

Capítulo 4

The phenomenon of Manga and Japanese culture. Experience of industry in Latin America

Christian Giovanni Miranda Gaibor, Raúl Guillermo Zambrano Pontón,
Jenny Maribel Zavala Enríquez, Andrés Leandro Rodríguez Galán,
Andrea Paulette Mora Ubilluz

Abstract

The process of relocating Manga, as well as Anime in Latin America, gave way to the Latinization of Anime-Manga, whose products, according to Anticona, Felices, were adapted to the Latin reality according to their social and cultural structure, causing a culture shock. In this sense, the main objective of this study is to analyze the impact of the Manga Industry in the region's countries. For this, the qualitative approach is used from the content analysis technique, and its instrument is the structured bibliographic record. The main results determined that there are marked differences in how the countries of Ecuador and Mexico look at Manga. The first is an opportunity to make youth visible, and the second is to forge the local economy based on consumerism. In addition, in Argentina and Colombia, its passage has meant the initial clash between two cultures, but over time it became a way of life. However, in the countries under study, two central aspects coexist: on the one hand, the breakdown of local culture that has brought the crisis of cultural identity into the debate, and on the other, a process that has facilitated recognition among youth.

Keywords:
Manga;
Cultural Identity;
Otaku Culture;
Transculturation;
Latin America.

Miranda Gaibor, C. G., Zambrano Pontón, R. G., Zavala Enríquez, J. M., Rodríguez Galán, A. L., & Mora Ubilluz, A. P. (2025). The phenomenon of Manga and Japanese culture. Experience of industry in Latin America. En A. B. Benalcázar, (Coord). *Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales frente a los Retos de Latinoamérica (Volumen II)*. (pp. 94-118). Religación Press. <http://doi.org/10.46652/religacionpress.385.c698>



Introduction

Today's society is constantly and simultaneously experiencing the massification of cultures that, although not necessarily conflicting, has given way to new behaviors and attitudes that generate interest in addressing the phenomenon of so-called subcultures in greater depth, where Countries like Japan have become benchmarks for the dissemination of popular culture. A Soft power model would say Juárez (2019), for whom said model is known as the Asian miracle. This is since over time it has managed to establish political and economic power relations at the international level based on disseminating its cultural practices.

An example of this is the Manga industry. This phenomenon has become part of Japan's cultural identity towards the constitution of its sub-culture expressed in the so-called Otaku culture, which has given way to behaviors and beliefs around the tradition of that country. An industry where the comic or the so-called comics or comic strips have gained more incredible notoriety in the West in recent times.

But what connotation has the practice of Manga generated in Latin America? On the one hand, it is pointed out that it promotes values such as strength and solidarity; in addition to promoting art, and on the other, it is claimed that it has given way to the identity crisis of local cultures. This concern will be addressed based on the experience of countries such as Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, and Ecuador.

The phenomenon of the Manga industry and Japanese culture. A brief review of its origin

The term Manga comes from Japanese culture and is known in the West as a comic strip, cartoon, or amusing. A universal term that, in the words of Bogarín (as cited in Gil and Santa Cruz, 2019),

encompasses a powerful cultural industry with wide commercial success, whose word “refers to the process of combining different pictographs to create complex thoughts that endow the comic Japanese of a peculiar style in the distribution of the elements on the printed paper” (p. 97).

For Rodríguez (2017), the most evident origins of Manga go back to the 12th and 13th centuries, from “the humanization of animals, their cartoonish tone, the composition of the scenes or the inclusion of text” (p. 2), but which achieved more incredible notoriety since the 19th century:

When the relevant painter Katsushika Hokusai coined the term Manga in one of his most famous works, the Hokusai Manga was a collection of scenes compiled in 15 volumes. In it, the word Manga uses the kanjis *man* 漫 (random, irresponsible, spontaneous, informal) and *ga* 画 (drawing), so the Manga concept could be translated as “random drawings” (2, p. 2b).

However, according to the research by Martínez (2016), the evolution of the visual language of Manga and Anime goes back to the Paleolithic era, when the oldest records of artistic manifestations were available, but it was only for centuries. XI-XII when the graphic works were linked to a specific narrative; in this way, to the concept of Manga and that will be expressed in the so-called *chōjū-giga* (“鳥獣戯画”), that is, caricatures of animals “a Japanese satirical criticism in the form of a caricature of society at that time” (3, p. 2b).

It also coincides with Sánchez (as cited in Gil and Santacruz, 2019), for whom its origins “date from the Heian period and that combine both text and images, in addition to being considered one of the first forms of sequential art” (p. 98), based on the Japanese monochrome drawing expressed in the *Chōjugiga* or animal scrolls. In the works, a visual language with images that are easy to interpret stood out and did not require prior knowledge about culture or art, according to (Martínez, 2016, p. 3).

