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Mutual Images of Japan and Europe

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Mutual Images of Japan and Europe

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Marco Pellitteri

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Uncertain spaces: The odd and the foreign in Tōei's feature films of the 1960

Marie Pruvost-Delaspre **|** New Sorbonne University, France

Abstract

American animation, after a long period of faithful adaptation of fairy tales and youth stories, seems to have gradually leaned towards a clearer geography, going from the abstract realm of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs *to the very real New Orleans of* The Princess and the Frog*, a modification that induces a reflection on the use of localisation in these films. This attention seems all the more important when it comes to treating feature films produced by Tōei Doga, the "Disney of the East" in the 1960s, to the extent that these films are both the trace of a first phase of internationalisation of the Japanese production, and the beginnings of a diversification at Tōei, as the studio goes around 1965 from adapting Asian literature and folk tales to the transposition of European youth stories like the Tales of Andersen. Focusing on an aesthetic analysis of the filmic text, centred around two films produced by Tōei,* Gulliver's Space Travels *(1965) and* The Tales of Andersen *(1968), this article intends to question the spatial and symbolic representation Europe as an "uncertain space".*

1. Introduction

The animation studio Tōei Dōga, identified by its first president Ōkawa Hiroshi as "the Disney of the East" (Hu 2010, 82), has had since its creation in 1956 an intricate relationship with European culture and traditions. Whereas their first animated features were adapted from oriental folk tales and stories like *Hakujaden* (*The Legend of the White Snake*), *Sanshō Daiyū* (*Sanshō the Bailiff*) or *A Thousand and One Nights*, a sudden turn occurred in 1965 with *Galibā no uchū ryokō* (*Gulliver's Travels Beyond the Moon*), followed by *Andersen monogatari* (*The World*

of Hans Christian Andersen) in 1968, *Nagagutsu haita neko* (*Puss in Boots*) in 1969, and *Dōbutsu takarajima* (*Animal Treasure Island*) in 1971. All adaptations of famous stories taken from European classic children's literature of the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries, these films present a peculiar vision of the Western world and seem to represent an imaginary Europe, somewhere between the fantasized Dutch village of Huis Ten Bosch in Nagasaki and exotic illustrations found in children books. These representations seem different from Miyazaki Hayao's precisely documented and relatively relevant images of Europe, such as *Kurenai no buta*'s 1930's Italian setting (*Porco Rosso*, 1992) or Stockholm's old town in *Majo no Takkyūbin* (*Kiki's Delivery Service,* 1989) for example and therefore need to be questioned in the light of the context of Japanese animation production in the 1960's and Tōei's own history.

By analysing how those narrative spaces are enclosed in a set of political, aesthetic and social questions at play, I would like to highlight the image-building process allowed by the animation medium through the depiction of Europe in *Galibā no uchū ryokō* (directed by Kuroda Yoshio) and *Andersen monogatari* (by Yabuki Kimio). Indeed, both films showcase in their description of the foreign land of fiction a contradictory will to integrate and to keep otherness at a distance. Those uncertain spaces, supposedly European but never clearly presented as such, offer a blatant example of how the odd and the foreign in an alien culture can be used to underline national identity through indirect resistance. Thus, those literary adaptations of Jonathan Swift and Hans Christian Andersen act as a foil, in the way they picture Europe as, at the same time, desirable and repelling, usual and odd, close

and foreign — resembling closely the contradictory reception of Western culture in Japan itself.

