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JAPANESE ANIME AND ITS TRANSCULTURAL LITERARY SIGNIFICANCE:
THE DEVELOPMENT AND EVOLUTION OF ISOLATED ESCAPIST FICTION
AND ITS RELATION WITH MAINSTREAM CANONISED LITERATURE

DEEP NASKAR¹, ABHIK MAITI²

¹Pursuing M.A in English, University of Calcutta.

²Pursuing M.A in English., M.A in History, Diploma in Tagore Literature & Diploma in Fine Arts.



DEEP NASKAR



ABHIK MAITI

ABSTRACT

Arianna Dagnino in her essay *Transcultural Literature and Contemporary World Literature* points out that “with the denationalizing wave of globalization, a mutation is under way within the global acumen of letters where new notions of belonging, as well as definitions of selfhood and identity are externalized through new creative artistic and literary process...” This is more evident recently through Anime with its heavy borrowing of motifs from western canonized literature and its gradual popularity as an emerging form of literary creativity.

The vast world of anime has its roots embedded very deep inside light novels, manga, visual novels, games and much more, which altogether known as the ‘otaku culture’ in Japan. Japan’s existence as an island civilization, far separated geographically from the mainland of Asia has led to the development of its own distinct culture and Anime is a reflection of Japan’s own cultural heritage; far distinct from its pan-Asian counterpart. It is an art form of purest quality which has protected itself from the cultural imperialism.

Though it is true that anime and serious literature have always been hostile towards each other, however with the coming of the new century new hope arises as more liberal minds are considering different arts as part of literature, such as music and paintings. One can hope in near future anime shall be considered as a serious art form too. While very little of the western canonized literature has been adapted into anime, yet some of the exceptional and remarkable works are, *Howl's Moving Castle*, *Romeo x Juliet*, *Agatha Christie no Meitantei Poirot to Marple*, *The Story of Cinderella*, *Jungle Book Shōnen Mowgli*, *The Secret World of Arrietty*, *Gankutsuou: The Count of Monte Cristo*, *World Masterpiece Theater*, *Tales from Earthsea*, *Nils no Fushigina Tabi*, *Blast of Tempest*, *Takarajima*, *Tokyo Godfathers*, *Pandora Hearts* or *Miyuki-chan in Wonderland*.

However, Samantha Chambers comments “There is still a slight negative stigma to anime, despite attempts to educate people on the nature of anime, and people still believe anime to be a violent art form. Acceptance of Otaku culture and the anime wave has become more acceptable, however, as more scholarly research is conducted and more libraries stock anime.” (Samantha Chambers, *Anime: From Cult Following to Pop Culture Phenomenon*).

Keywords: Anime, Theory of Adaptation, Escapism, Shakespeare, Japan, Studio Ghibli, Cinderella, Adaptation, Otaku, Jungle Book, Transculturalism, Utopian Fiction.

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The word 'Anime', which is pronounced as 'Ah-nee-may' or 'Aa-ni-me' is actually the abbreviated form of the word 'animation' in Japanese. But where the word 'animation' is applicable for all kind of animated works, such as CGIs or cartoons. The origin of the word anime is deeply rooted within Japanese culture and history. However narrowing down the definition of anime as Japanese art or Japanese cartoon would be highly unfair and unjust. Because it is much more than that. The vast world of anime has its roots embedded very deep inside light novels, manga, visual novels, games and much more, which altogether known as the 'otaku culture' in Japan. It can be said that anime is a high quality art form, a much ignored one though. But it is an art form of purest quality which have protected itself from the cultural imperialism and proved itself truthful to regional originality for almost a century.

