

ABSTRACT

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THE ATOMIC BOMB:
REFLECTIONS IN JAPANESE MANGA AND ANIME

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This study examines post-World War II “anime” and manga based on the bomb’s after-effects and changes in Japanese mindsets resulting from the War, especially as inspired by Osamu Tezuka and later artists influenced by his works.

This study theorized that Japanese political culture elements, through particular plotlines, could be traced in manga and anime themes carrying hidden messages repeatedly referencing the bomb’s effects on Japan, citing Tezuka’s influence, in the 1945-65 and 1985-95 periods, in the post-apocalyptic, science fiction, and fantasy genres.

Case studies were used to qualitatively assess data for historical evidence of Tezuka’s influence across specific genres, from scholarly studies and reviews of manga, comics, and related media. Evidence of Tezuka-inspired themes, such as hope out of endless devastation (the phoenix analogy) and man’s destructive obsession with

technology by conquering nature (dependent variables), were analyzed from a comparativist, historical viewpoint, as influenced by atomic bomb-related themes.

The researcher explains the Japanese fascination with technology and why many anime show status quo disagreements. Japan absorbed trauma from the bomb, was invaded by foreigners, and faced a complete overhaul. Post-war, the economy grew rapidly, but Japan must reduce rigidity and social conformity. The Japanese are aware of the US role in their dual defense arrangement; Japan felt discomfort as a junior-partner in the 1950s-60s. The US monitored Japan on defense and foreign policy as it rebuilt itself. Tezuka's work show insight into the defense arrangement and technology's societal role.

Conclusions suggest manga artists drew from Tezuka's works that the bomb's devastation changed Japan significantly, launching powerful themes referencing these events in postwar science fiction, fantasy, and futuristic post-apocalyptic genres, relating to Japanese history, political components from ethical technology perspectives, relations between nations, and conducting foreign policy (independent variables). Japan must look to the future, as after the war, rising from the ashes. Balancing Mother Nature, technology's place in society, and hope for rebuilding relate to the 2011 nuclear crisis and survival. Japan prevailed once before, recovering from a disastrous early 1900s earthquake; if Japan once survived devastation, certainly it could again. Just as manga and anime unite fans globally (especially once US Comics Code restrictions were lifted), mankind assists others in crisis and settles disagreements; we can universally transcend nation. Tezuka's message of bettering humanity to avoid a dark future depends on our ability to settle differences, respecting nature for its simple beauty in our lives.

THE ATOMIC BOMB: REFLECTIONS IN JAPANESE MANGA AND ANIME

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This paper relates to studying specific political culture themes appearing directly out of Japanese manga and anime in relation to the atomic bomb. In particular, some larger questions posed are what significance do these media have in relation to US policy or foreign policy with Japan, and why does it remain important to study these media in general? My aim is not to quantify this material, but rather to qualitatively assess what can be gained from this type of study and to find evidence of themes inspired by Tezuka most often appearing across genres, using a historical perspective. These questions and more are answered in the paper itself through particular themes being revealed in various works, especially as inspired by Osamu Tezuka, often called the father of modern anime and manga. Restrictions such as the Comics Code and propaganda used by Disney films paralleled politics of the Cold War, as well as the nationalism that the Japanese felt towards wanting to have their own military or more of a say in security and defense decisions. This is also expressed in particular metaphors (independent variables supporting the main themes), such as the way alien invaders signify Americans invading and occupying Japan and how the image of the bomb itself represents death and rebirth,

just as the phoenix analogy shows, and Japan's rise into an industrial superpower from the bomb's devastation. The two primary themes (dependent variables) surround hope rising from endless devastation and how man's obsession with using technology to conquer nature, if not tamed, can lead to negative consequences. On another note, this study remains valuable for learning how political cartoons, for example, are valuable forms of media to study, just as in America, showing satire towards political issues or how they portray events in metaphors to represent specific feelings of certain elements of the Japanese populace. The idea of Japan having a say in its own affairs is repeated over and over again when one sees the authors point out the obvious, that Japan finds a way to say this indirectly in these works when they talk about a foreign threat invading them or in portraying the US as buffoons who need the Japanese to help them get out of sticky situations. The nostalgia often connecting the two primary themes by audiences in the postwar and mid-1980s-1990s time periods is a coping mechanism, a way for Japan to deal with the tragedies and horrors of the war, the type of scarring that does not go away overnight, and a way of reassuring themselves that they can overcome terrible tragedy. Overall, the most critical issues to remember are that we can learn about US and Japan policy from this paper and/or Japan's feelings on establishing their own stance on policy issues through the study of anime and manga within particular genres of fantasy, science fiction, and post apocalyptic works, where unless man can conquer his shortcomings as a race, his future may hold little hope for continuing his existence, and politically, the

world could remain in chaos without some respect for the natural world and more brotherhood amongst his fellow compatriots.

The atomic bomb had a powerful effect on the underlying themes in the worlds of Japanese “*anime*” (the standard term used in the English-speaking West for Japanese cinematic animation) and “*manga*” (Japanese comic books and graphic novels). It can be said that the evolution of manga (comics), has brought a certain perspective and idealism with it in response to the atomic bombs in World War II, meaning that the Japanese imagined these catastrophic events in particular ways that affected their psyche, which is portrayed by various artists through their works. There are actually a number of “anime,” or manga that are animated and brought to life through moving images on film, in the preceding decades after World War II, that are based on the after-effects of the atomic bomb and the changes in mindsets and attitudes of the Japanese that directly result from the War, especially as inspired by the artist Osamu Tezuka’s works and the anime and manga artists that were later inspired by his manga and films. Many of these artists saw in Tezuka, a way of helping the nation cope with the tragedy of these catastrophic events. For Sean Leonard, Japanese animation expert and an instructor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) the Japanese word “anime” is an apocopation of *animeshon*, which is transliterated from English. In Japanese, both terms denote all types of animation. In English, anime refers to Japanese animation; the term is used for both the singular and the plural.”¹ The two common themes (dependent variables) analyzed

¹ Sean Leonard, “Progress Against the Law: Anime and Fandom, with the Key to the Globalization of Culture,” *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 8, no. 3 (2005): 284.

here developed out of manga, which sprang forth as an outgrowth of the bomb's effects, include an obsession with technological enhancements and hope rising out of endless devastation. These types of themes, and the originality of Japanese manga and anime artists, explain why fans exist all over the world for these particular forms of media. In addition, a number of lesser themes or sub-themes (dependent variables) will also be given in support of the two primary themes analyzed in this paper. Jerome Shapiro, author of *Atomic Bomb Cinema: The Apocalyptic Imagination on Film*, explains the importance of such atomic-bomb related themes expressed in films after the war, in order to help Japan cope with its loss, defeat, and despair as a result of the bomb itself, while maintaining some semblance of hope:

The first responsibility of any community or any leader that's experiencing a catastrophic event is finding hope. Without hope there is no...change. When you look at the scholarship on ancient apocalyptic literature, rather than, say the nuclear crisis we're experiencing today, what we find is that so and so agrees that this a hopeful literature. Yet it describes painful events that will come, it describes suffering and oppression that is taking place...they're saying that if we get through this, there's a possibility of rebuilding communities, finding greater meaning in life, and finding happiness...the first responsibility of any literature is to encourage people to survive and self-actualize in themselves, and then only is the possibility of restoring community possible...In the Japanese tradition the world comes to a complete end and a new one starts over.²

Besides hope, Japanese anime which references the bomb seem to echo change which comes forth in the form of a new world which emerges after an old world has been destroyed, with the good and bad being renewed as well, instead of the Western tradition which shows everything evil being destroyed, with all that is good being preserved.³

² Jeremy Shapiro, interview by Fred Nielsen, Omaha, Nebraska, 5 August 2002.

³ Ibid.

Indeed, Japanese literary traditions echo themes paralleling the nation's classical mythology (which comes from characters and stories dating back hundreds of years), showing varying film perspectives, such as Godzilla and other monster films of the 1950s and 1960s, besides formulaic American films, where good always triumphed. Anime and manga explore these complex post-apocalyptic themes even more. Additionally, centering on these storylines of technology getting out of hand and a sense of hope emerging are well-developed characters with multi-faceted personalities in these works as well.⁴

The origins of manga can be traced to the 12th century, when manga were first drawn by Toba, a Buddhist monk, who used scrolls to draw the “now-famous *Choujuugiga* (“Animal Scrolls”), which showed animals acting like humans...”⁵ Isao Takahata also confirms the influence of Toba's scrolls on through *ukiyo-e* (woodblock prints) to finally what manifested itself as manga in the present day.⁶ Manga itself can also be traced to a similar influence around the same 12th century time period in a form called *emakimono* (rolled up pictures), which were illustrated handscrolls inspired by similar works in China; these were meant for private, not public reading, and the parallel in this earlier style to later manga works is apparent, according to Nobuo Tsuji, who says

⁴ Jean-Marie Bouissou, “Manga Goes Global,” in *Proceedings of the Global Meaning of Japan Conference*, Sheffield, England, 19-22 March 1998 (Paris: Centre for International Studies and Research, 1998), 19.

⁵ Katsushika Hokusai and James A. Michener, eds., *The Hokusai Sketchbooks: Selections from the Manga* (Clarendon, VT: C.E. Tuttle Co., 1958), 4.

⁶ Isao Takahata, “12th Century Moving Pictures,” *Japan Quarterly*, July-August 2001, 32.

that, indeed, “certain qualities nurtured in early Japanese pictorial arts returned in the imagery of later ages.”⁷ Manga began to gain in popularity when it started to be “mass-produced” through woodblock printing in the 19th century. Initially, the manga were only available in Japan’s larger cities, but their availability spread as their popularity grew. The term manga comes from two words, “*man*,” which means “in spite of oneself,”⁸ “involuntary,” or “morally corrupt,” and “*ga*,” which means “pictures.”⁹ The term “was coined in 1814 by the woodblock artist Hokusai, who was trying to find a more accurate term to describe his artwork (Hokusai really meant ‘*man*’ to be read as ‘whimsical,’ making manga mean whimsical ictures).”¹⁰ This visual emphasis relates to the fact that “anime and manga come out of a highly sophisticated Japanese visual tradition. Because the Japanese language is based on pictograms, storytelling through animation and comic books is an accepted cultural concept.”¹¹ Susan Napier elaborates on this ancient link and manga’s mass appeal.¹² Scholars trace the roots of manga to early Japanese art traditions, since anime are primarily based on manga. Many manga use 17th-18th century

⁷ Nobuo Tsuji, “Early Medieval Picture Scrolls as Ancestors of Anime and Manga,” in *Births and Rebirths in Japanese Art*, ed. Nicole Coolidge Rousmaniere (Leiden, Netherlands: Hotei Publishing, 2001), 79.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Research Institute for Publications, “Genres of Manga,” Research Institute for Publications, <http://web.archive.org/web/20060513152410/www.anthy.com/lumina/Manga/genres.htm> (accessed 30 May 2010).

¹¹ Lewis Beale, “Japanimation Inc.: Is the Mainstream American Market Ready for Post-Apocalyptic Anime?” *New York Daily News*, 3 Aug. 1997, sec. Sunday Extra, 24.

¹² Susan Napier, “The Appeal of Anime,” Kateigaho, Inc., <http://int.kateigaho.com/oct03/nAnime.html> (accessed 30 May 2010).

woodblock prints (and other art forms such as e-makimono, or picture scrolls) as inspiration.

The grotesque and beautiful mesh together well in anime, with directors such as Hayao Miyazaki (whose 2003 *Spirited Away* won the Academy Award for best animated film), Mamoru Oshii, and Katsuhiro Otomo, not to mention Tezuka preceding them, producing quality works with not only more than just fantastic visuals, but also powerful narratives, apocalyptic visions, and dramatic storylines as well.¹³ The *Neon Genesis Evangelion* and *Ghost in the Shell* series provide views of the world that, historically and psychologically, are more complex than many Western animated works that are often brought forth, according to Napier.¹⁴ Comics also account for “the largest portion of the Japanese publishing industry, and animated features account for more than half of domestic box-office revenue,” with anime being “ubiquitous on Japanese TV, where as many as 15 shows, from soap operas to kiddie programming and adult dramas are broadcast every week.”¹⁵ As for Hokusai’s artwork, the forerunner to modern anime and manga, his works were developed throughout his entire life, and many of them can be seen in the book *Hokusai: Genius of the Japanese Ukiyo-e*, by Seiji Nagata.¹⁶ Many artists in the lower classes also used Hokusai’s woodblock prints a great deal, since they actually were banned from reading or writing (or speaking against the government in any

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Seiji Nagata, *Hokusai: Genius of the Ukiyo-e* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2000), 20.

way). People needed to find a way of expressing themselves and to perhaps project some humor into their lives. Through woodblock carvings or cartoon-like figurines, they had a hidden outlet with which to poke fun at the societal elite and the upper-class; as Ardith Santiago reasons:

Japanese woodblock prints...had been very popular amongst the merchant and common townspeople during the Edo Era's peace and prosperity. Printing was cheap and the products sold well, much like manga...accessible to the masses. The most popular...were ukiyo-e....illustrations of the "Floating World,"...to describe...uncertainties in life and the...search for sensual pleasures to sweeten one's feeling of hopelessness. "Like so much of old Japanese art, ukiyo-e projected a sparse reality: without dwelling on anatomy and perspective, they tried to capture a mood, an essence, and an impression."¹⁷

Woodblock prints were popular forms of expression in the Edo period, with *toba-e* (named in honor of Toba, a Buddhist monk who lived from C.E. 1053-1140) and was also used for humorous, satiric works, such as "*Chojugiga*, or 'Animal Scrolls,' a 12th-century satire on the clergy and nobility which were reprinted over time in order to entertain townspeople.¹⁸ These woodblock prints later developed into comics, and the cartoon-like structures actually displayed amusing representations of wise moral teachings and of rulers performing various acts of buffoonery, especially in the feudal times of the lethargic shoguns and samurai, who did not always act appropriately in many situations.¹⁹

¹⁷ Ardith Santiago, "Manga, Beyond Ukiyo-e: Aesthetics, Postmodernism and Japan," *Japanese C195: Aesthetics and Hermanutics*, 10 March 1999, 3.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Genres, 2.

One of the most interesting aspects of how manga appears today is the fact that it got its modern appearance from designs modeled after American comic books from the 1930s. If one actually looks very carefully at the way Betty Boop was drawn, with the big eyes and the large, round face, one can discover some similarities, especially the large facial expressions, which had a lasting impression on the Japanese. According to Christine Wallgren, “The graphic style of...Japanese illustrators is easily recognizable. Characters are simple...with large eyes (the larger the eyes, the more innocent...), angular faces, and spiked-up hair...illustrators were strongly influenced by...cartoon characters as Betty Boop and...Mickey Mouse.”²⁰ The American culture influenced the Japanese in many ways, including the atomic bomb, which had powerful effects and was depicted in a number of allegorical ways in particular comics in the science fiction, futuristic and fantasy genres. The occupation, in particular, had an enormous impact upon how the Japanese viewed the Americans, which has a heavy influence on the look and feel of anime up to the present day:

The American occupation of Japan is a topic which has also been treated in “serious” manga...*Barefoot Gen* and dramatic anime films such as *Grave of the Fireflies*...The occupation is...very much alive in Japanese popular culture, as both a manifest and a repressed theme....American influence on Japanese culture during the occupation is...responsible for both the look and generic narrative qualities of anime in Japan.²¹

Frederik Schodt has also revealed in his book *Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics*, that Japanese animation types draw great inspiration from “Western political

²⁰ Christine Wallgren, “Manga, Anime Catching on,” *The Boston Globe*, 25 May 2006, 1.

²¹ Annalee Newitz, “Magical Girls and Atomic Bomb Sperm: Japanese Animation in America,” *Film Quarterly* 49, no. 1 (1995): 10.

cartoons and Disney animation,” with anime director Hayao Miyazaki also admitting to being fond of Disney’s style of animation.²² Anime has proven to be part of the American influence on Japanese post-World War II life. With the post-War shadow of America looming in the background as a form of cultural imperialism, many Japanese drew artistic inspiration directly from their occupiers. Akio Igarashi reveals evidence of direct influence from post-World War II Hollywood movies, including those of Disney:

Hollywood films were the most successful anti-communist propaganda tools and received powerful backing from the American government. These films exceeded the American government's expectations by depicting the various circumstances of American society. The crowds that filled the movie theaters to capacity feasted on the freedom and affluence of American society in these films. The children who watched *Dumbo*, *Bambi*, and *Mickey Mouse* were captivated by the colorful and expressive Disney animations.²³

From these early influences of anti-communist propaganda and scenes of contemporary American life, one begins to see how the roots and style of early manga developed. Furthermore, the beginning stages of manga were converted into anime through a simple process. The Japanese artists essentially adopted the word balloons and the panels in the comics and evolved them into the modern style of anime.²⁴ The animated works were literally lifted from the design of manga pages into something more lively and full of movement, which became anime. There was always a close relationship between cartoons and animation in Japan, since two of three original animators in Japan were “from the cartoon tradition.” Tezuka’s *Astroboy* was also the first anime series bridging

²² Ibid.

²³ Akio Igarashi, “‘Americanization’: An East Asian Perspective,” *Contemporary Conflicts*, 26 March 2004, <http://conconflicts.ssrc.org/USA/igarashi/> (accessed 18 March 2010).

²⁴ Ibid.

manga and moving pictures, particularly on television.²⁵ With *Astroboy*, in a sense, manga became “not only the source of thematic elements or characters (as comics had...as far back as 1917), but a source of a new visual logic, and a new relation between motion and stillness. As an aesthetic response to economic constraints, *Astroboy*’s Mushi Productions made manga move.”²⁶ With this in mind, one could explain that the reason one should focus on both anime and manga is because they are inevitably linked together in their history, driving the market for each other as well:

San Francisco--based Viz, a pioneering U.S. manga publisher that is owned by two *Japanese* entertainment giants, distributes such anime properties as *Ranma 1/2* and the very popular *Inuyasha* series, including the new *Inuyasha* movie, *Affections Touching Across Time*. Viz’s anime marketing director, Anthony Jiwa, tells PW that anime and manga are “intrinsically linked,” despite the obvious differences between print and *animation*. Manga, he explains, is more detailed and provides more background. Boys, he notes, are very influenced by *animation* and TV. Anime in Japan, he says, are generally based on the most popular manga book series, while in the U.S., anime properties tend to reach the market first, prompting a demand for the manga.²⁷

Besides the obvious link to manga and anime as adaptations into moving pictures (and often with anime being based on popular manga series), more importantly, the themes in manga and anime come from as far back as the ancient times of the wooden block prints and the old Japanese picture scrolls, showing that they are similar and reflect centuries of progression, with modern moving pictures merely serving as an extension of the ancient forms of art. The past is inevitably linked to the present. Anime has its roots in

²⁵ Marc Steinberg, “Immobile Sections and Trans-Series Movement: *Astroboy* and the Emergence of Anime,” *Animation: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 1, no. 2 (2006): 198-199.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Calvin Reid, “Manga Sells Anime—And Vice Versa,” *Publishers Weekly*, 18 Oct. 2004, 32.

traditional Japanese art, which Taihei Imamura cites S.M. Eisenstein as also acknowledging.²⁸ The Japanese picture scroll is the forerunner to anime as well, with the only difference being that the picture scroll does not move. Animation is simply pictures moving in time, as "the essential movement is the progress of an idea...a representation of...motion is not art unless it advances an idea...Both the motion picture and the Japanese picture scroll are plastic expressions of ideas, and...have fundamental techniques in common."²⁹

The development of manga and anime overlap along similar lines, become one and essentially tell a story. Often, the typical development is that a story will begin as manga and sell as a regular series of books or comics. Over time, when the manga gains in popularity, it is turned into a body of work, essentially anime, to entertain wider audiences in television and film. Sometimes a series may last for years, simply a few episodes, or just a movie or two. The early history of these art forms gives some indication as to how manga is influenced today as well, and the moving pictures merely reflect the adaptations that are drawn from the comic books into film. Manga itself has become a worldwide phenomenon. It also exists in varieties suitable for all ages, and it is quite diverse on its subject matter, ranging from quite simple topics to explicit sex and extreme violence. The reach of this industry in Japanese society is immense and one of the core areas of the entertainment industry. There are great works by well-known

²⁸ Taihei Imamura, "Japanese Art and the Animated Cartoon," *The Quarterly of Film Radio and Television* 7, no. 3 (1953): 217-218.

²⁹ Ibid.

directors, such as Katsuhiro Otomo's *Steamboy* and TV series and games inspired by anime, such as "*One Piece* – about...pirates...in search of buried treasure – and *Doraemon*, about a time-traveling robotic cat."³⁰ Anime also includes low-brow works of extreme violence and sexual content, but fans often admire it more or less for its unconventional storylines and unpredictable plots, such as Miyazaki's films. Anime, which has its roots in manga, has fans all over the world. The industry for both is quite large, as at one point, *Shonen Jump*, a manga weekly with large viewership, sold 3 million copies per issue--"what Marvel sells in a month."³¹ Akihabara, a popular Tokyo neighborhood for anime fans, is flooded with persons selling everything and anything anime related, since "studios...crank out thousands of anime TV episodes and dozens of movies a year."³² The industry itself only seems to be growing worldwide, and its impact can be assessed for how it remains an important part of understanding Japanese culture in general as a huge success that evolved out of the aftermath of World War II and the atomic bomb. However, the paper's focus will be on case studies revealing those works that link directly to the inspiration of Tezuka (called the father of modern anime and manga who developed *Astroboy* into a popular comic) and focus on evidence that references apocalyptic events surrounding the atomic bomb. The next section details in particular certain works in the 1945-65 and 1985-95 time periods that lead to the themes of hope rising out of endless devastation and the obsession with technology leading to

³⁰ Ian Rowley, Chester Dawson, Hiroko Tashiro and Ihlwan Moon, "The Anime Biz: Still an Adolescent," *Business Week*, 27 June 2005, 51.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

destruction, which are common areas of concern for Tezuka because of what he witnessed from the bomb itself and how Japan had to rebuild itself in its aftermath. In addition, these time periods corresponded with various waves of right-wing nationalism waxing and waning amidst a time when tensions regarding strategic alliances between the US and Japan hit a peak, with the earlier period seeing the establishment of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between the United States and Japan (AMPO) (based on the US-Japan Security Alliance established after World War II), rapid industrialization and the second period of time from 1985-95 witnessing not only a certain amount of nostalgia for the old Empire, but which also culminated in the rise of the great Japanese global economic superpower and a renewal of current security arrangements with American military bases in Okinawa and Japan.

Research Question, Hypothesis, and Explanation

Can certain Japanese political culture elements, through specific plotlines showing repeated patterns referencing the atomic bomb, directly or indirectly, be traced through manga and anime themes carrying certain underlying messages relating to the bomb's physical and psychological effects on the Japanese, as both a people and a nation? These political culture elements, particularly with respect to Tezuka's work and influence, relate primarily to the postwar-1965 and 1985-1995 time periods. Specific themes will be reinforced by supplying evidence through case studies and a historical analysis approach. Often, the themes that occur in such anime as *Akira* and Akiyuki Nosaka's novel (adapted by Isao Takahata into an anime film) *Grave of the Fireflies*, bring back images

of the horrors World War II, and the fact that war itself is not a pretty sight, as we gain from the main character, Seita, in *Fireflies*. The film itself initially looks to be anti-American to some extent, but the film merely shows children enwrapped in the hardships of war, with no Americans actually shown in the film. In fact, “on one level, this movie [*Fireflies*] could be seen as a metaphor for the entire country of Japan during the war... fighting a losing battle, and too stubbornly proud to admit defeat and reach out.”³³ The story from this work shows a character’s wounded pride and is a semi-autobiographical account of a war survivor whose younger sister perished because of starvation. The film showed the difficulties of “Seita’s unwillingness to seek help or his resort to theft to obtain food, and the grief he endured which consumed him—something that never happened to the real person [author]—for that decision.”³⁴ The antagonists, often typified by foes (which seem to be absent in the form of living beings in this story), materialize in the form of human vulnerabilities that may lead to war, which are pride, the “suspicion that falls upon two children trying to live on their own, and the prejudice leveled against a healthy young man who doesn’t want to fight.”³⁵ This story, about a boy and his younger sister during the air raids in Japan in World War II, can represent any number of families in their war experiences. The B-29 air raids, in relation to the atomic bombs, “leveled most Japanese cities before that. In Tokyo alone, 100,000 people

³³ Marc Marshall, “Review: Grave of the Fireflies,” Marc Marshall, <http://Animeworld.com/reviews/graveofthefireflies.html> (accessed 30 May 2010).

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

were killed in one night of fire-bombing -- that's nearly as many as died in Hiroshima.”³⁶

The characters in the story are orphans struggling for their own survival, but their situation only gets worse as the war wears on, and their condition deteriorates as they roam the countryside, leading to a depressing conclusion. The lesson learned is that the atrocities of war take a toll on all who are involved, leaving no persons unscathed.

How the bomb is perceived by some scholars to have affected the Japanese people, with certain messages in mind, is apparent in particular works of manga and anime, particularly the post-apocalyptic, science fiction, and fantasy genres. Inevitably, for example, the ultimate lesson we learn is that war has no winners, as *Fireflies* teaches us:

Above all, the enemy of this story is war—although you never see a battle or an army, you can see the tragic effects of war on even the idyllic countryside far removed from the front. *Grave of the Fireflies* puts a human face on the civilian population of Japan during the war--something not many movies have done, and none have done as well. Moreover, it manages to do so in a painful and realistic, yet still understated, manner. In fact, it is almost too painful to watch, but equally difficult to take your eyes off. All this, and it is animated--anyone who thinks animation can't tell a realistic story with any impact has never seen this movie, and should be required to do so.³⁷

The images of endless devastation caused by the war and the atomic bomb abound in Japanese animation repeatedly, as Brian Fuller elaborates. The mushroom cloud is an endless motif that constantly resurfaces in some form in many science fiction manga and anime. The outlook on the future is still bleak for them and makes them relive many of

³⁶ Alan Gleason, “Keiji Nakazawa,” *The Comics Journal* 256 (1988): 2, http://www.tcj.com/256/i_nakazawa.html (accessed 30 May 2010).

³⁷ Ibid.

their fears of another nuclear event: “A collection of...amateur drawings by survivors...was published by...The Japanese Broadcasting Corporation...in 1977. Of the artwork submitted...the deadly cloud outnumbered...other subjects by almost 2 to 1.”³⁸

The psychological effect still lingers in many ways in the nation’s psyche, causing lasting grief that has not completely gone away, with many artists referring to “family loss and societal devastation as character motivation.”³⁹ In addition, what is helpful in having manga and anime as media through which to express the sentiments felt by the Japanese from the war is that these themes can easily be categorized as something to which others can relate, perhaps as universal ideas to help other cultures understand what the Japanese also experienced from the bomb at the hands of their foes. Images abound with obvious references to the war, such as, for example, when the Giant Divine Soldier (*Kyoshin-hei*) character displays an obvious link to Japan’s defeat and the bomb itself, “a biomonster weapon,” which “represented the ultimate realization, and excavated residual, of the lost-Mega-ceramic-industrial-civilization. The fire it vomits causes nuclear explosion, reminiscent of the catastrophe of Hiroshima/ Nagasaki...”⁴⁰ Another strong example refers to the suffering endured by the Japanese, and, though there is bitterness towards the Japanese that the Chinese display towards them with regards to the Nanjing Massacre, according to Ishikawa Yoshimi, the Chinese, through a recent exhibition by

³⁸ Brian D. Fuller, “Atomic Imagery in Animated Japanese Science Fiction,” paper presented as part of the annual meeting of the Society for Animation Studies, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, New York, 6 October 1991.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Shigemi Inaga, “Miyazaki Hayao’s Epic Comic Series: Nausicaa in the Valley of the Wind: An Attempt at Interpretation,” *Japan Review* 11 (1995): 118.

Japanese manga artists, were able to learn more about what was endured by Japan from the air raids by the Americans during World War II, as the Chinese were “unaware of the suffering by the Japanese during World War II. That’s because they’ve been taught...that Chinese were...victims, that stood up to Japanese aggressors, resisted and...prevailed. They’ve never...thought what World War II was for...Japanese...”⁴¹ Though it is true that, similarly, the Soviets, as victims of aggression themselves by the Germans in the Babi Yar Massacre,⁴² felt little sympathy towards the German people, who endured suffering at the hands of their own leaders in World War II, it is still significant to know that a place exists in the literature to understand multiple perspectives, to know that wartime does indeed bring universal suffering to those involved. Furthermore, time has a way of healing past bitterness to some degree, and modern times have revealed apologies all around, to some extent, from the Japanese, for their past atrocities on other East Asian states, with additional work to be done, and from Germany, as it rebuilt its economy and renewed economic ties with Russia and other former Soviet states in the present day. In addition, more data has become accessible to all parties involved in World War II, for example, the sheer destruction caused by war for everyone involved, and the suffering reined on the Japanese by Allied troops and the Japanese government on its own people, bringing the Japanese full circle to

⁴¹ Yoshimi Ishikawa, “Healing Old Wounds with Manga Diplomacy. Japan’s Wartime Manga Displayed at China’s Nanjing Massacre Memorial Museum,” *Japan Focus*, 8 March 2010, <http://japanfocus.org/-Ishikawa-Yoshimi/3315> (accessed 30 May 2010).

⁴² PBS.org, “Out of the Ashes 1919-1947: A Survivor of the Babi Yar Massacre,” www.pbs.org, http://www.pbs.org/wnet/heritage/episode8/documents/documents_13.html (accessed 25 September 2011).

acknowledging past mistakes, such as in Nanjing, and having to live with the knowledge that previous generations are partly responsible for the bitterness that still exists towards them in East Asia. Suffering has been endured by both victim and aggressor, with Japan dealing with its own form of suffering and that of others, requiring the country to face the dual role of making amends with its past and healing old wounds that may never fully heal with its neighbors. Repeatedly, the themes of suffering and devastation caused by major catastrophic events surface in Tezuka's works. The next section outlines and details the importance of Tezuka's influence on manga and other anime artists to come, but most especially in the genres surrounding the hypothesis' two primary themes centering on 1) death, destruction, and rebirth, and 2) the use of technology to conquer nature, leading to disaster, that primarily exist in the science fiction, fantasy, and futuristic genres after an apocalypse.