By sorting out in the original text elements that are consistent with the recipient's culture from totally foreign ones, the process of adaptation has often served political purposes. Therefore, a formal analysis of the texts provides significant information on what is perceived as foreign and odd, highlighting in return what is considered as conforming to national identity – to put it more directly, the spaces represented in *Galibā no uchū ryokō* and *Andersen monogatari* have little to do with Europe, but have a lot to say about how 19th century Europe is perceived by the filmmakers, set designers and animators of the Tōei Dōga studios. Underlined by Romain Chappuis in his study of adaptations of Western narratives in manga and anime as an appropriation of a transnational culture, this translation has a strong ideological impact: "This "Other" is integrated by exacerbating some of its features: The West is presented in Japanese works as conveyor of an excessive, unjust and potentially dangerous world, as the manifestation of Cartesianism taken to the extreme" (Chappuis 2008, 72). In *Frames of Anime*, Tze-yue Hu goes even further back in time to explain such mixed feelings, evoking the history of the Japanese writing system or the Meiji period Modernisation program. For her, this contradictory relationship with westernisation has a lot to do with the animation medium himself, since "a constant national desire to seek a referential space for self-understanding, self-projection and self-expression [...] has led to the discovery and application of a new medium in the twentieth century. This new medium has the flexible capability to embody all kinds of images" (Hu 2010, 18).

Using a set of concepts forged to tackle those relationships, from a reflection on orientalism to the more recent idea of "invented tradition", I will try to offer, using Tōei's animation feature films as the main object, an aesthetical point of view using film analysis to provide an in-depth vision of the adaptation process at work in these feature length animation films, and the generic repositioning commonly used in Japanese adaptations of Western sources, thus tackling an issue of genre that also seems relevant to the question, alongside the general problem of the depiction of the West and the construction of national identity.

2. Image-building in Japanese animation: an aesthetical point of view

Hobsbawm and Ranger's *The Invention of Tradition* (1983) assessed that the process of formalisation and ritualisation of new traditions served as the base for the establishment of social cohesion, the legitimation of institutions and the socialisation of beliefs and value systems. Applied to the Japanese field, it proved quite relevant, since it allowed to the study of the supposed "westernisation" of Japan, from Meiji imports to contemporary practices, no longer as a mere imitation process but as a complex discourse constructing a whole cultural identity. Such attempts as Stephen Vlastos in *Mirrors of Modernity: Invented Traditions in Modern Japan* (1998) further allowed the exploration of the invention of tradition as a myth-making and identity-building practice central to the development of a new discourse on national identity. For example, Jennifer Robertson's chapter, "It takes a village: Internationalisation and Nostalgia in Postwar Japan", clearly highlights how Native place-making projects conducted by localities reinforce opposition between Tōkyō and the rest of Japan. Taking the

example of the Dutch village theme park Village Huis Ten Bosch in Nagasaki Province as a starting point, she writes:

> The assimilation and containment of multicultural differences and the incorporation of global phenomena into local place-making projects are central to the on-going processes of socio-psychological security, national cultural-identity formation, and capitalist market development in Japan. (Robertson 1998, 115).

Huis Ten Bosch, because of its link to the Netherlands and its general significance in the context of Nagasaki, has a great implication in this context. It is a place conceived as a Japanese recreation of the foreign, which therefore does not need to be seen anymore, replacing an actual trip to the Netherlands — thus giving us a clue about the depiction of Europe in anime, not so much as an actual place of possible travels but as an uncertain space of imagination and recreation. Huis Ten Bosch also echoes, because of its nature, another important place of hybridity between a fantasized West and contemporary Japan, Tōkyō Disneyland. As stressed by Mary Yoko Brannen, the amusement park was meant to be quite close to its American counterpart, even though it ended up featuring specificities that make it totally different from it:

> What is remarkable about Tōkyō Disneyland is that the Japanese owners wanted an exact copy, even though they have in fact adapted the Anaheim Disneyland to suit the tastes of Japanese consumers. Ultimately, it is the Japanese, not the Americans, who have defined Tōkyō Disneyland. That is to say, it is the importation of the artefact rather than its exportation that begs to be analyzed. (Brannen 1992, 217)

As Brannen suggests through the idea of replacing exportation by importation, we have to reverse our point of view to see in those texts

what was conceived and created by the Japanese[1], and not only what was copied or suppressed from the original model, since the origins matter less than why and how they were adapted. To take an example closer to our field of study, this is also relevant to cultural products such as Mickey Mouse, which was, according to Ōtsuka Eiji in his article "Disarming Atom: Tezuka Osamu's Manga at War and Peace", the main source of inspiration for Japanese cartoons of the 1930; he writes that, though "it is not impossible to see manga in terms of a lineage that goes back to ukiyo-e of the Edo period or comic animal art of the medieval period, [...] such a view of history ignores the 'invented traditions' prevalent in so many of the introductory books on manga published in the late 1920s and early 1930s" (Ōtsuka 2008, 116).