However, historical data reveals that the impulse of Manga in the modern age for Gil y Santa Cruz (2019) and Rodríguez (2017), has as its precedent the economic, political, and social context of the 20th century, where after the defeat of Japan in World War II, North America would prohibit the dissemination of Manga during the war due to its highly militaristic content but, instead, it would give impetus to the entertainment industry by adapting to the post-war public at a time when youth were in the dark. Search for cheap entertainment.

According to those pointed out by Martínez (2016), in the 20th century, the impulse of Japanese culture toward the West arose with the beginning of the so-called Meiji era, a time in which the emperor of Japan had made the decision to open the culture towards the world, in this way, the cultural phenomenon called Japanism managed to generate a great impact in the world due to the erotic and elegant characteristics that Japanese art manifested. However, even though there was an enormous influence from the West in the narrative as well as in production and edition, it still retained the style and technique typical of its tradition.

At present, Manga results from the combination of graphic art and Western comics, the greatest representative of it being Ozamu Tezuka, a designer who dedicated his experience to the creation of characters and the production of comics; In this regard, Arias et al. (2020), maintain that the characteristics of “an inherited aesthetic are still maintained, to which must be added the expressiveness put at the service of character compression, resulting in the exposure of the personality of Japanese society throughout history” (p. 97), but it also maintains its moral, religious, and philosophical essence, which, although meaningless to the Western reader, are expressions of Japanese culture: its customs and also superstitions. Below is a visual review of the Manga’s illustrated story.

Figure 1. Chôjugiga or “animal scrolls”.



Source: image taken from the article by Álvarez (2021, p. 6).

Figure 2. Hokusai Manga Artwork (北斎まんが 1814-1849). The first Mangaka.



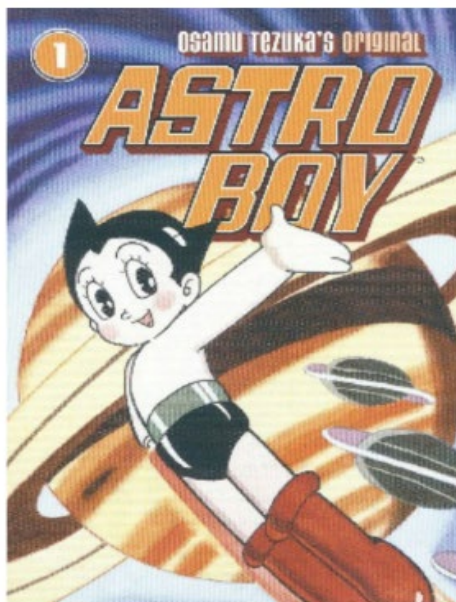
Source: image taken from the article by Álvarez (2021, p. 9).

Figure 3. Manga (anonymous).



Source: image taken from the article by Álvarez (2021, p. 11).

Figure 4. Manga in the United States



Source: image taken from the article by Álvarez (2021, p. 12).

Otaku culture and Manga fans

The Otaku culture or also called the Asian subculture, is a phenomenon that appeared in the 1960s in Japan, where, according to Juárez (2019), it was made up of animation fans who gradually emerged from many university and college followers that formed Anime clubs.

It was the beginning of the construction of a whole world of fantasy that was to surround this industry until it later reached unsuspected levels; from that moment, “(...) the fame of these clubs and their members grew, and they began to be recognized as those followers capable of camping and waiting long hours outside the movie theaters” (Juárez, 2019, p. 4).

Thus, the expression Otaku acquired over time, according to Vivanco (2017), is a pejorative character attributed to fans with some hobby on specific topics such as Japanese video games, Anime, graphic novels, and Manga, according to their dynamics, of the Japanese mass culture that spread throughout the world. It is due to the appearance of the network that accelerated a process of great popularity that in the 90s marked a new stage in the consumerism industry.

During that time, cartoons such as Dragon Ball, Saint Seiya, Doraemon or Naruto achieved great success as “a consequence of the efforts made by the Japanese government to use Manga and pop culture as tools to make Japan known to the public “rest of the world” (Rodríguez, 2017, p. 11). Over time the West managed to acquire greater popularity, but without that pejorative character that had given to Japan towards the end of the 80s.

Although the term otaku in Japan and Latin American countries does not have a common vision, García y García (2017), two specific definitions broaden their knowledge. The first definition is related to those people who are dedicated to reading/watching Manga or Anime, for example, Japanese animated series. The second is the most popular, where people have a taste for Japanese culture in general, with a tendency to fanaticism, considering that to become a true Otaku, one must possess certain characteristics, that is, “dedicate several hours a day to the hobby, acquire items related to it, look for places where related things can be obtained or exchanged and above all handle large amounts of relevant and current information about Manga and Anime” (García & García, 2014, p. 2).

Characteristics of the Manga industry

The Japanese comic or Manga presents some characteristics that differentiate it from Western culture, especially in the style of drawing it uses and the treatment it executes around a theme. The

action scenes are commonly static, focusing on the same scene from different angles and generally keeping the same background, trying to save animations by repeating the previous chapters (Galvis, 2016). In this regard (Gómez, 2009), describes that they share a series of characteristics, such as: action, Shojo (Love Stories), adventure, humor, suspense, hentai (involves sexual themes), every day or real, fiction, spokon (sports), Gakuen (his story is about school or university life), Kodomo (content child), Yaoi (gay characters) (p. 19).

