubbed and edited in order to fit the standards of the children time slots in the American broadcasting system. This did not improve during the 90s when misconceptions about anime spread, claiming that all Japanese animation is brutal, crude and pornographic. These views stemmed from a handful of sources. In the 90s anime was already gaining momentum in the West. The big U.S. animation companies spread rumors in order to harm the anime industry's status and prevent further invasion of anime to the U.S. A lack of satisfactory classification of anime by rental shops also did its harm - since anime were more

mature and usually seemed not intended for children they were at times classified as adult cartoons and could be found on the same shelves as erotic cartoons. To top it all erotic anime series were actually a big hit in the U.S. They sold the most copies, and thus were more visible to the public. And the public categorized anime on the basis of these erotic anime shows (Patten 2009:64-64, 113-115).

The great outburst of anime, and the start of what would be later coined in the U.S. as the "anime bubble", began in 2000. The U.S. market was suddenly flooded with anime, both on TV and on DVD. Conventions were sprouting, stores were stocking goods, and the image of anime as a whole did a 180 degrees turn for the better. But what caused this?

There is no simple answer to that question. Some claim that in the second half of the 90s more high budget anime series and movies were produced, raising the popularity of anime in the West exponentially. Others suggest that in order to portray the harsh reality the U.S. faced in the beginning of the 21st century, mainly terrorist acts such as 9/11, a more avant-garde medium was needed. Manga and anime were fitting mediums for the expressing of harsh and postmodern realities and struck a chord with the Western audience (Kelts 2007:37-40). Napier, on the other hand, states that anime's growth spurt was the result of years of building fandom support coupled with fast technological advancements (mainly the VCR, the DVD, and the internet)(Napier 2007:134-137). I believe Napier's approach is right, but overlooks an important component that was crucial for the successful buildup of the anime and manga mediums in the U.S. A more business-oriented point of view is needed in order to understand the overwhelming success these mediums enjoyed on the brink of a new millennium.

Effective marketing

In Japan anime is but one component in a bigger marketing scheme. Although anime series can be completely original or based on books and video games, most anime series are based on manga. The transition from manga to anime is easy and natural. As we saw in the previous chapter, manga evolved to incorporate movie-esque visuals and effects, which translate smoothly into an animated sequence. Moreover, since manga are more diverse and are read by a much larger audience in Japan than comics are in the West, their animated counterparts can appeal to a more diverse audience as well. An animated version of a manga can at times be proof of the manga's success and popularity. That is because the decision to create an anime adaptation is always at the hands of the manga publishing companies. Simply said, if the company feels that an anime adaptation will garner more fans and in turn make the manga more popular, it will trigger the creation of that corresponding anime. If manga is the first step, and anime is the second, than affiliated goods and merchandise are the last pieces of the puzzle. Those who like the anime will buy affiliated goods, such as DVDs, toys, cards and so on. The relationship I describe here is not always a linear course of action. Some manga are based on anime (as in the case of the famous Neon Genesis Evangelion), some manga and anime are based on merchandise (such as the Hello Kitty and Licca-chan dolls), and some are based on video games (the most famous case being Pokemon). So it might prove simpler to perceive the marketing of these formats in the image of a wheel, in which one medium creates the next. Ultimately, if marketed wisely, the consumer can "enter" this wheel at any point and continue on to consume all the affiliated mediums found within it. With each new medium the momentum of this marketing wheel increases to reach more consumers

and provide the needed stimulus and depth to keep earlier adopters (aka fans) from abandoning the bandwagon. This marketing wheel can reach colossal proportions if enough contextual depth and prior conceptualization is given to a project.[38]

On the other hand insufficient marketing can, in most cases, lead to a problematic reception. Effective marketing becomes even more vital when you are selling to a different country, or in our case to an audience with a distinguishably different cultural palette altogether. That is why anime and manga must also adhere to proper marketing, and it is exactly the lack of sufficient marketing that prevented anime (and consecutively manga) from succeeding in the U.S. until the late 90s. To put it in a nutshell, anime wasn't promoted as a Japanese product until the 90s, and that lead to a slow start for the developing medium. Although anime movies and series started popping up in the U.S. during the 60s they were intentionally stripped of all cultural references to Japan and Asian culture. This was a strategy used by many Japanese electronics and video companies at that time. They were aware of the negative resonance some countries had with Japan following Japan's World War 2 misdeeds, and thus resolved to obscure the Japanese features of their products. Japanese products which were stripped of their Japanese traits are referred to as odorless.[39]

Some anime series were produced odorless to begin with, and were mainly made for a foreign (not Japanese) audience. Such series were often ordered by Western companies, which contracted Japanese companies to create them. Nonetheless some series which were originally intended for a Japanese audience were also picked up by

[38] A good example for such a marketing wheel in Japan would be the .hack project. The project originally launched with the release of the TV anime .hack//Sign and the video game .hack//Infection in 2002. However this multimedia spanning project sought to increase its intellectual depth by providing the fans content of all kinds, which included additional anime series, manga series, video games, music discs, affiliated .hack-only magazines, books, picture books, figures and more. When the .hack project ended in 2006 it comprised of 31 different multimedia titles.

[39] The term odorless, in the meaning stated above, was coined by Iwabuchi Koichi. For a more extensive study about odorless practices in Japan and Asia see Iwabuchi 2002. For a specific discussion on the nature of odorless anime see Iwabuchi 2004.