This epistemological ploy has allowed us to draw a path and explain the analytic glaze used here. One of the main advantages of the notion of "invented traditions" is that theological historical lineages have been set aside, replaced by a vision that embraces different kinds of cultural, political, religious, economical relationships. In that sense, it could be linked to a new trend that appeared in French History in the 1980s, defined by its creators as focusing on "cultural transfers", that is to say the reciprocity and plurality of cultural exchanges on a larger scale. Indeed,

> Works on cultural transfers do not insist on the importation but rather on the stakes hidden in importation, the strategies that account for it and the rivalries it arouses. The methodology is based on two axes: the analysis of the context of export and reception, and the analysis of the vectors of the transfer. (Joyeux-Prunel 2002, 153)

[1] The park is the property of the Japanese company Oriental Land Company since its creation in 1983.

Even though the reciprocity of the transfer will only become visible at the end of the 1970s, when Japanese popular culture begins its entry into the European market, the question of the "vector" of the transfer resonated with our own concerns as Europeans. In the context of French History, "vectors" were meant to be travellers, writers, merchants, politicians or academics, recalling the first encounters of the Japanese people with European culture, through Jesuits or Dutch merchants. In the context of Tōei Dōga feature films, the vectors seem to be members of the studio themselves, rather than official or institutional vehicles. Indeed, the studio artists accessed their Western material, especially Hollywood films and European animation, mainly through the mediation of Anidō, an association founded in 1967 by several members of Tōei Dōga, followed by directors, animators and technicians of several other Tokyo animation studios, such as Mushi Pro or A Pro. The activity of the group, currently presided by Takashi Namiki, who used to work in the animation industry, focuses nowadays on the publication of illustration and art books and the popularisation of anime history through exhibitions and events[2]. However, in the 1960s and 1970s, the group focused on the organisation of public or semi-public screenings, allowing artists of the growing Tokyoite animation industry to discover European animation and American cartoons, as well as older Japanese productions, like Masaoka Kenzō's films. The films shown were also discussed during meetings and evoked in Anidō's information letter, *Anime Daiyori*. Their effect was huge on the artistic teams, as proven by the example of Paul Grimault's *Le Roi et l'oiseau* (*The King and the*

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[2] Anidō has been publishing a lot of information on its past and present activities on its website, with a notable effort to translate some of it into English: http://www.anido.com/about?lang=ja.

mockingbird, 1953-1977[3]) which was screened several times by the association after its Japanese release in 1955 and will leave a long-lasting impression on several members of the studio, such as Takahata Isao and Ōtsuka Yasuo. As stressed in Joyeux-Prunel's text, the physical exchanges and travels are also very significant in that matter, and it is important to stress here that several members of the studio were invited to visit foreign institutions, especially Disney Studios Burbank premises. Indeed, Ōtsuka Yasuo recalls a trip made by Tōei director Yabushita Taiji to the American studio to learn from their techniques and production organisation in the 1950s, especially the books and Preston Blair's animation manual he brought back (Kano 2008, 8).

Even though those screenings and travels had a great impact on Tōei's teams, I will refrain from using such notions like that of influences, bearing in mind that, since the work of Gérard Genette, or on a literary side since *Ficciones* (*Fictions*, 1944) written by Jorge Luis Borges*,* inspiration can go both ways and influences involve a dominant (and often teleological) point of view on art history. In the Japanese context, the notion of intertextuality often appears to be a useful surrogate, as Stevie Suan explains:

> Within Japanese artistic production there has been a long tradition of intertextuality, and the Japanese traditional theatre is well versed in this practice. Intertextual references have been used for centuries to the joy of spectators, with excerpts from external literary and poetic pieces, current events and legends, and even references from within the theatre world itself. (Suan 2013, 92)

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[3] Grimault's film went through many stages of production, and the first version, screened in 1953, did not receive his approval and, after several years of struggle, he managed to win back the rights and produce a new version of the story, completed in 1977. Nevertheless, it was the first version, called *La Bergère et le ramoneur* (*The Shepherdess and the Chimney sweeper*), that the Japanese public had access to, at its official release in 1955. See Jean-Pierre Pagliano (2012), *« Le Roi et l'oiseau » : voyage au cœur du chef-d'œuvre de Prévert et Grimault*, Paris, Belin, 192 p.