Major Concepts and Variables

There are many types of manga available to the public. In fact, there are manga (Japanese comics) aimed at every conceivable age group in Japan. The first thing that we must do is to collect evidence of the different genres of manga relating to the atomic bomb and then assess cross-culturally (and across the genres) what types of variables relate to Tezuka's influence on the themes or dependent variables mentioned above and examine them throughout all of the age groups; essentially, this means listing the subthemes or independent variables that appear consistently throughout many atomic bomb-related manga and the common character structures, especially those lesser themes

supporting the two central themes (these two are the dependent variables) mentioned in the research question. These can be acquired through researching articles and leading researchers which focus on the underlying themes of manga, comics and cartoons and through reviews of the manga. Manga review guides often contain much of this information. There have been studies done in scholarly journals focusing on manga and post-World War II elements on the atomic bomb. We can then assess if we can find the themes that appear most often relating to the atomic bomb and further narrow Tezuka's common themes of hope rising out of endless devastation and of man's attempt to conquer nature which leads to disastrous consequences for the human race. The paper will generally focus on the years between 1945-1965 and 1985-95, when Japan dealt with various issues regarding security arrangements, the rise in economic superiority, and the waves of right-wing nationalism which hit Japan to some extent. The most common types of manga that appear to be popular among children have crude elements of simplistic violence and a plot which appears to be of little depth, other than the good versus evil point of view, which could plausibly contain some references to the atomic bomb itself.⁴³ The comprehensive article "Genres of Manga" describes the different genres of manga available for all age groups, which may help us to get some idea of what areas of manga exist. This pairs genres into distinct categories and divides them even amongst the sexes. It also includes good examples of manga that are presently seen in the market and on television and film. This is a good breakdown of understanding the

⁴³ Bouissou, 13.

various manga categories in order to more fully understand the age group that it is being marketed towards, perhaps, helping us to separate the relevant areas to be researched.⁴⁴

It seems that the way manga are structured is that as one gets older, one moves on to more sophisticated forms of manga. The different types of manga that exist are for varying age groups, as well as both sexes.⁴⁵ In contrast to the common idea in mainstream America media of comics being for young people, Japanese manga artists, such as Hiroyuki Sugahara, explain that “There’s nothing wrong in having some comics for the forty-something crowd and others for the fifty-somethings.”⁴⁶ For manga in general, certain publications are circulated more often than others. A simple fan-oriented reference can be found in Eri Izawa’s “What are Manga and Anime?” page which explains the difference between the various types of anime.⁴⁷ This page also goes into particular detail about the drawing styles, how to recognize each one, and whom they are marketed for. This is excellent for comparison of the product that is created and mass-produced. It also explains the peculiar ways that certain characters are drawn or represented and eliminates a lot of confusion.

Furthermore, we can find evidence of the themes we are researching and group manga categorically by determining how often certain themes occur referencing the

⁴⁴ Genres, 1.

⁴⁵ Genres, 8.

⁴⁶ Masaki Yamada, “A Philosophical Creator of Comic Strips,” *Aichi Voice* 13 (2005): 1 http://www2.aia.pref.aichi.jp/voice/no13/13_local_voice.html (accessed 30 April 2010).

⁴⁷ Eri Izawa, “What are Manga and Anime?” Eri Izawa, <http://www.mit.edu:8001/afs/athena.mit.edu/user/r/e/rei/WWW/Expl.html> (accessed 20 May 2010).

atomic bomb in particular genres and consider the intended audiences, which may help in looking for atomic bomb themes in science fiction, fantasy and futuristic post-apocalyptic works. "What is Anime?" an article from *Redline's Web Crossroad*, is a helpful beginners guide for ordinary readers, gives a concise definition of anime and describes its development over time. It traces the popular genres, titles, and the style of drawing's origins.⁴⁸ This is a useful guide for those who need guidance to understand the various themes of anime and why one may appear completely different than another. These are not just standard, formulaic American cartoons that are commonly seen on television in the mainstream; they are complex and reflect a certain age group's idealism all the way from childhood to adulthood. Indeed, anime often presents many complex issues that typical American fodder of the establishment may not often cover, which is why it appeals to its many American fans. Anime is more complex than just animated works for children, considered on par with live action films and not taking "the traditionally light, often shallow approach of American cartoons."⁴⁹ Anime in Japan are said to be more like live action-films, as stated, but imagined in a way that only animation can bring to the screen, with "genres such as sci-fi, horror or drama" at a high-quality level, with fully-developed characters having an expressiveness not commonly "seen in cartoons or movies."⁵⁰ In addition, an interview with *Änimerica*, the *Bubblegum Crisis* creator,

⁴⁸ "What is Anime?" in *Redline's Web Crossroad*, Redline. 2 Mar. 2001, 1. <http://web.archive.org/web/20010409064531/www.red-web.net/anime/info.html> (accessed 30 May 2010).

⁴⁹ Kevin M. Williams, "More Than a Cartoon, Anime Spans Genres," *Chicago Sun-Times*, 10 Nov. 1999, 55.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

Toshimichi Suzuki, reveals why there is a particular appeal of Japanese manga and anime among many American audiences and the differences in perception regarding comics among Japanese:

Regardless of where you live, there's a certain age when you cut off your ties with cartoons, wouldn't you agree? Japan is the kind of place where even adults read *Weekly Shonen Jump* and whatnot. There's no shortage of these childlike adults there. But in the U.S. and in other countries, people stop watching animation after a certain point. There's just no more animation worth their time to see. Maybe this is why Japanese OAVs are getting such attention.⁵¹

The above *Redline* reference may aid in examining the plots of the stories and the amount of times characters display certain kinds of behavior relating to victimization or loss, et cetera, surrounding the bomb, which ultimately help us in realizing their target audience level or the intended audience. It is presumed that certain themes referencing the bomb will appear more often than others, and many manga do in fact have a hidden message or several messages to them. The various age groups of manga can then be defined here that relate to the bomb that may have some inspiration in Tezuka's works.

For purposes of this study, the manga types most often containing references to the atomic bomb will be given, with several manga subgenres being listed here, which will later be filtered into those works inspired by Tezuka. For boys six to eighteen, *Shonen* is usually read. This type of manga varies all over each end of that group; even older people read *Shonen*, and it includes such hits as the early *Astro-Boy*, *Dragon Ball*

⁵¹ Seiji Horibuchi, "Bubblegum Crisis," *Animerica* 1, no. 3 (1993): 4.

and *Slam Dunk* (a basketball series).⁵² *Seinen* manga are normally aimed at men from ages fifteen to forty and have a wide variety of plots. In fact, the publishing company produces this type of manga for all age ranges also. *Golgo 13* (about a professional assassin) and *Hotel* (about hotel life) are categorized within this particular genre. There is such diversification in this area for all ages, aged twenty to twenty-five, twenty-five to thirty, and twenty to fifty.⁵³ Sharon Kinsella's "Change in the Social Status, Form, and Content of Adult Manga" explains themes in adult manga and examines further questions as to its social status and its development over time, and she provides analyses of how the common themes that run across this genre are analyzed and how they impact society. This type of study gets into some very interesting ideas about anime and what it means for people in general and their varying interests over time.⁵⁴ Other manga (not necessarily included in this study but notable for their significance) include *gekiga* manga, which are fun and entertainment manga, as described here:

Not all manga is simply for entertainment. Manga can be used to learn more about history, to create political satires, or a mixture of both. It can be used as an outlet for creative ideas, etc. And there are a few magazines dedicated to reminding us of that...One such magazine is *Garō*, which has existed since 1964. Its first story, *Kamui*, by Sampei Shirato, was a historic view of ninjas and the struggle for the rest of the works published in *Garō*. All stories had to be interesting and emphasize content instead of form. *Garō* is still published monthly, over thirty years later.⁵⁵

⁵² Fusami Ogi, "Gender Insubordination in Japanese Comics (Manga) for Girls," in *Illustrating Asia: Comics, Humor Magazines, and Picture Books*, ed. John A. Lent (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 171.

⁵³ Genres, 2.

⁵⁴ Sharon Kinsella, "Change in the Social Status, Form, and Content of Adult Manga," *Japan Forum* 8, no. 1 (1996): 103.

⁵⁵ Genres, 3.

In a similar vein, during the 1950s, many of the Classic Comics series in the United States presented, in addition to literary classics, commentaries and perspectives on history through popular characters from several viewpoints.⁵⁶

Minute references might be made to the war and/or the atomic bomb in children's works, but not as difficult or complex an idea as the ones coming from anime reserved for more mature audiences. Because of the nature of the content, many children may have a difficult time understanding fully the horror that comes from war, as in *Grave of the Fireflies*, and the fact that death inevitably is a part of the trauma of the war and the bomb itself.⁵⁷ Shades of the political ideology of realism are prevalent in many manga; for example, in *Akira*, the military and politicians would rather use the power of Akira to suit their own purposes instead of any greater cause, with the "world order...ruthlessly manipulated by the United States."⁵⁸ In contrast, Disney does not seem to present as well structured a storyline when it comes to such highly complex, sophisticated material as the subject of a war because of the Comics Code restrictions (i.e. Disney displays obvious shades of black and white in characters as well as what might happen next in a story).⁵⁹ As a counterpoint, one can also make the case that anime did not fit into this mold of ideal American values projected by Disney and threatened the status quo, as determined

⁵⁶ Charles Pelto, "Classic Comics Press," Classic Comics Press, <http://www.classiccomicspress.com/index.html> (accessed 30 April 2010).

⁵⁷ Marshall, 3.

⁵⁸ Bouissou, 31.

⁵⁹ Bouissou, 4.

by the Comics Code and Cold War politics of the time. In fact, in terms of Disney and the attitude of the time period, Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart's *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comics* describes the propaganda released into mainstream American society by Disney during the Cold War to portray Communists in a negative light, or at least, anyone who dared to engage the US in open conflict. Disney built his vision of America, his "Disneyland palaces," with a specific slant favoring US interests..."already colonized, with phantom inhabitants...to conform to Disney's notions of it. Each foreign country is...a...model within the process of invasion by Disney-nature.⁶⁰ Foreign states (particularly Communist ones) at opposing ends of the American political spectrum (such as Cold-War Era Vietnam and Cuba) that were in conflict with the United States were portrayed in a way that made "the revolutionary struggle appear banal," with Disney showing "underdeveloped peoples...like children, to be treated as such, and if they don't accept...they should have their pants taken down and...given a good spanking..."⁶¹ In essence, the Third World were portrayed as children or savages who needed to surrender to a foreign authority to bring them into the modern world, which appears to be a "replica of the...empire and colony...Under the suggestive title 'Better Guile Than Force,' Donald departs for a

⁶⁰ Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart, "From the Noble Savage to the Third World," in *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comics* (New York: I.G. Editions, 1975), 103.

⁶¹ Ibid.

Pacific atoll...to survive for a month, and returns loaded with dollars, like a modern business tycoon. The entrepreneur can do better than the missionary or... army.”⁶²

Essentially, Disney used the idea of imperialism to project anti-Communist attitudes among the general populace in certain regions throughout the world, especially towards audiences in Central and South America. In fact, not only were Communists seen negatively, but a view was given of Latin America and the Third World that was nothing short of being racist and patronizing. In addition, in postwar times through the pre-Vietnam era, Hollywood studios injected a similar focus promoting idealized American values, anti-Communism, and heavy endorsements of American ideals abroad, including a positive view of the Marshall Plan and an image of Europe back to Americans with the idea that America was becoming increasingly international, a nation flexing its global hegemony, with Hollywood also advancing what society deemed ideal American interests by espousing the benefits of the Marshall plan through film, saving Europe from “recrudescing communism” through “international capitalism, by...big screen American...cleanliness, abundance, and speed.”⁶³ American commodities portrayed in films also helped to push consumption even further and restore American prosperity, with a wholesome vision of Europe smitten with America’s internationalist perspective and superpower status, with “stars such as Cary Grant, James Stewart ...Audrey Hepburn...films such as *An American in Paris* (1951), *Roman Holiday* (1953),

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Christopher L. Connery, “Pacific Rim Discourse: The U. S. Global Imaginary in the Late Cold War Years,” *Boundary 2* 21, no. 1 (1994): 51-52.

To Catch a Thief (1955), *Paris Blues* (1961)” giving “the look of...expensive travelogues...full of long tracking shots and overheads of iconically European sites (the *Roman Forum*, *Notre Dame*...) from cranes and helicopters...Europe is...excess...thanks to U.S. pluck and technical know-how.”⁶⁴ Hollywood had a particular agenda to portray back to its audiences that the nation’s ideals were working abroad, an important part of the US mission to assert its global hegemon status.⁶⁵ This was American prosperity projected at its best. It was also perfect reading during the height of the Red Scare and the bomb shelter exercises of the 1950s-1960s, particularly for the United States. Especially during that time period, a company with Disney’s influence was immense, powerful, and equally as pushy of idealized American values on other cultures to the same degree that pro-American films were preferred in the United States towards mass American audiences as portraying the country in a positive light. Disney’s production company was seen as the voice of the nation for many years, with “a distinct U.S. style and tone” that has been successful since the studio’s founding in the 1920s, with its influence being so significant domestically and abroad as to be attracting criticism from “commentators such as Scott Schaffer,” who “suggest ‘...a... pattern behind Disney’s use of local stories or histories...the expansion of American political, economic, and cultural imperialistic power in the second half of the twentieth century.”⁶⁶ Disney’s goal was

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Susan J. Napier, “Confronting Master Narratives: History As Vision in Miyazaki Hayao’s *Cinema of De-assurance*,” *Position: East Asia Cultures Critique* 9, no. 2 (2001): 469.

(and still is, to some extent) not only to maximize entertainment and merchandising opportunities, but, as Schaffer and other expert commentators in this area suggest, to legitimize a particular American “worldview...upbeat and centered on individual action and initiative, and—while it acknowledges Otherness—often ends up erasing difference through its joyously inclusive finales...the “group hug” ending of *Aladdin* or...uniting of mermaid and human in *The Little Mermaid*.”⁶⁷ The main goal of American cinema here is to use reassurance, which, according to Robin Wood, is where “all problems are solved and harmony is restored under the aegis of U.S. ideology and values.”⁶⁸ This is an ideal case of how national icons, in the role of Disney characters, can be used to gain political support for a cause. Just as Donald Duck, for example, was told to pay taxes to “bury the Axis,” Disney has generally been noted to subconsciously suggest a particular America-centric point of view to project onto its audiences. Disney often played the role of representing the voice of the American people, which is evident in the way it extolled the virtues of American capitalism (and brought with it the stereotypes of an uncivilized Third World saved by American idealism) in the above reference when Donald Duck departed for a Pacific island in “Better Guile than Force” and came back rich in later works or in expounding the benefits of the Marshall Plan in rebuilding Europe in other post-war works. Other examples abound when Disney modified classic children’s tales to suit US audiences, as noted above in the happy ending for *The Little Mermaid* when mermaid and human lived happily ever after.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

Often, stereotypes of the East are projected through a Western lens, reflecting culturalist and imperialist attitudes, as discussed in Edward Said's book *Orientalism*, that often mirror how Disney and America portrayed Eastern nations such as Japan, for example. Toshiya Ueno further discusses the idea of Techno-Orientalism in an article called "Japanimation and Techno-Orientalism," where he outlines stereotypes of the Japanese by the West as being technologically advanced and culturally rigid that reflects a somewhat negative view often discussed in Said's works. Toshiya Ueno asks why anime is so highly developed in Japan, and this may have something to do with the Western lens of Japanese culture through the idea of Orientalism, since "David Morley and Kevin Rovins...argued in...*The Space of Identity* that 'Western stereotypes of...Japanese hold them to be sub-human...no feeling, no emotion, no humanity'...These impressions come from...high development of Japanese technologies...'Techno-Orientalism'."⁶⁹ Orientalism and the fear of foreigners are to blame for type-casting others through particular stereotypes, or cultural misrepresentations that are projected onto the Western world when "binary oppositions...were projected on to the geographic positions of Western and non-Western," creating the myth of a monolithic Orient that helps to bring attention back to the West and lumping the Orient into a "cultural, religious or linguistic unity."⁷⁰ Naoko Sakai says that the Orient is apparently unified by "that which is excluded and objectified by the West" and that "in...service of...its historical progress...the Orient is a shadow of the West." Furthermore, Ueno says that "If the

⁶⁹ Toshiya Ueno, "Japanimation and Techno-Orientalism," *Documentary Box* 9 (1996), 3-4.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

Orient was invented by the West, then the Techno-Orient... was invented y...information capitalism.”⁷¹ In ‘Techno-Orientalism,’ Japan is not only located geographically, but...projected chronologically. Jean Baudrillard called Japan a satellite in orbit. Now Japan [is]...the future of technology,” with Morley and Rovins suggesting that if the future involves technology, then the future is Japan.⁷² Evidence, then leads towards a Pacific-dominated era displacing Western hegemony, with Japanese animation displaying Japan within a futuristic, stereotyped lens that also looks down on Japan’s culture, with Techno-Orientalism being “a manipulator of the complex about Japan,” with the nation being “the object of transference of the envy and contempt from other cultures and nations. The Japanese function as effective figures of...information capitalism.”⁷³ Japanese scholars, as well, often misunderstand this interpretation and do not realize that the Western view of them as robotic and rigid often comes from past orientalist attitudes projected by scholars and companies such as Disney in their own works:

I think that the stereotype of the Japanese, which I would like to call "Japanoid" for not actually Japanese, exists neither inside nor outside Japan. This image functions as the surface or rather the interface controlling the relation between Japan and the other. Techno-Orientalism is a kind of mirror stage or an image machine whose effect influences Japanese as well as other people. This mirror in fact is a semi-transparent or two-way mirror. It is through this mirror stage and its cultural apparatus that Western or other people misunderstand and fail to recognize an always illusory Japanese culture, but it also is the mechanism through which Japanese misunderstand themselves.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ueno, 4

The manga *Ghost in the Shell* is further elaborated on when a metaphor of the mirror is discussed when the “Puppet Master” character from the work “...whispered a passage from the Bible to Motoko...’We resemble each other's essence, mirror images of one another's psyche.’...There are two mirror stages...One the encounter between human and machine...another is Japan and others...’Japanoid’ as object of envy and hate.”⁷⁵ Thus, strong images of Orientalism portray Western attitudes of the Japanese, with the Japanese likewise projecting these attitudes back onto their own culture for interpretation.

On a similar note, manga and anime artists had a way of projecting the Japanese psyche onto their audiences with stories such as *Astro-Boy*, where the Japanese demonstrated their fear of the destructive power of nuclear technology to conquer nature and mankind abusing technology in general for ill-intended purposes, or the tragic tale of *Grave of the Fireflies*, where one gained insight into the Japanese perspective of the devastation wrought by World War II on the civilian populace, showing the nation’s view of itself as a victim of both aggressive Allied bombing and a nation in the verge of losing its status as a great Empire that once was. A certain symbolic element of nostalgia exists in particular works as well, such as in *Akira*, that, despite the destruction of Neo-Tokyo in the latter part of the movie, like many other works, brings hope for a new age at some point in time that foreshadows their later economic rise to power. All of these images project a uniquely Japanese perspective that parallels what Disney often did in creating works from the lens of a contemporary American view of the world, stereotypes that included a Western projection of the East reflecting colonialist interpretations discussed

⁷⁵ Ueno, 4-5.

in Edward Said's *Orientalism*, with the Japanese then reflecting on these attitudes to themselves as to how they fit within a Western cultural context. These projections often led to negative portrayals and a cultural disconnect that did not allow American audiences to experience the work of anime artists until years later, as a result of not only the Comics Code restrictions, but because many American companies felt that the themes were not compatible with American audiences and would not be in line with what Disney typically produced as a cartoon standard, such as the theme of reassurance often seen in Disney fare, for instance. In addition, perhaps the themes of death, destruction, and rebirth as well as the evils of technology through Tezuka's works were perhaps not something producers felt American audiences would be familiar with or understand, as they were not victims of the atomic bombs and did not experience the same feelings of loss and devastation or would have been concerned to see elements of right-wing nationalism. On a final note, now that Comics Code restrictions have been lifted and anime fandom has expanded to a level that American mainstream media has caught on to some degree, in the last ten to fifteen years, we have only seen the beginning of the explosion of anime and manga into the United States, with truly beautiful creations of peoples' minds on themes such as the atomic bomb. This will be further explained and extrapolated on in the subsequent sections below. The particular themes inspired by Tezuka have been identified and the genres connected to particular works of manga and anime will now be explained further in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION

Research Methodology: Data Collection Steps and Procedures

The various groups of manga, inspired by Tezuka's ideas from 1945-1965 or the period 1985-1995, relating to the atomic bomb, will be qualitatively examined through case studies and historical analysis by the themes introduced above. The case studies will be particular works of anime that reference the atomic bomb and the two central themes that serve as our dependent variables. The two central themes will be strengthened by evidence from the subthemes (independent variables) found throughout specific works of anime. The story lines and the tendencies of characters to display particular themes of loss and devastation, rebirth, and technology versus nature leading to destruction will help us to pinpoint evidence of the influence of Tezuka's works of fans primarily in the science fiction, fantasy and future post-apocalyptic genres of manga and which audiences the manga is intended for (see article for the age groups).¹ It is assumed that particular themes previously mentioned will dominate within certain groups, and sometimes there is a hidden message which must be meticulously analyzed. The devastating consequences of manga centered on atomic bomb themes, or even the themes that are related directly to the tragedies of the atomic bomb, do not necessarily paint a pretty picture.

¹ Genres, 1.

Part of the success of manga cartoonists was in fact due to the great deal of creative freedom that manga artists had on their own production:

There are cultural reasons for the freedom enjoyed by the manga, since the traditional culture blurs the distinction between Good and Bad, and does not attach moral connotation to sexual matters, Japanese society displays a high level of tolerance. Also, due to historical reasons, the Japanese media has always been very sensitive to any official attempt at censorship, which reminds of the militarist regime. And—last but not least—the *mangaka* retain the licensing rights for their characters on top of royalties on comics. The most famous ones regularly make the list of the highest income earners and are completely immune from any financial pressure.²

Cartoonists were not tied to rigid contracts that limited their freedom of expression in their creations, unlike in the United States, where large studios were the standard, and the artists under contract often had to conform within these parameters. Schodt clarifies this when he discusses Tezuka's works during the height of his *Astroboy* fame: "...Unlike American comic book artists at the time (who were usually just one member of a larger production system established by a publisher), Tezuka had complete control over his work and often revised it by himself."³ Many comic artists have been following the so-called "Comics Code," which was established in 1949 (and written down in 1971) with a variable consensus throughout the United States. The "Standards of the Comics Code Authority for Editorial Matter as Originally Adopted," by Les Daniels, editor of *Comics: A History of Comic Books in America*, displays the basic standards set forth by the

² Bouissou, 13.

³ Frederik L. Schodt, "Designing a World," in *The Astro Boy Essays: Osamu Tezuka, Mighty Atom, and the Manga/Anime Revolution*, ed. Frederick L. Schodt (Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge Press, 2007), 34.

comics code in the United States, which were enforced heavily and unmodified until after the 1970s.⁴ For example, even some of the American comic authors who occasionally delved into political territory, such as Gary Trudeau with his *Doonesbury* strip, were still affected by conservative American values and the specter of the Comic Code's influence up into the last few decades, as Kerry Soper's research has shown:

On the eve of the 1980 presidential election, Trudeau ran a weeklong series called "Mysterious World of Reagan's Brain" that depicted the candidate's mind as "deep, neglected, uncharted territory - a sort of brain of darkness," Soper says. More than two dozen papers dropped the strip, including the *Indianapolis Star*. Editors there received 850 phone calls of complaint and succumbed to pressure to reinstate the comic.⁵

Japanese artists commonly do not face this kind of intense pressure that has obligated some American artists to tone down their rhetoric in order to reach mass audiences, for fear of being censored or restricted in some way, as the above case suggests. The Comics Code set strict guidelines for what kind of material was allowed in comic books and the way characters were portrayed; indeed, artists who disregarded the Code had difficulty releasing their comics on the market. Japanese authors also inevitably encountered this censorship and could not effectively sell a great body of their work in the US until the 1990s or so. Noboru Ishiguro, the director of *Space Battleship Yamato*, elaborates on this: "There are strict rules against American [animated violence]...Japanese television, which does not have (and, in fact, has never had) these sorts of restrictions, has

⁴ Les Daniels and John Peck, eds., "Standards of the Comics Code Authority For Editorial Matter as Originally Adopted," in *Comix: A History of Comic Books in America* (Providence, RI: Mad Peck Studios and Les Daniels, 1971), 1.

⁵ "First Book on *Doonesbury* Chronicles Trudeau's 'Obama-New Yorker Cover' Moments," in *BYU News* [<http://news.byu.edu/archive08-Aug-doonesbury.aspx>], Brigham Young University, 2008 (accessed 10 Sep. 2010).

traditionally provided much more room to develop various sorts of expression.”⁶ Though censorship did exist to some extent in Japan with respect to media, Kosei Ono explained that “One big difference...between Japan and America was that the border between children's culture and adults' culture was much more blurred in Japan,” hence a different standard developed pertaining to restrictions in general.⁷ The Daniels article is merely a listing of the code, and one will immediately notice how stringent some of the laws are and how much more flexible they have gotten over the years.

In addition, the Comics Code itself included guidelines and references to obscene materials, such as pornography and excessive amounts of violence. For example, on the issue of crime, the original standards dictate such information as “if crime is depicted it shall be as a sordid and unpleasant activity,” and “Criminals shall not be presented so as to be rendered glamorous or to occupy a position which creates the desire for emulation.”⁸ The code essentially created a void in American comic fare, prompting the fans to look for something else, as many American cartoons slowly degenerated into standard, formulaic works, often digressing from the early narratives with some depth to works with lesser quality by the 1950s, with “shows like *Tom and Jerry*...’sanitized’ to remove their politically incorrect content, reducing them to repeated action scenes with fits of unresolved violence.”⁹ There was little substance to some of these works other

⁶ Leonard, 285.

⁷ “News: The 3rd Annual Japan-US Manga Symposium,” in *Comic Box* (2008): 1-3, <http://www.comicbox.co.jp/sympo.html> (accessed 18 March 2010).

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Leonard, 283-284.

than to fill up a television schedule. Saturday-morning cartoons set a trend for making animated works mainly for children and tied in advertising sponsors, turning away adult viewers and making many cartoons essentially long commercials at times, which “prompted a spate of derivative superhero works and strong censorship rulings throughout the late 1960s and 1970s, the latter motivated by parental groups and moral organizations.”¹⁰ Many fans felt this created a void that called for them to look elsewhere, to foreign works, such as anime instead, to fill this void.¹¹ Anime filled the gap, the space that was forming within the context of a demand for family-friendly cartoons in America at the time, plus the pressure of the Comics Code restrictions caused problems. The American fans found solace in anime as a counter-response to this movement, something that gave them hope, without any restrictions, that captured more creative, developed storylines not necessarily or excessively tied to commercial interests: “In the United States, as...the rest of the world, animation has...been...a Disney creation...exclusively for children...Japanese animation - or anime...in Japan...having turned this practical wisdom on its head, is now an effectual presence in foreign markets and...threat to Disney.”¹² More often in anime, realistic scenarios could be portrayed, including those of violence from World War II and the trauma that came out of many post-war works. Anime is notable for what separates it from these American styles of cartoons:

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Takashi Momma, “Miyazaki Hayao and Japanese Animation,” *Journal of Japanese Trade and Industry* July/August 2002, 1, http://www.jef.or.jp/journal/jef_contents_free.asp?c=201 (accessed 15 June 2010).

Anime is distinct from...types of *animation* most Americans are familiar with. It's not "The Flintstones"; it's not "Bugs Bunny"; it's not *Toy Story*. And it's not necessarily for kids. Anime is slick, vibrant, and detailed, and...aimed at mature audiences. It often features large-eyed heroines, fantastical mechanical robots, and fast-paced action. Anime artists achieve the medium's distinct look...using a broader color palette than...in typical Saturday morning cartoons; applying creative lighting to set mood; focusing on minute detail, such as refracted images in water, accurate historical settings, and intricate mechanical devices; and experimenting with camera angles and abstract backgrounds.¹³

Anime, especially within the genres of fantasy, science fiction, and future, apocalyptic works, has such realism within its works that can even prove to be unsettling, not unlike live-action movies. For manga artists, it was hard not to show the grittiness that the war caused and the violence that they had experienced with their own eyes, such as Osamu Tezuka (creator of *Astro-Boy*) did, but the Comics Code forbade such material in this country. Further references to crime are depicted here:

(Part A Standards) 6. In every instance good shall triumph over evil and the criminal punished for his misdeeds.

7. Scenes of excessive violence shall be prohibited. Scenes of brutal torture, excessive and unnecessary knife and gun play, physical agony, gory and gruesome crime shall be eliminated.¹⁴

Even in scenes that did not relate to crime, the standards were quite restrictive (which would explain why anything graphic resulting from radioactivity or the atomic bomb might be pushed aside):

(Part B Standards) 1. No comic magazine shall use the word "horror" or "terror" in its title.

2. All scenes of horror, excessive bloodshed, gory or gruesome crimes, depravity, lust, sadism, and masochism shall not be permitted.

3. All lurid, unsavory, gruesome illustrations shall be eliminated.¹⁵

¹³ Lorraine Savage, "The Anime Invasion," *Computer Graphics World* 21, no. 4 (1998): 74.

¹⁴ Daniels, 1.

¹⁵ Ibid.

The Japanese artists, though, did not feel the pressure of the markets to give in to these standards, and in fact, no one forced them to.

One of the reasons why manga possesses such mass appeal to a variety of audiences is because of the flexibility enjoyed by the Japanese in exploring the storylines and the seemingly fantastical originality involved with the plots, the characters, and the imagery present, as explained by the *Bubblegum Crisis* creator Toshimichi Suzuki. He states that with a 120 million-plus population, anime is meant for its fans primarily, and that though the medium remains popular, the market for it does not fill every niche that sales and promotions can reach: “It’s all such a small world...we laugh about it sometimes, how the Great Toshiba and the Great Polydor and the Great Sony are creating entire departments within their gigantic corporations to sell product to maybe 10,000 people...”¹⁶ Suzuki explains that his company, Artmic, could cater to America if they decided to, even with only a small, 10,000-strong audience, with so many hobbyists interested in the medium.¹⁷ The contrast with America is that the idea of “million-sellers” is not an issue with the Japanese, since they are focused on a smaller scale, and even with a large-scale work like *Terminator* or *Star Wars*, the first Japanese release would...be... 100,000...In the U.S., you’d...start from a million...Sales in urban areas like Los Angeles can’t be projected to the entire nation. What’s coming out in Tokyo may

¹⁶ Horibuchi, 9.

¹⁷ Ibid.

well reflect sales all over Japan, but...not...America.”¹⁸ This means that manga artists in Japan seem to prefer quality over quantity, which is also a reflection of the contrast in outlook of manga and anime companies looking for creativity and pleasing the fans over the often typical view of large American film or comic companies of grabbing every niche of the market and maximizing sales.

In reference to the independence of manga artists, these *mangaka*, as they are called, are free to write whatever they please, and if they have disagreements with a company on material, they oftentimes can form their own production with other artists or illustrators to develop completely new material. Basically, “One reason the Japanese like anime so much is that it isn't limited by budgets or special effects problems. Anything that can be drawn can be shown, and the artists can use bizarre angles or forced perspectives to create unexpected effects.”¹⁹ Azuma quotes Oshii (of *Ghost in the Shell* and *Patlabor* fame) in explaining that “nobody wants to watch simple anime like works, on the contrary, people want to watch works that are considered cultural and progressive...with some variation of the illustrations and with little interesting niblets scattered around for taste.”²⁰ In short, this means that anime fans are looking for great originality, which these artists seem to deliver on in many ways because of creative control. In addition, such freedom gives the artist a comfort zone in which to work that is unparalleled anywhere else, contributing to its rapid ascension worldwide and especially

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Roger Ebert, “Wings: a Sensational Peek at Japan's 'Anime,’” *Chicago Sun-Times*, 12 May 1995, 38.

²⁰ Hiroki Azuma, “Anime or Something Like It: Neon Genesis Evangelion,” *InterCommunication* 18 (1996): 1, http://www.ntticc.or.jp/pub/ic_mag/ic018/intercity/higashi_E.html (accessed 15 June 2010).

among American audiences: “Anime is becoming...more appealing to non-*Japanese* audiences...because of its unique design, storytelling, and presentation style...Anime is aimed at a broader audience that includes adults...Anime directors have more liberty than their American counterparts.”²¹ Characters in anime, according to Savage, have a great deal of depth and exhibit imperfect qualities, even dying at times, evil characters admire their opponents’ abilities and fight for a cause instead of simply greed, and women also play important roles as “more... the protector or aggressor than the damsel in distress”; these types of themes “are responsible for anime’s growing notoriety in the US...Most major video...and rental shops carry anime...and... dozens of conventions...feature anime exclusively...There are...video games...and...Web pages devoted to ... anime ... Many college campuses sport at least one anime club.”²² The possibilities are unlimited, giving absolute independence to the artists. This ability to express wide-ranging creative ideas in their works is explained by the fact that two features of Japanese comics stick out, which are “the idiosyncrasies of the market and variety and depth of expression.”²³ The manga editors in the publishing companies are also the keys to market demand and “highly developed expressive methods,” since they are actively involved in the process of making comics and in contributing to story ideas, often becoming very personable with authors and helping them through long days to get a large amount of work done.²⁴ This

²¹ Savage, 77.

