

**History-making through Japanese Entertainment
Media: The Case of Japanese Historical Manga of The
Bakumatsu-Ishin Period**

By

TRAN THI NGUYET ANH

SEPTEMBER 2014

**THESIS PRESENTED TO THE HIGHER DEGREE COMMITTEE
OF RITSUMEIKAN ASIA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF
CONTEMPORARY JAPAN STUDIES PROGRAM**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with respect and gratitude that I would like to thank my research supervisor, Professor Yoshida Kaori, who offered many hours of guidance and support throughout the entire writing of this thesis.

Many thanks to the Head of Contemporary Japanese Program, Professor Fujita Kayoko, who has offered thorough guidance on this thesis and provided me with her expertise, through which I learned and grew.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people from the Academic Office of Ritsumeikan Asian Pacific University in Beppu and the College of Letters of Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto. Each one of these individuals went beyond the call of duty to assist my quest and it is thanks to their assistance that I have had a precious chance to study and collect valuable data for my thesis in Kyoto.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for their patience and unconditional support, even during the most difficult times, and for the encouragement given in order to complete this formidable task.

TABLE OF CONTENT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	2
LIST OF TABLES	5
ABSTRACT.....	6
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	8
1.1 Study background.....	8
1.2 Statement of the problem	10
1.3 Research hypotheses	11
1.4 Research questions.....	11
1.5 Definition of terms	11
1.6 Significance of the study	12
1.7 Scope of the research	12
1.8 The outline of the research.....	13
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1. The historical background of Bakumatsu- Ishin period	14
2.2. The construction of history through entertainment media	17
2.3 The construction of history through comics and manga.....	23
2.3.1 The discourse of comics and manga	24
2.3.2 The construction of different memories of the past through manga.....	26
2.3.3 ‘Postmodern nostalgia’ of Edo period	29
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	33
3.1 Textual analysis.....	33
3.1.1 Semiotic of manga text.....	34

3.2 The theoretical framework.....	38
3.2.1 ““Collective memory””: the mediated construction of history	38
3.2.2 The media transformation of samurai stories in Japan	40
3.3 The choice of manga series to be studies.....	41
3.4 Data collection procedure.....	43
3.5 Data analysis procedure	44
3.6 The short summaries of six selected manga series	44
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS	48
4.1 The initial analysis of selected manga series.....	48
4.2 Resistance to the West	50
4.2.1 The Black Ships event (1853)	50
4.2.2 The Anglo-Satsuma War (1863)	54
4.2.3 Stereotypes of the Western Others.....	55
4.3 Domestic political struggles.....	58
4.3.1 The Sakuradamon Incident (1860).....	58
4.3.2 The peak of the political struggles in the Bakumatsu period.....	59
4.3.3 The transition from the Bakumatsu period to the Meiji period (1867-1869)	64
4.4 Strategies to construct history in manga	68
4.4.1 Historical heroes – Japanese idols from the past	68
4.4.2 Historical manga as a positive dialogue between the past and the present	74
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	80
REFERENCES.....	87

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: List of historical events and figures in the chosen manga series.	44
--	----

ABSTRACT

In recent years, historical products have been popularized in visual media such as films, TV shows and comics/manga. Professional historians and scholars have debated about the use of visual media to construct the past. Japanese historical manga have also gained a great deal of academic attention.

In chapter 1, this thesis examines manga representations of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period to demonstrate that manga can shape the historical consciousness of readers, especially among younger generations in Japan. Moreover, it argues that manga artists can use the characteristics of manga visual language, in which information can be condensed and conveyed through skillful compositions of panels and graphic-text narratives, to evoke critical perspectives about the past and the present. The thesis aims to identify the schemes and main themes that manga artists employ to rebuild the past as well as to reveal the hidden intentions behind such representations of history.

In Chapter 2, I discuss how historians and scholars such Pierre Sorin, Hayden White, Robert Rosenstone view great potential of visual media such as photographs, films, and movies to not only record past events and figures, but also to bring contemporary audiences closer to the past through the lens of historical products. The discourse of comics and manga proves that these new visual media have their own unique approach to narrating the stories of past in a compelling way through their vivid graphic depictions.

In Chapter 3, I explain the methodology of the study. I discuss Roland Barthes's semiotic theory and manga semiotics, used in the thesis to analyze the chosen texts in order to understand the meanings behind the graphic-textual narratives of historical manga. The practice of "realistic effects" proposed by Barthes has been used to explain how manga artists can create a sense of

realism and authenticity in their creations through citing historical recourses, reliable archives or explanatory notes about historical event and figures. Concepts of “collective memory” and “media-complex” have been employed to explain how manga and other popular media can shape the historical consciousness of the Japanese public through their historical construction of the past.

In Chapter 4, I argue that the depiction of specific historical events and heroes of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period has signified a common pattern in the manner of manga constructions of history. This pattern of popular depictions can be traced back to other Japanese popular media, so I suggest that there is a network of interactions between manga and other Japanese popular media which enhances certain perspectives of the past in the collective memory of the mass-audience in Japan. Subsequently, historical manga has also opened up a positive platform of mutual exchange between creators and consumers, as readers can enjoy active and wider perceptions of the past through contemporary constructions of things and people from another time.

The Conclusion argues that the employment of historical manga to transmit history is very influential and popular among young people, who may gain interest in looking more deeply into the past.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Study background

Recently, Vietnamese historians have been debating about whether popular media such as movies, television dramas, and novels are a credible channel through which to learn about history. Many argue that such products provide an extremely limited view of historical events and figures for entertainment. Due to such criticisms, there have been few historical films and television shows produced in Vietnam which raise only little interest in history among Vietnamese people, especially the young generations. However, when looking out to the world's entertainment media, this thesis recognizes that among the popular topics that media tend to employ is history. Especially in Japan, a country with long recorded history and tradition, there are not only a lot of history-themed shows broadcasts on television, but also many films, books, newspapers, magazines and even plays about history. This provides an interesting avenue of research to study how Japan's entertainment media uses history in their products to capture the attention of audiences who may or may not have any prior in history.

As discussed above, scholars around the world have been studying how mass media entertainment products such as television and films can be seen as a new approach to transmitting history. In "History as image/Image as history: Reflections on the Importance of Film and Television for an Understanding of the Past", John E. O'Connor (1988) writes that visual media can not only act as historical evidence for historians when they study contemporary history, but can also be viewed as an innovative resource in historical education for the general public. Since most people nowadays obtain news and entertainment from a variety of media in

their daily lives, it is necessary to study how we can make use of the power of such media to extend and sharpen the public's historical perception (O'Connor, 1988, p.1201).

In the book *Mass Communication in Japan*, Anne Cooper-Chen and Miiko Kodama (1997, p.18) explain that even though the mass media in America and Japan have some common ground (for example, television is the most popular information source for people in both countries), there are still many of distinctions between American and Japanese mass media. Indeed, while they have the same traditional media as the rest of the world, such as books, magazines and newspapers, radio and television, movies and videos, games and websites, the Japanese have evolved their own branch of media in the form of manga (comic strips and comic books) and anime (the Japanese short form of the English word animation). These unique branches of Japanese media were developed by adopting new knowledge and techniques from Western comics and cartoons and combining them with traditional art forms. Right from the beginning, manga and anime captivated Japanese viewers with their unique art style and storylines and quickly became big business in Japan with a diversity of genres. Furthermore when manga and anime were introduced to the international market, they soon gained global popularity (Johnson-Wood, 2010). Because of their powerful influence, in Japan manga and anime are often used as instruments to inspire the general public, especially the younger generations, to learn more about Japanese culture and history. Thus, in this thesis, manga will be the primary focus to examine how Japanese media is used to present history to the general public.

Regarding the representation of history in Japanese manga, in the book *Understanding Manga and Anime* (2007) Robin E. Brenner writes that while the topic of history is lacking in American comics, Japanese manga artists enjoy using Japan's long history as their creative material (p.152). Moreover, according to Mio Bryce and Jason Davis (2010) in their essay "An

Overview of Manga Genres”, the unique style of drawing and storytelling are the reasons why manga can generate an impressive visual effect for readers and because of that manga is very useful when it comes to constructrecreating the past (p.37). Many scholars are also concerned that what is represented in Japanese historical manga can act as a resistant voice against the mainstream historical interpretation. For instance, in manga discourse about the image of atomic bomb victims in *Hadashi no Gen* [Barefoot Gen] by Nakazawa Keiji (1973), Kawaguchi Takayuki (2010) indicates that the explicit horror of the destruction after the dropping of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima and the struggle of the victims to survive the trauma and devastation are “representations of the war and the nuclear experience” (p.234). This indicates that manga can also be a tool to study Japanese contemporary perceptions of past events in order to understand the current political and social values implied in the graphic narratives.

Based on these observations, this thesis aims to contribute to the knowledge about the connection between manga and history, particularly in the contemporary period when historical representations have broken away from the traditional form of written history and evolved into new trends of recording and transmitting the past.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The main aim of the study is to discover how Japanese manga construct the past. A secondary aim is to reveal the implications that manga artists try to convey through their historical representations.

1.3 Research hypotheses

Two hypotheses are proposed for the research:

- i. Japanese manga artists employ specific historical events/figures in their works to construct the political and social conditions of the Bakumatsu-Ishin Period.
- ii. The historical representations of such manga series reflect the mainstream conventions of Japanese history that manga artists know and utilize in the manga narratives.

1.4 Research questions

In order to demonstrate the research objectives and (dis)prove the hypotheses, this thesis will answer three main questions:

- i. How are some certain historical events and figures depicted visually in manga?
- ii. How are narratives composed to recount history in manga?
- iii. What are the implications of these representations in historical manga?

1.5 Definition of terms

i. Manga is the Japanese word for comic strips and comic books (Encyclopedia of Japan, n.d.).

ii. The Bakumatsu period is the name used by Japanese scholars for the late years of the Tokugawa's military government, from 1853 to 1868. The Meiji Ishin or Meiji Restoration, took place in 1868, when the Tokugawa government was overthrown and power was "restored" to the emperor. The subsequent Meiji period spanned from 1868 to 1912 and was the time when, under the regime of Emperor Meiji, Japan started to modernize in order to catch up with the West (Jasen & Rozman, 1986, p. 07). In this thesis the term Bakumatsu-Ishin period will be used to refer to the decades from 1850 to the 1870s.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study contributes an innovative look at the way in which history is narrated. It describes the patterns used by manga in particular, and the Japanese popular media in general, to make history more realistic, comprehensible and enjoyable to the general public. Through the use of these patterns, history is longer seen as a dull subject about the unknowable past, but a lively story, through which we can learn about chains of events in former times that are the basis of the present day. In this way, besides the traditional ways of preserving and imparting history from one generation to another (oral traditions, textbooks), the entertainment media with have added a new way to continue connecting the past and the present.

Furthermore, this study also extends academic research in the field of Japanese Studies to Vietnam. It is my hope that learning from the experiences of Japanese manga in the historical genre will suggest a new approach to the subject of Vietnamese history, such as employing comics as a tool to preserve and transmit the history of Vietnam to the Vietnamese public, especially the young people.

1.7 Scope of the research

In this thesis, the Bakumatsu-Ishin period has been chosen in order to provide close insight into how Japanese manga portray Japanese history. There are three main reasons for focusing on this particular period. First, this is a short and condensed period so it is easier to trace the flows of historical events in order to shed light on how manga construct the past. Second, numerous manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period have been published, suggesting that there are

distinctive reasons for using this period for historical presentation. Moreover, because of the large number of manga dealing with this period there is sufficient data available for the study.

1.8 The outline of the research

The study has five parts. The first part is the Introduction, which provides a general background to the study, the reasons for choosing the topic, the statements and research questions of the study, its significance and limitation.

The second part is the Literature Review, which is divided into two main parts. The first part provides a historical background of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period in academic history. And the second part reviews what has already been researched about the construction of history by entertainment media or more specifically on historical representation in manga.

The third part contains the methodology of the research. It consists of the subjects and instruments of the study. It also presents the methods of observation done in the research.

The fourth part, the Analysis and Findings, describes and analyzes the Bakumatsu-Ishin period in manga, how history was portrayed in manga and what messages were conveyed in historical manga.

The last part of this research is the Conclusion and Suggestions, which briefly reviews the research and suggests new directions for subsequent studies on similar subjects.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this literature review chapter, there are four sections. The first provides a historical background of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period in order to establish the relevant historical events that have been recorded in written archives. The second introduces various professional historians' and scholars' views regarding the representation of history in the media. The third reviews research that analyzes the historical productions of the entertainment media. And the fourth discusses specific studies about manga discourse and the construction of Japanese history through Japanese manga.

2.1. The historical background of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period

In order to understand the historical events portrayed in the Japanese entertainment media in general, and in manga in particular, it is necessary to understand the flow of actual events in the Bakumatsu-Ishin period. This section also provides an overview of the specific historical events that are the main focus of this thesis.

The Bakumatsu period is the term used by Japanese scholars to denote the late years of the Edo period (1603-1868), specifically the last years of the Tokugawa military government, from 1853 to 1868. This period ended with the Meiji Restoration, or Meiji *Ishin*. The subsequent Meiji period, which spanned from 1868 to 1912, was the time when, under the regime of Emperor Meiji, Japan started to modernize in order to catch up with the Western nations. This thesis focuses on the Bakumatsu-Ishin period, in particular the decades between the 1850s and the 1870s, since most of the main events attributed to the tremendous changes in early modern Japan occurred during this time period.

In the book *Japan in Transition: From Tokugawa to Meiji*, Marius B. Jansen and Gilbert Rozman (1986) state that they used “the Japanese convention of referring the years from 1853 to 1868 as Bakumatsu and “early Meiji” for the 1870s in order to define the period in which Japan began its modernization after U.S. ships were sent to Japan under Commodore Perry to demand trade and diplomatic relations (p.7). The Bakumatsu period represents a time when Japan faced many difficult internal and external problems. In his notable book *The Making of Modern Japan*, which discusses the conflict in Japan during this time, Marius B. Jansen (2002) remarks that the cause of the fall of the Tokugawa government after more than two hundred years of ruling was the pressure of the Western imperial powers on Japan (p.257-258). In 1853, the United States sent warships to demand that Japan open its market to America, and the Tokugawa government agreed to sign various unequal treaties on trading and tariff authorities in exchange for peace. After two centuries of seclusion, the Japanese armed forces — the Japanese navy in particular — were outdated compared to America and other Western countries in terms of weapons and strategies, so in a war with the U.S. absolute defeat would have been unavoidable (Jansen, 2002, p.279). According to Andrew Gordon (2003) in his book *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*, the treaties that the Tokugawa signed were unfair and disgraceful in every sense, and as a result, other political parties in Japan could not accept this humiliating submission and began to raise forces to overthrow the government, which was blamed for the lack of resistance to outside forces (p.50). Following over a decade of violence, the anti-government protesters had succeeded in bringing down the Tokugawa in 1868 and had restored the power of the emperor Meiji, which set in motion the amazing transformation of feudal Japan into a modern and powerful nation.

In the early years of the Meiji period, the drastic changes between the two regimes caused friction not only in the political system, but also in the social system, such as the end of the daimyō rule in local areas and the abolition of the samurai class during the 1870s (Jansen & Rozen, 1986, p.8). Therefore, at the beginning of the Meiji period, the new government had to deal with the resistance of the former samurai and the local government who wanted to preserve their longtime privileges. However, as the main goals of Japan at that time were to build up national prosperity and military strength in order to restore the sovereignty that had been given up in the unequal treaties, the Meiji government received support from the general population to suppress rebellions and stabilize the control and power of the central government nationwide at the end of the 1870s (Jansen & Rozen, 1986, p.14). And from then, Japan was on a steady path to successful modernization. Jansen (2002) points out that memories of the late years of the Tokugawa government have earned a remarkable place in the history of modern Japan and the inspiring story of the struggle between the anti-government protesters and the Tokugawa defenders has been kept alive in the present time with the help of the entertainment media (p.325).