For Castelán (2018), the characteristics are easy to spot when you can read one of the most emblematic comics in the industry, like Dragon Ball, whose Japanese drawing style is unique and crosses borders over time. In this way, I can describe the following Manga characteristics:

- In the Manga, the panels and pages are read from right to left.
- It is frequent in Japanese Manga that the characters or objects are drawn more realistically, combining cartoonish characters with a realistic environment.
- Manga books have a greater variety of transitions between panels.
- Manga characters have very large and expressive eyes, typical Western individuals.
- Mangas have various themes, and the most common are romance, action, science fiction, or fantasy (Castelán, 2021, parr. 24).

In addition, it is divided into genres and types aimed at children and adults, whose content, according to Castelan (2021), narrates fantastic stories or happy endings with a high degree of humor called Kodomo Manga. Likewise, there is the Shojo Manga, whose content is aimed at adolescent women and young adults and is composed of a narrative that reflects humor and sensitivity. Shonen Manga is

directed towards teenage males and young adults, whose characters have a certain charisma, with the content of action and comedy.

The Josei Manga is aimed at an adult female audience, from which stories with complex problems are told. And finally, the Seinen Manga is aimed at the adult male. “It has a wide catalog of plots, including violence, politics, social criticism, and even eroticism. Here, the argument is more important than the action” (Castelán, 2021, parr. 30).

For Barba (2017), Manga has a unique type of graphic narration with various styles, themes, techniques, and trends. In addition, “they are instantly recognized by how the pictorial space is divided, the compositional structure, the unique gestures and bearing of the characters, and the meticulous attention paid to detail” (p. 122), fitting perfectly into visual culture. Contemporary by using ideograms.

These characteristics have made Manga a representative example of Japanese culture worldwide, managing to boost the country’s economy with millions of sales and with enormous influence within society. Thus, Manga can contain more than 400 pages (Arias et al., 2020), with dozens of authors, and in which a collection could take years to complete. Still, it must be accepted by the readers, even leading to its success or failure.

Manga fans in Latin America

According to the research carried out by Andréu (2018), the Latinization of Manga arose thanks to the publishers, who translated the dialogue into the language, where the volumes were initially obtained under the western format (reading from left to right), reaching compiling between 4 to 6 chapters:

The appearance of a magazine printed on colored sheets and even colored on some of them originally Made the compiled volumes of a Manga (the tankoubon) in Japanese format (reading from right

to left), a small book that contained approximately 200 pages with black and white drawings (Andréu, 2018, p. 11).

In this way, Manga fans arose, represented by the so-called Otakus, gaining more incredible notoriety from the first decade of the 2000s, before the consumption of Japanese cultural products, which according to Álvarez (2016), in countries like Argentina proliferated local and publishers of Argentine origin dedicated to the sale of Japanese comics in book fair stands. So, fan Otaku:

They are characterized by an adult-centric common sense and the traditional media as young people who suffer from an “obsession” or “sociopathy”, “confuse fiction with reality”, “reluct themselves to grow up”, or “waste their time and money” in consume Japanese cartoons and animated series, accumulating a wealth of knowledge about them that would be “useless” as “unproductive” (Álvarez, 2016, p. 76).

The particularity of the so-called Latin American Otakus, according (Bravo, 2015), is that within the groups of fans, an identity is being formed, with characteristics of acting, representing, and self-referencing. Thus, the new member is also adopting this identity under a Nickname (a nickname) that can be taken from an Anime or Manga character “because young Otakus consider that they have the same qualities as such a character or feel identified with the character chosen” (Anticona et al., 2022, p. 17).

For Vivanco (2017), the fan who considers himself represented by the Otaku culture in Latin America and countries like Japan is acquiring some aspects of Japanese mass culture, exercising an identification process based on practices such as sharing tastes and preferences with others for Manga, that although they are delegitimized by adults, they have generated a sense of belonging, adopting oriental cultural traits with a high content of emotional proximity.

Manga experience in Latin America

The impact of Manga in the region has led various researchers to direct their efforts to understand the Otaku phenomenon in greater depth, for which many people have developed a sense of affinity and even fanaticism for Manga. But how do you understand this phenomenon in Latin America? Next, a review of the studies carried out in countries such as Argentina, Colombia, Mexico and Ecuador are made.

a. Argentina:

Álvarez (2021), considers that around manga and anime, identities have been established from Japanese mass culture and that it is represented from the Otakus with practices associated with fanaticism. Here, the word Otaku acquires negative connotations of social ineptitude or obsessiveness, and even fans are described as immature, but instead for these groups it represents a kind of escape from society; and whose personality is classified as shy, reserved or with difficulty in socializing, leading to neglect of their appearance and loss of contact with reality.

