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Mediating on the Voiceless Words of the Invisible Other: Young Female *Animé* Fan Artists— Narratives of Gender Images

Jin-shiow Chen

The Onset of a Journey

My interest in youth animé/manga[1] (Japanese animation and comics) culture in Taiwan began three years ago when my niece, Kitty, then 15 years old, showed me some photos of her cosplay[2] performances and manga drawings (doujinshi[3]) by her good friends. The beautiful pictures fascinated me but in all honesty, I was stunned that my own niece and her good friends were participating in 'those exotic activities'. As far as I knew, my niece and her friends were good students—smart, creative and diligent in pursuing fine art as their majors in high school. I was disturbed by this incongruity and could only pretend politely to ask her about her involvement with "Comic Market/ComicWorld[4]", "Cosplay", and "Doujinshi Sales". Kitty explained a bit but grew impatient when I did not understand. She suggested that I attend a ComicWorld convention to find it was really like. I was apprehensive with concern. Kitty sensed my fear and said, "Don't worry. These animé fans won't eat you. They are not like what the mass media present as carnal savages, or violent, anti-social gangsters" (Kitty, Personal communication, May, 24, 2000).

After three years of exploring this subculture, I have seen a group of youngsters active and energetic in artistic expression, striving for recognition among their peers. I met many fans and amateur artists[5]

in the ComicWorld conventions who were willing to share their experience and knowledge of animé/manga art with me, an outsider. This subculture was completely committed to animé/manga art and open to anyone who shared similar interests. I realized that I had been misled by elitist values and mass media to perceive animé/manga fans as socially pathological, deviant, disreputable, and to a certain extent, dangerous "others". A cultural hierarchy underlies society and tends to marginalize and malign ideas and beliefs that are different from those in mainstream culture (Jenson, 1992; Lewis, 1992).

In Comic Markets/ComicWorld conventions, I was surprised to observe that the majority of animé/manga fans and amateur artists were young women in their mid-teens and mid-twenties. Kinsella (2000) considered that animé/manga fan culture was more a girls' culture than a boys'. This is not only because girls are in the majority but also because girls' manga and feminine expressions are the leading genres in the subculture. Little academic attention has been given to these young female fans and artists and their subculture. The mass media has jumped to expose this "secret land", lamenting how exotic, decadent and sensuous the culture is, spotlighting only thoes most flamboyant, bold and seductive female cosplayers and fanatics. These young female animé/manga fans and artists have been painted into sexualized images and have been labeled as dangerous "others". Obviously, they did no better than their grandmothers and great grandmothers to change their fate of being subordinate and objectified. They continue to remain invisible.

Last year, I talked to a few girls who are animé/manga fan artists. The two girls mentioned that they were glad that an academic scholar would listen to them and try to understand their interests and point of view. One of these girls explained, "It is always a great feeling to be respected for who you are and for what you like" (Personal communication, Nov. 11, 2002). As a female scholar and art education

researcher, I have felt compelled to listen to these young female animé/manga fans and artists to let their story be told. Here two young female animé/manga fan artists share how they feel about gender issues as readers and creators of manga art who participate actively in ComicWorld conventions.

Narrator 1: Tsukasa

Tsukasa is 18 years old. She graduated from a senior high school and was accepted to a private university. She started to read mangas when she was 9 or 10 but it was not until she reached age 14 that she became serious about drawing manga characters. In the process of learning to draw manga, Tsukasa read a variety of manga including shonen manga (boys' manga), shojyo manga (girls' manga), sci-fi and yaoi[6], (boy-love manga) and yuri[7] (girl-love manga). Tsukasa confessed that she even read manga pornographies for personal curiosity. She found that many female characters in the genre are well drawn and beautifully presented. Apparently, the figure drawing techniques and skills still hold a great charm to attract Tsukasa's attention.

