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“Perhaps there's another, much larger story behind the printed one, a story that changes just as our own world does. And the letters on the page tell us only as much as we'd see peering through a keyhole. Perhaps the story in the book is just the lid on a pan: It always stays the same, but underneath there's a whole world that goes on - developing and changing like our own world.”

Cornelia Funke, *Inkheart*

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the origin and development of a phenomena that I term the "Japanese-European" mode: or, Japanese media that draws on a specific kind of European or European diasporic influence but resembles no real place or time. Examples of this phenomenon includes the many adaptations and reimaginings of classic Euro-American novels in manga and anime, maid and butler cafés that vaguely mimic nineteenth-century English grand houses, Japanese adaptations and retellings of European fairy tales, and more generally the notable and pervasive presence of European styles, vaguely defined locations, and historical events. These are obviously representations of European-ness, but simultaneously not meant to resemble any form of reality. They evoke time periods, places, and even people and events that exist(ed) in "reality," but encased in a world that does not exist anywhere else.

While elements of the Japanese-European have been discussed in conjunction with specific titles or media objects, it remains underexplored as an overarching media phenomenon. I argue that the broader Japanese-European mode is the result of multiple overlapping "worlds" that originate in translated English-language literary texts. Specifically, I highlight tactile and adjacent manifestations of Japanese-European worlds as a form of end point, or the final stage of transformation from the literary narrative or narratives where they may have originated. To that end, I have chosen three literary texts as case studies: L.M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* series. Each chapter toggles between a contemporary tactile and/or spatial phenomenon and its literary source as a means of tracing how a literary text can be the seed from which an entire world can sprout. From there, I argue that these simultaneous and overlapping worlds

detach themselves from their sources to become an overarching, specifically Japanese-European mode.

Introduction: Japanese-European Worlds

> "I was born in 1867 in a log cabin in Wisconsin and maybe you were, too. We lived with our family in the Big Woods, and then we all traveled in a covered wagon to Indian Territory, where Pa built us another house, out on high land where the prairie grasses swayed. Right? . . . we were a girl named Laura, who lived and grew up and grew old and passed on, and then she became part of us somehow. She existed fully formed in our heads, her memories swimming around in our brains with our own." (McClure 1).

Wendy McClure's book *The Wilder Life* vividly describes the author's relationship with the main character of Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* series. Wilder was the child of American pioneers in the 1870s and 80s and author of the heavily edited, semi-autobiographical series, the first installment of which, *Little House in the Big Woods*, was published in 1932. Wendy McClure was one of many children who read about the fictionalized Laura after the entire series was released in paperback in 1971 and the popular television adaptation aired in 1974. McClure understood the difference between reality and fantasy, and the distinction between history and the present. And yet, she writes that she felt like she'd shared experiences with Laura. She had "the uncanny sense that I'd experienced everything she had, that I had nearly drowned in the same flooded creek, endured the grasshopper plague of 1875, and lived through the Hard Winter." (1) The glimmers of, as she puts it, "Laura World" that she encountered in her everyday life made that world all the more enticing. She writes, "(Laura World) shared space with the actual past… it didn't take much more than, say, the sight of a dusty glass oil lamp on the wall above a booth at a suburban Bonanza to make me feel like I was communing with Laura." (3) She goes on to clarify that "it's not that I really wanted to make

bullets or race around on ponies, it's that I wanted to live in Laura World and do them. And Laura World, for all its enticing remnants washed in on the tides of time and antique shops, was another world, and to visit it was all but unthinkable." (7–8)

McClure was not the only one to be looking for Laura World in the 1970s. On the other side of the world, Japanese women and girls were also reading the *Little House* books in translation and watching the television series. And they, too, were looking for ways to live alongside Laura World. As McClure was imagining her cottage fries as pan-fried potatoes, Japanese *Little House* aficionados were transforming their clothes and their homes. "Country Style" fashions, which evoked the silhouettes and patterns described in the books and shown on television, rose in popularity, and in the early 1980s the store Depot 39 appeared in Tokyo, selling both new and antique rustic-American-style furniture and home goods imported from the United States. For McClure, Laura World was accessible by merely existing in the United States – in Japan, it took not just a leap of imagination, but also commerce, manufacturing, and focused intention. Japanese Country Style enthusiasts and fans of *Little House* had to translate not only across time, but across space and culture. McClure's Laura World is fictional, but the borders are flexible. No one McClure personally knew was within living memory of covered wagons or sunbonnets, but, even so, Laura World's historical presence and the permeability of the boundaries between Laura World and the Everyday World made the experience that much more powerful and distinct. The possibility of Laura World allowed McClure to share in the memories quoted in the opening of this introduction, and McClure, at the very least, had access to a cultural memory of Laura World by the virtue of living in the United States and even in the Midwest, Laura's historical stomping grounds.

In Japan, Laura World required a greater leap. As I will discuss in significantly more detail in Chapter Three, this leap resulted in a world resembling a hybrid form of "Country American," or what would be eventually known as Country Style. Country Style, among other things, brings together a number of different foods, styles, and objects that may or may not have existed in juxtaposition in "real life." Over the course of translation back and forth across time, space, and medium, though, they developed their own internal logic. Hisayo Ogushi argues that popular translated texts like *Little House* and *Anne of Green Gables* were the foundations of the flowering of Country Style in girls' culture. (36) For example, the timing of the interest in and proliferation of a rustic-American aesthetic in women and girls' culture coincided with popular television adaptations of both of these titles. Country Style overall, however, has very little to do with the narrative of *Little House* or *Anne of Green Gables*. The fashions and home decor of Depot 39 are not fan material in the traditional sense, and the world cultivated by Country Style had very little to do with the actual United States, neither contemporary nor historical. Country Style is premised on the "reality" of a certain kind of rural North America; however, despite the import of that reality, the shape that Country Style tends to take in Japan resembles no place, time, or culture outside of Country Style itself.

The Japanese-European

This dissertation came to fruition from a lifelong observation of the plethora of representations of a form of fictionalized "Europeanness" in Japanese media and popular culture. The "Laura World" of Country Style is but one example. There are a multitude of Japanese media forms that draw on a specific kind of European or European diasporic influence and yet also resemble no real place or time. They evoke time periods, places, and even people and events

that exist(ed) in "reality," but encased in a world that does not exist anywhere else. Other examples include the many adaptations and reimaginings of classic Euro-American novels in manga and anime, the distinctly "French maid"-esque outfits quintessential to Lolita and Gothic Lolita fashion subcultures, maid and butler cafés that vaguely mimic nineteenth-century English grand houses, the many adaptations and retellings of European fairy tales, and more generally the notable and pervasive presence of European styles and vaguely defined locations and historical events in Japanese media and popular culture. Although there is a wide variety of different variations on this European mode, it is nevertheless cohesive.

These European-derived media and phenomena are distinct in that they are obviously representations of a kind of European-ness, but simultaneously not intended to resemble any form of reality. From an external, literal perspective, Japanese-European worlds tend to be ahistorical and riddled with inaccuracies: from the stylistic concessions of many *shōjo* manga and anime to exaggeratedly big (or small) skirts and long, flowing hair, to odd or incongruous character naming choices, to fast and loose adaptations of major historical events. As I will discuss in Chapter Two, for example, Japanese imaginings of *Alice in Wonderland* tend to combine the aesthetics of 19th century English girlhood, Venetian masquerades, and Elizabethan royalty. It would be easy to dismiss these representations as "wrong, "or "inaccurate," but a more descriptive and precise approach, however, is that of surprise, or inconsistency – the juxtapositions between individual elements within each case are what make them unique. Furthermore, these worlds are not limited to any one medium but tend to take on a distinctly tactile and/or spatial form. Focusing only on 2D forms of "Japanese Europe" would not encompass the entire scope of this flexible and ever-shifting mode. As in the case of Country Style, it oftentimes manifests itself in the 3D world through clothing, food, constructed spaces

like cafés, in tourism, shopping, and so on. As I will explore in Chapter Three, this variation on Country Style and the Japanese-European similarly extends into digital spaces.

I posit that the Japanese-European mode as I observe it is the descendant of translated European literary texts, translated repeatedly over time, space, and medium. Japan is a unique case in that the presence of any form of "Europe" in the cultural consciousness has a hard start date. Japanese readers did not have access to translated English-language literature prior to the Meiji period (1868–1912), nor did they have access to most other European cultural objects. The reopening of Japan to European trade and travel also caused a translation boom of European-derived literary works that were then devoured by a fascinated populace. For my purposes, representations of Europe can be traced directly to this late 19th century literary translation boom as one of the most accessible and widespread ways for European cultural objects, narratives, and worlds to be introduced to Japanese readers. These readers had no frame of reference for these literary works, and made their own interpretations of the texts and the worlds that revolved around them. Over time, I argue, these worlds – initially anchored to specific translated texts – have separated from their original sources, to expand into a what I call a Japanese-European mode.

My central question is: How do multiple overlapping worlds with literary origins result in the Japanese-European mode? My use of the terms "world" and "mode" are intentional: world, in this case, refers to the "world" of one singular title or text. A world has an origin point, such as how "Laura World" orbits the *Little House* books. The world may not be wholly "accurate" to the text, but it is still related and relatable to that text. "Mode" is less so. Mode refers to the expanded universe of the Japanese-European, or when representations of Europe that clearly belong in the same general space as more clearly defined worlds have no clearly defined origin

point. Mode also applies across worlds: "Laura World" and another world associated with a different text, say, *Alice in Wonderland*, are different worlds, but both still utilize a recognizably Japanese-European mode. There is a pattern to how the worlds are represented that makes them identifiable as utilizing that mode.

All of these interconnected European worlds form an enormous and sprawling landscape, and while their ever shifting and fluid nature is what make them so interesting, it also makes them difficult to pin down. I tackle this undertaking by carving out a specific corner of the vast universe of the Japanese European mode and attempting to trace its contours. To that end, I have chosen three literary texts as case studies, or, more accurately, origin points: L.M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* series. Each of these case studies was chosen as a translated title that is well-known in Japan and in one way or another is the foundation of a world that utilizes the Japanese-European mode. I have chosen to focus on three English-language texts: One from England itself, and two from English-speaking former colonies. Although the Japanese-European mode as I have defined it can be observed across multiple European locations, languages, and cultures, I have chosen to remain within the Anglosphere for the sake of simplicity and continuity. English language literature makes up a large percentage of translated European works in Japan, and the Anglosphere (encompassing England and its colonial presence) makes up its own subset of Japanese-European worlds.

To narrow this subset down even further, worlds set in the vague late 19th and early 20th centuries are predominant in both the Japanese-European as a whole and in those related to the Anglosphere in particular. This is due partly to the fact that many of the earliest English-language translated works are still popular in Japan today, such as Arthur Conan Doyle's

Sherlock Holmes stories and Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. These titles were contemporary to the Meiji Restoration translation boom and have continued to be read and translated since. Other titles, like *Anne of Green Gables* and *Little House*, were translated much later, but are both set during this period. As I will discuss in significantly more detail presently, the worlds of *Alice*, *Anne*, and *Little House* are also incorporated into the universe of *shōjo bunka*, or girls' culture, which has a long and parallel history to English-language literary translation and as a result is predisposed to worlds set during that early period of English language translation. This project will highlight all three of these titles as texts and worlds that are explicitly related to girls' and women's culture. While titles like *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* would also make for a good case study, the long and intertwined history of girls' and women's culture and English-aligned Japanese-European worlds makes for a particularly rich avenue of investigation.

Each of my chapters will toggle between a contemporary tactile and/or spatial phenomenon and its literary source as a means of tracing how a literary text can be the seed from which a distinct world can sprout. From there I will explore how worlds can detach themselves from their sources to become a mode. Chapter One, on *Anne of Green Gables*, will explore fan tourism on Prince Edward Island; Chapter Two, on *Alice in Wonderland*, will explore Tokyo *Alice* cafes; and Chapter Three, on Country Style and *Little House*, will explore digital spaces stemming from the Country Style of Depot 39 and similar. I highlight tactile and adjacent manifestations of Japanese-European worlds as a form of end point, or the final stage of transformation from the literary narrative or narratives where they may have originated.