Keeping in mind this frame of reference, what I intend to do here differs slightly in the sense that, because my own background stems from cinema aesthetics, I wish to look into the body of the films, and not only stay on the contextual level, to describe how they seize the historical and technical aspects of cinema on an aesthetical level.

3. Depiction of the West in Toei's films: Otherness as a country

If settings have been of a great value in Hollywood cinema, one could say that background art in animation might bear the same significance. The topic of this article was inspired by a very simple observation: in all Tōei Dōga feature films of the 1960s supposedly taking place in Europe, such as *Andersen monogatari* (1968) or *Nagagutsu haita neko* (1969), one could hardly find any details in the depiction of places crossed by the characters, as if space had no real existence in those narratives — an exact opposite to studio Ghibli's productions set in the West, which use actual places and references. Taking a closer look at the films, it became obvious that what first seemed like a vacuum was the tracer of a deeper problem, involving the representation of otherness, a concept already described by Susan Napier as central to the understanding of anime (Napier, 2001). Indeed, those empty places bore the mark of a contradictory tension to both represent and hide the European origins of the narratives, especially in background art, composing a series of uncertain spaces that do not seem to belong to any recognizable geography.

The introduction of *Galibā no uchū ryokō* (1965) gives a beautiful illustration to this idea of uncertainty in the backgrounds. Indeed, after a sequence in a movie theatre featuring a short illusionary trick of story

in the story — we see a man trying to survive to the wreckage of his ship, but the next shot allows the spectator to understand those images as taken from a movie, "Gulliver's Travell" (*sic*) — the character is thrown out of the theatre to find himself in a dark, desolated back street in half ruins, the despair of the character echoed by the contrast between the black walls and the glowing sunset [ill. 1]. The next sequence, showing the credits, is composed of a series of static shots of different backgrounds, a closed shop's front window, a gloomy archway, etc. Those background shots, even though they do bear some trace of the European setting, such as the sign "hotel" on one of the buildings, have no real depth and totally escape naturalist depiction. They are a hybrid mixture of the decoration of an Italian restaurant — close to the "defamiliarising past and present" (Osmond 2008, 60) of Aburaya in Miyazaki's *Sen to Chihiro no kamikakushi* (*Spirited Away*, 2001) — and illustration books on European cities and architecture, like it was fantasized outside the West, a vision of Europe "perceived through the sketches found in imported books" (Lucken 2001, 8). Actually, illustration books are known to have been a great source of inspiration for animation artists, a fact not limited to Tōei Dōga but also frequently cited in the creative process of Disney studios' background artists, such as the influence of Sir John Tenniel's engravings for *Alice in Wonderland* (1951) described by Michael Barrier (Barrier 2008, 148). Nevertheless, *Galibā no uchū ryokō*'s introductory sequence backgrounds seem to differ from this stance, because of their abstract and sparse nature: they do not aim at identifying a precise place, but give a general sensation of space; not a specific country, but foreignness in itself, otherness *as* a country. In that sense, they somehow resemble the backgrounds of the

short film *Aru machi kado no monogatari* (*Tale of a street corner*, 1962) by Osamu Tezuka, who used abstract locations to convey a sense of universality.

Along the same line, the city pictured in *Wan wan chūshingura* (1963) represents a nameless "modern" town impossible to locate in space or time, precisely because it offers no specific detail or object that would work as a synecdoche for a whole culture, the exact opposite of Cavallaro's definition of anime background value as a "sign" for space:

> A meticulous approach to product design ensures that settings are consistently populated by correspondingly convincing props and accessories. At the adaptational level, an original's transposition to the anime screen is often individualized precisely by the depiction of objects intended to allude metonymically to entire cultures and lifestyles. (Cavallaro 2010, 15)

Because they do not "allude" to any precise foreign place, the backgrounds of *Gulliver's Space Travels* leave the spectator with no other choice than to accept the narrative space as a fictional world, an interpretation reinforced by the narrative structure itself, since like Alice at the end of her adventures, Ted wakes up from a dream only to go back to the monotony of daily life.

