



Mapping the Story of Manga: Graphic Novels and the Cultural Boom in Japan and World

Pragati Swami¹, Devendra Kumar Sharma²

¹Research Scholar, Department of English & Modern European Languages, Banasthali Vidyapith, Rajasthan, India

²Assistant Professor, Department of English & Modern European Languages, Banasthali Vidyapith, Rajasthan, India

Received: 06 May 2024; Received in revised form: 15 Jun 2024; Accepted: 24 Jun 2024; Available online: 30 Jun, 2024

©2024 The Author(s). Published by Infogain Publication. This is an open-access article under the CC BY license

(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Abstract—Manga are circulated in graphic novel format as printed Japanese comic books. They are famous Japanese graphic novels or comic books. A popular form of literature, read by people of different age groups. They certainly provide visual as well as linguistic examples of Japanese culture. They deal with a number of genres like fantasy, romance, supernatural, erotica, action, psychological, science fiction and many more to include. This paper deals with manga-culture, its evolution and, cultural and global aspects attached to it. It highlights the educational element associated with manga. It further discusses about the prospects of manga being a form of cross-cultural literature and, how influential it is not only in Japan but also worldwide.



Keywords—Manga, Japan, Culture, Graphic novels, Comic books, Cross-culture.

I. INTRODUCTION

Manga literally means ‘humorous picture’, originally started as a simple caricature. Manga has a long history of development from simple caricature or good versus evil story to a story with a plot depicting deeper and complicated aspects faced by characters. These plots are based on multiple themes like politics, social, religious, historical, and cultural issues and further much more to explore. As Kato Etsuro in his *Techniques for a New Manga* (1942) explicates that, “manga is an art that should warn of or actively attack all things in the world that are unjust, irrational, unnatural, or incongruous with the will of the nation”. (07)

Japanese society is remarkably capable of modifying the traditions, and integrating them with contemporary popular culture. The establishment of the Japanese cultural industry is the outcome of this same ability of amalgamating traditions with the constantly changing modern culture in this globalized world. As Benjamin Wai-Ming Ng in his “The Adaptation of Chinese History into Japanese Popular Culture” (2013) enunciates that, “The Japanese have demonstrated a remarkable talent

for both preserving and transforming cultural traditions. Their interest in preserving tradition is exemplified by the continuity of traditional artistic and cultural forms, such as *chanyoyu* (the tea ceremony), *ikebana* (flower arrangement) and *kabuki* drama that continue to be popular in contemporary Japan” (243). Manga certainly provides visual as well as linguistic examples of Japanese culture. Japanese young people have shown a keen interest in manga since the beginning. The main reason behind the popularity of manga is that, it provides a medium to young generation to express their desires and thoughts by depicting their own stories through these original manga. Manga can be considered as a bridge connecting young people with their peers. It acts as a medium to connect and communicate and be vulnerable through the characters drawn in manga. Manga can be considered significant in terms of communication among Japanese people. They consist of greatly contextual indications. They join auditory and perceptible techniques such as tonal voices and facial expressions. Linguistic tools like homonyms and onomatopoeia are thoroughly used in storytelling. It adds to the psychological indulgence in the story.

There are three possible theories of manga origin:

1) According to F.L. Schodt, Japanese narrative comic art is perhaps as old as civilization itself, given the first notable caricatures were discovered in the *Horyuji* Buddhist Temple in the 7th century.

2) *Choju-Jibutsu-Giga* (ink painting image scrolls) from 12th or 13th century in which narrative is overshadowed by visual pictures. The panel arrangement was right to left, which still remains the manga structure today.

3) K. Misaka in “The First Japanese Manga Magazine in the United States” (2004) built the history of modern manga, by bringing it under the umbrella term of the artistic movement started by European political cartoonists living in Japan. Since, Japanese manga artists drew the notion of comic books after their birth in the United Kingdom and the United States. Contemporary and postmodern manga has a history of less than 100 years, a journey of east meeting the west. Sharon Kinsella asserts that as a result of political opposition and societal liberalization, postmodern manga's growth intensified after the 1960s.

There is also a belief that manga should be included as a subject of cultural studies and teaching tools. Though manga certainly possess the qualities as a tool for cultural knowledge at a global platform, but like any other cross cultural text, manga's capability to serve as an example of Japanese culture depends heavily on its translation. Manga requires analytical and critical understanding to connect and comprehend the underlying plot. Every element that makes a manga has a role to play; to describe the story in a particular way that the author wants it to be. The function of these elements is transcendental in nature, to conjoin space and mind, and create the story of given characters in a relatable or perceptible way. The images telling the story build the tension and complications faced by the characters in the plot. With the popularity of manga among the young generation in Japan, The Ministry of Education in Japan decided to adapt the benefit of the pop-culture to the national art educational curriculum for 8th and 9th grades in compulsory education in 1998. The universal appeal of manga and penetration of local culture globally is the example of storytelling taken seriously by manga artists.