Prior Literature

I am not the first to be intrigued by the lives and afterlives of European literature in Japan. In addition to Hisayo Ogushi's work on *Little House* and Country Style, Anne McKnight's work on "Frenchness" in Japan and Yukari Yoshihara's extensive writings on Shakespeare in manga and anime are two examples of how scholars have tussled with questions of cross-linguistic, cross-medium translation, adaptation, and metamorphosis. McKnight, in her work on baroque and rococo aesthetics in the postwar period, makes a connection between the opulence of the baroque and the "consumer revolution" of the 1970s. (119) Yoshihara traces how Shakespeare has been adapted and parodied in Japanese popular culture, arguing that Japanese adaptations of Shakespeare transform the Shakespearian canon from supposedly untouchable high culture into a widely accessible reference point by putting him into conversation with other, less highbrow cultural modes. (83) From the perspective of fan studies, Lori Morimoto's article "Sherlock (Holmes) in Japanese (fan) works" examines modern Sherlock Holmes fan culture in Japan to note that *Holmes* is everywhere in the modern literary landscape and not necessarily confined to any one genre or form. Since *Holmes* was introduced to Japan at a moment of broad exploration of English literature, it has evolved into a much looser, broader, body of work than can be seen in comparable English-language examples. (2.1) Amanda Kennell, in her comprehensive writings on Japanese interpretations of *Alice in Wonderland*, notes something similar. She utilizes both Western fan studies and the Japanese media mix model to discuss the liminal nature of *Alice*, particularly the literal absence of Alice herself in her nevertheless distinctive silhouette. (32–38)

Scholars focusing on the development of contemporary worlds from translated English-language texts tend toward, understandably, analyzing one specific title and looking at how it

develops. Relevant writings investigating the intersections of embodied and fan culture include Vera Mackie's body of work on street fashion and its relationship to *Alice in Wonderland* and Sarah F. McGinley's chapter on *Black Butler* fans at the famous Swallowtail Butler cafés in Tokyo in CarrieLynn Reinhard, Julia Largent, and Bertha Chin's fan and food culture anthology, *Eating Fandom*. Literature that explicitly connects embodied experiences to literary origins, or to European "worlds" is less prolific. Brian Bergstrom comes closest to what I am attempting to do here in his article on Japanese *Anne of Green Gables* fan tourism on Prince Edward Island. In it, he situates *Anne* tourism within the context of 1990s Japanese fan cultures to argue that tourism is indeed a form of embodied fandom. (233) Like Amanda Kennell, he incorporates fan studies and contemporary Japanese media studies – particularly media mix – into his analysis. He posits that for *Anne* tourists, Prince Edward Island is part of the world of the text. (237) He argues that, furthermore, individual texts can be treated as "portals" into their respective underlying worlds, which in turn allow fans to interact with the text physically. (237)

However, while fan culture is important to the case of fan tourism and *Anne of Green Gables*, it does not fit as well in cases that do not explicitly deal with fans of a text. While Country Style's relationship to the *Little House* series is not difficult to trace, it does not fit as neatly into a fan/fan object dynamic. Enjoyers of Country Style need not be fans or even aware of *Little House*. This is also the case for *Alice in Wonderland*, as Vera Mackie and Amanda Kennell both note. Therefore, a slightly different approach is needed, one that disconnects the one text from the world it is affiliated with. Rather than using the text/fan dichotomy as an anchor, I will also be using individual texts and titles as points of departure with an eye to the much bigger picture of how worlds and modes can develop from those individual titles. The question is not so much how one title has morphed over time, but the inverse: how the European

mode I observe could have stemmed from translated literature. Each individual title will be considered in tandem with the others, each chapter building upon the one prior. In this way, I use my three case studies as focusing devices and a means of concentrating this otherwise sprawling area of investigation.

In Translation

When a text is translated across languages, it is also translated across cultures. The choices made during translation reflect the relationship between the two languages or cultures. (J. S. Miller 2) J. Scott Miller likens the translation practices of the Meiji period (1868-1912) to 19th-century *japonisme* movement in Europe and North America – fascination with and curiosity about the "Orient" that led to "freewheeling" interpretations of a vaguely East Asian locale (ostensibly Japan) in visual and decorative arts, music, and literature. (2) In Meiji Japan, as well, translations from English freely incorporated assumptions, artistic liberties, and misunderstandings on the part of the translators. One can think of this mode of translation as "adaptive," rather than literal. In this case, rather than viewing adaptive translation as mistakes, one can understand a non-literal translation instead to be an intentional imitation. As Miller puts it, "the original shrub of the source text is uprooted from its place of origin, transferred across time and space, and transplanted into new surroundings with the aim of making it appear as though *it has grown there from the beginning*." (original emphasis) (10) Many Meiji translators sought to incorporate foreign texts into contemporary sensibilities, sacrificing aspects of the original to make the text feel less foreign. Over time, the two translation modes – literal and adaptive – began to be recognized as their own distinct styles, referred to as *hon'an* (adaptive; an intentional rewriting), and *hon'yaku* (literal). *Hon'yaku* was used for efficiency and education, while *hon'an* to "tame and modify the foreign to fit domestic sensibilities." (J. S. Miller 13)

I bring up the question of translation and adaptation for two reasons. The first is for the simple reason that many of the foundational English-language literary texts that persist in the Japanese cultural landscape today were translated during this early period. As mentioned earlier, the *Sherlock Holmes* stories and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* are two examples of early translations that remain multi-adapted and well-known in Japan today. The second is that the fluidity of adaptive translation resembles what I observe in my case studies for this project. Miller argues that the ways in which adaptive translation changed texts across languages was to make the text more approachable and enjoyable to a new audience. Another way to think about this process is to think about how to adjust a text to accommodate the preexisting associations and assumptions that already exist within that other language. As Miller discusses regarding literal translation, there are numerous difficulties and awkwardnesses in translating across languages and cultures. The tactics of adaptive translators as they sacrifice a literal definition in favor of cultural communication or linguistic flow can similarly apply across written text, images, manga, animation, fashion, and so on.

Women and Girls' Media and Worlds

As referenced briefly in the section prior, my three primary examples fall under the general category of *shōjo bunka*, or girls' culture. I have made this choice intentionally, as *shōjo* has a long history of drawing on European and American children's classics for inspiration. The study of *shōjo* is a complex field of its own, and there are many ways to parse and define the long and rich history of Japanese girls' and young women's culture. For my purposes, however, *shōjo* and related cultures offer a rich and distinct perspective on the Japanese-European mode. Elements of *shōjo* are particularly fluid between mediums, encompassing manga, anime,

cosplay, street fashion, and so on, and women and girls have enthusiastically engaged with a wide variety of English-originating cultural objects ever since they first had access to them. Nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century English-language children's novels like *Little Women*, *Jane Eyre*, *Pollyanna, A Little Princess*, and *The Secret Garden*, to name a few, as well as *Anne of Green Gables* and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* have all been translated and incorporated into the world of *shōjo*. Many, indeed, formed the backbone of early *shōjo*, as relatively recent publications during the Meiji translation boom.

All three of my anchor titles as well as the associated contemporary spatial and embodied cultures are in some way affiliated with *shōjo* culture. The development of *shōjo* is not only related to the translation boom of the Meiji period but also to widespread educational reforms. At this time, women's education transitioned from a variety of mostly informal education models based on location and social class, to a significantly more formalized primary and secondary educational system modeled on the American structure. (Tocco 48) Middle and upper-class young women began to attend all-girls secondary schools, which provided a new cultural niche for a specific style of girls' culture. (Shamoon 2) Girls' magazines, aimed at these young women, promoted styles of dress, speech, and behavior that would become distinct to *shōjo* and standards of the genre even long after Meiji had ended. (Shamoon 2)

While *shōjo* has continued to develop and morph across its long history, I highlight this early period because of the legacy it has left on the genre as a whole. *Shōjo* media does not only use European imagery, locations, and storylines in abundance, but the style of *shōjo* and other girls' and young women's cultures, especially when it comes to the European mode, continues to harken back to the turn of the twentieth century. As I will discuss in much more detail in the chapters to come, *shōjo* is defined by variations on the dress styles of upper-class young women

of the late 1800s and early 1900s, including long skirts, ruffles, and bows; even in cases that are not meant to reference any specific time period, the influence is there.

Adaptive translation is also particularly relevant to the early development of *shōjo* as a multimedia form. As an example, Louisa May Alcott's 1868-9 American classic *Little Women*, first translated as *Shōfujin* in 1906, was initially adapted to be set in Japan. The main character Jo's (changed to the Japanese masculine name Takashi) hair is described as blonde, however, and Jo/Takashi refers to herself as American at least once. (Dollase 9) The push-and-pull of self-identification, paired with an intentional sense of exotic foreignness, remains present throughout many examples of European-aligned *shōjo* media, as does a sense of estrangement from the 'everyday' world. Yoshiya Nobuko's 1910s and 20s *Hana Monogatari* series, for example, built dreamy worlds full of explicitly, European-coded imagery, particularly in objects, such as pianos or clocks. Hiromi Tsuchiya Dollase argues that Yoshiya's "flower worlds" intentionally estrange readers from their surroundings to build an exotic dream-world by means of these intentionally European-coded motifs. (32)

These elements are relational – a piano might mean nothing if it was not paired with other elements, like a sense of estrangement and dreamy mood. Here, too, is a divorce between the historical or cultural origin of a piano, and instead an emphasis on the relation of the piano with other objects in context. These early examples of *shōjo* would set the course for the many decades to follow. As I will discuss, a sense of estrangement from the 'everyday' world has remained even now, and, even translated across medium again into physical space, has the mix-and-match approach to time and space. At a moment at which education – particularly women's education – was being reformed to more closely echo an American system, these early images built an in-between space that was both recognizable to a Japanese reader but also preserved

some of the foreignness of the original. Translation across medium from written word into image retained the fluidity of meaning and location.

The 1970s and 80s are the second period in *shōjo bunka* worth highlighting for the purposes of this study. *Shōjo* underwent a significant transformation at this time, shifting away from the very young audience of years past and instead toward teenagers. Artists would oftentimes keep the aesthetics of older *shōjo* but with more adult themes dealing with sexuality and politics. Over the course of the 1950s and 60s *shōjo* manga had been developing into the monthly or weekly magazine format aimed specifically at girls. (Shamoon 82) Many of the innovative artists of the 1970s began their careers by submitting their amateur work to magazines over the course of the 1950s and 60s, and by the 1970s their work in turn, now legitimized by the magazine publishers, created what felt like an intimate reading community for girls. (Shamoon 83)

The author and artist of the 1972 manga *Rose of Versailles* (*Berusaiyu no Bara*, or *BeriBara*), Riyoko Ikeda, was one of these. Ikeda was one of what was known as the Year 24 Group, or a group of women mangaka who spearheaded the trend of creating more complex manga for older girls. *Rose of Versailles* tells an embellished version of the life of the doomed Marie Antoinette of France. The visuals are frothy and opulent and capitalize on the exotic setting and extravagance of Rococo dress and design. The *Rose of Versailles* manga was a hit, and was soon after adapted into an anime, a live-action film, and a stage play. While the Japanese-European mode by no means disappeared in the roughly 65 years between the earliest *shōjo* and *Rose of Versailles*, *Versailles* remains a prominent example of the 1970s *shōjo* boom that was a major influence all three of my case studies.

Although the depiction of European settings and stories in *shōjo* was by no means new, the *shōjo* of the 1970s redefined the genre, including its look and thematic components. Anne McKnight argues that *Rose of Versailles* offers a commentary on postwar economic boom and feminine agency, and that the Rococo visual aesthetic can be connected to these themes. (136) However, there was also a general uptick in representations and adaptations of European stories and histories over the course of the 1970s and 80s. *Rose of Versailles* is one example, as are Ikeda's subsequent works, most of which are set in France or an otherwise historical European setting. Deborah Shamoon argues that the shifts of the 1970s fundamentally shaped the look and genre conventions of *shōjo* culture, much of which remains to this day. (101) These shifts included a distinct pivot away from the platonic homosocial relationships common in older manga, and toward heterosexual romance plotlines as "a safe place for girls to fantasize about their own sexuality and social agency." (Shamoon 136) These themes additionally lent themselves well to adaptations of translated turn-of-the-century and mid-century girls' novels, as many of these also had elements of danger, darkness, and/or politics.

As I will discuss, there are 1970s manga or anime adaptations of all three of my case studies that have affected the construction of their individual worlds. Perhaps the most famous and beloved example is the 1979 *Anne of Green Gables* anime, which has profoundly influenced *Anne* fan activity around Prince Edward Island. *Alice in Wonderland*'s contemporary "look" has been largely shaped by Disney's 1951 film and John Tenniel's famous illustrations, but the influences of 1970s *shōjo* culture pervade *Alice*-world, particularly in Lolita and Gothic Lolita fashion. *Alice* was also adapted into an anime in 1983. The *Little House* books were not adapted as openly as *Anne* or *Alice*, but as I will discuss in Chapter Three, the 1979 manga *Maimee Angel* is a very near adaptation, down even to borrowed names. While the original literary texts are also

relevant, the influence of this moment in the development of contemporary Japanese-European worlds remains.