Yet, the un-located foreign country found in *Galibā no uchū ryokō*, if it does not bear any resemblance with any actual Western landscape, might have a more cinematic origin, for the sets clearly recall the background art of the French animated feature *Le Roi et l'oiseau* by Paul Grimault, itself located in the imaginary kingdom of Takicardia. In the introductory sequence, a shot of a poor salesman with a carriage [ill. 2] directly evokes the dark and shabby Lower City where the two lovers the shepherdess and the chimney sweep find shelter, and Ted's moth-

eaten clothes look like an allusion to the "poor but happy" moral of Grimault's film. As the title suggests, *Galibā no uchū ryokō* sends the hero Ted and an aging Gulliver on yet another travel, this time into space; this new development might allude to Ward Kimball's series *Man in Space* (1954), broadcast in the TV show *Disneyland*, or the general fondness for space discovery, as proven by the success of the film *Moon Pilot* directed by James Neilson in 1962. Such an interest, at least for Japanese producers, in space discovery can also be seen in Masumura Yasuzo's 1958 *Kyojin to gangu* (*Giants and Toys*). Another interesting aspect of the topic may be found in Hergé's 1953 *Tintin's Adventures* album *Objectif Lune* (*Destination Moon*), adapted for television by the studio Belvision in 1959. Directed by Ray Goossens, the animated series was broadcasted in black and white under the Japanese title *Chinchin no bōken* by Fuji-TV in 1964-65. The space rocket take-off sequence of *Galibā no uchū ryokō* shows many similarities with *Destination Moon*, starting with the rocket and the launching ramp design [ill. 3].

This observation leads us to the concept of "Hollywood mediation", elaborated by Daisuke Miyao in an article on Noburō Ōfuji's animated film *Bagudajō no tōzoku (The Thief of Baguda Castle,* 1924). In fact, Ōfuji's film was based on Raoul Walsh's *The Thief of Bagdad*, featuring Douglas Fairbanks, riding the waves of 1920's Hollywood oriental style, but completely adapted to fit a Japanese setting. What seemed of great interest in Miyao's theory, along with a reflection on "translocal" networks of exchanges between Japan and the United States, was the place given to the cinematic process of mise-en-scene in that respect. He writes:

> On the levels of its styles and its generic configuration, in particular, the representation of Japan in *The Thief of Baguda Castle* could be regarded as being mediated by Hollywood cinema. Stylistically, despite its form as an animated film with *chiyogami, The Thief of Baguda Castle* fully utilizes various cinematic techniques that had been effectively used in Hollywood films, including multiple shot sizes, camera movements, point-of-view shots, deep-space compositions, crosscutting, and intertitles. (Miyao 2007, 90)

Such an example also occurs in *Galibā no uchū ryokō*: Ted, in the company of a street dog and a toy soldier, has trespassed on an amusement park at night, and is chased by three policemen. To escape, he climbs on a rocket and lands further away in a deep forest. Frightened by the animals' noises, the group starts to run through the forest, until they come to a tunnel leading to Gulliver's forsaken cottage, where their adventure will start. This sequence, of great narrative significance since it marks the entrance into the realm of fiction and dream where Ted will meet the hero of "Gulliver's Travell" (*sic*), is shot in a very unusual way for Japanese animation of the time. Indeed, trying to convey the sense of the characters plunging into the bushiest part of the forest, it relies on a shooting technique known at Disney's studios as the multiplane camera.[4]

The multiplane was a device that allowed, thanks to several levels added to the traditional animation stand, to reproduce the main optical principles of the cinematic apparatus, especially the depth of field, which mattered a lot to Walt Disney for he saw it as one of the weaknesses of animation compared to cinema. Though the Fleischer brothers or Ub Iwerks created similar apparatus in their own studios, the most famous early example of the use of the multiplane remains the first shot of *The Old Mill* (Wilfred Jackson, 1937), where the camera

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[4] On the multiplane camera technique, see Telotte, J., (2008), *The Mouse Machine: Disney and Technology*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press.

seems to enter the landscape and slowly comes closer to the birds nest at the centre of the attention. Such a mise-en-scene will reoccur in most of Disney studios feature films, as it was thought to be the proof of great technical and artistic achievement.