U.S. and European companies. The U.S. film companies decided that in order to adopt these series they must be rendered odorless. This decision had very little to do with ill feelings about Japan, and was very much a matter of localization. It was commonly believed that a cartoon for kids should not contain any cross-cultural references, which might confuse kids. Also, the original anime series seldom passed the strict criteria held by the U.S. TV stations, which meant they had to be edited, and censored, in order to become valid for screening in the U.S. The editing process itself took place in the U.S., with most if not all series receiving a throughout treatment. The result was an odorless cartoon, one which was at times very different from the original Japanese anime (Schodt 1984:154,156. Iwabuchi 2004).

Odorless anime were stripped of their Japanese traits, but I suggest they also lost affiliation to their original properties in Japan, which in turn damaged their overall attainable success outside of Japan. As I explained, the need to make anime suitable for children forced the film companies to censor and change the contents of series. In addition the original manga series, on which those anime were based upon, were not imported to the U.S. Since the anime usually contained only a small portion of the overall story portrayed in the manga some odorless anime series in the U.S. suffered from problematic endings, major plot holes and unexplainable jumps in the storyline. The odorless approach damaged the marketing wheel series originally had in Japan, because U.S. film companies seldom brought over the manga, game and merchandise that were such an essential part of the wheel in Japan. Some companies tried to replace the Japanese marketing wheel by creating alternative, U.S. made, figures and comic books; but these cases were scarce and lacking. The odorless approach, while

allowing many series to cross the borders and reach Western viewer, caused insufficient marketing and thus hindered the reception of anime in the West.

Tapping into the market

In addition to harming the marketing wheel, odorless anime hindered the growth of anime fandom in the West. It might be the case that many of the early followers of anime in the West were unaware of the thread binding their favourite series - the Japanese thread. U.S. based companies were sometimes unaware of the existing anime fan base, and thus failed to realise the potential anime had to become mainstream in the West. As time went by it became apparent that, to a certain extent, hiding the Japanese nature of anime is keeping it from reaching a broader audience. Some companies understood this earlier than others. One such company was Streamline Pictures. Founded in 1988 by film producer Carl Macek and animator and film distributor Jerry Beck, Streamline Pictures was the first American company to specialize in the dubbing and distributing of anime series. Macek, a pioneer in the business and himself an avid anime fan, had a clear vision of the market. His intention was to expose anime, as a Japanese cultural product, to as many households as possible. Since anime's origin was yet fairly vogue Streamline Pictures did not release anime in native Japanese language with English subtitles. American animated cartoons were always dubbed and Streamline felt that subbing anime at that point only served to alienate it from the U.S. audience. Streamline was also aware that anime fans were already buying subtitled pirated tapes from tape traders, and wanted to release a different experience and not just a second subtitled version. Moreover

Streamline's target audience was not restricted to the existing anime fan base. Dubbed anime served to lure new people into buying these movies and series. Another reason for dubbing anime was Macek's genuine aspiration to let viewers enjoy the artistic value anime had without covering the pictures with subtitles. (ANNCast 2010: 01:04:00 - 01:06:00). When marketing anime Streamline usually preferred to release movies, since they could stand on their own without the consumers having prior knowledge about them or anime in general. However, when confronted with the distribution of anime series Macek had a peculiar marketing scheme: he would usually release the first episode of a series, but leave the rest untouched. Macek explains that "The whole goal was to expose people to anime…by putting them [the episodes] all out I would have destroyed any television marketing potential that the series had because no broadcast [authority] would broadcast a show that had already been marketed on home video….I felt that initially the home video market destroys the ultimate viability of that particular program. And as you can see today when everybody that distributes anime puts out series, add it to item, without having the infrastructure of a television broadcast or a merchandising campaign, it eats away the infrastructure and ultimately collapses the infrastructure." (ibid: 01:03:00, 01:06:23 - 01:07:12).

While Macek's expectations from the series his company chose were perhaps too optimistic, he acted to promote anime as a genuine Japanese product and understood how to make the most out of the series' marketing potential. Macek claimed that other companies did not understand the true commercial and market value of the properties they had. In other words, their marketing schemes did not include, or even took note of, the Japanese marketing wheels these series had in Japan.

While Streamline Pictures had a hand in distributing some of the most famous anime movies of the late 80s and early 90s (Including the castle of Laputa and Akira) anime as a whole boomed in the U.S. during the end of the 90s. As I have explained this boom is attributed to the growing grassroots fandom, fast evolution of technology and effective marketing that culminated in the end of the 90s. As anime was becoming mainstream it became less and less odorless. Anime fans wanted their series as true to the source as possible. Therefor anime in Japanese with English subtitles became more prominent. The distinction the public started to make between American animated cartoons and Japanese ones meant that censorship became less of a burden and more authentic, unedited anime appeared on U.S. store shelves. It wasn't long before fans of anime, craving to find more about their favourite series, turned to their source material - manga. Although manga in English was available in the U.S. before the 90s, it was usually in small quantities, and was licenced by companies which didn't specialise in manga.[40] Manga was not well known and pre-90s attempts to publish it had flopped horribly (Schodt 1984:154-155). In fact the manga version of Akira serves as one of the very few examples of pre 90s manga which succeeded in gaining popularity, and even that success is attributed in large to the movie adaptation with which it went hand in hand.[41]

Nevertheless following anime's rise to mainstream it was inevitable that manga became widely available in the U.S. At the time there were two pioneering manga publishing companies around: Viz Media, which was founded in 1986, and Tokyopop (formerly known as Mixx Entertainment) which joined the scene in 1997. These two

[40] Imported manga in Japanese were also available in the U.S. as early as the 60s, in stores within little Tokyo districts (Patten 2009:74).

