



Casey Brienza. *Manga in America: Transnational Book Publishing and the Domestication of Japanese Comics*

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Throughout *Manga in America*, Casey Brienza makes a convincing case for the relevance of looking at manga as a case study in transnational publishing, bringing together contemporary topics for scholars in book publishing, comics publishing, and culture industries in general. Working primarily with qualitative information emerging from interviews with industry insiders, Brienza's book presents an informative introduction followed by six topical chapters, a conclusion, a methodological appendix, and a helpful glossary.

Brienza starts off by situating the three main discourses ["air," "conquest," and "export" (7-9)] used to explain the arrival and success of manga, and she revisits the trio throughout the book, comparing them against her emerging results and conclusions. While the publishing data is rather outdated (mostly pre-2012), the strength of this book lies in the information emerging from the 70 cross-national insider interviews. The diverse pool of interviewees strengthens the uniqueness of this work and enriches a scarce scholarship that is often focused on the North American industry [see, for example, Matthew McAllister (1990, 2001, 2007); Norcliffe and Rendace, "New Geographies of Comic Book Production in North America" (2003); and newer works such as Woo, "Erasing the Lines between Leisure and Labor: Creative Work in the Comics World" (2015) and Murray, "Behind the Panel: Examining Invisible Labour in the Comics Publishing Industry" (2013)].

Chapter 2 starts with two concise but rich literature reviews that provide an overview of manga publishing and book publishing, helpful for scholars not familiar with either field. Combining and transforming Bourdieu's concept of literary field and Gereffi's value chain, Brienza develops her three-part model of a transnational field as well as the book's core concept: "domestication." This concept is defined as "the sum total of those social positions and functions which reside exclusively within the transnational cultural field" (37), and its strength lies in its bringing together and making visible the work that is often hidden behind terminology such as "localizing" or "translating."

From the establishment of a recognized industry with *Sailor Moon's* success in the late 1990s to Borders' creation of manga's own category in 2005, Brienza showcases in chapter 3 the powerful metamorphosis whereby manga became conceptualized as a book, distinctive from American comics, and ruled by the processes and expectations of the book trade publishing



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field instead of the comics field. In chapter 4, scholars get an insider's view on licensing practices, and – in particular – decision-making processes. The evolution of these practices is key in the emergence of US-created manga and in provoking Japanese publishers' interest in establishing digital distribution venues and stronger US subsidiaries. Chapter 6, on the future of manga, further explores some of these changes that have already become a reality, such as fan-funded manga publishing or the expansion of original global manga. Chapter 5 returns to the testimony of informants – a mostly female workforce who are underpaid and overworked and passionate about manga – who make visible the processes of “domestication.” Brienza situates this precarious labor force as part of the contemporary “creative class” and situates her work in larger discussions around the evolution of capitalism (109-110).

The methodological notes in the appendix are invaluable for those taking up interviewing as a core methodology. This work complements Brienza's other recent edited collection, *Global Manga: Japanese Comics without Japan?* (2015), that looks at manga produced throughout the Americas, Europe, and Asia and – as in this title – pays special attention to the conditions under which global manga is produced.

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