The sequence in *Gulliver's Space Travels* clearly mimics the technique and is probably relying on *Bambi*'s opening scene also set in a thick forest, but appears to reverse the process. Thus, instead of giving the sensation of a gentle tracking shot taking us inside the setting — a feature Walt Disney and his directors thought necessary for the public to accept the non-realism of the animation medium — the backgrounds of the Tōei film are quickly sliding toward the edge of the frame in a totally unnatural manner, as if the trees were stepping out of the way for the character to move forward. Here we can imagine that, since Japanese art has developed a different representation of perspective points (Screech 2012, 103-109), the operator has probably interpreted the role of the multiplane apparatus according to his own vision, and somehow in the opposite direction of the Disney style. This is an interesting example of how Hollywood mediation can be adapted and claimed in a different context since, as Thomas Lamarre highlighted using different examples in *The Anime Machine* (2009), the multiplane apparatus is being used in the context of Tōei's production system to stress horizontality and artificially, where it served to underline depth of field and realism in Disney's production.[5]

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[5] For further consideration of the topic, see Pruvost-Delaspre M. (2014).

4. From intertextuality to images migration: beyond adaptation

We have seen that, from what seems like a foreign and unknown narrative space, a very precise network of references could be drawn, woven together to form a new kind of setting, abstract and universal, conveying an idealized vision of the West as seen through cultural products like Hollywood movies. Nevertheless, restraining this network of signs to the adaptation material seems limiting, since adaptation itself calls for more intertextuality, according to Dudley Andrew's adaptation typology (Andrew 2000, 30).

As an example, Tōei's adaptations would fall into Andrew's third modality of adaptation, "transforming", distinct from "borrowing" and "intersecting" in the way that it chooses to radically differentiate itself from the original source. *Andersen monogatari* provides a perfect illustration of this tendency: instead of adapting one of the best known fairy tales of the author, as the studio will do later with *The Little Mermaid*, the film is based on *The Fairy Tale of My Life*, Andersen's autobiography written in 1847. Adaptation as seen by Tōei's screenwriters at that time was leaning toward free rewriting, rather than mere translation from text to screen. Later on, the studio's versions of *Puss in Boots* and *Treasure Island* would introduce many distortions, decentring the original text's genre, tone, and even moral. For instance, the main character, Pierre, is depicted in *Nagagutsu haita neko* (1969) as a growing hero, changing from a frightened weakling to a brave warrior who confesses to the princess that he concealed his real identity, thus modifying the meaning of Perrault's *Puss in Boots* on lying and relying on appearances.

In *The Tales of Andersen*, the main focus is not so much on the life of Andersen himself, or on the consistency of the tales, but rather a game of "domestication" of European narratives. Forged by Joseph Tobin to avoid the derogatory connotation of terms like "imitation" or "borrowing", the notion of domestication can be used to describe the "unsettling combination of familiar and exotic" at play in certain Japanese works (Tobin 1992, 5). One interesting remark lies in Tobin's description of the "circulation" process that allows foreign elements to enter Japan and be integrated:

> There is an intern circulation of cultural and material capital in Japan: the West most often enters Japan through Tōkyō, is domesticated there (made appropriately and uniquely Japanese), and is then repackaged for export to the provincial periphery. (Tobin 1992, 16)

Besides the direct question of centre/periphery dialectic dealt by Tobin here, the notion of circulation as one of the main processes of domestication gives us a clue on the nature of the functioning of adaptation. To go further in this reflection, I would like to introduce a new concept, forged by French cinema theorist Jacques Aumont, that of "images migration" (Aumont 1995). Aumont first used the expression as a way to seize the importance of a presence of painting in cinema that would not merely be a quotation or a tribute to an inspirational model, but the transfer of a whole set of iconographic elements from a painting to a film. Later on, he expanded the concept to the transfer of representational models, focusing on the Annunciation theme in Pasolini and Godard's films (Aumont 2002). What "images migration" helps to highlight is how mise-en-scene can also be the place of appearance of intertextuality.