[41] Streamline Pictures strategically distributed the Akira movie to comic stores that also stocked the manga (published in 1988 by Marvel Comics in the U.S.), so that people who liked the manga will be able to buy and watch the movie and vice-versa. This contributed to the overall sales of the manga and the movie (ANNCast 2010:01:00:00 - 01:01:12).

companies, the first to specialize in the publication of manga in the U.S., tried to localize manga for the American audience: they flipped the pages so as to be read from left to right, erased Japanese sound effects, chose to refer to characters with their first name, even though the original manga referred to them with their surname, and so on. But by 2002 manga and anime were popular enough that Tokyopop could allow itself to release a line of manga called the "100% Authentic Manga" line. These manga were virtually identical to the Japanese originals: the pages would be read from right to left, Japanese sound effects were left intact, and in most cases no censorship or name changing took place. The "100% Authentic Manga" line had two advantages. First, it was greeted with enthusiasm from both the mangaka in Japan (which resented the flipping of the pages of their manga, claiming it damages the art) and the fans (which could finally read manga in a way similar to their Japanese counterparts). Second, printing unedited manga reduced production costs (Galbraith 2009:78 b. Gravett 2007:152, 156). Although Viz never adopted it, the practise of providing unedited manga became the norm for most of the manga publishing companies that appeared later on.

Manga had a huge part in elevating the popularity of anime. It added content to the marketing wheel. With manga finally available in fair quantities and variety, DVDs becoming cheap, and merchandise appearing "straight from Japan", anime finally found solid ground and became mainstream in the U.S. In a manner completely opposite to the one that existed in Japan, in the West anime had predated manga and became its backbone. The marketing wheel, which lacked in earlier stages, finally appeared. It was adopted by new, anime and manga specific, companies in the U.S. and used by Japanese companies that came to be interested in marketing their series in the West.

Before I move on to discuss the consequences of manga and anime's popularity in the U.S., I would like to sum up my previous argument about the role effective marketing played in the promotion of Japanese "cool" culture by providing an example of a successful Japanese franchise. The prime example of effective marketing is undoubtedly represented by the remarkable success of the Pokemon franchise. Initially based on a video game, the Pokemon universe quickly expanded to contain manga, anime, collectibles, and more video games. It can be assumed that some parents, in both Japan and the U.S., were at a loss as to how, and why, Pokemon became so big. It seemingly arrived like a hurricane, gulping up all the children (and their parents' wallets too). But for Nintendo, the company responsible for the planning and distribution of the Pokemon franchise, the success of Pokemon was nothing but a surprise. Nintendo had planned out the course of the franchise to the minor details, and from a very early stage. They initially searched for a game that had the potential to become a big franchise. When they saw that potential in one of their company's invested projects - the Pokemon game - they carefully planned their marketing around it. Their steps to expand the Pokemon universe in Japan were timed and calculated. They not only surrounded Pokemon fans with enough stimuli to enjoy a multi-layered universe, they also planned years in advance how to continue to maintain the huge marketing wheel they had devised. For instance, Nintendo periodically adds more Pokemon characters and produces new video games to feature them. [42] Nintendo then creates a new anime series to introduce kids to the new Pokemon characters and to convince them to buy the "new generation's" video games and affiliated merchandise. Nintendo's strategy with Pokemon worked marvels in Japan. So when they wanted to

[42] The Pokemon characters, which are called pocket monsters, are the main attractions of the Pokemon franchise. In the Pokemon universe Pokemon trainers catch and train their pocket monsters and later use them to compete with other trainers in Pokemon fights and beauty contests.

export Pokemon to the West Nintendo decided to leave the marketing wheel that spun it in Japan intact, with the addition of minor differences meant to support the localization of Pokemon in the U.S.[43] It's hard to believe that Pokemon could have been as successful as it was in the West if it wasn't pushed by such a massive marketing scheme, and carefully tailored to tap into the local U.S. market (and later the European one). We can only wonder to what extend the Pokemon franchise could have evolved if Nintendo had chosen to publish Pokemon in the U.S. only as a game or an anime (a common practice in the 70s and 80s market) instead as the sum of its parts. I believe I do not stretch reality by far by suggesting it couldn't have reached even a fraction of the fandom, and the affiliated economic vigour, it now enjoys. The potential to become an overwhelming phenomenon in the West existed in many more Japanese titles, even before anime boomed in the West. But the lack of a proper marketing wheel meant these series were destined to become mere shadows of their Japanese counterparts come West.

From odorless to meaningful

Due to fans demand for unedited anime, more and more series arrived to the West "as is" directly from Japan. Those series were not altered for Western consumption and were not censored (to a certain degree). Fans were gradually given the ability to

[43] In the U.S. the Pokemon franchise was handled by Nintendo of America (NoA) – the American subsidiary of Nintendo Japan. The Pokemon anime series was heavily modified for the American viewer (including the censorship of entire episodes, name changes, the inclusion of an entirely different sound track, and more). However, little to no change was made to the video games and card game. The marketing strategies for the promotion of Pokemon too remained fairly close to the Japanese ones. The lessons learned by Nintendo in the marketing of Pokemon in Japan were implemented by NoA for the American release. For more information on the glocalization and marketing of Pokemon around the globe see Tobin 2004.

choose between a dubbed soundtrack and a subbed one. The Western audience was attracted to the different culture portrayed in manga and anime (in which I also include the drawing style of manga itself), and as a result odorless manga and anime gradually disappeared from view. But are there values incorporated within manga and anime, which were hidden or depressed in odorless anime? Were there advantages to be gained from watching "authentic" anime or reading "authentic" manga?