²² Ibid.

²³ Natsume Fusanosuke, “Japanese Manga: Its Expression and Popularity,” *ABD* 34, no. 1 (2003): 5.

²⁴ Ibid.

participation level in the manga development process is unheard of in other countries, and the editing system is quite unique and requires more than a few pages to express here; it actually harkens back to the early days of Japan's "now-maligned system of life-time employment."²⁵ Distribution figures for manga and anime remain quite impressive today.

Indeed, because of this popularity and public appeal of manga and anime, worldwide distribution figures indicate sales of epic proportions in relation to American or even French comics. The comics industry began to expand a great deal in the 1990s. For example, Ito says that "In 1991, about 6 billion books and magazines were published in Japan. Comic magazines comprised 35 percent, or 2.1 billion copies, a 5.2 percent increase from 1990."²⁶ Reider explains that artists like Osamu Tezuka are responsible for helping to spur the manga industry to epic proportions in recent decades, helping rebuild the postwar economy to the point that by "1995, comic books and magazines were a billion dollar industry, accounting for forty percent of all books and magazines sold."²⁷ Sales have even been rising over time in the United States alone into a \$4.2 billion industry by 2004.²⁸ In 1994, when the industry just began to take a foothold in the United States, manga and anime had grown "from an underground hobby for American

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Kinko Ito, "Sexism in Japanese Weekly Comic Magazines for Men," in *Asian Popular Culture*, ed. John A. Lent (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 127.

²⁷ Noriko T. Reider, "Transformation of the Oni: From the Frightening and Diabolical to the Cute and Sexy," *Asian Folklore Studies* 62, no. 1 (2003): 149.

²⁸ Reid, 30.

collectors into a mini-industry that generated \$10 million in comic book sales and \$50 million in home video sales...”²⁹ According to Marvin Gliecher of Manga Entertainment at the time, “Ancillary merchandise like toy models and T-shirts account for \$10 million in annual sales...”³⁰ Furthermore, American “*otaku*” had been known to “pay \$3 to \$12 for each comic book, sometimes spending more than \$500 a year, and \$30 to \$35 for videos.”³¹ Anime “aficionados, often teenagers on limited budgets, buy copies ‘even though they cost between \$20 and \$30,’ says Patrick Mathewes of Scarecrow Video in Seattle, which stocks about 500 Japanimation titles. ‘So bringing the price down will help a lot.’”³² In 1994, Tower Video’s Vice-President John Thrasher said that “Best’s \$14.95 Streamline titles have done particularly well, predicts steady growth.” In Europe, in 1995, it was reported that the market has also been expanding rapidly over time:

Since the video release of "Akira" in 1992, the European Anime market has expanded faster than demons appearing in an arcade game. The U.K. currently holds first place with wholesale revenues of 2.5 million to 3 million pounds (\$3.75 million to \$4 million) wholesale, followed by Spain, Italy, and France, and then Germany, Benelux, and Scandinavia...British shipments average 5, 000 cassettes at 9.99 pounds (\$15) suggested list. Market leader Manga Video skews high and claims a 15, 000-unit average, aided by top-sellers *Legend Of The Overfiend* and *Akira*, which did 20, 000 and 80, 000 tapes, respectively. The next goal is to introduce more sports, children's, women's, and educational releases to broaden the genre and boost the numbers.³³

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Seth Goldstein, “Orion, PolyGram Bring Anime to Mainstream,” *Billboard*, 24 Dec. 1994, 13.

³³ Peter Dean, “World Vid Vendors Fight Over Anime,” *Billboard*, 28 Jan. 1995, 71.

In 1998, The *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported that *Princess Mononoke* had grossed \$131 million dollars in Japan, with *Evangelion* getting about \$22 million “from movie distribution in Japan-but five times that amount in CDs and videos,” out of a Japanese film industry total figure of “20%-40% of its domestic revenue” coming “from animations.”³⁴ In fact, Japanese anime producers focused on international competition, especially with Hollywood movies, since anime is big business and generates top dollars. The Japanese focused on animation and “churns out 30 to 40 films and TV programs a week. Pioneered by...Tezuka – the...’God Emperor’ of anime, whose *Kimba, the White Lion* series may have been plagiarized by Disney’s *The Lion King*—Japanimation encompasses...sophisticated soap operas to eco-conscious raccoons.”³⁵ Carl Macek, who brought *Robotech* and *Akira* to the US, explains that “There’s more to it than just babes with big boobs and a raygun jumping around in outer space blasting bug-eyed monsters... For every one of those B-movie girlie films there’s a film like *Barefoot Gen*, which deals with the aftermath of Hiroshima.”³⁶ Characters such as those in *Sailor Moon* are not just sexy, but powerful and independent, generating over “\$250 million a year in tie-in toys in Japan, five times the sales for the once mighty *Power Rangers*,” with merchandising being crucial to its reach overseas.³⁷ Thus, animation industry remains considerably influential to Japan and its export power abroad. In a way, Japan is still discovering a means of exposing its culture to the outside world as an international

³⁴ Eriko Amaha, “A Royal Success,” *Far Eastern Economic Review* 161, no. 4 (1998): 37.

³⁵ Rick Marin, and T. Trent Gegax, “Holy Akira! It’s Aeon Flux,” *Newsweek*, 14 Aug. 1995, 68.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

player, while at the same time, finding a way to exhibit its uniqueness without compromising its own values for a global audience:

No people has been more obsessed with internationalization than the Japanese. Since opening its doors to the outside world in the mid-nineteenth century, Japan has evolved into a Western-style nation state, first as an autocratic imperialist and then as a U.S.-modeled industrial democracy, chronicling struggle after struggle for international acceptance. *Kokusaika*, as the Japanese call internationalization, has been a buzz word that evokes the sense of progressivism, as opposed to tradition-bound nationalism. The country's path to modernity is punctuated by frequent clashes between the two *modus operandis*, between future-embracing metamorphosis with a touch of self-denial and the reactionary defense of independence and uniqueness.³⁸

The anime world has gained quite a following in recent years. By 2003, the anime industry had exploded worldwide to include Japanese manga sales totaling over 4 billion eurodollars in 2003, compared to over 110 million eurodollars in American comics and almost 220 million eurodollars in French comics, with manga outselling the nearest competition nearly twenty times over.³⁹

Another contributor to success in the manga world is the fact that, unlike in France and the United States, manga invite reader input with postcards at the end of comics and ask the audience to contribute potential story ideas to their liking. The three best storylines by the readers, no matter how obscene or perverted they are, usually are the ones that survive, and the unpopular ideas normally run out and end shortly thereafter.⁴⁰ The complexity of story lines and the number of characters in manga are

³⁸ Akira Ishikawa, "Pokemon Break Ground for Japan," Asia International Forum, http://www.siue.edu/EASTASIA/Yuki_Pokemon_040200.htm (accessed 15 June 2010).

³⁹ Didier Pasamonik, "La BD Franco-Belge dans le Monde : un Nain Parmi les Géants," Univers BD, http://www.actuabd.com/article.php3?id_article=1043 (accessed 15 June 2010).

⁴⁰ Bouissou, 15.

simply mind-boggling, as Brian Fuller explains in “Macross,” along with the appeal to the reader/viewer to contribute to the story and be part of the experience:

The *Macross* saga, (a robot/mecha anime) for example, traced the life stories of 42 major characters. Within the course of a series, the birth, marriage, and even the death of any one (or all) of the players may be chronicled. The substantive plots are thick with complexity, almost precluding accessibility for the novice. Nevertheless, some of the richest characters in modern literature await the viewer who is willing to actively contribute to his own entertainment.⁴¹

The above example displays the complicated themes and emotions facing many characters in anime and manga, perhaps the reason why many American comic fans may be drawn to these themes, unlike several other types of comics often produced by large American corporations, with typical lines drawn between good and evil characters in comics in the United States, as noted by Susan Napier, who explains that, though the West tends to stereotype anime as strictly for children or only for adults, anime actually has a wide audience across all ages and a great deal of variety in its subject matter, as well as being “non-American,” but, as film scholar Susan Pointon emphasizes ... *uncompromisingly* non-American. Anime references ... indigenous Japanese culture but ... its narrative structures, style, pacing, and...emotional tone differ from ... American animation and cinema ...⁴² Many American movies have a tendency to produce “dynamics of reassurance” with happy endings, where all on the side of good usually live, whereas Japanese animation is usually more emotional, complicated,

⁴¹ Fuller, 2.

⁴² Susan Napier, “Peek-a-Boo Pikachu: Exporting an Asian Subculture,” *Harvard Asia Pacific Review* 5, no. 2 (2001): 14.

sometimes melancholy, and full of mass destruction.⁴³ Good characters may perish, and evil ones show “moral complexity;” in general, anime offers more variety for the viewer in comedies where the male character may not always win over the female, where doomsday images abound, and where “heroism and self-sacrifice” are revealed “within a...sense of cultural despair...It is this dark and richly nuanced world that has captured a ...number of Americans over the last decade...”⁴⁴ Without realizing it, many American fans of comics and cartoons in particular have been conditioned to Japanese anime over the years from an early age (starting with *Robotech*, *Star Blazers*, *Sailor Moon*, then to the *Pokemon* era and beyond) and do not make the connection as to why they may seem attracted to these works more often than those originating from mainstream film companies in the United States.⁴⁵ Generally, even Japanese writers like Masakazu Kubo are likely to note the differences between how American and Japanese audiences have been conditioned to view animated works: “North American movie critics had taken a critical view of animation...as ‘kids-stuff’ and treated the genre as such...whether...produced in America or Japan. If...popular, it was because of the toys and games related to those...Further, critics probably saw these...as transitory...” The fact that the film *Princess Mononoke* failed in the United States displays some evidence of this view.⁴⁶ Thus, cultural views of animation explain why many Americans, conditioned by earlier

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Masakazu Kubo, “Japanese Animation as an Industry,” *Journal of Japanese Trade and Industry* July/August 2002, 1, http://www.jef.or.jp/journal/jef_contents_free.asp?c=200 (accessed 20 June 2010).

generations of predictable, family-friendly works by such companies as Disney and perhaps because of earlier censorship laws, for example, did not know what to expect of this genre, thus not knowing what to think when these works began creeping overseas more and more. The works of early predecessors such as Tezuka, for example, delved into territory unfamiliar to American audiences, such as in the context of Tezuka's world of interconnected characters throughout his "Star System", which contains "...stock characters and 'casting'...different roles in different comics...distinct...personalities...It differs from...conventional stock character systems... Disney cartoons in which Mickey Mouse appears in various...plots...each of Tezuka's "stars" has a strong 'off-stage' identity..."⁴⁷ The complexities of themes found across many Japanese manga and anime perhaps may explain why so many Americans are fans of these genres, and why so many will often buy these over popular works from their own country. These American anime fans are quite attracted to the mediums and have driven their success rate up significantly in the US, often choosing Japanese works over American ones for their uniqueness. Japanese animation has also been known to make fun of itself through zany characters and ridiculous plotlines, with "the dynamic drawing style, fantastic settings and weird storylines...virtually a language unto themselves" which "seem to operate in a separate dimension to their Western equivalents."⁴⁸ According to Benoit Runel of *Fox Kids* in Europe, "Comic books have been known to bring inspiration to many Japanese

⁴⁷ Natsu Onoda Power, "Stars and Jokes," in *God of Comics: Osamu Tezuka and the Creation of Post-World War II Manga*, ed. Natsu Onoda Power (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2009), 66.

⁴⁸ Rupert Howe, "Made in Japan: Chasing the Dragon; Pokemon was Nicknamed 'Kiddie Crack'. But a New Wave of Japanese Monsters Threatens to be even More Addictive. Rupert Howe Reports," *The Independent* (London), 5 March 2000, 22.

animators,” and though “It can also be seen as cheap animation and some of it doesn't have the same budget as in the West...it's the scriptwriting and direction of the scenes which make it so appealing.”⁴⁹ These are merely some of the many examples of why manga has such worldwide appeal. The manga world itself has become so large that it has its own language, and its own set of terms that hardcore fans use and only understand amongst each other.

The hardcore fan of pop culture (manga in this case) is called an *otaku* (a Japanese *honorific* term for another's house or family or is also known as an *honorific* second-person pronoun), one who becomes obsessed with particular comics, and who helped fuel the manga industry a great deal, much as the term “fanboy” is used for fanatic comics fans in the United States. The article “About Otaku eZine” explains what an otaku is and how obsessed otaku can be about anime; Tezuka's works stimulated interest in manga and anime fans to begin distinguishing themselves as otaku of these forms of media. In Japan, the term may have a negative connotation, but in the U.S., its usage can be more positive to mean someone who has a sincere interest in something.⁵⁰ “Anime Definitions,” from *The Unofficial Anime Definition Page*, gives all kinds of anime definitions in the genre and helps others understand the lingo of the anime-obsessed fans, the otaku. For example, many otaku do fan-subbing of Japanese animated works of material not released overseas yet, which can lead to dubious results at times. Mass fandom has also inspired many otaku to put significant effort into these translations,

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Erik Josue, “About Otaku eZine,” Erik Josue, <http://web.archive.org/web/20020805185555/www.otakuezine.com/about.php> (accessed 20 June 2010).

which take up a majority of their time. The fans then share these “fansubs” in Internet sites and with other online groups, with translation software also being developed across various computer platforms (before the Internet, fans traded titles, films, and comic books among themselves or wrote their own translations with whatever equipment was available at the time). Much of this work is pro-bono and may not be the most professional, but it gets the job done, sometimes, as stated, with silly, unorthodox results, making up for sophistication with creativity, using “different colored subtitles,” as these otaku “introduce the foreign word into...English...with a definition that sometimes fills the screen.”⁵¹ The subtitles also include “small-type definitions and cultural explanations...illegible on the fly... different fonts, sizes, and colors to correspond to material aspects of language, from voice to dialect to written text within the frame ...And...“subtitles” all over the screen.”⁵² The fans writing the subtitles are practically going back in time to the days of subtitled early black-and-white films, but the “underlying differences put the two worlds apart.”⁵³ The fan-subtitled works contain clever expressions that only other anime-obsessed otaku may understand, but these “fansubs”, as they are called, are not necessarily the most suitable versions of translated titles available for mainstream consumers. Annalee Newitz concurs that American *anime* fans not only reinterpret these texts through their own readings but also provide their own

⁵¹ Abe Mark Nomes, “For an Abusive Subtitling,” *Film Quarterly* 52, no. 3 (1999): 31-32.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

translations and subtitles for Japanese originals.”⁵⁴ The fan-subbers may be little understood outside of the world of anime fandom itself. The unusual otaku language may be a bit puzzling, but deciphering it is definitely the key to understanding what the die-hard fans are talking about when debating anime.⁵⁵ These arguments are not for the casual anime fan; sometimes non-otaku will get lost without some guidance from hardcore fans. This is a dialect developed by very devoted fans, basically requiring a “fan” dictionary when one tries to read it. Interestingly enough, otaku are valuable for also adding to the social commentary in translations and for establishing links to important political components of particular works for anime or manga which contain such themes. Otaku, in a sense, are one of the driving forces behind anime’s fandom, in fact, according to Japanese researcher Mizuko Ito:

To support their media obsessions, otaku acquire challenging language skills and media production crafts of scripting, editing, animating, drawing, and writing. And they mobilize socially to create their own communities of interest and working groups to engage in collaborative media production and distribution. Otaku use visual media as the source material for crafting their own identities, and as the coin of the realm for their social networks. Engaging with and reinterpreting professionally produced media is one stepping stone towards critical media analysis and alternative media production.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Susan Pointon, “Transcultural Orgasm as Apocalypse: Urotsukidoji: The Legend of the Overfiend,” *Wide Angle* 19.3 (1997): 51.

⁵⁵ “Anime Definitions,” in *The Unofficial Anime Definition Page* [<http://replay.waybackmachine.org/20050403210040/http://www.tapanime.com/fun/def.html>], TAP Productions, 2002 (accessed 30 June 2010).

⁵⁶ Mizuko Ito, “Otaku Literacy,” Paper presented as part of the symposium *A Global Imperative: The Report of the 21st Century Literacy Summit* at a meeting of the New Media Consortium, San Jose, CA, 26-28 April 2005.

In this respect, manga and anime have now become elements of mainstream pop culture in the United States, though the path of manga settling into contemporary American society has faced many hurdles along the way, especially in the early years.

The Comics Code has made it difficult over the years for many Japanese manga to break into the market here in the United States. Actual realtime experiences, such as the atomic bomb, were considered too sensitive and inappropriate subject matter for the American market.⁵⁷ Perhaps it was presumed that many readers would react unfavorably to something that might not have a good versus evil plotline or an unfamiliar one, as many American comics often contained. When we examine the former “enemy” in Japan from WWII, it becomes a challenging task to say that there are any “bad guys” left or polar opposites of the US in terms of political ideology.⁵⁸ In fact, images of the war and the horrors brought about by such a weapon as the atomic bomb (according to Otsuka, even *Astro-Boy* used to be called *Mighty Atom*, or actually *Ambassador Atom* even earlier, in Japanese, which referenced the atomic bomb and the earlier AMPO Japan-US Peace Treaty released that same year)⁵⁹ present a murky, gray area that gives us the hard task of distinguishing between good and evil because of a lack of specified social mores that exist in the Japanese culture, unlike in many Judeo-Christian cultures. Also, many companies felt that American audiences were not ready for anime’s depiction of

⁵⁷ Daniels, 1.

⁵⁸ Jennifer Wong, “Anime Mania: Astro Boy (Tesuwan Atom),” *Funtoys2us*, http://replay.waybackmachine.org/20010427212024/http://www.funtoys2us.com/editorial/articles/at_archives/aug00/at_20000816.asp (accessed 30 June 2010).

⁵⁹ Eiji Otsuka, “Disarming Atom: Tezuka Osamu’s Manga at War and Peace,” *Mechademia* 3 (2008): 111.

unconventional themes or tragedy of a type that was inappropriate under Comics Code guidelines, since the name Astroboy itself was associated with the atomic bomb, and therefore, it violated political correctness at the time.⁶⁰ This murkiness between good and evil with gray areas is further expressed in Ian Condry's article "Youth, Intimacy, and Blood: Media and Nationalism in Contemporary Japan," in which he explains the victimization of the Japanese among themselves and how they are able to cope with their sense of loss from catastrophic events in the war. The anime *Blood+* involves "a young schoolgirl," "conspiracies with the American military while battling bloodthirsty monsters," and the young schoolgirl's situation with an adopted family, all whilst battling monsters in the midst of "loyalties and the violence of war."⁶¹ Some anime offer a clear, dividing line between good and evil, but often, since then, "we find more often the elaboration of gray areas in battle," such as in *Mobile Suits Gundam* (1979), where alien and human characters seemed to possess more three-dimensional traits concerning "fear, anxiety, and moral dubiousness of war..." and Takahata's *Grave of the Fireflies* (1988) brings to light the possibility that war is not about "'who fought whom,' but how the suffering was extraordinary, and meted out on civilians as well as soldiers. Since Gundam, one of Anime's attractions has been this willingness to explore the multiple dimensions of war's brutality."⁶² The brutality of war is universal, no matter what side one is on, which serves as one of the independent variables that the Japanese wish for the

⁶⁰ Bouissou, 4.

⁶¹ Ian Condry, "Youth, Intimacy, and Blood: Media and Nationalism in Contemporary Japan," in *Japan Focus* (2007): 1, <http://japanfocus.org/products/details/2403> (accessed 20 June 2010).

⁶² Ibid.

world, including the US, to discover. All of these characteristics make anime often fairly complex to comprehend, more than what most children's programming is designed for today in the United States. This means that anime brings something to the table that appeals to many American fans that not often found in their Saturday morning cartoons, for example. According to Hiroki Azuma, the recurring themes in such works as *Spaceship Yamato*, for example, are a "spiritual and self-sacrificing philosophy...the imitation of...Japanese pre-war military... 'Yamato'...means 'Japan' in poetic language and the spaceship...is...from a salvaged Japanese navy warship sunk in the famous battle of...World War 2. The implication is clear."⁶³ This is referencing a great, powerful warship called the *Yamato* once sunk by the Allies in World War II; the ship was used as a national symbol to portray the great empire once lost. The idea portrayed here and in the earlier quote(s) is that the Japanese faced human suffering just as much as others during the war, which means that war affects everyone involved, unfortunately, no matter which side is portrayed as good or bad. Though the Japanese were on the side of the Axis powers, they, too, faced suffering and devastation and were traumatized by the war's events. The important element concerning this independent variable (one that reinforces the two central main theme of the paper) for the Japanese regarding the atomic bomb in these works is that they focused on the suffering of many civilian, as well as military, casualties, and they see war as a process devoid of morals, which helps them deal with the idea of how they were decimated during the war and the bomb attacks, bringing a dramatically different perspective than the "good" and "evil" Allied versus

⁶³ Hiroki Azuma, "Superflat Japanese Postmodernity," lecture presented at a meeting at the Museum of Contemporary Art, West Hollywood, CA, 5 April 2001.

Axis plot often portrayed by formulaic films in the United States to mimic the Cold War-era dichotomies of the Soviet Union and the United States.⁶⁴ In many ways, we can relate the universal suffering of war by all involved to common themes that bind humanity, the reality of which shows that war does not discriminate in terms of tragedy, a theme often visited by Tezuka himself in his works. Much like the series *Yamato*, Kwame Appiah's idea of cosmopolitanism (similar to universal ideals expressed by Tezuka) concerns the idea that man can, at some point, find that he can set aside his differences and find themes that are common to all humanity, as Tezuka tried to do in his works years before the *Yamato* series premiered. In the *Yamato* series, man has found a way to combine diverse backgrounds into a cohesive unit to work together and travel into the deep realms of space to save humanity. In the end, looking beyond these differences to the things that bind them all (through Appiah's vision of cosmopolitanism) makes them realize that humanity has more in common with itself than its physical differences suggest. Cosmopolitanism across cultures can also be seen in Henry Jenkins' idea of *pop cosmopolitanism*, whereby younger people are broadening the gap between nations by "distinguishing themselves from their parents' culture through their consumption of Japanese anime and manga, Bollywood films, bhangra, and Hong Kong action movies," which suggests that young people are coming full circle today to begin to see their own humanity reflected amongst products of foreign cultures.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Condry, 1.

⁶⁵ Henry Jenkins, "Pop Cosmopolitanism: Mapping Cultural Flows in an Age of Media Convergence," in *Globalization: Culture and Education in the New Millennium*, eds. Marcelo M. Suarez-Orozco and Desiree Baolian Qin-Hillard, 118. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.

Many principles of the universality of humanity are also evident in the way protagonists and antagonists are characterized in anime that makes their alignment less easily identifiable, having several traits in common at times. Often in manga, the line between good and evil can be blurred even further at times, with neither side clearly distinguishable from the other. For example, “Mobile Suit Gundam,” a long-running franchise, “was a war story, and it targeted the blurring of the lines between good and evil and the effects of war on the people who fight,” essentially making the good/evil lines in some manga and anime less of a focus, saying more about the lesson that such warfare brings to everyone, as the war’s impact affected all sides, to a great extent, with bloody results.⁶⁶ Because of the complexity of such themes in anime, some of the “bad” characters may exhibit characteristics of an evil nature, yet there can even be something inherently good about them, and vice versa; they are multifaceted, in a sense.⁶⁷ There are many unpredictable patterns of behavior in characters not normally seen in mainstream American comics or cartoons, and being very Japanese, one can also understand the culture a bit more.

Gilles Poitras is an anime expert and admirer who draws inspiration from the medium itself in his book *The Anime Companion*. The book goes into particular detail about the connection between Japanese culture and animation; it also explains many Japanese cultural eccentricities “that may befuddle non-Japanese fans, such as Japan's

⁶⁶ Mark Gilson, “A Brief History of Japanese Robophilia,” *Leonardo* 31, no. 5 (1998): 368.

⁶⁷ Bouissou, 13.

color-coded system of public telephones....”⁶⁸ He reveals that many anime characters display human emotions and feelings and how these qualities and the imagery fascinate fans, remarking that ““American animation tends to be...predictable...good guys...win through super strength or...weapons...about Japanese animation...there are subtleties, shadings, and...characters...make mistakes, the good can fail miserably, the bad are... bad for reasons we...understand.””⁶⁹ Anime has been a breath of fresh air for many fans, who find other forms of animation difficult to watch after discovering anime, one reason being that “Japanese animation is rarely done in the flat, blocky, computer-generated style of Saturday morning cartoons. The use of cels, which involves hand-painting transparent celluloid sheets, still predominates in anime.”⁷⁰ The unusual storylines and drawing styles tend to help attract fans to this form of artwork. In addition, the unorthodox character structure is why many Americans are drawn to anime, without being able to clearly distinguish between good and evil characters, as many cartoons in this country do. Part of the appeal of manga and anime, explain Szasz and Takechi, is that because so many postwar American comics were considered “superficial” and “simplistic,” comic fans were immediately drawn to the stories with “far more biting edges,” with protagonists facing not only villains, but “suffering, tragedy, and...a call for

⁶⁸ Peter Stack, “A Big Draw; Japanese Anime Cartoons Find an Eager U.S. Audience -- and It's Not Just Kids,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, 13 Jan. 1999, E1.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

responsibility.”⁷¹ These “biting edges” also included characters with murky motivations and complex personalities. This varied outlook and ambiguity between the two dichotomies of good and evil, in fact, has more to do with deep-rooted cultural and religious institutions embedded within Japanese society. Japan has no universal morality code, as is the same with Native Japanese religion, and “right and wrong are imbedded within social relationships, not universally upheld religious doctrines...Violent and erotic fantasies are not...immoral like...in the West.”⁷² There is also no “universal moralistic judgment from a deity, which explains why good and bad characters are portrayed differently in “*Japanese theatrical forms*,” with good and evil being less clear-cut, as “Anime villains... wrestle with their sympathetic sides. They are complex...with desires, reasons, and principles.”⁷³ Anime villains are also rarely evil simply for being evil, such as “ugly witches and stepmothers and...bad guys in Disney *animation*...heroes are often...fallible characters that make mistakes and...fall to the dark side.”⁷⁴ Hence, many anime characters are imperfect and unable to simply correct their mistakes overnight, and they might stray the line between good and evil simultaneously, which is one of the reasons foreign fans are also attracted to these works and helped push them into the US

⁷¹ Ferenc M. Szasz and Issei Takechi, “Atomic Heroes and Atomic Monsters: American and Japanese Cartoonists Confront the Onset of the Nuclear Age, 1945-1980,” *The Historian* 69, no. 4 (2007): 728.

⁷² Shinobu Price, “Cartoons from Another Planet: *Japanese Animation* as Cross-Cultural Communication,” *Journal of American & Comparative Cultures* 24, no. ½ (2001): 159-160.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

market as well. The idea of simple good-versus-evil characters is also more of a Western construct, something to be explained a bit more in the next paragraph.

All of these issues over character development further complicate the concept of morality in anime and manga. What elements determine how one is good or bad? Dual dichotomies are often seen in terms different from how the West often portrays them. How to determine good or bad is a difficult question in anime, as the bad characters (such as in the manga *The Guyver*) have complex personalities and are far from the bumbling idiots portrayed in many American cartoons, as Bruce Westbrook explains:

All such work was spawned when anime arose amid Japan's postwar economic struggles. It was cheaper to tell stories in animation than as live-action films...Just as U.S. animation evolved from comic strips and cartoons, anime also has its roots in "manga," Japanese comic books that are as popular with adults as they are with children...The difference between American comics and "manga" is that the Japanese brand focuses on character development and story...Anime's themes are also less conventional than U.S. animated features. It's not uncommon for major characters to die or undergo transformations that render them evil. Even children's anime deals with complex ideas.⁷⁵

There is no guarantee that one can immediately predict a character's behavior pattern in anime or manga. In fact, the "bad guys" display many emotions, and they even mourn the loss of their companions. The revenge that might be displayed towards an opponent is not always motivated by selfish desire, greed, or power; rather, the motivations might even be hidden, underlying a deeper meaning. Likewise, the good characters are not often carbon cutouts of stereotypical good characters often seen in Western cinema. Is this underlying motivation of characters that "bad guys" display what the Japanese desired the U.S. to hear (evil characters in anime and manga often bring in foreign

⁷⁵ Bruce Westbrook, "Japanese Animation Leaps from Cult Status to Mainstream," *The Houston Chronicle*, 4 Nov. 1999, 1.

elements that corrupt the “pure” Japanese society) when we invaded and completely turned their lives upside-down, with all of the mass destruction caused by our advanced weaponry? Perhaps the images reflected through certain Anime works are a form of soft power, Shiraishi argues, that Japan has given us, one that, instead of flexing its military might anymore, the nation is able to transcend economic barriers through such cultural exports as manga in order to help others understand how their people feel about issues such as the atomic bomb.⁷⁶ Have these images in manga come back to remind us that the Japanese people also had human emotions and were not necessarily unfavorable only because they were our political antagonists? Perhaps so, but this is only one aspect of what anime can teach us about Japan’s past.⁷⁷ By attempting to comprehend the complexity of anime and its characters’ imperfections (without cleanly cut good and evil characters, for instance), Hayao Miyazaki reflects on one of his creations (*Porco Rosso*):

Miyazaki, who often caricatures himself as a hog, has explained the film’s pig-headed hero as a middle-aged man who is so disillusioned with society that he can no longer identify...as human. “I’m disgusted by the notion that man is the ultimate being, chosen by God,” he explained in a 1993 interview. “But I believe that there are things in this world that are beautiful...important, that are worth striving for. I made the hero a pig because that...best suited these feelings of mine.” Oddly packaged heroes are...an old Disney trope. But Miyazaki’s crimson pig gives us a protagonist who is uncannily human and...never completely heroic: he fights, he drinks, and only acts the hero when his hoof is forced. It bears noting...that although...a mere cartoon pig, his is a more developed personality than...half the pretty young things...gracing America’s screens.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Saya S. Shiraishi, “Japan’s Soft Power: Doraemon Goes Overseas,” in *Network Power: Japan and Asia*, eds. Peter J. Katzenstein and Takashi Shiraishi (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 234.

⁷⁷ Marshall, 3.

⁷⁸ Peter Ritter, “The Land of Youth,” *Arts Feature*, 20 October 1999, 3.

This type of imagery shows initiative on the part of the artist to develop his characters more fully, connecting them to something we can relate to directly as humans. To the Japanese, as well, part of the attraction of manga is in the art form itself and what it reveals, as it presents a differing perspective on characters, a vivid storyline, and often gives more insight into character development, presenting more of a three-dimensional viewpoint; all of these dynamics, along with originality limited only by the imagination of the artist, give manga a unique place amongst its fans, as it can be designed for persons of all ages instead of simply children, according to Masami Toku. In non-Japanese, foreign comic books, the story is normally two-dimensional, but manga contains “1) picture...2) word...3) balloon..., and 4) frame...The function of each element...is...different...”⁷⁹

Toku describes this process in more detail below:

...The picture is the content...lines...into positive...(figures) and negative shapes (background). The word including onomatopoeia...is...the outside voice (sound)...from subjects, and...inside voice...in the mind...Word...appears...outside...the frame with or without balloons as...connector between frames. The balloon (“fukidashi”) used to be the container of the inside...or...outside voice...differentiated from...narration...It developed to support...manga...both...inside and...outside voice/ thought of the subject/object could be...in the same frame, differentiated by...shape of...balloons. The frame (“koma”)...a container...includes...picture as...content, and... “format.”...to integrate time and space. Frame used to be...square or rectangle shapes... in alignment... it developed into diverse shapes...to express different psychological situations...⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Masami Toku, “What Is Manga?: The Influence of Pop Culture in Adolescent Art,” *Art Education* 54, no. 2 (2001): 14-15.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

In addition, sophisticated manga storyline development had something to do with “the expansion of the age range...comic books are...assumed...for children...”⁸¹ This shows the contrast between the perception of comics traditionally serving children in the West and the idea that they currently serve more than just children’s audiences in Japan. Japanese children grew up with manga and continued to read it, finding it more entertaining than other existing mediums; this continued into adulthood “during the 1960s,” and manga “developed to...more human drama than a...simple strip...manga started to produce many...types of stories...to please readers.”⁸²

Miyazaki’s work, for example, attempts to create a three-dimensional view of reality in a two-dimensional world, unlike many characteristics common of simple black-and-white Disney characters. Miyazaki’s characters look similar to Disney’s with his “frail, picture-book princesses,” but they are more realistic and untouched by what “anime director Haruhiko Mikimoto called the ‘Disney Complex.’”⁸³ Disney films seem full of “egalitarian...values: toon gags, high adventure, caricatures, fairy-tale romance” and songs that “sustain rather than complement narrative.”⁸⁴ Jack Zipes argues in *From Mouse to Mermaid* that they choose technique over story, but Miyazaki’s films are not musicals and tend to have some humor; Disney tends to take on a particular slant for classic tales and often resorts to “sublimating narrative into...cute animals and “name”

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Andrew Osmond, “Nausicaa and the Fantasy of Hayao Miyazaki,” *Foundation: The International Review of Science Fiction* 72 (1998): 60-62.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

voice-stars,” while Miyazaki “allows...characters...to emerge...naturally.”⁸⁵ Disney works are known for villains who clearly define the meaning of the word evil “from *Snow White* to *Mulan*,” while Miyazaki’s films “are notable for their lack of evil characters,” with many stories where “potential villains switch sides (...*Porco Rosso*), are... redeemed (*Nausicaa*) or...don't exist...(My *Neighbour Totoro*) ... Miyazaki's ...emphasis is... characters rather than...backdrops.”⁸⁶ The little details in Miyazaki's films matter, as he enjoys mixing the “real and fantastic...locations with a wide-eyed wonder which makes no divide between present-day cities and future wonder-lands.”⁸⁷

Like *Porco Rosso*, Miyazaki wishes not to simplify the story for all of his viewers, including children, but to simply explore more realistic interpretations in his creations as reflections of the world around us. A writer such as Miyazaki, inspired by Tezuka’s works, shows that he is not afraid to take a myth and explore how it relates to daily life as it is experienced by Earth’s inhabitants, reflecting the importance of Japanese animation unto itself and the reason why it becomes important to research for insight into Japanese society and possible effects from the bomb. Miyazaki’s films draw from old Japanese myths, blending them into modern adaptations to suit global audiences, while at the same time, he avoids sugarcoating stories to please children and instead feels that “to make a true children’s film is a real daunting challenge and this is because we need to

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

clearly portray the essence of a very complex world.”⁸⁸ His work is known to re-imagine popular Japanese tales and take life on in a realistic, challenging fashion rather than simplify a story to suit the average viewer.⁸⁹ This chapter section, then, was able to outline the Comics Code restrictions that caused many manga and anime titles not to be released in the US. In turn, as American comic and cartoon fans, including many teens and adults, were limited on their choices and on monopolies by the Hollywood establishment, they embraced the seemingly unlimited creativity allotted to anime and manga artists and pushed the market to the point that anime and manga were able to penetrate the market later on, especially as Comics Code restrictions were lifted and American companies made a gamble on Japanese titles. Because story was the focus and because character development and plotlines were not restricted by cultural norms, anime was able to transcend across cultures, particularly in the works here inspired by Tezuka and particular themes surrounding the atomic bomb. The next section will cover the critical issues (and independent variables) surrounding manga and anime in the fantasy, science fiction and futuristic, apocalyptic genres.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data will be collected from scholarly studies and critical reviews of manga, comics, and other related media. Then, evidence supporting the themes (in the form of independent variables) inspired by Tezuka surrounding hope rising out of endless

⁸⁸ Lucy Wright, “Forest Spirits, Giant Insects and World Trees: The Nature Vision of Hayao Miyazaki,” *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 10 (2005): 39.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

devastation and man's obsession with technology by conquering nature, leading to destruction, will be collected together from case studies and critically analyzed from a comparativist, historical viewpoint. The themes (and subthemes) pertaining to the atomic bomb in World War II will be elaborated on in the next section in an effort to illustrate how the manga reinforce the two central themes above. Most often, the themes (dependent variables) that occur often revolve around the sense of loss that comes with any post-apocalyptic event (such as the bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki).⁹⁰ Eventually, though, out of the ashes comes forth the promise of hope and new life, pertaining to the metaphor of the phoenix, that order can be restored, such as in Hayao Miyazaki's *Future Boy Conan* and another work called *Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind*, which were "further set in a world healing after nuclear war, promising new birth and life if foolish humanity respected it, an ethos repeated in *Nausicaa*."⁹¹ In many ways, this reflects post-World War II Japan's economic development, as expressed in the animated version of the *Bubblegum Crisis* saga:

Few cities [are] as prone to disaster as Tokyo. The city was...destroyed in the Great Kanto Earthquake...and the carpet-bombing...of World War II...reduced the city to rubble...Each time, Tokyo rose...MegaTokyo is the setting...2032... the world's most overcrowded city - the heart of industry, culture, information, and conflict. The Second Great Kanto Earthquake dealt a blow... The capital is ...confusion...recovering from...ruins...Cars running on gasohol and batteries crowd streets...a scar of the earthquake remains: a huge fault... through Tokyo, 50 meters wide...separating...East and West. A...tidal power plant has been established...solar power plants have been founded, supplying...electricity... clumps of office buildings, with...photovoltaic collectors, await... another day.⁹²

⁹⁰ Marshall, 2.

⁹¹ Osmond, 58.

⁹² Jeanne Hedge, "Bubblegum Crisis Synopsis Index," Jeannehedge.com, <http://www.jhedge.com/bgcrisis/index.htm> (accessed 20 June 2010).

The scenes expressed above are reminiscent of Japan's condition immediately following the atomic bomb and then the rapid rebuilding process of the next several decades. According to Yomota, the dual themes of death and rebirth can be seen in Oshii's works, such as in the *Patlabor* and *Ghost in the Shell* series, with "constructions of the high capitalist era [but] are at the same time spaces brimming with the nostalgia particular to ruins."⁹³ Indeed, morale in Japan was low after the war. However, with the help of American investment, it reinvented itself over time as an economic superpower, becoming significantly strong in its economy twenty to thirty years after World War II ended, as it built up its economy and began to industrialize rapidly. MacArthur made it a point to encourage the Americans to assist in the rebuilding process, which was successful and lasted a period of six years. The constitution was also formulated by the Americans as well, as is commonly noted. This rebuilding phase invigorated new life in Japan's economy and allowed it to rapidly industrialize after the war. The country and the great empire essentially died at the war's end. However, like the phoenix, and similar to themes in several post-apocalyptic manga and anime, Japan rose out of the ashes and engaged itself as one of the top contenders in the world economy following a period of great ascent. All of this history is important to understanding Japan's current state and the themes expressed in works referencing the bomb. Though the nation suffered greatly from the bomb and the Allied bombings, the Americans also had a strategic plan in asking Japan to serve in a joint security arrangement. Though this was opposed on some

⁹³ Inuhiko Yomota, "Stranger Than Tokyo: Space and Race in Postnational Japanese Cinema," in *Multiple Modernities: Cinemas and Popular Media in Transcultural East Asia*, ed. Jenny Kwok Wah Lau (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 78.

grounds, later on, the nation had little choice but to follow along to continue receiving aid and investment from the U.S. if it wanted to become a great power again someday, and essentially, Japan was pushed into a joint security arrangement with the U.S. and served as a useful counterpoint to the rise of Communist states in the region. Essentially, Japan became a junior military partner of the U.S. and followed American foreign policy, becoming a key American Cold War ally in East Asia, serving as a buffer between North Korea and China.

The strategic arrangement and nationalistic tensions surrounding the effects of the atomic bomb, the occupation, Japan's rise, and waves of nationalism are themes that often find themselves in the works of artists inspired by Tezuka. The next section will present the research to support the analogy of the phoenix and the fact that man's obsession with technology may lead to his demise, giving evidence within specific independent variables to support these central, dependent variables. However, the message of hope that comes out of destruction and rebirth often transcends cultures, as shown by Tezuka's work as well and creeps into the work of other artists later on.

CHAPTER 3

PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH

The atomic bomb had a powerful effect on the underlying themes in the worlds of Japanese anime and manga. Do certain essential elements of Japanese political culture traced through themes in science fiction, fantasy and futuristic/apocalyptic manga support the above themes, as inspired by Tezuka and events surrounding the bomb between 1945-65 and 1985-1995? There are many types of manga available for every age group in Japan, with manga review guides containing much of this information. More scholarly journals today also provide research on both manga and post-World War II elements on the atomic bomb. Much of the research done here ranges from scholarly publications and expert opinions to a hobbyist's flawed attempts at explaining Japanese pop culture from a general Western perspective. There is a great deal of analysis done on certain themes in anime, but some are hard to understand as well and reflect little but the main idea of the anime itself. There is still some significant work to be done in adding to the handful of legitimate studies of Japanese animation. There also exist, however, deep political overtones to many works, and these can be greatly appreciated for their depth. Indeed, the manga expert Frederik Schodt explains that Japanese comics certainly convey a different, deep-rooted dynamic, as "unlike superheroes in U.S. comics, the hallmark of manga lies in its depiction of commonly experienced situations that 'reflect the Japanese

id, the subconscious,' he said.”¹ These can include deep political overtones implying certain messages from the horrors of the bomb itself. Attempts here were made to find works and references that might have best reflected the various genres mentioned and the themes that had certain political references from events surrounding the bomb attacks. Overall, the list of sources was quite useful and gives one a sense of where to pinpoint the research. Many more scholarly works have become available in recent years, and there has been an influx of anime and manga in this country to analyze and to examine the themes that do appear consistently, helping one to separate the relevant manga categories and make connections as to the significant themes in this study. Manga has increasingly become a more serious form of scholarly inquiry in recent decades; in fact, in 2003, manga crossed the bridge from being a popular form of visual culture to being accepted into the mainstream of the Japanese education system: “Japan’s new national curriculum...for the first time, added...instruction on manga to the content of middle school art...50 years after Tezuka...drew...*New Treasure Island*...and initiated...events that transformed manga from a minor Japanese art form to a global phenomena.”² The study of manga and anime has become so significant in Japan that several university departments have hired manga artists as full-time professors. Often, professors do encourage students to engage in more scholarly reading than manga comics, but some “professors truly understand manga and anime, think seriously about them, and would

¹ Junko Hanna, “Manga's Appeal Not Limited to Japanese Fans,” *The Daily Yomiuri*, 11 Dec. 1996, 3.

² Brent Wilson, “Of Diagrams and Rhizomes: Visual Culture, Contemporary Art, and the Impossibility of Content of Art Education,” *Studies in Art Education* 44, no. 3 (2003): 224.

highly encourage students to read manga and watch anime. And the number of such professors seems to be increasing.”³ Some academics encourage students to get into anime and manga because of their complexity tied into revealing various aspects of Japanese culture and society. There is more interest in developing this area in recent times, as “Kyoto Seika University created the first school of Cartoon & Comic Art in Japan in 2000...[an] additional three universities created similar schools and courses for students to study manga, anime and games.”⁴ The fact that manga and anime are being developed for scholarly inquiry means that these media are being taken seriously to the point of becoming permanent fixtures within the academic community and a greater part of mainstream university studies. All of this, in turn, inspires artists and fans to realize that all of their efforts to bring anime to the masses are perhaps paying off; Japanese society can be understood more clearly, in part, by studying the meanings behind particular anime and manga. More schools developing manga and anime studies programs include the Character Creative Arts Department developed by Osaka University of Art; interestingly, the departmental dean is “comic artist Kazuo Koike and at least two of...23 professors are well-known comic artists (Go Nagai who created *Mazinger Z*, *Devil Man*, *Harenchi Gakuen*, etc. and Machiko Satonaka who created *Ariesu no Otome*, *Asunaro Zaka*, etc.).”⁵ In addition, Takara Zoukei University formed the School of Media Contents to reflect interest in “movies, animation, and games,” with famous

³ Regine Debatty, “Japanese Universities Hiring Manga Professors,” We Make Money Not Art, <http://www.we-make-money-not-art.com/archives/007049.php> (accessed 3 March 2011).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

comics artist Reiji Matsumoto (creator of *Space Battleship Yamato*, *Galaxy Express 999*, etc.) as a professor there, who also recently worked with French band Daftpunk.⁶

Otemae University, with Monkey Punch on the faculty, also developed a course for manga and animation.⁷ As is evident from the degree programs that are being developed, manga is being taken more seriously as a respected area of scholarly inquiry, and so the disciplines will be subdivided into various categories to understand this new phenomenon, which gives deep insight into both Japanese culture and politics.

Some of the age groups of manga that directly reference the atomic bomb (as inspired by Tezuka) were defined earlier. One common genre, for example, is gekiga manga, which are for fun and entertainment. However, not all manga are simply for entertainment. The various groups of manga relating to the bomb will be categorized by the themes introduced, with the target audience in mind. Manga itself is highly influential and remains as one of the clearest artistic outgrowths of the events surrounding the bomb. The interest in science and technology and Japan's "first-hand experience of their devastating effects at the end of World War II has influenced the tone and attitude of anime."⁸ The defeat in the war and the melancholy nature of many anime films set them apart from the positive, "more optimistic tone of American animation." A cyber-punkish example of this lies in *Akira*, which shows a futuristic metropolis in Neo-Tokyo, which has emerged as a new city in the aftermath of World War III and is now

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Wong, 3.

about to fall apart, with “scientists and the military jockeying over a super-human with exceptional telekinetic powers while biker gangs and violence run rampant on the streets.” Jean-Marie Bouissou’s “Manga Goes Global” discusses the significance of this type of manga on a global scale. Indeed, Katsuhiro Otomo makes special reference to the anime “Akira,” and an analysis of some of the prevailing themes is analyzed by the author throughout the article. A breakdown of some key ideas that originated from the atomic bomb effects are mentioned, and the characters are examined in a way as to compare them to people affected by the ravages of the war, much like the futuristic version of Tokyo in the movie.⁹ On a side note, Bouissou’s article clearly informs the reader on certain aspects of some anime relevant to the atomic bomb itself and serves as a valuable source for those academics who wish to pursue serious study of the political complexities of Japanese manga and anime. There is much crime and civil unrest in society thirty years after this great third world war was mentioned, the time period serving as the main setting of the movie. There is a quest to find a supposed bomb that destroyed old Tokyo, named Akira. This unseemly force is able to start a trail of destruction, culminating in a climax of epic proportions.¹⁰ The unsettling feeling of the anime reminds us of Gibson’s *Neuromancer* and special effects similar to the end of *2001: A Space Odyssey*, “but there is little preoccupation with the effects of technology or an entrance into a realm of virtual reality where the line between human and machine

⁹ Bouissou, 2.

¹⁰ *Akira*, directed by Katsuhiro Otomo (1989; Tokyo, Japan: Pioneer Entertainment, 2001), DVD.

becomes blurred.”¹¹ Gibson’s other cyberpunk novels also show inspiration from Japanese works, such as *Count Zero*, *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, and stories in *Burning Chrome*, with characters, events, and concepts originating in Japan, such as the gomi trash-as-art movement.¹² Reality and fantasy in *Akira* become hard to separate, as many of the events surround a future that contains the threat of machines nearly superseding human intelligence. One can consider the themes which made *Akira* a remnant of its era, creating great interest among its fans with its unconventional plotlines, ambiguity between reality and the computer world, nationalistic feelings, and the cyberpunkish, dark feel of the film that many of its fans could relate to:

Postnationalism or transnationalism has...been central to science fiction...Related to cyberpunk trans-Pacific imaginary is...*anime* subculture. Fan networks exchange Japanese *manga* and film...in a dystopic future and involve violent clashes between humans and robots. *Akira*, an anticorporate apocalypse had... limited commercial release...and *Gunhed*, a cloning of...*Terminator* and *Alien* circulates...on bootleg tapes. *Anime* subculture values...computer-generated artificiality of much Japanese animation, seeing...fewer variations between frames...with wildly distorted mise-en-scene hacker-accessible...aesthetics suited to...garage-punk nihilism. Cyberpunk and anime enactments of the trans-Pacific postnation are...dystopic—the underside to dominant...Pacific Rim discourse...¹³

The future bleakness inherent in many titles of this subgenre is more evident as one examines other titles along a similar spectrum as *Akira*. Toshimichi Suzuki, the creator of *Bubblegum Crisis*, elaborates on these themes a bit further in an interview with *Animerica* magazine. He focused on the man versus machine relationship in the series and how future society would reflect this, also estimating what contributions man would

¹¹ Bouissou, 13.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Connery, 53-54.

“make to Earth in the midst of pollution and environmental destruction” and how “civilized society” would “interact with machines.”¹⁴ He commented on the universality of the series setting in a future where Tokyo (that could be any other place, he noted), 38-50 years from now, would show humanity as containing more progressive “values but... greater pressures. This is where I wanted to...focus, while...introducing the Knight Sabers as a personification of the strain of this new society...from their perspective; they would act as ‘shadow assassins’ seeking to resolve those pressures.”¹⁵ This idea shows reinforces the idea that man must be aware of what decisions he makes with technology or may face serious consequences without someone like the “Knight Sabers” to keep society in check. The series was named “bubblegum” to show a chaotic world, as in the reference to chewing gum bubbles that may erupt at any time.¹⁶ Suzuki further elaborates on the series itself in detail:

...Fifty years in the future. We’ve made it...to space, the evolved machine has become pseudo-human, the cyborg becomes a boomer...among...machines, an anti-lifeform emerges. In...*Bubblegum Crisis*...there’s still...control over machines, but give them...time. When humanity is...overcome, we’ve entered *Gall Force*...machines are self-aware and...weeding out humans. They evolve...You’ve got Paranoids and Solnoids...adapted to space...and a machine army...Surpass *that*, and you’ve ventured onto...*Megazone*. Should there be...war...*Gaiarth* is born...think of *Bubblegum Crisis* as a...premonition against a...chaotic future When you see...foreigners in public agencies...it’s intentional. There’s mostly...giant corporations...I’m talking about...what meaning choices...have on our future. Are we...on the right track?¹⁷

¹⁴ Horibuchi, 6-9.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

Bubblegum, then, could quite possibly be the vision of what a future, unchecked, could hold for mankind. The nature of an unknown future, where mankind is not aware of where his choices may take him, demonstrates specific concerns about technology. These themes reflect the complexity of technology getting out of hand, including the fear of destruction caused by a series of unfortunate circumstances and the unintended consequences of war (i.e. the atomic bomb). This is one independent variable that reinforces one of the central themes. Some other references to the bomb's effects can be seen, with a particular fascination with weaponry and strong female figures, especially in "anime's frequent fascination, even obsession, with extraordinary weaponry, combat robots, and other military prostheses that amplify the powers of diminutive and often feminine or feminized characters."¹⁸ The female characters in *Bubble Gum Crisis* seem to challenge traditional gender roles by "making the prosthetically enhanced young women succeed when macho police fail...these young women, the Knight Sabres, appear coded as Japan, whose new technological superiority permits it to surpass larger, more physically powerful rivals."¹⁹ Again, Japan, in the form of these female characters, is seen here as a powerful country able to outdo its rivals by flexing its technological prowess over others, perhaps serving as a metaphor for Japan's need to prevail on its own and detailing its perseverance in overcoming difficult conflicts. Japan having a say in its own affairs also reinforces the notion that perhaps the nation is looking to make its own

¹⁸ Ho Lin and George P. Landow, "World War II and Japanese Cartoon and Animation Art," *Cyberspace and Critical Theory*, <http://www.cyberartsweb.org/cpace/anime/ww2.html> (accessed 9 July 2011).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

decisions in its affairs without seeking help at some point, which also serves as an independent variable supporting one of the central themes of hope rising out of endless devastation, that Japan can survive and will prevail. This ties into the idea of victimization and that fact that Japan is looking for various ways to not only cope with its past trauma from the bomb, but also to assert a role for itself in future issues involving international affairs. Additionally, Lin and Landow are entrenched at the idea of several common themes frequently appearing in anime, especially those that have come out of catastrophic events surrounding the bomb. Particularly, these two themes centering on weaponry and strong females surface periodically and help to examine the outgrowth of the war's effects from such an apocalyptic event, which has influenced the anime genre heavily. Technology and determined youths are familiar themes also seen in Tezuka's works. It is obvious from the war that these kinds of themes have repeatedly surfaced in anime, and the two authors are devoted to these, but upon closer inspection, others emerge as well.

Another comic adaptation that reflects on the fascination with technology in the wrong hands and deals with strong female characters is *Ghost in the Shell*, directed by Mamoru Oshii, which is about a cyborg that must stop a thief-hacker from taking over people's minds and stealing valuable information. The futuristic work, like other anime in this genre, serves as yet another example (vastly different from standard, predictable American fodder, which is why it remains entertaining for American audiences) of Japan's fascination with technology as something monstrous, powerful, and difficult to contain, leading to disastrous results. David Lubich covers some of these issues in his

article, “The Stylishly Violent Akira Made the West Sit Up. Are We Still Toonstruck,?” explaining the fact that though critics dismiss anime with such names as “Voomer Madness and Geno Cyber as boys'-shoot-'em-up fantasies, these are light years ahead of...American garbage that fills kids' TV in the UK. While ‘big guns sell’, the best...are subtle, intelligently plotted, and give us...insight into...Japan's obsession with technology.”²⁰ Chrys Mordin of Forbidden Planet has also commented that “Technology is part of their everyday life...it has been the making of post-war Japan - so it's natural that Anime explores all...possibilities, all...possible futures,” leading Lubich to conclude that “This fascination with the darker side of technology, bio-technology and mutation, reflects the more mature relationship the Japanese have with technology. Like it or not, it's the future.”²¹ Hence, Japan has accepted technology as the future and centers on developing stories embracing technology as part of everyday life. Technology in *Ghost in the Shell* presents a primary focus of the story. Technology and robots, as seen by the above quotes, remain an inevitable part of Japan's culture, good or bad. The Japanese have embraced technology to the degree that it has also been a savior to its economy rising again, since “Robots were accepted in general as the tools to rebuild postwar Japan.”²² As a result, “Fantasy robots have served to represent technology in nearly every form in which it could present itself to Japan.”²³ This is represented in the various

²⁰ David Lubich, “The Stylishly Violent Akira Made the West Sit Up. Are We Still Toonstruck?” *The Guardian* (London), 20 Jan. 1995, sec. The Guardian Features Page, T16.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Gilson, 369.

²³ Ibid.

ways that robots are used in anime, hence, there is a heavy focus on technology in many stories. In this *Ghost* anime, the feature cyborg is equipped with many kinds of powers and is nearly unbeatable; confusing the matter that the creation is confused about its identity, and these cyborgs are “Planted with false memories” and “not told of their unnatural creation. They do not believe their own histories until they see direct evidence that their private memories have been forged.”²⁴ The robots themselves display a highly complex meshing of human and robot, fantasy and reality. For example, “Perhaps the most striking example of tech life in *Ghost* are the artificial intelligence robot Fuchikomas: acting as individuals but also possessing a hive mind [potential to make its own decisions], the Fuchikomas have the potential for revolt but are nevertheless kept in check by the ‘human’ opposition of cyborgs.”²⁵ The main character, Kusanagi, is a cyborg on the side of the humans and is “highly cynical about the idea of a human essence, of the ‘ghost’ that may or may not inhabit her ‘shell.’ When she encounters an artificial intelligence truly capable of growth, her sense of identity and her role in society lose what measure of stability she had assumed they had.”²⁶ Hence, the series struggles with issues of one’s own self-identity, along with more complex parameters surrounding technology. Struggles with identity mirror the confusion and sense of abandonment felt by many orphans following the war and caused by the atomic bomb. The plot remains difficult enough to decipher, with the fantasy, reality, and cyborg contexts intertwined,

²⁴ Matthew Hutson, “Ghost in the Black Box,” *Cyberspace and Critical Theory*, <http://www.cyberartsweb.org/cpace/cyborg/film/hutson.html> (accessed 6 March 2011).

²⁵ Ray Mescalado, “Otaku Nation,” *Science Fiction Studies* 27, no. 1 (2000): 144.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

yet displays the embracing of technology that Japan has and also the inherent dangers of abusing it that the nation fears. The police in the story have very hi-tech equipment to apprehend criminals, and it becomes almost unsettling what people can find out about others with such technology. This anime is very reflective of how dangerous technology can be when people are confronted with almost absolute power, just as nuclear technology can be destructive in the wrong hands. In *Ghost in the Shell*, “we encounter beings that challenge...definitions of life and of consciousness. Human characters ...interact with other, human-engineered, characters, and the division between the two fades,” accentuating “the fears, desires, and questions many...have about the future of our relationships with artificial intelligence and technology in general,” and particularly Japan’s fears and aversion to technology getting out of control, such as in an atomic-bomb like event or similar nuclear apocalypse.²⁷ Indeed, Susan Napier “reads Oshii Mamoru’s *Ghost in the Shell*...as foregrounding a desire to use technology as an escape from the limitations of the body and the social categorizations organized around it.”²⁸ This complicated relationship, this merging of man and machine, is further explained by Masamune Shirow, the creator of the well-known title *Appleseed* and the *Ghost in the Shell* manga:

Creating humanoid robots involves...understanding...to be human...current robots indicate...we understand basic human...structure...some...say...emotions can be explained through chemistry...When...using chemical reactions...to robots, then we'll be...closer to humans...the heroes Japanese children...identify with...all seem...robots ...like Doraemon or Arare-chan...robots are...pals...go

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Carl Silvio, “Anime, Both Global and Local,” *Science Fiction Studies* 29, part 3, no. 88: 2, http://www.depauw.edu/sfs/review_essays/gardner88.htm#silvio (accessed 3 March 2011).

to factories in Japan...workers are...robots...In the multiracial sense Japan will...become...similar to the West...if a robot...can coexist...Perhaps it's...human...of different materials...The...problem is... true humanoid robots...People here don't...stress from science and technology...we'll need...something about the growing gap between...rich and...poor...compassionate capitalism that has more social guarantees...not...socialism, just...balance.²⁹

Developing humanoid robots inspires us to learn more about humanity and its faults, in addition to what we can learn about building a better future and avoiding common human mistakes with technology. However, even in the hands of a few persons with good intentions, power can be corrupted, and this all makes us question how far we can go when given the tools to take advantage of a system, which may explain Japan's aversion to possessing the bomb, as doing so always comes with the risk that the technology could end up in the wrong hands. The technology could also be misused in a way as to cause a crisis similar to that at World War II's end.³⁰ Witnessing the event firsthand caused the Japanese great pain, and made Tezuka and other writers fearful of what would happen if mankind was left unchecked with such technology on his own.

Speaking of technology unhinged, "The Guyver" remains another important story by Yoshiki Takaya that traces the development of a teenage boy who suddenly stumbles upon technology that he can barely control. His enemies are mutant-like creatures who wish to get this technology because of its powerful capabilities, making the user seemingly unstoppable. The hero has his hands full dealing with this unpredictable

²⁹ Frederik L. Schodt, "Being Digital," *Manga Max* 1, no. 1 (1998):20-21, <http://www.jai2.com/MSivu.htm> (accessed 3 March 2011).

³⁰ *Ghost in the Shell*, directed by Mamoru Oshii (1995; Los Angeles, CA: Manga Entertainment, 1996), DVD.

technology, “an alien device that latches onto the protagonist Sho Fukamachi and turns him into a living bio weapon. The guyver ...is alive and...can create armaments from itself.”³¹ The protagonist must also fight against “the evil Chronos corporation who want their guyver back. Chronos have genetically engineered humans so that they can transform into monstrous forms at will. They want the guyver because it is one of a kind and cannot be recreated.”³² The emotions and structures of the characters, including the antagonists, are quite developed and display many three-dimensional characteristics. The line between human and machine is once again blurred here, just as in “Ghost in the Shell.” Once again, an unknown technology can lead to great destruction if used in the wrong way, reminiscent of the atomic bomb. Napier would describe this anime as “exploration of the dehumanizing and de-individualizing effects of technology on its users.”³³ The child who develops special abilities with his newfound toy also reflects images of children who struggled to survive on their own after the bomb decimated the nation.

The failure of authority figures is another constantly recurring theme throughout manga and anime that takes its roots back from the distrust of Americans in World War II (actually, a fear of foreigners was quite common for an extended period of time, since Japan was isolated for so many years). Oftentimes, Japanese artists poke fun at police and other authority figures. For instance, there was even a manga in the 1970s called

³¹ “Synopsis on Guyver- What is Guyver?” [www.theguyver.net, http://www.theguyver.net/synopses_ie.htm](http://www.theguyver.net/synopses_ie.htm) (accessed 3 March 2011).

³² Ibid.

³³ Silvio, 2.

“Gaki Deka (Kid Cop),” in which the protagonist routinely had a penchant for displaying his genitals to others.³⁴ Since that comic was released in 1974, the Japanese artists have not been afraid of displaying other ways of mocking law enforcement which may foreshadow some of the feelings they had towards Occupation authorities or American military persons as well. However, in the United States, this was and still is risky ground, for the Comics Code had strict guidelines (and still does to some extent) on the subject of persons with authority:

(Part A Standards): 1. Crimes shall never be presented in such a way as to create sympathy for the criminal, to promote distrust of the forces of law and justice, or to inspire others with a desire to imitate criminals...
 3. Policemen, judges, government officials, and respected institutions shall never be presented in such a way as to create disrespect for established authority...
 9. Instances of law enforcement officers dying as a result of a criminal’s activities should be discouraged...
 10. The crime of kidnapping shall never be portrayed in any detail, nor shall any profit accrue to the abductor or kidnapper. The criminal or the kidnapper must be punished in every case.³⁵

One can observe here that disrespecting authority in the United States, even members of the armed forces, was considered inappropriate; hence these types of examples led to the ban on Japanese comics (and many other Japanese imports). The failure of the adult figures in the gekiga (fun and entertainment) manga “Akira,” in fact, is another alliteration to a lasting effect left over from the nuclear holocaust of the bomb itself. The children are left behind and orphaned in that particular story, and the adults that remain are not nearly as effective in accomplishing anything (or promoting world peace) as the teenagers who seem to dominate the story. This reflects the growth of obsessed fans, the

³⁴ Bouissou, 14.