Recently Tsukasa seemed to lose her enthusiasm in manga/animé, and had switched her fondness to a group of Japanese pop singers named "V6". Now she would identify herself as a V6 fan more than a manga/animé fan. Utilizing V6 singers as the main characters of her manga doujinshis and storylines, Tsukasa was about to create a V6 doujin-site on the web, where V6 doujins (those who adore V6 as their idols) were able to post their "fannish" art work—manga doujinshis and novels. Among these six singers, Tsukasa most adored Ken Miyake and Hiroshi Nagano. These singers are young, thin, tender and good looking with feminine dispositions, very different from American stereotypes of strong, energetic, athletic, muscular, masculine,

handsome guys. In fact, their feminine dispositions are similar to those of "bishonen" (beautiful boys) in the manga fantasy worlds.

Like many V6 fans, Tsukasa depicted Ken Miyake in manga styles (see pictures #1, #2, #3 & #4) and base her novel characters on them in developing the stories. Tsukasa said she disliked V6 fans who liked to place themselves into the plots of their novels as if they were dating the V6 singers. She said:

> For some reasons these fans tend to satisfy their own desires of being beloved by V6. That is it, fulfilling their own vanity and dreams. A lot of female fans like to make their own novels that way. I think that type of plotting is disgusting, in a certain aspect, and not enough to intrigue readers to explore deeper into the souls of the characters, the stories, and eventually the writer who develops the stories. In my own case, I prefer to develop stories totally from V6 singers, that is, a completely made-up story about these singers with no interface between the fantasy and the real worlds. (Tsukasa, personal communication, July, 6, 2003)

Picture 1

Picture 2

Picture 3

Picture 4

To be able to do so, Tsukasa explained that she had to study these singers' songs, performances, news reports, and other materials to get thorough information about each member's personality, tastes, habits, philosophy, and values. In this aspect, Tsukasa believed that she was different from many other female fans who were crazy about V6 singers for their appearances only and tended to be indulged in novels with shallow romantic stories. Tsukasa found herself different from other girls in many aspects; for instance, she said:

> Many girls start to care about their own looks, appearances, and body shape when reaching the age of 12 or 13. They begin to dream of falling in love. So they spend time learning to wear make-up or to dress up in order to make themselves prettier to attract boys. I am obviously naive in this respect. My mother had been pushing me to be on a diet to loose a little weight, so I could be more like a girl. It was not until recently that I tried a diet to lose

about ten pounds and began to care more about the way I dressed. Even so, I am not sure I will start a love romance that soon.

Indeed, Tsukasa lost a lot of weight and looked very different from when I met a year and half ago. She used to be a tomboy but had become more feminine and prettier. It seemed that she was comfortable with this, holding an optimistic view of the freedom in her life to come in college. Even so, Tsukasa emphasized that she was not used to wearing dresses or skirts but preferred shirts and jeans. And, she said she would continue to play male characters in the cosplay activities as before. Tsukasa recalled her most recent cosplay experience as follows:

Many people claim that we live in a multicultural society yet the general perception of gender roles in cosplay is still very conservative; that is, males play male characters and females play female characters. If you play a character of opposite gender, you may be viewed as a weird person. However, many of my favorite manga characters are male, and that is why I kept playing male characters in the cosplay activities. In the beginning, some of my friends questioned why I wanted to play male characters but later they found my masqueraded character to be cute and handsome, saying that my performances were fabulous. Thus, they accepted the roles I had tried to play and did not criticize me any more.

Tsukasa complained that there were some other experiences that were very unpleasant to her. She usually liked to put on costumes and make-up at home and then take the subway or bus to the ComicWorld conventions (Doujinshi conventions). She found many old men in the subways or buses leered at her as an alien and also gazed at her breasts. Tsukasa confessed if that happened once, she could simply not let it bother her, but it happened so many times that it made her irritated and mad. She thought to herself in anger, "Why can't a girl with big breasts play a male character? I think it would better if I were a boy, then I would be free to play whatever male characters I like." Tsukasa continued to complain that sometimes when she wore tighter shirts, many guys would gaze at her breasts. She felt irritated but could never understand why these guys were so interested in looking at her breasts. Tsukasa admitted that if she were a boy, she would not get into such an unpleasant situation.

Tsukasa mentioned many times in the interview that her personality, thinking and working behaviors were more like a male's. I asked if she was influenced by Japanese mangas. She said it did not affect her that much because she read shonen and shojyo mangas—many different types. She then explained what might be an unconscious influence from her parents. She told me that when her mother got pregnant, she kept praying, "I want a boy. I want a boy." Tsukasa continued to say, "Maybe this unconscious prenatal influences led me to become so much like a boy—calm, straightforward, and rational."

As mentioned earlier, Tsukasa began to care about her weight and appearance. However, no matter how many external changes she made, Tsukasa insisted that her personality and disposition did not change much. She described herself as a rational, calm, easygoing, straightforward and responsible person even through the changes she made. These sound like good personality traits yet she anticipated that they might hinder her in socializing with other female colleagues when entering her career life in the near future. Tsukasa explained as follows:

Unlike other girls, I don't know much about intrigue concerning others or flirting or playing games. I am honest, tolerant and upright. I like to be frank with what I think, feel and believe. Some of my classmates have taken advantage of this, choosing me to do difficult work when they were in charge of a team. Also,

they liked to provoke misunderstandings among my friends, instigating some to be alienated from me. I would never be like that!

Tsukasa continued to say that in many Japanese manga, the heroines are not very smart but they are usually chased after by a swarm of guys. She said that some people would argue that if these heroines were smart, kind, tender and beautiful, then they would be too perfect or too good to be true, and they would not attract many readers. Tsukasa doubted this explanation but she had to admit that she could not stop reading these manga without blaming these heroines for behaving so stupidly to earn the mercy of these guys. Tsukasa also explained that though many of these heroines were not smart, they were often presented as nice, kind, gentle, and considerate girls. These heroines were often mistreated by malicious, wicked and bad-hearted people (mostly female), but their kindness, consideration, and gentleness finally won them the victory of true love and a happy life. Tsukasa clarified that she did not blame them for being kind and nice to people but she simply could not understand why these heroines had to be so submissive, stupid, soft-minded and docile. In a way, Tsukasa would prefer to be a wise and knowledgeable girl and be like a boy chasing after love to conquer all obstacles and fulfill her own dreams.

Narrator 2: Chiyong

Chiyong is an art-major undergraduate student about 20 years old. She started to read manga when she was in kindergarten. At that time she could not read much Chinese so she mainly looked at those pretty characters. When she was in seventh or eighth grade, *Sailor Moon* was very popular in Taiwan. Like many girls, Chiyong was attracted to those pretty female soldiers. Chiyong stated when she first saw the comic book, she was amazed that the lines and colors applied to the

manga characters were so delicate and beautiful. At that moment she was completely drawn in by its charms and decided to imitate the way these female soldiers were depicted. Chiyong said that her enthusiasm was highly aroused then, so she devoted a lot of time and effort to drawing these characters. She made great progress in drawing manga characters during this time.

Chiyong started by copying female manga characters, particularly those pretty and cute soldiers from *Sailor Moon*. To this day, her enthusiasm remains strong as can be seen in pictures #5 and #6. Almost 95 percent of Chiyong's figure drawings are female.

Picture 5

Picture 6

Chiyong did not just read shojyo manga but also shonen manga, boy-love manga, and girl-love manga. Her interest in drawing beautiful female manga characters did not limit her from reading other types of manga. However, Chiyong stated that in Taiwan's manga market, girl-love manga was not often found. It seemed that girl-love manga was not as popular as boy-love manga. Chiyong confessed that she was

much more interested in boy-love manga and had more accesses to it. This might create an illusion that boy-love manga is more favored than girl-love manga.