Technically the definition of anime is quite simple and generalized on Wikipedia, "*anime is used to refer specifically to animation from Japan or as a Japanese-disseminated animation style often characterized by colorful graphics, vibrant characters and fantastical themes.*" But in it is a vast and versatile form of art which has always been ignored by the rest of the world. Also it would be quite wrong to say that anime only gets produced in Japan, as recent years we have seen other eastern countries such as Korea, Philippines, China and also America in the west following their own individualistic style of anime production. While films, music and even comics are being recognized as serious literary forms, the existence of anime is still unknown to the masses, even though it has existed for almost hundred years. One of the reason for such ignorance by the rest of the world might be because of its anti-realism notion. In a world where reality is being glorified almost in every acclaimed films and novels, perhaps this is the curse anime suffer for its rebel. The world of anime is very anti-realistic. Though unlike cartoons it does not contain sarcastic or slapstick humor, instead it often tends to reflect violence, action, gore and sex or sexual references. Yet it very intricately separates itself from the dullness and provides the audience a myriad and vibrant world, in which they strive to experience but can only soak the warmth of. It enchants the viewers with its enigmatic fantasies and romanticism. The prime motive of an anime plot is to provide the audience delight and excitement, whether it is grim or joyous. Another reason for the hostility towards anime could be its lack of consumer. As mentioned before, the roots of anime penetrates very deep to the Japanese culture. It is also worth mentioning that how loyal Japanese are to their culture. Even after being wrecked by two great wars, and nuclear holocausts, they have saved their community from the mass cultural colonization. It is to be noted that till date the greater part of Japanese citizens are not yet fluent in English and all the communication in trade, education, politics, and technology, almost everything is done in traditional Japanese language. And this has affected the anime industry as well, as all the anime are made in Japanese and it takes a while to reach the particular series to reach west and getting through the dubbing procedures there. So we can say that this language gap is another hindrance for anime to become a global popular culture. Also the regional background, lifestyle and distinctive elements of Japanese culture are a recurring element in most of the mainstream anime, which also raises a problem towards global audience. The local festivals, Obon festival, the stunning imageries of sakura, the greenery of dense bamboo forests, the rural beauty of Japan, the Japanese school life, the fireworks celebration, the peacefulness of Japanese summer with cicada's nonchalant chanting, these things are engraved into anime as in their culture. To which global audience often cannot relate themselves with.

Where Hundreds of anime are releasing each year, it is quite difficult to estimate the important works created in this area. Priority of an anime should not be just determined by the distribution, audiences or profit amount itself, as the market has considerably grown than that of the past years. One should also consider the plot, art quality and the mark it has left on history. There is *Astro Boy*, which is known as the pioneer of anime, created by Osamu Tezuka. There are also the Gundam series and Dragon Ball series, which gained immense popularity in the 80's. And there are Studio Ghibli films which made anime popular to the global audience like *Kiki's Delivery Service*, *Princess Mononoke*, *Only Yesterday*, *Porco Rosso*, *Pom Poko*, *Whisper of the Heart*, *The Wind Rises*, *My Neighbors the Yamadas* or *Spirited Away*- the only anime, non-English-speaking and traditionally animated winner, so far, of an Academy award for Best Animated Feature. Some of the important

works of the contemporary time are : Naruto, Bleach, One Piece, Fullmetal Alchemist Brotherhood, Death Note, Neon Genesis Evangelion, Code Geass, Ghost in the Shell: Stand Alone Complex, Cowboy Bebop, Rurouni Kenshin etc.

While most of the anime are the adapted form of manga or Japanese comics, the second most adaption comes from light novels or 'raito noberu' or 'ranobe' in short, which is actually the Japanese equivalent of western novella. These are typically 40,000 to 50,000 words long and also quite slim and short in size. For such features light novels are extremely popular among Japanese young adults. They often have dense publishing schedule and comes out in volumes. Another feature of light novels is that they contain illustration of vibrant manga style arts, unlike mainstream novels. As mentioned, light novels and anime are greatly intertwined, for throughout years we've seen some great anime adaptation from those. Kyoto Animation, a top anime studio of Japan mostly tends to adopt light novels than manga. Some of their highly popular adoptions are 'Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya', 'Amagi Brilliant Park', 'Clanned', 'Hyouka' etc. While a good number of anime series and movies have been made from Nisio Isin's highly acclaimed 'Monogatari' light novels. Apart from these some of the top and popular anime which were adopted from light novels are 'Baccano', 'Sword Art Online', 'Durarara!!!', 'Yahari Ore no Seishun Love Comedy wa Machigatteiru', 'Spice and Wolf', 'No Game No Life', 'Hataraku Maou-sama!', 'Kokoro Connect' etc.

Apart from these light novel adoptions, often the studios have taken ideas from serious literature. One such instance is the 'Aoi Bungaku Series'. The series consists adoption of six popular short stories of Japanese serious literature. Three legendary manga artists of contemporary time, Takeshi Obata, Tite Kubo and Takeshi Konomi have come together provide the series its life.

The stories which had been adopted were:

'No Longer Human' , by Osamu Dazai (episode 1-4): The path of a man with intense feelings of alienation towards society and the feeling of "humanity".

Sakura no Mori no Mankai no Shita, by Ango Sakaguchi (episode 5-6): A forest bandit finds a beautiful maiden in the forest and takes her to be his wife, but she is more than she seems to be.

'Kokoro', by Natsume Sōseki (episode 7-8): A young man lives in Tokyo as a renter with a widow and her daughter. He invites his childhood friend, a monk, to come live with him, hoping to help him. When the monk falls in love with the widow's daughter, it drives a rift between them. The story is narrated from two points of view, the man's and the monk's.