³⁵ Daniels, 1.

otaku, and the slow breakdown of social structures of succeeding generations, as many became individualistic and disenchanted with authority in general after the war (as a way of coping with their loss), perhaps stemming from the anti-American resentment and the realization that Japan's governmental policies were dictated by someone else, effectively leaving no one in charge, as if this was a consequence of Japan losing the war. The adults lost the respect of later generations after it was felt that they sold their souls to the devil by allowing such an undesirable situation of a foreigner ruling the country, which should never have occurred in the first place (if only Japan had won the war!):

The *otaku* panic...reflects...concerns of social scientists about Japanese society... social fragmentation...mass media and communication infrastructures to this change intellectuals have linked...decay of close-knit civil society to... individualism...The absorption of youth in...*manga* subculture...was perceived by...intellectuals as a new extreme in...Japanese youth...*Otaku* came to be... preoccupied by...personal pastimes...suffering from Peter Pan syndrome...Ueno Chizuko, the...feminist theorist, pressed...that amateur *manga* genres reflect... infantilism...*Otaku*...were unable to communicate. The independence of amateur *manga* subculture from...society, and its growth on...new media technologies... made it appropriate for chaos over the...communication of younger generations.³⁶

This feeling of alienation by the younger generation is reflected in certain works detailing the aftermath of an apocalypse, for example, such as in *Akira*, where the adults seem to have a disconnect with the youth. In fact, the adults seem unaware of their surroundings, having a miscommunication with the young people in “*Akira*” and are, in fact, too engulfed in their own greed and obsession with the power of acquiring *Akira*, the ultimate weapon.³⁷

³⁶ Sharon Kinsella, “Japanese Subculture in the 1990s: Otaku and the Amateur Manga Movement,” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 24, no. 2 (1998): 314.

³⁷ Bouissou, 19-20.

Another seinen (multi-themed manga for males 15-40) comic, detailing the failure of powerful individuals is the comic (and film) about a professional assassin (code name Golgo 13) who must seek revenge for the death of a businessman's son. He is nearly a "super assassin" with his extraordinary abilities and always avoids death. He is able to pull off seemingly impossible stunts and has perfect accuracy with his weapon. The movie gets more complicated, as he must go from one place to another to find the killer, and things only get more eerily twisted as time passes in the world of Golgo 13. This reflects patterns of crime in the Japanese mafia. The callousness of the lead character shows Japan's determination to grin and bear what it had to succeed after the war. At the end of the first movie, the president of a powerful company is ultimately deemed responsible for his own downfall and is subsequently punished by the assassin for his evil deeds, much as several top individuals in Japan's government, such as Hideki Tojo, abused their power and led the country to the brink of destruction in engaging a prolonged war with the West.³⁸

One animated feature that represents the trauma and horror of wars and the aftermath of technology gone awry is a seinen comic centered on a post-apocalyptic future called *Fist of the North Star*. This is a world where people fight for survival in the wasteland that Earth currently is in at the time, much like the Japanese had to survive after the bomb's aftermath. There are groups of martial artists who have special powers and fight each other until they literally explode. The battle for survival that every mortal faces is reminiscent of the many orphaned children who grew up without parents,

³⁸ *The Professional: Golgo 13*, directed by Osamu Desaki (1983; Tokyo, Japan: Tokyo Movie Shinsa, 1983), DVD.

struggling for their own very existence after the war itself. One of the most powerful martial artists, a positive character name Kenshiro, battles to save the earth from a protagonist who wishes to rule the world. The amount of violence is quite simply ridiculous, and the main theme centers on fighting with superhuman strength and skill. This shows the anger and oppression that came out of a massive holocaust and how it can affect a nation's psyche. This comic film adaptation shows how people struggle for hope and that they will do anything in order to survive, even at the cost of others, as explained by Buronson, the manga's creator. The story essentially revolves around the idea that when society collapses, only the strong survive by using brute force; however, violence cannot win over "friendship, love and the emotions that people hold inside them," since "Love and compassion are more powerful than violence."³⁹ This particular title expressed powerful themes reminiscent of the bomb, causing a sense of disenchantment and hopelessness expressed by many post-war Japanese and the state of the country immediately preceding the atomic bomb, occupation and the rebirth of Japan's economy.

Another animated manga that expresses similar ideas of destruction, occupation, and rebirth is the seinen feature "A Wind Named Amnesia," which is "Set in [an alternate] (1999)...Human civilization has been devastated by a mysterious wind that erased everyone's memories--even the basics of language and self-care that real amnesia doesn't affect. Their minds wiped clean, the survivors haunt the ruined cities, scavenging

³⁹ "Interview with Buronson," ADV Films, <http://www.advfilms.com/titles/fistofthenorthstar/interview.html> (accessed 7 March 2011).

for food.”⁴⁰ Wateru (which means “traveler” in Japanese), the protagonist, was fortunate enough to regain his faculties with the help of “a survivor at a government research facility” who “wanders through America in a jeep, trying to bring knowledge to people. In San Francisco, he meets Sophia, a mysterious woman with unexplained powers; she joins him on a journey to New York that turns into a transcontinental escape from a murderous...robot.”⁴¹ Their adventures include meeting a cult who prays to a large “wrecking machine, and two puppetlike survivors in a fully mechanized city,” with the hero having a difficult time helping man rebuild his society without Sophia’s unusual ability to communicate with others.⁴² In the story, technology reached the point to here mankind has realized it is completely dependent on it and then loses the ability to use it; this sends a powerful message about technology, reflecting the idea that the Japanese considered the atomic bomb to be the epitome of industrialization at its worst. There is a physical threat to the protagonist, who seems to be some sort of alien invader or foreign element (similar to the Americans occupying Japan in World War II), as if something out of this world caused the massive amnesia on mankind. In any case, the hope of human existence lies in someone who can lead the world back to rebirth, and many images of dilapidated civilizations proliferate throughout the work, reminding many of Japan’s state post-World War II. He remains the symbol of rebirth, perhaps the only hope to man

⁴⁰ Charles Solomon, “A Wind Named Amnesia,” *Metareview*, <http://www.metareview.com/product-a-wind-named-amnesia/B00009MGFS> (accessed 7 March 2011).

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

rising again to his former state of progress. The image of rebirth after a catastrophic event has deeply religious connotations in Japanese society, in fact, as Napier suggests:

animation...contributes to “developing a distinctively Japanese...apocalypse”, which... draws from...Buddhist...*mappo*...“a fallen world saved by a religious figure”...”latter days of the Law”, the final 1000-year phase of decadence and decline following... Buddha’s death...Japanese historian of religion, Kitagawa, recognizes...this apocalyptic heritage...is...complex...where the: “yearning of the Japanese...to restore the...golden days...with...religion and politics (*saisei-itchi*), has...developed...messianic fervor... during political crises. The ethnocentric, messianic restoration implicit in...indigenous religious tradition...received further stimulus from...apocalyptic...*mappo* (the...age of degeneration of...Buddha’s Law) as well...from...‘immanent theocratic’... Confucianism...by...messianic...Nichiren’s teaching in the thirteenth century...”⁴³

Besides these complex issues surrounding the apocalyptic concept of *mappo*, Kitagawa also recognizes that “the...ethnocentric, messianic motif in...many other postwar new religions present ‘old dreams’ of Japan as...‘new visions’ of the coming social and political order...”⁴⁴ Michael Broderick has also found that “...*mappo* tradition” can further be “...complemented by arcane *masse*...the latter...closer to an apocalyptic narrative...’*Masse* describes the...end of the world, and the beginning of an entirely new one”⁴⁵ This is evident in *Spriggan* and *Appleseed*, which both qualify “the Japanese apocalyptic further as there is not so much... salvation of an elect...as...Western tradition, but...closure of one narrative and...beginning of another...In *Spriggan*, a...(cyborg)...attempts to annihilate...life...and start afresh with newly designed creatures,” while *Appleseed* shows “artificially augmented human clones (bioroids) are

⁴³ Michael Broderick, “Superflat Eschatology,” *Animation Studies*, 12 July 2009, <http://journal.animationstudies.org/2009/07/12/michael-broderick-superflat-eschatology/> (accessed 3 March 2011).

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

created to harmonize warring homo sapiens but are themselves positioned to be...inheritors of Earth once humanity is 'euthanazed'."⁴⁶ In addition, to reference the ethnocentric motif in many anime, as noted above, the hero is also Japanese, which brings to mind some ideas about rising nationalism and ferreting out the foreign threat.

The anti-occupation themes revolving around Japan's blaming of the Americans for their continuing problems after the war, along with the idea that nuclear technology can be dangerous, continually foment throughout the manga world in endless ways. Through *Mighty Atom* or *Astro-Boy*, Tezuka expressed frustration with the American occupation and felt humiliated and embarrassed by it, as if it also destroyed that part of the Japanese psyche that longed to make its own decisions but was helpless after its great empire fell apart: "He was...beaten by...American GIs because he could not communicate...Tezuka cannot have been the only Japanese...humiliated by occupation troops...subjugated to...foreign powers. A... nationalist...would have experienced ...humiliation...he felt deceived...ambivalent..."⁴⁷ Alluding to this disillusionment with an occupying power who often stumbles over itself, along with greedy politicians looking out for their own interests, the failure of authority figures theme is also revisited, as the American buffoonery displayed in many manga and anime features are found in the mecha series "Patlabor," by Masami Yuki. The story revolves around a group of police officers in the near future who use "Labors," which are robots, for heavy construction. The Tokyo Metropolitan Police have their own Patlabors to fight crime and manage

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Bill Benzon, "The Robot as Subaltern: Tezuka's *Mighty Atom*," *The Valve*, 10 November 2008,

accidents that Labors are involved in. A specific police division, Special Vehicle Section 2, Division 2, is focused on, with Noa Izumi being the main character, but the rest of the division is included. The series is full of references to feelings about American influences, Japanese self-determination, and technological dangers, as exemplified in the “Patlabor II” movie. The monologue itself asks what the Japanese are protecting, which is typical of a war film and also shows a bombed bridge, giving the idea that maintaining peace is essential to Japan.⁴⁸ However, peace under American influence is perhaps questioned negatively, especially since there is some hint that other motives may be at play by the US.⁴⁹ The solemn images also suggest that prosperity and modernization in Japan has come at a price of losing “natural beauty.”⁵⁰ In addition, images of a prosperous country coincide with guilt for preserving Japanese peace, with the Japanese having grown acclimated to the suffering of others.⁵¹ Arakawa suggests that just war is possible, such as in World War II.⁵² In addition, “the...solemn buoy conveys...isolation and loneliness,” since “Japan is without allies...and must protect itself. Aside from the scene...in Southeast Asia, the...military-political conflict occurs...around Tokyo. Severe damage is upon the city...bridges...blown up...helicopters...wreaking

⁴⁸ Michael Fisch, “Nation, War, and Japan’s Future in the Science Fiction Anime Film *Patlabor II*,” *Science Fiction Studies* 27, part 1, no. 80 (2000), <http://www.depauw.edu/sfs/backissues/80/fish80art.htm> (accessed 9 July 2011).

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

destruction...government forces...helpless...”⁵³ The destruction itself reminds one of *Godzilla*, and Susan Napier draws on Tudor’s *Monsters and Mad Scientists: A Cultural History of the Horror Movie* and explains that *Godzilla* is “secure horror...collectivity is threatened from...outside, reestablished through scientists and...government”⁵⁴ In addition, enjoyment in...“secure horror”...”is...chaos and destruction, which audiences find... attractive...less likely to induce anxiety and enjoyable...order...restored with ...resolution of...conflict. These films were...anti-technology in prewar...science fiction and fantasy, they...conveyed a...nationalistic message”⁵⁵ The nationalistic message often revealed is that “American technology as evil awakens...monster, in contrast to...good Japanese technology that...kills it. Napier points to negative...American nuclear technology...Hiroshima and Nagasaki...”⁵⁶ Japanese audiences could be satisfied with the fact that “the happy conclusion...served as...ideological device that ‘offered its postwar...audience an experience...cathartic and compensatory, allowing them to re-imagine...tragic wartime...”⁵⁷ The *Patlabor II* movie shows evidence of the important dynamics between the Japanese people and the American military presence in Japan:

...*Patlabor II* conform[s] to...“secure horror,” there is...doubt whether they [nationalist messages] carry...“cathartic” function...for...present...Japan. The nationalist aspect...is...evident...Yokohama Bay Bridge is destroyed by a ...

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

missile ... reminiscent...of American “smart bombs” during the Gulf War...to cement... connection in...viewers is...behind the...shift in which the attacking jet is...American ...“secure horror” with nationalist significance can be...tanks and infantry...to occupy Tokyo...a[n] ...allusion to...US occupation ... police ...are...preparing for...long war... the population...in disbelief. The...chaos begins with a close-up...“out of order”... above a train platform...the population...depends on the...train system...there is... chaos...followed by a...sequence...that contains...emotionally charged animation...⁵⁸

The devastating images of Tokyo being under occupation remind the Japanese of the early days of occupation after the war, rousing up some nationalistic feelings among the populace, captured by the following scenery of sad “images...a...city under siege. The scene fades with snow...soldiers standing guard during night a...reminder of defeat... loss of national pride... With American occupation the mobilization of the military signals collapse of peace...postwar Japan.”⁵⁹ In addition, Japan’s “decision to ... abstain from ... conflict has been ... central ... separating ... from ... prewar ... attitudes, when ... military prowess was ... national pride. A shift ... marks ... temporal ... ideological regression ... towards ... rehabilitated militant nationalism.”⁶⁰ There is no less than an element of nationalism in the above quotes, along with the idea that the Americans have somewhat overstayed their welcome. It is not surprising, then, that images of nationalism abound in such a work, with the Japanese serving as the good presence that kills the evil American technology. Japan is then able to come to terms with its guilt-ridden self by portraying such ideas as giving the nation a newfound hope and a life that can indeed start over and be reborn. Sometimes, the way to cope with the war and the tragic bomb

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

destruction is to turn to another world, a world where anything is possible and where any devastation and tragedy can be overcome, or perhaps to an ordinary setting through the eyes of those war orphans who became extraordinary as a result of their experiences, such as in the world of Hayao Miyazaki. Though not an orphan, he was indeed impacted by the works of other orphans affected by the war, having witnessed many of the horrors of World War II himself.

Considered by many in the field to be one of the greatest artists of his generation, Hayao Miyazaki is also one of the most innovative and original manga artists in the anime industry today. Astroboy was considered the start of one of two types of anime, with the other, “in the words of animation critic Tsugata Nobuyuki...the Disney-influenced, full-animation, feature-length animated film stream...out of Toei Studios’ animation division, Toei Animation (formerly Toei Douga)...”⁶¹ Miyazaki was considered one of the forefathers of this second area, who started with Toei himself, which was established in 1956; however, Toei was originally from an association called “Nihon Douga, which drew together many animators active in the prewar and wartime periods...”⁶² Toei was established even further back to the first Japanese animation and “its...founders, Yamamoto Sanae and Yabushita Taiji, were trained by one of three founding figures of animation in Japan, Kitayama Seitarou. This leads Yamaguchi Yasuo to claim the Japanese animation boom can be traced...to Kitayama...1917 to... 1923.”⁶³

⁶¹ Steinberg, 198.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

It is essential to remember these lineages when examining Japanese animation's history, since "in the prewar period, animation in Japan was not an industry at all but an assortment of small production groups often based around a principal animator, who passed knowledge and know-how about animation to his disciples in esoteric fashion."⁶⁴ This is all important background for laying the groundwork and understanding the present world of anime and its trendsetters. Clements and McCarthy say that "The world of Japanese animated features is less confused, since it is still dominated by Hayao Miyazaki, as it has been for the last twenty years."⁶⁵ His depictions of life in otherworldly existential means or in the most generic of places bring to us the fullest potential of the human imagination. The setting is usually another world with a strong female character, odd-looking life forms, and a wild series of events that occur:

Hayao Miyazaki is perhaps the most famous anime director in Japan today and, because his studio produces mainly family films, he is often compared to Walt Disney in the West. Miyazaki's films...are far more complex and challenging to watch; where Disney films tend to affirm existing cultural values, Miyazaki's perform a complicated dance between performing Japanese cultural values and destabilizing them. Despite the...rigidity of gender roles in Japan, nearly all Miyazaki films feature strong, intelligent, independent heroines who put supposedly feminist characters such as Disney's Pocahontas and Mulan to shame. Miyazaki is...well-known for the environmentalist bent of his films, which combine warnings of environmental disaster with a strong note of hope for the future.⁶⁶

At times, his fantasies center on idealistic settings that almost resemble classic stories in a European-esque environment: "the Paris of memories," (from a Japanese phrase): "This

⁶⁴ Steinberg, 198.

⁶⁵ Jonathan Clements and Helen McCarthy, "Introduction," in *The Anime Encyclopedia*, ed. Jonathan Clements et al. (Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge Press, 2006), xx.

⁶⁶ Christine Hoff Kraemer, "Between the Worlds: Liminality and Self-Sacrifice in *Princess Mononoke*," *Journal of Religion and Film* 8, no. 1 (2004): 3.

imagined Europe—a world of quiet hedgerows and walled gardens unspoiled by war.”⁶⁷ Roger Ebert even explains that the types of themes in Miyazaki’s and others’ works are no ordinary themes, opening up a world unparalleled in its limitless possibilities, since “To watch these titles is to understand that animation is not an art form limited to cute little animals and dancing teacups. It releases the imagination so fully that it can enhance any story, and it can show sights that cannot possibly exist in the real world.”⁶⁸ *Grave of the Fireflies*, in particular, is one of the works mentioned that seems to have this kind of effect on its viewers, striking their hearts with its imaginative, yet realistic, scenarios.

Miyazaki’s own Studio Ghibli, in fact, made the *Grave of the Fireflies* film, even though Miyazaki himself did not draw the characters or participate in the production. The horrors of World War II become a reality in this story, as mentioned previously, but these unpleasanties of the war also show the unfortunate consequences of mankind’s destruction. Perhaps Mr. Miyazaki speaks for his generation on the war itself and the atomic bomb, though he does not see violence as something which he holds in high regard. His experiences of the war as a child and what became thereafter left an indelible mark on his mind, as it did in the minds of many Japanese manga artists, including Tezuka, and is subsequently depicted in their stories. Traumatic defeat and the dropping of the atomic bomb had a powerful effect on the postwar Japanese mangaka,

⁶⁷ Ritter, 2-3.

⁶⁸ Roger Ebert, “The Beauty of Anime; Japanese Animation Unleashes the Mind,” *Chicago Sun-Times*, 7 Oct. 1999, sec. Features, 43.

who witnessed burning cities, large planes and firepower from invading soldiers.⁶⁹

Hence, certain themes developed into the popular images seen in manga countless times:

“The A-bomb trauma and the ruined, burned and scorched city became what Shiraishi calls “The Original Experience and the Original Picture” of manga. The Japanese cartoonists became obsessed with mechanical things living their own life—hence the... importance of the theme of the giant warrior-robot...foreign to American or European postwar comics. Since Tezuka’s *Tetsuwan Atomu*, many manga scenarios revolved around the same recurrent story; the world...destroyed because technical progress ran out of hands and must be rebuilt using mechanical tools. Manga raised questions about Progress and Future—while American comics, obsessed by...confrontation with communism...devoted themselves to the glorification of existing social order (the... setting for Disney’s stories) and its preservation (the sole task for the superheroes).”⁷⁰

This fascination with mechanical things and the experience of a child with special powers is described in further detail in the article “Anime Mania: Astro Boy (Tetsuwan Atom),” by Jennifer Wong, who traces the origins of Osamu Tezuka’s works. His story is the first of a genre that spawned the anime industry, a fascination with mechanized robots, and numerous other titles by Tezuka. Other scholars such as Philip Brophy also explain that “it is generally regarded that the animation industry in Japan blossoms with the formation of the independent MUSHI STUDIO under the leadership of...Tezuka in the early 1960s (culminating in the successful...ASTRO BOY).”⁷¹ “Astro Boy,” indeed, has been clarified to be the main inspiration for the beginning of the Japanese animation industry (as well as stimulating other industries to develop) that eventually spread throughout the

⁶⁹ Bouissou, 22.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Philip Brophy, “Sonic—Atomic—Neumonic” (paper presented at The Life Of Illusion: 2nd International Conference on Animation, Japan Culture Centre, Sydney, Australia, 1995).

world.⁷² As Japan entered a period of growth and prosperity after the war, with the evolution from “secondary to the...tertiary sector economy its...source of...expansion, *Astroboy* and the character-based system of serial consumption...had...influence on cultural production for...that century and into the 21st...also on...economic production, marketing and consumption.”⁷³ *Astroboy* and the anime following that series on television borrowed from the dual themes of limited animation and product marketing that helped propel anime to a significant level of success.⁷⁴ These two areas are also connected to “history, from the ruins of the Pacific War and...emphasis on the secondary sector in Japan’s reconstruction, to the movement into late capitalism, with its dependency on... consumption,” which also ties into “consumers’...desire to make the media world into their world via the consumption of character goods.”⁷⁵ *Astroboy* also proved so popular that a third series for television was created in 2003; the market for anime only continues to expand, along with the merchandising. Interestingly enough, the success of this classic series shows that “the special relation between movement and immobility that *Astroboy* pioneered is by no means exhausted.”⁷⁶ On another note, Jennifer Wong, referencing her article discussed earlier, gives details about Tezuka and Astro Boy, who is a character who remains the best hope for his people and is an orphan with special powers. Astro-Boy was representative of the prosperity ahead for Japan’s

⁷² Steinberg, 197-198.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

rising markets, the symbol of promise after the war. Japan's experiences, in order to speed up the post-war industrialization process, forced it to embrace a "robophilia" that has been "part of a larger philosophy in regard to technology that developed along with postwar Japan to make it the power it is today."⁷⁷ The atomic bomb brought the idea of Astro-Boy to the forefront of what Japan felt was needed after the war, a symbol of national unity and one of prosperity:

In World War II, Japan experienced the devastating power of...technology in the... atomic bomb. In postwar Japan, technology would become Japan's savior...(Astro-Boy's) appeal lies in his humanity...His story is like...Pinocchio...a replacement for the son lost...in a traffic accident...Japan's image of robots was...nurturing...Atom was Japan's son. It's not unthinkable that many Japanese who lost sons to the war... could relate...personally...Tezuka was a medical student who...intended...Atom to be a...parody, but..."publishers wanted...a peaceful future, where Japanese science and technology were advanced, and nuclear power was...for peaceful purposes." Author Frederick Schodt...expert on...Japanese comics, notes that "over the years, Atom and robots became linked with a...future...science and technology could provide."⁷⁸

As a symbol of the nation, Astro-Boy fought constantly against a mad scientist's evil robots and also could shoot projectiles, and the character's inspiration is discussed, with an in-depth reflection of how the effects of the atomic bomb and World War II influenced the character in general.⁷⁹ The special abilities of many characters (an independent variable supporting the two central themes of the paper) in anime allude to the bomb's

⁷⁷ Gilson, 367.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Osamu Tezuka, *Astro Boy*, TV Series, directed by Osamu Tezuka (1963; Grimes, IA: Right Stuf International, 1993), DVD.

effects, as “many anime heroes are mutants or have psychic powers, an obvious metaphor relating to Japan's concern with the Bomb and the effects of nuclear radiation.”⁸⁰

A perfect example of the idea of mutants who suddenly gain a great deal of power after an apocalypse is the animated movie “Harmageddon,” based on the science fiction manga “Genma Taisen” by Kazumasa Hirai and Shotaro Ishinomori. The plot concerns a “young psychic princess named Luna who is given a horrifying vision of an impending invasion upon Earth. Knowing it to be a, well, harmful one she sets off to find the world's most powerful psychics to aid her in being rid of the intergalactic menace.”⁸¹ The plot contains an alien menace from another galaxy that is bent on destroying the earth, much like the Americans were sent to Japan to ward off the Japanese and force them to surrender. The victim state of the Japanese is once again revealed here, and the significance lies with the fact that the fate of the world is at the mercy of the mutants. The atomic bomb caused quite a bit of radioactive effects (contributing to the fear of technology falling into the wrong hands), which was of no coincidence in the plotline development, as Shotaro Ishinomori was seven at the time of the atomic bomb blast and admits to having been directly inspired by Tezuka, his mentor.⁸² Ishinomori once submitted work to a *Manga Shonen* magazine contest seeking new talent, with Tezuka being impressed by his drawings and eventually asking him for help on “Astro Boy.” Post-war themes abound in that particular comic.

⁸⁰ Beale, 24.

⁸¹ Michael Apoyan, “Review: Harmageddon,” [www.Monstersatplay.com](http://www.monstersatplay.com), <http://games.monstersatplay.com/review/anime/harmageddon.php> (accessed 3 March 2011).

⁸² Shotaro Ishinomori, “Manga, the All-Powerful Medium,” *Mangajin* 31, November 1993, 68-70.

Quite frankly, Tezuka had been known to incorporate heavy post-war themes into several of his works, since “The theme of tragedy and human growth, including battles as a form of initiation, is a traditional theme in post-War Japanese manga, one that Tezuka Osamu (1928–89) began in 1945–1950s.”⁸³ Tezuka further gives evidence of his negative attitude towards science and technology, especially as it is used for evil means in the essay “Save our Mother Earth,” where “The progress of natural science was...intended to bring happiness to human beings. But instead it has become ... evil...causing nothing but pain to the earth. The problem can hardly begin to be touched upon by my Manga, which some people once ridiculed and labeled absurd.”⁸⁴ Tezuka also carries a style very similar to Betty Boop, and one can see the roots early on. In fact, he was also influenced by Disney cartoons, as was Miyazaki, and some of Tezuka’s own works parallel similar styles of Disney’s, since some of the greatest “influences on Tezuka came from the west. Calling Walt Disney an idol, Tezuka...had seen Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse cartoons many times as a child, and, after World War II, had travelled from...Osaka...to Tokyo to see *Bambi* no less than one hundred times...”⁸⁵ Though, in the early 1990s, there was controversy “about the similarities between Disney’s *The Lion King* and Tezuka’s three-decades-earlier *Jungle Emperor*, some critics remembered that *Jungle Emperor* itself drew heavily on Disney animation

⁸³ Fusanosuke, 4.

⁸⁴ Osamu Tezuka, “Destruction: Save Our Mother Earth,” Tezuka Productions, http://en.tezuka.co.jp/message/destruction/des01_2.html (accessed 3 March 2011).

⁸⁵ John A. Lent, “Animation in Asia: Appropriation, Reinterpretation, and Adoption or Adaptation,” *Screening the Past* 11, no. 1 (2000), <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/screeningthepast/firstrelease/fr1100/jlfr11c.htm> (accessed 10 July 2011).

and cartooning style.”⁸⁶ Astro-Boy draws somewhat from both the Betty Boop and Disney cartoon influences, as evidenced by Tezuka’s drawing style, and the show eventually became very popular. It had mass audience appeal almost immediately after the public was able to watch just a few episodes. Astro-Boy spawned many other anime works and almost single-handedly started the genre.⁸⁷ It was considered the first feature to jump-start the entire industry:

Astroboy was the first 30-minute, weekly animated TV series produced in Japan, and is considered to be the beginnings of “anime” – or...one of...two main streams that flow into it. First broadcast on 1 January 1963, *Astroboy* is based on the manga...series... created by the “god of manga”, Tezuka Osamu. Tezuka occupies a huge place in the Japanese imaginary and the history of its postwar mass culture in that he lays claim to being...creator of both manga and anime as we know them...manga as it is known today is very much a postwar development. Tezuka is credited with introducing the two distinguishing features of postwar manga: cinematic framing techniques and the long-story format (leading to sprawling narratives that continue over multiple volumes, often serialized in manga magazines before being published as individual books).⁸⁸

Many spin-offs of a boy with special powers developed soon after this work was released, especially after it became animated instead of just a comic book. Children had hoped that they too could strive to be something, even if there were no parents around to guide them. There were additional implications to this story, due to the fact that Japan’s postwar citizens had to deal with such sudden cultural shock, as depicted here:

The first generation of mangaka was confronted with another psychological trauma; the ignominious failure of their defeated fathers and the anguish of having their parents dead and being abandoned. The typical manga hero is an orphan of a kind, from Tetsuwan Atomu—...rejected by the scientist who built him—to the

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Wong, 2.

⁸⁸ Steinberg, 7-8.

queen Marie-Antoinette in *Beru-bara*—...left alone in a foreign, hostile country, far away from her family. Even when he/she is living with his/her parents—as in most children’s manga—the young hero is often a bad boy/girl, a failure at school like Doraemon’s *Nobita* or a whimsical young mischief like *Crayon shin chan*. Manga is devoted to the dynamism of the younger raising in revolt against their failed fathers...to build a brave new world.⁸⁹

This war orphan motif is quite reflective of Tezuka’s attitude towards war and the effects it had on children, directly influencing later works by him and artists inspired by his themes, in which he comments that “I have one principle that I’ll never compromise; even if I have to surrender my life, and that is that I’ll never condone war” and further emphasizes how the tragedy of Japan’s war orphans is an ugly result of war’s (and the atomic bomb’s) after-effects.⁹⁰ War is as difficult and challenging issue, more than “soldiers fighting and dying: the many wars fought during our history have produced countless child victims...Even in today's world, many children are hurt in wars between adults, losing...limbs or being separated from...parents or brothers, and ...robbed of...lives and futures.”⁹¹ Tezuka’s message is that “We must not turn away from the reality, saying that it has nothing to do with us and therefore ignoring it. If we really want world peace, this is where we have to start.”⁹² These reflective themes of war’s tragedies and the bomb’s devastation continue into later works and are passed onto other authors such as Miyazaki, who seems to shed light on such themes quite often. These themes tie

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Osamu Tezuka, “War: Lambs of Sacrifice,” Tezuka Productions, http://en.tezuka.co.jp/message/war/war01_3.html (accessed 4 March 2011).

⁹² Ibid.

directly into plotlines about consequences leading to death and destruction as a result of man's carelessness or obsession for power if he is left to his own devices.

Additionally, Peter Ritter's article "The Land of Youth" is interesting in that it mentions that Miyazaki's only memory of the war was a bright sky that was glowing, the atomic bomb, as he witnessed it from a distance. This has heavily influenced his fantasy world being interrupted by some grim reality, which is a common theme in one of his films called *Princess Mononoke* (several of Miyazaki's works can be considered seinen comics), about a forest girl who protects her land with her special powers against those who would desire to steal the woodland's hidden secret to its beauty. It is essentially based on a "medieval Japanese fable in which a princess and a horde of forest creatures struggle against the Tataro clan, which tries to set up an iron smelter in the mountains."⁹³ One scene actually parallels the bomb's effects in a destruction scene in the forest when "The apocalyptic sequence comes to a climax when Eboshi, ignoring Ashitaka's cries, shoots off the *Shishigami*'s head."⁹⁴ This, in turn, triggers a trail of destruction, for "Out of its body gushes a mindless black sludge that kills everything in its path. The *Shishigami* reforms into a blind, rampaging, headless mass: trees fall; grasses and flowers turn black; the smaller spirits of the forest tumble from their perches, dying; the town is destroyed."⁹⁵ This parallels the scene in the aftermath of the atomic bomb, where nothing but a wrecked landscape was what remained in various parts of the Hiroshima and

⁹³ Amaha, 37.