In the interview, Chiyong explained why she and many other girls like to read boy-love manga:

> The main reason we girls like to read boy-love manga is that most of the characters are what we called "bishonen". It is extremely pleasant and joyful to see so many beautiful boys all at the same time. To me, gay love is a symbol of ideal love that is beyond the limitation of traditional values. It is powerful to pursue true love no matter what would happen. In this aspect reading about bishonen could bring psychological satisfaction to many females. We read boy-love manga not because we are homosexual but because we come to experience how they escape the restraint of tradition and how they fulfill a deep love. There are many romance novels in the book markets but we are simply tired of reading the same ole stories constrained in the social structure and institutional values. (Chiyong, personal communication, July 18, 2003)

From the above statement, I came to understand that to many females, reading boy-love manga is a channel for running away from social oppression. Even though they might not be consciously aware of gender discrimination and patriarchal oppression of women in this society, they seek alternatives. It is also a good way for these young female readers to fulfill their desire for ideal love that they could never possess in this mundane world. In the interview, Chiyong did not attempt to criticize inequalities towards women in society for she did not sense these inequalities. She simply described her experience and observations from reading boy-love manga. Chiyong stated;

We have been educated to keep silent about sexual desire, behavior and love since we were very young. It would be shameful if we talk about it boldly, and that is why we do not dare to read boy-love mangas brazenly and openly. We read the boy-love and pornographic mangas, and talk about homosexual love and sexual love secretly behind our parents and teachers. I know that the love stories and characters in most boy-love mangas are beautified to feed on most females' expectations. This type of ideal, utopian love is lifted up from the female dreams of love and aimed at arousing women's fantasy for spiritual and psychological love. For this reason, boy-love manga may include scenes of making love but they are not as numerous, brazen, violent, or sadistic as those that appear in girl-love or pornographic mangas meant to appeal to male readers.

Japanese manga has created a type of male beauty that appeals so much to the female readers in Japan as well as in Taiwan. This type of male beauty is incarnated in beautiful boys, called "Bishonen" in Japanese. Bishonen possess feminine and tender, delicate qualities in appearance and personality, completely different from those macho, athletic, energetic, and muscular guys favored in popular American culture. Chiyong stated, "Taiwanese girls do not like guys who grow mustaches and body hair all over; that looks dirty and scary. They would like someone clean, elegant, tender and delicate". Recently Chiyong attempted to depict male manga characters, and they were all bishonens (See pictures #7, 8,9). Sometimes, it is a little difficult to distinguish her female characters from her male characters. They are so much alike.

As apparent in her manga artwork, Chiyong took the aesthetic values of the Japanese manga mainstream—qualities of elegant delicacy, softness, tenderness, mysterious femininity and romantic airs. No matter what gender of manga characters she depicted, they had to be

beautiful and romantic in Chiyong's terms. In a sense, these manga characters were very much like the mythical deities or spirits in nature—too beautiful, mysterious, gentle and delicate to be true. Chiyong stated frankly that she liked to see something femininely beautiful, so would she present everything as beautiful. She said, "It is because I cannot find something ideally beautiful in our real world that I put it into my manga artworks. I try my best to make my figures beautiful, pleasing to my eyes, my imagination and my psychological needs." (Chiyong, personal communication, July 18, 2003)

Picture 7   **Picture 8**

Picture 9

Digging for Deeper Meaning in the Narratives

Tsukasa's and Chiyong's descriptions gave insights into their gender identity that deserve special attention:

Dreaming to be "He" vs. living in the ideal "She"

Tsukasa and Chiyong expressed different gender identities, which were at opposite ends of the scale. Tsukasa identified herself as more similar to a boy while Chiyong adored the perfect beauty of a girl. The problem being—these two girls' sense of "self" was absent and voiceless from their narratives.