According to a research conducted by Napier for one of her books, fans today clearly understand the connection between manga, anime, and Japan. In fact those mediums' being Japanese was an essential aspect in their appeal to the fans. Fans are intrigued by the cultural settings of manga and anime just as much as they are attracted to their plots. Manga and Anime were found to stimulate an intellectual interest in Japan. Napier identified many fans which, upon reading manga or watching anime, began to study Japanese history, art or language. Some even decided to visit Japan (Napier 2007:180).[44] Manga and anime clearly affected American fans' image of Japan, in a positive way. In view of manga and anime's fictive nature it can be argued if those mediums confer an image of the real Japan or a fictional one. Napier found that fans differentiate between the fictional story settings and the cultural weight that is embodied within them. Manga and anime might take place in an unknown country, in space or in an alternative time-line, but as Japanese products they usually maintain cultural aspects widely accepted in Japan. When reading manga or watching anime, Japanese and Western viewer alike are bombarded with cultural references. If the story unfolds in a Japanese setting one can expect to see how the Japanese education system works, take note of how Japan is affected by the passing of seasons, learn a lot

[44] A company called Pop Japan Travels now offers "popular culture tours" to Japan and specializes in tours tailored for otaku and fujoshi.

about Japanese (and Asian) cuisine and dress-codes, and of course discover Japanese traditions and religious beliefs.

But even if the story does not take place in Japan per-se the viewers are still exposed to the Japanese mentality behind it. This comes in several levels, some more apparent than others. Much have been said about the morals and conventions of manga and anime, where plot twists can be found aplenty, characters are not always plain good or evil, and good doesn't always triumph over evil. In a country such as America, with its superhero comic tradition and clear definitions of right and wrong, manga and anime are unique to a fault. Movie producers, screen writers and even game companies have utilized these unique aspects, and most of them proudly admit their inspiration came from Japan.

The Japanese nature of manga and anime can also be seen in the social norms depicted within them. Japan maintains a strict social order, which manifest both in the way people act and the way they speak. A certain manga might take place in space, and contain non-Japanese protagonists, but the way they refer to each other will reveal the deep-rooted Japanese social order their creators naturally affixed to them. Japanese viewers are accustomed to such things, because they experience these levels of politeness and social discrimination on a daily basis.[45] The Western audience on the other hand will notice and might actively question these social norms, and the way they affect the relationships and views of the fictional characters.

Perhaps the most active level in which readers and viewers are influenced by manga and anime is the language. In manga suffixes affixed to character names (such as chan, san, sensei etc.) are abundant and also serve to portray Japanese social norms. For those who wish to study the Japanese language manga in Japanese is among the

[45] In the forms of relationships between girl and boy, junior and senior (kohai-sempai), young and old, employee and employer, and so on.

easiest reading materials.[46] Anime has an even bigger impact. While watching a subbed anime the viewer, be them students of the Japanese language or complete strangers to the language, will inevitably be exposed to the Japanese language, which adds exponentially to the feel of experiencing a different culture. The persistent viewer will soon get used to hearing the Japanese language, and maybe even learn a few words and phrases.

By now we have discerned why it took manga and anime so long to bloom in the U.S. In addition we have seen that manga and anime fans have grown to appreciate these mediums on several levels, and as a result usually developed an unbiased opinion about Japan. The change in attitude toward manga and anime in the West attested their cultural power. It showed they had enough cultural depth in them to attract viewers of a different culture, and that by being associated directly with Japan in later years they contributed to a better understanding, and even the study, of Japan. To a degree this helps to explain the second part of the main question of my thesis: how did manga transform from an unofficial and controversial art to being a national art which represent Japan in the 21st century?

Manga and anime came to represent Japan in the 21st century because they are popular mediums that crossed over to the West and influenced its perception of Japan.

[46] The amount of kanji characters used in manga is much smaller in comparison to those which appear in novels, and is a far cry from the kanji-filled Japanese newspapers. A lot of manga also have furigana (kana letters that appear above the kanji and show how it should be read) which makes for an even easier read.

The American seal of approval

Japan was not oblivious to manga and anime's popularity growth in the West. Many mangaka were happily surprised and intrigued when they understood they had fans abroad. In May 1977 the first Western anime fan club, named the Cartoon/Fantasy Organization (C/FO), was founded in Los Angeles. The C/FO had a hand in informing some of Japan's biggest mangaka and animators that manga and anime fandom is sprouting in the U.S. Fred Patten, one of the founders of the C/FO described how this happened:

"The C/FO club in Los Angeles found out in December 1977 that Tezuka, the creator of Japan's first TV animation studio and the artist/writer of such characters as Astro Boy and Kimba the White Lion, was coming to Hollywood on a brief business trip. A couple of fans managed to meet him. Intrigued to discover non-Japanese-ethnic Americans who were fans of Japanese animation, Tezuka visited the C/FO during a second business trip in March 1978. Shortly after, the C/FO was contacted by representatives of two of Tokyo's largest animation studios, Toei Doga and Tokyo Movie Shinsha, who said that Tezuka had advised them that American fans were eager to promote Japanese animation in the United States…

Tezuka personally organized a tour group of about thirty Japanese cartoonists and animators to visit the 1980 San Diego Comic-Con, so they could see for themselves what an audience Japanese animation was developing in the United States." (Patten 2009:59).[47]

[47] Aside from Tezuka Osamu, Patten also counted Go Nagai, Monkey Punch, and Igarashi Yumiko among the Japanese participants (ibid).