II. HISTORY AND EVOLUTION

Grace Shum in “The Evolution of Comic Panel in Manga” (2017) espouses:

In 1902, Kitazawa created the first serialized Japanese comic strip called *Tagosaku to Mokubi no Tokyo kembutsu*. Thus, Rakuten, influenced by western comics, became the first in Japan to design comic strips with six panels. Rakuten began to call his comics, ‘manga’, perhaps the first use of its

modern meaning. Inspired by the western culture, the French journal *Rire*, and the American Magazine, *Puck*, Rakuten published his own review, *The Tokyo Puck*, in 1905, the year in which the manga magazine publishing boom started. (63)

During the 1920s and 1930s manga depicting post-industrialist westernization of Japanese society were published. After the 1950s, a considerable portion of Japan's populace began reading manga and discussing it. *Shounen manga* (boys' manga) and *shoujo manga* (girls' manga) are two types of manga. The broadening of the age range of manga readers is linked to the development of increasingly complicated storylines. During the 1960s, a new manga generation arose, one that continued to read manga as adults. As the new generation of manga fans grew older, they began to have great expectations from the storyline. The plot of manga evolved to portray more human drama than a caricature or a simple comic strip in response to the expectations of the viewers.

Manga was also popular at the time for satirizing and mocking current political conditions, as well as addressing social issues that were not shown by the media. With the growth of Japan's economy in the 1970s and 1980s, the manga market exploded, and manga became a popular culture in the country. Plots which had a political back-story became commercial mass entertainment for people of all ages very soon. Publishers decided to export manga to Western and Southeast Asian audiences in the 1990s. Since then, the response has been phenomenal. Due to the rapid rise of digital manga sales as well as increased print sales, the value of the Japanese manga market has reached \$4.9 billion in 2020. Hence, registering the public appreciation, manga industry enjoys.

One pivotal aspect of manga popularity that must be considered is the advent of U.S. Commodore Mathew Perry in 1853. He was the face of western and American political coercion for Japan to allow its ports to trade with the west (Brenner 2007). As a result, Japan saw an escalation in amount of foreigners who eventually introduced Japanese to the European and American style comics; which later influenced manga. Second factor that contributed to this art form was World War II. In that era of extreme idealistic nationalism and militarism, the voices of manga artists were subjugated. After World War II, war became a major theme of manga. This further contributed to the revolution in the field of manga production.

To further add to this discussion, it is only pertinent to talk about the role played by Osamu Tezuka (1928-1989), also referred as God of Manga (*manga no kamisama*) or grandfather of Japanese comics in the journey of manga which we know today. He is considered as one of

the most influential *mangaka* (manga artist) in manga industry ever. Schodt in *Manga! Manga! The world of Japanese comics* (1983) claimed that Tezuka impacted every manga creator that came after him. Some were following his footsteps and some were opposed his style, but he single handily determined many major characteristics of modern manga. The development of so called story manga (*sutorii manga*) is associated with his name. He explored new form of storytelling, by digging into the Japanese tradition of word-picture combinations and, at the same time he brought in new pictorial element from U.S. and European cinema.

Popular culture scholar, Mitsutoshi Ishigami, describes his ambiguous feeling as a boy while reading Tezuka's works. He further tells that he used to feel a sense of strangeness (*iwaken*) and curiosity when looking at their cityscapes filled with their skyscrapers and foreign letters on the road signs because English was language of the enemy. Tezuka had an exceptional aptitude as an innovative borrower and as an artist who could effortlessly translate western plots into Japanese tales. Later on he experimented with theme of metamorphosis. Manga with this theme were about the shift that takes place when a character transposes from his ordinary, apparently innocuous self to reveal his dark, evil side. Thereafter he transitioned his narratives by including specific details about social, cultural and political context of given time. There is no single 'Hero' whose characters run the show. These stories include several characters with subplots and interesting sides. These plots ran for thousands of pages, showing the fragility of all social and political systems. The concept of change and transitory nature of time was quite evident in these manga. His characters were now taller and more angular with recognizable modern figures. Some of his notable works are *Astro Boy*, *Black Jack*, *Buddha*, *Phoenix*, *Kimba the White Lion*, *Princess Knight*, *Dororo Animerama*. The manga-anime connection is also forged by Tezuka, through his own anime production company, Mushi Productions (1962-1973), and now are part of wider media alliance, including computer games, films, and video/DVDs. Tezuka in his career has produced 150,000 pages of manga, 400 paperback titles, 60 animated works for television and 17 theatrical animated movies.