Even though Aumont first intended the concept as a tool to explore the relationship of cinema with other art forms, "images migration" is well suited to describe the interconnection of the foreign and the familiar in Tōei's animated films. Indeed, as we have seen, Hollywood was the first and foremost medium to provide images for Japanese cinema to digest and interpret. Nevertheless, the role of this mediation can be expanded further, to different types of texts, not necessarily pertaining to American popular culture but also coming from the margins, such as Russian animation.

While it appears to be well known now that Hayao Miyazaki greatly admires the Soviet animation feature *Snezhnaya Koroleva* (*The Snow Queen*, 1957) by Lev Atamanov (Miyazaki 2009, 71), the impact of Russian and East European animation on anime as a whole remains in the shadows. Yet, its evocative power for young animators of the 1950s and 1960s was very strong, and can explain how some themes and motifs appeared in their films. A salient example would be the figure of the sandman in *Andersen monogatari*, who helps and guides the young hero on his path to the fulfilment of his future as a writer. The character, named Ole in the Japanese version, coming from the sky with an umbrella and living in the church tower, serves as Hans' good fairy, providing advice and comfort to the insecure youngster, and as a narrator for the story at the same time. Thus, he combines the distinctive features of two characters, the little elf Ole Lukøje who appears in Andersen's eponym tale and brings stories into the dreams of sleeping children — an echo to Hans' vocation — and *Snezhnaya Koroleva*'s character Old Dreamy, the narrator of the story in the Soviet version.

The link between the three texts appears to be reinforced in a clear manner by the use and re-use of the same iconography: while, at the beginning of *Snezhnaya Koroleva*, the camera moves away from Old Dreamy to reveal a bust of Hans Christian Andersen standing on a mantelpiece, *The Tales of Andersen* comes to a close with a drawn representation of the statue of Hans Christian Andersen standing in The Kings Garden at Rosenborg Castle, Denmark [ill. 4]. The inscription is a simplified translation of the first paragraph of Andersen's autobiography, where he writes that his life was "a lovely story, happy and full of incidents".

The same kind of triangle migration reoccurs later, when it comes to the treatment of the background representing the city where Andersen was born. Indeed, the European town of *Andersen monogatari* draw on different literary sources, even if it does resemble Andersen hometown of Odense as seen on ancient pictures. For example, the wooden bridge that connects together Hans' and his sweetheart Elisa's windows across the street, beautifully decorated with flowers [ill. 5], is directly borrowed from *Snezhnaya Koroleva* — especially since Andersen's tale only mentions crates of herbs that allowed the two children to sit across each other next to the roof. It is interesting that we find the same kind of mise-en-scene in Jiří Trnka's (1912-1969) version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (*Sen noci svatojánské*, 1959) when the two lovers secretly meet at Hermia's balcony. Trnka was gaining a wide international audience at that time, and we can only suppose that his work, including his illustrations, had an impact on Japanese animators. In the illustrated book *Zahrada* (*The Garden*, 1962), one can find depictions of villages of

wooden houses buried under the snow that bring to mind the traditional city of Tōei's adaptation [ill. 6].

Indeed, illustration has always been a great source for material and inspiration to animation artists, from Gustave Doré's (1832-1883) fairy tale illustrations, to the books of Ivan Iakovlevitch Bilibine (1876-1942), such as *Vassilissa Prekrasnaïa* (*Vassilisa the Beautiful*, 1899), published in Japanese by the Ghibli Museum Library, and has been of great significance in the "domestication" of European imagery in anime. The existence of this network of quotation taken from various literary and artistic materials underlines the diversity of the studio's artists' inspiration, acknowledging at the same time the possibility for an image or a representation to "migrate" from one territory to another, but also the profound intertextual richness of Tōei's films dealing with European settings. A few years later, at the beginning of the 1970s, the studio will begin to change its policy, based until then on a model of literary adaptations made into feature length animation films, to produce mainly for television. Ironically, whereas those 1950-60s films never gained real recognition outside Japan, Tōei's animated TV series will be broadcasted widely, offering to many local viewers their first peak at anime. Nevertheless, the rich intertextuality this article tried to underline is still present in the studio's television production, allowing a more subtle approach to its most popular animated series.