The Japanese artists that took part in 1980s Comic-Con interacted with the crowds and returned to Japan knowing a new appreciation for Japan's popular culture had begun to spread among American youth. Over the following years Japanese mangaka and animators continued to visit the U.S., primarily as guests or participants in conventions. While this did not serve the purpose of forging any sort of commercial relationships between the artists and the West, it did make the Japanese public aware of the popularity their own cultural products were gaining in the West. When the 21st century began and both manga and anime sales exploded in the West, the Japanese media followed this development closely. Critics in Japan claimed that since Japan has reached the economic power fitting that of a superpower nation it comes naturally that the next stage in Japan's growth would be the global acceptance of its culture (Iwabuchi 2004:59). And this growth certainly took place, with the manga and anime industries taking a central place in the export and global acceptance of Japanese culture. Between 1992 and 2002 the export of manga, anime and video games from Japan leaped by 300% while other sectors showed only 15% growth (Gravett 2007:152).

As I will explain in the following pages, by consuming manga and anime the West had given these mediums a seal of approval, which contributed greatly to their image in Japan, and gradually made them official cultural ambassadors of Japan abroad. However, this seal of approval in itself seems kind of odd, considering the little to no interest the Japanese manga and anime industries had in the West. As I have mentioned before the comic industry in the West was miniature in comparison to that of Japan. Since most manga and anime series were produced for local consumption the industry did not actively attempt to sell them abroad, and when Western

companies began to voice their interest in buying them the industry did not understand the true potential at hand. Also, by the time the West had suddenly taken an interest in manga and anime many neighboring Asian countries, such as Hong Kong, Taiwan and Thailand were already actively consuming these mediums for years, and they were far more popular there (Iwabuchi 2004:60). So if the West was slow to adopt manga and anime, and had little economic impact on the industry, why did its interest in those mediums cause such a commotion in Japan?
The answer to this question can be divided into two categories - the nominal implications and the practical implications of the Western interest in manga and anime.

The nominal implications should be interpreted in regard to the American-Japanese relationship along the years. Being under direct occupation of the U.S. during World War 2, and later receiving guidance and financial help from it, elevated the status of America in Japan to that of a role model, in both the economic and cultural planes. As a result Japan is one of the most Western looking countries in East Asia. It is because the U.S. holds such a high status in the eyes of the Japanese that U.S. praise of manga and anime had such an impact in Japan. Manga represent a cultural item that is unique to Japan. While the early, pre-World War 2, roots of manga do stem from mimicking the drawing style of the European newspaper comic strips, manga has since strayed so much from the conventional European and Western comic traditions that its originality cannot be denied. Since World War 2, Japan has been actively consuming Western products and has grown accustomed to the cultural imperialism America had enjoyed. But manga's creation process, content, and consumption (in Japan) are undoubtedly Japanese. That is why U.S. praise for manga and anime was very

important to the Japanese on a nominal level. The Japanese were very proud that a product unique to their culture had earned the appraisal of the U.S. The world's most culturally-influential country had tipped its hat off to manga. Such support would have mattered little if it came from the countries of East Asia, because Japan doesn't hold them in such high regard, and their interest in Japan is somewhat taken for granted.

The practical implications of the Western interest in manga and anime leaned less on what Japan had experienced in the past, and more on what it can gain in the future. Since manga and anime were made for consumption in Japan no export-oriented strategies were taken into account in their production and domestic distribution process. Nevertheless when the American video, film and book companies knocked on its doors and were eager to commence negotiations for adopting and publishing its products in the U.S. the Japanese industry began developing high expectations of its products' performance abroad. The industry knew it had struck gold, to the extent that some believed anime will be able to singlehandedly pull Japan out of its economic crisis and back on track. While this last wish never came true, it is evident that in the dawn of the 21st century the U.S. had finally extended its arms to fully embrace anime, and subsequently manga. This should not be taken lightly. Because of the differences between the Western and the Japanese markets manga and anime can only achieve a small market share in the West. This market share could never rival the income of the big Japanese market for manga and anime, but it had the potential to surpass the rest of the Asian markets for those mediums. That is because albeit Japan's success in marketing manga and anime to Hong Kong, Thailand and Taiwan, pirated illegal

copies of manga and anime also ran rampant in those countries.[48] Also, Japan never managed to create a solid infrastructure for selling manga and anime in South Korea and China - perhaps the two biggest markets available for Japan to exploit in its region. Bearing strong anti-Japanese feelings in response to the former Japanese occupation, South Korea enacted an import ban on Japanese popular culture, which kept manga and anime from reaching South Korea legally until 1998 (illegal copies of manga and anime were common). When the ban was finally lifted in 1998, and Japanese popular culture was finally able to find its legal way into South Korea, the Korean government began to aggressively promote manhwa (the Korean comics, which were developed and moulded from manga, but were drawn by native Koreans) inside Korea and abroad in an attempt to minimize manga's spread (Gravett 2007:154). Things went along similar lines in China, where to this day the government discourages artists from mimicking the Japanese-influenced manga and encourages the development of native-Chinese comics and animation. China's government's lax attitude toward copyright laws allowed for pirated copies of manga and anime to be sold in mainland China unattended, posing great hurdles for publishing companies in Japan that wanted to restrict and control the distribution of their works in China (Wong 2006:35). Plagiarism is also common in China. Some Chinese artists sample phrases and character designs from manga. But more serious cases in which famous Japanese manga were copied almost in their entirety, with the name of the title and the mangaka changed to Chinese ones, also took place.[49] Interesting enough Korea and China's negative attitude toward the reception and consumption of commercial manga

[48] The publishing companies in Japan ignored piracy abroad until the recession in the 90s. Only when faced with a country-wide economic crisis did the publishing companies begin to combat the raging piracy and insisted on issuing official licenses for their properties (Gravett 2007:154).