The graphic as well as creative aspects of manga are quite unique which make them loved worldwide in today's scenario. Manga merge the connections between frame, picture and word at the core of American comics and Japanese famous art to produce a 'cinematic' story telling. By shifting from motion to motion and point to point in sequential frames, the *mangaka* can give a structured narrative to cover virtually any theme across both genders and all age groups. Manga provide its audience, stories with

intricate plots and interesting twists. These plots generally deal with universal themes like friendship, romance, jealousy, growth etc. Erika Fujiwara in "An Analysis of Contemporary Manga Culture in Japan and Sweden" (2010) stated that the manga scholar Fusanosuke Natsume, rejected the facet of nationalism of manga in its expanding cultural history. Natsume agrees with the special characteristics in manga, which painted Japanese culture to a certain magnitude. It is true that Japan has provided specific surroundings and conditions for the growth of the manga market. But Manga itself is highly universal and mixed as a result of intermingling of other cultures, especially American culture, after the Second World War. Manga covers more than 30 genres and numerous sub genres determined by their content and unique artistic element. In simple terms, manga genres can be brought under 5 main categories as mentioned in "Understanding the Manga Hype: Uncovering the Multimodality of Comic-Book Literacies" (2006) by Adam Schwartz and Eliane Rubinstein-Ávila:

- 1) *Senin manga* (Adult/ Men's manga)
- 2) *Shounen manga* (Boys' manga)
- 3) *Shoujo manga* (Girls' manga)
- 4) *Rediisu Komiku* (Ladies' manga)
- 5) Overlapping category including sports, erotica etc.

Another important element in manga culture is the rise of Amateur movement from the late 1980s. Amateur manga conventions in Tokyo were attended by thousands of young people by 1992. With the booming expansion of the Amateur manga movement; it provided an outlet of expression and spontaneous mannerism to the contemporary youth of Japan. It is one of the largest subcultures in contemporary Japan. It may be invisible, but it enjoys immense following. Another remarkable attribute of this movement is that it had been arranged and executed almost exclusively by and for teenagers and adults in their early twenties. This movement also gave rise to individualism in Japanese youth. Individualism, known as *Kojinshugi* in Japanese, has been dismissed as a formal political ideal in Japan. Conventional democracy, not resisting individualism, has always been considered as a communal issue or modern disease thoroughly in the post war period. Youth culture called *Wakamono bunko*, which has thrived since the 1960s, has always been connected with post war Japanese individualism. Contemporary manga has been concluded as a route of escapism and immaturity by the older generation. Manga-culture becoming a predominant aspect of youth culture has been frowned upon by the leading intellectuals of Japanese society. During the 1960s, university students stopped reading classics and

turned towards children's manga. It became the pivotal reason behind the extensive expansion of manga from minor children medium to major mass entertainment. Its immense admiration gradually made manga a travel companion to Japanese folks, which can be read in compact spaces and gives a sense of relief in their daily commute. Manga provides an escape route to adults from a strict society driven by hardcore principles of hard work and excessive pressurizing work culture. Average Japanese spends 89 minutes a day traveling in busy subways. Reading manga in a crowded subway makes traveling a little less exhausting. Since this period, attributes of immaturity, resistance, escapism, introspection have been aligned with youth manga and youth culture in general. During the 1970s, affordable and portable offset printing and photocopying equipment were introduced in the market. Any kind of literature, including amateur manga, could be easily reprinted and distributed cheaply without any obligation. It gave the opportunity to masses for huge participation which was not registered and remained uncatalogued with mass access. Contemporary printed amateur manga are known as *Doujinshi*. Manga artists and fans print and distribute editions of their own amateur manga. *Doujinshi* began to increase, slowly in the 1970s and exponentially during the 1980s. In 1975, an institution was founded, called Comic Market, in order to encourage the phenomenon of unpublished amateur manga. A public convention was organized several times a year, where amateur manga could be sold and sought. Amateur manga, whether parody or original work, is widely judged to be low quality culture; because it lacks direct references to social and political life. *Doujinshi* and Cosplay are celebrated and speculated globally. Cosplay, in which fans dress up as their favorite characters' avatar, is quite famous and lauded.