Tsukasa's story implies an apparent bias that males are better than the females in the following respects. (1) The male personality is seen as upright, rational, calm, and responsible. (2) The male is attributed qualities of diligent exploration and research into the deeper basis of meaning and thought—not simply caring about the external appearance and shallow romantic love as many girls do. (3) Males are attributed with the power of intelligence, capability and subjectivity—not just playing dumb, cute and charming to attract the mercy of others as many girls do. She internalized the male disposition and deprecated the female stereotype as being unintelligent, jealous, flirty, flighty, and overly concerned about personal appearance and romance. In a sense, Tsukasa was unconsciously dreaming to be a boy. From the bottom of her heart, she felt that being a boy would let her live a more free, convenient, and comfortable life in today's society.

In contrast, Chiyong made no attempt to become a boy. It seemed that she felt comfortable as a female. In the interview she made no complaint about being a girl and did not talk about gender inequality in society. Her manga artwork revealed a dream of being an ideal beauty—a beauty taken from the aesthetic values of commercial manga. She kept drawing manga characters of her ideal beauty to fill in the gap between the 'real she' and the ideal women constructed by the manga fantasy. Indeed, she lives in a fantasy mode of "she."

Creating an ideal gender by combining
male and female characteristics

I found that "bishonen" were favored by both Tsukasa and Chiyong and by so many other girls in Taiwan. For them, a good-looking, handsome guy should be like a bishonen—a considerate male possessing the feminine, delicate, and gentle qualities. The image of "bishonen" is a symbol of a perfect person in whom the male and female characteristics are blended, making gender discrimination meaningless. It is implied that when a man is like a bishonen, there is no male chauvinism or domination.

Although animé/manga fantasy artists invented "bishonen," the aesthetic values of feminized masculinity they represent have become popular in the ideals of young Japanese and Taiwanese women. The female attention given to this ideally feminized masculinity has even influenced Japanese popular culture in its selection of male role models. For example Tsukasa's idols, the V6 singers, are physically similar to the "bishonen" ideal. Kraemer (2000) believed that the future of feminism in animated films is undoubtedly Japanese. As a matter of fact, Japanese popular culture is re-inventing the "third body"[8] and shaping the future of gender roles.

Meditating on the Invisible

It mattered not whether these two girls identified with the male supremacy or ideal femininity; they did not speak directly about themselves. Their "self" was literally absent from their narratives, leaving their personal self-images completely invisible. Tsukasa and Chiyong did not intentionally try to hide themselves from being understood, they merely negated themselves unconsciously by identifying with the ideal "Other." The presumption underlying this on-going self-negation is that women are imperfect and inferior to men or as Freud would say; they are "defective males." According to Irigaray, women's self-negation is the result of the patriarchal unconscious.

Irigaray argued that the world is constructed with a shield of the male ego, enabling him to see his own reflection and causing the mother to accept this framework of the male ego while never presenting her true self. Irigaray perceived this neglect as equivalent to "matricide" (Sarup, 1993). Unfortunately, the daughter looks to the mother as if the world is made of one symbolic order in a monologic culture. Sarup (1993) explained Irigaray's concept of the Western imaginary,

> Western culture, identity, logic and rationality are symbolically male, and the female is either the outside, the hole or the unsymbolizable residue. The feminine always finds itself defined as deficiency, imitation or lack. (p. 119)

Irigaray's psychoanalysis of Western culture explains the female situation in Taiwan too. Women's inferiority and abandonment are similar in both the West and the East from the past through the present. The more complicated and sophisticated the world becomes, the greater the social division between men and women. Some people are convinced that women have enjoyed equality in pursuing their education, career and social lives and have been able to compete with their male counterparts. Female images have been idealized for young women, and our mass culture is saturated with images of femininity. Chyong's narrative illustrates the paradoxical celebration of the female image and its ideal femininity in postmodern society. Chiyong did not complain about her social status as a young woman, yet she was aware of her imperfection and compensated by indulging herself in the animé fantasy of ideal beauty. Chiyong is still alienated from her self. Instead of identifying with male superiority, she devoted herself to ideal femininity as presented in the popular animé/manga industry.