Media Mix

The media mix framework is a helpful one for a study that orients itself in terms of "world" in a Japanese media context. Amanda Kennell expansively defines media mix as a "form of industrial synergy wherein companies create a fictional world with the goal of instantiating it in multiple, noncompeting media… so that each iteration advertises all of the others." (10) Although media mix exists in many other national and/or otherwise contemporary media contexts, the case of Japan is distinct in that the media mix model is relatively old and well developed. Marc Steinberg traces media mix back to the 1960s with the character merchandising of *Tetsuwan Atomu* (*Astro Boy*, 1963-66). (ix) Put simply, character merchandising refers to the "licensing, production, marketing, and consumption of goods and media based around the image of a character." (Steinberg 41) Steinberg focuses on manga and particularly anime as a central component to the development of the Japanese media mix as a whole and argues that it is particularly well-suited to transmedia connections. (xiii–xiv) Steinberg argues that the image of the character allows multiple media forms to converge and communicate across mediums. (xv)

In the late 1980s, media theorist Eiji Ōtsuka used the stickers included in Bikkuriman brand chocolates as an example to demonstrate a form of media mix. Children would collect the Bikkuriman character stickers that came with the chocolates one at a time, individually piecing together a "grand narrative" one by one. (106) Ōtsuka equates the term "grand narrative" to "world," or *sekai*, in the way it is used in Kabuki theater. In Kabuki, *sekai*/world refers to a

generalized sense of historical times, places, narratives, and characters. Each individual play is an individual variation on the overarching world. (Ōtsuka 111) In anime and manga, *sekai* tends to refer to the "world" of a particular media mix. Ōtsuka likens the Kabuki *sekai* to amateur fan comics (*dōjinshi*) of the *shōjo* manga *Captain Tsubasa*. Although there is an underlying structure, each fan creation adds to the world of *Captain Tsubasa* as one narrative variation. (113)

From the perspective of fan studies, Louisa Stein argues that fan works like those of *Captain Tsubasa* fans are a vital component of transtextual worlds. The transtext is a concept that accompanies scholarship on transmedia narratives, particularly in fan studies. I introduce this concept as a means of understanding how scholars have understood related forms of multimedia. Transmedia stories occur over the course of multiple media platforms (film, gaming, comics, and so on), and each make a distinct contribution to a whole and cohesive narrative. (Jenkins 95–6) The transtext, then, comprises the texts that are produced in a transmedia story. While the concepts of transmedia narrative and transtext were first introduced as a way to think about franchises like *The Matrix* or *Dr Who* with a strong narrative component and authoritative canon (to use the language of fandom), they also offer a way for audiences to engage with media flexibly, in terms of what order and how they consume each individual text.

Stein refers to a landscape of texts populated by a multiplicity of works and authored both by fans and by more "official" sources. She argues that by including fan works in one's perspective on a text as a whole one fundamentally decenters the source, creating a media landscape that is "immense, flexible, and powerful, if contradictory and contentious." (85) She is careful to discuss the concept "fantext" as well, as defined by Hellekson and Busse, which intentionally incorporates fan-produced content into a text, including gifsets, fanfiction, static

visual fanart of all forms, video edits, and so on, creating a "communal" interpretation. This interpretation can hold multiple contradicting directions and outcomes. (Hellekson and Busse 7) The transtext creates a landscape of texts that go on to build a fan's understanding of the text as a whole. A transtextual landscape – or world – must be unified by something, but that something need not be an authoritative canon or community of fans that orbit one specific source.

In contrast to the transtext discussed by fan studies scholars like Jenkins, Stein, Hellekson, or Busse, which is defined by non-commercial fan activity, media mix as discussed by Steinberg and Ōtsuka focuses on an industrial model in which works, characters, and worlds intersect due to more or less intentional actions on the parts of various rightsholders. (14) However, as Amanda Kennell points out, the media mix and "world" model can also be applied to the more organic ebbs and flows of common cultural heritage, like fairy and folk tales, historical events, and religious texts, among others. (Kennell 14) She posits that even in the case of out-of-copyright or uncopyrightable titles, texts, objects, or events, if there are enough adaptations they can constitute a world in and of themselves. This in turn offers the potential for analysis of the world as a whole. While *Alice in Wonderland*, which is one of my case studies and the subject of Kennell's work, is out of copyright and thus available to be freely adapted, *Anne of Green Gables* and *Little House* are not. Nevertheless, as I will discuss, all three manage to occupy similar space. Even though the original texts of *Anne* and the *Little House* series are still under copyright they, alongside *Alice*, are locus points for worlds that are not only associated with the titles themselves, but that intersect and overlap with each other.

Incorporating space and place into the media mix adds another layer of complexity to an already complex concept. In some ways, tactility has been a part of the media mix since the early days, and certainly since the days of Eiji Ōtsuka's *Bikkuriman* character stickers. Character

merchandising is made significantly easier when an image or character can be attached to a physical object, like a chocolate or a sticker. While social conception of a world may be a significantly more complicated endeavor, the world can still be attached to and associated with a physical object. As with Ōtsuka's Bikkuriman character stickers, character is generally agreed to be how transmedia worlds are constructed in the media mix context. However, it need not be. Media mix is defined as an industrial tool; an intentional form of merchandising that leads back to making a profit.

As I will demonstrate in the chapters to follow, the worlds built from my literary case studies do not focus on character per se. The *Anne of Green Gables* comes the closest, as the most traditional fan object. Fans self-identify with Anne as a character, and this self-identification shapes their interaction with tourist sites. However, in all three cases of *Anne*, *Alice*, and *Little House*, the world is based more in the juxtaposition of objects and senses rather than character – despite all three titles starring a central character, and despite McClure's "Laura World." As such, throughout this project, I have chosen to style these worlds as *Title*-world, rather than "character" world, in contrast to McClure. This is both for the sake of clarity, but also a way to deliberately distinguish the form of world I discuss here with that of character merchandising and character-oriented media mix. Name-world is no longer as apt when the character is no longer a vector into the world itself. The world has erased the character and the narrative; it has put itself at the forefront.

World and Space

Manifesting a particular world through the juxtaposition of objects, foods, scents, and so on does not fit the mold of adaptation. Other media forms, like anime or manga, can be adapted

even when there is very little resemblance between the "original" and the adaptation. Embodied experiences and spaces, however, are significantly more difficult, as the emphasis must, by virtue of their nature, be placed on the world rather than plot, character, or some other element. Homing in on how various forms of embodied worlds relate to my focus literary anchors clarifies and distills the relationship between individual titles and the greater world or worlds they have come to represent. When a story or narrative or world is translated into space that one can literally enter, we can more clearly see the outlines of that world. Furthermore, the very premise of the Japanese-European is that of place. The "reality" of place and how culture is crystallized and transmitted through physical objects is an important component of how the Japanese-European mode is expressed. Fashion, architecture, and food, for example, are all ways that both 2D and 3D Japanese-European worlds communicate their "Europeanness," and constructed spaces are an apt lens through which to examine such a tactile and spatially-oriented phenomenon.

Benno Werlen writes, "space does not exist as a material object, or as a (consistent) theoretical object." (2) As a Human Geographer, Werlen's interest lies in the interactions between space and people; "the significance of space for social processes." (1) Werlen's focus is on geography; what geography is, and how it is measured. He argues that "space is neither an object nor an *a priori*, but a frame of reference for actions. Space is a frame of reference for the *material* aspects of social actions in the sense of a formal classificatory concept." (3) He proposes a perspective that minimizes the notion that space is fixed.[1] Werlen suggests flipping

[1] Werlen prefers not to use the term "space." His preferred terminology is "action theory," or "action geography," as he sees action, rather than fixed space, as a theoretical starting point. I will not be adopting these terms for the sake of clarity and continuity. As this is not a social geography project, I find "space" to be a sufficiently precise and significantly more flexible term for my purposes.

the script and focusing on the perspective of the "embodied subject, the corporeality of the actor, in the context of specific socio-cultural, subjective and material conditions." (3)

Werlen is dealing with not only the fictional or constructed worlds of fandom or media, but worlds as lived by individuals. He homes in on what he calls the "social world," which is "produced and reproduced by social actions… which means that it is these actions, rather than 'space,' that is constitutive of that world. Any concept of space can only provide a pattern of reference by means of which problematic and/or relevant material entities that bear on actions can be reconstituted and localized." (3) Materiality and physicality are significant, but they are meaningful in context of these social actions. They are not significant in the abstract but become significant in how they are incorporated into and interact with the social world. He breaks space into three categories: social meaning in the social world, mental meaning in the subjective world, and material object in the physical world. (140) Space is not fixed but depends upon these three factors.

Werlen goes into much more detail on each, but for my purposes I will keep the discussion very simple. He explains that the location of a physical object within the social world – social world being social relationships, culture, and customs – does not necessarily correspond to its physical position in the material world – meaning, its physical characteristics and/or location do not determine an object's socio-cultural meaning. (147) Physical and social worlds rely on individual interaction with others and with physical space, be that through gestures and facial expressions or through sensory engagement with the material world. (163) The subjective world, then, forms the basis for and determines the meaning of both. The subjective is how each individual interprets the information received through each of these worlds – the interaction,

either with physical objects or with another person, and then the interpretation of that interaction, creates the space. In sum: everything is contextual, including our experience of space and world.

A particularly prescient and practical example of the combination of physical, social, and emotional worlds is in café and food culture. Third places such as cafes, bars, and other similar spaces act as relatively safe, relatively private, public gathering spaces, especially in urban Japan. (White 4) A "third place" refers to a space that allows for communal gathering: not as private as a home, but not the workplace. Coffeehouses and cafes have fulfilled this role in Japan since the Meiji Period, and as will become apparent over the course of this project, coffee, food, and cafe culture has a significant presence in the European worlds I am tracing, from explicitly themed cafes to the intense focus on food and drink even outside of a cafe setting. All three of my case studies have cafes or food culture attached to them in some capacity. While Chapter Two is almost entirely devoted to themed cafes, the embodied cultures of both *Anne* and *Little House* revolve around food in some capacity. It is not a coincidence that cafes and coffee culture entered Japanese life at the same time as translated English-language literature, as both came as part of the wave of interest in all things European after over two centuries of isolation. However, perhaps like the literary worlds of this dissertation, Japanese coffeehouses, while initially a Western import, soon lost any "Western cultural odor they might have had." (White 4) They might have a Western origin, but quickly adapted to fit the needs of locals. Cafes are an appropriate metaphor and lens through which to look at the development of European literary worlds, but they are also literally part of those worlds.

Chapters

My first chapter will focus on L.M. Montgomery's 1908 novel, *Anne of Green Gables*. The novel was translated into Japanese in 1952 and has remained a popular culture mainstay ever since. Since the 1990s, *Anne* fans have been traveling to Prince Edward Island, the Canadian home of both Anne and her author, and continue to be a remarkable touristic presence. By using *Anne* as a case study, I will explore the relationship between Japanese fans of *Anne* and the real place that is Prince Edward Island. I will primarily focus on touristic materials, and the ways in which a Japanese fan might interact with the physical space of Prince Edward Island. *Anne* is the only example of traditionally understood "fan culture" that I will be exploring in this dissertation. *Anne* tourists freely identify themselves as fans of *Anne of Green Gables*, and their activity can be easily understood as a relatively uncomplicated fan/text relationship. There is a distinct gap, however, between how the island presents itself to visitors and how *Anne* tourists experience it. There is a mismatch between the PEI of *Anne*-world and the PEI tourists visit, despite the fact that they are technically the same place. The central question of this chapter is to ask how the *Anne*-world of Japanese fans lines up with the real place that is Prince Edward Island. How is *Anne*-world defined for *Anne* fans? How do tourists reconcile their *Anne*-world with the reality of PEI, and how does *Anne*-world map onto or depart from the landscape of PEI?

My second chapter will focus on contemporary manifestations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Unlike *Anne*, *Alice* has no physical place that tourists can travel to. Wonderland has very little anchor in the "real world," and although the option to travel to England and engage in *Alice*-related tourist activities exists, *Alice* tends to remain physically in Japan. This chapter will focus on Tokyo-based *Alice* retail experiences that allow visitors to shop and dine in *Alice*-themed settings. Those who engage with these contemporary *Alice* spaces would be unlikely to

identify themselves as "fans" of *Alice in Wonderland*, unlike *Anne*. They may well be fans, but the reason for engaging with these spaces is not because of a love for any particular *Alice* source text, while in the case of *Anne*, the marriage of literary text and a specific physical place is critical to the experience. This chapter will also engage with more loosely *Alice*-related cultures, like that of Gothic Lolita, to explore how *Alice*-world can expand into the realm of fashion and in turn a more flexible definition of what "*Alice*-world" means. *Alice*-world is much less firmly tied to the novel than *Anne*, drawing on many decades of illustrations, rewritings, adaptations, and reimaginings, using the *Alice* title as a form of anchor but by no means bound to it.

My third and final chapter will move away from both physical space and from literary anchor. In this chapter I return to Wendy McClure's concept of Laura World and Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* series to explore how Country Style has evolved from the cafes and shopping experiences of the 1980s and 90s into a diffuse, digital world or worlds in the form of "slow living" vlogs. These digital worlds move away from the materiality encompassed in my first two examples, but texture and other multisensory input is critical to the medium of slow living vlogs. These vlogs build sensory worlds in digital space that mimic a cozy, soft version of the Americana found in McClure's version of Laura World. Vloggers invite viewers to enter country-cottage fantasies that ostensibly represent the "real" rural United States. Digital space allows for the worlds of these vlogs to be built out in a way that is different from both the cases of Chapters One and Two. To some extent, there is a return to "reality" as described in the chapter on *Anne*, but with the same placelessness and emphasis on mood as *Alice*. "America" is used as a placeholder to refer to a very specific kind of world and mood. My interest in this project is how there can be this transmission between "reality" (the realities of the United Kingdom, Prince Edward Island, or the American frontier) and "fantasy" (the Japanese versions

of these places) when the fantasy lives so close to and alongside what one thinks of as the "real world." A contemporary Lolita might not be a direct descendant of *Alice*, but she may be a distant grand-relative, bonded by time, space, and a sort of inner DNA. This project will attempt to map how that DNA unspools.