Outside of Japan, the meaning of Otaku is proudly claimed, but its dominant stigmatizing meanings persist “to such an extent that even the fans themselves can reject their characterization as such because they consider it insulting” (p. 3), even leading to qualify them as violent and marginalized.

For Caballero (quoted in the Ministry of Culture of Argentina, 2021), manga arrived in Argentina in the 90s, where productions such as Mazinger Z, Meteor, Robotech, Harlock, Heidi, which were adapted into comics, however, the Argentine population was unaware that he came from Japan. In addition, those who in the country are dedicated to producing comics, did so with their own style, but more like the American one, with the design and construction of a smaller

number of pages that are counted in less time than the Japanese one. It was thus that Manga began to become popular in Argentina, but only because of the invasion of the imported stuff that was cheaper to produce abroad.

Finally, Manga in Argentina (Oliverio, et al. 2015), as in the West in general, is considered as part of the subculture, and of which a process of westernization is appreciated, with adaptations or modifications of a Spanish and American nature, but with the language of Argentina. They also point out that the interest in consuming Manga in Argentina is given by how the stories are told, and not so much by the graphic image, with the presence of an identification with the characters and their stories; but under a kind of game at the moment in which the Argentine is related to another culture, where a distortion of the practices themselves occurs. It also generates a huge influence on your life; and in the case of the Otakus that also exist in this country, it is related more by those who are interested in Manga as Anime assuming fanaticism or as a fan; although Japanese stigmatization by these groups also persists, which is why many Argentines prefer not to identify themselves as such.

b. Colombia:

As the Japanese Manga industry became a benchmark for mass consumption of a culture different from the original, it has generated around it a series of investigations on its influence on society. In this sense, the experience in Colombia reveals that its reading “has not only contributed to define and reinforce some imaginaries about Japan. This act has also served as a motivation for communities such as the Mangakas Club to form” (Guarín, 2019, p. 25); but, in addition, to build representations about social structures adopting “global practices in local dynamics” (Guarín, 2019, p. 58) allowing to narrate local everyday life with foreign influence.

The authors agree that the taste for Manga has its immediate response in a low sense of belonging to the local culture, a phenomenon that has spread due to globalization. A situation that, in his opinion, is replicated at the Latin American level where elements such as language, attitudes and visual representations are appreciated; so, the Mangakas Club idealizes Japanese culture, which reveals an identity crisis.

From the approach of Guarín (2019), the Colombian in his attempt to appropriate myths and imaginaries around indigenous culture, does so based on the Japanese reference, from his way of treating spirituality.

For Arias et al. (2020), in populations such as Cartagena, the taste for Anime and Manga is given by the curiosity that exists about elements of Japanese culture, where over time, the function that it has exercised in the audience of entertaining transcended to become “a way of learning and personal growth” (p. 85). This influence has also motivated them to learn more about this culture by including practices in their daily lives, such as the interest in preparing their gastronomy, watching their movies, and learning to draw Manga. However, this was not always the case, while in the 90s, a clash of cultures was reflected due to certain contents that reflected polemics contrary to the values and principles of the Colombian.

Guarín (2019), considers that the so-called fans of Japanese culture identify themselves as consumers of this culture through trips to places where the representative gastronomy of that country is found or by frequenting places such as “the Kunai-themed cafe in Bogotá, trendy among fans of directing its decoration to Manga and where the menu is identical to some of the programs in the Anime series” (p. 12). They are the sample of cultural appropriations.

In young people, Manga focuses on letting their values and feelings emerge in them, expressing them through their art, which allows them to communicate, but also “transform a cartoon into a

way of life for the fan” (Guarín, 2019, p. 17). In addition, the general population that likes this industry feels identified by the characters,

for example, all humans have a best friend who is also their rival, in education, sports, video games, even to get a partner, assimilating these skills in real life, and that rival is the arrogant one who is always more successful than the other. (Guarín, 2019, p. 18)

The problem that is reflected is that Manga and Anime fans tend to change their culture. It is due to a great variety of genres that exist around them, such as the excellent use of plots and drawings, where Japan has managed to sell the best of its culture, even going over great powers like the United States and Germany, when they affirm that “They are not super smart, they are just organized and therefore they are successful” (Gil, & Santa Cruz, 2019, p. 21).

c. *Mexico*

In Mexico, the word Otaku is known as a term strongly associated with the world of Fandom. In this sense, for Juárez (2019), the arrival of the Manga industry in the country was given by the television broadcast of series aimed at children’s groups, a fact that gave way to the knowledge of this industry in the different groups, generating in publishers a greater boost to their economy. Currently, Juárez (2019), comments, there are avenues dedicated exclusively to the sale of products that are made by the Otaku culture, but:

Not only for entertainment or the consumption of fandom products but also, thanks to them, an “(...) approach has been fostered between people interested in that world that is so longed for by many, and that gives them an identity that is born from the mixture of two cultures in which they intend to develop” (Juárez, 2019, p. 6).