'Run, Melos!', by Osamu Dazai (episode 9-10): A playwright writes a play based on the story "Run, Melos", and deals with his own feelings of betrayal towards his childhood friend.

'The Spider's Thread' , by Ryūnosuke Akutagawa (episode 11): Kandata, a cruel and evil bandit is executed and lands in hell. The one good thing he had done in his life was to not kill a spider he met in the city. The spider drops him a thread to climb up into heaven. His elation is short-lived, however, as he realizes that others have started climbing the thread behind him.

'Hell Screen', by Ryūnosuke Akutagawa (episode 12): Yoshihide, the greatest painter in the country, is commissioned to draw his greatest work, an image of the king's country inside his mausoleum. In the despotic king's realm, Yoshihide can see nothing but the suffering of the commoners. He decides to make his last work a tribute to the country as it really is. [Wikipedia]

According to Emmanuel Bahu-Leyser, from the French Animeland found it exceptional to have such realistic, deep and mature stories to be adapted into anime. He went further by describing the series as a gold nugget both culturally and technically. On the negative side, he noted that the adaptation quality is uneven between the teams. This is quite true because of the three artists' individual and unique style which differed from each other.

As mentioned earlier, the vast gap between western and Japanese culture and origin has always maintained the hostility towards one another. While western animation mammoth has always found its inspiration from western myth, fairy tales, folklores and Grimm brothers, Japanese found it in their own nation. But also to be kept in mind that Japanese creators are very much liberal. When western animators and

Hollywood have safely kept the distance with Japanese arts and stories (except few recent disastrous remakes), throughout the ages Japan has drawn its inspiration from few well known western fantasies and dramas, which includes *Romeo and Juliet*, *Cinderella* etc. This phenomenon may be attributed to the transculturalism (defined as "seeing oneself in the other", is in turn described as "extending through all human cultures" or "involving, encompassing, or combining elements of more than one culture") Tassinari had previously visualized this phenomenon and declared that transculturalism opposes the singular traditional cultures that evolved from the nation-state. He also stated that transculturalism is based on the breaking down of boundaries, and is contrary to multiculturalism because in the latter most experiences that have shown reinforced boundaries based on past cultural heritages. And that in transculturalism the concept of culture is at the center of the nation-state or the disappearance of the nation state itself. In this context, German cultural scholar Dagmar Reichardt stresses the didactical relevance of a paradigmatic shift in academia through Transcultural Studies, mainly focusing on the European model of conviviality in a globalized world. While Disney has often been accused for sugarcoating the grim tales or depicting an unrealistic character anatomy. There it can be said that Japanese animation artists had always been strict for precious anatomical drawing just as in other anime or manga. And when it comes to the plot, they have often taken enough artistic authority and freedom to dissect, analyze the traditional story and also often discovering and incorporating unique elements in it. It won't be fair to label such act as artistic immaturity, as "Aeschylus and Racine and Goethe and da Ponte also retold familiar stories in new forms. Adaptations are so much a part of Western culture that they appear to affirm Walter Benjamin's insight that "storytelling is always the art of repeating stories" The critical pronouncements of T.S. Eliot or Northrop Frye were certainly not needed to convince avid adapters across the centuries of what, for them, has always been a truism: art is derived from other art; stories are born of other stories." [Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*]. The first American animated cartoon came out in 1906, '*Humorous Phases of Funny Faces*' and first ever distributed Mickey Mouse cartoon by Disney was in 1928, '*Steamboat Willie*'. But the oldest anime dates back to 1917, produced by Jun'ichi Kōuchi, titled '*Namakura Gatana*'.

Also anime films are highly applauded and acclaimed in international film festivals. Such as *Spirited Away* shared the first prize at the 2002 Berlin Film Festival and won the 2003 Academy Award for Best Animated Feature, while *Innocence: Ghost in the Shell* was featured at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival.

While these are the basic elements often can be found within anime plots. It can also be said that the anime industry are quite liberal to accept the story from a vast set of things. As mentioned before, anime stories are mostly adapted form of other media. Such as manga, video games, visual novels, light novels, board games and even most recently android games are being adapted as anime for marketing purposes. As mentioned before, due to Japan's geographical and cultural isolation with the west and mutual cultural alienation towards each other the Japanese have often restrained themselves to produce anime based on western themes. Another major underlying factor of such could be the lack of consumer. While a traditional Japanese themed anime could easily be marketed, a western theme anime, especially something based on serious western literature would have hard times claiming financial success. And also to be noted that making an anime is a highly expensive and time consuming process which requires a large amount of skilled craftsmen. Hence the producers have generally avoided such routes. Perhaps that's why while in west Disney was drawing its inspiration from famous books and fairy tales, such as *The Jungle Book*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Snow White*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Sword in the Stone* (based on the origin tale of King Arthur), and even most recently *Frozen*, based on Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale *The Snow Queen*, Japanese producers had always been immersed in traditional and clichéd plots which would 'sale'. Yet some of the daring producers and studios have often taken the bold steps. Some of the remarkable western literary anime adoptions are discussed here.