Chapter One

Visiting Anne-land: Anne of Green Gables tourism on Prince Edward Island, Canada

Anne in Japan

In February of 2023, I visited what is advertised as the only *Anne of Green Gables*-themed cafe in Japan officially affiliated with the Anne of Green Gables Licensing Authority on Prince Edward Island, Canada. Located about an hour outside of Tokyo by train, the cafe is housed in an ordinary-looking, if fairly large, house in a nondescript suburban neighborhood. It looks like a residential building, with a cultivated garden in front and "Anne" spelled out in large, bright red block letters. The cafe is identified by a sign with its name (Anne of Green Gables Atelier and Cafe), and an illustration of Anne shown in profile with her signature red braids and broad brimmed straw hat. The cafe itself is a mix-and-match of *Anne*-ness. The interior is decorated with a variety of *Anne*-themed memorabilia, ranging from large portraits of the characters from the 1979 *Anne* anime, posters of various Canadian television adaptations, and tourism materials from Prince Edward Island (PEI) itself. Even the menu is Anne-themed, with meals named after various incidents in *Anne of Green Gables*, and images of Anne are stamped onto both the dishes and some select food items. The cafe builds a world – an *Anne*-world – that simultaneously incorporates many adaptations of the novels and is structured around the real place that is Prince Edward Island.

Japanese fandom of *Anne of Green Gables* is a well-known fact on both Prince Edward Island and in Japan. Prince Edward Island is both the setting of the original novel and the

childhood home of its author, L. M. Montgomery, and there has been a Japanese-oriented travel industry on the island since the 1970s. On PEI itself, much of the touristic material is offered in English, French, and Japanese. In Japan, there are countless travel memoirs, guidebooks, and guided tours aimed at assisting Japanese travelers and providing a vicarious travel experience to those who cannot travel. In addition to the Anne of Green Gables Atelier and Cafe near Tokyo, the "Canadian World" theme park in Hokkaido gives visitors the opportunity to tour a replica Green Gables house, identical to the house on PEI. The "reality" of PEI holds a remarkable amount of significance among Japanese fans of *Anne* – both the tactile reality of the places and objects named in the books, and the conceptual reality of the history of PEI and its connection to Montgomery's life. And yet, at the same time, there is an element of fantasy to both depictions of Prince Edward Island and to fan tourism on the island. Fans are not interacting with the island as an independent entity, but as filtered through their own experience of the novel(s) and its adaptations.

Fan Tourism

Fan tourism presents a novel case, where even a location with no clear boundary, unlike a theme park, for example, can become the locus of fannish activity. Matt Hills argues that the "fan-text affective relationship cannot be separated from spatial concerns and categories." (110–11) By visiting a fan site, fans are able to "redefine" material space, "mapping" their experience with the fan text onto a given location. (110) This is especially true for what Rebecca Williams refers to as non-commodified fan sites. (100) As opposed to sites that commercialize themselves and their relationship to a fan object, such as parks or ticketed filming locations, non-commodified fan sites are related to a text in some way but outside the scope of a structured,

commercial experience. Hills uses the example of *The X-files* fans visiting the otherwise unremarkable back streets of Vancouver. (Hills 149) Other examples include *Twilight* tourism in the town of Forks, Washington – and *Anne* tourists on Prince Edward Island.

These "real-life," uncommodified fan sites offer a nuanced approach to how the relationship between reality and fantasy can play into fan culture. They force a blended mode of engagement, mapping imagination and individual perspective onto a location without the mediation of commerce. On PEI, official sites like the Green Gables Heritage Place are most easily viewed through the lens of site-based fandom. But for Japanese tourists, unofficial *Anne*-sites like the Kensington Train Station, a filming site for one of the *Anne* films, or even the apple orchards some tours visit are treated with the same degree of excitement and reverence as any officially sanctioned location. Although travel and the tourist industry itself can be seen as a form of commodification, Japanese fan-tourism tends not to follow the maps laid out by English-language touristic materials and marketing. As I will discuss, despite the long relationship between PEI and Japanese tourism, this disconnect moves Japanese tourism away from "commodified" and toward the "non-commodified."

Prior Literature

Scholarship on *Anne* in Japan include Brian Bergstrom's work on *Anne* fan tourism and embodied fandom, Danièle Allard's writing on *Anne* fan clubs, and Akiko Uchiyama's multiple writings on a wide range of *Anne* topics. Allard and Uchiyama in particular have written extensively on how *Anne* fits into the wider girls' culture at the time of translation and beyond. Yoshiko Akamatsu's work on *Anne*'s first Japanese translator Hanako Muraoka takes an in-depth look at how Muraoka's translation practices influenced Japanese readership, as well as the

cultural processes that allowed *Anne* to remain in the popular consciousness, such as the 1979 anime. Michael B. Pass, among others', writings on the influence of *Anne* on Japanese-Canadian relations round out the world of *Anne* scholarship.[2] This chapter will bring together two modes of engagement with *Anne* fandom – from the perspective of fan studies and that of a more traditional literary history. In keeping with the goals of this project, I will be treating each of these as parts of a whole – that whole being *Anne*-world – rather than as separate histories and forms of fandom.

This chapter will explore the *Anne* sites themselves alongside the original novels and contemporary tourist materials in both Japanese and English. I focus on the writings of Miki Okuda and Yuko Matsumoto, both prolific contemporary *Anne* writers, translators, and travel guides. They both are authoritative voices in the translation of Prince Edward Island into *Anne*-land for Japanese tourists, vicarious fans, and aspiring visitors. I will use their touristic writings as a launch point to look at the differences between the experience of Prince Edward Island they communicate to Japanese readers, and how the Prince Edward Island authority presents itself to tourists across the board. From there, I will explore how both of these authors and their works intersect with both the touristic authorities on PEI and with their own libraries of original writing and translations. I will use this as a segway to think about *Anne of Green Gables* in Japan as a

[2] For further reading, see:

Allard, Danièle. "Taishu Bunka and Anne Clubs in Japan." In *Making Avonlea: LM Montgomery and Popular Culture*, edited by Irene Gammel, 295–309. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002.

Akamatsu, Yoshiko. "During and After the World Wars: L. M. Montgomery and the Canadian Missionary Connection in Japan." *The Looking Glass: New Perspectives on Children's Literature* 18, no. 2 (2015).

Ledwell, Jane, and Jean Mitchell, eds. "The Continuous Popularity of Red-Haired Anne in Japan: An Interview with Yoshiko Akamatsu." In *Anne around the World: L.M. Montgomery and Her Classic*, 216–27, 2013.

Pass, Michael B. "To the Tortured World and Back Again: Anne of Green Gables and Japanese-Canadian Relations, 1931–1970." *Histoire Sociale / Social History* 55, no. 113 (2022): 119–44.

whole and attempt to sketch out the contours of *Anne*-world as it pertains to the real place that is Prince Edward Island.

Sketching out *Anne*-world

Anne of Green Gables was first published in 1908, by Canadian author Lucy Maude Montgomery (under L. M. Montgomery). *Anne of Green Gables*, though the most well-known of the *Anne* texts, is one of nine "official" *Anne* books that follow the titular Anne from childhood in the late 1800s through middle age in the 1910s. Montgomery also published a number of short story collections set in Avonlea, the fictional town in which *Green Gables* and several of its successors is set. *Green Gables* stars eleven-year-old orphan Anne Shirley, who is mistakenly sent to live with middle-aged siblings Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert in lieu of the boy they had requested as farm help. Anne charms the crotchety Cuthberts, and they choose to adopt her instead of rectifying the original mistake. Despite a hard early life, Anne has a vivid imagination and a positive attitude, and much of *Green Gables* is spent recounting the scrapes she gets into. The novel is episodic and does not follow a strict narrative arc, and though Anne does mature over the course of the first and subsequent books, one would be hard-pressed to pin down one, definitive, plot. All of the *Anne* books focus on landscape and character, each chapter centering an episode in Anne's life and how it shapes her relationships with the people and places around her. The landscape of Prince Edward Island acts as backdrop to Anne's adventures, and is described in rich, loving detail, both by Anne and by the narration.

Anne of Green Gables, translated as *Akage no An,* or *Red-Haired Anne*, was first translated into Japanese by teacher, writer, and children's radio host Hanako Muraoka. Muraoka was introduced to the novel by a Canadian missionary friend just before she left Japan in 1939.

She spent the war years translating *Anne* into Japanese, finally publishing it in 1952. Muraoka's translated *Anne* was a near immediate success, and the subsequent seven books in the series were translated and published in quick succession. The final volume, *Rilla of Ingleside* (translated as *Anne's Daughter Rilla*), was published a mere eleven years later in 1959. Muraoka went on to then publish two out of three translated volumes of Montgomery's *Emily* series, also set on Prince Edward Island and dealing with many of the same themes as *Anne*, that same year. The final *Emily* translation was published later, in 1969.

Anne's popularity in Japan is not confined to the novels alone. In 1979 Nippon Animation aired *Akage no An*, a 50-episode anime as part of the *World Masterpiece Theater* series, which also adapted other European and European diaspora novels such as *A Little Princess, Heidi,* and *Little Women*. The anime was popular enough to, among other things, be featured on the postage stamp jointly issued by the Canadian and Japanese post in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the novel's publication. In 2014, Japanese public broadcasting service NHK dedicated its 90th *Asadora* (morning drama) to *Hanako to An* (*Hanako and Ann*e), a dramatized rendition of Muraoka's life, beginning with the bombing of Tokyo and culminating in the publication of the *Anne* translations. The drama was adapted from a 2008 biography of Muraoka written by her granddaughter, Eri Muraoka. A revised version of Muraoka's own translation was also published that same year.

Muraoka has an enormous presence in Japan and influence over how the text is read. Interestingly, by contrast, and despite the importance of PEI itself, L. M. Montgomery does not have this kind of pull. Montgomery is far outstripped by Muraoka in Japanese *Anne*-related fame, and among the many Montgomery works translated by Muraoka, only *Anne* gained any lasting traction. The second Montgomery series translated by Muraoka, the *Emily* trilogy (*Emily*

of New Moon, Emily Climbs, and *Emily's Quest*), was made into an anime, but the translated *Emily* was not as popular as *Anne* and has not enjoyed the same lasting legacy. Muraoka also did not translate Montgomery's memoir *The Alpine Path*, despite surely being aware of it and most likely having read it. The memoir was only first translated in 1979 and then languished out of print until re-translated by Toshimi Mizutami in 2019. Muraoka's other translated works include other North American, United Kingdom, and Ireland-based greats of the early 20th and late 19th centuries, including Mark Twain, Oscar Wilde, and even a translation of *Alice in Wonderland* in 1952.

Muraoka is so wrapped into the world of Japanese *Anne* that it would be remiss not to give her some attention. Montgomery, meanwhile, is important not only because of the emphasis placed upon her life at the *Anne* tourist sites, but also because the landscape of *Anne* is, literally, the landscape of PEI. A visit to Green Gables is a visit to Montgomery's childhood as well as the world so vividly described in the *Anne* books and Montgomery's other works. It is hard to overstate how intertwined the landscapes of Montgomery's works are with her life. As such, a Japanese visitor to *Anne*-land visits three locales: that which lives inside the *Anne* books; that which lives in the greater Japanese *Anne* culture, including the legacy of Muraoka; and that which is presented to visitors, which is far more intimately connected to Montgomery and a more traditional, linear history.

Entering *Anne*-world: Travel Writing

Fan-travel writings offer an intimate perspective on how Japanese fans interact with *Anne* and with PEI. In her article, "Reading In and Out of Order," Margaret Mackey recounts a story of an Iraqi *Anne* fan who first encountered the stories as a child by means of the Japanese *Anne*

anime, which had been dubbed into Arabic. The fan eventually went on to move to Canada and read the original *Anne* texts in English, but only registered much, much later that the stories were Canadian and that the setting was, in fact, Canada. (1) A Japanese reader or writer is likely to have been introduced to PEI by means of the *Anne* books or the anime, much like Mackey's Iraqi *Anne* reader. In the case of a Japanese reader, they may also have encountered *Anne*-world by means of the large body of Japanese *Anne* travel writings that have proliferated since the 1990s.