5. Conclusion

The concepts of domestication and images migration helped us to figure how the image of Europe as perceived by Japanese animators was mediated by Western culture, especially American and Russian cinema.

A deeper analysis of graphic sources, such as illustration books and reference materials, would help foster a greater understanding of how anime inform a vision of the West. Animation, as illustration, can be considered as a privileged medium since, as Tze-yue Hu suggests in *Frames of anime* (Hu 2010, 18), since its malleability, its "plasmaticity" to use a term created by Soviet filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein to describe the appeal, the attraction he felt towards the omnipresence of metamorphosis in Disney Studios 1930s cartoons (Eisenstien, 1991), allows it to develop a variety of forms of expressions and animation techniques. This process comes along with a reflection on cultural identity, since Tōei's animators, often taught in the *Yōga* tradition (Japanese western-style painting), blend a practice learned from the West to local artistic practices. Interestingly, this question is still at stake in contemporary anime, especially studio Ghibli's films; even though Takahata Isao and Miyazaki Hayao always tried to keep away from Tōei's "manga eiga" model, some similarities can be found in the studio's fantasied depiction of Europe. Miyazaki discussed[6] this issue with the French artist and illustrator Jean Giraud/Mœbius, evoking his quest of a reunion between Japanese and European techniques and inspiration in *Sen to Chihiro no kamikakushi* (*Spirited Away*, 2001):

> - Mœbius: Something I have always enjoyed is the fact that Mr Miyazaki has drawn his inspiration, for most of his fantasy films, from Europe. It's a perception of Europe one can feel as distant, idealised, and passionate. But I also felt that films like *Totoro*, *Mononoke* and *Chihiro* [sic] represent a very moving return home.
> - Miyazaki: The perception of a fictional universe and the production technique are inseparable. On a graphic level, we learned drawing and three-

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[6] This recorded dialogue, dating back to the Miyazaki/Mœbius exhibition in Paris in 2004-5, can be found at the end of Yves Montmayeur's documentary *Ghibli et le mystère Miyazaki* (*Ghibli and the Miyazaki mystery*, 2004).

dimensions space construction from Europe. For a public bath scene, the setting has to be typically Japanese. But I did not see how to draw a typical Japanese background using European techniques. My team had concealed a special gift they had: their traditional sensitivity. In the end, it was amazing to see how the scenes combined European techniques with their own sensitivity. Those two different schools of thought found their place in the film and I feel like the finish is a success.

Perhaps the whole idea of identifying foreign and local elements in Japanese films leads to a fallacious approach as, according to Isamu Kurita in *The Revival of Japanese Tradition*, sometimes it is the traditional that begins to look foreign, and the exotic that becomes familiar:

> The very international-ness of the life-style makes the traditional Japanese arts appear quite alien and exotic. We look at our tradition the way a foreigner does, and we are beginning to love it. It is the product of a search of something more advanced and more modish than what we have found in our century-long quest for a new culture. (Robertson 1998, 110)

The same things could probably be said of Disney studios 1950s animation films which, in their search for classic narratives, very often turned to European folktales and children literature and depicted those stories with a high degree of fantasy, recalling in many ways Tōei's vision of Europe.

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Ill.6. *The Tales of Andersen* © Tōei.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marie Pruvost-Delaspre *obtained her PhD in 2014 at the Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3. Her doctoral thesis is titled "Pour une histoire esthétique et technique de la production animée : le cas de la Tōei Dōga (1956-1972)". Her research combines the analysis of forms and the history of production and techniques, in a multidisciplinary perspective.*