[49] A popular artist in China by the name of Joustar is known to have plagiarized almost every single one of CLAMP's works, including the manga X, Card Captor Sakura and Tsubasa Chronicles. For more information on the plagiarism of manga, including side by side art comparisons of Japanese and Chinese manga, see ComiPress 2007.

seems at odd with those countries willingness to work for the Japanese anime industry as a cheap outsourcing solution.

The welcoming reception of anime and manga in the West, coupled with the unwelcoming and problematic attitude toward these mediums in the East, tipped the scale in favor of exporting anime and manga to the West.

There is yet another merit to be gained from exporting manga and anime to the U.S. To this day the American culture rules supreme over global trends and its influence on other cultures, including that of Japan, is undeniable. But other cultures can ride the success the American culture has attained by using the infrastructure it has created worldwide. If the cultural items America produces are proven to be successful all around the world than one might be able to weight the successfulness of a cultural item in the world through its reception in America. Using this logic if manga and anime prove successful in the U.S. there is a high probability they will succeed in other Western countries, or any country that actively follows the American culture. By examining which manga and anime proves popular in the U.S. the Japanese companies can decide which series have the potential to succeed in the rest of the world. The U.S. film companies can also prove to be invaluable business partners for the Japanese companies, because they can use their already wide global distribution network to distribute anime more effectively to other countries. For example, Miyazaki Hayao's movies are handled outside of Japan by Walt Disney Pictures, which distributes them to theatres all around the globe (with the exception of the U.K.). This allows for Miyazaki's movies to reach more theatres than would have been possible by way of direct distribution.

America affirms manga's image in Japan

If the first part of my thesis dealt with the image of manga as seen from within Japan then this second part sought to show the same process as it developed outside of Japan (and Asia at that). But in order to grasp a fuller picture of the way manga serves Japan worldwide one must connect these two parts and examine their outcome in a symbiotic way. Did the fandom manga and anime enjoyed in the West change the way the Japanese feel about, or even define, manga and anime?

During the U.S. anime bubble, which took place between 2001 and 2005, anime and manga enjoyed an amazing growth spurt in the West (ANNCast 2009). As anime and manga finally entered the mainstream in the West tens of series were released every year, to be bought and followed by the supportive fans, both new and old. This unprecedented marketing success also heightened the awareness to manga and anime in the West. The sheer numbers of anime and manga titles that found their way to the shelves of DVD and book stores caused casual costumers, who were not familiar with anime or manga, to notice them. These developments did not escape the attention of the Japanese government. Their 2000s white papers stated:

"…recognition and evaluation of Japanese animation overseas is high, and many animated television programs produced in Japan appear on television in foreign countries. It is said that Japanese animation is a fine and unique form of expression due to the techniques of Japanese artists, and there are high expectations for it in the future…There is a strong interest in Japanese manga and anime overseas." (White papers 2000).

This statement is followed by a list of exhibitions concerning manga that took place inside and outside of Japan during the 90s, the foundation of the Hiroshima Manga Library (a public library specializing in manga) in 1997, and the inception of a manga course at Kyoto Seika University in 2000 (later to be expended into a faculty of manga). The white papers addressed the manga exhibitions as a "contribute to the stimulation of modern art". The report comes to a close with the line: "Increasingly, manga has also served as the basis for movies and television dramas. In this way, manga is becoming recognized as an important form of modern expression" (ibid). The 2000s white papers indicate that in the beginning of the 21st century manga's positive image in Japan rose exponentially. The Miyazaki incident had the side effect of making professional manga more accepted and supported by the Japanese public. But the positive evaluation of manga and anime in the West was the final link in the chain that elevated manga's image in Japan to that of a modern art form.

The commercial success of manga and anime in the dawn of the 21st century was followed by two important events that would further strengthen the image of manga and anime in Japan. One was the 2002 Academy Awards ceremony, in which Miyazaki Hayao's movie Spirited Away won the Oscar for best animated feature. The best animated feature category was only added to the ceremony one year before that. To be able to win an Oscar for an animated feature film, and only one year after the category was devised, must have been a feat to be proud of. This achievement can be even more flattering considering the fact that Spirited Away revolved around culturally Japanese notions. Both the acting characters, places and items portrayed in it had undoubtedly genuine Japanese traits. And it was those traits, and the deep

cultural feel they imbued, that partly won the movie its Oscar. Following the event Japan's Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro congratulated Miyazaki on the Oscars victory saying, "I'm glad to see the world appreciates Japanese cultural works." (ANN 2003). The winning of the Oscar also meant the ultimate acknowledgment of anime in the West, a statuette that symbolized the U.S. approval of the quality of manga and anime.

The second important event was the publication of an article titled Japan's National Cool. Written by Douglas McGray in 2002, this article was the first to propose that Japan had accumulated soft power in the form of cultural influence born from its popular culture. McGray also stated that Japan itself is still not fully aware of its own cultural power, and hasn't acted to take advantage of it yet (McGray 2002). While McGray's article spoke about Japan's popular culture on a general level and did not mention manga or anime, it still was a wake-up call for the Japanese government.[50]

In 2003 the Japanese government invested an enormous amount of money into cultural agencies in an attempt to create a better infrastructure for the creation and management of manga and anime (Kelts 2007:112). On February 9th 2007 the Japanese government announced a five year agenda for the promotion of Japanese culture in other nations, in which manga and anime play a significant role. The government stressed the need to promote "Cool Japan" abroad, specifically focusing on exportation of Japanese manga, anime and music (ANN 2007). The agenda outlined three goals for the promotion of these fields:

- To partner with universities and museums with a strong background in the arts to promote Japanese culture overseas.