Yuko Matsumoto is a prolific translator, writer, and tour guide, and an excellent entry point for discussion of the contemporary manifestation of *Anne* tourism. As of June of 2023, Matsumoto was actively working in the *Anne* space, and led a yearly tour of about 35, often solo, women through Prince Edward Island. Her tour is structured roughly by Anne's life, which also very roughly corresponds to Montgomery's own. The tour is organized through an *Anne*-lens, so while tourists are visiting Montgomery's own personal locales, they do so as *Anne* fans, visiting those spaces as *Anne* sites. On Twitter as well, Matsumoto herself and the guests who tweet her often refer to the sites as related to Anne rather than Montgomery. Matsumoto's book, *Anne's Prince Edward Island: A Travelogue* (*Akage no An no Purinsu Edowa-do Shima Kikō*), is part travel guide, part aesthetically-laid-out introduction to the landscape of *Anne*.

The book is full of hand-drawn maps and photographs of Prince Edward Island's tourist sites and natural beauty. Starting with a tour of the Green Gables house itself, the book then covers the grounds and surrounding natural spaces before moving out into the rest of the island. Though some discussion of Montgomery's life is included when relevant, the primary focus always remains on Anne. Throughout the book, Anne and Montgomery are referred to side by side, as co-residents of PEI. The book also includes a section on the four seasons, illustrated with photographs of and writing on the natural world as it pertains to *Anne*, with special attention paid

to flora and fauna mentioned in the books, such as apple blossoms. The final sections of the book are comparatively short and include basic touristic information – where to stay and eat, for example – and then a very short rundown of the locations in the later *Anne* books.

One of the first sentences of Matsumoto's book contextualizes and frames the experience: "...This is the landscape (*tochi*·土地, a word that evokes soil, rootedness, and a physical connection to land) that wrote Anne of Green Gables."[3] (9) Matsumoto's language draws attention to the close relationship between PEI and the novel, framing the rootedness of the text within the physicality of the space. The book explains where and how various locations correspond to the events of *Anne of Green Gables*, including direct quotes. While Montgomery's own connection to the landscape is mentioned, the focus is on Anne and her world, rather than connections to Montgomery's life. This is not to say that there is no discussion of Montgomery or the historical residents of *Anne*'s landscapes – Montgomery and her relatives are certainly discussed – but they are secondary. As a whole, the book is a guide to, as the title suggests, Anne's world, specifically the world of Green Gables and Avonlea.

Green Gables is featured immediately, on page 10, and referred to as Green Gables, the place where Anne lived with Matthew and Marilla rather than as, alternatively but equally accurately, the Montgomery relative's home upon which Green Gables was modeled. The farm is promoted as Green Gables on the island as well, and the signage pointing toward the site likewise refers to it as such (as opposed to the MacNeil Farm, or some other title). But even so, the way Green Gables is framed in the book sets the tone for how a Japanese visitor or the vicarious, home-based traveler will understand the site. Despite the translated Japanese title highlighting Anne's red hair rather than her relationship to Green Gables, Anne is still very much

[3] 「赤毛のアン」を書いた土地です。

Anne *of Green Gables*. Green Gables is the highlight of the book, and given the most space and detail, down to the detailed illustrated floorplan that notes the bedrooms of each of the characters. Only the town of Cavendish (the model for Avonlea), PEI's capital city of Charlottetown, and Green Gables are mapped out with such care and visual detail – the other sites highlighted in the book make do with mere written descriptions and photographs. The focus of Matsumoto's book is on entering the world of Anne as described in *Anne of Green Gables*. The subsequent *Anne* books are noted at the very end, but the majority of the text and examples are focused on the first *Anne* volume, treating Anne almost as a historical figure in her own right.

This is, if not a contrast, a divergence from how much of the Prince Edward Island tourism materials present the landscape. A wide range of touristic partners[4] have put together a literary tour of L. M. Montgomery's island, designated by distinctive, book-like signage in English, French, and Japanese, in that order, at key sites in her life. The tour is Montgomery focused and marketed as a Montgomery literary tour (as opposed to *Anne*). The tour does correspond to points in the *Anne* books, such as the Kensington Train Station, which was used as a filming site for the 1985 Canadian miniseries and as a model for the Hokkaido "Canadian World" theme park, but the tour signage and materials, including the translated Japanese materials, tend to be focused on Anne as a fictional character, and Montgomery as her creator. Put another way, for the PEI literary tour the perspective is place-first; Anne's connection to Prince Edward Island is through Montgomery. Matsumoto's tourism materials are Anne-first, by contrast; Anne and the landscape exist side-by-side, and Montgomery is treated as conduit rather than creator.

[4] The Resort Municipality of Stanley Bridge, Hope River, Bayview, Cavendish and North Rustico, the Government of Prince Edward Island, the Government of Canada, the Central Coastal Tourism Partnership, and Tourism Cavendish Beach on Prince Edward Island, among others, according to the tour website, https://lmmontgomeryliterarytour.com/, Accessed 10 August 2023.

Miki Okuda is another major player in the Japanese *Anne* space, as has been so since the 1990s, when she quit her job to live on Prince Edward Island for fifteen months. Her first book, 1995's *Akage no An no Niwa de* (*In the garden of Anne of Green Gables*), is a staple of Japanese *Anne* travel writing, and recounts the experience in a style that can be read both as practical and vicarious narrative travel guide. Okuda has since worked on multiple *Anne*-related original writings as well as translations from English, all oriented toward not only the purely touristic but the embodied, sensory, and material *Anne* experience. Her original works include 2001's *Anne of Green Gables A to Z: the life and natural world of Anne as described by L. M. Montgomery* (*Akage no An A to Z – Mongomeri ga Kaita An no Kurashito Shizen*), and 2008's *The Eternal* Anne of Green Gables *Book* (*Suien no "Akage no An" no Bukku*). Translations include Elaine Crawford and Cindy Crawford's *From the Kitchen of L.M. Montgomery: Aunt Maud's Recipe Book*, which Okuda translates as *Anne of Green Gables' Recipes: From the Kitchen of L.M. Montgomery* (*Akage no An Reshipi Nōto: L. M. Mongomeri no Daitokoro Kara*). The title of this last translation, like Matsumoto's work, and like the text of *Anne's Garden*, foregrounds Anne, rather than Montgomery. Okuda's *In the Garden of Anne of Green Gables* is more in line with a travel narrative than Matsumoto's, which can be read as a pure travel guide, although there is an argument to be made for both works' ability to be both travel guide and narrative leisure reading.

In the Garden, while text-heavy, has many colorful photographs of the island throughout. Even in the early pages, on which Okuda briefly describes the steps she took to move to PEI, are framed by photographs of the island and of Green Gables. The photographs do not literally illustrate the text but rather illustrate Okuda's reasoning for moving – the natural beauty of the island, and, in particular, the presence of *Anne*. One photograph on page 9, upon which Okuda discusses her logistical decision-making pre-departure, shows a brown, circa 1880s dress on a

hanger. To the *Anne* fan, this dress would instantly be recognizable as the beloved dress Matthew gifts to Anne in chapter 25 of *Anne of Green Gables*.

The photograph has nothing at all to do with the juxtaposed text, but its placement alongside it and the specificity of the content speaks to Okuda's reasoning for being on the island, and the desire to live as Anne. Clothing, food, and other daily-life accessories are ongoing themes in both Okuda and Matsumoto's works. Both Matsumoto and Okuda's illustrations and photographs tend to focus on the tangible, small items that make up Anne's world (and *Anne*-world): clothing, dishes, antique stoves, and foodstuffs, among others. Both juxtapose these images with those of the natural landscape, creating the effect of an aestheticized daily life surrounded by natural beauty. Like Matsumoto, Okuda discusses Green Gables first and foremost - the first full chapter of the book is entitled "Welcome to Green Gables." Okuda also includes sections on exotic cultural household items, like patchwork quilts, again complete with many photographs.

There is a fascination with the tangible experience that is framed, but not necessarily contained, by the character of Anne. Anne is merely the jumping-off point, or a vector. Anne's experience on Prince Edward Island is what opens up the possibility of what can be described as *Anne*-world – in this case, the home of the abovementioned cultural household items and foodstuffs. Okuda's works on *Anne* marry image and text, constructing a reading experience that combines Okuda's first-person narrative with hand-drawn maps and photographs of Prince Edward Island. Her *Anne* translations, such as her translation of Carloyn Strom Collins' *The Anne of Green Gables Christmas Treasury*, remain in this theme. However, Okuda's works that are not *Anne* are also telling: these begin to expand *Anne*-world and place it into a larger context of related works and worlds.

Beyond *Anne*-world

Okuda's other translations focus on children's books first and foremost, all of which are either British or North American. All her other translated works, with the exception of her translation of Carolyn Strom Collins's *The World of Little House*, which focuses on Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* series, feature alternative worlds in some capacity: *Peter Pan*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, and the works of naturalist and children's book author and illustrator Beatrix Potter. Setting aside the *Little House* book to discuss further in a moment, *Peter Pan* is quite literally about leaving "our world" for Neverland; similarly, the magical world of Narnia of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, is again distinct from "our world" (which is also consistently referred to as such in the text). The works of Beatrix Potter, while not as overtly fantastical as *Peter Pan* or *Narnia*, tell stories of highly anthropomorphized animals that live alongside humans in such a way that suggests two separate worlds. Potter's children's stories very often feature animals that English children would be familiar with (rabbits, ducks, hedgehogs). The interactions between animals and humans, as well as the very human nature of the animals themselves, build a sort of parallel universe in which the animals, many of whom are wearing hats, jackets, and other clothing and perform human-like activities, live their lives in conjunction with and alongside people.

In context of these other works, *Anne* and *Little House*, as, by contrast, staid works of semi-historical fiction, seem suddenly out of place in Okuda's universe. And yet, *Anne* and *Little House* do share characteristics between them. Both are firmly grounded in place, *Anne* on PEI, *Little House* the American frontier. Both are also physically and culturally remote from a Japanese context. Collins's *The World of Little House* gives historical detail on the lives of

pioneers like the Ingalls family, but in fact resembles a Japanese *Anne* lifestyle volume. It includes recipes and crafts, and the text is sandwiched between soft, colorful illustrations of objects that cue a — perhaps difficult — but nevertheless uncomplicated domestic past: cast iron skillets, biscuits, sewing, and other images reminiscent of crafting or cooking, again pointing toward tangible manifestations of an aestheticized daily life. The book also teaches one how to craft or cook items that are ostensibly part of the world of the narrative.[5] This again speaks to pulling one world into another or incorporating parts of the novel's world into that of the reader. Okuda's body of work and Yuko Matsumoto's guidebook both do something similar: they place the reader into the world of a given text, with exceptional care taken to include these small physical, evocative details.

Brian Bergstrom, in his article on Anne-as-world, also uses Okuda's book for his analysis. Much of the article focuses on Okuda's language, and how she inserts herself into the text. Bergstrom builds on the works of media scholars such as Eiji Ōtsuka, who argues that a world is not anchored to any one media text, but that any work that refers to or takes place in a world takes part in building that world. Bergstrom argues that the shift from "Anne-as-text" to "Anne-as-world" occurred in the 1980s and 90s. He attributes that shift to a variety of factors, including the broadcast of the popular *Anne* anime in 1979, and the Canadian, live-action television series directed by Kevin Sullivan, the first installment of which was screened for Japanese audiences in 1986. The economic boom of the 1980s made it both possible and normative to make *Anne* a way-in to domestic consumerism, and *Anne* even made appearances in lifestyle and fashion magazines. The Hokkaido theme park "Canadian World," which opened in 1993, also allowed Japanese fans to "visit" PEI and dress up in period garb. It was during this

[5] I will discuss *Little House* in much more depth in Chapter Three.

period (that same period during which Okuda was living and writing on PEI) that Japanese tourism to Prince Edward Island peaked.

Bergstrom writes, "I would argue that this sense of Avonlea as a world one can access not just, or even primarily, through books or even motion pictures, but rather through dressing and living in certain ways, paved the way for fandom to move away from appreciations of the text itself and towards embodied experiences that allow a feeling of inhabiting the world the books describe in longer-lasting, expanded ways," and that "one can see how this fandom, which has been routinely naturalized as an extension of a presumably homogeneous Japanese identity that expresses itself in group activities and tourism, may actually be better read as a response to a cultural logic of consumption that feeds on character and world, privileging modes of inhabitation and information collection over an engagement with the texts themselves." (240) He argues that Avonlea has become a version of "self-as-world," or "an experience of the self that is allowed to occur at a remove provided by the inhabitable mode of fandom available through investment in the world of Avonlea."

Bergstrom's argument is rooted in the 'place'-ness of Avonlea, and the crux of the piece is how Okuda and others will travel to inhabit the land of *Anne*. However, as I will discuss in the next chapter regarding *Alice in Wonderland*, when there is no place to return to, entire worlds can be constructed essentially out of nothing, or from objects alone. Worldbuilding does not rely on existence, or reality; as we will see in the case of Wonderland, worlds are inhabitable even without a real-life corollary, or even a base to build on. Bergstrom's assessment is that the cultural and economic atmosphere of the 1980s and 90s made it possible for Anne fans to communally adapt their clothes and living spaces and make pilgrimages to Prince Edward Island, which in turn carved out a way to embody and inhabit Anne-world. The groundedness of PEI,

both as a place and within the novel, makes Anne a perfect crucible for this kind of embodied fan experience. However, while the economics and social dynamics of the 1980s and 90s made it possible, acceptable, and communally beneficial to engage in travel and consumerist fandom, *Anne* readers have engaged with the physicality and world of Green Gables for much longer.