1. Howl's Moving Castle (2004): When it comes to anime, Hayao Miyazaki is considered a living legend. His films have been acclaimed internationally, even screened on Berlin International Film Festival. He also

achieved Academy Award or Oscar in Best Animated Feature for his film *Spirited Away* (2002). In 2004 he scripted and directed the anime movie *Howl's Moving Castle* or *Hauru no Ugoku Shiro*, based on British author Diana Wynne Jones' novel of the same name. Though it is a classic tale of fantasy, the story unfolds in a fictional kingdom where magic and 19th century technology equally exist and relevant. Despite the primary projection of innocent fantasy, the story actually contains a strong political background. Miyazaki particularly chose this story to express his anger on United States' invasion on Iraq. Miyazaki himself confessed that he "had a great deal of rage about [the Iraq war]." Apart from that, the movie also depicts the theme of old age. Miyazaki depicts aging as a kind of transformation, evolution or metamorphosis which eventually provides the protagonist freedom, experience and insights about life.

The plot of the movie however significantly differs from the novel. Miyazaki has used enough artistic freedom to transform the story into something to convey the message which the age and crisis demanded. For instance, in the movie very little has been told about the protagonist Sophie's background. The movie plot also considerably reduces the roles of Sophie's sisters. We are only able to see her sister Lettie for a short amount of time in the movie. The movie mercilessly excludes the elaborated parts about her sisters, and takes an entirely different approach. Which is not pretty uncommon in adaptation arts, such as Linda Hutchen states in her *The Theory of Adaptation*, "adapter's job is one of subtraction or contraction; this is called "a surgical art" (Abbott 2002: 108) for a good reason. In adapting Philip Pullman's trilogy of novels, *His Dark Materials*, from 1,300 print pages to two three-hour plays."

Again while in the book the main antagonist has been played by the Witch of the Waste. In the movie the antagonist rolls and evolves, until finally fixating upon the Monarchy. Though in the beginning it was the Witch of the Waste who has been portrayed as villain. But as the story progresses, we see the King's advisor, the witch Suliman as a more villainous character. The movie also does some serious changes to the original storyline. Such as excluding the important arc of the missing of prince Justin or removing the character of Sophie's youngest sister Martha, portraying Howl's apprentice Markl (Michael) as a young boy such avoiding the love affair of Martha and Markl (Michael).

In the book, Howl's castle is a tall, dark, evil appearing tower, while in the movie Howl's castle is "rotund collage of chimneys, roofs, steam pipes, and other odd appendages, borne along on mechanized bird legs" [Kimmich, Matt (2007). "Animating the Fantastic: Hayao Miyazaki's Adaptation of Diana Wynne Jones's *Howl's Moving Castle*". In Straytner, Leslie; Keller, James R. *Fantasy Fiction into Film*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company.]

Entirely changing the sex of Suliman from a man to woman and such avoiding the marriage of Suliman and Lettie provides a more complicated insight to her character.

Dani Cavallaro states in *The Anime Art of Hayao Miyazaki*, "In the movie, Madame Suliman appears to have only sadistic motivations for creating conflicts... "And despite being omniscient, is unable to recognize the idiocy of the war until the very end of the story. This reflects Miyazaki's desire to "show real-world conflicts as also being somewhat arbitrary and fueled by the desires of capricious people." It also excludes more roles such as the Witch's fire demon, Lily Angorian and more. On the other hand it includes Turnip Head as, the scarecrow who plays an important part and later revealed as Prince Justin. The movie also provides a very humouristic and passionate voice to Calcifer, Howl's fire demon, unlike the book where he is a ferocious fire demon.

However the movie very strongly focuses on tyranny, military exercises and war from the very beginning. From the very first we see the spectacular shows of the kingdom's military parades and exhibition to glorify war. We also see the army men's attempt to violet Sohie from which Howl saves her. It clearly shows the corruption which runs within. Unlike other Miyazaki creations, this movie doesn't hesitate to show death and destruction. The movie itself can be very remarkable for its radiant projection of war, explosion and disaster brought up by devastating war. We see how the war affects Howl both physically and psychologically and eventually shedding light upon the audience's mind. We also see how suffocating the authoritarian rule of tyrannical dictator could be. The movie is thematically significantly different from the book; while the book

focuses on challenging class and gender norms, the film focuses on love, and personal loyalty and the destructive effects of war." (Levi, Antonia (2008). "Howl's Moving Castle". *Mechademia*. 3: 261–163.)