This situation can be explained by Bartky's (1990) notion of "feminine narcissism" (p. 37), a false consciousness of femininity. Bartky (1990) explained that modern industrial societies have developed a new

form of dominance, "capitalist patriarchy", emphasizing normative femininity that focuses on women's body for its sexuality instead of its duties and obligations. Through the growing influence of visual media, "images of normative femininity, it might be ventured, have replaced the religiously oriented tracts of the past" (Bartky, 1990, p. 80). New standards of female beauty have been invented, haunting many women with a pervasive feeling of "bodily deficiency". Bartky perceives this "fashion-beauty complex", which is often internalized into a woman's "other" bodily self, causing the "self" to struggle toward self-actualization and wholesome affirmation of the body image. The "fashion-beauty complex" provides opportunities for narcissistic indulgence, deprecating woman's self body image and femininity. Bartky's fashion-beauty complex refers to images of perfect female beauty presented by real models, but this same fashion-beauty complex can be applied to the ideal female beauty presented by popular animé/manga. Capitalist patriarchal dominance has utilized various cultural agencies to shape women's sense of self, deepening feminine anxiety to the point of self-estrangement and self-alienation. Under this patriarchal dominance women are not only inferior, but they eventually become capitalist products.

In recent years, feminist researchers have challenged "the view of women as passive consumers manipulated into desiring commodities" (Strinati, 2003, p.217). They have raised a new notion of cultural consumption, "Cultural Populism", in order to emphasize that female consumers play an active role in the process of cultural production. Stacey (1994) explained that consumption should be perceived as "a site of negotiated meanings, of resistance and of appropriation as well as of subjection and exploitation" (p.189). As commonly seen in fan culture, media fans purchase and internally digest popular media texts they consume to produce their own work. This is especially seen in female-oriented fan communities that make their own interpretation of sexuality, legitimizing their own feminine values in contrast to dominant patriarchal values (Fiske, 1989; Fiske, 1992; Radway, 1984). In Japan, animé/manga fans and amateur artists like to produce sexually explicit themes in their manga doujinshi as a specific response to the highly gendered structure of commercial boys' and girls' manga. Kinsella (2000) described distinctive genres of amateur manga parody [9], yaoi, and Lolicom [10] as having "betrayed a widespread fixation with male and female gender types and sexuality" (p.11). Animé/manga critics have also stated that the dominance of "sexual themes" in animé/manga fan art is manipulated as a creative impetus for change in the gender politics of society.

From Kinsella's viewpoint, animé/manga fan art is a powerful vehicle for fans and artists to remodel the social and political construction of gender and sexuality in society. As found in this study, "bishonen" animé/manga characters invented for yaoi manga have been very popular among girl fans. Such popularity has led the Japanese animé/manga industry to adjust styles of male characters to please a greater number of female readers' tastes. Popular culture in Japan as also promoted those with bishonen features as male role models. A women's gaze used to be forbidden but now it is mildly forcing cultural change, reinventing gender roles. Japanese animé/manga fan culture has been prevalent with feminine privileges. It gives a gaze of liberation. Every bishonen is subject to female free will, as these female fans can gaze at these images and create their own narratives. They can appropriate images of their idols and rearrange them into their own favorite types whenever they want. For instance, we see Tsukasa's idols, the V6 singers, drawn as cute effeminate boys (see picture # 1, 2, 3, and 4) that are in a sense, male dolls that Tsukasa can play with and control. Similarly, we find effeminate young men in Chiyong's drawings (see picture #7, 8, 9) who all shy away from the spectator's gaze. It is the viewer who has the power to gaze at them. In contrast, when we look

at the young women in Chyong's other drawings (see picture #5 and 6), we are stunned because they gaze at us. These female characters gaze at us—spectators—as if they have the control and power in the world. The point is that young girls in animé/manga fan culture have empowered themselves, legitimizing their own type of girls' culture and feminine values.