⁹⁴ Kraemer, 12.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

Nagasaki. In *Princess Mononoke*, when a warrior is cursed for trying to protect his village from a boar-god, he must get help from this unusual forest girl to stop it from killing him. The curse itself is reflective of radiation sickness and is one independent variable supporting the idea that technology can become disastrous if allowed to destroy nature:

Ashitaka's diseased arm, which throbs with malignant hypertrophy whenever he feels hatred, symbolizes one aspect of the protagonist's...passage from adolescence to existential authenticity. Insofar as Ashitaka can be viewed...as the antithesis of Yamato-takeru...the latter...a prewar exemplar of the nation and its virtues, Ashitaka's struggle for maturity acquires...significance. Similarities between Ashitaka's infection and contraction of "A-bomb" disease via black rain—...contact with a black substance transfers potentially mortal, but not immediately deadly, sickness—suggest... Ashitaka's struggle to overcome...hate can be read as...Japan's coming to terms with... nuclear attacks...by transcending the impulse toward retribution in favor of...building a more ecologically respectful...spiritually harmonious world.⁹⁶

There are multiple layers of symbolism referencing the bomb beneath the elements of the storyline in "Mononoke." The story also shows a greedy ruler who decides to try to deplete the forest of its natural resources and take the forest's secret--its lush minerals. The warrior must stop his people and the village's opponents from keeping events from escalating and disaster from striking.⁹⁷ This film shows how normal society, when everything seems perfect, can be disrupted:

A quintessential example of Miyazaki's genius, the film is...one of his darkest and most ambiguous texts, notable for its balanced exploration of the conflict between nature and technology. Lady Eboshi, leader of an iron-working town, is competent, intelligent, powerful, and set on destroying the sacred forest that

⁹⁶ John A. Tucker, "Anime and Historical Inversion in Miyazaki Hayao's *Princess Mononoke*," *Japan Studies Review* 7 (2003): 6.

⁹⁷ *Princess Mononoke*, directed by Hayao Miyazaki (1997; Santa Monica, CA: Miramax Films, 1999), DVD.

thwarts her mining efforts. She is not...the stereotypical Disney villainess, destroying the forest for profit alone. Though the town manufactures munitions, it is...a utopian home for lepers, ex-prostitutes, and others marginalized by society. Opposing Eboshi is the wild wolf-girl San, a fiercely independent creature of the forest and adopted daughter of the wolf god Moro. San has led the sentient forest animals in attacks against...townspeople, resulting in the loss of many lives. Both sides have...grievances...⁹⁸

The story is a complicated one, with many dynamics between both sides that make choosing one over the other difficult for the viewer at times. Ashitaka is one primary character who remains of primary importance in the story, as a metaphor for the war orphans who had to survive on their own after the war itself. This “young warrior prince...has journeyed far from home to free himself from the curse of a dying boar god, who became a demon after being shot by Eboshi. A powerful warrior...peace-loving and compassionate, Ashitaka is the last prince of a dying tribe...”⁹⁹ Ashitaka is “in tune with nature but...fully human” who cares about his fellow man and wishes to cease the skirmish between the manufacturing town and the forest.¹⁰⁰ The plot creates more complexities by showing that “as Ashitaka refuses...sides, so...does Miyazaki – both San and Eboshi are...sympathetic...representing worlds that have...unique beauty...as their own savagery. Miyazaki avoids...Western trope of good vs. evil and explores ... technology and nature in a way that affirms both.”¹⁰¹ In the story, the balance between nature and technology must not be disrupted, and technology can lead to the destruction of anything and everything if taken into the wrong hands. The idea of a utopia does not

⁹⁸ Kraemer, 4.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

always occur in reality, as one observes in this anime, and greed can ultimately almost destroy people if they do not cooperate with one another. Evidence of Miyazaki's socialist influences from this piece are reflected in his works. Because Miyazaki was better at drawing things other than humans, as a child, he focused on instruments of war, such as tanks, ships, and planes, which surface periodically in his later work.¹⁰² He later drifted into socialism, and, though he later minimized his political ideas in his work and “tempered his politics, historical materialism...underlies much ...later work...especially *Princess Mononoke*, a creation myth based upon the endless contest between industry, laborers, and the natural world.”¹⁰³ In addition, “if Miyazaki refuses to view the world in...heroes and villains, a Weltanschauung he considers both...male and...Western, he does suggest that change is precipitated by discord.”¹⁰⁴ A concern for the environment inspired the “Mononoke” story. He suggests that man must harmonize with nature, or the natural cycle of things will be disrupted, reflecting socialist ideals. In addition, “Miyazaki's surreal images are based on fact, such as the slime-coated stink spirit that is bathed by a brave Chihiro and is revealed to be a river god covered in garbage.”¹⁰⁵ Miyazaki is known to be ecologically aware and confesses that he “helped as a volunteer to clean the local river. And that bike [in the story] was actually stuck in the sludge. We

¹⁰² Ritter, 2.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Susan Wloszczyna, “Animation Virtuoso Makes Sweet 'Toons with Disney,” *USA Today*, 18 Sep. 2002, sec. Life, 10d.

restored that river so that there's fish swimming in it now.”¹⁰⁶ He is definitely one who does not shy away from his political, idealistic values, embodying them in real life.

Miyazaki is seen as an idealist of sorts who believes in harmony with the world, one characterized by a utopia that suddenly experiences a threat to the environment that could potentially be at the heart of one's very existence (Tezuka himself often expressed such concerns about society losing respect for nature in the march towards progress), especially in the film *Pom Poko*:

Renowned...director Isao Takahata spins this tale about a...battle between Japanese folkloric figures and housing developers at the edge of...Tokyo sprawl. The tanuki -- a badger-like creature...with big round eyes, a large Buddha-like belly, and long pendulous testicles...– is...beloved...in Japanese myth...a...bringer of fortune and a shape-changing trickster. *Pom Poko* opens with...tanuki fighting...each other for...scarce resources of their forest. Soon the group realizes that the...enemy is not...fellow tanuki, but suburban sprawl. Lead by...tough-talking matriarch...Oroku Baba...they use... lycanthropic abilities...to thwart the developers...tarps fall on windshields and obstacles appear before bulldozers, sending the lot careening off...into a gulch. Unfortunately, the tide of progress is not...easily turned. Will the...tanuki keep their pastoral idyll?¹⁰⁷

The strong socialist feel of the story contains a group of happy raccoon-dog creatures (tanukis) at peace with their existence, yet suddenly realizing that their greatest enemy is technological progress at the hands of mankind, disrupting nature. On a similar note, Phillip E. Wegner has made parallels between Miyazaki's work (and links to socialism) in a scene from *My Neighbor Totoro* and William Morris' utopian “*News from Nowhere*...hierarchies of gender and class have disappeared along with...nationalist or militaristic violence...there is...collective stewardship of the land and...end

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Jonathan Crow, “Synopsis: Pom Poko,” www.moviephone.com, <http://movies.aol.com/movie/pom-poko/1093419/synopsis> (accessed 4 March 2011).

of...destructive exploitations...deep...community and mutuality...collective working of...land...no...money...”¹⁰⁸ Miyazaki, according to Peter Ritter, in his article “The Land of Youth,” has made it known that his works often reveal partly socialist ideals through historical materialism (man is trying to conquer nature through suburban sprawl in this case), and the tanukis must learn that change indeed reaps some difficulties in adjusting; instead of fighting amongst each other for the few remaining resources, they must unite, much as laborers do in a union, and fight mankind’s materialism to give in to his capitalist demands to acquire more land.¹⁰⁹ Man, is, in essence, determined that he and his technological needs must be met, yet the Tanukis, in their determination, remain steadfast. He feels that man must learn to respect nature, being one with it, as well as understanding that technology and progress have their limits. Man should not let his greed get out of control, or destruction could follow, especially by interfering with the natural cycle of things. This is reminiscent of the Japanese experiencing the foreign threat of the Americans coming in and occupying their country (one important independent variable), turning their way of life upside-down in the process. They impose their capitalistic values on the Japanese, yet the Japanese seemed content in their simple way of life that was ultimately destroyed when the Americans abused technology and dropped the bomb. The lesson is that humans should respect one another’s sovereignty without feeling that capitalism is the only thing that matters in life. The notion of man

¹⁰⁸ Phillip E. Wegner, “‘An Unfinished Project that was Also a Missed Opportunity’: Utopia and Alternate History in Hayao Miyazaki’s *My Neighbor Totoro*.” *Interdisciplinary Comic Studies* 5, no. 2 (2010), http://www.english.ufl.edu/imagetext/archives/v5_2/wegner/ (accessed 30 September 2010).

¹⁰⁹ Ritter, 172.

conquering nature leading to destruction is also seen in Kurosawa's works; though he directed live-action films, similar themes are evident throughout his film *Dreams*, leading to disastrous consequences in the end, reminiscent of the atomic bomb, which form a key theme in *Dreams*, as well as man's failure to bend nature to his will.¹¹⁰ Kurosawa shows man's intent on utilizing science and technology to conquer nature in a way as to profit from it as well, with the resulting consequences being "nuclear disaster and a burning earth (Mt. Fuji)...the direct result of the destabilization of nature resulting from these all-too-human human attempts at subjugation."¹¹¹ To add further to the type of trauma associated with a cataclysmic event, many Japanese children were left to fend for themselves against the American occupation after the bomb, struggling to survive, much like the Tanukis in the *Pom Poko* film. One can understand some of Miyazaki's themes more clearly after reading this article and screening some of his works, especially in understanding the point of view of the many orphaned children after the war.¹¹²

The independent and strong, possibly orphaned child theme repeatedly surfaces in Miyazaki's work, such as in *Spirited Away*, directed by Hayao Miyazaki, about a girl who wanders off by herself when her parents make a stop in an abandoned theme park:

Unhappy to be leaving the familiarity of her old neighborhood, a sullen and fearful 10-year-old girl wanders away from her parents on the road to their new home, finds herself in a mysterious, enchanted world, undergoes trials requiring bravery and resourcefulness, and emerges with courage to face the new. The plot might apply to a hundred children's stories, family-friendly films, and child-

¹¹⁰ Robert Feleppa, "Black Rain: Reflections on Hiroshima and Nuclear War in Japanese Film," *Cross Currents* 54, no. 1 (2004), <http://www.crosscurrents.org/FeleppaSpring2004.htm> (accessed 4 March 2011).

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Ritter, 3.

development studies. But only the great *Japanese animation* artist Hayao Miyazaki could dream up the marvels of *Spirited Away*, a triumph of psychological depth and artistic brilliance offered as the magical adventures of one skinny little girl.¹¹³

She suddenly finds herself surrounded by all manner of creatures, like “warty twin sorceresses Yubaba and Zeniba,” with such scenes as a “shadowy bathhouse and amusement park for the spirits...a riot of busyness and personages haunting, funny, and often both.”¹¹⁴ One creature here is “the hulking, semitransparent figure...No-Face,” who “invokes loneliness,” while “the gargantuan infant...Boh embodies...being spoiled rotten.”¹¹⁵ The heroine, Chihiro, discovers that the person in charge is a witch who has transformed many individuals into these unusual beings and controls their lives. The girl must stop the witch from taking over her life and preventing the girl from going back to her world. She also must rescue a friend in the process and discover how it is that she can get back to where her parents are and her everyday life. This shows how a child faced with adversity must overcome her temporary handicaps to succeed in a great goal, echoing images of the strong, typical female orphans surviving the post-war period, with a bit of determination and a mind of their own (another independent variable that works well to support this paper’s central themes):

These female protagonists are [a]...mixture of characteristics...Japanese as well as... Western...they... partake in...Japan's culture of the *shojo* (young girl)...*shojo* occupies ...play (*asobi*) in modern Japanese culture. Feminine, innocent, and cute... [Representing]...cuteness [*kawaii*], the *shojo* serves as...appealing...in contrast to the... hardworking...Japanese male. In...Banana

¹¹³ Lisa Schwarzbaum, “Pretty in Ink,” *Entertainment Weekly*, 27 Sep. 2002, sec. 1c, 57.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Yoshimoto, they are...linked with nostalgia ...in...1950s female children in Miyazaki's *Tonari no Totoro*. Often...the *shojo* is...older and...subtly eroticized. Most of Miyazaki's heroines are in their early teens...Although sexuality is never highlighted, characters...Nausicaa and San have...female figures and relationships with male characters that seem...potentially erotic...Miyazaki's heroines differ from...typical *shojo*...in their... independence...many...are... taking charge...¹¹⁶

Miyazaki's strong female characters are evident in his works, as "Kiki in *Kiki's Delivery Service* ...leaves home at...twelve...to be a witch...the heroine of *Nausicaa* explores the apocalyptic wasteland and performs scientific experiments..."¹¹⁷ Likewise, in "*Mononokehime*, San is a... mix of anger and aggression who...attempts to take on human civilization with...her two wolf 'siblings.'...Miyazaki...seems intent on...figures whose...attributes could be...in Japan, but...exemplify...Western-type... courage and heroism," which all seems to point to the idea that Miyazaki sees universal themes in his work that transcends cultures.¹¹⁸ On a similar note, in *Spirited Away*, the female character must remain strong as she finds her way around, discovering new things and making her own decisions. Again, some of the child acting as adult themes appear here and the realization that one must overcome one's own demons to succeed in life, similar to sentiments expressed by war orphans in Tezuka's *Astro-Boy*.¹¹⁹ Much like these heroines, the orphan Astro Boy "evoked the numerous war orphans marginalized by post-war Japanese society. When...published in 1951...there were many war orphans...Like

¹¹⁶ Napier, "Confronting Master Narratives," 473-474.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ *Spirited Away*, directed by Hayao Miyazaki (2001; Burbank, CA: Walt Disney Studio Motion Pictures, 2003), DVD.

them, Astro Boy had to gain his own identity...to be accepted...through his contribution to the community... by acting as a peace mediator.”¹²⁰ Indeed, there is undoubtedly also evidence of Tezuka’s influence on Miyazaki’s works, as admitted through his boyhood experiences: “Like...many schoolboys in postwar Japan, Miyazaki was drawn...to manga...particularly...Tezuka...*New Treasure Island* was...sacred...for...artists of the genre. Taking up drawing...was for Miyazaki less...rear-guard action against adulthood than...homage to his...predecessors.”¹²¹ The orphan themes, frequently appearing with female protagonists, are continually seen not only in Miyazaki’s works, but others’ as well.

One work that particularly draws on the idea of a strong female orphan is the cyberpunk series *Battle Angel Alita*, the story of a cybernetic girl who is revitalized and brought back to life with the help of a doctor who is an expert on cybermedical technology:

On a future Earth, there is a great floating city. Perhaps life is a futuristic paradise there...but we don't go there. Instead, we enter a city built underneath the floating city. In these slums, a cyborg engineer finds a discarded cyborg from the trash dropped from above. He rebuilds her and gives her a name, Gally, which is later known as Alita. Alita awakens in a world where living conditions are poor, gangs roam the area, and “survival of the fittest” applies. Alita is apparently a child with no past...even to herself. Mysterious combat abilities are within her though and after a period of some confusion, Alita registers herself as a “hunter/warrior.”¹²²

¹²⁰ Yuki Tanaka, “War and Peace in the Art of Tezuka Osamu: The humanism of his epic manga,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 38-1-10 (2010), <http://www.japanfocus.org/-Yuki-TANAKA/3412> (accessed 4 March 2011).

¹²¹ Ritter, 2.

¹²² Kevin Lamothe, “Anime: Battle Angel,” www.animenfo.com, http://www.animenfo.com/animetitle,65,neulwy,battle_angel.html (accessed 5 March 2011).

Like other anime of this genre, the world is in a post-apocalyptic, harsher state than before, which makes life difficult to survive. The prospects for greater human civilization appear bleak, but there is one hope. Alita is perhaps the answer to all the desolation on the earth. The allusion to cybernetic technology and the dangers of destruction as a result of its misuse by mankind are reflective of the atomic bomb and the events surrounding the nuclear aftermath of Japan in World War II. The city represents Japan in its industrialization period after the war, with much instability and chaos throughout the nation, as the gang activity and the Darwinian attitude towards survival allude to a nation in a period of civil unrest and exposed to unwonted influences, such as the negativity associated with the American military and their imposition of values upon the Japanese. The character is an orphan, much like those left behind from the tragedies of the war. She is not aware of her past, suggesting that she is a source of greater power than previously thought. The heroine, much like in "Ghost in the Shell" series, appears to outwit and overpower her opponents with her exceptional abilities. She may also be a symbol for a strong female dynamic that slowly rose in Japanese society after the war, with women gaining greater social status. She is also indicative of the independence that many women faced as they were able to show determination and character in a traditionally male-dominated society by subduing her opponents, much like the "Sailor Moon" series has shown, with its strong feminine characters (connecting this to the independent variable describing strong female orphans from the war) who dominated their antagonists.

Some reference to sentiments expressed by female orphans is seen in the manga film adaptation of *Sailor Moon: Evil Eyes* from the Sailor Moon saga, which is written by Naoko Takeuchi and is about girls who were planet guardians in their previous lives and possess special powers, upon which they can all anytime when they need to fight evil beings (usually demons and other girls with similar powers).¹²³ They all have unique powers and wear schoolgirl uniforms. They are very independent, strong-willed, and travel to strange worlds that ordinary schoolgirls do not. It is also apparent that such strong female themes are influenced by the idea that the “the growing strength of women in Japanese society has led to an increase in woman warrior-type anime heroines. This, in turn, has helped attract a female audience in the United States.”¹²⁴ This is characteristic of the female war orphans who had to survive on their own after the war as well. Often, in anime or manga, the characters use the “female body as a means to fetishize technology,” who are often “Victoria’s Secret cybersoldiers, posed languorously on tanks and other mecha in a manner reminiscent of cheesecake calendars.”¹²⁵ The protagonists in “Sailor Moon” are reflective of strong-willed teens who can act independently of adults and make adult decisions. The girls in “Sailor Moon” have special abilities to aid them in their endeavors and pursuits of life’s challenges, but they also must act as ordinary schoolchildren at the same time, which shows the difficulty of adjusting to adult life without much guidance as well, since the war orphans and bomb victims struggled to

¹²³ Naoko Takeuchi, *Sailor Moon: Evil Eyes*, TV Episode, directed by Junichi Sato (1992; Burbank, CA: Buena Vista Home Entertainment, 1997), VHS.

¹²⁴ Beale, 24.

¹²⁵ Mescallado, 143.

a degree with these issues. The consequences of war, destructive technology, and violence coming together are cataclysmic, which is also seen in “Sailor Moon,” as reflective of issues that war orphans struggled with, in surviving the bomb, witnessing destructive technology (such as when the girls transform and use powerful magic to destroy enemies), and realizing that using violence can only lead to devastating consequences (i.e. the evil monsters using violence suffer a horrible fate), much as the Americans’ use of the atomic bomb technology forced them to live with the consequences of their actions as they witnessed many Japanese suffer:

As a girl, Serena...has a mixture of traits and, as the superhero, Sailor Moon, a constellation of powers—weapons (tiara and moon prism wand), strengths (the ability to shift form, impersonate others, execute multiple attacks), and a make-over appearance (...with new cleavage, jewels, and a uniform...now miniskirted, turns her sexy and beautiful). All of the latter...are only revealed in...battle. This means...transformation ...in *Sailor Moon*... is...linked to destruction; the girls transform only with the arrival of (and to counter-attack) the destructive Negaverse, and...use their powers to destroy...The ...name of the show...[Pretty Soldier, Sailor Moon]) suggests...superheroism...is coupled to...the...warrior-destroyer. So even in this mild, sweet...cyborg killer, violence ...intended to...destroy others is fundamental to the appeal...of the main character(s).¹²⁶

All of these themes of violence, abuse of technology, and war orphans that survive great perils are similar to the powerful heroines expressed in the stories of “Captain Harlock” creator Leiji Matsumoto (Takeuchi’s main manga inspiration growing up), who also dealt with images of war and its consequences, such as “The Cockpit,” a war story set during World War II:

The...episode, "Sonic Thunder Attack Team," reveals the story of a young pilot of an ohka, a "human bomb" launched from the bottom of a mother plane, powered by rocket engines. On August 5, 1945, this ohka pilot named Nogami

¹²⁶ Anne Allison, “Cyborg Violence: Bursting Borders and Bodies with Queer Machines,” *Cultural Anthropology* 16, no. 2 (2001): 243.

survives by parachuting out ...when attacked by American fighters. Although ashamed to be saved since...many of his comrades perished, he gets another chance to...attack...the next day. When the plane carrying his ohka gets attacked and catches fire, a Japanese plane makes a suicide crash into the American fighter ready to shoot down his mother plane and ohka. Nogami's ohka gets launched, and he crashes it into an American aircraft carrier. The carrier captain receives news of the...bomb being dropped on Hiroshima just before his ship explodes.¹²⁷

The above quote reveals that both sides of the war engaged in tragedy, and that war is devastating to all parties involved. Matsumoto also explores similar themes of hope and loss in his popular anime series "Space Cruiser Yamato" about Earth in 2199 which is "under attack from the mysterious planet Gamilon," whose "bombs cover...Earth with radioactivity and...Earth has...one year for survival...On the planet Iscandar, there is a machine which can remove the radioactivity. Queen Starsha offers it to the people of Earth. A team of star blazers undertake the...journey" to "travel 148,000 light years and back in just one Earth year."¹²⁸ Susan Napier explains how the themes of loss, love, and hope surround the image of the atomic bomb itself in the story:

Even more than the...bomb...a metatope for loss...the Yamato...are tropes of... Japanese identity, initially...as one of loss and destruction but, through...animated fantasy...become a trope of renewal and hope. For...this reworking is... positive...as the Yamato...transformed from...emblem of prewar...militarism to...global... emissary of peace and love...This universalization of the Yamato's...significance is...clear...The earth is...united against alien blue-skinned enemies...and...love of humankind is...evoked...If the atomic bomb was...powerlessness and victimhood, as a result of an...outside force the sinking of the Yamato is a...defeat and despair...The films

¹²⁷ "The Cockpit: Kamikaze Stories (*Kamikaze Images*)," Wesleyan University <http://wgordon.web.wesleyan.edu/kamikaze/films/cockpit/index.htm> (accessed 5 March 2011).

¹²⁸ "Space Cruiser Yamato/Star Blazers," www.anime.com, <http://www.anime.com/Yamato/> (accessed 5 March 2011).

project...universal love...Furthermore, the Yamato unlike the Enterprise in Star Trek [is]...reactive...defending the earth rather than seeking out adventures.¹²⁹

As one can witness, Matsumoto was deeply affected by his wartime experiences with his specific references to the horrors of war, the destruction evident in the abuse of technology, the despair felt by Japan and the family structure in the conflict, and the sense that some sense of hope can be ascertained from the entire experience, all independent variables which support the two dependent variables or central themes.

Likewise, Shoji Kawamori, the creator of the “Macross” saga, in an interview, expressed the fact that he was inspired greatly by Matsumoto’s work (the creator of “Yamato”) in his designs, along with influences from Kazuki Miyatake and Leiji Matsumoto.¹³⁰ He sometimes uses the Studio Nue name for some of his work that suits that particular company he started, but he also was inspired significantly by the film *Uchu Senkan Yamato*.¹³¹ He started out drafting mecha designs for that same production company that produced the film after contacting them in his freshman year, landing a job with them by his sophomore year.¹³² Kawamori’s work eventually led him to the “Macross” saga, which encompasses themes of alien invaders coming to Earth, engaging

¹²⁹ Susan Napier, “World War II as Trauma, Memory and Fantasy in Japanese Animation” (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, *Japan Focus*, Chicago, March, 31- April 2, 2005), <http://www.japanfocus.org/products/details/1972> (accessed 5 March 2011).

¹³⁰ LongZhu, “Animerica's Interview with Shoji Kawamori,” LongZhu, <http://members.aol.com/LongZhu/Shoji.htm> (accessed 5 March 2011).

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

in prolonged wars with humans, romance, and humans battling the aliens with mechanized robots and other unconventional weapons, even music:

10 years ago, a mysterious alien vessel crashed into the Earth. This...triggered... humanity to unite and face the new threat of alien invaders. Now, the alien vessel has been rebuilt as the Macross, a flagship for humanity...During the ceremony of its maiden voyage, the Macross initiates a pre-programmed booby trap, destroying an incoming alien fleet. Now humanity is in a desperate battle with the invading Zentradi forces...Among the crew of the Macross are a young man and...girl from...different backgrounds. The war for them is a way to find the path they must follow in life, while struggling with...emotions...for each other...*Macross* comes across as a social commentary on life and the arrogance of man.¹³³

Macross encompasses many themes that leave several questions to be desired as to the impact of the war on the Japanese that reflect their own experiences with the occupation and the atomic bomb, with the bomb foreshadowing a total devastation that is similar to the climactic ending of the series and the aliens similarly referencing the American occupiers. There is even irony in the name of the massive spaceship designed to fight the aliens, called the Super Dimensional Fortress Macross (SDF are the initials for Japan's Self-Defense Force, its pseudo-military). The original name "Super Dimension Fortress" ("Choo Jikuu Yoosai") is a play on a working title, "The Super Dreadnought Fortress Macross" ("Choo Dokyuu Yoosai Makurosu"), which is explained in the production notes of the Macross series by the animated ship's designer, Shoji Kawamori.¹³⁴ One interesting bit of information that might be noteworthy is that Kawamori is also known for various mecha designs for several other series, including "Escarflowne," "Genesis of Aquarion," and especially for the Takara line of Diaclone toys that became the forerunner

¹³³ Allen Divers, "Macross TV Boxset: Review," Anime News Network,

¹³⁴ AnimEigo, "About the Title: "The Super Dimension Fortress Macross," AnimEigo, <http://www.animeigo.com/liner/out-print/macross-tv-series> (accessed 30 September 2011).

for the famous “Transformers” series in the United States; in fact, his Convoy design is nearly identical to the Optimus Prime character (leader of the Autobots) in the long-running series. The Transformers franchise involves a series of prolonged wars between good and evil, extraterrestrial robots, known as the Autobots and Decepticons, who have carried a great deal of their battle to Earth, reflecting alien invasion themes (i.e. the Americans) and a destructive, powerful technology (i.e. nuclear technology) that will give the user the power to threaten the planet’s existence, which the Decepticons long to have.¹³⁵ These issues support the central precept about technology in the wrong hands (such as the Decepticons possessing it) leading to Earth’s destruction. In any case, the wartime themes resurface again and again throughout these examples listed.

Another manga (which was also turned into an anime television series) with complex themes centered around wartime loss and a hope to come involves the series “Silent Service.” This seinen comic concerns a nuclear submarine under joint US-Japanese command that is suddenly taken over by the crew and essentially under the command of no one:

A more complex situation is...series *Silent Service*. This series, set in the contemporary era, features a nuclear submarine, originally under...U.S.-Japanese command and... called the *Seabat*. In a...twist...the Japanese crew takes over...and turns it into a rogue vessel, no longer under...any nation. Most of the series consists of...travels of the submarine and...attempts by the international community to find...it, constantly defeated by the...captain who masterminded the takeover...Although unexpected, the takeover is...presaged by a significant action...by the Japanese commander early on... Alone...he takes out his knife and carves a...word into the hull...“Yamato.”... Although the overall diegesis of

¹³⁵ Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., “Shoji Kawamori,” Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shoji_Kawamori (accessed 5 March 2011).

Silent Service is less...evocative of history than... Yamato...history is still an important emotional catalyst behind the plot...¹³⁶

This series covers the independent variables of defeat and loss in a tense world of the future, with Americans made to look buffoonish and the Japanese riding on a wave of nationalistic feelings.¹³⁷ Loss and defeat are covered in a way as to be either “therapeutic or problematic,” remaining open to question for the viewer.¹³⁸ Yoshida Mitsuru, a Yamato survivor from the actual ship that sunk, said that “Fortunately the space cruiser *Yamato* is decisively different from the battleship *Yamato*,” with the *Seabat*, on the other hand, signaling a “desire for Japanese autonomy from America.”¹³⁹ The complex morals arising from this story express a particular desire by the Japanese to be independent, feeling that they no longer desire outsiders to control their fate, so that they can assert themselves in foreign policy, for example. In addition, the naming of the vessel “Yamato” by the captain invokes images¹⁴⁰ of the series by that name, along with a rising feeling of Japanese nationalism since the war itself and the American occupation, unfortunately stressed by the bomb and the air raids on Japan.¹⁴¹ The Americans appear as unwanted foreign invaders (one independent variable), and perhaps this attitude reflects a Japan that is making itself feel better by making themselves, again, the victims

¹³⁶ Napier, 12.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Kayt Solomon, “Real Horror in Animation,” *Hackwriters.com*, June 2006, <http://www.hackwriters.com/anime3.htm> (accessed 30 April 2011).

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

and the occupier, in the form of the Americans, the aggressor (another independent variable). This idea of the victim is not surprising, as Japan “has avoided acknowledging events that took place during World War Two” and “substituted a vague notion of ‘unfortunate events’ and Japan as...perpetual victim of intercultural [misunderstandings]’ ...Japan’s isolationism leads to a desire not to discuss...the nuclear attacks with ‘outsiders’...as if they would not understand Japan’s unique situation.” This reflects the isolationist nature of Japan’s politics, one where Japan sees itself in a different light from the rest of the world (another independent variable). In the “Silent Service” series, there are also quite a few references to the United Nations and geopolitics that also factor into this series.

Both “Silent Service” and “Yamato” expressed a trend since the 1990s in anime of revived nationalism themes, which serves as an important independent variable towards the paper’s primary themes. In previous decades and immediately after the war, the tragic images of loss and despair prevailed in many series that were not immediately considered appropriate by the American occupiers or when the United States continued to exert heavy influence on Japan’s foreign policy. There had always been vague references to wartime experiences through subject imagery in manga and anime. However, as of late, the popular science fiction themes have demonstrated more boldness in further emphasizing what could have happened in an alternate universe, or perhaps if Japan could have determined its own wartime fate. In this way, the animated stories show the Japanese sense of not only self-guilt, but the attitude that they can fend for themselves:

Live action war films declined in the 1970s, as did stories...in actual wars. But fantasy war films...traced back to such films as Atragon (1963)...a Toho special

effects movie in which remnants of the Imperial Navy save...Earth from invading aliens, took up the slack...in...anime. For instance, the successful “Space Battleship Yamato”...offered... that resurrecting the sunken battleship Yamato was the only way to save the human race, and “Silent Service”...showed a rogue Self-Defense Force warship...forcing peace on the superpowers. Such works marked...that anime fandom, and related audiences...for manga, would...reveal right-wing tendencies in the 1990s. These would...be represented by...right-leaning subculture commentators as Sato Kenji and Kiridoshi Risaku, or neo-nationalist manga artists like Kobayashi Yoshinori.¹⁴²

Revived nationalism is one of the ideas that has been re-surfacing as of late, and more people have been fearless in showing their frustration at being pushed around by the United States’ collective defense arrangement with Japan, the AMPO treaty. In a sense, the fates of the United States and Japan are intertwined because American forces are obligated to protect Japan if it is attacked, and Japan has the right to defend itself. Both carry out joint training exercises and save Japan a great deal from having to dip into its own defense budget by using American forces. However, the Japanese also appear to be upset that the US has a special arrangement to convict military personnel in its own courts, without the consent of the country that the troops are stationed in. As a result, tensions run high when serious crimes are committed, and many troops seem to have an unchecked ability to be accountable to themselves under American law, with the Japanese feeling that this is simply one more indication than the US exerts control over Japan (a solid independent variable). Several manga and anime deal with these specific themes of American military occupying and setting their own rules, such as “Blood”.

The “Blood” shonen series discusses the Japanese feelings on the American presence in Japan, often interweaving the themes of orphaned schoolgirls with special

¹⁴² Aaron Gerow, “Fantasies of War and Nation in Recent Japanese Cinema,” *Japan Focus*, 20 Feb. 2006, <http://japanfocus.org/products/details/1707> (accessed 6 March 2011).

powers and expressing an underlying sense of the fear of a foreign element controlling Japan's fate, giving rise to nationalist sentiment to some degree. There is a threat that exists, With alien-like monsters that want to wreak havoc, the schoolgirl protagonist must once again save the day and rid the world of these foreign invaders:

...The content...portrays...transnational intimacy that rejects simplistic notions of "family" that define...relations in..."blood."...the nation and...family, the world-setting...of *Blood+* contradicts...affection and action that characterize Ishihara's... national sacrifice...The monsters are related...by "blood," yet...goals, and moral standing, vary...As the...national "family" weakens, many...youth are questioning their location in the...social world. *Blood+* represents...as...dangerous, full of corporate and military malfeasance...with...potential to be repaired if close friends and...siblings...work together...Schoolgirls and transnational monsters as core characters can...be...related to a...book...David Leheny...*Think Global, Fear Local*... analyzes ...popular media representations...to justify enhanced powers for the state...¹⁴³

Leheny connects "media sensationalism surrounding Japanese schoolgirls who go on paid dates...with middle-aged men" and shows how foreign threats and these adventurous schoolgirls show a nation apparently under attack, causing politicians to overreact in getting international collaboration to stop terrorism and sex trafficking.¹⁴⁴ This seems to justify the expansion of state and police power because of a perceived foreign threat by the media that will presumably destroy the nation from within.¹⁴⁵ Similarly, in *Blood+* "In one of the...plot developments...a young girl in Vietnam...having lost a leg to a landmine, supports her family by searching fields for explosives..."¹⁴⁶ Fansub" groups

¹⁴³ Condry, 4-5.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

also help by making “available online...translation notes...a few characters mention the Status of Forces Agreement...the United States government’s shield for military personnel...from...foreign...laws,” while *Blood+* itself “aims to capitalize on... unease with military interventions and multinational pharmaceutical companies...bad guys...”¹⁴⁷

One can learn from the above that the American military presence indeed had a great impact on the Japanese psyche and generated a lingering feeling that Japan is its own nation that does not need foreign intervention (an important independent variable that explains how the Japanese feel unique as a people by themselves, tied into nationalism) and can fend for itself. In fact, during World War II, nationalists made a point of comparing foreign troops to ancient demon-like creatures popular in Japanese mythology: “It is common knowledge among Japanese that during World War II...*oni* was used to describe the Japanese enemy—the leaders of the Allied forces, the Americans and British. The monthly *Manga*...editor...Kondo Hideo...depicted as evil demons Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin.”¹⁴⁸ The aggression displayed by the American military in carpet-bombing Japan, along with the use of the atomic bomb that caused many to become orphans, forever imbedded a near-obsession with doomsday themes in manga and anime. Pointon agrees with Newitz in the idea that “it is undeniable that atom bomb imagery recurs obsessively in almost every *anime* text”...whether originated by a firebreathing dragon, an uncontrolled technology, or a sinister, generic world

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Reider, “Transformation of the Oni,” 147.

government.”¹⁴⁹ The atomic bomb is revisited continually through various metaphors that constantly resurface in many genres of these media.

An extremely powerful example continually conjuring war images of the atomic bomb experience concerns the impact of a family and children’s attitudes in the shonen comic “Barefoot Gen,” a manga created by Keiji Nakazawa, that details the events of Hiroshima from a young boy’s point of view, whose family is wiped out completely, except for him and his mother. Nakazawa relates this event to his own war experiences:

Then, in 1966, my mother died. I...rushed back to Hiroshima, but...she was already lying in a coffin...If it hadn't been for my mother, who knows what would have happened to me...I went to the crematorium to collect her ashes...But there were no bones left...I think the radiation must have invaded her bones...to the point that they just disintegrated...Since coming to Tokyo, I hadn't said a word about being an A-bomb survivor...People in Tokyo looked at you...strangely if you talked about it...There was still...fear among...Japanese that you could "catch" radiation sickness from A-bomb victims...The more I thought...the more...it was that the Japanese had not confronted these issues...They hadn't accepted...responsibility...I wrote my first work about the bomb...[Struck by Black Rain]¹⁵⁰

Many personal tragedies were felt very close to home in Japan’s wartime period, as in the above interview with Nakazawa. Nakazawa was also inspired by Tezuka’s work; in fact, there is a story of him discovering “a classmate's copy of the manga *New Treasure Island* by Osam Tezuka, which changes his life forever. Nakazawa finds the story and the artwork so compelling that he seeks out all the other Tezuka manga he can find and begins making plans to become a manga artist,” as both Tezuka and he share the experience of physical and psychological trauma caused by the bomb itself and making it

¹⁴⁹ Pointon, 54.

¹⁵⁰ Gleason, 1.

a part of their work.¹⁵¹ Kamrowska also validates the opinion that the bomb's effects go beyond the surface, into the nation's collective conscience, dragging with such an experience a social and psychological impact never felt before in the population.¹⁵² Even the creator of "Yamato" expressed anger towards this tragedy and frustration at the "alien invaders" that the United States appeared to be based on when they came into the country, directing this anger of painful childhood experiences towards the enemy through one of the characters in his manga, such as "Derek Wildstar, an impulsive fighter pilot on the Space Cruiser *Yamato*," who "flies into a rage as a captured member of an enemy alien race is interrogated. As he charges furiously toward the alien, he indulges in a lengthy reverie which recounts his parents' death at the hands of bombs...by members of the alien's race."¹⁵³ This tragic personal, emotional turmoil felt by the characters in many genres of manga and anime is recreated over and over throughout the industry in many science fiction/fantasy/post-apocalyptic future works, particularly by those artists influenced by Tezuka. In fact, according to Susan Napier, the two works expressing the most accurate examples of Japan's wartime experiences are "Barefoot Gen" and "Grave of the Fireflies," both of which reveal personal tragedies and relate the themes of children affected by the war:

The two most famous...are the...faithful recreations or rememorations of cataclysmic events such as the...bombing of Hiroshima...in Barefoot Gen

¹⁵¹ Brian Ruh, "Brain Diving: Legacies of Hiroshima," *Anime News Network*, 23 November 2010, <http://www.animenewsnetwork.com/brain-diving/legacies-of-hiroshima/2010-11-23> (accessed 6 March 2011).

¹⁵² Agnieszka Kamrowska, "Children of the Apocalypse: the Atom Bomb Trauma as a Theme in Japanese Anime," *Film Quarterly* 61 (2008): 112-113.

¹⁵³ Fuller, 2.

(...1983) and the final days of the war as seen by two children in Kobe...in *Grave of Fireflies* (...1988). In these two films, personal memory on the part of the writers of the original texts (...Nakazawa Keiji on whose autobiographical manga *Barefoot Gen* is based and Nosaka Akiyuki who wrote the semi-autobiographical short story *Grave of Fireflies*), became part of...Japanese memory, as the films were seen by millions of Japanese schoolchildren. But the war, the defeat and the atomic bomb... manifest themselves... in more displaced forms, most obviously in the...fetishization of apocalypse, which has been a staple of Japanese animation since the 1970's to the present.¹⁵⁴

Grave of the Fireflies remains particularly disconcerting as well because the “desolation stretches out on all sides.”¹⁵⁵ The film “has been called Japan’s ‘Schindler’s List,’” showing “the brother doing anything he can think of to protect his sister, who grows weaker every day.”¹⁵⁶ The film ultimately ends in tragedy, showing the hardships of the war orphan experience. In fact, famed movie critic Roger Ebert says that “This is the only animated film that has ever made me cry.”¹⁵⁷

An example that shows how this orphaned war child experience is expressed even closer to the present is seen in the long-running manga series “*Dragon Ball*,” written by Akira Toriyama. This is the story of a boy with a tail who lives by himself. He has unusual powers and is very strong; he is not sure of his origin and has no parents, but one day stumbles upon a young woman. She befriends him and discovers that he has one of the dragon balls that she is looking for. Each of them has special powers, and if all seven are combined, that person may get a wish. Throughout the series, there is constant fighting in the race to gain all seven dragon balls, and if someone finds one, they can

¹⁵⁴ Napier, 1.

¹⁵⁵ Ebert, 43.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

possibly track where the others might be. This series has been so popular that there are many sequels, and it has continued for years. It is fascinating in its depth and the various journeys that the characters take, reflective of much of Japan struggling to find itself and survive in numerous ways after the war and the bomb attacks. Indeed, the war orphan experience was an influence of Toriyama's since his childhood, as an admitted fan of Tezuka's work: "I was an avid anime watcher until I was about 10, when I moved to manga. I think I am influenced by Osamu Tezuka's and Walt Disney's works which I watched during that time, such as Tetswan Atom ("Astro Boy") and 101 Dalmatians."¹⁵⁸ Each Dragon Ball character develops so fully over time that it is remarkable the change that some of them go through, which could reflect the lifestyle of any ordinary hero or "superhero" and all of its complexities, yet also Japan's evolution from a war-torn nation after a nuclear holocaust into an industrial superpower, which ties into one of the central themes of the paper regarding death, destruction, and rebirth.¹⁵⁹

To wrap up this particular section, the paper here highlighted and explained the motivations for Tezuka's work, provided background into the religious justifications for manga and anime, and the standing of these media as a field of their own, as well as reinforce the two primary themes Tezuka expressed surrounding the atomic bomb and the many sub-themes expressed by other artists inspired by his works in these science fiction, fantasy, and futuristic-apocalypse genres of manga and anime. The sub-themes include

¹⁵⁸ "Shonen Jump Interviews Akira Toriyama," [www.SquareHaven.com](http://www.square-haven.com/people/Akira-Toriyama/?interview=9), <http://www.square-haven.com/people/Akira-Toriyama/?interview=9> (accessed 6 March 2011).

¹⁵⁹ Akira Toriyama, *Dragon Ball: The Magic Begins*, TV Series, directed by Minoru Okazaki and Daisuke Nishio (1986; Los Angeles, CA: Harmony Gold USA, 1989), VHS.

the dynamics of victimization felt by the Japanese as a result of having to experience the bomb, the guilt associated with being forced into a joint security arrangement with the US, and the nationalism felt as a result of supporters to the right of the political spectrum wanting Japan to strike out on its own with an independent security force able to make its own decisions. In any case, many political elements have been found within the sub-themes, or independent variables, that add weight to the central concept gauged from Tezuka's influence by justifying the phoenix analogy of death and rebirth and the other theme of mankind leading his race into catastrophe if he desires to conquer nature through the abuse of technology. Questions surrounding the research limitations and techniques are proposed and answered in the next section, along with how data fills in the gaps as supporting evidence in the form of data analysis steps and procedures.

CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH DELIMITATIONS AND TECHNIQUES:
DATA ANALYSIS STEPS AND PROCEDURES

We can determine what subthemes (or independent variables) occur most often and which ones appeal to which audiences, including how different generations perceived World War II and especially the atomic bomb, showing comparative analysis, especially with regard to Tezuka's influence on many artists that support his central themes (the dependent variables) examined in the paper in the time period mentioned from 1945-1965 and 1985-95. The benefit of this research is that many people will be more enriched with the knowledge as to how Japan was able to cope with the horrible effects of the war. Indeed, we can assess exactly which subthemes or independent variables people respond most to and which ones are not as popular, centering on the effects of the atomic bomb and especially its implications of mass destruction. The subthemes that occurred most often will be discussed, and the meanings and feelings behind all of these independent variables will be explained. Perhaps the sentiments of Tezuka's work (which inspired many others after him) centering on such themes of technology bringing forth a promise for the future and a hope that things will turn out for the better can best be explained in a quote by Ada Palmer reflecting the feelings of post-atomic bomb survivors: "Hiroshima-survivor Keiji Nakazawa is one of hundreds who remember...*New Treasure Island*...and its successors...offered...two kinds of hope: societal hope...nuclear technology...

might...build a...future...individual hope...a child...have something...to aspire to...a *manga-ka*.”¹ Undoubtedly, many artists owe their inspiration to Tezuka driving the post-war trends in anime and manga and to asking questions about what the bomb meant for Japan itself: “He pioneered long and narrative cinematic stories and influenced many *manga* writers to establish a *manga* genre...His work was popular with...children and adults and was influential in the works of many other *manga* writers. His *manga*...created...universal appeal...”² Tezuka was a pioneer in his field for inspiring future artists in many anime and manga genres, breathing life into these art forms to ensure their success through their creativity involved with original storylines. In addition, the main reason behind the success of many manga will be also given in this chapter. Attitudes towards the bomb will be focused on, and the ultimate effect of the bomb at its end may also prove central to some themes. The time frame for this project is from the end of World War II to 1965 and the 1985-1995 time periods. Relevant themes will be easily distinguishable from insignificant ones once the basic themes, or dependent variables, are established.

The subthemes, or independent variables, that most often occurred supporting the two central themes, especially in highly developed anime films such as “Akira,” are an engaging storyline and three-dimensional characters, aspects of technology and how they

¹ Ada Palmer, “Film is Alive: The Manga Roots of Osamu Tezuka’s Animation Obsession,” Smithsonian Institution, http://www.asia.si.edu/film/tezuka/essays/Tezuka_Palmer.pdf (accessed 18 May 2011).

² Seiko Yasumoto, “From Whence Does Popular Culture Emanate and How is It Re-Made? Junguru Taitei or Lion King,” in *Proceedings of the 17th Biennial Conference of the ASAA*, eds. Marika Vicziany & Robert Cribb (Victoria, Australia: Monash Asia Institute, 2008), 3.

relate to man and nature, and the meanings and feelings behind all of these aspects. In addition, the primary factor for success in many manga are the innovative abilities of the creators, who have complete freedom over their product; they draw the characters with a great deal of international flavor (i.e. wide eyes, simple facial structures) and they care more about satisfying the audience than in generating revenue. Also, we can gain a sense of how a number of the Japanese people felt towards the bomb and the tragedies that occurred.³ The animated feature version of the manga *The Cockpit* reveals such tragedy of the war's catastrophic events, in a sense, from the Japanese perspective:

...The Cockpit is a true masterpiece...Each story is well-plotted and well-directed, with masterful aerial sequences, sympathetic characters on all sides, and a very human drama ...Though...controversial...as it depicts World War Two from a Japanese viewpoint, the stories...are...universal, as these men...go through hardships, are forced to make decisions that result in...destruction...Again, this is one series that drives home...that war is...insane...The characters...have... well-developed personalities, no matter what side... which...illustrates the madness of a war that turns a man...into another...number in the list of...dead...The Cockpit...bodes well for...America...despite telling WWII from the "enemy's"...view. Urban Vision has...given Americans...opportunity to experience... human suffering and honor...sympathy and understanding for...victims of the war...⁴

Additionally, we must remember that the Japanese will never forget the casualties of the war and the violent air raids that killed and maimed many. The atomic bomb, however, rates as the single most devastating attack ever unleashed upon mankind.

The destruction of Neo-Tokyo at the end of *Akira* reminds us of the capability of the beast within mankind. The endlessly swelling white orb that continues to envelop the

³ Marshall, 2.

⁴ Cloudbt, "An Animation Masterpiece," Dooyoo, <http://www.dooyoo.co.uk/dvd-title-t/the-cockpit/69864/> (accessed 12 July 2011).

city (and either absorbs or destroys everything in touches) brings to light the awesome display of power of what can be abused. Susan Napier has coined several terms around the apocalyptic theme that this and similar manga represent:

Napier traces...three “modes”...“the apocalyptic,” “...elegiac,” and “the festival.”...The book’s...attempt to think of anime as...dialectical... illuminates...tensions, reciprocations, and exchanges between Japan and...global culture...in Japan in the latter ...twentieth century: they represent...Hiroshima and Nagasaki...for...Japanese. Much... apocalyptic imagery draws...from...non... Japanese sources such as...Revelations...The apocalyptic mode can appear in...different manifestations depending on the...anime being discussed. In...*Legend of the Overfiend*...it is...sexuality and sexual aggression... *Akira*... represents the apocalyptic...dissolution of a familiar world and its... cultural norms...Napier demonstrates how Katsuhiro constructs...celebratory... apocalypse by...cultural contexts including Menippean satire and the traditional Japanese festival.⁵

One can then compare the idea that the atomic bomb attacks produced many perspectives and relate to how it changed Japanese society in its entirety, developing a dramatic outlook in a shift from the pre-World War II era, perhaps symbolizing an old Japan dying and a new Japan arising. There is no other force that exists that can compare to these weapons of mass destruction (or can even withstand the impact of such a force). At the end of the movie, the sun begins to shine, and the promise of a better tomorrow seems to rise amidst all the debris.⁶ This powerful image represents the constant loss, but newfound hope, that Japan has felt over the many years since the American occupation, the end of the war, and the rebuilding of its economy. The images are also evocative of the subtle references to the atomic bomb that are not directly expressed in many films, as there is a major lack of direct accounts of the bomb itself, as the Japanese prefer to avoid

⁵ Silvio, 2-3.

⁶ Bouissou, 26

the issue and tell the story in other, indirect ways, as a way to cope with such devastating trauma on their nation:

Why Japan would not produce...atomic bomb cinema is understandable...The...feelings of shame and victimization that discussions...bring to the surface are hardly the stuff of commercial entertainment. Yet considering the enormity of the bomb—...its implications—the...rarity of...direct film treatments...in Japanese cinema is notable... Only...Kurosawa may...have dealt with the bomb in any...manner. Indirect...treatments ...are prevalent...Yet only a recognition of the range of cinematic treatments of the bomb, and the...absence of...treatments, allows...understanding of how the Japanese have...avoided and attempted to deal...[with] nuclear attack...No essay tackles...why the Japanese...avoided the bomb...and how...the few films...produced have portrayed the Japanese as victims without...the origins of the war and Japan's culpability in it.⁷

The sense of loss out of such devastation constantly surfaces throughout these films as well, as there is always some hint that Japan can rise again. Though the Japanese are not seen as the aggressor in any sense of the word, with no indications made of how their military conquests and aggression throughout Asia as an Axis power got them to the point of being attacked with the atomic bomb, they have used such images of war to give them at least some semblance of hope that their nation can rise again, evoking feelings of nationalism to an extent. Yet at the same time, the more important idea is that the hope exists for the nation to prosper again, not necessarily as a military, but merely a functioning, breathing nation that functions by way of its own willpower.

One feature this is further expressed in (hope helps cure the pain of war or the difficult atomic bomb situation, for example) is “The Place Promised in Our Early Days,” by Makoto Shinkai, an admitted fan of Miyazaki’s work:

⁷ David Desser, “Review of *Hibakusha Cinema: Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the Nuclear Image in Japanese Film*, by Mick Broderick,” *Film Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (1998): 44-45.

The advanced point of animation is that we can show more beautiful landscape than the real world. A creator can pour something beyond language into the beautifulness. In addition, I think landscapes can be the most intimate “cure” when we feel sad or pain. Even if your emotions didn't reach someone, and you could do nothing for it, you can see from panoramic viewpoint that you are surrounded by beautiful landscapes and have connections to the huge world. Although the second episode is a sad story of hopeless love, alternatively, we drew the landscapes more beautifully. If some of audiences were in such a hard situation and have difficult time, I hope my work would be a little help for them.⁸

There is a promise amidst all the violence, that all is not lost. The great nation will rise again, but it will take some time and patience. A similar sentiment is expressed in Shinkai's “Voices of a Distant Star,” where teenagers who fall in love must deal with crisis in the face of an alien invasion on earth, with the girl accepted into a military training program that is sent further and further away into space, since her mothership takes “successively greater warp jumps away from home.” Her boyfriend sends her text messages that increasingly take longer to travel to her as she goes deeper into space, “but Mikako's texts can only travel at the speed of light. Her *now* becomes his *then*, separated by days, then weeks, then months...” This perhaps reflects the sense of loss and loneliness experienced by Japanese as they begin to lose their loved ones over the course of the war itself, waiting for them to come home. Again, landscapes impress in this feature, as it is “truly one of the most beautiful and powerful anime of recent years and its creator has become a poster boy for the new generation of have-a-go amateur animators.”⁹ Clements and McCarthy go on further to say that “Perhaps the greatest

⁸ Daike, “Makoto Shinkai Interview,” Makoto Shinkai Fanweb Unofficial Fansite, http://daike.hp.infoseek.co.jp/03_filmography/5cm/5cm_pamphlet.html (accessed 10 July 2011).

⁹ Jonathan Clements and Helen McCarthy, “Voices of a Distant Star,” in *The Anime Encyclopedia*, ed. Jonathan Clements et al. (Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge Press, 2006), 709.

innovation of all in modern times comes in *Voices of a Distant Star*, the first release to truly utilize software that allowed a private individual to completely bypass the old distribution system.”¹⁰ Perhaps if Japan had had more choices as to steer the war effort had they known the outcome, they would have done things differently. One can observe the frustration from years of war and occupation in the feature “Deep Blue Fleet,” perhaps reflecting what Japan could have done if it had had a choice to decide its own fate during the war:

Isoroku Takano, a Japanese pilot shot down over Bougainville Island in 1943, is thrown through a time slip and allowed to relive his life, retaining all the memories of his former existence. Teaming up in 1941 with another time-traveler, Yasaburo Otaka, he seizes power in the Japanese government. With Otaka as prime minister and Takano leading the armed forces, the Japanese demand that Western powers pull out of Asia. When the Americans refuse to comply, the Japanese declare war and bomb Pearl Harbor.¹¹

The above “what could have been” scenario shows the constant emotions of loss, devastation, frustration, and hope that came from the war, showing that indeed, the battles took their toll on the nation’s psyche, and perhaps reflects the idea that Japan would have changed some things had they known that the bomb would be used, the nation would fall apart, and the country would have had to suffer the consequences for years to come, especially having to face the humiliation of being occupied and pacified by the United States and learned several lessons about the consequences of technology gone awry (like the militarization of the country and the bombing as the result of abusing their power throughout Asia through sheer domination). The familiar themes of

¹⁰ Clements and McCarthy, xx.

¹¹ Jonathan Clements and Helen McCarthy, “Deep Blue Fleet,” in *The Anime Encyclopedia*, ed. Jonathan Clements et al. (Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge Press, 2006), 136-137.

technology going out of control and endless devastation caused by the bomb, creating a situation out of Japan's control at that point, runs throughout many anime features, especially the futuristic cyberpunk and science-fiction manga that take place in a post-apocalyptic environment.¹² Technology must be monitored carefully to a degree, or it can lead to disastrous consequences. The Japanese often fear the dangers of rapid technological advances that may cause disharmony in nature, triggering catastrophic events, such as another atomic bomb. Many scenarios are explored as to how to handle such life-altering changes, dramatic enough to possibly threaten the existence of mankind:

...Akira ends with a warning against...rampant scientific technology, ending... with a... question mark on...mankind...The fact that so many...anime...take place in futuristic or ancient worlds of social upheaval and political unrest, says a lot about...*Japanese* animators. Anime...deal with ...how to reconcile ancient tradition and nature with...new technology...dealt with... daily...in Japan...In *Princess Mononoke*, the ancient *Japanese* world of forest gods and demons is threatened by...encroaching civilization...and... polluting industries...*Nausicaa* ...takes place in another world and...time...[with] a strong ecological theme... romanticizing...feudalistic society...*Galaxy Express 999* is about people who give up...human bodies...for robotic ones...People travel...through... space ...The train is not... high-speed...but an old man-run steam engine locomotive.¹³

Anime is endlessly examining the Japanese need to alleviate such damaging effects to nature, mankind, and how the earth is going to keep from leaning towards another nuclear-like holocaust in the future. Perhaps more than twenty different anime come to mind where Tokyo has been decimated again and again, either through a nuclear holocaust or a series of violent wars.

¹² Lin and Landow, 3.

¹³ Price, 157-158.

One series that expresses the very idea of an incoming apocalypse, with technology being a source of destruction, and a hope coming from within a group of young people, particularly a character named Kamui, with exceptional abilities is the Shjojo series “X”, authored by the all-female artist group Clamp. In the movie version of the story:

Kamui...whose name means God's power, is the key to preventing the destruction of Tokyo, both the destruction and its prevention being longstanding cinematic traditions. And he is determined to protect his love, Kotari...His best friend and Kotari's brother, Fuma...is enchanted into becoming Kamui's enemy. Dual goddesses, Kanoë...and Hinoto...tell of a battle for the world's future that moves from dreamscapes to bloody struggles on the city's streets. The film's motley band of world protectors include a stripper and a 14-year-girl and her magic wolf.¹⁴

The story itself is set in the near future of 1999 (future at the time) and paints a grim picture of the coming years ahead. Tokyo itself “has become the Earth's final battle ground between the Dragons of the Earth, who want to destroy the human race in order to cleanse the world of man's ‘obscenities,’ and the Dragons of the Heavens, who want to preserve it.”¹⁵ However, like many anime of this genre, the line between good and evil is somewhat confusing as the main character, Kamui, is not “a savior on a mission. He's dazed and confused, tormented by dreams and demons that blur all lines: between good and evil, between reality and fantasy, between fate and free will.”¹⁶ Basically, Japan is going to yet again face inevitable destruction, including at the hands of a technology for

¹⁴ Elvis Mitchell, “Even Animated, Poor Tokyo Can't Get a Moment's Peace,” *The New York Times*, 24 March 2000, sec. E; part 1, page 16, column 5, Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk.

¹⁵ John Petkovic, “Animated Fantasy from Japan is a Blood-and-Thunder Beauty,” *The Cleveland Plain-Dealer*, 13 July 2000, sec. Arts and Life, 5E.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

ill-intentioned purposes, typified by “the Beast, a computer capable of monitoring and controlling the world whose serial number of course is 666.”¹⁷ This is in reference to the Mark of the Beast in the Book of Revelation in the Bible and is a sign (in the form of an actual, sentient computer with that “unholy” number in Judeo-Christian belief systems) that the end times are coming, a common thought among many Christian believers. The final battle is to be fought in Tokyo between opposing sides.¹⁸ Kamui represents the hope of the Japanese fate post-war, perhaps the national spirit of Japan, and the possibility of Japan rising once again, as the Beast is one element of a destructive technology, along with the foreign element, the Dragons, who might destroy the world and cause an apocalypse. Could the Dragons of the Earth represent the Americans intent on making Japan bend to its will during the war, who may have caused the Beast to hold the fate of the world in its hands? The apocalypse and technology’s role in it is also told in several other stories in various ways, including “Blue Submarine No. 6.”

A modern anime dealing with doomsday events and destructive technology is seen in the manga series “Blue Submarine No. 6,” a Shonen series authored by Satoru Ozawa, with the animated version directed by Mahiro Maeda. Similar to Evangelion, the world was put through a series of apocalyptic events and must struggle to survive after ocean levels have risen, mimicking the cataclysmic events of the atomic bomb:

In the future, the rising heat has begun melting the polar ice caps. More of the Earth's surface is underwater than ever before...As if humanity didn't have enough problems, a group of ocean-dwelling creatures seems to have declared war on

¹⁷ Kevin M. Williams, “Anime Loses its Storytelling Luster in ‘X,’” *Chicago Sun-Times*, 24 March 2000, sec. Weekend Plus, Movies, page 30, NC.

¹⁸ Ibid.

mankind. Led by the scientist Zorndyke, their goal is to wipe human beings off the face of the Earth. But why? For every question answered, a new one is raised...Now mankind's last hope is a state-of-the-art submarine and her crew. Ace pilots Mayumi and Tetsu are on the front lines of this underwater war. But not for the same reasons...The crew of the Blue Submarine No. 6...seek to defend humanity from this new threat.¹⁹

The story itself evokes themes of survival after a holocaust, an enemy threat carrying destructive technology, and a powerful submarine manned by a group of pilots who must stop the foreign element from bringing further destruction. The scientist Zorndyke is a Westerner who seeks absolute power, to destroy the earth with equipment that will shift the magnetic poles and release a massive amount of solar radiation, much like the Americans were portrayed as foreign invaders intent on destroying Japan with air raids and the nuclear bomb itself. The heroes in the story, essentially, represent the Japanese as the heroes and the foreigners as the threat. The result of such a depiction of the foreigner as the menace, with a relationship between hybrid sea creatures and humans being incompatible is no less than an ethno-nationalistic feeling expressed by the right-wing Japanese, who for many years considered themselves somewhat different from the rest of the world. This is typical of a homogeneous society, with multiethnicity almost being a mark of displeasure amongst such a nation strong in its Japaneseness:

Hybrid beings...in horror-fantasy anime...ends up serving as an allegory for the horrors of miscegenation —and ... multiculturalism ... In Japan, a country with a history of isolationism and racism, miscegenation is ... shame and anxiety ... Japanese ... do not wish ... their culture ... “multi” ... Horror-fantasy anime ... represent ... merging ... separate cultures ... as socially disruptive ... Vampire Hunter D ... centers upon a half-vampire ... he battles to preserve the boundaries between ... supernatural and human ... He ... proves his honor by keeping the worlds ... separate ... There is little ... “multiculturalism” in ... anime ...

¹⁹ Lawrence Eng, “Blue Submarine No. 6 (a Review),” *Cjas.org*, <http://www.cjas.org/~leng/bluesub.htm> (accessed 14 July 2011).

Multiculturalism with America ... becomes ... double ... dread ... Narratives which raise ... multiculturalism ... may depict horror and violation because they are associated with a ... period when Japan was invaded by another ... culture and ... powerless to stop it.²⁰

Japan too often was invaded by other cultures and associated foreigners with wrecking havoc and symbolizing an undesirable element, hence the Westerners or Americans often being the object of negativity, especially the Americans in World War II. This is further complicated by the Japanese stereotype of Others, essentially non-Japanese, usually foreigners, of which there is an actual hierarchy in Japanese society:

...Japanese had...their...racial paradigm based on Tokugawa Confucian ...“proper place” ...Overlooked...is...the position blacks...occupy in the ...hierarchy...These...stereotypes of...black Other...reinforced by...American discourse...resulted in...acceptance...of... racial hierarchies...Influence can be found in...Tezuka...whose black primitives...[Jungle Emperor] (1950 to...1954) show...his namesake, as well as Shimada’s...Tezuka follows the...Western view of Africa...borrowing...from...Tarzan ...in...[Jungle World of Devils] (1948), [Tarzan’s Secret Base] (1948), and...subsequent works...The black Other occupies the same...space as *burakumin* and Koreans... Japanese preoccupation with racial elevation...to distance themselves from races subjected by Western power...Japan hoped to avoid by acquiring...accoutrements...of a...colossus.²¹

The Japanese, then, became the victims. The Western imperialism imposed on the Japanese for generations made them feel particularly as if their nation was somehow different, and that foreigners did not always bring positive values. Kuwahara concurs that Japan has always seen non-Japanese as the Other: “It has been pointed out by both American and Japanese scholars that Japan’s identity has historically been, to a greater

²⁰ Newitz, 9.

²¹ John Russell, “Race and Reflexivity: The Black Other in Contemporary Japanese Mass Culture,” *Cultural Anthropology* 6, no. 1 (1991): 5, 12-13, 14-15.

extent, determined by its relationship to the Dominant Other...”²² The nation was isolated for hundreds of years at one point and never particularly got used to the idea of a melting pot, making foreigners feel out of place. They could, then, not experience a sense of Japaneseness, which linked all of the general population together, which as a homogeneous society, was ethnocentric in its nationalism. Again, the foreign element, the Americans, came in, dropping the bomb, destroying the state and imposing their will on the Japanese, making them lose their self-identity, yet also imposing more Western imperialistic values, including racial ones, on the Japanese. However, one cannot discount the Japanese and their own racial view of themselves as superior to other Asians; in their desire to become accepted as a superpower, they merely looked to the West as examples of not only how to expand their empire, but to colonize other states that they believed consisted of lesser, inferior peoples.²³ By the war’s end, however, the Japanese faced defeat and saw themselves at the short end of this cultural imperialism and, being told what to do by these outsiders, reluctantly had to accept such a place in order to stay on good terms with the United States. The sea creatures remain the largest threat in “Blue Submarine” and represent an abomination as a mix of sea-dweller and man, a combination that does not necessarily bring harmony, as defiling one’s Japaneseness by mixing in non-Japanese blood also remains a problem within Japan, particularly for its minority populations, implying that they do not quite belong to

²² Yasue Kuwahara, “Japanese Culture and Popular Consciousness: Disney’s *The Lion King* vs. Tezuka’s *Jungle Emperor*,” *The Journal of Popular Culture* 31, no. 1 (1997): 37.

²³ Russell, 14-15.

Japanese society as full members. Not surprisingly, anime is directed mostly at Japanese audiences, with the idea of reinforcing Japanese cultural values among its population:

A funny thing about anime: no matter how popular it is in the West and how universal it just might be, there is no way to disguise its very "Japaneseness." Anime is deeply imbedded in all aspects of *Japanese* society: folklore, legends, history, religion, moral assumptions, and aesthetic standards, to name a few. Fans around the world might be surprised to know that anime is created with only the *Japanese* audience in mind. The intention to create a boundary-defying art form is not a preconceived goal. The fact that anime has become so popular outside of Japan is quite a mystery to many *Japanese* animators.²⁴

Anime remains a powerful indicator of what it means to be Japanese among their own population, and by spreading abroad to other nations, anime shows an ethnocentrism inherent in these Japanese works, yet also the Japanese are unconsciously instilling their values on other cultures through their works, displaying their own form of cultural imperialism. The menace in many anime features is the foreigner, the alien, or some other non-Japanese as a result, yet the Japanese still remains the victim. This is not to say, however, that they are not fascinated with Western culture or with the Western lifestyle, but oftentimes, the West is seen from a particularly Japanese point of view and interpreted through the eyes of the typical Japanese. Hence, Japanese are certainly fascinated by the vastly different appearance and character of Westerners, and though sometimes Western in look or setting, such as the works of Miyazaki, these often contain Eastern sensibilities. Shinobu Price discusses these in an earlier quote around page 41 of this paper on Miyazaki's works being absent the typical morality display in Western features that show the strong influence of Judeo-Christian values; these values often clearly distinguish the line between good and evil in American works, for instance, a line

²⁴ Price, 156.

which is murkier in anime and manga.²⁵ On another note, when discussing the victimization of the Japanese, Maeda's version of "Blue Submarine" shows a foreign threat that seeks to make the Earth (represented by the Japanese) bend to their mercy, as if the nation had not already had enough stress from the atomic bomb itself. Echoing themes of victimization of the Japanese and imaginary worlds, Maeda admits that he was heavily inspired by Miyazaki's work as a youngster:

Maeda was inspired to become an animator as a schoolboy after watching *Konan*, a series created by Hayao Miyazaki, who has been called Japan's Walt Disney. Miyazaki's animated film *Princess Mononoke* was Japan's highest-grossing movie until *Titanic* came along... Maeda recalls approaching Miyazaki for a job while he was still studying fine arts in university: "I found out he was working on a film project. But Mr. Miyazaki said, "You will have jobs waiting for you in the future. Now, you finish your studies."²⁶

The victimization of the Japanese at the mercy of a foreign threat remains paramount to many central themes in anime, as previously discussed. The pilots in the story represent that hope that Miyazaki frequently portrays in his stories, along with hope coming after a massive disaster of some kind affecting the earth. This victimization is no less put forth in other works which are equally as powerful, including *Neon Genesis Evangelion*.

The theme of victimization of the Japanese goes along with another theme involving humanity in a post-holocaust situation in the animated seinen series *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, in which the world endures a "'meteorite strike' on Antarctica" that "wipes out half of Earth's population." A project called NERV is engaged with an alien invading force "called the Angels who are sending bioengineered weapons to destroy the

²⁵ Price, 159-160.

²⁶ Ong Sor Fern, "Japanese Director Aims to Animate in Hollywood," *The Straits Times* (Singapore), 5 June 2000, sec. Life; Life!, 11.

rest of humanity.” *Evangelion* is an experimental project that battles the invaders with “giant cybernetic organisms, but only children born after the Antarctica incident can pilot the machines,” evoking images of the war orphans and their struggle for survival after the atomic bomb attacks. The images of death and rebirth are also evoked, as Mick Broderick explains. The sentiments of post-war Japan are often expressed in the futuristic, post-apocalyptic works, particularly in the science fiction genre, combining “catastrophe, myth, mecha, agency, spectacle, kinesis, chaos and montage with a ubiquitous sense of imminence, solitude, quiescence, introspection, prophecy, teleology and predeterminism...”²⁷ Metaphors for the atomic bombs constantly appear in many post-war works as well. Japan’s quick ascent to an industrialized nation, its occupation by American troops and democratic transition, and its economic rise have helped propel *anime* and *manga*’s reach to the 1980s Japanese Generation X-ers “new human” generation and *otaku* culture. *Neon Genesis Evangelion* shows a change in Japanese society from the past few decades, contributing to John J. Collins “apocalyptic imagination.”²⁸ *Evangelion* seems to show a society changing from chaos to one of peace and stability, showing the cycle of death and rebirth. Surviving a devastating event, such as the bomb or an apocalypse, proves that an audience is still attracted to these types of themes.²⁹ And so, death by destruction via a nuclear element of the Earth is explained, as is rebirth in the form of a new hope, children who emerge from the

²⁷ Mick Broderick, “*Anime’s* Apocalypse: *Neon Genesis Evangelion* as Millennial Mecha,” *Intersections* 7 (2002): 27-28.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

millennial aftermath. The phoenix analogy frequently surfaces in *Evangelion*, reminiscent of what Japan experienced during and after the bomb, with themes of death and rebirth complemented by images of destruction but hope for the future: “Conjured out of nothingness by these prayers, perched on the head of a phoenix, nearly as immobile as the icons of Eastern Orthodox Christianity, immersed in a cool nimbus of white radiance, Kaworu materializes amid the wreckage of New Tokyo-3.”³⁰ Indeed, according to Solomon, in these films showing apocalyptic images, children are often seen as symbols of “endurance and survival.”³¹ These children are able to fight the evil alien invaders, showing their determination to survive. The images of a new Tokyo rising also reflect the Japanese ascent to a global power status, the fact that they do have hope, though, even if it is in the form of children with exceptional abilities (i.e. war orphans with special powers). The protagonists are two teenage characters who must pilot flying vehicles, named Shinji and Asuka. Expressing Japanese sentiment towards their frustration of being occupied by the Americans and force-fed Western values (represented by the aliens), including the idea that they were also victims in the war, shows some obvious connection to the atomic bomb, as “Eva similarly replayed the Pacific War from the Japanese point of view, specifically the apocalyptic final events.” In addition, “Cosmetic use of Western religious imagery, such as Angel weaponry exploding in cruciform patterns, may appear to suggest that Western beliefs are an alien

³⁰ Sheldon Danielson, “Neon Genesis Evangelion: A Boy’s Own Odyssey or The Dream of Shinji: A Psychological Study,” Sheldon Danielson, <http://www.kanadatetsuo.com/> (accessed 4 May 2011).

³¹ Solomon, “Real Horror.”

invasion.”³² The victimization of the Japanese, as seen in several other manga and anime features, further elaborates on the Japanese after-effects of the bomb itself. This victimization theme is repeated over and over again in Japanese post-war cinema:

The Americans and...French invented the movie...but no nation...had more...fun...than the Japanese. They unleashed monsters spawned by the A-bomb to terrorize Tokyo. They created TV...shows with machines as heroes, then built...--anime--that included fierce and friendly robots...Lost in the kid-friendly silliness of the later kaiju eiga was the theme of...*Godzilla*:...the creature was awakened from its 65-million-year slumber by an atomic blast...In the only nation attacked by a nuclear weapon, the Japanese could...feel like...victims in history's most atrocious real-life horror movie. Scriptwriters plumbed this unease for...postwar science-fiction...about evil aliens, flying saucers, astral and political calamities. Sci-fi is, in Susan Sontag's phrase, "the imagination of disaster." The Japanese didn't have to tweak reality...far to dream up... disasters.³³

The Japanese essentially relived the horrors of the atomic bomb through many of their films as a coping mechanism, a form of self-therapy to guide them through difficult memories of this past event, yet also as a reminder of the tragedies they faced in the bombings, much like “Evangelion” does. However, as Evangelion was released by Hideaki Anno in 1995, the modern standard by which many post-apocalyptic manga or anime works abide is still the classic *Akira*, from which a multitude of references to Japan’s post-atomic bomb feelings can be garnered.

The entire *Akira* movie serves as a conduit through which audiences can put forth their emotions, feelings, and hopes of what they believe that all humankind can become.

³² Jonathan Clements and Helen McCarthy, “Evangelion,” in *The Anime Encyclopedia*, ed. Jonathan Clements et al. (Berkeley, CA: Stone Bridge Press, 2006), 184-185.

³³ Richard Corliss, “Reel Machines; Japan's Fascination with Technology Has Brought a Cavalcade of Monsters, Mutants and Mechanical Toys to its Inventive Silver Screen,” *Time*, 1 May 2000, sec. Int'l Edition, Time Asia, Gizmo Nation, 46.

The message is that the future, after a devastating catastrophe, can bring a promise of something better:

Hidden treasures; a connection to something vast, epic --- perhaps...infinite. This is one of the best-hidden, secret elements of these...Somewhere...there might shine a joy that outshines...pain and pleasure, an eternal love that...survives... death. This is...the... answer...This...search...has taken the Anime...visitor across...time and space, through ...characters...emotions and experiences too profound for words...and...back to reality, carrying...hope..."The future will be glorious, if...we remember what is...important and persevere no matter what." Surely this message strikes a chord in...the audience,... repeated...in manga ,...movie, and...video games. How many people have found solace this way, and the will to survive their...sufferings... with the hope for something far better? The message...has surpassed..."romanticism"; it has sailed...into...the divine.³⁴

The reader here can reiterate that, through such tragic experiences (i.e. the atomic bomb and the air raids), the Japanese will never forget what happened. In addition, the "anime invasion" of the United States has been a godsend to the economy of Japan because the nation can help us to understand what it has been feeling over all of these years. Akira launched the "invasion" of anime as we know it today, in fact, with its complicated plot and powerful post-apocalyptic themes:

Released theatrically in this country in 1989, "Akira" is regarded as the anime that began the current American craze and brought anime to the attention of mainstream film critics. A \$ 7 million production often regarded as the masterpiece of the genre, "Akira" is about motorcycle gangs and psychic rebirth in a post-apocalyptic "Neo Tokyo" of the 21st century..."The animation is so completely cinematic," said the Phantom of the Movies in his review, "[I] often found it easy to forget [I] wasn't watching a live-action movie." Janet Maslin of The New York Times called the same film "a phenomenal work of animation [with a] post-apocalyptic mood, high-tech trappings, thrilling artwork and wide array of bizarre characters."³⁵

³⁴ Eri Izawa, "The Romantic, Passionate Japanese in Anime: A Look at the Hidden Japanese Soul," in *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*, ed. Timothy J. Craig (New York and London: M.E. Sharpe, 2000), 12.

³⁵ Beale, 24.

The worldwide interest in Akira brought along with it a curious fascination for these unorthodox animated features from Japan, stimulating the industry to its present-day growth and spawning a huge wave of interest in the genre. David Lubich explains this here:

The release of the feature film Akira led European critics to praise a “new” genre of cartoon. With its post-apocalyptic setting and unremitting bleakness coupled with graphically precise animation, Katsurio Otomo's masterpiece signaled the start of some long-overdue interest in Anime outside Japan. It's also when the trouble began. "In some ways, Akira was very damaging," says Helen McCarthy, editor of Anime UK, Britain's leading Anime magazine. "It was as if this film had come out of nowhere."³⁶

Akira began a different dynamic, one that surged a sudden interest in the anime genre overseas:

"Akira" was "like nothing people had seen before," says Carl Horn, an editor at Animerica magazine. Set after World War III, "Akira" thrusts a juvenile-delinquent biker into a government experiment that gives him apocalyptic powers--and an overwhelming desire to blow up Tokyo. Director Katsuhiro Otomo painted his bleak vision of the future with virtuoso artwork and awesome special effects. "I think the American fans that latched onto this stuff are entranced by the fact that in the *animation* medium, anything is possible," says Matt Greenfield, vice president of AD Vision, a Houston-based anime distributor. "*Japanese* writers and directors will push that medium to the edge." And past it.³⁷

Other works came to the West particularly in a hurry, as other companies risked releasing these, hoping that another “Akira” would rise. Though practically having a monopoly on

³⁶ Lubich, T16.

³⁷ Marin and Gegax, 68.

the animated market for years, “in recent years the classical Disney animation product has been challenged by the rise of a very different type of animated film, most of these emanating from Japan.”³⁸ Eventually, the anime industry exploded, and demand skyrocketed. Pokemon then emerged on the scene and brought a nationwide obsession with anything Japanese. Later, the flood of Pokemon led the way to other toys and related animated comics, and we have only begun to experience the impact of manga all over the world.

On a mass scale, part of the success of manga can be attributed to its marketing effectiveness towards all age groups and production at a larger quantity. In fact, Osamu Tezuka, the “father of modern manga,” who created the first popular anime cartoon “Astro-Boy,” actually was able to discover a way to use less frames per second in his animated features. He also hired many assistants to help him in his endeavors in drawing backgrounds, foregrounds, and other foundations when structuring the individual cells for movement in his cartoons.³⁹

By lessening the amount of frames per second, Tezuka found a way to produce large quantities of manga without actually sacrificing too much time and effort. Because of this emphasis on story rather than character movement, different dynamics of anime developed in those works, as opposed to those of Disney or other American artists:

There are a few generalizations to be made about anime. The characters' faces often have the preposterously chiseled look of Western superheroes, as defined by

³⁸ Harry M. Benshoff, “Heigh-Ho, Heigh-Ho, is Disney High or Low? From Silly Cartoons to Postmodern Politics,” *Animation Journal* (Fall 2009): 65, <http://www.animationjournal.com/abstracts/essays/Benshoff.html> (accessed 7 May 2011).

³⁹ Bouissou, 10.

U.S. pulp illustrators. The *animation* itself is quite limited: when a mouth moves, the rest of the face stays still, stricken. You won't find, say, the gestural verve of a Tex Avery wolf or the behavioral subtlety--simply put, the great acting--of Daffy Duck under the pencil of Chuck Jones. The form's genius is in the stories' breadth and daring. The glory is in the graphic richness of the landscapes: either idyllically gorgeous or scarred with the nuclear apocalypse that still obsesses *Japanese* artists. As Miyazaki says, "The background in anime isn't an afterthought. It's an essential element."⁴⁰

Tezuka's work is also reflective of the emotions coming out of Japan in the postwar period, essentially showing characters affected in a profound way by the bomb itself: "Tezuka's manga has evolved a...post-atomic fusion of eastern calligraphic sensibility and western narrative iconography. Like the...metamorphosing beings which populate his stories, his manga is emblematic of Japanese post-war identity..."⁴¹ In terms of the actual production of anime, focusing on different elements than the number of frames per second was much cheaper and more efficient when it came to satisfying consumer demands for manga availability, especially on a global scale, as evidenced by Wong Joon Ian:

However, the anime boom of the 60s led to many artists being unable to cope with the demand. Many of the original artists at Studio Zero, including Fujiko F. Fujio, Doraemon's creator, left to focus on drawing comics instead of animation. This frenetic pace of production led to the development of a technique which would come to define anime. Three frames per second were used instead of the conventional 24 in order to save time. Today, this method remains in use and is the hallmark of Japanese animation.⁴²

⁴⁰ Richard Corliss, Georgia Harbison, and Jeffrey Ressler, "Amazing Anime," *Time*, 22 Nov. 1999, sec. Cover Story, 95.

⁴¹ Philip Brophy, "Manga and Anime in Australia," *Wochi Kochi* (Japan Foundation Quarterly Newsletter), 2006, http://philipbrophy.com/projects/rstff/MangaAnimeAustralia_J.html (accessed 2 May 2011).

⁴² Wong Joon Ian, "Why Anime is Tops in Japan," *New Straits Times* (Malaysia), 25 March 2000, sec. Reel Stuff, 5.

Tezuka, as one of these original artists, was known to be the one who opened the door for numerous others with his revolutionary film techniques in anime and was also known as one of the first to adapt manga into animated works: “as one of the most influential *manga* artists in Japan after the war” who “initiated story *manga*, and most significantly had adapted cinematic expressions, such as the point of view, framing, close up, composition...to successfully create a stylish look and lively flow in his *manga* which had never been done before,” including also reducing the frames per second to reduce budget costs to focus more on storylines and to keep up with demand.⁴³ The Japanese have become proficient, in fact, at mass producing manga (before animated features) by using cost effective recycled paper, and the same kind of resourcefulness was used to create animated productions. In France, Italy, and Spain, and later in the United States, this paid off because production costs turned out to be much cheaper, and little had to be done to transfer the anime available to foreign markets, since the competitors abroad merely bought the rights to the product and simply did their own translations.⁴⁴ As a result, these other countries had years and years of material with which to work without having to worry about creating something entirely new. Japan was and always is producing large quantities of anime; by the time that older dated material has been recycled, there is already a stack of new, animated manga with which to work lying on the shelf.

⁴³ Sheuo Hui Gan, “Tezuka Osamu’s Adult Animation and its Influence on Later Animation in Japan,” in *Proceedings of the 'Whither the Orient: Asians in Asian and Non-Asian Cinema' Conference*, ed. Joel David (Gwangju, South Korea: Asia Culture Forum, 2006), 190.

⁴⁴ Bouissou, 11.

The chapter reviewed the most important subthemes in anime and manga that centered around how Japanese is written for themselves, the victimization idea of the Japanese using atomic bomb imagery as a coping mechanism for the bomb, and the idea of nationalism often portrayed in works that justified why anything foreign was a threat, which in a sense, covers some right-wing feelings towards the American occupation and inspiring some on the right to push Japan towards the idea that the country can fend for itself and must rid itself of foreign elements that corrupt their uniquely Japanese culture. This chapter explains other themes coming from the war, such as helping its fans relate to the war orphan motif of children who had to survive on their own, expressed in the form of powerful children surviving on their own in science fiction, fantasy and future apocalyptic manga between 1945-65 and 1985-95. Tezuka's central precepts are given more supporting evidence in this chapter, as well as an explanation of the rapid manufacturing process of anime and how Tezuka pioneered the animation process to its current wave of success. The next chapter will help tie everything together and explain how these particular subthemes go into the main themes of using the analogy of the phoenix to explain Japan's economic rise after nuclear devastation by the atomic bomb and the related theme of how man's obsession with technology leads to mass destruction, inspiring all humanity to work together to achieve some particular goal of world peace, perhaps what Tezuka would suggest overall.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RESULTS

What, then, can we gain from all of this research on the atomic bomb as related to political themes in manga and anime? First, we can understand more deeply and more intellectually why the Japanese have such a fascination with modern technology and why many anime express a complex dissatisfaction with the existing social order.¹ The research has established, in direct relation to the atomic bomb attack, that the Japanese have had to absorb a great deal of trauma, not only with the aftermath of the atomic bomb, but of being invaded by a foreign country and having their entire system of authority being turned upside down into a completely new type of government. Hence, Japan has referred to some of their experiences in the form of various metaphors for the Occupation authorities, the American military presence, and a cataclysmic event much like the atomic bomb. The nation may have grown economically at a rapid pace after World War II and into the present day, but it still has some catching up to do with regard to its rigid social structure and emphasis on social conformity. Did the American occupation, which was relatively short, irritate the Japanese (especially right-wing nationalists) for a long time? That is a difficult question to answer, but the Japanese know that they can rely on the Americans to protect them in times of turmoil because of the post-war security arrangements linking both nations' defense forces. On the other

¹ Lin, 2.

hand, naturally, they should have felt uncomfortable under the watchful eye of the United States throughout the 1950s and 1960s. To a great extent, the United States did patronize Japan for a number of years and dictated what type of policy Japan was expected to abide by (at least until the economy was strong enough to sustain itself); the arrangement could be described as “subordinate independence,” as Japan relied on the US to defend the nation and to rule on important policy matters, which freed Japan to focus on “economic development and the expansion of overseas trade.”² Interestingly, the work of Tezuka also remains significant for explaining important messages within the context of the US-Japan security arrangement and also for revealing relevant questions of technology’s role in society in various episodes of his *Astro-Boy* storylines, including such subjects as: “...autonomous robots...overcoming rigid rules and a central control...ethical responsibility [and] the...non-proliferation of militarily useful robot technology,” with the “mangas...intended to buttress the techno-euphoria of the years of recuperation from the lost Second World War, thus contributing to the country’s recovery.”³

Out of the concerns raised by Tezuka and others with respect to such complex themes as military technology and ethical responsibility, can the atomic bomb, ever be forgotten for the horrors that it unleashed, especially by those on the right who feel nostalgia for the Empire that once was (especially culminating with Japan’s economic

² William M. Tsutsui, “A Case Study of Late Twentieth-Century Japan through Art: Tezuka Osamu and Astro Boy: Late Twentieth-Century Japan: An Introductory Essay,” Program for Teaching East Asia, University of Colorado, <http://www.colorado.edu/CAS/TEA/curriculum/imaging-japanese-history/late-20th-century/essay.html> (accessed 16 May 2011).

³ Stefan Krebs, “On the Anticipation of Ethical Conflicts between Humans and Robots in Japanese Mangas,” *International Review of Information Ethics* 6 (2006): 66-67.

rise to prominence in the late 1980s until the mid-1990s)? This is similar to saying that one can move on without continuing to mourn or remember those who were lost in the attack on Pearl Harbor. At the very least, in some manga, the characters are sophisticated enough for the reader to understand that life does not always exist only in forms of good and evil.⁴ Susan Napier suggests that this very link to reality, that lines between good and evil are not clear-cut, and make the study of anime worthwhile:

A...cultural alternative that offers its own...vision of the world...that at times directly challenges the thematics of reassurance of...U.S. cinema...is...Japanese animation... whose products...embrace...wider... culture, history, and national identity...than most... contemporary Hollywood...In contrast to most U.S. cartoons...anime texts offer a dark... complex view...Even conservative fare...as ...Gundam and Yamato...of the 1970s and 1980s, is set in dangerous science fiction worlds where...characters die and, in the... climax to *Farewell Yamato*, national icons such as the...space/warship are...embarking on a suicide mission...Recent anime ...in... high school life, such as *Revolutionary Girl Utena* or *Serial Experiments Lain*, portray... Japanese education...as a chaotic world of bullying, betrayal, and fear with no redeeming authority figures to intervene.⁵

Thus, anime offers a practical alternative, something different and more intellectually challenging to typical Hollywood fare that asks complex questions about culture, life, and society that is supposed to make one uncomfortable with the idea that reassurance cannot always be obtained in the plot of a movie, as anime shows. Evil is not always portrayed in animated features, as Miyazaki shows, but rather, it is a different way of viewing things from outside the comfort zone of popular American cinema. There are countless numbers of situations in reality that can change the status of a person's ability to make decisions (like stress or anxiety), and each scenario depends upon the individual person,

⁴ Bouissou, 13.

⁵ Napier, "Confronting Master Narratives," 469.

which reflects the complexity of clearly defining something that is entirely positive or negative, without various shades of gray. Just as in politics, one cannot be certain that information presented on an issue is always black-and-white because there always exists the possibility that the data can be manipulated to suit the goals of a particular person running for office, for example.

Through the current research on anime and manga, with an additional focus on the influence of Osamu Tezuka's works on other artists, a conclusion can be made that the devastation wrought by the effects of the atomic bomb changed Japan in such a significant way as to launch powerful themes (and subthemes) which reference past historical events in the works of many postwar anime films and manga (especially in science fiction/fantasy/futuristic apocalyptic manga between 1945-65 and 1985-95). The research also represents several important subthemes (which serve as independent variables) which relate not only to Japan's history, but which also contain important political components ranging from perspectives on the ethics of science and technology policy, questions of relations between nations, and subtle hints on how to conduct foreign policy towards various international entities. However, these forms of media also address universal themes with cross-cultural appeal. Images of devastation, coupled with the hope of a better future and the optimism associated with science and technology, are two such themes (that serve as our dependent variables), as in the "Yamato" series (originally developed by Leiji Matsumoto, an artist also directly inspired by Tezuka's works):

In *Be Forever Yamato* (...1980)...the ship is forced...into the center of the...Black Nebula...by...asteroids and enemy forces in a...symphony of destruction. At the last moment...the crew discovers an exit space from the Nebula that places them above...an exact twin of...Earth, 200 years in the

future...All these... sequences...provide... pleasure for the...audience of children and adolescents, as the Yamato comes again... within a hair's breadth of being annihilated. But the craft's constant plunges into danger followed by miraculous recovery can...be looked at psychoanalytically...into...the postwar Japanese citizenry...“working through”...defeat. By offering the audience...to... approach...Yamato's (Japan's) annihilation and then... escape...destruction, the films can be seen as...cultural therapy in which loss is revisited in a...reassuring manner.⁶

The destruction (the Nebula), with new blossoming of a society on the horizon, is experienced directly through the Yamato's (Japan's) trials itself, showing that the nation could prevail in its shortcomings after the bomb and win the long hard road to recovery, learning to heal from its wounds. What we do know is that Japan's experience parallels the trials of the Yamato itself and partly reflects how a number of Japanese (especially right-wing Japanese, including nationalists) viewed the cataclysmic events towards the end of the war through anime and those with related themes of destruction; the Japanese saw hope in the future (as referenced through the phoenix analogy) and believed that science and technology brought promise, or progress, towards a better world, a world that learns from its mistakes of the past and grows to respect Mother Nature. Historical perspectives, particularly through the manga comics and anime film case studies which this research covered, utilize analyses by scholars from American, European, Japanese, and other academics of note, and contain universal themes and consistent ideas about what Japan has obtained from the atomic bomb experience. Quite often, manga also exhibit complex storylines such as *Yamato* and three-dimensional characters, with common fallacies and imperfections, similar to the reality of our existence on Earth. As a relevant example, one can consider the “good guy” character in “Porco Rosso” (another

⁶ Napier, 8.

work developed by a Tezuka protégé, Hayao Miyazaki) who drinks too much: how do we know how perfect the common hero figure really is when he goes home after defeating the evil characters?⁷ Perhaps the hero character in many works becomes tired like the rest of us, and it is even possible that he may feel anxiety as a result of all of the pressure from society, reflecting the issue of social conformity in everyday life in Japan. It is quite plausible that the hero's anxiety (in anime or manga works) will give him a human side, but many American comics (restricted by the Comics Code and anything not in conformity with traditional American values of the time period commonly held by Orientalist stereotypes of the past) did not often portray such scenarios for decades after World War II. As Kara Lenore Williams reasons, for years, fans have cited the "complexity of storylines (in contrast to American animation) and dark tone and content as some of the elements that attract them to anime."⁸ In manga and anime, where imagination is the only limitation, there exists the likelihood of every possibility of character types or storyline:

The backgrounds in these Japanese graphics tend to be very detailed and the storylines complex, when compared with their American comic book counterparts. "There is manga for everybody," [Lexington, MA librarian Robin] Brenner said. "It's on every subject . . . war, history, religion, your job; and there's an awful lot of romance. It's divided by gender and by age group."⁹

⁷ Ritter, 3.

⁸ Kara Lenore Williams, "The Impact of Popular Culture Fandom on Perceptions of Japanese Language and Culture Learning: The Case of Student Anime Fans" (PhD diss., The University of Texas at Austin, 2006).

⁹ Christine Wallgren, "Manga, Anime Catching on," *The Boston Globe*, 25 May 2006, 1, http://www.boston.com/ae/books/articles/2006/05/25/manga_anime_catching_on/ (accessed 19 July 2011).

How do we know the antagonist in a story, since the “bad” guy does not donate to charity or help poor children off of the street? Such complex issues are typical fodder in the unorthodox world of anime and manga, and it becomes more compelling as time goes by, as Japan has transitioned from a society decimated by war, only to prevail and recover from its losses, as “the commercial superiority and equitable foreign relations the country enjoys speak of the thorough healing of the wounds of war,” demonstrating that a great promise of success, of a peaceful nation, hoped and dreamed for in the works of Tezuka and later artists, has become reality today for this global superpower.¹⁰ However, Japan is also a nation that is constantly looking to reinvent itself in various ways and perhaps establish its own identity, one somewhat distinct from the shadow of American influence, which perhaps Japan is still struggling with, but which remains a goal that Japan is determined to accomplish. Japan now has the resources and the capability to make these kinds of decisions on its own, but this remains to be seen in the future.

As an avenue for further research in the areas of anime and manga within the perspective of Japanese domestic politics and its own foreign policy, Japan must look beyond the horizon and to the future for a new hope, as it did after the atomic bomb in World War II, rising to become a great economic superpower. Once again, the questions of how to balance man’s place within Mother Nature, nuclear technology’s role in society, and the hope that many carried through to help Japan rebuild are once again relevant in the midst of the 2011 nuclear crisis: “Japanese history has entered a new phase...we must look at things through the eyes of...victims of nuclear power...who have proved their

¹⁰ Fuller, 1.

courage through suffering. The lesson...from the current disaster will depend on whether those who survive...resolve not to repeat their mistakes.”¹¹ This ultimately depends on the fortitude and sheer determination of the Japanese people to overcome the 2011 nuclear disaster. However, history shows that Japan was able to rebuild from a devastating earthquake in the early 20th century and also after the atomic bomb. In essence, if Japan was able to prevail out of such mass destruction once before, as Tezuka and others inspired by him afterward showed in their works, certainly the country is capable of doing it again, which also may explain that a wave of nostalgia and nationalism on the right inspired many of the works and calls for independence in the later period examined in this study, when Japan rose to prominence in the mid-1980s in a prosperous economy.

To recap, the first time period studied here, from 1945-1965, dealt with tensions leading to the renewal of the AMPO treaty in 1960 and a rapid industrialization phase for Japan. The second period, from 1985-95, also witnessed not only a second wave of prosperity for Japan’s economy, but also the loosening of Comics Code restrictions, which opened the US market, and also right-wing nationalistic tensions in Japan regarding the renewal of leases for US military bases (just as the American military presence was an issue of contention in the decades following World War II) in the joint US-Japan security arrangement. On another note, some lessons to be taken to heart are that the suffering of a people, a nation, is reflected by many others all over the world, as Appiah’s idea of cosmopolitanism shows that despite our differences, universally, certain

¹¹ Kenzaburo Oe, “History Repeats,” *The New Yorker*, 28 March 2011, http://www.newyorker.com/talk/2011/03/28/110328ta_talk_oe (accessed 20 May 2011).

things do bring us together as a human race: we all witness the effects of mass destruction at some point in time. With the overwhelming outpouring of aid so far in the 2011 nuclear crisis and through the efforts of many NGOs and governments around the world, the response has proven that indeed we can be certain that man understands that suffering is universal, felt at one time or another by most nations, be it through famine, flood, storms, or other natural disasters. Just as manga and anime unite anime fans throughout the world, as a human race, we help one another as much as possible when crisis comes and settle our differences perhaps not all, but most of the time, or at least we have universal principles that transcend nation and culture. Ultimately, what we must realize is that if we do not listen to Tezuka's message of bettering ourselves as a race in general, we may face a bleak future of epic proportions, worse than any nuclear crisis can bring. Our future depends on our ability to bridge these gaps and settle our cultural differences and temper and respect nature for the simple beauty that it brings to our lives. Themes of death and rebirth can be a positive development, perhaps, in the symbolic sense, if we destroy all evidence of a selfish world where one nation tries to become a global hegemon over all others, and we can cooperate and work together towards a bright, positive future that will bring mankind respect, prosperity and progress, and a hope that this kind of peace will inspire others out there in the cosmos to do the same. This is the kind of vision Tezuka would have wanted us to have, and the kind of vision that many after him felt would suitably fit what he was trying to achieve with his work. Man and nature can co-exist peacefully as well when man appreciates the simple beauty in life, as we are ultimately part of nature itself.

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