In 2013 Miyazaki said the film was his favorite creation, explaining "I wanted to convey the message that life is worth living, and I don't think that's changed." (Cavallaro, Dani (2015). *Hayao Miyazaki's World Picture*. McFarland. ISBN 978-1-4766-2080-0.)

As mentioned earlier, the movie's prime motive was to strip war out of all its manifested glory and also to exhibit the terror of tyranny. Hence the ending significantly differs from the book. While the book ends with the traditional love-marriage and 'they lived happily ever after', the movie ends with rising hope of the ending of the war. "Miyazaki's biggest addition to the plot of the book was the use of the war as a large part of the plot. In the book, the war is only tangentially referred to; the king orders Howl to find the king's missing brother Justin, because Justin's military skills are needed for a forthcoming war" [Kimmich, Matt (2007). "Animating the Fantastic: Hayao Miyazaki's Adaptation of Diana Wynne Jones's *Howl's Moving Castle*". In Straytner, Leslie; Keller, James R. *Fantasy Fiction into Film*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company.]

The movie faces sheer popularity and critical applause. Helen McCarthy in *500 Essential Anime Movies* said that the natural world was "beautifully represented", with "some absolutely breathtaking mountains and lakeside landscapes". She also praised the design of the Castle and added that Miyazaki added his own themes to the film: "man's relationship to nature, the futility of war, and the joy of flight" (McCarthy, Helen (2009). *500 Essential Anime Movies: The Ultimate Guide*. HarperCollins.)

Richard Corliss of *TIME Magazine* wrote, "Palaces and shimmering lakes, warplanes and fire sprites all come to life at the breath of Miyazaki's graphic genius". [Corliss, Richard (5 June 2005). "Movies: For Children of All Ages". *TIME*.

2. *Romeo X Juliet* (2007): As mentioned, Japanese animators have often taken enough liberty and daring steps to modify and reconstruct a conventional story to their own requirements. This particular anime based on the renowned drama of Shakespeare is one such instance. Unlike the drama, was oriented towards teens, we see incorporation of multiple elements which eventually makes the series very much different than the original content. The anime also shows numerous references and characters from other plays of Shakespeare (like Cordelia, Antonio and Ophelia) and also the author himself makes a cameo appearance. The anime resembles so little to the original drama that it leaves very little much room for a comparison. Like the reviewer Nadimi comments on *myanimelist.net* "Nevertheless, this story was far from being truly original itself, for it not only borrowed from Shakespeare, but also from many other well-known tales such as Robin Hood, *Les Misérables*, and many others. This could, again, be easily ignored for the sake of entertainment, but as the story progresses, more and more random elements come into play, making the anime drift off farther and farther away from the source material." While the drama takes place in Italian city of Verona, the anime opens in the fictional island of Neo Verona. The central plot focuses on the revenge of Juliet against the Montague. The story keeps going unfolding series of emotions, anger, plots of revenge, murder and battle, providing a developing ground for each character. However while the drama ends with utter tragedy, in the anime through the action packed climax shows the shocking deaths of Romeo and Juliet, it ends with giving rise to an optimistic future and hopes for the surviving characters, and providing hint that the star crossed lovers are blessed and happy together in heaven. Despite giving a typical anime influenced spin off to the original drama, critics have both praised and criticized several loopholes. Theron Martin noted that the story made use of too many 'saved-at-the-last-moment' scenes. He noted a drop-off in animation quality in the second half of the series, and was disappointed at the change in the tone of the ending. While Bamboo Dong described it as "absolutely wonderful, both aesthetically and also narratively", and praised the reinvention of the tale. Chris Beveridge of *Mania* noted the addition of characters from Shakespeare's other plays "may either please or annoy the hardcore fans", but enjoyed the adaptation, although he noted it was not particularly "revolutionary or challenging". He later noted that in the first volume, the use of the fantasy setting was understated but was used more in the second part of the series and enjoyed the "focused" narrative. Like Linda Hutcheon commented on *A Theory of Adaptation* "... It does seem to be more or less acceptable to adapt Romeo and

Juliet into a respected high art form, like an opera or a ballet, but not to make it into a movie, especially an updated one like Baz Luhrmann's (1996) William Shakespeare's *Romeo + Juliet*. If an adaptation is perceived as "lowering" a story (according to some imagined hierarchy of medium or genre), response is likely to be negative."