[50] While McGray did not mention manga or anime in his article he did mention the Superflat art movement - a postmodern art form which was inspired and influenced by manga and anime.

- To support the training of people involved with arts and entertainment, and to coordinate co-produced projects in the arts and entertainment fields with talented people in universities in other countries.
- To develop existing training programs and film development at the Tokyo national modern art museum's film center.

On the same year the Kyoto International Manga Museum was opened. A year later Doraemon, a robotic cat character from a manga and anime by the same name, received the title of "first anime ambassador" from Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Doraemon's character was entrusted with the promotion of Japan's culture abroad via commercials, pamphlets and films. Furthermore two of Japan's prime ministers - Asō Tarō and Hatoyama Yukio (which served between the years 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 respectively) - publicly advocated their appreciation for manga. Asō even went as far as suggesting that other business sectors should learn from the successful manga industry. His strategy for the recovery of Japan's economy consisted of harnessing manga and anime's soft power to draw more foreign visitors to Japan. This leap in tourism would then generate new workplaces for hundreds of thousands (Japan Today 2009).[51]

Manga and anime - the cultural ambassadors of Japan

By now we have discerned that the positive image of manga and anime in Japan grew thanks to their popularity in the West. This popularity had two merits. On the

[51] Following prime minister Asō Tarō's statements an issue of Keizaikai (Economic world) magazine presented several interviews with key figures in the manga, dōjinshi and anime industries, in an attempt to "find the secret" that lead to the economic success of manga and anime in Japan and abroad. For more information see Keizaikai 2009.

one hand it provided more income to the manga and anime industries in Japan. On the other hand it exposed more people around the world to Japan's culture. As mentioned earlier, Western consumers of manga and anime directly link them to Japan and it affects their view of Japan, usually in a positive way. The Japanese government began to invest in the promotion of manga and anime to further promote and strengthen Japan's image around the world. This governmental promotion focuses on the artistic and cultural nature of manga and anime, and their association with Japan. The government does not, however, dwell on the economic infrastructure of manga and anime in Japan or outside of it. While manga and anime do not maintain enough soft power to help Japan on an economic or political ground they do give Japan a cultural and artistic edge in the global scope. They represent Japan and its culture, and promote the interest in them. They help to better understand Japanese concepts and norms and consequently spread them both to Eastern and Western lands. Their representation of Japan is becoming symbolic. They are gradually being grouped with the more traditional cultural symbols that represent Japan today (symbols such as sushi, geisha, sumo and kimono).

In 2007 Asō Tarō, which had just finished serving as ministry of foreign affairs and has yet to claim his post as prime minister, was interviewed by Nikkei Business magazine on the contribution manga and anime can offer in raising Japan's cultural standards on an international level. Asō mentioned the Japan Self-Defense Forces Iraq Reconstruction and Support Group - a battalion-sized, largely humanitarian contingent of the Japan self-defense force which was stationed in Samawah, Southern Iraq, between early January 2004 and late July 2006. The group's duties included water purification, reconstruction and reestablishment of public facilities for the Iraqi people in the area. To do so the group utilized water tankers. Prior to the deployment

of the force the governmental committee in charge contemplated on how to differentiate the water tankers from other vehicles in the area and mark them as Japanese (to avoid any misconception by the Iraqi public). The committee initially intended to mark them with a big version of Japan's flag - a red circle on a white background. However, Asō objected and asked the committee, "can we swiftly differentiate Iraq's flag from that of Iran's?"

Following Asō's comment the committee set off to find an icon which the Iraqi people will easily recognize as Japanese. That icon proved to be Captain Tsubasa - a manga and anime that focuses on a youth soccer team and its captain Tsubasa Oozora. It turns out the Captain Tsubasa anime (released under the name Captain Majed in the Arab world) was very popular in Iraq. And so the committee decided to mark the water tankers with a drawing of Captain Tsubasa. Asō concludes his story by proudly exclaiming that "to this day the Captain Tsubasa's water tankers have yet to be attacked" (Nikkei Business 2007).

This example serves to show how manga and anime can represent Japan. In Iraq Captain Tsubasa symbolizes Japan, just as the Japanese flag does. Because manga and anime are genuinely Japanese they are constant reminders of Japan and its culture. The government promotes these mediums so that they can further spread Japan's culture abroad. Although no economic or political way to harness manga and anime's acclaimed soft power has been found yet, manga and anime fits neatly into Japan's new model for global recognition in the arts and technology. In an age where the consumption of popular culture represents countries and define them on the global plane manga and anime are indeed ambassadors of Japan.

Conclusion

This work shed some light on the less acknowledged elements that influenced manga's image in Japan – the dōjinshi movement and the success of manga and anime abroad. To fully understand manga's image through the years one needs to understand the history and influence these factors had, alongside with the influence the developing professional manga industry had. These three factors are interconnected and affect each other. As the first chapter indicated the dōjinshi movement didn't develop separately from professional manga. It was born from professional manga. Even amidst its immense growth during the 70s and 80s dōjinshi remained both a reflection of professional manga and a source of inspiration for new ideas and drawing styles. Today the dōjinshi movement is enormous and Comic Market continues to be one of Japan's biggest conventions. Nevertheless the bonds between amateur and professional manga remain unchanged: most of the dōjinshi published today are parodies (as opposed to original stories) and thus relay on existing manga series to be based upon. Professional mangaka and publishing companies continue to appreciate the dōjinshi movement and to take note of it.[52] The success and continuous growth of the dōjinshi movement helped to further its recognition, and today the Japanese public is more tolerant of amateur manga conventions and do not criticize them as much.