Creating Early *Anne*-world

A foray into the early Japanese editions of *Anne of Green Gables* (as well as the later *Anne* books) indicates that *Anne*'s visual and sensory world was being constructed for Japanese readers from very early on. The two dynamics I will focus on here will be the translation and how space is described, as well as the early illustrations and other visual depictions of Anne herself, which were an early Japanese readers' first experiences in the realm of Anne-world. *Anne of Green Gables*'s first edition in Japan was, much as the original text was in English, illustration-less. However, Anne did not appear in a vacuum, as readers at the time had a series of visual references to look to for turn-of-the-century Western garb. Other works of a similar genre, like *Alice in Wonderland*, were already popular, and girls' magazines, such as the popular *Shōjo no Tomo* or *Shōjo Sekai* discussed these regularly. In this case, then, given the history of this particular moment in European history being an exoticized item to begin with, the period setting of *Anne* is likewise important, though, arguably, less so than her landscape. I will address the former point briefly, and the second in more detail.

The text of *Anne* is not explicit about time period. To a casual reader of the 1950s, particularly a young person in Japan who would not have much political or social context, the setting would likely appear antiquated but not easily placeable to any specific date. There are very few details in the text itself that would mark a particular time and place to the uninitiated

reader. There is a sense of vague timelessness to the text, in that this is a time dominated by steam trains and horse-drawn buggies, but there is a significant absence of any other political or technological identifiers that might root a reader in time. Coupled with an already existent base of dream-worlds rooted in vaguely turn of the century European themes, *Anne* slots nicely into that niche.

And yet, there is also evidence for a kind of self-identification between Anne and reader even in early illustrations. One 1954 edition published only two years after the Muraoka *Akage no An* features full-color illustrations by Yōko Toyama, which help to determine how Anne was viewed when she entered the Japanese reading consciousness, as well as how important the visual world was to become. The illustrations are in full color, and clearly a centerpiece. The first illustration, which depicts an episode in which Anne gets stuck on a bridge piling in the river and is rescued by Gilbert, is not only in vivid color, but a large fold-out. The imagery is vivid, and equal attention is paid to both the characters and the landscape, an early example of the importance of not only the landscape itself, but its visual characteristics. Another example by the same artist, from *Anne of Avonlea*, expands on this theme.[6] While Anne is dressed like a contemporary (1950s) Japanese schoolgirl, her older friend Miss Lavender and childhood chum Diana are dressed in explicitly period-aligned clothing, with high collars, long skirts, updos, and plenty of frills. This is only one such example of early ways in which Anne is set apart, providing a vector for a contemporary reader to enter her world. It is not so much in the fact of Anne's dress, but the stark contrast her presentation takes to Diana and Miss Lavender that both situates Anne within the world and brings her closer to a contemporary reader. The rest of the

[6] *Anne of Avonlea* is known in Japan as *An no Seishun*, and *Anne of Windy Willows* as *Akage no An no Kōfuku*. The illustrated volume I accessed is a copy of *Anne of Avonlea*, but is titled *Akage no An no Kōfuku* both in the catalog and on the title page of the work. Therefore, I have chosen to cite this copy as *Kōfuku*, in keeping with the catalog and original title, while translating the title as *Avonlea*.

space is decorated with ornate tea things and other period and locational cues, which heightens the contrast between Anne and her two compatriots. Anne's clothes are distinctly mid-century in their cut and style, and there is no indication in the accompanying text why Anne might be dressed differently to Diana.

Another helpful series of examples that can contextualize Anne's presentation in these early images can be found in a 1954 edition of *Junior Sore Iu* magazine, a girls' magazine aimed at teenagers. In this issue also, Anne was given a large, prominently placed spread; six full-color pages, with illustrations, narrating Anne's story. (Shiro 53-60) The story is also given a large cover image. The interior is not an excerpt from the novel, but more of a retelling, told in first person from Anne's point of view. These retellings were not an uncommon practice for girls' magazines at this time. Anne and Gilbert are depicted on nearly every page. Both are dressed in more or less period-appropriate clothing, being a floor-length dress for Anne and a vest and coat for Gilbert. Anne is shown as slightly older than she is for most of the first novel, which follows her through ages 11-14. The older teen that she appears to be in the illustrations, though, aligns with the demographics of the magazine. The text itself is an accurate, if paraphrased, summary of the novel. The illustrations focus exclusively on the aged-up Anne and Gilbert. Going by the illustrations alone, one might understand the story as a romance, and even though in the novel itself Gilbert is positioned as a romantic interest, very little to no romantic storyline takes place in *Green Gables*. The relevant novels that would explore their romance (*Anne of Avonlea* and *Anne of the Island*, 1955 and 56 respectively) had not yet been released in Japanese at the point of the magazine's publication.

The cover illustration for the story is a distinct contrast to the interior illustrations. Anne retains her red hair, but she is dressed significantly closer to how a young Japanese girl in 1954

might be, in a pinafore and sailor hat set jauntily at the crown of her head. Her hair is likewise very modern, long down her back and cut into bangs. She even wears a bobby pin over her ear. The styling is unmistakably contemporary to the magazine, and a sharp contrast to the stylized look of the interior. So, here we have two Annes – neither of whom portray the Anne of the text. One is an adult or older teen Anne in period garb, while the other is a younger Anne, but clearly far more aligned with a young girl of the 1950s. Much of the rest of the magazine is devoted to fashion spreads, and the back of the magazine contains patterns for readers. The photographs and instructional illustrations exclusively depict young girls, the intention appearing to be to assist readers in making their own fashionable clothing and accessories. The copy I accessed had markings done in pencil over the patterns; clearly, at some point, a young reader had planned on making the fashions in question for herself.

Anne is incorporated into a readers' world by means of the very layout of the magazine. The magazine, by its nature, interacts with the reader in a very tangible way. Readers are encouraged to see the fashion spreads and patterns that sandwich the *Anne* section between them and imagine how they might transform those photographs and patterns into something they can wear in their own lives. The reader – if she is reading the magazine linearly, from cover to cover – travels from fashionable photograph, through *Anne*, to dress and accessory patterns. She imagines herself wearing these new fashions, just as Anne did. There is a tangibility to *Anne* even in the early days that can be traced directly to the contemporary manifestation of *Anne* tourism. Anne exists outside of time, and yet also firmly anchored within it. Anne as a character, from the beginning, has acted as a vector to incorporate readers or audiences into a specific kind of world – one defined by the clothing of Diana and Miss Lavender and the rest of the sitting

room in the *Anne of Avonlea* illustration. She has a personality of her own, but she is also the entry point into something else.

Anne-world in Translation

Akiko Uchiyama attributes the early popularity of the Muraoka translation of *Anne* as an echo of the *shōjo shōsetsu* (girls' novels) that were popular at that time. She argues that there is evidence to suggest that Muraoka's translation of *Anne* was a conscious attempt to engage with the genre. Uchiyama writes, "the essence of *shōjo shōsetsu* lies in the concept of a girls' school that is closed off from the outside world – an exclusive world of ephemeral beauty." (Uchiyama 214) She points out that Muraoka used the 'schoolgirl' speech used by characters in *shōjo shōsetsu*, such as the consistent use of *no yo*, *te yo*, and *te* as sentence endings. (213) This sophisticated, middle or upper-class, educated girls' speech used by both Anne and Diana in the translation is characteristic for *shōjo shōsetsu*, and is significantly more in keeping with Japanese genre conventions than with the original text, in which Anne's speech is remarkable for the flowery language she uses, in distinct contrast to her peers.

Uchiyama furthermore suggests that the physical and cultural remoteness of Prince Edward Island contributes to the *shōjo*-ness of *Anne*, and particularly that it may promote "imaginative accessibility." (215) She also discusses the importance of small things, particularly food, and cites Kazuko Honda, who also explores the importance of food in the *Anne* mythos. Honda notes how food items that appear in *Anne*, like pound cake, feel exotic, but they are also accessible – all one needs is a kitchen and a recipe. (228) Honda also discusses the clothing in *Anne*. Anne's clothes are at first described as aggressively plain, and a source of great joy for her is Matthew's gift of a dress with a stylish silhouette, lace, and frills. Uchiyama points out that the

description of Anne's dream dress, gifted to her by her beloved Matthew and discussed earlier in this chapter, resembles the clothing popular in *shōjo* stories contemporary to the 1950s and beyond. (215) As I discussed in the section prior, clothing also ties in to girls' reading practices at the time, which were often incorporated into other activities and spheres of life.

Multiple scholars have written on the interconnections between *Anne* and the Japanese *shōjo* genre and culture, including Hisayo Ogushi, Hiromi Tsuchiya Dollase, and Akiko Uchiyama. The issue of the Western novel as adapted into *shōjo* has been discussed at length within *shōjo* studies. Dollase in particular points to the influence of Euro-American women writers and girls' novels in the early development of *shōjo*. *Shōjo* manga and anime also have a long history of adaptation of European literary works and their associated imagery, and an aestheticized Europe that openly pulls on European literary tradition has been a common theme since the founding of the genre, as discussed in the introduction. As Hisayo Ogushi notes, *shōjo* artists started to incorporate American (particularly US-based) works after World War II, and peaked in the 1970s and 80s, of which *Anne* is an excellent example.

A boom in translation supported by the American Occupation's Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) translation program (1948-1951), which created a bidding system for the translation rights to foreign books, boosted the translation of English-language books for girls. There was also a proliferation of new magazines for young girls over the next ten or so years, such as the *Weekly Shōjo Friend* (1962), *Weekly Margaret* (1963), and *Junior Sore Iu*, as just discussed. Ogushi points out that these magazines and the manga associated with them, particularly *Margaret*, set romantic comedies (*roma kome*) in what Ogushi terms the "Western World," i.e., England, France, Italy, Switzerland, North America, and so on. She also notes the proliferation of US-based and US-literature-inspired works throughout the 1970s, such as *Mittsu*

no Branko no Monogatari (1977), loosely based on *Little Women*; and *Maimee Angel* (1979-80), which loosely incorporates elements of the *Little House* series, the live-action American television adaptation of which also aired on NHK in 1975.

The *Anne* anime, which aired in 1979, was part of Nippon Animation's *World Masterpiece Theater*, an animated series that adapted numerous Western literary classics into anime. As per Ogushi's observation that the 1960s, 70s, and 80s saw a boom in manga and anime set in North America, of the twenty-six series in *World Masterpiece Theater,* nine are adapted from North American authors, and eight of those are set in North America. The lone original story, *Tico of the Seven Seas* (*Nanatsu no Umi no Tikko*), featured a mixed-race Japanese American protagonist, but was set on a boat and not any concrete, fixed, locale. Ogushi argues that North America represents a combination of light and shadow in its manga and anime representations, and that the "independence and self-realization" that was common in *shōjo* manga of the time coincided with themes found in the juvenile literature promoted by the Occupation forces and made its way into the Japanese reading and later cultural landscape.

The *Anne* anime follows the general plot points of *Anne of Green Gables* and *Anne of Avonlea*, with a few changes made to characterization and timeline. Visually, the anime is in line with the early illustrations I discussed previously, with a visual emphasis placed on home items, clothing, the natural world, and foodstuffs. Though the art style could not be called lush, enough attention is paid to these details to be remarkable. Furthermore, even as the anime draws upon a history of *Anne* content that came before, the anime itself is likely the foundation upon which many contemporary *Anne* fans base their own imagination and worldbuilding. As demonstrated by the cafe I discussed at the beginning of this chapter, and by the anime's prominent inclusion in the celebrations for the 100th anniversary of the novel, the anime itself has become almost

synonymous with *Akage no An*. Akiko Akamatsu notes that while *Anne of Green Gables* remains a staple in school libraries, most young people are most likely to associate *Akage no An* with the animated image of Anne. (216) While the novels are still a source of inspiration, we can understand contemporary *Anne*-world as a combination of all of these historical factors: the novel itself, the translation, early *Anne*-related imagery and media culture, as well as the anime and the media milieu that surrounded it.