3. The Story of Cinderella/ Shinderera Monogatari : Cinderella is a common fairy tale being popular since middle ages, and it has gotten many adaptation in numerous art forms, which also includes the famous animated movie by Disney in 1950. But when it comes to Japan, the typical Japanese animators have taken enough freedom to dissect, expand and incorporate certain plots and characters. The anime which was released in 1996, produced by Tatsunoko studio consists 26 episodes. Which is considerably larger than the original story and the Disney movie. At the same time it also provides the author enough space to treat the plot in a much profound manner. So obviously the story differs a lot from the original tale or the Disney treatment.

In the Disney adaptation, we have seen Cinderella as an orphan who gets treated badly by her stepmother. But the anime follows the original storyline. The anime begins with Cinderella's widower father, who is a noble tradesman leaves for a very long business trip. As soon as he leaves, Cinderella's stepmother and two stepsisters, envious of her beauty and gentle nature, put Cinderella into servitude and she has to go through harsh manual labour.

"The series covers Cinderella's trials and tribulations as she tries to adapt to her new life while suffering the abuse of her stepmother and her two stepsisters. All the while, her fairy godmother, Paulette, subtly watches her and tries to influence events to fix Cinderella's life without her noticing. One of her first acts in this is to grant several of the animals of the house the power of speech..." (Wikipedia) It is also notable that how the creators provide the animals human voice, thus giving an anthropomorphic touch.

However the biggest plot twist in the anime, which significantly put it in a league of its own, is the treatment towards the Prince. Unlike the Disney movie or the original story, the Prince (here being called as Prince Charles) is no typical prince charming. And also to be noted that Cinderella is no damsel in distress either. This reflects the equality of the gender roles Japanese believes. As mentioned, the biggest twist in the anime is that Prince and Cinderella meets much earlier, almost at the beginning of the storyline. Obviously being unaware of each other's true identity, thus they were given a true neutral ground to build and develop a true friendship which eventually provides a serene romantic touch.

Unlike the story or Disney film, where the manly hero comes riding in horse to save the damsel in distress, in the anime we see Prince Charles is a simple minded adventurous young boy, who likes to roam the town in disguise. On one such occasion he encounters Cinderella and "This marks the beginning of many adventures, including hunting, discovering enchantments, betrayal and conspiracies of the palace..." (Wikipedia) and it strengthens their bonds much more.

While in the movie and original tale, we see Cinderella's stepmother as the prime antagonist. Here in the anime, the story goes a step further. As it intricately weaves the backdrop of a bloody Coup d'état conspired by Duke Zarl. Hence the viewers can identify Duke Zarl is the villainous cold blooded antagonist who doesn't even hesitate to poison Prince even in his wedding, while the step family of Cinderella merely establish itself as a foil to build Cinderella's character.

In both the story and Disney film, the narrative ends with the shoe scene and a typical fairy tale ending. In the anime, the story goes a bit further with more twist. We see the shoe scene only as a sub-climatic scene, which paves way for the final climax, the marriage where Duke Zarl tries to poison Prince Charles and kidnaps Cinderella, but Prince Charles reappears. Then both of them engage in a breathtaking battle at the heights. This gives another layer to the much conventional fairy tale.

Reviewer on myanimelist.net comments "...Both the movie (Disney) and the story (by Charles Perrault) do not go in great detail about Cinderella's life before she went to the ball. This series tell a great deal, and, not only that, the twists make the story a bit more realistic, in my point of view. Fairy tales are always, or almost, the same and have many common components such as: love at first sight (without even

knowing each other), a villain or two defeat and a happy ending. Cinderella Monogatari changes all of these examples and weaves a story that is so great that you should overlook the fact that perhaps you do not like the ancient aspect of it."

According to another reviewer chichiriNoDa, "In order to fully appreciate this series is that you just have to watch this with an open mind because there is an undeniable huge flaw regarding its plot. Cinderella befriended the Prince in a very ordinary circumstance without realizing he is really the Prince. We get to see them interact throughout almost the entire series that you wish for Cinderella to realize it's the prince all along. But that same flaw made this series the more charming and memorable."

However despite the fantastic approach to an ancient story, the anime itself failed to gain much popularity. Whether for having alienated plot which differs from traditional Japanese anime trend or because of the failure of marketing department, it's unobvious. However it will stay as a bright instance in history for the retelling.

4. Jungle Book Shōnen Mowgli : Based on Rudyard Kipling famous children story series 'The Jungle Book', the anime basically follows the storyline of the first three books, which are 'Mowgli's Brothers', 'Kaa's Hunting', 'Tiger! Tiger!'. While the book and the famous animated movie by Disney neatly follows the rising and falling tension between Mowgli, her jungle mates, the villainous Bengal tiger Sher Khan and Mowgli's survival in human society. The anime which is tremendously long (52 episodes) focuses on Mowgli and his rootlessness, his alienation towards both animal and human society, his love affair with the village girl Jumeirah and the problems in colonized India.