Censorship in manga is an important factor that affected both amateur and professional manga. The censorship of manga changed over the years to reflect the

[52] Many professional mangaka still publish dōjinshi or participate in amateur conventions. For example the artist ABe Yoshitoshi released several dōjinshi along the years, one of which became an anime series called Haibane Renmei. The mangaka Akamatsu Ken started out his career as a dōjinshi mangaka. He still periodically attends amateur conventions to keep in touch with fans and sell storyboards and character portfolios of his series (Shimoku 2008:129). Once in a while several professional mangaka will group together to create dōjinshi (ANN 2010).

growth, spread, and influence of the medium in Japan. Since manga is a medium which enable artists to reach out to many readers its content constantly remains under the inspecting eyes of parents, teachers, organizations and the government. Until the 90s the regulation of manga on the governmental level remained fairly lenient and forgiving. The Miyazaki incident in 1989 brought forth stricter regulations for manga, both professional and amateur. The Japanese public perception of manga impacted the level of censorship in the medium. The public took an active part in pre-90s censorship by informing the police of inappropriate manga. It was also the driving force behind the otaku bashing and dōjinshi panic which followed the Miyazaki incident in the beginning of the 90s.

The censorship of manga is still a very much debated issue today. In October 2002 a publishing company called Shobunkan published 20,000 copies of an adult manga called Honey Room (Misshitsu). The manga was labeled with and "adult manga" sticker and enclosed in a plastic cover. Nevertheless, the manga became the subject of the first major obscenity trial in Japan in over 20 years. Shobunkan's editor Monotori Kishi and the mangaka Suwa Yuuji were convicted in 2004 for violating article 175. The judge sentenced Monotori to three years in prison. Monotori appealed to the Tokyo high court and in June 2007 his sentence was reduced to a fine of 1.5 million yen. The court also ordered the removal of all manga drawn by Suwa, who was fined and accepted a guilty plea in order to avoid going to jail. After the event many book stores were reluctant to sell erotic manga, fearing police raids will follow (Gravett 2007:137, Nagayama 2008:126). Honey Room was singled out due to its realistic illustration of sex combined with its failure to obscure genitalia and pubic hair. The case of Honey Room shows that the indecency act is still upheld today. However, it also demonstrates the problematic nature of manga censorship in the 21st century. In

his defense Monotori argued that Honey Room was not obscene because it was not as arousing as erotic photos, videos, and much more intense content found on the internet. The censorship of manga today is still harsher than that of real photos and videos, and has yet to be revised to deal with the fast expending information networks and file sharing. It can be argued that the indecency law of article 175 is anachronistic and did not stand well in the test of time. However, no attempt to revise and update the article has been made. On the contrary - we are now witnessing an attempt to further restrict the content of manga. While I was writing this work a new bill to regulate and censor inappropriate representations of youth in manga and anime has been suggested and accepted by the Tokyo metropolitan assembly in November 2010. The "youth ordinance bill" or bill 156 will allow the regulation and ban of unjustifiably glorified or exaggerated sexual or pseudo sexual acts of youth in manga and anime. It will also allow the government to directly regulate manga and anime which pose harm to Japan's social order in any way. Bill 156 will go into effect in April 2011 and will concern all manners of manga, anime and video games in Tokyo prefecture. Using this law the government will have the ability to abolish manga and anime that portray youth in offensive ways. However, bill 156 is not meant to regulate manga and anime for adults (such as erotic manga sold to adults only), and its overall purpose is yet quite vogue. The bill has raised the opposition of many publishing companies and mangaka for constricting creativity even more than before while misjudging the genres in which stricter regulation should really be applied (Ruh 2010). Only time will tell how it will affect the current state of censorship and the future of manga publications.

The need to further regulate manga and anime might be connected to the spread of manga and anime abroad. As the second chapter showed the success anime, and later manga, enjoyed in the West strengthened manga's positive image in Japan and showed manga and anime can represent Japan abroad. Of course not all manga and anime are attractive enough, or artistic enough to represent Japan. Manga's transformation from popular culture to high culture is not complete and probably never will be, because manga is a commercial medium. It can be used to relay a message, or be viewed as an artistic exhibit, but manga is also made for mass consumption and must contain a certain degree of commercial value. If manga is to represent Japan it will naturally be more vulnerable to criticism from inside and outside Japan, and as a result might be more closely monitored by the government in the future. Also, while it seems manga and anime have proven themselves as agents for the spreading of Japan's culture abroad, the government has yet to effectively utilize them for any encompassing national, economic or political cause. Moreover the Japanese manga and anime industries were late in realizing the commercial potential manga and anime had in the West, and as a result their infrastructure for publishing and distributing manga outside Japan is still insufficient. Therefor further governmental intervention in the manga and anime industries might generate stricter regulation rules, but might also allow for better distribution and use of these mediums inside and outside of Japan, and can potentially contribute to the growth and stability of those industries.

As we enter the second decade of the 21st century the commercial success anime has enjoyed in the West, partially for being fresh and different, has subsided. Anime has reached its Western audience and will likely continue to be popular as a niche genre

in the U.S. Manga fandom in the West, on the other hand, continues to expend and reach new audiences, partly because it arrived much later than anime and has much more to offer. Manga has not yet lost its momentum, and its ability to innovate and recreate itself will probably sustain it for many years. In December 2010 Japan's ministry of economy announced its intent to quadruple the sales of cultural exported commodities related to cool Japan (such as manga, anime, video games, food and fashion) by 2020 (Asahi Shimbun 2010). It remains to be seen how this increase in export, coupled with the new 156 bill, will affect the manga and anime industries in Japan.

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