In sum, the Bakumatsu-Ishin period is an important transitional period in Japan's history when Japan departed from the Chinese traditional ideologies regarding the loyalty and courage of warriors to their ruler in order to embrace the new Western ideologies of nationalism and modernization. Because of the dramatic changes in this period it has been widely studied. Similarly, the history of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period has been a popular subject of contemporary entertainment media, a testimony to the deep imprinted memories of these past changes in Japan's society.

2.2. The construction of history through entertainment media

This section of the thesis review previous studies on how the past can be constructed by visual media such as film, television drama. History in this sense is a discourse of the past created by not only historians but also visual media in order to transmit the past to the larger public in the present time.

There are two main approaches of historians and scholars use to study history in media. The first approach is to use visual images as evidence to construe the narrative of the past to the public. For instance, while stressing the significance of historical media, John E. O'Connor (1988), quoting pioneering historian Robert A. Rosenstone, points out that it is necessary for professional historians to study film and television as visual evidence of the past (p.1200). He argues that the invention of film and television helped to record many historical events and figures, which historians can analyze to deepen their understanding of the past. In addition, O'Connor also comments that a significant number of people in the present gained their historical knowledge through television and film rather than textbooks or academic journals (O'Connor, 1988, p.1201). This indicates that historical works produced by visual media may have more importance in the public mind than the academic works of professional historians, and suggests that academics themselves should be more involved in the study of history in media, as these productions may "suggest wonderfully provocative approaches to teaching history" (O'Connor, 1988, p.1201).

Following O'Connor, Gary R. Edgerton (2001) explains his hypothesis about the role of television in broadcasting history in the essay *Introduction: Television as Historian: a Different Kind of History Altogether*. Initially, he presupposes that nowadays everyone learns about history

through television (Edgerton, 2001, p.1). Moreover, for television broadcasters, history is a most profitable subject, and so the number of shows about history has been rapidly increasing. Furthermore, with all the visual effects, historical backgrounds and stylists have been used as means to construct the past on the screen to contemporary audiences (Edgerton, 2001, p.2). In addition, the popularity of history shows is because stories about the past reflect current problems by using historical figures and events to express contemporary issues and try to find resolutions for the future (Edgerton, 2001, p.3).

However, there is also serious criticism from historians who see historical programs as fictional and who are concerned that such shows could have harmful on the historical awareness of audiences. On this subject, Edgerton suggests that professional historians should collaborate with popular historians, who have been supported by history shows on TV, in order to produce high quality, more academically rigorous historical programs (Edgerton, 2001, p.9). Consequently, television will be an influential medium to inspire people's interest in learning more about history (Edgerton, 2001, p.11).

This suggestion is shared with enthusiasm by Taylor Downing (2004), who indicates that popular historians who cooperate with television producers or film directors to make historical programs or movies should do their best in translating the complicated analyses, ideas and debates of academia into easy and popularized narratives of history that would attract the attention of the general public (p.17). He too hopes that professional historians, "who were primarily in the universities but also including that broader constituency of archivists, curators and those who earn their living from the research and study of history", will join forces to help historical programs to have more depth and more dimension than the narratives of the past which are often criticized as narrow and one-dimensional (Downing, 2004, p.16-17). For instance, in

1974, the British ITV Channel series *The World at War* “drew audiences of between six and seven million—and some episodes reached twelve million”; the show also received positive criticism and awards thanks to the careful combination of archive films, historical resources and the narration of a historian who guided audiences through the flow of historical events (Downing, 2003, p.10).

In addition to that, Simon Schama (2004), a famous British historian who also works as a chief narrator for the history program “A History of Britain” on BBC, comments in his essay that historical media with its innovative narration and usage of visual and oral effects had helped to bring down the wall around history built up by professional historians with traditional textbooks, archives and academic journals (p.27). Due to that, the ordinary people could easily access the knowledge of the past and could start to develop their own perception of the past through sharing and debating what they see and learn from all the available historical sources.

Peter Burke (2001) also comments that visual images from the old, traditional forms like paintings, sculptures, carvings to the new, modern forms like photographs, movies can be very rich and informative evidence about the past. Historians can employ visual evidence with careful interpretation in certain historical contexts. For instance, Burke considers the film *Louis XIV Takes Power* (*La prise de pouvoir de Louis XIV*, 1966) directed by Roberto Rossellini as a “serious attempt to evoke the feel of a remote age” (2001, p.162). Burke’s analysis of Rossellini’s film shows that visual texts are able not only to construct the scenarios of the distant past, but also to portray the lifestyles and mentalities of people who lived in particular periods even if only through the account of a single historical figure. This indicates very clearly that historical films, as well as other visual media which are usually deemed as light fictional entertainment, can function as a significant part of understanding history.

As this thesis have shown, there are historians and scholars who consider historical films and other entertainment media as new avenues by which to comprehend how contemporary people perceive politics and social conditions in the present time through the construction of certain images of the past. The present study, however, is intended to investigate how history is constructed by the entertainment media rather than history in visual media as evidence of the past.

A second approach is to apply interdiscipline to study how visual media, such as film, television, construct the narrative of the past through their own distinguishing methods. Regarding this approach, Hayden White's (1988) concept of "historiophoty" as "the representation of history and our thought about it in visual images and filmic discourse" is useful to bring in here. Through this concept, White (1988) suggests that visual images and films could be useful instruments to recount the past, just as traditional oral and written history, since "it is obvious that cinema (and video) are better suited than written discourse to the actual representation of certain phenomena—landscape, scene, atmosphere, complex events such as wars, battles, crowds, and emotions" (p.1193). Yet, there remains opposition to the use of visual representations of history such as historical movies or even documentaries have a strict of time limit to represent the past events which results into the lack of insightful and critical debates around specific issues of history as in written accounts (White, 1988, p.1194). However, this research refer to White's concept of historiophoty in which history is a constructed narrative which can include the usage of visual images to retell the past to the contemporary public.

To support White's concept of historiophoty, Pierre Sorin (1980) has also coined the phrase "visual history" in his comments on how films and television can become a main source of historical knowledge not only for ordinary people but also for specialists in the modern day

(p.26). According to Sorin, there are three main reasons for historians to re-evaluate the authenticity of audiovisual material.¹ Firstly, rather than reading and learning from academic books by historians, people can get their historical knowledge faster and more easily from films or television programs. Thus, compared to the new historical version made by entertainment media, academic historical documents seem to be “an outmoded erudition” (Sorin, 1980, p.26). Secondly, historians need to pay lots of expense for research visual records for academic purpose, and even larger amount of money to compare and contrast all the available historical films, including popular historical films to fully construct the past from various perspectives of the past (Sorin, 1980, p.26). Thirdly, films and television use a very different method to recount history which is unfamiliar to historians who are accustomed to particular academic conventions (Sorin, 1980, p.27). Thus, Sorin concludes that historians need to develop a new approach to study historical representations in films and television in order to comprehend how people in the present think of the past rather than just insisting on the historical accuracy of the shows (p.37-38).

Sorin (1980) proposes the combined method of historiography with film analysis in order to enable the historians to “read” the context in historical films since “fiction and history react constantly on another, and it is impossible to study the second if the first is ignored” (p. 38). Thus, Sorin is not really concerned about the accuracy of historical films compared to written accounts, based on his assumption that all historical films are fictional. So historians should pay more attention to understanding the *mechanism* by which historical films choose to construct the past, rather than just trying to point out their inaccuracies. Moreover, Sorin argues that the best approach to analyzing historical films is based on “the originality of a film, its relationship to the

¹ Sorin (1980) defines “audiovisual material” as “material that reaches the senses and establishes communication through a combination of moving pictures and sounds, particularly television and the cinema.” (p.25)

current events, its favorable reception by the public, and the fact of its being produced and distributed during a time of crisis” (p.36). Following this approach, Sorin argues that the purpose of media producers to create historical films which reflect to current audiences contemporary views of the past as well as the present.

Robert A. Rosenstone (1995) also advocates a different theoretical approach to examining history in films. He finds that traditional methods are unsatisfactory to answer the crucial question about the relation between the “historical world on screen” and “written history,” since films and film studies are unfamiliar fields of expertise to historians, and therefore it is necessary to find a middle way to analyze the historical context in films (p.52). Hence, he divides historical films into “three broad categories: history as drama, history as documentary, [and] history as experiment,” in order to comprehend how historical worlds are constructed in certain types of films. For instance, history as drama is considered as the most popular form of historical films in every country around the world. Thus there are two conventional strategies of narrating in those “dramatized history”:

[...] films based on documentable persons or events or movements (*The Last Emperor, Gandhi, JFK*) and those whose central plot and characters are fictional, but whose historical setting is intrinsic to the story and meaning of the works (*Dangerous Liaisons, The Molly Maguires, Black Robe*) (Rosenstone, 1995, p.53).

In the case of history as documentary, the main theme that can be detected in most films is “nostalgia,” with a single narrator speaking about the past accompanied by “recent footage of historical sites intercut with older footage” and historical relics, photographs, and so on (Rosenstone, 1995, p.53). The last type is history as experiment, in which the techniques of history as drama and history as documentary are often combined to make a narration of history

against the mainstream films made by Hollywood. In Rosenstone's opinion, history as experiment is the one that historians should lean toward since it offers "the possibility of what might be called a 'serious' historical film, a historical film that parallels—but is different from—the 'serious' or scholarly written history" (Rosenstone, 1995, p.54). By tracing the common themes and filmed techniques that appear frequently in historical films, Rosenstone has summarized the strategies employed in certain types of such films, such as drama or documentary, to construct the past.

In sum, historians and scholars who encourage innovative ways to examine the historical contexts in visual media, proposed to apply film studies and visual analysis to study how films or visual media (re)construct history. For the current thesis, the second approach is more appropriate since it will help to explore the mechanisms that entertainment media tend to use to recount history, as well as to disclose the subtle information that the audience receives when viewing historical representation of entertainment media.

2.3 The construction of history through comics and manga

As discussed in the previous section, entertainment in general has contributed to shaping popular memory of the past. Manga is certainly one of those media, and it has characteristics distinctive from other media. Thus, this section discusses how manga specifically functions in representing historical events

2.3.1 The discourse of comics and manga

In *The Languages of Comics* Mario Saraceni (2003) remarks that contemporary comics have been developed in both contents and forms to be more experimental and intellectual, and

that comics are “no longer only for children” (p.3). Artists can employ the distinguishing art forms of comics, such as using both words and pictures, as well as “texts organized into sequential units, graphically separated from each other”, to create intellectual and highly aesthetic stories for young adult readers. Thus, recently, Western scholars have also come to notice the potential of using new forms of visual media such as comics to create a strong and authoritative interpretations of historical events. Since comics and manga have a unique combination of visual and text narratives in order to construct specific views of history to the larger readers.

In “History and Graphic Representation of *Maus*”, Hilary Chute (2009) demonstrates through her analysis of the graphic structure of *Maus*, an account of the Holocaust experience of the comic artist’s parents. Chute argues that “to claim that comics made languages, ideas and concepts ‘literally’ is to call attention to how the medium can make the twisting lines of history readable in form” (p.341). Chute proposed to study the construction of history in *Maus* through analysis of the “time and space of the comic pages” (p.342). As Chute describes them, comics are structured by panels and gutters which effectively direct the attention of readers to selected moments that the artist wants to portray. This is called the “annotation of time as space” (Chute, 2009, p.342). Moreover, as regards the construction of history in *Maus*, Chute finds that “the visual intersection between the past and present” as well as “verbal parallel” are in fact acting as a “link between the past and the present”. Chute remarks that this kind of visual narrative style is “helping to expand the culture map of historical representation” in which the questionable problem of assumed closure of history and moral solution in popular media narratives can be avoidable (p.355). As a result, it generates a deeper discussion of individuals’ accounts of traumatic events in the past, which can never be ended or forgotten in the present (Chute, 2009,

p.357). Overall, Chute's study clearly proves the capability of new visual media like comics to recreate history through aesthetic graphic-text narratives. Since the art style of comics and manga are quite similar, the comic analysis method used in Chute's study is useful for this study of the representation of history in manga, as discussing further below.

The discourse of manga is often focused on the history of manga and the manga industry in order to introduce the medium as a Japanese popular culture product not only inside but also outside Japan (Schodt, 1983; Kinsella, 2000). Yet another trend of manga discourse is Japanese academic studies on manga theory (*mangaron*). According to Kinsella (2000),

Manga theorists, notably Yomota Inuhiko, Ōtsuka Eiji, and Natsume Funosuke, focused their attentions on developing for manga an equivalent of literacy theory, referred to as 'manga expression theory' (*manga hyōgenron*), which focuses entirely on the structure and spatial arrangement of manga pictures within the discreet manga product. Manga expression theory takes the lines used to draw manga pictures (*byōsen*), the spatial organization of the boxes (*koma*), and the speech bubbles (*fukidashi*), as the starting point of a theoretical deconstruction of the medium (p.100).

With this development of manga theory, scholars can examine the structure of manga more closely in terms of visual arrangement as well as text. This also provides a way to understand the graphic narratives of manga more objectively, with a focus on the content of manga itself rather than on the intentions of manga artists or producers (Ingulsrud & Allen, 2009, p.51).

However, this research would argue that the analysis of manga should be a combination of the construction of visual narratives and the purpose of the manga artists in order to uncover hidden implications in the story. Especially when it comes to historical manga, the artists'

intention is unavoidably embedded in the arrangement of visual and verbal texts to provide alternative interpretations of history.

2.3.2 The construction of different memories of the past through manga

In the introduction chapter of *Manga and The Representation of Japanese History*, the book's editor, Roman Rosenbaum (2013), states that the main aim of the collection is to show "how Japanese history is represented in graphic art and in particular in Japanese manga" (p.1). According to Rosenbaum (2013), the authors in this edited book, who are from various disciplines, recognize that "manga pose a peculiarly contemporary appeal that transcends the limitation imposed by traditional approaches to the study and teaching of history" (p.2). Moreover, Rosenbaum also suggests the possibility of manga to "transmit ideological interpretations of history and influence a vast readership" (p.2).. From this point of view, manga has an enormous capability to construct and convey history through its distinctive visual art and narratives.

One of the popular trends of historical manga during 1990s was the revisionism of Japanese wartime activities. Matthew Penney (2011) argues that right-wing manga such as *Manga: Kyōkasho ga oshienai rekishi* [Manga: History not taught in textbooks] by Fujioka Nobukatsu (1997) "are empowered by the strategic alternation" of manga depictions as well as "by the manipulation of stereotypes" in order to spread Japanese neo-nationalism and revisionism of Japan's wartime history to a mass readership (p.154). Using the manga expression theory proposed by Natsume Fusanosuke (1999), Penney remarks that since "manga visuals consist of a series of symbols and codes that do not seek realistically to depict but rather to suggest occurrences," revisionist history manga can exploit manga to limit the readers'

perspectives of the past that are communicated and aid essentialism through the representative characters (p.155). With regard to *Manga: Kyōkasho ga oshienai rekishi*, Penney also emphasizes the importance of the voice of characters in order to observe the main point of view in the manga. For instance, Korean victims of the Japanese imperial army are “not only deprived of [a] voice; in the visuals as well they are not given defining characters” (p.156). This kind of depiction is considered to downplay the atrocity of Japanese army during the wartime. On other occasions, war victims may be given a voice “simply to glorify Japan” (Penney, 2011, p.157). Meanwhile, right-wing manga of the revisionist trend of post-war history also exploit the stereotypes of evil Americans in order to portray Japan as a tragic hero that fought against white imperialism (Penney, 2011, p.158). In this light, manga representations are used for the purpose of nationalism to dissimilate a feel-good revisionist history in the attempt to recast the historical perception of the readers.