In addition, for Castelli (2017), the otakus are participants in international events organized by Japan, a fact that has allowed them to expand their culture; although, in countries like Mexico, the bad reputation of the otakus has also become known, where the media have been the main disseminators.

According to Castelán (2018), the graphics of Japanese Manga was introduced in the country after the Anime as a form of commercialization, highlighting that: There is a rational consumption of the product, and the public reworks,

reinterprets, and recreates the elements that are presented to it, which generates new features that are the product of the hybridity process between Japanese narrative and graphics in conjunction with local traditions locales. (p. 33)

In this regard, Barba (2017), considers that access to the internet has strengthened the consumption of narrative content such as Manga, in which terms such as “appropriation, hybridization, and transculturality, as well as representations, identities and stereotypes” (p. 39). In addition, according to him, the Otakus in Mexico have added the dynamics of consumerism, giving way to a participatory culture; that is, a space where the motivation for own creation has been staged, as well as the need to share said creations with other communities; the fact that motivates the exchange. This has been how the Otakus in Mexico connect and participate in the Manga narratives, but only thanks to the development of digital technology.

d. Ecuador

In Ecuador, the Manga industry is also part of the so-called subcultures, where it has gained greater popularity, with young people being the most interested in its consumption. According to

Vivanco (2017), this group considers that Manga, beyond its negative aspects in which it distances the individual from their local culture, allows promotion and search for their own identity based on the recognition of others for individual knowledge. For this reason, the Otakus are seen as a group that integrates and generates closeness among youth and brings together other audiences and social strata.

In addition, it is considered a social phenomenon, but not a fad, and in cities like Guayaquil, it has achieved enormous popularity. This is due to the great diversity that this subculture offers.

Issues such as expressions, characters, representatives, body language, and the colloquial, together with several characteristics, carry a mixture of both when they are in a foreign territory such as Ecuador, which they take over in an imposing, striking, and attractive way, allowing participation. And integration of all those who like their expressions (Vivanco, 2017, p. 8).

Even so, problems coexist, such as the prejudices generated in society against different groups such as the Otakus, which leads to their discrimination, against the use of phrases such as satanic cults and worship of evil beings; however, Vivanco (2017), points out that both the Anime and the Manga highlight values such as solidarity, courage, and responsibility; elements that are still relevant within this industry.

According to Mena (2017), the art of comics in Ecuador has achieved greater visibility due to the existence of groups linked to activities related to the genre, such as exhibitions and drawing contests, which have promoted knowledge about the industry in the country. Of Manga, projects such as the Manga Project aimed at training students in illustration and narrative stand out. In addition, many of the artistic works that emerge from these projects focus on generating local products but with audiovisual content of Japanese origin, where the opportunity is given to youth to socialize their jobs.

For Dután (2015), transculturation is a visible fact in Ecuadorian youth that has not been well managed, a fact that has led to an “incorrect use of the language or of the cultural expressions that are shown” (p. 4). However, in the country, it has gained greater popularity due to the good management of the characters that “allows a greater appreciation of art; the stories and their heroes have won the hearts of millions of young people, as well as the use of the language within the animation. Data that makes them extremely popular” (Dután, 2015, p. 31).

In addition, the introduction of Manga has given way to the acquisition of cultural idioms, which for Dután (2015), are expressed in gastronomy and language; however, misinformation has given way to the growth of negative opinions and discrimination around the Otaku culture.

Methodology

The methodology of this study focuses on the use of the qualitative approach, which according to Escudero & Cortez (2017), allows one “to know the point of view of people from the experience of daily life based on the observation of natural behaviors, experiences, contexts, and discourses, for the subsequent codification and generalized interpretation of their meanings” (p. 23).

Regarding the scope of the investigation, the hermeneutic analysis is used. In this case, the research transcends to the analytical level, using sources that support an idea by extracting information that facilitates the construction of affirmations.

Similarly, it corresponds to a documentary-type investigation, which according to Patelia (as cited in Gallardo, 2017), “is a process based on the search, recovery, analysis, criticism, and interpretation of data obtained and recorded in various documentary sources: printed, audiovisual or electronic” (p. 54). It is a strategy that

facilitates a deeper understanding of the phenomenon treated by analyzing theoretical realities using the review of documentary sources.

In the case of the present investigation, scientific articles and third and fourth-level theses are considered according to the reality of countries such as Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, and Ecuador. For this, the content analysis technique is used, which according to Andréu (2018), “is a technique for interpreting texts, whether they are written, recorded, painted, filmed..., or another different form where all kind of data records, transcription of interviews, speeches, observation protocols, documents, videos” (p. 2). —using the bibliographic record as a tool.

Results

The results obtained from the use of research developed in 4 countries of the region are presented below.

Table 1. The Manga experience in Argentina

| Topic: The Manga industry in Argentina File # 1 | |
|---|--|
| Information Álvarez (2021): Around the Manga as the Anime, identities have been constituted from the Japanese mass culture, and that is represented by the Otakus with practices associated with fanaticism. The word otaku acquires negative connotations of social ineptitude or obsession, and even fans are described as immature. Instead, for these groups, it represents a kind of escape from society. Ministry of Culture of Argentina (2021): There is an initial ignorance of where Manga comes from. Those in the country who are dedicated to producing comics do so with their own style, but more like the American one, with the design and construction of a smaller number of pages that are counted in less time than the Japanese one. Oliverio, Hernández, Guzzo y García (2015): Manga is considered as part of the subculture. A process of westernization is appreciated, with the Spanish and American adaptation or modification of the own Argentine language. The interest in consuming Manga in Argentina is given by how the stories are told and not so much by the graphic image. In addition, there is identification with the characters and their stories. A kind of game is witnessed when the Argentine is related to another culture, where the practices are distorted. | Analysis Around the contributions of Álvarez (2019), the Ministry of Culture of Argentina (2021), and Oliverio, Hernández, Guzzo y García (2015) there are two central factors. The first associated otaku with fanaticism and anchored the idea of discrimination. The second, in the country, mainly highlights the influence of the West that, in practice, leads to devaluing local culture. However, many like Manga because there is an affinity with the characters built to entertain, mainly where in Argentine, the story is more important than the image. |

Source: own elaboration.

Table 2. The Manga experience in Colombia

| Topic: The Manga industry in Colombia Sheet #2 | |
|---|---|
| Information Martínez (2016): The taste for Manga has its immediate response in a shared sense of belonging to the local culture, a phenomenon that has spread due to globalization. Japanese culture is idealized, which reveals an identity crisis. Colombian, in his attempt to appropriate myths and imaginaries around indigenous culture, the Colombian does so based on the Japanese referent: from his way of treating spirituality. Arias, Robledo y Cobos (2020): The curiosity gives the presence of the Manga about elements of the Japanese culture, where over time, the function that it has exercised in the audience of entertaining transcended to become “a form of learning and personal growth” (p. 85). In the 1990s, it reflected a clash of cultures, while certain content reflected controversy that conflicted with Colombian values and principles. Guarín (2019): A sample of cultural appropriations has been generated in the country. In young people, Manga focuses on allowing their values and feelings to emerge, which they express through their art, enabling them to communicate, but also “transform a cartoon into a way of life for the fan” (19). The problem that is reflected is that fans of Manga as Anime tend to change their culture. | Analysis The reading of the authors mentioned above reflects that the introduction of Manga in Colombia meant the loss of features typical of the local culture, as an initial confrontation with a different culture. However, permanent practice made it easier for industry to enter the daily life of people, ceasing to be an element of pure entertainment towards a contribution to personal training and a way of life. |

Source: own elaboration.

Table 3. The Manga industry in Mexico

| Topic: The Manga industry in Mexico Sheet #3 | |
|---|---|
| Information Juárez (2019): The television broadcast of the series gave the arrival of the Manga industry in the country for the children’s group, a fact that gave way to this industry being known to the different groups, generating a greater boost to their economy in the publishers. At present, there are avenues dedicated exclusively to the sale of products that are made by otaku culture, aimed not only at entertainment or the consumption of fandom products but also, thanks to them, rapprochement between interested people, and generate an identity that is born from the mixture of two cultures. Castelli (2017): The Otakus are participants in international events organized by Japan, which have allowed them to expand their culture. In the country, the bad fame of the Otakus has also touched where the media have been the main diffusers. Barba (2017): Internet access has strengthened the consumption of narrative content, such as Manga, from its consumers. From those terms, such as “appropriation, hybridization, and transculturality, as well as representations, identities and stereotypes” (p. 39) are articulated. The Otakus have added the dynamics of consumerism, giving way to a participatory culture. | Analysis In Mexico, the Manga trend is given by boosting the local economy. In general, beyond the Otakus also acquiring a negative reputation, the mass media being the main factor for its discriminatory effect; Manga is highlighted as an essential factor in generating greater dynamism of consumerism. In addition, its value is given by building a new identity, with a fusion of both cultures: the Mexican and the Japanese. |

Source: own elaboration.

Table 4. The manga industry in Ecuador

| Topic: The Manga industry in Ecuador Sheet #4 | |
|--|---|
| Information Vivanco (2017): Manga, beyond considering it as a negative issue that distances the individual from their local culture, promotes the search for one's own identity based on recognizing others for individual knowledge. Likewise, values such as solidarity and courage stand out. In the country, there are still problems, such as the prejudices generated in society against different groups, such as the Otakus, which lead to their discrimination. Mena (2017): The art of comics in Ecuador has achieved greater visibility with the existence of groups linked to activities related to the genre, such as exhibitions and drawing contests. Many of the artistic works that emerge from these projects focus on generating local products but with audiovisual content of Japanese origin, where the opportunity is given to youth to socialize their jobs. Dután (2015): Transculturation is a visible fact in youth that has not been well managed, leading to an "incorrect use of the language or of the cultural expressions that are shown" (p. 4). The introduction of Manga has given way to the acquisition of cultural idioms expressed in gastronomy and language; however, misinformation has shown a negative meaning to the otaku culture, which also generates discrimination in the country. | Analysis In Ecuador, the Manga industry is taken as a space to generate recognition between groups, but it would also make visible the youth dedicated to the art of comics, and although factors such as discrimination towards otaku culture are also highlighted, the value that Manga gives to the population, especially youth, where transculturation must be appropriately managed so that this phenomenon does not lose its usefulness in groups dedicated to it, is highlighted. |

Source: own elaboration.

Discussion

Unlike the experience in countries like Argentina, Mexico, and Colombia, In Ecuador, Manga represents an opportunity for youth to express themselves but also to promote recognition; however, this is only possible if, in this transculturation process, efforts are aimed at highlighting the best of comics.

In Colombia, the interest that this industry promotes spaces for personal training also stands out, giving way to entertainment in Manga as a secondary factor. In the case of Mexico, its value is focused on granting the step towards a new identity, or an identity built on a fusion of the Japanese and the Mexican.

The difficulty that can be appreciated at the level of the countries studied is given by understanding that the trend of Manga is directed more towards promoting discrimination against those who practice

it, especially towards the Otakus, whom both at the level of Japan and in Latin America entail a negative charge; especially in Argentina and initially in Colombia, a country that represented a clash between cultures. In addition, the idea of a loss of a sense of belonging persists in the countries, as well as a loss of a sense of local cultural identity; although in Mexico, it represents rather a way to boost the local economy based on consumerism.

In all cases, Manga is appreciated as a way of life. The preference towards this phenomenon is given by how stories are built around the characters with whom many identify, of which entertainment continues to be the main factor.

References

- Álvarez, F. (2016). Otaku cyberculture. An interdiscursive analysis of fan identities staged in Facebook groups. *Perspectivas de la Comunicación*, 9(2).
- Álvarez, F. (2021). If you do this, you are an otaku: Reflections on identities constituted from objects of Japanese mass culture. *Intersecciones en Comunicación*, 1(13).
- Andréu, J. (2018). *Técnicas de análisis de contenido: Una revisión actualizada*. Universidad de Granada.
- Anticona, A., Felices, A. & Rodríguez, J. (2022). *The Otaku as the main consequence of the impact of Japanese culture on young people in Latin America through anime and manga in the 21st century*. Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas.
- Arias, F., Robledo, N. & Cobos, T. (2020). Anime consumption in the university population of Cartagena. *Luciérnaga*, 23, 69-87.
- Barba, R. (2017). *Mexican Otaku. The analysis of the participatory culture of fans of Japanese transmedia narratives*. Comics Books.
- Bravo, D. (2015). *The Latinization of Manga and Anime*. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
- Castelan, J. (2018). Descubre las características del manga: el cómic japonés que ha traspasado fronteras. Crehana. <https://n9.cl/3ya8j>
- Castelli, S. (2017). The introduction and influence of manga in Mexico: The case of Lorena Velasco Terán and DREM. *Cuadernos del Cómic*, 8.
- Dután, F. (2015). *Análisis del anime como medio de comunicación transculturador en jóvenes de 18 a 24 años de la ciudadela Huancavilca Norte, ciudad de Guayaquil*. Universidad de Guayaquil.
- Escudero, C. & Cortez, L. (2017). *Técnicas y métodos cualitativos para la investigación científica*. Utmach Publishing House.
- Galvis, A. (2016). *Significados sociales, estilos de vida y prácticas de consumo relacionadas con el consumo de anime y manga por parte de jóvenes fanáticos con acceso a medios en línea en Bogotá*. Universidad Santo Tomás.
- García, R. & García, D. (2014). An approach to studies on otakus in Latin America. *Contextualizaciones Latinoamericanas*, 6(10).
- Gil, E. & Santa Cruz, R. (2019). *Manga: from tradition to mass culture*. Universidad de Córdoba.

- Gómez, P. (2009). *Anime y manga*. El Cid Editor.
- Guarín, S. (2019). *Japan, anime and a way to learn about a new culture*. Universidad Santo Tomás en la ciudad de Bogotá.
- Juárez, K. (2019). Softpower Otaku: from Japan to Mexico City. *Revista de Ciencias Antropológicas*, 26(75).
- Martínez, J. (2016). *Manga y anime: La historia ilustrada*. Universidad Santo Tomás en la ciudad de Bogotá.
- Mena, J. (2017). *El arte del cómic en Ecuador*. Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar.
- Ministerio de Cultura de Argentina. (2021, 12 de febrero). El manga en la Argentina y la popularización de la historieta japonesa. <https://n9.cl/ewfa6>
- Oliverio, S., Hernández, M. & Guzzo, M. (2015). *En busca de la historia. Un estudio sobre la construcción de la subjetividad en el mundo del manga*. Universidad de Buenos Aires.
- Rodríguez, J. (2017). *Manga como fenómeno social: una breve historia de la cultura otaku*. Universidad de Salamanca.
- Santana, J. (2013). *Manga. Del cuadro flotante a la viñeta japonesa*. Universidad de Vigo.
- Vivanco, M. (2017). *Inserción de la subcultura Otaku en Guayaquil*. Universidad Politécnica Salesiana.

El fenómeno del Manga y la cultura japonesa. Experiencia de la industria en América Latina

O fenômeno do Mangá e da cultura japonesa. Experiência da indústria na América Latina

Christian Giovanni Miranda Gaibor

Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo | Riobamba | Ecuador

Universidad de Málaga | Málaga | España

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9974-6018>

giovanny.miranda@unach.edu.ec

christianmirandagaibor@gmail.com

Docente investigador con quince años de experiencia en universidades públicas y privadas en Comunicación Estratégica, Periodismo e Investigación Ahora, Doctorando en el programa de Comunicación por la Universidad de Málaga; autor de artículos científicos, libros y capítulos de libro, conferencista.

Raúl Guillermo Zambrano Pontón

Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo | Riobamba | Ecuador

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4009-2726>

gzambrano@unach.edu.ec

Director de la Carrera de Comunicación de la Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo.

Magister en Comunicación Corporativa en la Universidad Regional Autónoma de Los Andes, Especialista en Imagen Corporativa en la Uniandes, Licenciado en Comunicación Social en la Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo, periodista deportivo y académico con 15 años de experiencia.

Jenny Maribel Zavala Enríquez

Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo | Riobamba | Ecuador

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-1061-6836>

jenny.zavala@unach.edu.ec

jennyzavala20214@gmail.com

Comunicadora con más de 14 años de experiencia en: docencia, investigación, periodismo, comunicación estratégica, marketing comunicacional, relaciones públicas, eventos y protocolo, redacción periodística y comercial, gestión de stakeholders e influencers.

Andrés Leandro Rodríguez Galán

Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo | Riobamba | Ecuador

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5127-3832>

andres.rodriguez@unach.ec

Ingeniero en Diseño Gráfico por la ESPOCH, cuenta con un Máster en Gestión de Marketing y Servicio al Cliente por la ESPOCH y Máster en Comunicación Transmedia por la UNIR. Con 13 años de experiencia en docencia universitaria, también ha trabajado en instituciones públicas, privadas y ONG.

Andrea Paulette Mora Ubilluz

Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo | Riobamba | Ecuador

<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-0085-7120>

paulette.mora@unach.edu.ec

Ayudante de investigación y estudiante de la Carrera de Comunicación de la Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo, ganadora de varios premios nacionales en fotografía, coautora de artículos científicos y ponente en el Congreso Internacional Eugenio Espejo.

Resumen

El proceso de reubicación del Manga, así como del Anime en Latinoamérica, dio paso a la latinización del Anime-Manga, cuyos productos, se adaptaron a la realidad latina según su estructura social y cultural, provocando un choque cultural. En este sentido, el objetivo principal de este estudio es analizar el impacto de la industria del Manga en los países de la región. Para ello, se utiliza el enfoque cualitativo a partir de la técnica del análisis de contenido, y su instrumento es el registro bibliográfico estructurado. Los principales resultados determinaron que existen marcadas diferencias en cómo los países de Ecuador y México miran al Manga. El primero es una oportunidad para visibilizar a la juventud, y el segundo es forjar la economía local basada en el consumismo. Además, en Argentina y Colombia, su paso ha significado el choque inicial entre dos culturas, pero con el tiempo se convirtió en una forma de vida. Sin embargo, en los países estudiados coexisten dos aspectos centrales: por un lado, la ruptura de la cultura local que ha puesto en el debate la crisis de identidad cultural, y por otro, un proceso que ha facilitado el reconocimiento entre los jóvenes.

Palabras clave: Manga; Identidad Cultural; Cultura Otaku; Transculturación; Latinoamérica.

Resumo

O processo de realocização do Mangá, bem como do Anime na América Latina, deu lugar à latinização do Anime-Mangá, cujos produtos, de acordo com Anticon, foram adaptados à realidade latina conforme sua estrutura social e cultural, provocando um choque cultural. Nesse sentido, o principal objetivo deste estudo é analisar o impacto da Indústria do Mangá nos países da região. Para isso, utiliza-se a abordagem qualitativa a partir da técnica da análise de conteúdo, sendo seu instrumento o registro bibliográfico estruturado. Os principais resultados determinaram que existem diferenças marcantes em como os países do Equador e do México enxergam o Mangá. O primeiro é uma oportunidade para visibilizar a juventude, e o segundo é forjar a economia local baseada no consumismo. Além disso, na Argentina e na Colômbia, sua passagem significou o choque inicial entre duas culturas, mas com o tempo tornou-se um modo de vida. No entanto, nos países estudados coexistem dois aspectos centrais: por um lado, a ruptura da cultura local que trouxe ao debate a crise da identidade cultural, e por outro, um processo que facilitou o reconhecimento entre os jovens.

Palavras-chave: Mangá; Identidade Cultural; Cultura Otaku; Transculturação; América Latina.