A Stop

An ancient Chinese proverb says, "Silence is often more powerful than voices; the hidden meanings between lines are sometimes more significant than the written ones". To be able to acquire crucial knowledge and wisdom, a reader or a listener needs to unravel the multiple textual layers in the narratives and interwoven context. Thus far, I have examined two insightful stories—visual and literal narratives—unraveling many invisible threads and implicit drives. I am also sure that what I envisioned in this study could never be thorough enough for there are certain invisible aspects still left untouched and voices yet unheard. It is for me, the narrator of this study, to leave these areas of silence to others to seek for more meaning and insight. Along the journey, I have given these two young animé/manga fan artists great encouragement and appreciation, but I now realize that my own feminist consciousness has been enforced through the stories and artwork of Tsukasa and Chiyong and for that I give thanks.

Notes

[1] Animé is a short form for "animation" and has been recognized as any animation made in Japan. Manga is the term used for Japanese comic books. Manga is not a synonym for animé, but many animé movies are adapted from mangas so that the visual style in both media

remains similar. Thus in this study, animé/manga is used to refer to distinct visual style.

[2] Cosplay is a Japanese fan term for "Costume Play" and is similar to the western Masquerade (Santoso, 1998). Cosplay emerged in the late 1980s, and its popularity has been escalating so rapidly that animé conventions cannot be held without it

[3] Doujinshi is a Japanese term used to refer to coterie or self-published fanzines distributed within specific groups or communities. Although doujinshi becomes well-known in manga fan culture, it is also used to refer to other media such as self-published novels, stories and sci-fiction. Thus, in this study manga doujinshi will be used to emphasize those manga pamphlets or magazines that manga fans or amateur artists publish. Along the growth of the commercial manga industry, the number of doujinshi artists and fans printing materials of amateur manga increased (Kinsella, 2000).

[4] Comic Market (also known by the abbreviations Comiket and Comike) is ostensibly a voluntary, non-profit making organization. It is held in the form of a convention where animé/manga fan art and amateur manga could be bought, sold, displayed or exchanged. In Taiwan, it is called ComicWorld or Doujinshis Sale Convention.

[5] The animé/manga fan communities (also called animé fandom) outside of Japan have been growing gradually since the 1970s. In the animé fandom, almost all fans are potential artists who make and publish their own animé/manga materials (doujinshi) for circulation in fan organized clubs and conventions. In this study, these artists are called in several terms such as animé/manga fan artists, amateur artists, amateur animé/manga artists, or manga doujinshi artists.

[6] Yaoi means boy/boy love stories, a kind of erotic manga that features gay relationships between male characters. Yaoi was a genre emerging from female fanzines. In yaoi, male characters are often the kind of "bishonen" (beautiful boys"). Yaoi manga seems quite popular among heterosexual girls of Taiwanese culture.

[7] Yuri means girl/girl love stories, a kind of erotic manga that features lesbian relationships between female characters.

[8] This term is used by Waugh (1998) in his article, "The Third Body," to refer to the "gale subjects" that are invented in gay male narrative film. In this study, I apply this term to mean the effeminate boys invented by Japanese animé/manga, also called bishonens, as an ideal gender type, that is different from the first gender, men, and the second gender, women.

[9] Parody is a genre of manga doujinshi, or amateur manga in which the fan artists re-write or revise published commercial manga stories and characters. Many manga critics have criticized that those fan artists who create parody types of amateur manga are not talented enough to write original.

[10] Lolicom is an abbreviation of Loita complex. Lolita complex is used to refer to the theme of sexual obsession with young pre-pubescent girls. Lolicom manga usually features a young girlish heroine with large eyes and a childish face, but voluptuous body (Kinslella, 2000).

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