Comic rental shops, comic Internet cafes, comic conventions, global book clubs, and manga libraries are various forms of manga culture. Comic conventions attract thousands of manga enthusiasts from all over the world to Japan. *Doujinshi* manga, cosplayers, fans presenting their fan fictions attend these conventions and contribute to cultural expansion of Japan. Japanese communication is certainly reflected in manga. They consist of facial expressions, tone of voice and grunts, integrating visual and auditory model values. The incorporated storytelling fashion of manga steadily includes homonyms and onomatopoeia. It gives dynamics to the plot.

One manga genre that should be specifically focused upon is educational manga. Adding visual and verbal text with story, manga are capable of making hard concepts easy to comprehend. F. L. Schdot in his *Dreamland Japan: Writings on modern manga* (1996) depict "Japanese manga are a visualized narrative with a

few words tossed in for effect" (09). Further, Osama Tezuka, the Godfather of manga, asserted that manga expresses meaning through hyperbole, abbreviation, and deformation. Manga can act as a great medium to teach the concepts of literary devices like metaphor, symbolism, personification, etc. Such manga are essentially more educational media than mere entertainment. These manga works are generated after thorough and detailed research work. Such types of manga are capable of providing high literacy value, and reading satisfaction after the rich accumulation of knowledge by the reader. For example, '*Haikyuu*' is a sports manga about high school volleyball. It depicts the journey of a high school volleyball team. It deals with the various aspects of volleyball and related knowledge in great detail. In fact, sports manga are considered to be a big push for high school students to pursue careers in sports.

Walter Benjamin talks about how massive reproduction of art leads to liberation from ritual. Manga owes its popularity and productivity to the mechanical propagation similar to the film industry. The traditional art values are losing their importance under postmodernism. The originality is compromised due to consumption of art by infinite audience. The greater level of consumption of art hegemonies the liberal aspect of production of art. Artists have to create according to the demand of consumers instead of creating for the sake of art.

Capitalism is the reason behind the tarnishing of the traditional fabric of art production. Similarly, manga artists also give into these public demands and add elements which spur the interest of masses. They are obliged to meet the demand of direct emotional visual satisfaction of consumers. Availability is the fundamental reason behind the popularity and success of the Japanese manga market. Another important role is played by excellent cooperation between publishers and manga artists. Since, themes discussed in manga are simple like love, anger, coming of age, etcetera; it attaches a universal element of understanding. The world created by manga shares the common feelings of readers universally. Japanese manga industry initially focused on children with clever marketing techniques, simple storylines with cute characters; with related merchandise products. Later, they shifted toward adults with plots providing realistic and complex reading experience.

III. MANGA IN GLOBAL WORLD

Manga's success in the west is considered Japan's economic marvel, which saw a progressive shift to the soft power of manga as a gradual asset. Roman Rosenbaum in

Manga and the Representation of Japanese History (2015) enunciates:

Following the gentrification of manga into fine art via the graphic novel, Hollywood has created a successful franchise of popular graphic material through fraternizing with for, example, Dark Horse Comics, the largest independent American comic book and manga publisher in United States. This new partnership successfully linked the comics and movie industries and led to production of a variety of graphic novel adaptations, beginning in 1994 with *The Mask* (05).

Originally dominated by American-style comics, West saw the rise of manga in its local market in or around 1990s. It's related to the emergence of multi-channel satellite broadcasting in Europe during 1980s. As broadcasting stations were having shortage of visual media content, they opted to broadcast cheap Japanese anime in huge quantity that were not protected by copyright agreements. Around 1990s, the general situation changed immensely, as the audience which consumed Japanese anime in 1980s became the buyers of Japanese manga. Coincidentally, a substantial quantity of manga was being exported to west at the same time as they were being exported to East-Asia.

During mid-1990s, as domestic market for manga started shrinking, publishers started looking for new manga market. Eventually Japanese publishers decide and made licensing a part of their business with Asian partners in the late 1980s. Initially, Manga were introduced in Hong-Kong, Taiwan, Korea and other Southeast Asian countries through thriving black markets selling pirated copies; leading to a history of technology transfer for creating local manga also consisting of imitations. In 1991 Star TV, satellite broadcasting for Asian countries, started programming services which led to an anime boom and eventually to a manga boom in East Asian countries. As Fusanosuke Natsume explains in "East Asia and Manga Culture: Examining Manga-Comic Culture in East Asia" (2004) that, "Factors commonly seen throughout East Asia such as traditional sense of values, the importance of parent-child relationship, family relations, and poverty have helped to facilitate accessibility to Japanese works, leading to a lower barrier for translation efforts" (96). He further illuminates, "The quality of Japanese-style manga in East Asia has been relatively high, supported by the fact that local artists have been oriented towards Japanese-style manga in their work. In addition, Japanese publishers have encouraged the promotion of local works, and there are increasingly more opportunities for Korean and Taiwanese works to be published in Japan" (96-97).