In conclusion, *Anne of Green Gables* offers an interesting example of how history, fantasy, and embodied spaces collide and overlap. The reality and historicity of Prince Edward Island is inextricably intertwined with the story of *Anne*. And yet, as demonstrated by the early illustrations and visual depictions of Anne's world, the physicality of the space is something that has been important to *Anne*-world since early on, and separately from Prince Edward Island. Prince Edward Island the concept was established much earlier than Prince Edward Island the place in the *Anne*-world of Japanese fans. PEI the place became a possibility in the 1970s – but the world of *Anne*, that of long dresses and tea parties, already existed. At its core, *Anne* is a novel that is firmly grounded in its landscapes and is deeply rooted in the life of its author. It was translated into Japanese at a moment friendly to both girls' novels, and with a reading culture that encouraged self-identification with certain characters, in addition to a healthy working relationship with 19th century girls' literature. The popular anime built upon this relationship, again, in another moment that was particularly friendly to *Anne*'s profile of story. Economic and cultural forces made it possible to travel to PEI in the subsequent decades, and, looping back around to the text itself, made it possible for Japanese visitors to truly live as Anne, and enter the text even more fully.

The *Anne*-world of the Japanese visitor is built by this long cultural history – not necessarily premised on the reality of PEI at all. Each literary visitor carries this cultural history with the text with her. Even as she learns about the "real" history of the space and explores Green Gables, her perception of that space is through her own prior experiences with the world. As such, I propose that, rather than perceiving the landscape of Prince Edward Island as a "real" counterpart to the *Anne* text(s), it is more accurate to instead understand the relationships between history, reader, and space as intertwined and expressed via Japanese *Anne* tourism like that exemplified by Okuda and Matsumoto. It is moreso the experience of a landscape through the lens of these layers of history, experience, and text than a binary between the two.

The reality of the space is not as important so much as the physicality of it. Engaging and putting oneself in Anne-world through clothing, food, and other objects is not only not new, but a reading practice in and of itself that is not restricted to *Anne* alone. Anne, by virtue of her simultaneous rootedness and displacement in the world of her Japanese fans and visitors, offers a unique perspective on how this kind of self-identification through physicality can take place, and how perceptions of space, time, and history vary according to one's own personal exposure to and prior knowledge of a given landscape. Not only is that landscape filtered through the lens of the novel, but also through the culture that grows up around that novel. The experience is built by a complex interplay between the "reality" of the space and the lens through which that visitor is primed to experience that space. The next chapter will take this question one step further - if the real place that is PEI is incorporated into an already existent Anne-world rather than the reverse, what changes when the world in question is based on not only an entirely fictional world, but a bizarre one? How do these layers of history, fantasy, and "reality" morph in the case of *Alice in Wonderland*, where there is no "real" place to look at or return to?

Chapter Two

Tokyo Wonderlands: Tokyo *Alice in Wonderland* Spaces

Finding *Alice*

Searching for *Alice in Wonderland* in Japan is not so much an act of looking as sifting through a deluge of material. Known in Japanese as *Fushigi no Kuni no Arisu* (*Mystery Country's Alice*), *Alice* is to be found everywhere, from anime and manga to themed hotels, cafes, and stores, to street fashion and cosplay. Variations on *Alice* range from the pink and frothy, to the Gothic, and everything in between. A few well-known Japanese adaptations of *Alice* include the *Kingdom Hearts* and *Twisted Wonderland* game universes, the *Black Butler*, *Sword Art Online*, and *Alice in Borderland* manga, anime, and television shows, Lolita and Gothic Lolita fashion, commercial experiences like those of the Harakuju *Alice* store Alice on Wednesday, and *Alice* cafes like the Tokyo-based Alice in Fantasy Book and Alice in Old Castle.

If one takes the definition of "fan" and "fandom" as demonstrated by *Anne of Green Gables* fans, one would expect *Alice* to behave similarly. This would mean that each interpretation of *Alice* would refer back to a source, whether that be the *Alice* books, Walt Disney's film *Alice in Wonderland*, or some other launch point. *Alice* in Japan, however, is sprawling and undefined. While contemporary adaptations and transformations of *Anne of Green Gables* and other, similar, works remain closely tied to their respective novels, *Alice* is flexible, an amalgamation of author Lewis Carroll's two primary *Alice* books, his three other *Alice* and Wonderland-related works, and one hundred and fifty years and counting of translation and reimagination.

In keeping with this project's focus on material manifestations of worlds somehow rooted in or related to translated literature, this chapter will focus on contemporary *Alice* spaces and embodied practices as a way-in to *Alice*-world. Unlike *Anne* and Prince Edward Island, *Alice* and Wonderland do not have a "real" corollary. Any choice made on the part of Wonderland must be intentional; if one wants to visit Wonderland, one must create it from scratch. The choices made in the creation of Wonderland provide a rich source of material for analysis. In the case of Japanese *Anne of Green Gables* fandom on Prince Edward Island, the relationship between novel and landscape is mediated through a pre-existing *Anne*-world that is then mapped onto the island. As we see in the examples discussed in this chapter, and perhaps true to the spirit of Wonderland, *Alice* takes a very different course. Japanese *Alice* spaces and embodied cultures are a prime example of creating a world out of fragmentary bits and pieces that revolve around – but are not necessarily derived from – one original source. The world of Wonderland as described by Lewis Carroll is not the Wonderland presented by the spaces discussed in this chapter. Indeed, the "world" of Japanese *Alice* has arguably very little to do with Carroll's text. Each element, be that a color, a motif, or even a specific foodstuff, that goes toward building out a distinct *Alice*-world stands in relation to both other texts and objects and the relationships those have to each other, *Alice* and non-*Alice* alike.

My three primary case studies are the Tokyo based *Alice* store Alice on Wednesday, and DD Holdings' two Tokyo *Alice* cafes Alice in Fantasy Book and Alice in Old Castle. As I will describe in more detail in this chapter, each are a variation on *Alice* that is Gothic, mystical, and fairy-tale-esque. Each plays on an incongruous combination of Disney soundtracks and pan-European imagery and motifs ranging from Queen Elizabeth I of England to Venetian Gondolas to French Maids – a strange assortment that nevertheless manages to weave together a cohesive

experience. Despite the seemingly random assortment of juxtaposed items and themes, each space also manages to still orient itself around *Alice*. I will tie my analysis of these three concrete spaces to the more amorphous, and yet still *Alice*-world, fashion cultures of Gothic Lolitas and Disneybounders. Their similarities help to map both the contours of *Alice*-world, and the role materiality and embodiment might take within it. As incongruous as each individual element may seem, they have all somehow come together to refer to a Victorian children's book that has morphed into a remarkably complex, utterly distinct, entity of its own.

Fushigi no Kuni no Arisu

To date, there are more than 500 editions of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in Japanese, more than any other language except for English. *Alice's Adventures*, by the English academic Lewis Carroll, was first published in 1865, and its sequel, *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There*, in 1871. John Tenniel, artist and regular political cartoonist for the prominent British satirical magazine *Punch*, illustrated both original editions in collaboration with Carroll. (Figgins 271) The two initial *Alice* books were then translated into Japanese in 1899 under Emperor Meiji (1868 – 1912) as part of the flood of foreign works that were translated into Japanese in the wake of the Meiji Restoration. Throughout this chapter I will be shortening *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* to just *Alice*, which more readily encompasses both *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*. This is perhaps the most accurate way of describing most Japanese *Alice*-world: not tied to any one source, but to many.

Carroll's books transport Alice, a young girl bored on a sunny afternoon, to an alternate, parallel reality. In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Alice follows a white rabbit down a rabbit hole to Wonderland, a dreamscape where she encounters a range of strange characters. In

Through the Looking Glass, Alice goes through a mirror and again has adventures and encounters a host of odd characters. Both books are surreal and bizarre, some of which is incorporated into the form of the text itself, which at times will spiral across the page or wrap around the illustrations. These stylistic choices are generally reflected in Japanese translations. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is most commonly translated as *Fushigi no Kuni no Arisu* (Strange/Mysterious Country's Alice), and *Alice's Adventures* remains the most well-known *Alice* title in Japanese. While elements of *Through the Looking Glass* are present in contemporary Japanese versions of *Alice*, *Looking Glass* is rarely referred to on its own. The other three Carroll *Alice* texts – *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* (1864), *The Hunting of the Snark: An Agony in Eight Fits* (1876), and *The Nursery Alice* (1890) – are rarely referenced in the broad popular culture, except for the full-color illustrations in *Nursery Alice*, which were the first to introduce what was to become a classic image of a full-color, blonde Alice.

Much as "*Alice in Wonderland*" tends to encompass both *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* in English, "*Fushigi no Kuni no Arisu*" does the same in Japanese. The word *fushigi* can be translated as wonder, but also "mystery, strangeness, bewilderment, or fear." (Somers 199) *Fushiji* expands *wonder* from a sense of awe into the realm of the strange, with a sinister edge that does not necessarily apply to *wonder* in English. *Fushigi* is also a common way to describe the supernaturally strange or mysterious, and, notably, to also describe *yōkai* like the kappa of Akutagawa's novella. (Foster 17) The dichotomies between "real" and "not real," or "natural," and "unnatural" are also not as clear cut in the world of *fushigi.* The supernatural is not "not real," or "not natural," so much as elements or processes seen in nature that appear in a surprising way. (Foster 16) Michael Foster argues that "creatively translated, *fushigi* might be rendered as 'that which cannot be grasped in thought.' Mystery is the

hollow core, the originary absence, the 'thing' always just out of reach, always deferred." (17) Using the word *fushigi* to describe Wonderland opens up the possibility of what Wonderland is – and also hooks *Alice* into a vast and ever-shifting sea of *fushigi*. The word *fushigi* places Wonderland at a crossroads of the everyday and the strange. By describing Wonderland as *fushigi* country, the translated title also brings Wonderland closer to the realm of a fairy tale. Alice, too, as the "country of *fushigi*'s Alice," becomes a part of Wonderland. She is no longer a visitor but has the potential to be as strange and mysterious as Wonderland itself.

The translation from *wonder* to *fushigi*, as well as the shift in emphasis from *Alice* onto *fushigi* in the translated title brings that sense of enchantment and mystery to the forefront, from *Alice's* adventures *in* Wonderland to the Country of *Fushigi*'s Alice. As Sean Somers writes, "as a domain for realizing *fushigi*, Wonderland entices the Japanese reader with an alternative experience, a unique space that enchants and beguiles." (199) *Alice* provides an opportunity to realize – or create – a country of *fushigi*. The title *Fushiji no Kuni no Arisu* then transforms from a title in the spirit of *Anne of Green Gables* or even *Akage no An* into a framing device. Invoking *Akage no An* ties an object to a very specific set of references, all harkening back to the novel itself. Invoking the title of *Fushigi no Kuni no Arisu* in a game, film, space, or other mode, does not tie itself to any one thing. It explicitly cues the *kind* of world one might be about to invoke. The term *fushigi* can be, and is, readily applied to describe anything that encompasses the weird, strange, or mysterious, which includes both European fairy tales and Japanese folk and fairy lore.

Fittingly, Japanese *Alice* behaves much more like a folk or fairy tale than a novel in the traditional sense. There is an openness to the possibilities of *Alice* that one also finds with characters like Red Riding Hood or stories like "Cinderella." Indeed, *Alice* can often be found retold or otherwise alongside more traditionally defined European fairy tales, such as "Red

Riding Hood." *Alice* even has direct connections to the world of Japanese fairy and folklore, such as through Ryūnosuke Akutagawa's famous 1927 novella *Kappa*, the title of which references a Japanese supernatural creature, or *yōkai*. Amanda Kennell has convincingly argued that *Kappa* contains both stylistic and thematic references to *Alice*, including both in terms of plot and in echoes of Carroll's unique use of wordplay and onomatopoeia. (61–68) *Kappa* was also written at roughly the same time that Akutagawa did his own translation of *Alice*, entitled *Alice Story*. (Kennell 57) *Alice* is not the only translated European literary work to live somewhere in the space between novel and fairy tale, but it is one of the oldest and most ubiquitous.

The *Otogibanashi* Treatment

European fairy tales were introduced parallel to the literary movement that brought *Alice* to Japanese readers. The term *otogibanashi* refers to a form of literary fairy tale that includes original stories like those of Hans Christian Anderson as well as collected folktales like those of the Brothers Grimm. (Murai 154) *Otogibanashi* need not necessarily refer to a story of European origin, though it often does. The Brothers Grimms' famous 1819 collection of German stories, for example, *Grimms' Fairy Tales*, which was first translated into Japanese in the late 19th century, is considered to be *otogibanashi*. Early translations of European *otogibanashi*, such as the Grimms', were aimed primarily at children, but translators did not always necessarily sanitize the stories for a youthful audience. While some edited out passages deemed too violent or immoral, others took a more "folkloristic" approach to translation. (Murai 161)

The folkloristic approach rose in popularity in the late 1940s and early 1950s. These translators leaned into the violent or sexual elements of the stories and claimed that their

translations were closer to the "original" Grimms' version. (Murai 161) Genkurō Yazaki's 1954 translation of "Snow White," for example, left the evil queen's death by dancing in red-hot shoes in, a scene commonly cut for its violence. (Murai 161) The rise in "authentic" Grimms' translations also coincided with the release of some of the Walt Disney Company's most well-known animated fairy tale adaptations: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, based on the Grimms' story "Snow White" and released in the United States in 1937, was only made available to Japanese audiences in 1950. *Cinderella*, based on a story recorded by 17th century French writer Charles Perrault and also later by the Brothers Grimm, was released in Japan in 1952. *Alice in Wonderland* came in 1953, and *Peter Pan*, another film based on a turn-of-the-century English children's book, in 1955.

It is tempting to see Disney's *Alice in Wonderland* as a locus point for Japanese representations of Alice, given the omnipresence of Disney soundtracks, imagery, and themes incorporated into contemporary variations on *Alice*. However, the media that surrounds Disney's *Alice* film in Japan seems to be adjusted to a Japanese idea of *Alice* rather than the other way around. Titles such as the *Kingdom Hearts* (2002 – present) and *Disney Twisted Wonderland* (2020 – present) games, while affiliated with Disney, are firmly embedded in a distinctly Japanese history of *Alice* adaptations and sense of *Alice*-world. *Twisted Wonderland*, for example, a smartphone game released in 2020, involved manga artist Yana Toboso, well-known for her Gothic *Alice* interpretation, *Black Butler*. Both games incorporate a sense of the Gothic that is missing from both the original *Alice in Wonderland* film and most American-oriented marketing materials and spinoffs. Amanda Kennell suggests that Disney's role in Japanese *Alice*-scape is to, "respond to Japanese desires and amplify Japanese creativity rather than to import foreign masterpieces." (22) On a broad scale, Disney is one of a number of prominent influences

Japanese artists and creators will draw upon to create the European-inspired worlds encompassed in *Alice*. Disney's animated versions of European-originating stories were, by the time they got to Japan, well and truly out of context, and, combined with a resurgence of interest in European folk and fairy tales, paved the way for *Alice* to slide from the classic children's literature end of the scale to that of *otogibanashi*. The tension between the two versions of "European fairy tale" circulating in Japan at the same time commingle within contemporary manifestations of *Alice*. *Alice* can be, at the same time, threatening, Gothic, violent, and sexual, as well as innocent, frothy, and fantastic.

Another wave of Grimms' fairy tale translations and adaptations crested from the late 1970s through the 1990s, what Mayako Murai calls the "Grimm boom." Writers not only translated the Grimms' stories, but wrote versions of their own, this time aimed at adults. Many took a feminist perspective and used their retellings to engage with contemporary discourse on gender and sexuality. (Murai 164) Like those of the 1940s and 50s, these retellings did not shy away from the sex and violence both implicit and explicit in the original translated stories, using and reworking these themes for an adult women's readership of popular fiction. Misao Kiryū's 1998 retelling of *Snow White*, for example, not only describes the violence in the original story in graphic detail, but in her version, Snow White is a sadistic individual in an incestuous relationship with her father.[7]

[7] See also:

Kiryū, Misao. *Hontō wa Osoroshī Gurimu Dōwa*. Bestsellers, 1998.

Ogawa, Yōko. *Otogibanashi no Wasuremono*. Illustrated by Kumiko Higami, Hōmusha, 2006.

Yōko Ogawa's similar 2006 short story collection, *Otogibanashi no Wasuremono* (*Forgotten Fairy Tales*), illustrated by Kumiko Higami, retells four classic stories: "Red Riding Hood," "The Little Mermaid," *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and *Swan Lake*. Although "Red Riding Hood," an old story recorded in *Grimms'*, and "The Little Mermaid," originally by Dutch author Hans Christian Anderson in 1837, are considered fairy tales in the traditional sense, *Alice* and *Swan Lake* are an 1860s English novel and 1870s Russian ballet, respectively. Ogawa's collection of retold stories demonstrates how *Alice* had been, by the mid- 2000s, thoroughly incorporated into the world of *otogibanashi*. *Alice* arrived at a moment friendly to its profile, then, but also at the same time as a boom in interest in Western *otogibanashi*; especially *otogibanashi* that could be retold with a dark and/or feminist twist. Alice's unique structure and content, paired with its incorporation into "fairy tale" culture, particularly via the Disney animated film, allowed it to enter the realm of *otogibanashi*. *Alice*-world provides a landscape to map these legacies onto; a sense of mystery and the bizarre, which is twisted through an established practice of European fairy-tale retellings.

Defining the Gothic

"Gothic" is a term often ascribed to Japanese *Alice*, and is one way in which Japanese *Alice* is distinct from, for example, most of Disney's non-Japanese versions of *Alice*. "Gothic" is also a key ingredient in the Gothic Lolita (*Goshikku Rorita*–) street fashion trend that has roots in *Alice in Wonderland*, and is additionally applicable to the *Alice* cafes and shopping spaces I will discuss later in this chapter. As a term, Gothic, as it is used in the Japanese sense – *goshikku* – is in direct conversation with *fushigi*, as in *Fushigi no Kuni no Arisu*. In Japanese, *goshikku* encompasses the same sense of the mystery and bizarre that *fushigi* does, but oriented toward a

sense of European historicity. Novelist and literary critic Eiri Takahara describes the Gothic as a way of life, based in a set of symbols but also flexible. He writes,

> "If it's a color, it's black. If a time, night or dusk. The place is inside a Gothic building, or a similarly desolate, gloomy set of ruins or old buildings. Past rather than present. The European Middle Ages. Old-fashioned attire. Coldness rather than warmth. Monsters, the grotesque, heresy, evil, suffering, and death. Damaged things and damaged bodies. Transformed bodies and changed appearances. Depictions of violence and tragedy. Mystery and dread. The bizarre. Decadence. Or, by contrast, a longing for innocence. Dolls, and other girlish hobbies. Respect for beauty. Mystical images of Western origin, such as androgyny, angels, and demons. Wonder. Devotion to the sublime. The apocalypse. Decorative, ritualistic, and magical gestures and behaviors. Indulgence in dreams and illusions. Dreaming of another world. Antichrist. Antihuman. These elements make up the Gothic spirit. Not to say that all of these elements are fixed, but the basic representations, designs, and tools of the Gothic spirit have been established over time." (8–9)[8]

Takahara's description of his definition of the Gothic – and the "Gothic spirit," which is implied to be slightly different than true Gothic – encapsulates much of Japanese *Alice* cultures and spaces. Takahara's Gothic also encompasses the definition of *fushigi* I discussed earlier in this chapter. On the one hand, there is the darkness expressed in "Gothic" media, such as

[8]「色ならば黒。時間なら夜か夕暮れ。場所は文字どおりゴシック建築の中か、それに準ずるような荒涼感と薄暗さを持つ廃墟や古い建築物のあるところ。現代より過去。ヨーロッパの中世。古めかしい装い。温かみより冷たさ。怪物・異形・異端・悪・苦痛・死の表現。損なわれたものや損なわれた身体。身体の改変・変容。物語として描かれる場合には暴力と惨劇。怪奇と恐怖。猟奇的なもの。頽廃的なもの。あるいは一転して無垢なものへの憧憬。その表現としての人形。少女趣味。様式美の尊重。両性具有、天使、悪魔など、西洋由来の神秘的イメージ。驚異。崇高さへの傾倒。終末観。装飾的・儀式的・呪術的なしぐさや振る舞い。夢と幻想への耽溺。別世界の夢想。アンチ・キリスト。アンチ・ヒューマン。こうした要素によってゴシックの精神は構成される。すべて決まっていると言うのではないが、基本になる表象・意匠・道具立てなどは相当歴史的にできあがっている」

otogibanashi-style *Alice* retellings. On the other hand, there is the lightness of the "Princess" and Rococo imagery that can also be associated with *Alice*.

Takahara's definition of Gothic highlights the Europeanness of Gothic influences. He notes that the Gothic is a term that originates in Europe as art, architectural, and literary forms. (11–12) But Takahara's discussion of the Gothic is not confined to these specific references, but a general sense of Europeanness. Some of his definition can be applied to the preexisting definition of Gothic literature in English, which includes the likes of Mary Shelley and Charlotte Bronte. However, Takahara's definition of Gothic spirit is also distinctly Japanese in that it homes in on a sense "Europe" as a point of contrast, or strange and foreign entity. It can be thought about as another, darker, stranger way to imagine the exotic that was represented by patchwork quilts and apple pies in the *Anne*-world of Chapter One. Japanese *Alice*-world is, in Takahara's terms, an encapsulation of the Gothic spirit.

Alice Spaces

I will return to the question of *Alice* and the Gothic in a moment. However, at this point, I will turn to the three *Alice* spaces that I mentioned earlier in this chapter. This section will closely analyze three commercial *Alice* spaces in Tokyo: one themed shopping experience and two cafes. As *Alice*, unlike *Anne*, has no "real" base to build from, these *Alice* spaces must be constructed from scratch. As already discussed, *Alice* has ties to Disney, fairy tales, the Gothic, and *fushigi*. As a world of Gothic, European-aligned *fushigi*, the question is, then, what are the specifics in creating an *Alice*-world? What is each individual element, where does it come from, and how does it juxtapose to the other elements in the space? Finally, what is the appeal of

inhabiting a space of this nature? Why build an *Alice* space in the first place if, unlike *Anne*, it lacks the convenience and novelty of a real place to map itself on to?

The commercial nature of each of these examples adds a layer of complexity but also helps to clarify the relationship between individuals and space. In direct contrast to some of the *Anne* tourist destinations discussed in the chapter prior, these spaces are explicitly transactional. As I will discuss in more detail presently, however, the merchandise sold is secondary to the experience of visiting the space itself. Each venue is not selling merchandise so much as a version of *Alice* that customers will pay to experience. The transactional nature of the space also clarifies the expectation of creator/consumer – the use of the term "Alice" means that the version of *Alice* presented is what creators think that customers want and will pay for. The merchandise is a vehicle to bring people into the venue. Since these *Alice* venues are not tied to any one franchise, as a Disney, Pokemon, or other trademarked site might be, the creators are free to pull on any stylistic inspiration, unbeholden to any overhanging source material or corporate power.

Alice on Wednesday

I visited Alice on Wednesday on February 6th, 2023. Alice on Wednesday (*Suiyōbi no Arisu*) is an *Alice* themed store in Harajuku, selling *Alice* merchandise in a themed space. The entrance is on a side street, just off a broad Harajuku thoroughfare, speckled with high-end cafes, eateries, and designer stores. In order to enter, customers must duck through a small door (approximately three feet high) in the wall of an alley. The door is positioned so that there it is impossible to see inside. Entering the store takes a leap of faith and gives the impression of moving into another world. As the website copy reads, one "follows the white rabbit, opens a

small door, and finds oneself in a strange and charming wonderland." (*Alice on Wednesday (Suiyōbi No Arisu)*)

The store is three floors. Customers are directed to start at the top floor and work their way down. Climbing the stairs to the top floor immerses the shopper in the experience and allows them to adjust from the street. It is a curated experience, much like an interactive museum exhibit. The floors increase in size and brightness as one proceeds through the levels. The top floor is a dimly lit space filled with bags, textiles, and other related paraphernalia. The second floor is slightly bigger and contains mostly jewelry. The lighting is still dim, although slightly brighter than the top floor. The lighting highlights the jewelry and adds to the luxurious effect. The ground and last floor in the experience is the largest, and the brightest. The floor and walls are a startling white, which differentiates it from the other two rooms. This floor primarily holds food items, as well as checkout. The bright lighting transitions the shopper out of the world of the store before they duck back out onto the streets of Harajuku.

The walls are decorated with framed pictures and Alice-themed designs; including, like much of the merchandise, plays on playing cards (kings, queens, jacks, and suits), teapots and teacups, clocks, and rabbits. Much of the imagery is closest to John Tenniel's illustrations, with the notable exception of a large, sculpted bust of the character of the Caterpillar that takes pride of place in the stairwell and bears striking resemblance to the animated Caterpillar of Tim Burton's 2010 *Alice in Wonderland* film. Orchestral music is played throughout all three levels. No photographs are allowed in the store, and while there are promotional photographs and a few video walkthroughs available online, as well as an online store, the only way to truly experience the store is to visit. Much of the merchandise, too, is not only Alice-themed, but store-themed.

The effect is cyclical; the experience is to shop, but the shopping circles back to the experience. As the website copy attests, the experience does echo that of falling down the rabbit hole: a plain alleyway and a tiny door opening into a magical interior. The merchandise available at Alice on Wednesday demonstrates the wide variety of aesthetics and visualizations of *Alice*, but the effect as a whole is one of a magical, vaguely threatening, pseudo-historical Europe with an emphasis on a version of royal and upper-class opulence. As I will discuss presently, the themes of playing cards, royalty, variations on Tenniel's illustrations, and a sense of separation from the outside world run through *Alice* cafes as well. Alice on Wednesday offers a space premised on the inherent strangeness of Wonderland and signals that strangeness through layout and atmospherics. The commercial experience is created and supplemented by the space; without it, the merchandise would not be nearly so attractive. The merchandise behaves more like that of a souvenir of the visit than a product on its own.

Eat Me!: Alice in Old Castle and Alice in Fantasy Book

The Alice in Old Castle (*Kojō no Kuni no Arisu*) cafe in Ikebukuro and its sister cafe, