Meditating on the Voiceless Words of the Invisible Other: Young Female Anime Fan Artists—Narratives of Gender Images

Jin-shio Chen, National Chia Yi University, Taiwan

Abstract
My interest in youth anime/manga (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 performances and manga drawings (doujinshi) 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 "Cornic Market/ComicWorld", "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 anime 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).

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Anime, as you may have already suspected, is an abbreviation for the word “animation,” referring to hand-drawn or electronically generated animated stories. Becoming popular in the 1960s, Western eyes view it as being strictly Japanese. Common themes within such story segments culturally constructed views of gender, whose shapes change in often