As Kenichi Ishii in "Chapter VIII International Distribution of Culture and Information" in *Popular Japanese Culture in East Asia* (2001) has enunciated, "Generally, a flow of information and culture is prone to follow a one-way direction from an economically advanced country to a less-advanced nation...The most basic element is the size of the domestic market...In a developed market, high costs can be spent in content production, the costs can be recovered in the domestic market; therefore products are competitive; and incentive toward creative works becomes great" (63). In the same sense the flow of Japanese Manga to East Asia is bordering on to the rift in economic statues and power relations among the East Asian and Southeast Asian countries. Even though there might be some topical and territorial differences with respect to religion, national order, government policies etc. But cultural background and human resources are the prime prerequisite for the fabrication of cultural content.

Merging the narrative dialogue and graphics, the considerable Japanese story manga and its western counterpart, the graphic novel, demonstrate the trans-cultural soft power of a global media that has the potential to exhibit history in previously unexpected ways. It was during mid-1980s, that manga translated in English language were introduced in the market. In 1987, First manga, Koike Kazuo's *Kozure Okami* (1970), (*Lone Wolf and Cub*) was released in North America and it was the major breakthrough manga. Frank Miller designed the covers and this translation became one of the most eminent Japanese manga in United States. Manga are now localized in the European and American market. The first independent manga corner was displayed at one of the oldest and largest international book fair in the world in Frankfurt, Germany in 2002. Japanese manga have reached to Spain, Italy, France and Middle East.

The breakthrough of manga into other countries is linked to various complex brewing of several distribution systems, economic and cultural backgrounds, social and political systems, content and quality of work which overlap with human resources. Hence, the manga boom in other countries cannot be discussed on the basis of content's attributes or cultural tradition alone.

With manga being a global hit, one also needs to contemplate the connection between manga and anime. Most of the anime are inspired by manga. These cultural products including manga and anime were created for domestic consumption. These products jumped borders and became transnational sensation. Peter J. Rimmer articulates in "Manga World: Globalization Theory Revisited" (2004) that, "...these Japanese cultural consumer products are now in the process of being popularized in a way that underlines

globalization is not merely a western preserve but incorporates Japan (lo-globalization). As Japan has become part of this decentred globalization, it is, in turn exporting cultural products to Asia (glocalization)" (07).

In *Japanese Visual Culture*, Mark W. MacWilliams (2008) clarifies, "Manga and anime are not fine arts on display in museum; they are popular art forms created by an industrialized, corporate, capitalistic culture found on television, in the movie theatre, at the local book store or in the manga cafés...Manga and anime attract fans, both Japanese and western, not because of any eastern mystical sense of harmony with nature, but because of what Jean Marie Bouissou has called their "aesthetic of excess, conflict, imbalance, and over sensuality"" (05).

As the trajectory of manga in global world takes a pellucid path, now one need to understand what is driving it on the same road in the contemporary world. As globalization is ever changing phenomenon and world is constantly changing. Manga being a cultural product has to maintain relevance. Iwabuchi (2002) in his work "From Western Gaze to Global Gaze: Japanese Cultural Presence in Asia" argues that, Japanese popular culture is a blend of many different cultures, resulting in the disappearance of any perceptible Japaneseness. He calls this *mukokuseki* culture, which literally means 'statelessness' that is without nationality and coined the term "culturally odourless" (256). And hence in early stages of manga boom and anime boom also, transitions were made according to the country in which it was being imported in like changing the name of characters or changing dialogues to make it culturally relevant to the audience.

As people around the globe became more aware about Manga as well as anime, and realized their origin, they demanded to consume these media form in true authentic self without any transition in original content. Fans wanted to consume manga and anime that incorporated evident signs of japaneseness. This shows the passion fans share around the globe for these cultural products. According to Harumi Befu cultural globalization occurs through two routes. One is 'Sojourner route', in which emigrants who leave their homeland for different countries in search of better prospects, take their culture with them. Other is 'Non-Sojourner route' through which cultural products spread abroad without native carries; and in today's case it is possible through the medium of internet. Internet played a vital role in spreading the manga and anime among global community. Fans demanded original or authentic Japanese translations. Hence there come individual passionate fans in the picture, who translate original manga with its authenticity or try to do so. Manga that are translated from Japanese to respective languages by

dedicated fans are called 'scanlations'. Similarly, in case of anime, fans try to provide authentic subtitles called 'fansubs'. Though these 'scanlations' and 'fansubs' are illegal and cause a lot damage to manga and anime production companies. But at same time they act as free promoters of these media forms in world. Hence these fan activities on online platforms act as a double edged sword for these production houses. As Shiraishe Sae mentions in her article "Manga Innovation and the Model of its Global Diffuse" (2011), instead of countries, individual players or groups of people have become connected and communicate for their motives beyond the regular constraints of space and time. (168). She stresses the distinction between actors in globalization and internationalization. Internationalization is assisted by nations for international politics and individual economies. The players of globalization, however, are individual citizens.

The popularity of manga and other cultural media has been promoted by 'media mix' which is "the phenomenon of transmedia communication, specifically, the development of a particular media franchise across multiple media types, over a particular period of time" (Steinberg 135). A further pattern of media mix is converting manga to anime, anime to live action movies, movies to any kind of character goods, in order to provide manga and anime fans and children with their favorite character. The impact of interconnecting media mix is further extended via the subsidiary economic effect of licensing, which allows leading manga characters to be used in advertising and replicated as figurines. Iwabuchi (2012) highlights that role of Japanese government in the development of content business and in the promotion of cultural diplomacy. (142).

Since 2000, the Japanese government has been aiding these content businesses. In 2010, the government launched the 'Cool Japan Campaign' irrespective of the fact that popular culture has never been perceived as authentic culture until manga and anime became a global phenomenon. The aspect of using popular culture as 'soft-power', combines the prospect of globalization and nationalism.

Susan Napier (2007) insists "Japanese media has allowed them to explore a side of themselves in a way that they feel would be impossible in American cultural products" (144). Manga and other related cultural products provide an attractive fantasy gateway to its audience from the real world, in other words an escape from real world. Fan indulging in activities such cosplay, creating *Doujinshi* (derivative works), and sharing information on online platform among virtual fan community. Fans are consuming their favorite characters rather than the content of the story.

IV. MANGA IN CROSS-CULTURAL CONTEXT

As discussed earlier, Manga in particular, offers visual as well as linguistic examples of Japanese culture, and hence harbors prospective chances to be an exceptional source of cultural knowledge. For example, America has become just as much of a recipient of cultural influence as it is an influencer, with the consumption of manga and other Japanese popular culture products. Beside with this ascending popularity, consumers also have an increased awareness of Japanese origins of manga and anime. This dual stance of awareness and popularity of Japanese culture has led to consumers using the cultural products like manga as a derivation of Japanese cultural information. It could be contended that manga might prove to be better at transferring cultural information, since manga possess, as manga is largely telling the story through visual narrative which eventually enables the audience to discern certain mannerisms and body language, including scenery and common settings such as streets, schools etc. Manga is not catered to foreign audience, it is initially produced for Japanese audience and therefore it is full of culturally specific references and circumstances. Consequently, considering the visual nature of the manga narrative, these particular cultural references and situations become hard to dismiss or disregard in the process of translation. In spite of the fact that manga possess the potential to facilitate cross-cultural learning, manga production is on the basis of entertainment and hence, with a very few exceptions, manga has not been considered as cross-cultural literature by most of the scholarly circles. The prospect of alteration of manga during the process of translation has been discussed earlier in the paper and how with the spread of internet, awareness about manga origins and demand to consume to these cultural products in their authentic form has increased, this situation, consequently have lessened the aspect of alteration. But it has not stopped completely and partial altering of cultural material still persists. This partial alteration makes the situation more complicated compared to complete re-write that shifts everything according to western norms.

Eventually, altered cultural information, added with evident or apparent Japanese origins and setting, leads to mingling of western culture with Japanese culture, portraying an amalgamated picture which is not true to either of culture. This lead to a misguided image that makes the reader to believe, that the altered cultural product is an actual representation of Japanese culture. This continued misrepresentation of Japanese culture then gives the inaccurate presumption that all cultures operate along the same reasoning and proposition that of western culture. This kind of ethnocentric assumption by west (especially

America), can no longer be supported in the contemporary era of global interaction.

American comics are full of colour and narration, and they do share immense popularity, but historically rooted distinctness from manga, in everything from available stories to production of those stories and marketing strategies resulted in incomparable products even after being quite influential. American comics have its journey since their first inception in the 1930s. Initially, “newspaper comic strips...featured long, melodramatic stories and were read by millions of people. In 1934, comic books were invented...and for years they enjoyed incredible popularity, with the genres such as crime, westerns, superheroes, romance, humour, and science fiction” (Thompson 15). But during 1950s, rise in juvenile delinquency was associated with crime and horror depicted in comic books; terrified public protested and pressurized comic publishers, which eventually led to imposition of strict censorship. Comic artists were stuck with superhero genres or so called safe genres and hence consequently, limiting the comic and cartoon industry to children only. On the contrary, Japan never faced the boundation of censorship. Manga and anime derived from them, enjoyed the liberty of experimentation and exploration of covering wide range of genres and themes. The range of subjects offered by manga industry is immense, and caters something to people of every age and gender and for nearly every taste. Schodt (1996) expounds “there are manga that rival best in the literature. There are soft-core and hard –core porn tales for both men and women. There are stories about the problems of hierarchal relationships in boring office jobs or about the spiritual rewards of selling discount cameras in Tokyo’s Shinjuku district... It seems like the most popular comics of normal people doing normal things (28). Even today, manga are story driven depending on the imagination of artist, while mainstream American comics prefer franchise over creativity.

Cross-cultural literature is characterized by its capacity to immerse readers in the culture depicted within the text, allowing them to envision and vicariously experience the cultural context it originates from, the primary focus is to encourage greater comprehension and awareness of the given culture. Manga serves as a cross-cultural medium, despite comic books being typically considered as mere source of entertainment, as it compliments learning and builds curiosity about Japanese culture. While reading cross-cultural literature may not substitute real-life experiences, but it may provide an exposure that can contribute to enhancing both understanding and tolerance towards other culture. Same is relevant in the case of manga and anime industry. By engaging with diverse literary works, individuals can

develop a broader perspective and a more open-minded approach to cultural differences.

Thus, these synchronic and diachronic realities of Manga can be considered as a converging point where the progressive orientation of conventional Japanese academia meets with the country's indispensable entertainment culture. Scholars of cultural and comic studies are positive that Japan can be considered as another centre of globalization due to current worldwide inclination toward manga and anime. Further, the study divulges the fact that Manga are continuous carriers of Japanese culture in this global world. The alien part of foreign culture, coming with a relatability factor in the plot can be considered as one of the many reasons behind its success internationally. Globalization comes with capitalism; making manga a success economically for Japan. Another thing that should be put under consideration is that multimodal literacies are encouraged by graphic novels and make students engage in studies more coherently. The cultural aspect of literary study, though not fully utilized, has been explored in different contexts, and the results have shown a significant level of success. Participants in these studies demonstrated both increased understanding and a heightened in other cultures after being exposed to cross-cultural literature. Chevalier and Houser conducted the study "Pre-service Teachers' Multicultural Self Development Through Adolescent Fiction" in 1997, tested the use of "adolescent fiction to encourage multicultural self-development among primarily European American pre-service teacher" (426); this study proved to be an overall success. These positive outcomes indicate that literature can serve as a powerful tool for fostering cultural awareness and promoting intercultural curiosity among readers. Textbooks may provide facts but cross-cultural literature gives insight about the people and how they feel, it attaches events to emotions and facts to people. Translation and alteration of manga is an area that requires constant improvement and guidance, so people may understand the culture deeply, instead of relating it to theirs' superficially.

REFERENCES

- [1] Allison, A. (2008) The Attractions of the J-Wave for American Youth. *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States*, edited by Wanatabe Yuushi and David L. McConnell (pp-99-110). M. E. Sharpe, Inc.
- [2] Allison, A. (2006) The Japan Fad in Global Youth Culture and Millennial Capitalism. *Mechademia 1: Emerging Worlds of Anime and Manga*. 11-22.
- [3] Amirthanayagam, G. (2000) *The Marriage of Continents: Multiculturalism in Modern Literature*. University Press of America, Inc.
- [4] Brenner, E. R. (2017) *Understanding Manga and Anime*. Greenwood Publishing Group.
- [5] Chevalier, M. & Niel O. H. (1997) Preservice Teachers' Multicultural Self Development Through Adolescent Fiction. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* 40(6), 426-436.
- [6] Chen, J.S. (2007). A Study of Fan Culture: Adolescent Experiences with Animé/Manga Doujinshi and Cosplay in Taiwan. *Visual Arts Research*, 33(1),14-24. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20715430>.
- [7] Choo, K. (2012). Nationalizing "cool": Japan's global promotion of the content industry. *Popular Culture and the State in East and Southeast Asia*, 2012, (pp.85-105)
- [8] Dalil, Z. (2015) *Manga and Anime: A gateway to Japanese Culture*. Moulay Ismail University, M.A. Thesis.
- [9] Dallacqua, A. K. (2012) Exploring Literary Devices in Graphic Novels. *Language Arts*, 89(6), 365–78. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41804360>.
- [10] Etsuro, K. (1942) *Techniques for a New Manga*. Self-Published.
- [11] Fujiwara, E. (2010) An analysis of contemporary Manga culture in Japan and Sweden. Lunds University Press.
- [12] Gravett, P. (2004) *Manga: Sixty years of Japanese comics*. Laurence king.
- [13] Hansen, K.S. (2012) "In Defense of Graphic Novels." *The English Journal*, 102(2), 57–63. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23365398>.
- [14] Ishii, K. (2009) 中国におけるアニメ国産化政策と日本アニメの利用実態：「ソフトパワー」論の一考察 (The policy of domestic anime production in China and the usage of Japanese anime: An analysis on "soft power) *情報通信学会誌* 26(4), 17-28.
- [15] Iwabuchi, K. (2012) Uses of media culture, usefulness of media culture studies: Beyond brand nationalism, into public dialogue, *Creativity and Academic Activism: Instituting Cultural Studies*, Edited by Meaghan Morris and Mette Hjort (pp. 139-156), Hong Kong University Press.
- [16] Iwabuchi K (2002). Western Gaze to Global Gaze: Japanese Cultural Presence in Asia. *Global Culture: Media, Arts, Policy, and Globalization*, edited by K. Kawasaki, D. Crane, and N. Kawashima, (pp. 256-274) Routledge.
- [17] Iwabuchi K. (2012). *Recentering globalization: Popular culture and Japanese transnationalism*. Duke University Press.
- [18] Kelts, R. (2006) *Japanamerica: How Japanese Pop Culture Has Invaded the U.S.* Palgrave MacMillan.
- [19] Kinsella, S. (2000) *Adult manga: Culture and power in contemporary Japanese society*. University of Hawai Press, 2000.
- [20] Kinsella, S. (1998) Japanese Subculture in the 1990s: Otaku and the Amateur Manga Movement. *The Journal of Japanese Studies*. 24(2), 289–316, <https://doi.org/info:doi/>.
- [21] Lau, Chung Yim. "Manga Drawing as Stereotyped Aesthetics." *Visual Arts Research*, vol.39, no.2, 2013, pp.42–53, <https://doi.org/10.5406/visuartsrese.39.2.0042>.
- [22] MacWilliams, Mark W. *Japanese Visual Culture: Explorations in the World of Manga and Anime* M.E. Sharpe, 2008.

- [23] McGray, Douglas. 2002. "Japan's Gross National Cool." *Foreign Policy* 130, 2002, pp. 44-54
- [24] Misaka, K. "The first Japanese Manga magazine in the United States." *Pub Res Q* 19, 2004, pp. 23-30, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12109-004-0004-3>.
- [25] Murakami, Satsuki, and Mio Bryce. "Manga: As an educational medium" *International Journal of the Humanities*, vol.7,no.10, 2009,pp.47-55.DOI:10.18848/1447-9508/CGP/v07i10/42761.
- [26] Nakane, Chie. *Japanese Society*. University of California Press, 1972.
- [27] Napier, Susan J. *From Impressionism to Anime*. Palgrave MacMillan, 2007.
- [28] Natsume, F. (2004). East Asia and manga culture: Examining manga-comic culture in East Asia. In R. G. Abad (Ed.), *The Asian face of globalisation: reconstructing identities, and resources: The Papers of the 2001 API Fellows* (pp. 95-106). The Nippon Foundation.
- [29] Rimmer, P.J. (2004) Manga World: Globalization Theory Revisited. *Japanese journal of Human Geography*. 26(02), 2004, 07-28. <http://hdl.handle.net/1885/73717>
- [30] Rosenbaum, R. (2015) Introduction: The representation of Japanese history in manga. *Manga and the Representation of Japanese History*. Ed. Roman Rosenbaum. (pp.01-17), Routledge.
- [31] Schodt, F. L. (1983) *Manga! Manga! The world of Japanese comics*. Kodansha International.
- [32] Schodt, F. L. (1996) *Dreamland Japan: Writings on modern manga*. Stone Bridge Press.
- [33] Schwartz, A, and Eliane R.Ã. (2006) Understanding the Manga Hype: Uncovering the Multimodality of Comic-Book Literacies. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 50(1), 40-49. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40012306>.
- [34] Steinberg, M. (2012) *Anime's Media Mix: Franchising Toys and Characters in Japan*. University of Minnesota Press.
- [35] Thompson, J. (2007) *Manga: The Complete Guide*. Ballentine Books.