While the Disney movie depicts Mowgli's origin as just an orphan boy found in basket in deep jungle of India by Bagheera the Black Panther. In the anime, the origin of Mowgli kind of resembles the origin of Tarzaan. Where Mowgli as an infant gets separated from his parents and was later rescued by the Baloo the bear, Bagheera the panther, and Kaa the python. Here we see a difference from the Disney adaptation, where Kaa at first try to eat Mowgli. But here Kaa appears as a parent figure from the beginning.

As it is a long project, we see the writers providing enough light and insight to the character building of Mowgli. We see Mowgli's constant struggle to fit on the pack of wolves as he grows up as an outcast. At the same time his conflict with the bloodthirsty tiger and other life threatening dangers in the jungle. Though the romantic affair between Mowgli and Jumeirah is one of the important plotlines of the anime, yet we also see the odd interracial romantic hint between the she Wolf Lala and Mowgli. But whether Jumeirah or Lala, this experimental bold aspects cannot be seen in the Disney adaptation or the original story. This rightly refelects "Most theories of adaptation assume, however, that the story is the common denominator, the core of what is transposed across different media and genres, each of which deals with that story in formally different ways and, I would add, through different modes of engagement—narrating, performing, or interacting. In adapting, the storyargument goes, "equivalences" are sought in different sign systems for the various elements of the story: its themes, events, world, characters, motivations, points of view, consequences, contexts, symbols, imagery, and so on.." [Linda Hutchen, A Theory of Adaptation]

"Walt Disney told his animation crew to "throw away" Kipling's book because the storyboards based on the original concept were too dark and dramatic." [The Hindu, 2012-12-25] But the creators of anime never hesitated to include or even enhance such elements, reflecting the typical Japanese traditional attitude, like reviewer griz1-199-491493 on imdb.com comments "A wonderful tale of self-discovery, community, honor, duty, coming of age, and coming to terms with the darker sides of the Human Condition". Reviwer Dawalk-1 on imdb.com comments that "I can't say for sure which version of Mr. Kipling's story I like more, since I'm partial to both this and Disney's, but I'd agree that it is the far more superior of the two. Because this one delves even deeper into the world of the hero Mowgli and the animals. For those who haven't seen it, I'll give one explanation of what the message of this is: A lesson on how people and animals have to learn how to coexist on the same planet harmoniously."

However the anime gained immense popularity in India. "The Jungle Book TV serial was aired on Doordashan on July 1993 and ran for one full year, from 12PM to 1PM. The kids born in the 80s and early

90s would drop everything and wait for the cartoon show and discuss it the next morning with their friends in school. Bagheera, Bhalu, Pappu, Shere Khan (voice dubbed by Nana Patekar, even then) and of course, Mowgli were names that would feature in games that kids would play in those days." (<http://nostalgic90s.com>). In India Jungle Book Shōnen Mowgli gained more popularity than any other version of the Jungle Book, including the Disney adaptation. The Hindi version of the title song, "Jungle Jungle Baat Chali Hai" was very popular. The anime was closely dubbed to Hindi, such serving a local and intimate touch. Till date whenever Jungle Book is referred, an Indians relate more to the anime than any other. One such example is that when the live action film of Jungle Book released in 2016, for the title track of hindi dubbed version, the remake of anime title track "Jungle Jungle Baat Chali Hai" was used, rather than remaking the Disney title track.

In the conclusion we can say, due to Japan's isolated geographical location and solitary cultural growth, people of Japan often found western adaptations alien. Though the daring Japanese industry has often taken such bold projects and have used tremendous freedom to mould it into something entirely new, yet most of the industry is still afraid to go out of the box due to commercial risks and failure. However it would be great enough to have more such adaptations in future for the Japanese animators' unique talent to provide layers and depth to each story. Likely Linda Hutchen comments "...however straightforward the idea of adaptation may appear on the surface, it is actually very difficult to define, in part, as we have seen, because we use the same word for the process and the product. As a product, an adaptation can be given a formal definition, but as a process—of creation and of reception—other aspects have to be considered. This is why those different perspectives touched on earlier are needed to discuss and define adaptation." We can hope that despite the rise and falls, more studios and creators will step forward in this endeavor ignoring the commercial risks. Then there also appears the wall of translation, but adaptation in a way is translation too, "This newer sense of translation comes closer to defining adaptation as well. In many cases, because adaptations are to a different medium, they are re-mediations, that is, specifically translations in the form of intersemiotic transpositions from one sign system (for example, words) to another (for example, images). This is translation but in a very specific sense: as transmutation or transcoding, that is, as necessarily a recoding into a new set of conventions as well as signs." (Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*)

However, except these, Japan and West, both sides have to overcome this infertile atmosphere of mutual hostility and alienation. While the West should throw off their ignorance and forced generalization towards east. Also the great language barrier between Japan and the West should be resolved. More and more importance should be projected on translation to global languages and faster dubbing procedures. As example, one of the most critically acclaimed and highest grossing movie of present time *Kimi No Na Wa* released in theatrically in Japan on august 2016. Hopefully there are some positive signs visible on the horizon. Such as crossovers of famous anime/manga and cartoon/comics. As example crossover of famous manga *Shingeki no Kyojin* and *Marvel Comics*, resulting the comic book *Attack on Avengers*. And also vice versa, adapting popular franchise into anime, as *Marvel Disk Wars: The Avengers*, *Demashita! Powerpuff Girls Z*, *Iron Man*, *Wolverine*, *X-men*, *The Animatrix* (based on *The Matrix* movie franchise), *Supernatural: The Animation* (based on the famous TV show), *Mutant Turtles: Choujin Densetsu-hen* (based on *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*). It is also to be remembered that the *Transformers* franchise was actually a collaboration between the Americans and Japanese. On the other hand, USA is approaching ahead as well, live-action movie adaptation of the popular cyberpunk anime *Ghost in the Shell* releases on 2017, starring celebs like *Scarlett Johansson*. Also the live-action movie adaptation of the highly popular anime/manga *Death Note* is on way, which stars veteran actor *Willem Dafoe* and being distributed by *Netflix*. The list also includes the much hyped remake of cult the anime movie *Akira*, which is rumored to be produced by *Leonardo DiCaprio* and distributed by the *Warner Bros*.

So it is quite evident that since the beginning of this century we have been observing the breeze of previously latent transculturism between West and Japan is getting more powerful in this 'liquid age'. As

Arianna Dagnino states, "While cultures (together with languages and identities) are becoming more fluid and intermingled through their complex permeations"

(Dagnino, Arianna. *Global Mobility, Transcultural Literature, and Multiple Modes of Modernity*, 2001). It is true that while twentieth century was marked as an age of migration and post-colonialism, where twenty-first century indicates neo-nomadic, transnational and transcultural patterns. As Arianna Dagnino comments "If expatriate/migrant writers were still concerned with the main question of 'how to traverse, intellectually and emotionally, the distance between a familiar "here" and an alien "there"', transcultural writers have already traversed that space, they have already incorporated the stranger within themselves, they have already accepted or restored their inner Other. It is expressly upon these cultural crossings that their creative works are built; their novels are literary expressions of what it means to understand the nuances in cultural transactions and cultural transformations" (Dagnino, Arianna. *Transcultural Writers and Transcultural Literature in the Age of Global Modernity*, 2012). And otaku culture is no exception of that. Apart from official adaptations, the foreign consumer of anime/manga has tremendously exceeded. Anime convention is becoming more and more regular in many countries. And consumers are engaging in more and more transcultural activities, such as cosplay or fanfiction. Presently a large number cosplayer and author, artists are being influenced by otaku culture. As writer Pico Iyer points out, "Even the man who never leaves home may feel that home is leaving him, as parents, children, lovers scatter around the map, taking pieces of him wherever they go"

(Iyer, Pico. *The Global Soul: Jet Lag, Shopping Malls and the Search for Home*. London: Bloomsbury, 2001). And yet it can be mentioned, that this sudden evolution of transcultural anime is no abnormal growth, but something which has already happened to other art forms, it is a part of natural metamorphosis, " Even when declaring allegiance to one place, we seem to be always moving away from it ... Nationalities, ethnicities, tribal, and religious filiations imply geographical and political definitions of some kind, and yet, partly because of our nomad nature and partly due to the fluctuations of history, our geography is less grounded in a physical than in a phantom landscape. Home is always an imaginary place" (Manguel, Alberto. *The City of Words*. London: Continuum, 2008) .. So when a foreign consumer of otaku culture (also known as a weaboo) gets immersed into something alien which is completely different from his innate regional patterns, he/she is simply reflecting " a determination to make a home of any place the self inhabits" (Brancato, Sabrina. *Transcultural Perspectives in Caribbean Poetry, Transcultural English Studies*). are becoming more recurring, one should not erase the innate elements of the regional beauty, which has always provide the otaku culture its own unique aura. But we can also hope that there would be more transcultural evolution of anime/otaku culture with this ongoing development, which will enhance the literary experience and observation, and establish anime as an independent genre to help us explore new boundaries.

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