In contrast, Penney also examines works of left-wing non-fiction and fictional manga to show that the potential of manga can also create a powerful voice to resist the nationalist revision of the right-wing historical manga. The left-wing manga are more leaning toward depicting history in a realistic perspective rather the right-wing revisionist view. For example, Ishinomori’s *Nihon no rekishi* [History of Japan] is a non-fiction manga² which was based on academic research and yet was still drawn in an aesthetic sense of manga style. The whole 55-volume series was not only sold well commercially, but was also acclaimed as a “bridge between academic historiography and popular culture” (Penney, 2011, p.159). For instance, in contrast to right-wing manga’s evasion of Japan’s dark side of history, Ishinomori’s works depict the aftermath of violence as a way to call “attention to Japanese war crimes.” Another type of left-

² According to Penney (2011), non-fiction manga is the “mainstream mass market history to serve as study guides, reference works, or a fundamental introduction to historiography” (p.158).

wing approach is fictional history manga “that make use the archetype of boy’s manga—central to [the] development of the manga industry” to explore a new way to construct history in the binary of education and entertainment (Penney, 2011, p.162). According to Penney, the archetype of the boy hero in those fictional manga, along with the depiction of war horrors and violence, provide a starting point to atone for Japanese war crimes through the redemption of the hero. Again this approach is opposite to the right-wing manga in which Japan is either portrayed as hero or victim of evil Americans (Penney, 2011, p.162).

One new way to approach fictional manga is to employ “an academic character within an overall fictional plot,” in order to provide a sense of authority in an entertainment context (Penney, 2011, p.164). For instance in *Munakata Kyōju Denkikō* by Hoshino Yukinobu (1990), a fictional professor lectures about Japanese ancient history to the readers through his adventurous encounters with supernatural elements such as demons. The artist also chooses to “replicate exactly photographs of atrocities” to illustrate and capture readers’ attention of the dark side of Japanese history (Penney, 2011, p.165). In addition, all the left-wing manga are part of the trend of Japan’s apologies to its victims in 1990s. This suggests that manga can also illustrate current social and political issues of Japanese society in an artistic way, and indicates the potential of manga graphics to serve as a historical (visual) evidence and shape particular historical perception of the readers.

Overall, Penney’s analysis provides a significant amount of good empirical evidence to demonstrate how manga is an effective device not only to construct history, but also to stimulate social debate about Japanese wartime activities ranging from right-wing to left-wing arguments regarding the interpretation of history. As a result, manga helps to bring historical issues to general audiences so that they can construct their own historical perceptions through various

interpretations of history. Additionally, Penney's discussion of the theory of manga expressionism is a helpful tool for this research in examining the implication behind visual depictions of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period.

2.3.3 'Postmodern nostalgia' of Edo period

Another trend of historical manga studies is focused on how the Edo period is portrayed as an idealistic past of Japan, which seems to be linked to the popular construction of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period—the late years of the Edo period—in manga. Thus, the “postmodern nostalgia” in the research discussed above might suggest the strategies which manga artists employ to introduce the Edo period for contemporary readers as well as explore how the past can reflect the present in manga representations of the Edo period.

The issue of postmodern nostalgia lies with Azuma Hiroki's argument (2001) about the “self-Orientalism” by means of the Edo period created by manga and anime. Azuma (2001) remarks that postmodern Japanese seek the image of the Edo period in order to “forget defeat and remain oblivious to the impact of Americanization” in post-war Japanese society (p.22). Sutcliffe (2013) expands on Azuma's point, arguing that “Japanese society has been so deeply Europeanized and Americanized that any nostalgic return towards its traditional, original or ‘pure’ Japaneseness is dubious” (p.184). This indicates that the Edo period in manga is constructed as an imagined space which reflects a contemporary longing for a Japan that existed prior to Western modernism and American influences.

In “Postmodern representations of the Edo period”, Paul Sutcliffe (2013) argues that manga representations of the Edo period have reduced this historical period to a myth. According to Sutcliffe, the boom of the idealization of Edo in Japanese popular media, when the Edo period

is used as “commodified nostalgia,” began in the 1980s (p.182). In the view of postmodernism, Edo is once again utilized as “the site of authentic Japan, the pre-Western ‘outside’ of modernity” (Sutcliffe, 2013, p.183). Here, Sutcliffe argues that “postmodern nostalgia” is used to construct an idealized Edo period as an escape for readers from the gloomy state of postmodern Japan (p.183).

By applying Barthes’ semiotic theory, Sutcliffe (2013) says that “historical texts and images become distorted by ideology and thereby induce a loss of memory, a selective recalling and subjective interpretation” (p.175). The nostalgia of the Edo period is evoked through a series of selected images of Edo. For instance, the manga series *Kozure Ōkami (Lone Wolf and Cub)* (1970) employs “artistic depictions of nature and historical sightseeing locations in Japan” in order to evoke “a sense of nostalgia for the wide open spaces, forests” in contrast with modern Japanese city landscapes (Sutcliffe, 2013, p.175). Here, the natural scenarios of the Edo period is used as a longing for the nature prior to the modernization of Japan. Moreover, Scutcliffe also remarks that the frequent depiction of Mount Fuji in this manga has connected “Edo to a traditional symbol of Japan as a whole.” This implies that the image of Edo has been idealized by the manga artists to create a “national tradition” to the contemporary readers.

Samurai themes also appear frequently in manga representations of the Edo period in which “the main focus is on the characters’ inner depths” within the Edo background setting. According to Sutcliffe, the samurai stories are depicted with a lot of violence and blood, which “is a reminder of the harsh reality of the Edo period, and can be seen as move away from a purely nostalgia representation” (p.176). However, Sutcliffe suggests that samurai heroes depicted as loners and wanderers, such as Miyamoto Mushashi in manga series *Vagabond*, indicate a sense of loss of direction and identity in contemporary Japanese society. Not only that,

these samurai stories “represent an escape from the feeling of impotence after the defeat of War II” (Sutcliffe, 2013, p.179). Samurai themes thus still connect to the concept of “postmodern nostalgia” since these stories also create a fantasy world and a place of escape for readers who seek a lifestyle or direction in the past through the adventures of the Edo samurai. Thus, manga series about the Edo period such as *Vagabond* reflect a sense of nostalgia toward the image of Japan before the invasion of Western capitalism and modernity.

Despite arguments that the nostalgia for the Edo period in manga is a pessimistic sign of escapism from present social issues, Sutcliffe comments quite positively that in a sense, nostalgia for the past and a longing for the previous “social structures” indicate that the people in the present have an awareness of contemporary social issues and may be searching for solutions in the past (p.186). Indeed, this may be a the reason for the popularity of manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period.

Similarly, Rose Lee (2011) analyzes the image of “Shinsengumi, a group of young men recruited by the Bakufu to protect Kyoto from radical Imperial House loyalists in the tumultuous Bakumatsu period” in two different types of texts: historical novels and popular manga. According to Lee (2011), the portrait of the historical figure Hijikata Toshizō, vice-captain of Shinsengumi, in both *Moeyo ken* [Burn, My Sword], a popular historical fiction novel by Shiba Ryōtarō (1962), and *Gintama*, a popular history-themed manga by Sorachi Hideaki (2003), is to reflect “the masses’ empathy and yearning for an autonomous hero in the modern day” (p.184). This point is also a reflection of the “postmodern nostalgia” theme in Edo representations in which the past is revisited by the present to seek an idealized model or image. For instance, in *Moeyo ken*, Hijikata Toshizō represents the desire for self-determination in the context of the conformity of Japanese society in the 1960s. Meanwhile, the image of Hijikata in *Gintama* is

“idolized as a modern-day hero”. *Gintama*’s Hijikata is aware of the kind of life he wishes to lead, and is able to put it into practice” in the present time that Japanese people have lost their sense of direction due to the failing economy and increasing social problems. The differences in the meanings attached to the image of Hijikata in these two popular works indicates the transformation of historical representations through various media in which the creators reproduce and reintroduce the image of the past to current audiences. Subsequently, Lee’s study has suggested a new approach for this research to investigate how manga and other Japanese media interact to construct the historical consciousness of Japanese public through their popular history products.

It can be suggested, based on the above observations, that Japanese entertainment media is an effective tool to transmit history to the general public. Particularly, manga is a distinctive form of Japanese entertainment media, and thus the present thesis will examine manga actually construct the history of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period through analyzing both the graphic arrangements and textual narratives.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Textual Analysis

This thesis employs a qualitative interpretation of manga texts in an attempt to find out how Japanese manga shape the understanding of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period in Japanese history to the general public. It uses textual analysis to examine the contents of historical manga, as well as contextualizing the images presented in those manga works based on the historical background.

Textual analysis is “a way of analyzing media texts which involves drawing conclusions from a close examination of individual elements or small part of a particular text” (Clark, Baker, & Lewis, 2002, p.77). The objective of textual analysis is to understand how the meaning of a text is created. In Media Studies, “text is not merely written material” but also visual images (Lacey, 1998, p.12). Therefore, textual analysis is used to examine the visual styles, intentions and contents in order to uncover the specific ability of manga in transmitting history to the readers. Additionally, the depiction of historical events and figures as well as narratives are analyzed in order to elucidate patterns in the way that manga construct history.

The structure of manga is quite distinguished from other visual media since manga is literally framed in panels. Moreover, “the locus of information” in manga is “in the graphics, speech balloons, and occasional commentary, as well as the arrangement of panel itself” (Ingulsrud & Allen, 2009, p.5). This means that both the linguistic texts and graphics in a panel must be analyzed altogether in order to interpret the meaning through the manga text. Likewise, the compositions of panels in manga that depict certain scenes will be also taken into account to analyze to understand the significance of particular historical events and figures.

3.1.1 Semiotics of manga text

The signifying system proposed by Roland Barthes (1964) can be employed in order to read the visual and verbal components in manga narratives. According to Barthes's semiotic theory, linguistic texts and visual images are considered first as "denotative signs" or first-order signifiers, which involve "the literal or explicit meanings" of visual texts (cited in Ott & Mack, 2010, p. 105). Meanwhile, "connotative signs" operate "at the level of ideology and myth" (Ibid., p. 105). In the case of manga, at the denotative level, readers can only see the images that the manga artists purposely intend them to see. Only when the readers combine the visual images with the textual narratives in the same panel (or page), they can get the full meanings that the manga artists want to convey. Here, the connotative function allows the readers to extract meanings from the manga text based on their historical and culture background.

Take the depiction of the Black ship in the manga series *Getsumei Seiki—Sayonara Shinsengumi* as an example; the manga artist has drawn small ships coming closer from the sea along with the American flag (Morita Kenji. (2003). *Getsumei Seiki—Sayonara Shinsengumi, I*, p.52). On the denotative level, the readers would recognize that these ships were American ships. Meanwhile, those images also carry certain implications. Specifically, the images remind readers of the year 1853 when the black ships led by Commander Matthew Perry entered Edo Bay. Thus, at the connotative level in which the readers can think back to the historical context of the Bakumatsu period, the Black Ship event also signifies the beginning of the fall of the Tokugawa government when the Americans came to Japan in the mid-nineteenth century. Thus, Barthes' signifying system is useful to explain how graphic narratives of manga convey coded messages.

Moreover, Barthes (1964) also suggests that visual media such as films, comic strips and cartoons utilize a function called "relay" in their linguistic messages. He explains that in these

visual media, “it is the image which detains the information” while the textual narratives function only as the complements to the image (p.38). The relay function can also be found in manga in which the verbal narratives provide exact meanings to the visual depiction. In addition, in historical manga, the textual narratives can also be used to introduce historical information to the readers about the past events and figures depicted in the stories.

Regarding the topic of history, Roland Barthes in “The Discourse of History” (1967) introduces a concept called “realistic effect,” in which historians construct the sense of authority in their narratives of the past by demonstrating the objective recitation of the events as well as supplying concrete evidence and reliable sources. For instance, Matthew Penney (2013) in his essay “Making history: Manga between *kyara* and historiography” applies this concept of “realistic effect” to demonstrate that historical manga can be a potential medium to effectively construct the past. As one of the good examples, Penny analyzes a manga series titled *Jin* by Murakami Motoka in which the manga artist “selectively employs bibliographies and footnotes” as well as “outside sources such as museum collections” to produce an authentic aura for his historical manga (p.158). Moreover, Murakami has constructed a “comparison/contrast-based structure” in his manga to introduce the readers to the differences of the medical practices and equipment in the Edo period and the modern time in the detailed illustrations and textbook-like explanations (Penney, 2013, p.158). As a result, the manga series *Jin* was highly regarded for generating a sense of “realism” in the representation of the Bakumatsu period (Penney, 2013, p.157). Penney comments that historical manga such as *Jin* display the enormous potential of this medium to guide the reader into the discipline of historiography while maintaining its form as a popular product. Thus, Penny’s study provides a constructive framework for this research to explain the strategies employed by the artists of historical manga to construct the Bakumatsu-

Ishin period in their works and to account the practical use of manga as a channel to transmit history to readers.

Meanwhile, the structure of manga is also an important element in order to analyze the narrative of manga. In their book *Reading Japan Cool: Pattern of Manga Literacy and Discourse* Ingulsrud and Allen (2009) suggest that the linguistic and graphic components need to be examined hand in hand in order to thoroughly understand the content of a manga story (p.30). For instance, the verbal text in a panel contains equal information to the visual image in the same panel (Ingulsrud & Allen, 2009, p.30). In some cases, though, visual images are presented without any linguistic text, the purposeful omission of text can be suggestive in itself (Ingulsrud and Allen, 2009, p.31).

Furthermore, Scott McCloud (1994) offers several important concepts to analyze comics and manga texts in his famous book *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. He proposes that an iconic representation of a character in comics helps readers to identify with the characters easily, while a photo-realistic depiction makes them see it as a face of another (p.36). In other words, if artists want readers to blend in to the world of comics, they will depict things and characters with simple lines, while if the artists want to emphasize “the beauty and complexity of the physical world,” the visual depiction will be accurate and lifelike (McCloud, 1994, p.41). Likewise, McCloud notes that Japanese artists have developed a technique in which simple iconic characters are portrayed against a “near-photographic background” in order to heighten the process of “reader-identification” with protagonists whose depictions are simplified to a few lines (p.44). In contrast, other characters such as antagonists are often portrayed with more realistic facial features to separate them from the readers’ perspectives (McCloud, 1994, p.44). As a result, manga artists can prime readers’ minds to identify heroes and villains via non-textual

clues. Moreover, the photo-liked depiction of background accompanies with the iconic representation of characters also enhance the engagement of readers with the story. This concept is also useful to investigate how manga artists portray certain historical events and figures in manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period through the specific depictions in order to introduce these events and figures to readers.

Another practical concept suggested by McCloud (1994) to understand compositions of panels in comics and manga is that of “closure,” which he defines as “the phenomenon of observing parts but perceiving the whole” (p.63). As readers’ eyes pass from panel to panel, they are mentally connecting all the panels together to *conceptualize* all the sequential motions of both the graphic and text narratives in the manga. For instance, in one panel, a manga artist draws two samurai brandishing their swords, and the next panel shows that one of them has been killed. The moment of the final blow is omitted. This exercise not only helps readers to engage with the fictional world, but also assists the stories to move forward.

McCloud claims that there are six types of panel progression: moment-to-moment, action-to-action, subject-to subject, scene-to-scene, aspect-to-aspect, and non-sequitur (transitions with no relationship)³ (p.74). By utilizing these progressions, manga artists can manipulate not only the graphic and text narratives, but also the readers’ point of view in the story, according to their own purposes. This study will utilize McCloud’s model of panel progression to examine the narratives of manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period, which may reveal the manga artists’ intentions in constructing the past events. Subsequently, this approach will also help to demonstrate that these characteristics of manga efficiently recreate the past to the readers along with other visual media.

³ See more discussions regarding to panel progression in McCloud, S. (1994). *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Overall, the unique combination of visual and textual narratives in manga demonstrates a powerful expression of the past. The iconic representation of manga helps readers to identify with characters and stories more easily than other visual media such as film or television. Moreover, the complementary use of textual narratives with visual depictions also directs readers to the specific intention of the manga artist. These mechanisms of historical manga not only make it easier to transmit history, but also create a certain view of the past to readers by the intentional delivery through the distinctive characteristics of manga compositions of panels. Thus, these unique features of manga to construct particular perspectives of the past to readers, especially young generations has set manga apart from other visual media such as films or even anime which employed similar Japanese drawing techniques.

3.2 The Theoretical framework

3.2.1 “Collective memory”: the mediated construction of history

With regard to studying representations of historical events through media, recent historians and scholars have chosen an interdisciplinary approach. The concept of “collective memory” is adapted not only by historians but also by scholars who come from media studies backgrounds in order to explore the process of constructing images of the past in media production. As a part of visual media, through its distinctive ways of depicting the past, manga also have the potential to shape the public’s memory, which is also a main focus of this thesis.

The term “collective memory” was coined by Maurice Halbwachs in 1950 through his observation of how people from the same historical and social background share memories, and how those shared memories shape certain identities for different groups and societies (p.53). This thesis employs the definition of “collective memory” as a “form of memory that transcends

individuals and is shared by the group” (Roediger III, Zaromb, and Butler, 2009, p.139). This thesis also uses some similar concepts such as “popular memory⁴” in regard to the memory shared by a large group of people in society due to the construction of mass media. Michel Foucault’s concept of “popular memory” (1977) is often cited in reference to memory as a counter version of the oppressed group to resist official, dominant narratives of the past. However, Steve Anderson (2001) has criticized the fact that Foucault’s idea of “popular memory” does not take into account “the corrupting influence of the mass media” (p.22).

In his own view, Steve Anderson (2001) comments that, popular memory—“part of the power and significant of televisual historiography”—has more flexibility and intangibility in comparison with ‘official’ history” (p.22). Thus, popular memory is expedient to media constructions of history. As memory is often considered to be in opposition to historical discourses, the exploration of popular memory through media products, such as historical films or television programs, provides a lively way to look at history in which the audience can interact with past events through motion pictures and sound effects. Anderson (2001) goes on to assert that the strategies for making history through media are not “limited to overtly historical or nostalgia-oriented programming,” but also expands to “science fiction and time-travel narratives” (p.25). According to Anderson, therefore, the repetition of historical events in films and TV programs “indicate[s] a cultural need to imagine a type of history that is productive rather than merely reproductive and, perhaps most importantly, open to interaction with the present” (p.28). Based on these observations, the concept of “collective memory” is an essential part of this

⁴ See more of Foucault’s discussion in Foucault, M. (1977). *Film and Popular Memory*. *Edinburg Magazine*, 2, 20-25.

research since it will help to explain the reason why certain historical events and figures are frequently employed in particular manner to construct the memory of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period.

3.2.2 The media transformation of samurai stories in Japan: “media complex”

To demonstrate that Japanese popular media is a powerful tool to aid or even shape Japan’s history, Henry Smith (2006) introduces the concept of the “media complex⁵” which he defines as,

[...] the distinct mix of media by which people in any given historical era learn of things beyond their own immediate community. These “media complexes” have been constructed both by available technologies of communication and by the political determinants of what kinds of stories are told, either through negative prohibition or positive promotion (p.78).

According to Smith, media complex is extremely helpful to investigate how popular samurai stories has evolved and expanded its forms in various media through different historical periods in Japan. Smith (2006) asserts that the story of Chūshingura (The Forty Seven Rōnin) has been produced and reproduced numerous times in various popular media through different

⁵ Smith has developed the concept of the “media complex” from Satō Tadao’s idea of *sakuhigun* (1976) in which a group of media products which share a same core-story (in this case, samurai stories) such as Akō Gishi/Chūshingura, Shinsengumi, Minamoto Musashi, etc. See more Smith’s discussion on Satō in Smith, H. (2006). “The Media and Politics of Japanese Popular History: The Case of the Akō Gishi.” In J. C. Baxter (Ed.), *Historical Consciousness, Historiography and Modern Japanese Values* (pp. 75-98). Kyoto: International Research Center for Japanese Studies.

historical periods: at first the story was performed in the kabuki or bunraku stages during the Edo period Tokugawa period, and then evolved to historical novels in the Meiji period, and transformed into films and TV dramas in modern Japan (p.75). More importantly, in the process of becoming popular in the media complex, the crucial factor for the development of a story involves political contexts which may prohibit or promote the story based on how the authorities want people to interpret particular incidents in the past (Smith, 2006, p.77). This thesis will utilize Smith's concept of the "media complex" to describe how manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period inherit the popular images of historical figures and events across different media forms such as historical novels, films, and so on, and renovate these images to suit the taste of contemporary Japanese readers, especially the young generations.

Along with these concepts, this research will refer and identify particular combinations of scripts and graphics related to the depiction of historical events and figures as historical signifiers. Historical signifiers are historical events/figures portrayed frequently in various manga about the Bakamatsu-Ishin period, such as the Black Ship event, which indicate a significant meaning of the events/figures to the construction of the past. Thus, these identified historical signifiers will be examined in order to discover patterns in constructing the Bakumatsu-Ishin history. And finally, it will draw on the implications of these patterns in historical manga about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period.

3.3 Choice of manga series to be studied

In the process of screening the manga series to be studied, the researcher has come across numerous manga series that focus only on the Shinsengumi rather than of the historical events of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period as a whole. However, in order to demonstrate the potential of manga

to reconstruct the history of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period, the researcher will only select and analyze the manga series, which recreate several of historical events and figures in their storylines. Here is the list of the selected manga series for this research:

- *Shōnen* manga genre (boy's manga):

- i. Watsuki Nobuhiro 和月伸宏. (1994-1999). *Rurouni Kenshin* るろうに剣心, published in *Weekly Shonen Jump*. Tokyo: Shueisha 集英社.

- *Shōjo* manga genre (girl's manga):

- i. Kanno Aya 菅野文. (2003). *Hokusō Shinsengumi* 北走新選組, published in *Bessatsu Hana to Yume*. Tokyo: Hakusensha 白泉社.

- ii. Watanabe Taeko 渡辺多恵子. (1997-2013). *Kaze Hikaru* 風光る, published in *Flowers*. Tokyo: Shogakukan 小学館. (Still on-going, 34 volumes so far)

- iii. Yukimura Yukimura (2007-2009). *Chōshū Five* 長州ファイブ, published in *Comic B's-Log*. Tokyo: Enterbrain エンターブレイン.

- *Seinen* manga genre (manga for young men):

- i. Morita Kenji 盛田賢司. (2003-2006). *Getsumei Seiki - Sayonara Shinsengumi* 月明星稀-さよなら新選組, published in *Young Sunday*. Tokyo: Shogakukan 小学館.

- ii. Takahashi Tsutomu 高橋ツトム. (2005-2011). *Sidooh* 士道, published in *Weekly Young Jump*. Tokyo: Shueisha 集英社.

All the manga series chosen above will be examined in the Japanese original version⁶.

⁶The researcher will self-translate essential parts of these manga into English as back-up evidence for the research's argument.

3.4 Data collection procedure

In order to prove the argument that there is a general timeline of historical events in all manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period, the researcher has processed through all the chosen manga series. As a result, the researcher has identified in Table 1, which is historical events and figures that appeared in high frequency in the all or some of the chosen manga series.

Table 1: List of historical events and figures in the chosen manga series

Historical events		Titles of Manga series						The numbers of series that depict the events
Year	Events	<i>Rurouni Kenshin</i>	<i>Hokusō Shinsengumi</i>	<i>Kaze Hikaru</i>	<i>Chōshū Five</i>	<i>Getsu Seiki - Sayonara Shinsengumi</i>	<i>Sidooh</i>	
1853	The Black ships led by Commander Perry came to Tokyo Bay.	○		○		○	○	4
1855	The Ansei Great Earthquake in Edo at 6.9 Magnitude					○	○	2
1860	The assassination of Ii Naosuke, or the Sakuradamon Incident	○		○		○	○	4
1863	Aizu and Satsuma troops drive Chōshū force out of Kyoto in a political change.			○	○	○	○	4
	The Anglo- Satsuma war.				○	○	○	3
1864	The Ikedaya Incident			○		○	○	3
	The Kinmon Incident or the Forbidden Gate Incident.	○		○	○	○	○	5
1867	The Shogun resigned in Kyoto. Proclamation of Restoration of Imperial rule		○	○			○	3
1868	The Boshin civil war between the Imperial Forces and the ex-Tokugawa Forces.	○	○				○	3
1869	The Boshin War ended. The beginning of the Meiji Ishin Period	○	○				○	3

According to the table above, the historical events that have the most frequency of construction in manga can be divided into two categories: 1) the events related to the power

struggle between the pro-Tokugawa forces and the anti-Tokugawa forces; 2) the events related to the resistance of Japanese forces against the Western imperial power.

Base on the observation, these historical events appear to indicate a common time line which all chosen manga series follow to construct the Bakumatsu-Ishin period. As a result, the researcher will focus on the analysis of the historical events that most manga series have chosen to depict in order to explain the reason why they are employed repeatedly in manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period.

3.5 Data Analysis Procedure

The text analysis is conducted on all six manga series, pertinent to the Bakumatsu-Ishin period. The research has noted different strategies to depict the particular historical event and figures in alternative manner to academic history. The data that is discovered during this stage of the analysis was predictable.

Upon the completion of the text analysis, the patterns that arose are related partly or fully to the concepts in the theoretical framework. Hence this phenomenon will be discussed further in the later chapter.

3.6 The short summaries of six selected manga series

The researcher includes the summary of all the six manga series in the end of this chapter for the readers to comprehend the basic manga plots before read further to the finding and analysis parts in the next chapter.

a) Watsuki Nobuhiro 和月伸宏. (1994). *Rurouni Kenshin るろうに剣心*, published in *Weekly Shonen Jump*. Tokyo: Shueisha 集英社.

The story begins in the early of the Meiji period. The story's protagonist - Rurouni Kenshin, is an ex-assassin of the anti-Tokugawa force, who has tried to find his place in the new era where the struggle between the old values of the samurai class and the new ideas and techniques of Westerner in Japan even though the new Meiji government has come out as the victor.

b) Kanno Aya 菅野文. (2003). *Hokusō Shinsengumi 北走新選組*, published in *Bessatsu Hana to Yume*. Tokyo: Hakusensha 白泉社.

The groups of short related manga stories combined in one volume depict the fight to the death of the last Shinsengumi members during the Boshin war in 1869. Each story retells the dreams and the friendship that each member gain during their battles to protect their ideology under the name of Shinsengumi. The last story and also the climax of this manga is the death of Hijikata Toshizou, vice captain of Shinsengumi as the end note of one chapter of Japan's history and the opening to the new era – the Meiji period.

c) Watanabe Taeko 渡辺多恵子. (1997). *Kaze Hikaru 風光る*, published in *Flowers*. Tokyo: Shogakukan 小学館.

The main character of the story is a young girl, Kamiya Sei, who disguised as a male samurai to join Shinsengumi group in order to get revenge for her family

who were killed the anti-Tokugawa forces. With the help of Okita Souji who discovers her real gender by accident, Kamiya slowly adjusts to the life of the samurai and begins to understand the ideology and practice of the Shinsengumi who want to fight to reserve not only the Tokugawa government but also the Japanese traditional values which were threatened by the foreign forces during the Bakumatsu period.

d) Yukimura ユキムラ. (2007). *Chōshū Five* 長州ファイブ, published in *Comic B's-Log*. Tokyo: Enterbrain エンターブレイン.

The story retells the journey to England of five elite samurai from the *Choushuu* clan, who seek new knowledge and advance techniques of Westerner in order to build up Japanese own strength during the Bakumatsu period. The journey is a challenge for their old belief and value and the quest for new ideals to bring back to their home country.

e) Morita Kenji 盛田賢司. (2003). *Getsu Seiki - Sayonara Shinsengumi* 月明星稀 - さよなら新選組, published in *Young Sunday*. Tokyo: Shogakukan 小学館.

The main character in this story is Hijikata Toshizou, vice-captain of Shinsengumi. The story recounts the transformation of Hijikata from a young man with simple ideals for justice to a grown up man with a larger ambition and unyielding belief in protecting the values and ideology that he trusts.

f) Takahashi Tsutomu 高橋ツトム. (2005). *Sidooh* 士道, published in *Weekly Young Jump*. Tokyo: Shueisha 集英社.

The story illustrates the struggle to live and survive of two orphaned brother in a chaotic time of the Bakumatsu period. In order to define their place, the two brothers have taken up the swords and fight to protect their rights to live and try to build up their own happiness while being exposed to many different political turmoil in such a dark period of Japan's history.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Initial analysis of selected manga series

Analysis of six manga series finds that some historical events are depicted repeatedly across different series. In order to uncover the patterns of historical events during the Bakumatsu-Ishin period that are employed in the manga, Table 1 (see Chapter 3) is based on the initial analysis of six manga series that emphasize major historical events which indicate significant meanings to the construction of the past.

The initial analysis reveals two main categories of historical events depicted:

- i) Resistance to the West: events related to the resistance of Japanese forces against the Western imperial power (the Black Ship arrival in 1853; the Anglo-Satsuma war in 1863)
- ii) Domestic political struggles: events related to the power struggle between the pro-Tokugawa forces and the anti-Tokugawa forces.

Regarding the second category, the domestic struggles seem to be constructed based on the flow of the following three components:

- i) the beginning of the Bakumatsu period (the assassination of Ii Naosuke/the Sakuradamon Incident in 1860);

ii) the peak of the Bakumatsu period (the political clashes between the Aizu and Satsuma troops with the Chōshū troops in Kyoto in 1863; the Ikedaya Incident and the Kinmon Incident in 1864)

iii) the end of the Bakumatsu period (the Shogun resigns in Kyoto in 1867, the Boshin War in 1869, the beginning of the Meiji period in 1868)

Depending of the length of the manga series, all three components or only one or two components are portrayed in the manga. For instance, the manga series *Sidooh* has twenty-five volumes in total, *Rurouni Kenshin* has twenty-eight volumes, and *Kaze Hikaru* is an ongoing series currently with thirty-four volumes; therefore, the manga artists make a great effort to construct the Bakumatsu period from start to the end. Yet some manga, such as *Hokushō Shinsengumi* and *Chōshū Five*, are published as short series with only one or two volumes in total. In those short series, the manga artists focus on depicting one component of the Bakumatsu period. This strategy aims at selling printed copy to targeted groups of readers. However, it is also worth noting that the manga representations of history are not only constructed to suit the taste of different types of readers, but they also reflect the trend of popular history in which both the artists and readers are interested. Thus, the central plot lines and the graphic depiction of historical events are one of the important elements that reveal the schemes and historical conventions employed to rebuild the history of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period.

This chapter will discuss the findings in the first category, resistance against the West, in order to reveal the schemes that manga artists employ to rebuild the intense international relations between Japan and Western countries in the late nineteenth century. The second part will be an examination of the events that belong to the second category, domestic political struggles, in order to discover how the manga narratives and visual images portray the political

turmoil in Japan during the Bakumatsu-Ishin period. The third part discusses the similarities and differences in strategic depictions of particular historical events and figures in the six chosen manga series.

4.2 Resistance to the West

4.2.1 The Black Ships event (1853)

In four out of six chosen manga series, the year 1853 when the Black ships came to Japan is used as a signal for the beginning of the fall of the Tokugawa government. The Black Ship event is constructed as a historical signifier not only for the intervention of the Western Imperial powers in Japan, but also the catalyst for the collapse of the Tokugawa government. From the historian's viewpoint, Mikiso Hane (1986) remarks that, "Clearly, the situation that most seriously contributed to the undermining of the Bakufu's authority and self-confidence was the arrival of the Western powers [in 1853]. Without the crisis engendered by this situation, the Bakufu would not have collapsed as soon as it did" (p.83). Thus, the depiction of this historical event in manga is employed to recapture the threatening situation of the Black Ships arrival and Western imperial power in Japan in the mid-nineteenth century to the current readers.

To give an example, in the *seinen* manga genre⁷ such as *Sidooh* and *Getsumei Seiki Sayonara Shinsengumi* (hereafter referred as *GMSS*), the depiction of the Black Ships is portrayed in the realistic photograph style on one page or even two pages with rectangular frames narrating the time and the historical event. Susan Sontag (1978) has commented that the usage of

⁷ *Seinen* manga is a genre whose main targets are young male readers roughly 17 on into their 40's and contents are "amplified on violence and sex" (Ingulsrud & Allen, 2009, p.14).

photographic images “implies instant access to the real” as well as helping viewers to “reexperience the unreality and remoteness of the real” since photography has been able to capture the moment of the event happening and make the present stand still in its image (p.85). Here, historical manga creates a sense of “being there” for the readers by closing the gap between the past and present through the photographic depiction of the arrival of the Black Ships.

According to Roland Barthes (1964), comic strips apply a function called “relay” in order to transmit the linguistic message of visual images: the image constitutes the main information to the viewers while the text plays as the supplement to the coded message (p.38). Thus, the combination of the graphic and text in a panel provides a loaded message that the artist wants to convey. For instance, in *GSSS*, the scene of the Black Ship event is portrayed sporadically across two chapters. When the Black Ship event first appears in the story in the end of one chapter in the manga, Morita Kenji (2003) draws a tiny shadow of four ships coming closer from the sea along with an American flag and the text: “The [Tokugawa] period is about to face a big wave of change” (my translation) (Morita Kenji, 2003, *GSSS*, 1, p.52). The second appearance of the Black Ship event, in the next chapter, is portrayed in a grand photographic style. Furthermore, the four Black Ships are depicted without panels, emphasizing the sense of real ships approaching (Morita Kenji, 2003, *GSSS*, 1, p.160-161). A few lines of text introduce the historical event to the reader as well as a new turning point for the storyline. Moreover, the dominating image of the Black Ships coming from the outside world by sea creates a threatening and ominous feeling and reminds readers of the chaos caused by the American and other Westerner powers, to not only the Tokugawa government, but also to Japanese society as a whole during the Bakumatsu period. This style of depiction of the Black Ships incident stresses how important this event was to Japan’s history. At the end, the last depiction of the Black Ship

event portrays the four ships anchored silently in Edo Bay, with the text reading: “The Black Ships arrived and from now on, the period called Bakumatsu has begun” (my translation). The Black Ship event is constructed in this manga in a way that illuminates the view of the end of the Tokugawa as the start of the chaos.

Historical manga also incorporate famous paintings of the Black Ships by Japanese artists of the Bakumatsu period to establish what Bathes has termed “reality effect,” to create a sense of authority and reality for the fictional stories. Moreover, John Berger (1972) argues that the reproduction of historical paintings “exploits the authority of art” in order to illustrate the present perspective (p.29). For example, in *Kaze Hikaru*, the famous painting titled “Bushuu Ushioda Enkei” (Scenario in Bushuu Ushioda) is re-drawn in manga style in a medium size panel. And the script in the rectangular speech frame explains that the Black Ships that came in 1853 were the cause of the fall of the Tokugawa, as the rulers yielded to unequal treaties with America. Furthermore, underneath the graphic panel is a mini-size Okita Sōji, one of the significant members of the Shinsengumi. He is wearing black sunglasses and acts as one of the main characters in *Kaze Hikaru*. He is quoting an old Kyoto adage, “Isshun saki wa yami” (It's all darkness one step ahead, my translation) (Watanabe Taeko, 1997, *Kaze Hikaru*, 1, p.53). Here, readers are introduced to the actual historical event in the way the historical painting is reproduced and the textbook-style explanation is included in a single panel. Additionally, the smaller picture of the character Okita Sōji and his comment imply the distress and negative impact of the foreign forces on Japanese people during this incident. Peter Burke (2001) has commented that functions of a painting go far beyond displaying scenes from the past to provide an interpretation of history (p.158). In fact, the manga artist Watanabe Taeko replicates the historical painting as evidence for the actual incident, which can give a sense of reality to the

readers in order for them to “interpret” the event. Finally, the iconic representation of Okita Sōji allows readers identify themselves with the scene in the way that they relate to the gloomy days of the Bakumatsu period that they already know from history.

In this way the actual Black Ships event is blended skillfully into the manga narrative as the important turning point of the story and to accelerate the tempo of the development of the events and characters. For instance, in *GSSS*, protagonist Hijikata goes on a quest to look for a way to protect his warrior spirit before the challenges of the superior Western weapons and warships. Meanwhile in *Kaze Hikaru*, the time span jumps to ten years after the arrival of Black Ships, when the conflict between the anti-Tokugawa forces and the pro-Tokugawa forces had already reached its most violent and bloody stage, in 1863. In addition to that, in *Sidooh*, the Black Ship event is a reported story from a narrator as the beginning of the rising of the anti-Tokugawa forces against the decision of the Tokugawa leaders to open Japan’s ports under the West’s demands (Takahashi Tsutomu, 2005, *Sidooh*, 3, p. 103). This depiction implies the chaotic events of Japanese politics and society following the Black ships incident which is portrayed in the later parts of manga storylines.

Overall, through the depiction of the Black Ships event, the manga artists are able to not only reproduce an important historical incident, but also enhance the past atmosphere to the readers since the manga stories also change its turning point just like what had happened in the past. Moreover, the significance of the Black Ships’ arrival in 1853, that from this moment began the transition of Japan from a closed-off feudal country to an open and modernized nation, is once again emphasized to current readers.

4.2.2 The Anglo-Satsuma War (1863)

The Anglo-Satsuma War occurred in 1863 due to a dispute between the English government and the Satsuma forces over the murder of English citizens in Satsuma prior. After this battle, an extremist faction in the Satsuma forces along with the Chōshū forces had to “abandon its blind anti-Western stance and begin Westernizing its military forces” since they realized that Japanese swords could not win against the overwhelming strength of Western military forces with guns and cannons (Hane, 1986, p.76).

The Anglo-Satsuma War is depicted in quite a similar way in both *GSSS* and *Sidooh*. The battle scenes are seen from two points of view: the English ships from the sea and the Satsuma force in their battle stations. In *Sidooh*, not only the textual narratives but also extra explanatory notes are employed in order to explicate the cause of the battle (Takahashi Tsutomu, 2005, *Sidooh*, 13, p.63). This is a type of “realistic effect” to make the readers believe in the accuracy of the historical manga as well as to direct their perspective of this historical incident to the Japanese side. The most interesting point to note is that the lack of explicit depiction of the foreigners in the battle scene, except for the small black ship in the background. Even in *Chōshū Five*, the Anglo-Satsuma war is reported in an English newspaper with the illustration of only English battle ships firing cannon on the Satsuma’s troops (Yukimura, 2007, *Chōshū Five*, 2, p.88). These findings indicate that the black ships now have a second meaning. That is, the manga artists employ the black ships as iconic signs for the Western military powers and modern technology during the Bakumatsu period. This also implies that the Western power seems to only dominate the Japanese forces in terms of advanced technology, which Japan was still lacking in the late Tokugawa period due to the long closed country policy.

While the Anglo-Satsuma war appears to be depicted objectively in the manga, the verbal narrative is employed to suggest the artists' perceptions of this war to the readers. For instance, in a large panel in *Sidooh*, artist Takahashi Tsutomu depicts the aftermath of the war with smoke coming from both the English battle ships and from Satsuma's side on the beach. Meanwhile, the text in the same panel says that there were more casualties on the English side than the Satsuma side and the English ships had to withdraw (Takahashi Tsutomu, 2005, *Sidooh*, 13,p.65). This implies that the Satsuma force came out of the war better off than the English troops, and signifies a strong Japanese nationalist sentiment, that Japanese forces were able to fight back against the Western powers despite the vast differences in technology, as long as the Japanese still maintained their own pride and culture.

The purpose of constructing the Anglo-Satsuma war in the manga is to demonstrate the differences between the English forces (representing Western imperial power) and the Satsuma forces (representing Japanese military power). The depiction of the war and its aftermath not only implies that the result of the war was in Japan's favor, but also suggests that the Japanese spirit of the samurai and its traditional military—the epitome of “Japan”—can hold its own against the Westerners, whose only advantage is big guns. This may have the effect of making contemporary readers feel proud of the Japanese spirit and determined to fight against the stronger enemies: a subtle way to represent a nationalist perspective by taking an event out of its historical context and using it to glorify the Japanese figures in the story.

4.2.3 Stereotypes of Western Others

The manga depiction of the Black Ships associated with Western imperial powers demonstrates a stereotyping scheme of Occidentalism in which the Japanese are depicted as

brave fighters while the Westerners are dehumanized and replaced by the image of machines. This visual stereotyping of is the opposite of what Edward Said conceptualized in his famous book *Orientalism* (1979). According to Said's theory, Orientalism is a discourse in which "Europe was always in a position of strength, not to say domination" vis-à-vis its "Oriental" Others (p.40). In this viewpoint, the "Oriental" is often depicted through the lens of the Westerners as "irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, 'different'; thus the European is rational, virtuous, mature, 'normal'" (Ibid. p.40). From the opposite perspective, Ian Buruma & Avishai Margalit in their book *Occidentalism: The West in the eyes of its enemies* (2004) state that in the eyes of non-Westerners, Western Others are dismissed as "a mass of soulless, decadent, money-grubbing, rootless, faithless, unfeeling parasites" (p.10). Similarly, Peter Burke (2001) suggests the visual depictions of Western Others by non-Westerners as "monstrous races" or "exotic" facial figures and clothes can be perceived as an act of Occidentalism (p.132).

Manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period suggest that the Japanese people of that time had a negative view of Westerners, who disrupted and destroyed their normal lives by the forceful arrival of the Westerners. In fact, depictions of Europeans in the series *Sidooh* emphasize their very large nose, extremely hairy faces and overweight bodies (Takahashi Tsutomu, 2005, *Sidooh*, 4, p.110). According to McCloud's view of iconic representation, Japanese artists tend to draw protagonists in iconic styles to "assist in reader-identification" with heroes/heroines, while they depict antagonists "more realistically in order to objectify them, emphasizing their 'otherness' from the readers" (p.44). Consequently, the depiction of the Westerners reinforces the sense of that they are exotic aliens among the Japanese readers.

Besides the visual depictions, the verbal narratives also help to portray the Japanese goodness and superiority to the Westerners. For instance, in *Chōshū Five*, an English man is

confronting the Japanese protagonists regarding the fact that the Japanese authority refuses to give up the culprits who have killed his fellow countrymen or to pay compensation after the Anglo-Satsuma war. From the English man's point of view, the Japanese authority's behavior is barbaric and uncivilized. In lieu of an answer, the Japanese protagonists say that the war broke out due to the English disrespect for Japanese authority and Japanese culture (Yukimura, 2007, *Chōshū Five*, 2, p.89). The English man feebly replies that he is sorry for describing Japanese as barbarians since he has not known much about Japanese culture. Here, the English is shown as ignorant and haughty, while the Japanese protagonist is depicted as patriotic and rational, and as generously introducing Japanese culture to the English. In another scene in this manga, a character meets an English prostitute and has a talk with her about his dream to learn more from the English civilized society. But, the prostitute laughs bitterly and laments about the hard life of poor people in England, saying that it is not a civilized nation like the Japanese had imagined, and that humans are the same throughout the world (Yukimura, 2007, *Chōshū Five*, 2, p.78). On one hand, this depiction of the Western Others illustrates what Buruma and Magalit (2004) argue about Occidental views of the West as a “machine civilization, coldly rationalist, mechanical, without soul” (p.37). On the other hand, Japanese elites are depicted as sympathizing with the poor women and the laboring classes of the industrialized England of the nineteenth century. These depictions stress the idea that the Japanese elites during the Meiji Restoration concluded that “the creation of a ‘modern’ Japanese identity that, while selectively adopting and adapting certain useful elements of ‘Western civilization’, was deeply grounded in the native cultural tradition” (Starrs, 2011, p.69). Interestingly, the depiction of the struggle of Japanese political forces during the Bakumatsu-Ishin period highlights to current readers the resistance of the

Japanese forces to the Western imperial powers in order to preserve the uniqueness of Japanese culture.

4.3 Domestic political struggles

4.3.1 The Sakuradamon Incident (1860)

The Sakuradamon Incident was the assassination of Ii Naosuke, head of the Tokugawa councilors and the one behind all the Tokugawa's decisions on signing treaties with the Western powers. Furthermore, Ii Naosuke was also known as the one who used extreme methods to take out the political opponents of the Tokugawa's authority (Mikiso, 1986, p. 70). He was targeted for assassination by anti-Tokugawa forces who supported the philosophy of "Sonnō Jōi" (revere the emperor and expel the barbarians). According to Mikiso (1986),

[The assassination of Ii Naosuke] deprived the Bakufu of its strong man, and forced its officials to try to cope with the opposition by winning over the cooperation of the imperial court. Consequently, the center of the political action began shifting to Kyoto (p.71).

This significant historical event is constructed as an evolutionary factor for the Japanese nation in manga by changing the focus of the story from one arc to another. For instance, in *GSSS*, this event is introduced to depict the creation of the Shinsengumi group by Kondō Asami and Hijikata Toshizō in Kyoto when the Tokugawa government wants to secure its control over the imperial court against the anti-Tokugawa forces. In *Sidooh*, Takashi Tsutomu uses a technique call "scene to scene" in order to depict the cause and effect of the assassination of Ii Naosuke in sequent panels (Takahashi Tsutomu, 2005, *Sidooh*, 3, pp.104-107). This kind of graphic-text narrative emphasizes not only the process of the manga, but also the actual historical

process during the Bakumatsu period. Moreover, it is notable that this assassination event is both directly and indirectly referred to in the plotline of *Rurouni Kenshin*. This manga also deals with another assassination, that of Okubō Toshimichi, minister of the Department of Home Affairs in the Meiji government in 1878 (Watsuki Nobuhiro, 1994, *Rurouni Kenshin*, 7, p.183). The implications of this assassination and of the Sakuradamon incident become apparent when the protagonist Kenshin is forced to go back to Kyoto in order to resolve his past troubles with his old enemies and to prevent Japan's government from falling apart without a strong leadership, just as it did in the Bakumatsu period (Watsuki Nobuhiro, 1994, *Rurouni Kenshin*, 7, p.194).

The depiction of the Sakuradamon incident in these manga series is similar to the Black Ship event: it is treated as a symbolic signifier indicating the political downfall of the Tokugawa authority. The blood-spattered scenes of the assassinations heighten the intensity of the political atmosphere between the two opposing forces in the stories, but they also function to foreshadow even more vicious and violent actions, some of them actual historical incidents, which occur later in the manga. Thus, the boundary between fiction and reality becomes blurred through the depiction of manga.

4.3.2 The peak of the political struggles in the Bakumatsu period

In most of the chosen manga series, the climax of the political conflicts between the Tokugawa forces and the anti-Tokugawa forces occurs in the violent clashes in Kyoto, battles to gain the approval of the Emperor and imperial court to rule Japan. Several manga artists have made a great effort to construct events that happened during this period. The combination of the graphic depiction and textual narratives in those manga series create a sense of “being there.” Matthew Penney (2011) argues that “history-themed manga share many of the basic

characteristic and conventions of filmic representations of the past” (p.155). Indeed, manga artists use filmic techniques to depict the past by “reducing diverse groups to a few representative characters, thus condensing visions of historical events; they may also include anachronisms due to available locations and the idiosyncrasies of surviving sources” (Penney, 2011, 154).

For instance, the political struggles during the Bakumatsu period are represented through selective characters. For example, members of the infamous Shinsengumi group like Hijikata Toshizō, Kondō Asami, and Okita Sōji represent the Tokugawa forces, while historical figures like Sakamoto Ryōma, Katsura Kogōro, and Saigō Takamori represent the anti-Tokugawa forces. The pro-Tokugawa forces, such as the Shinsengumi group, are imagined as passionate young samurai—the epitome of the ruling class in Japan for more than two centuries—who want to fight to protect their true warrior way by defending the Tokugawa regime. In contrast, the anti-Tokugawa forces are often depicted as revolutionary individuals who employ unconventional strategies to fight back against the foreign invaders and restore the power of the Emperor by overthrowing the Tokugawa regime. Consequently, the historical events depicted in manga series about the Bakumatsu period focus are those that are related to clashes between the Shinsengumi and the anti-Tokugawa groups.

The evidence for this manga strategy can be found in three historical events depicted in *GSSS*, *Sidooh*, and *Kaze Hikaru*. According to these manga narratives, the first step leading to the acceleration of violence between the Tokugawa authority and the anti-Tokugawa forces was when the Chōchū extremists were driven out of Kyoto by the Aizu clans and the Tokugawa forces due to a brief political change in 1863. In the manga, the Shinsengumi group only appears briefly in this event; however, they receive official recognition from the Tokugawa as a part of

their military forces (Watanabe Taeko, 1997. *Kaze Hikaru*, 3, p.168-169). This scenario is important as it sets the tone for the development of both the plots and the characters. Here, the Shinsengumi members are depicted as grateful to the Tokugawa, but also as proving their worth by using extreme methods to secure the Tokugawa's status in Kyoto and eliminate the anti-Tokugawa forces. Moreover, the Chōshū forces are portrayed as determined and eager to regain their political status in the imperial court, which intensifies the hostility between the two sides.

The second crucial historical event used to construct the political turmoil of the Bakumatsu period in manga is the Shinsengumi's notorious raid of Ikedaya, the secret meeting place of the anti-Tokugawa groups in Kyoto in 1864. In this famed incident, the Shinsengumi group had gained useful information from their own spies and from the torture of prisoners from the Chōshū clans, and launched a surprise attack on the Chōshū rebels during their secret gathering at the Ikedaya inn. The gruesome ending of this incident, as well as the tragic fates of the people involved, have become symbolic of the Shinsengumi for contemporary Japanese consumers of various popular media such as historical novels, films, TV dramas and anime.

There are several ways for a manga artist to construct the Ikedaya incident. One way is to squeeze as much visual depiction of the vigorous fighting scenes between the Shinsengumi and the rebels, along with textual narrative of the Ikedaya event, into a single panel (Watsuki Nobuhiro, 1994, *Rurouni Kenshin*, 11, p.180). Chihiro Satō (2009) comments that this technique helps to convey "large amounts of information in a short time" (p.53). Matthew Penney (2011) also remarks that manga "can be an ideal medium" to retell history in few panels while "a prose history would use a paragraph" (p.155). Thus, the mixture of historical education and entertainment in manga allows readers to learn about the past in an entertaining way.

Another approach is to use “subjective motion,” where the readers’ point of view is placed in the same direction as that of a moving action (McCloud, 1996, p.47). Jolyon Barbaka Thomas (2012) explains this technique as follows:

Combined with realistic backgrounds and iconic representations of protagonists, this conflation of the reader’s viewpoint and that of the protagonist further enhances the vicarious impression of “being there” in the story”. The cinematic style of illustration allows *mangaka* [manga artists] to develop their stories with high level of complexity and emotional depth; they invite strong emotional responses as a result (p. 47-48).

This technique is applied in *GSSS*, *Kaze Hikaru*, and *Sidooh* to recreate the Shinsengumi’s raid on Ikedaya. The evening of the raid is shown as the night of the Gion festival, when Kyoto is filled with joyous crowds (Takahashi Tsutomu, 2005, *Sidooh*, 14, p.203). The following panels cut to the Shinsengumi moving toward the Ikedaya inn. The closed doors of the Ikedaya inn represent the dreadful silence before the chaos that will erupt once the doors open (Morita Kenji, 2003, *GSSS*, 6, pp. 92-93). The frenzied killing is depicted from panel to panel and from page to page in sequential order, so that the readers are entranced and mentally imagine themselves “being there” in the heat of the combat (Takahashi Tsutomu, 2005, *Sidooh*, 14, pp.216-217). Furthermore, to channel readers’ emotions, these bloody moments tend to be depicted in textual silence, with no conversation. The only text is sound effects of clashing swords or the screaming of dying people. The effect is one of watching a high-speed realistic action film in which everything happens too quickly for the characters to react properly. Here, the Shinsengumi are portrayed as action heroes who fought bravely to eliminate any enemy that disrupted the peace and order that they devotedly protected. The effect of this gruesome

depiction is to enhance the dark and violence side of the political struggle between the pro- and anti-Tokugawa groups that has reached its peak and started to spiral out of control on both sides.

The ability of manga to direct the readers' viewpoint in particular ways through the order of panels and the certain combinations of graphics and text allows the artists to construct history aesthetically while contributing an innovative way to understand the past. For instance, the Kinmon or Forbidden Gate incident of July 1864 (right after the Ikedaya incident) is described in manga as a bitter victory for the Tokugawa forces against their political enemy, the Chōshū forces. Battles between the pro- and anti-Tokugawa forces are depicted quite swiftly in five out of six chosen manga series in visual images accompanied by textual explanations. A general perception through manga series that illustrates the Kinmon incident is the temporary victory of the Tokugawa force against its enemy, which made the Tokugawa authority and its alliance believe that they might have a chance to resolve all their political problems. In contrast, the Chōshū leaders began to realize that they needed to abandon drastic and extreme actions and find another strategy to defeat the Tokugawa authority in order to rebuild Japan from within. The depiction of the Kinmon incident in manga underlines the dissimilarity in the political goals between the pro-Tokugawa forces that represented the old ways of thinking and the anti-Tokugawa forces that represented the new and revolutionary ideology of modernity. This also suggests the inevitable and unstoppable transformation of Japan during the late years of the Tokugawa period prior to the Meiji Restoration, despite the efforts of the Tokugawa forces to prevent it.

Another theme also identified in the series is the loss of innocent lives and the doubtful attitude toward the leaders of both sides about their own political aims. In manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period, a terrible fire after the Kinmon rebellion, later known as the Great

Kyoto Fire, has been depicted as a shock not only to the regular citizens of Kyoto, but also to the pro- and anti-Tokugawa forces because of the horrifying results of this tragedy. For example, in *Kaze Hikaru*, Watanabe describes the fire taking away the happy lives of thousands and forcing them to live in the streets. Loss of family and accommodation caused numerous women to resort to prostitution to afford food (Watanabe Taeko, 1997. *Kaze Hikaru*, 8, p.20-21). Orphaned starved and fell ill. The depiction with realistic drawing style and heartfelt storytelling provokes sympathy toward ordinary citizens, who tend to be often ignored by the authority during the disaster. Thus, this can be considered as a criticism of the view of manga artists on the political struggles of the late Tokugawa in which the terrible results on ordinary citizens seem to be downplayed in contrast of highlighting the political victory.

4.3.3 The transition from the Bakumatsu period to the Meiji period (1867-1869)

The last years of the Bakumatsu period were of central importance in the transition from the Tokugawa regime to the Meiji regime. The anti-Tokugawa alliance of the Chōchū and Satsuma troops began to have the advantage in combat because of the transformation of the army with Western discipline along with the use of modern guns and other weaponry. Meanwhile, the Tokugawa force and its allies (the Aizu) were a step behind in reforming their own armies. As a result, the Tokugawa were defeated in Kyoto in 1868 and the Shogun had to retire in Edo. This put an end not only to the Tokugawa's 260-year rule, but also the era of the samurai and the traditional feudal system in Japan (Mikiso, 1986, p.81). However, the remaining forces of the former Tokugawa had not yet given up their fight; they retreated to the northern territory of Japan, such as Aizu and Hokkaido, to resist the new Meiji government. The Boshin war in 1869 was the last war for both sides as the former Tokugawa were defeated and surrendered

unconditionally to the Meiji army. Consequently, the Meiji era had begun without major riots from the former Tokugawa forces.

This significant historical transition is depicted quite poetically and aesthetically in manga along with the anxiety and melancholy of the samurai, who are fully aware of their time coming to the end and struggling to find a new way live in modern Japan. Manga artist Kano Aya (2003) has skillfully captured these complex emotions in her manga trilogy *Hokusou Shinsengumi*, in which the lives and deaths of three members of the Shinsengumi during the Boshin war are artfully depicted. In the first of her manga trilogy titled “Aoi ni kaeru” (Return to the azure), where the protagonist Nomura Risaburō, who is having doubts about being a true samurai and is indulging in women and money, has a fateful encounter with Hijikata Toshizō and the Shinsengumi. Throughout battles and bitter defeats by modern guns and Western military strategies, Nomura and his comrades once again question whether this is the end of the samurai, and the uselessness of swords against bullets. However, the unyielding spirit of the Shinsengumi leaders encourage them to fight until the very end. The words of Kondō Asami to Nomura before waking to his death trial, “As long as Shinsengumi still exists, I am still alive” (my translation), inspire Nomura to realize his path of being a true samurai (Kano Aya, 2003, *Hokusou Shinsengumi*, p.26). The day before his death, Nomura confesses to Hijikata in deep sorrow because of Kondo’s death that he will dedicate his honor of being a samurai to protect the Shinsengumi. In this way, Nomura faces death in order to let his comrades escape after their failed attack on the Meiji navy. Before his death, Nomura remembers Hijikata’s words: when a samurai dies, his blood turns azure as he falls into the deep blue sea. Here, the manga artist has brilliantly retold the end of the Tokugawa forces and the samurai class through the brave efforts of the Shinsengumi group to protect their pride as samurai. The depiction of the overwhelming

power of the Western military strategies and weapons are expressed in the wavering spirits of the former Tokugawa soldiers and their reluctance to switch to using guns and wearing Western military uniforms (Kano Aya, 2003, *Hokusou Shinsengumi*, p.19). The effect of the heroic deaths of the Shinsengumi members is to stress the undefeated spirit of the samurai who always strives for self-sacrifice to achieve victory. This creates a sentimental feeling about the virtue of the samurai whose sincerity shines through their fight and death.

Souma Kazue, the protagonist in Kano's second manga "Chiru Hi" (Scattering Scarlet) walks a different path from his fallen comrades of Shinsengumi as he chose to surrender to the Meiji officials when the outcome of the Boshin war became very clear. Souma makes such a hard decision despite his comrades' angry accusations of cowardice and dishonor. His reason is that before dying Hijikata appointed Souma as the captain of the Shinsengumi, and he needs to prevent meaningless bloodshed for the sake of his comrades, the last remaining members. Souma's ideal is that even if the era of samurai comes to the end, the samurai themselves will continue to live on in the new era. However, the changes of the Meiji period are so harsh for the samurai who once had high status and privilege. Souma realizes that his existence as a leader of the Shinsengumi has become a burden to his comrades who are either stuck in the past or feel depressed and guilty about being alive. Consequently, he is determined to commit seppuku to bring an honorable end to the Shinsengumi just as he has promised Hijikata to protect the samurai code until the very last drops of his blood (Kano Aya, 2003, *Hokusou Shinsengumi*, p.138). The depiction of seppuku resonates with modern Japanese nationalism, in which seppuku is viewed as one of the "customs (associated with bushidō) to be cherished, preserved and if necessary, revived (during the militarist period of the 1930s and '40s) to prove that the 'Japanese spirit' is still alive despite all the forces of 'modernization' that threaten to undermine it" (Starrs,

2011, p.49). Thus, the manga has glorified this unique Japanese traditional culture in contemporary readers' minds through its poetic, graphic and verbal narratives.

The last story in Kano's collection is "Jun Haku" (White Sacrifice), which features the last days of Hijikata Toshizō. Kano has skillfully employed the actual historical dates and events as a background to illuminate the coming end of the samurai class at the dawn of the modernization of Japan. Through the emotional and psychological struggles of Hijikata, as one of the founders and a pillar of the Shinsengumi group, the artist conveys her own perspective of this historical time. Here, the depiction of Hijikata's devotion to the Shinsengumi and his samurai code reflect nostalgia for the sincerity and dignity of the "Japanese spirit" which seems to be lacking in the contemporary Japanese society that is defined by materialism and commodities.

Kano's trilogy brilliantly evokes a deep sense of nostalgia and melancholy. Here, the wave of modernization in the early Meiji period is depicted as happening so fast that it swept away all the past values, and some people could not find a place for themselves in this new world. Kano has employed numerous historical events as background for her stories; her main focus is to portray the complex psychological emotions of the Shinsengumi characters when facing the end of world that they knew and the unknown future that they have reluctantly accepted. Similar themes can be found in *Sidooh* and *Rurouni Kenshin*, in which those who survived the last days of the Bakumatsu period have tried to live on and find a new meaning and a new place to stay in an unpredictable era in place of their lost comrades and loved ones.

It can be argued, based on these observations, that the characteristics of graphic-text narratives in manga provide not only a meaningful way for the manga artists to introduce history to their readers from various perspectives of the past, but also to provoke readers' curiosity about

the past, which may develop their own historical perceptions. Moreover, manga and other Japanese popular media such as films and fictional novels have developed a connection in which common conventions and practices can be borrowed from one medium to another. In the case of historical representations of manga, filmic techniques and the fictional narratives have been employed skillfully to construct the vivid images of the past to the readers.

4.4 Strategies to construct history in manga

This section reviews the main strategies and themes that have been analyzed in the previous sections in order to identify patterns of strategies adopted by historical manga about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period. It will also discuss the meanings behind those strategies with regard to answering the third research question about the concealed messages embedded in manga representations of history.

4.4.1 Historical heroes – Japanese idols from the past

As discussed above, I have discovered a pattern in historical manga of using certain historical figures as a main strategy in all the chosen manga series in order to simplify the complex political issues in the power struggles of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period. To answer the question of why certain historical figures are more frequently depicted than others who also lived in the same period and are equally important in history, the concept of “media complex” (Smith, 2006) is useful here.

In his study, Smith has used the development of the Chūshingura story through various media forms from the Tokugawa period to the modern era as empirical evidence. While the

Chūshingura story was prohibited by the Tokugawa authority, who discouraged the public from discuss the ruling regime, the story continued to exist in the kabuki and bunraku theaters as well as in novels, which were very popular with the public during the Tokugawa period (Smith, 2006, p.81). In the Meiji period, thanks to the reduced control of the government on historical performances to promote the samurai spirit, the Chūshingura was developed as a new form of historical novel and street performance. This helped to cement the story and the image of the seventy-four rōnin into the collective memory of the public (Smith, 2006, p.83-84). Lastly, the emergence of film and television in modern Japan has further developed the Chūshingura into a familiar historical show for the Japanese public during the New Year holiday since the 1950s (Smith, 2006, p.89). Furthermore, Smith comments that the continuing existence of the Chūshingura story in the future is ambivalent as the current popular media, manga and anime, do not appear interested in reproducing this narrative due to the lack of interest among young Japanese (p.89). This indicates that manga have a significant role in the contemporary media complex in order to reproduce and reinvent Japanese classical samurai stories to the current viewers.

The popular history generated through the media complex has also constructed a collective memory or public memory in which “ordinary Japanese, as they are so often called, were also their own ‘historian,’ combining public versions with their own experience of the recent past” (Gluck, 2007, p.30). Thus, in the media-saturated world of postwar Japan, media history is an important tool for “the collective construction of memory” among the Japanese mass-audience (Gluck, 2007, p.37). At the same time, the public memory has also practiced “history as opposite,” in which the public memory protests against conservative history (Gluck, 2007, p.35). This indicates that manga artists can effectively employ common conventions of

constructing history of other media forms to create their own versions of the past. This approach helps to reverse and expand different perceptions of history to Japanese public who in turn can conceive their own historical perceptions about historical Japan.

Regarding manga about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period, the stories of rivalry between the Shinsengumi and the anti-Tokugawa heroes have great potential and appeal not only for manga but for other media to recreate fascinating and updated versions of the period. A common pattern identified in the selections of historical figures in manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period is the depiction of “tragic heroes.” In his famous book *The Nobility of Failure*, Ivan Morris (1975) explains the popularity of “tragic heroes” like the Shinsengumi, Sakamoto Ryōma, or Saigō Takamori: as conformity is highly valued in Japanese society, the public “can find vicarious satisfaction in identifying itself emotionally with these individuals who waged their forlorn struggle against overwhelming odds” (p.xxii). Certainly, the Shinsengumi had fought not only to protect just the Tokugawa regime, but also to preserve the status and spirit of the samurai. Simultaneously, Sakamoto Ryōma has been often portrayed as the devoted revolutionist who was tragically assassinated before he could fulfill his ambition to replace the old feudal system of the Tokugawa with the new modern system and technology of the West in order to restore the glory of Japan. Their meaningful way of living a short life has been constructed numerous times in various forms of popular media as an inspiration for the young generations of Japan. As the manga artist Watanabe Taeko (2003) says in an interview about her work *Kaze Hikaru*, she wants to transmit “the spirit of the samurai” and “Japanese tradition aestheticism” (my translation) through her Shinsengumi characters to teenage readers in order to encourage them not to waste their youth and to have a more positive lifestyle in this modern age (p.86).

Another significant factor of the depiction of historical figures in manga series is the reproduction and reinterpretation of the popular image of these famous persons constructed by previous media products. Furthermore, the development of the modern media-complex of individual works whose main stories focus on heroes of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period is often based on the historical novels of the renowned author Shiba Ryōtarō. In the 1960s, Shiba Ryōtarō wrote historical novels focused on the Bakumatsu-Ishin period in order to revive the spirit of the samurai who once lived in that chaotic time, which is now lacking in the modern Japan that is rich in money yet poor in ethics (Vinh, 2006). Shiba Ryōtarō's historical heroes "have been idolized by his readers precisely because they were seen to have led exemplary lives and lived truly to these criteria [of the spirit of samurai]" (Vinh, 2006, p.146). Consequently, Shiba Ryōtarō's historical novels have had a major influence on other works set in the Bakumatsu-Ishin period in various branches of entertainment media, including manga.

As one good example, the images of Shinsengumi members such as Hijikata and Okita in manga series are inspired by Shiba Ryōtarō's infamous novel *Moeyo Ken* (Burn, My Sword; 1962), especially his description of the Ikedaya raid by the Shinsengumi. For instance, the graphic depiction of the Ikedaya scene in manga is surprisingly closed to the filmic footage of the movie *Moeyo Ken* (1966), which is based on Shiba's novel, from the glimpses of the Gion Festival on the night of the raid to the deadly silent killing of the Shinsengumi at the Ikedaya inn. However, the manga artists illustrate these popular images based on their own perceptions. For example, one of the popular images of Okita Sōji—captain of the first squad in Shinsengumi—is that of a tragic hero who was a genius swordsman but died young because of tuberculosis. A lot of popular media portray Okita's signature moment, in which he coughed out blood during the Ikedaya raid. This scene is symbolized in Shiba Ryōtarō's famous historical novel *Moeyo ken*

(Lee, 2011). Several manga artists comment that they were inspired by Shiba's depiction of the Shinsengumi when they created their own images of the group and illustrated these scenes in manga. Similarly, in *Rurouni Kenshin*, artist Watsuki Nobuhiro (1994) admits in his author's note that the visual model for the character Seta Sōjirō was inspired by Shiba's description of Okita Sōji, although his characteristic is based on another source (*Rurouni Kenshin*, 9, p.86). Similarly in *GSSS*, artist Morita Kenji illustrates the incident where Okita Sōji coughed up blood right in middle of the Ikedaya raid and collapsed before his comrades' eyes.

Yet Watanabe Taeko in *Kaze Hikaru* challenges this common depiction of the heroic Okita by arguing that it is nonsense that a person suffering from tuberculosis could still hold a sword and fight until his death (Watanabe, 2000, *Kaze Hikaru*, 6, pp.188-189). After doing intensive research on this issue, Watanabe decided to exclude this scene of Okita from her illustration of the Ikedaya raid. According to her, some of the historical documents that she has found were either fictional or unprovable (Watanabe, 2000, *Kaze Hikaru*, 6, p.190). Moreover, the popular account of Okita coughing up blood, which is familiar to audiences in many popular products about the Shinsengumi, is based on Shiba Ryōtarō's *Moeyo ken* (Watanabe, 2000, *Kaze Hikaru*, 6, p.191). Thus, she determined to create a different version of the incident from her own historical perception, even though it challenges the conventional scheme. This demonstrates that some manga artists have adopted the popular depiction of the Shinsengumi from other media and reinvented these popular images to encourage readers to think of their own perspectives of the past.

Sakamoto Ryōma—another famous historical figure from the anti-Tokugawa side—also gained popularity in contemporary Japanese media due to Shiba Ryōtarō's historical novel titled

Ryōma ga yuku (Ryōma Coming to Us; 1966). Marius Jansen (1994)⁸ has praised this “brilliant historical novel” and commented that a Sakamoto boom was generated in other Japanese media, from books to motion pictures, after its publication (p.11). Similarly, Vinh (2006) remarks that, “Owing to the influence of *Ryōma ga yuku*, Ryōma’s name and his role as *shishi* [patriot] who selflessly sacrificed his life for Japan’s rejuvenation are referred with respect whenever people talk about the eventful years prior to the Meiji Restoration” (p.143). Consequently, the manga version of Sakamoto Ryōma is often portrayed as an unorthodox revolutionist who preferred guns to swords, and a smooth negotiator who tried to persuade all forces to join together in order to transform the old feudal Japan. Thus, Sakamoto Ryōma is respected not only by his fellow *jōi shishi* (patriots who fought to repel the foreign barbarians), but also by the Shinsengumi, his political rivals in most manga about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period. Here, the modern image of Sakamoto appeals to young Japanese as he was a “progressive historical figure” who fought bravely against the old and conformist society in his own ways (Jansen, 1994, p.12).

Moreover, even in manga series that do not include the Shinsengumi or Sakamoto Ryōma, like *Chōshū Five* (2007), the media complex of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period can still be discerned, as this manga is based on the 2006 movie of the same title by director Igarashi Sho. According to artist Yukimura, she was grateful to be given an opportunity to create a manga version for the movie. She also comments that there was a Bakumatsu boom in Japanese media at the time she began to draw the manga. This point fits with the concept of the media complex, in which historical products of different media forms can be spawned under a core-story and can be

⁸ Marius Jansen first published his book *Sakamoto Ryōma and the Meiji Restoration* in 1961. It was a major influence on Shiba Ryōtarō’s writing in the novel *Ryōma ga yuku* (1966). It may therefore be biased for Jansen to praise Shiba’s novel. However, Christian Tagsold (2013) comments that even though Jansen’s influence helped Shiba to write an exceptional historical novel about Sakamoto, it still worth to note that the brilliance of Shiba’s novel itself have generate a Sakamoto boom in Japan in 1960s (p.51).

expanded accordingly to the political and social conditions at certain historical periods. Indeed, the manga version of *Chōshū Five* depicts the famous five elite Chōshū samurai Itō Shunsuke, Inoue Monta, Yamao Yōzō, Endō Kinsuke, and Nomura Yakichi who went to study in England through illegal sea routes in 1863 when the *sakoku* (closed country) policy had not yet ended. Since this is a *shōjo* manga that targets female readers, the depiction of these five figures is in the *shōjo* manga style: handsome hairless faces, tall lean bodies and exotic hair colors. Moreover, the use of both English and the *katakana* script (which is used in Japanese for loan words) in the speech balloons indicating characters speaking in English, creates an exotic atmosphere. While this manga is based on a film, Yukimura has tried to include the historical sources that she collected to construct the settings and clothing of Bakumatsu Japan and Victorian London. This demonstrates that manga also has its distinguishing strategies to recreate history.

Based on these observations, it can be argued that the depiction of famous figures and historical incidents interact across media. As a result, the popular memory of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period has been constructed and enhanced through various media through different times. For instance, the depiction of particular historical incidents and figures in manga has been founded on the previous practices of other Japanese media, namely novels, films and TV series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period.

4.4.2 Historical manga as a positive dialogue between the past and the present

Looking at the depiction of historical characters in manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period, the media complex of era seems to reflect the frustration of contemporary Japanese toward the economic stagnation after the bubble economy period, and therefore longing for the past “to find in it whatever they [are] missing in the present and hoping for the future” (Gluck,

1998, p.263). In this circumstance, manga history has also become a medium for shaping the historical consciousness of the Japanese public in a positive way through the construction of the last years of feudal Japan and the samurai class and the beginning of modern Japan, when the nation was energetic despite all the threats from the Western powers and domestic political conflicts.

An example is Takahashi Tsutomu's *Sidooh*, published in the *seinen* manga magazine *Weekly Young Jump* from 2005 to 2011, which is aimed at young men in their twenties to forties. In the series, Takahashi has created an alternative 1990s Japan through a combination of dark and obscure graphic depiction and gloomy and distressing textual narrative. In fact, Takahashi seeks the answer for the depressing present of Japan by bringing back the chaotic Bakumatsu period. Through the eyes of two young brothers, Sho and Gen, the political and social issues of Japan after the Black Ship event of 1853 reappears.

In the story, ever since the Tokugawa regime yielded to the Westerners who forced Japan to open up for trading, a series of disasters, such as the Great Ansei Earthquake in 1855 and the fatal cholera epidemic in 1858, has struck Japan, killing thousands of people. Consequently, hostility towards foreigners has spread among the helpless and confused Japanese commoners who are suffering from foreign diseases and hunger. The two orphaned brothers are aimless, even though their mother once told them to become strong samurai like their father. They are forced to join a mysterious Buddhist cult named Byakushin (White Heart), whose dubious religious philosophy and ambitious political goal is to overthrow the Tokugawa regime and expel the barbarian foreigners. The two brothers then join a group of assassins to murder prominent Tokugawa officials and foreigners. However, they are betrayed by the Byakushin to the Tokugawa authority. Once again lost and aimless, the two brothers find a new way to live as samurai of the Aizu clan,

in which the spirit of samurai and the art of sword are highly regarded. However, the inevitable fall of the Tokugawa results in the end of the samurai class. After elder brother Sho dies, younger brother Gen tries to fight as a samurai in the Boshin war, where all his comrades die in a fruitless battle. *Sidooh* provides an unorthodox end to readers as Gen decides against committing seppuku like a true samurai since he found no meaning in being one anymore. While Gen chooses to live, it is unclear what would drive him to survive in the unknown future in the new era. This is the same question faced by Japan society after the two decades of stagnant economy and unstable political changes in the 1990s, which causes various social issues such as the sarin terrorist attack by Aum Shinrikyo, a Japanese new religious cult, the corruption and incompetence of Japanese government, and so on (Kingston, 2004). Takahashi employs the Bakumatsu period as a mirror to reflect the post-bubble state of Japan when the Japanese public began to question the social values that they had believed in for decades during the economic miracle. Japanese society started to face not only the harsh reality of the failing economy and politics but also changes in the morals of the society, especially in the young generation. Thus, Takahashi has used historical manga as a medium to initiate a serious discussion about the state of Japan in the binary of past/present in order to inspire readers to find a way of live in a contemporary Japan in which the political system is unreliable and the old social values are declining while new solutions and values have not yet been found.

In a more educational production, manga artist Watanuki Nobuhiro created his protagonist Rurouni Kenshin as a wandering samurai who tries to seek a new place in the rapid modernizing world of the early Meiji period. In 1878, the samurai class had been abolished and it was officially prohibited to carry swords—a major blow as swords were the symbol and the way of fighting of the samurai. Kenshin still carries his sword even though he has sworn to take no

lives until his death. Here, Kenshin and his samurai motto to use force only to protect his loved ones is positioned in the Meiji world in which the drive for Westernization swept away all the remains of the old feudal Tokugawa period. As a result, the samurai who are unable to fit in this new era have gathered forces to undo the Meiji government and re-establish the status of the samurai. Thus, Kenshin once again sets out to protect the peace that he sacrificed everything to achieve. Readers are introduced to the history of the Bakumatsu period in a subtle way through flashbacks about the past and Kenshin's enemy's replication of important historical events such as the Sakuradamon incident, the Ikedaya incident, the Kinmon incident, the Great Kyoto fire, and the Boshin War. Moreover, Watanuki also carefully inserts visual illustrations with textbook-style narratives to explain not only certain historical events and figures, but also various fighting styles and weapons. The parallel historical perspectives between the late Tokugawa and the beginning of the Meiji period in this manga provide a review of the past in order to understand how modern Japan has been built. As a result, the Bakumatsu-Ishin period is brilliantly constructed for the readers to enjoy through the skillful fight scenes and yet still have an interest in looking at the historical transition of Japan from the feudal to the modern era.

In another approach, Watanabe Taeko declares in her *shōjo* historical manga *Kaze Hikaru*, whose main readers are teenage girls and young women, that her creation is a celebration of the everyday life of people during the Bakumatsu period rather than historical events. Although her heroine Tominaga Sei is a fictional character, Watanabe has stayed close to history. Here, Barthes's "reality effect" is shown in the depiction of "manga image" along with detailed historical events and figures, intense citations and historical notes from professional historians and reliable sources. These historical sources and citations provide a sense of authority and credibility to Watanabe's manga. For instance, she ignores various *shōjo* manga conventions to

realistically portray the ordinary life of women in this turbulent age; for example, the heroine's hair is half-shaved like that of a samurai while she is disguised as her dead brother to join the Shinsengumi; there are descriptions of women's menstrual periods and the types of sanitary belts women used at the time; and there is discussion of the ways men and women stood while urinating. Such scenarios are usually omitted in shōjo manga for the sake of aesthetic and romantic elements. At the same time, Watanabe also employs several popular tropes of shōjo genre to attract female readers. For example, the heroines disguised as males; and BL parody (Itō Kashitarō's efforts to court Hijikata). These elements provide comic relief from the serious and gloomy stories the manga deals with.

However, Watanabe does not shy away from depicting the dark and violent aspects of the Bakumatsu period. Scenes of killing and the guilt of taking lives are told from the heroine's perspective, and she questions why samurai have to fight and why the Tokugawa and anti-Tokugawa forces use extreme methods to eliminate each other even at the cost of innocent lives. Moreover, the descriptions of women from different social classes in the Tokugawa period, from professional courtesans to peasant girls to daughters of samurai and merchant families, give faces and voices to women who often remain nameless in history. To borrow Fujimoto's (2011) words, "Women's manga depict the life and thought of nameless people, rather than that of rulers and victors who have been handed down as "history" (p.100). *Kaze Hikaru* has received such high praise from both readers and critics that it won the Shogakukan Manga Award for the *shōjo* genre in 2003.

In sum, this study argues that manga is a positive medium to generate various perspectives of history in which both the creators and the readers can share or negotiate their viewpoints of certain aspects of the past and the present of Japan. Moreover, the role of fictional

characters in historical manga should not be dismissed, as these characters can provide specific, often previously unseen points of view in interpreting history, such as that of the common people or of women during the Bakumatsu-Ishin period. Consequently, history can be seen from the bottom up, as commoners and women, who always suffer the most in historical transitions, are now given names, faces and voices to tell their history.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter first discusses the conclusions that have been drawn from the findings to fulfill the research objectives and prove the research hypotheses. The second section consists of the suggestions and recommendations for further studies of the manga representation of history.

Based on the results of this research, there is a general pattern of specific historical events utilized to construct the Bakumatsu-Ishin period. These historical events are depicted in manga in a cause-and-effect narrative as one historical event is the direct catalyst for the other. Not only that, this chronological order also acts as a historical signifier which helps to simplify the number of historical events that can be depicted in a given manga. Moreover, all the historical events selected to construct the history of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period in manga were considered as the essential turning points to the transition from the feudal Tokugawa period to the modern Meiji period. For instance, the Black Ships event in 1853, the Ikedaya incident and the Kinmon Incident in 1864 or the Boshin War in 1869 are the events depicted the most in the manga series studied. However, these historical events can be constructed differently in various manga due to artists' own interpretations of the past. As a result, the aim of the research to uncover the schemes that manga series employ to construct manga series has also been fulfilled.

These specific historical events are constructed by a combination of graphic depiction and textual narratives to indicate the historical date and meaning of the events. Manga artists can choose to condense the depiction of these historical events in one or sequential panels which not only help the readers to “read” all the necessary information more quickly, but also manipulate their perceptions of the past. Furthermore, the manga drawing style also has the ability to reproduce realistic and photographic backgrounds in the same panel with the iconic

representation of characters. Hence, Watanabe Taeko (2003) remarks that unlike manga, historical films or TV dramas might not accurately construct the past scenarios due to budget and resource limitations (p.87). In addition to that, in all six chosen manga series, the artists provide primary sources, explanatory notes, biographies, and thoughts about the manga creation process. According to Barthes' concept of "realistic effect," this approach creates a sense of realism and authenticity to the historical manga. As a result, historical manga can be a channel to transmit history to readers as well as to encourage them to examine history from various perspectives.

Regarding the depiction of historical figures in manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period, in all chosen series selected specific historical figures or groups to purposely limit the perceptions of the past in the narratives. Usually, the Shinsengumi are representatives for the Tokugawa forces and Sakamoto Ryōma, Saigō Takamori or Katsura Kogorō are representatives for the anti-Tokugawa forces. All of these historical characters are depicted in manga as tragic heroes who fight bravely to protect their goals and ideologies. Moreover, the visual designs and characteristics of these historical figures are all reproduced and remodeled from the popular images of them in other media forms, especially from the descriptions of Shiba Ryōta's historical novels. As the concept of media complex suggests various individual products of different media forms can share a core-story, the manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period are part of the Bakumatsu-Ishin boom in Japan in recent years. Hence, the manga artists employ those media conventions into their own narratives and then rework them for their own purposes, usually to attract targeted readers according to the genre. Consequently, the increasing number of historical representations of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period in particular, and the history of Japan in general, offer more viewpoints of the past to larger audiences. This result proves the research hypotheses that manga artists use certain historical events and figures in their works to construct

the Bakumatsu-Ishin period for their readers. As this scheme in manga is derived from popular images of the historical heroes in other Japanese media, this also indicates a close interaction between manga and other media in shaping the historical consciousness of audiences through their popular historical products.

Based on the findings, this thesis has also identified certain implications in the manga representations of history. The main theme of the manga representation of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period is the search for moral lessons from the past to apply to contemporary Japan. While Japanese society has been in a dormant state since the collapse of the Bubble Economy in 1990s, no apparent transformations in economic or political have yet been seen (Kingston, 2004). Paul Starr (2011) observes that the current situation of Japan “seems to be slowly but surely returning to the state of sociocultural fragmentation that exist prior to its modernist revolution in 1868” (p.268). As a result, manga artists construct the Bakumatsu-Ishin period as a mirror to reflect the political and social conditions of contemporary Japan in hopes of finding answers for the future in the past. Thus, the historical representation in manga can evoke “comparisons and contrast between past and present, a form of invitation to the readers to think historically about their relationship with the past” (Penney, 2013, p.157). Here, the manga representations of history provide a forum to exchange various perspectives of the past and present ranging from critics of current Japan to women’s input about the lives of nameless people of the past.

However, the power of manga representation to purposely depict history through certain points of view can be exploited to transmit controversial thoughts under the guise of the past. For instance, the Occidentalist and Self-Orientalist views of Japanese artists in the way they portray the West as a “machine civilization, coldly rationalist, mechanical, without soul,” as inferior to the Japanese, who are rich in traditional culture and self-sacrificing spirit. According to Starr

(2011), the national promotion of *bushido* (the Code of Samurai) and the *seppuku* ritual as the “quintessence of Japanese tradition” were the reinvention of the anti-Westernism and anti-modernism movement in Japan during the late Meiji period (p.56). Thus, Japanese anti-modernist nationalism turned the Western Orientalist view of the exotic and mysterious Japanese ritual of suicide into a symbol of Japanese tradition culture. This kind of Self-Orientalism was often employed by Japanese nationalist to distinguish “Japanese” culture from “Western” or later “American” culture. As a result, heroic stories of the samurai are “nationalized anew, saturated” in all Japanese popular media, including manga (Gluck, 1998, p.262). Indeed, the aesthetic and melancholic depiction of *seppuku* or the fearless fighting spirit of the samurai in manga series about the last years of the Bakumatsu period can be considered as the unconscious continuity of the renovated tradition by the manga artists to transmit these messages to the readers. To borrow Gluck’s words,

The historical Edo became a space between to two times. Change occurred before its beginning in sixteenth-century Sengoku and its end, in mid-nineteenth-century Bakumatsu. In between spread a synchronic panorama of Japaneseness, an Edo frozen as national tradition. In these instances, memory displayed history and Edo the storehouse of identity lay entirely outside time. (p.284).

In conclusion, the manga representation of history is an innovative medium to convey the past to contemporary Japanese youth, who have communication forms very different from the older generations. As Robert Niemi (2006) has pointed out, “in a constantly accelerating culture of consumption that fosters short attention spans and shorter memories, historical subject matter somehow continues to hold strong sway over” producers and audiences (p.xxi). Thus, media history is transforming itself to keep up with the rapid changes of information technology from

historical novels to historical films and TV programs and now to manga and animation. The characteristics of representation of history in manga lie in its powerful ability to construct the past in the brilliant “mix of fact and fiction, image and text,” which can pull the readers into a large forum in which can be found various perceptions of the past from conservative to progressive, from pessimistic to optimistic, and from pure entertainment to critical thinking (Penney, 2013, p.147). This engagement enables readers to experience the past through the pleasure of reading. By the end, the readers may or may not have expanded their views or been inspired to undertake further research more on history, but the mission of manga to convey the past has still been accomplished.

In sum, this study has argued that manga representations of history have been constructed based on a general scheme to convey the past to contemporary readers. Thus, from the literature review, the researcher has recognized the connection between history and entertainment media in general and history with comics and manga in particular as these media history products can generate a positive response from the public to critically think about the past and reflect on the present issues. In the Methodology Chapter, the theoretical framework proposes to apply Bathes’ semiotic theory and manga theory as well as other media concepts from several authors to analyze the manga texts in order to investigate the main schemes and themes in the construction of history in manga. Consequently, the results from the content analysis have provide the necessary information for the researcher to provide answers to all research object as well as prove the two research hypotheses to be correct. It is hoped that the results of this research will contribute to the intense discuss between the topic of history and manga. From now, the research will focus on the suggestions for further research of similar topic.

Due to time and space constraints, the research has focused on just six of the many manga series about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period. Thus, the scale of sample might be too small to fully cover all the aspects of how manga constructs the Bakumatsu-Ishin period in particular and Japanese history in general. However, the research has tried to compensate for the limited sample scale by including as much as possible all the genres of manga targeted at different types of readers Japan. Consequently, this research has been able to study the most general forms of manga from all genres about the Bakumatsu-Ishin period.

Further research on the boom of the Bakumatsu-Ishin period in manga and other media should be conducted. As this thesis concluded, manga representations of history are reproduced from previous media products. Thus, a study of the transformations of such images between manga and other media and vice versa may provide insights on the media strategies used to construct the historical consciousness of the Japanese public. Moreover, the recent trend of *Kyara*—dehistoricized characters in commercial historical products—should also be studied. The focus should not be on comparing this disguised form of history product with more serious historical manga, but on investigating the new trend of consumption behaviors of otaku—Japanese fans, and the marketing strategy of manga industry.

This study has shown that the topic of history is frequently used and reused in popular media, as the public always have “the desire to see the past through contemporary eyes” (Anderson, 2001, p.27). Thus, in the rapidly changing world of information technology, audiences can access history in various ways and much faster than in the past. However, in order to produce educational historical products while still attracting the public, the researcher recommends that media producers and professional historians should rely on the most popular forms of media such as films, TV dramas, manga/comics and animation. For instance, in the case of Japan, manga representations of history are the most up to date forms of narrating the past to

young readers and have even been promoted by Japanese government. As discussed in previous chapters, academic books are no longer the only medium to narrate the past, and other popular media can produce noteworthy historical works that capture the public's attention and provoke them to think about how the past has built up the present. Now the public can construct their own historical perspectives, which is also the goal of historiography. By transforming the *form* of the narrative medium, the morals and the lessons from the past can continue to pass on to the younger generations from the present to the future.

Finally, it is hoped that this study will contribute to the field of Japan Studies in Vietnam, and that Vietnamese professional historians can cooperate with Vietnamese popular media to produce interesting historical programs to encourage the public to learn more about the history of Vietnam, not only stories about wars, but also about the everyday life of the people in the past and the distinctive traditions and customs of Vietnam. By innovating the narrative form to suit the tastes of contemporary young Vietnamese, such as comics or animation, young people may become more interested in history. Moreover, from a business perspective, the publication of historical manga is beneficial as is both easier and cheaper to create a high quality manga or animation product compared to producing historical live-action films or TV dramas.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, S. (2001). "History TV and Popular Memory". In G. R. Edgerton & P.C. Rollins (Eds.) *Television Histories: Shaping Collective Memory in the Media Age* (pp. 01-16). Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- Azuma, H. (2001). *Otaku: Japan's Database Animals* (J.E. Abel & S. Kono trans.) Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (Originally published in 1971).
- Barth, R. (1981). "The Discourse Of History" (S. Bann Trans.). *Comparative Criticism*, 3, 7-20. (Originally published in 1967).
- Barthes, R. (1999). "Rhetoric of Image." In J. Evans & S. Hall (Eds), *Visual Culture: The Reader* (pp.33-40). London: Sage Publications. (Originally published in 1964).
- Berger, J (1972). *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin Books.
- Brenner, R.E. (2007). *Understanding Manga and Anime*. Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited.
- Bryce, M., & Jason, D. (2010). "Overview of Manga Genres". In T. Johnson-Woods (Ed.), *MANGA: An anthology of global and cultural perspectives* (pp. 34-61). New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Burke, P. (2001). *Eyewitnessing the uses of images as historical evidence*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Buruma, I. & Margalit, A. (2004). *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of Its Enemies*. London: Penguin Books.
- Chute, H. (2009). "History and Graphic Representation in *Maus*". In J. Heer & K. Worcester (Eds.), *A Comics Studies Reader* (pp. 340-361). Jackson: University Press of Mississippi
- Clark, V., Lewis, E., & Baker, J. (2002). *Key concepts & skills for media studies*. London: Hodder & Stoughton.

- Cooper-Chen, A., & Kodama, M. (1997). *Mass Communication in Japan*. Ames: Iowa State University Press.
- Downing, T. (2004). "Bringing the Past to the Small Screen". In D. Cannadine (Ed.), *History and the Media* (pp.07-19). New York: Palgrave Macmillian.
- Edgerton, G. R. (2001). "Introduction: Television as Historian: A Different Kind of History". In G. R. Edgerton & P.C. Rollins (Eds.), *Television Histories: Shaping Collective Memory in the Media Age* (pp. 01-16). Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- Focault, M. (1977). Film and Popular Memory. *Edinburg Magazine*, 2, 20-25.
- Fujimoto, Y. (2011). Historical Shōjo Manga: On Women's Alleged dislike (J. Berndt trans.). *International Journal of Comic Art*, 13 (2), 87-102.
- Gluck, C. (1998). "The Invention of Edo." In S. Vlastos (Ed.), *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan* (pp. 262-285). Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Gluck, C. (2007). "The Past in The Present." In D.P. Martinez (Ed.), *Modern Japanese Culture and Society (Vol 1: Post-War Japan: Setting the Scene)* (pp. 29-57). London & New York: Routledge.
- Gordon, A. (2003). *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Jansen, M., & Rozman, G. (Ed.s). (1986). *Japan in Transition: From Tokugawa to Meiji*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Jansen, M. (1994). *Sakamoto Ryōma and the Meiji Restoration* (Morningside Edition). New York: Columbia University Press. (Originally published in 1961)
- Jansen, M.(2002). *The making of modern Japan* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

- Johnson-Woods, T. (2010). "Introduction." In T. Johnson-Woods (Ed.), *MANGA: An anthology of global and cultural perspectives* (pp.34-61). New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Halbwachs, M. (1992). *On Collective Memory*. (L.A. Coser, Ed. &Trans.). Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press. (Original work published in 1952).
- Ingulsrud, J. E., & Allen, K. (2009). *Reading Japan Cool: Pattern of Manga Literacy and Discourse*. Plymouth: Lexington Books.
- Kawaguchi, T. (2010). "Barefoot Gen and 'A-bomb literature:' Re-Recollecting the Nuclear Experience". In J.Berndt (Ed.), *Comics Worlds and The World of Comics*(pp.233-244). Kyoto: Kyoto Seika University International Manga Research Center.
- Kingston, J. (2004). *Japan's Quiet Transformation: Social Change And Civil Society in the Twenty-First Century*. London, New York: Routledge Curzon.
- Kinsella, S. (2000). *Adult Manga: Culture and Power in Contemporary Japanese Society*. Surrey: Curzon Press.
- Lacey, N. (1998). *Image and representation key concepts in media studies*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Lee, R. (2011). Romanticising Shinsengumi in Contemporary Japan. *New Voices*, 4, 168-187.
- Morris, I. (1975). *The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in The History of Japan*. London: Martin Secker and Warburg Limited.
- Niemi, R. (2006). *History in the Media: Film and Television*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO.
- O'Connor, J. E. (1988). History in Images/Images in history: Reflections on the importance of film and television study for an understanding of the past. *American Historical Review*, 93(5), 1200-1209.

- Ott, B.L., & Mack, R.L. (2010). *Critical Media Studies :An Introduction*. Chichester; Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Penney, M. (2011). "Manga from Right to Left." In T.Perper & M. Cornog (Eds), *Mangatopia: Essays on Manga and Anime in the Modern World* (pp. 151-172). California: Libraries Unlimited.
- Penney, M. (2013). "Making history: Manga between Kyara and Historiography." In R. Rosenbaum (Ed.). *Manga and The Reprasetation of Japanese History* (pp. 146-170). London & New York: Routledge.
- Roediger III, H.L., Zaromb, F.M, & Butler, A. C (2009). "The Role of Repeated Retrieval in Shaping Collective Memory".In P. Boyer & J.V. Wertsch (Eds.) *Memory in Mind and Culture* (pp.138-171). New York: Cambrige University Press.
- Rosenbaum, R. (2013). "Introduction: the representation of Japanese history in manga". In R. Rosenbaum (Ed.). *Manga and The Reprasetation of Japanese History*(pp. 40-59). London & New York: Routledge.
- Rosenstone.R.A (1995). "The Historical Film: Looking at the Past in a Postliterate Age". In M. Landy (Ed.), *The Historical Film: History and Memory in Media* (pp.50-66). New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.
- Said, E. W. (1978). *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Saraceni, M. (2003). *The Language of Comics*. New York: Routledge.
- Schama, S. (2004). "Television and the Trouble with History".In D. Cannadine (Ed.), *History and the Media* (pp.20-43). New York: Palgrave Macmillian.
- Schodt. F.L. (1983). *Manga! Manga!: The World of Japanese Comics*. New York: Kodansha America.

- Starrs, R. (2011). *Modernism and Japanese Culture*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillian.
- Sutcliffe, P. (2013). "Postmodern representations of the pre-modern Edo period". In R. Rosenbaum (Ed.). *Manga and The Representation of Japanese History*(pp. 171-188). London & New York: Routledge.
- Sontag, S. (1999). "The Image-World." In J. Evans & S. Hall (Eds), *Visual Culture: The Reader*(pp.80-94). London: Sage Publications. (Originally published in 1978).
- Sorin, P (1980). "How to Look at an "Historical Film"". In M. Landy (Ed.), *The Historical Film: History and Memory in Media* (pp.25-54). New Brunswisk, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.
- Smith, H. (2006). "The Media and Politics of Japanese Popular History: The Case of the Akō Gishi." In J. C. Baxter (Ed.), *Historical Consciousness, Historiography and Modern Japanese Values* (pp. 75-98). Kyoto: International Research Center for Japanese Studies.
- Tagsold, C. (2013). Popular realms of memory in Japan: the case of Sakamoto Ryōma. *Contemporary Japan*, 25(1),: 41–59.
- Thomas, J.B. (2012). *Drawing on Tradition: Manga, Anime, and Religion in Contemporary Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Vinh, S. (2006). "Shiba Ryōtarō and the Revival of Meiji Values." In J. C. Baxter (Ed.), *Historical Consciousness, Historiography and Modern Japanese Values* (pp. 143-152). Kyoto: International Research Center for Japanese Studies.
- Watanabe, T (2003). *Kaze Hikaru no Sakusha – Watanabe Taeko Sensei Intabyū*(An Interview with the author Watanabe Taeko of *Kaze Hikaru*). *Betsu Satsu Takarajima: Nazo Toki! Shinsengumi Manga Betsuden (Extra Volume Takarajima: Solution of a riddle! Manga Bibliography of Shinsengumi)*, 832, 84-89.

White,H. (1988). Histography and Historiophoty.*American Historical Review*, 93(5), pp.1193-1199.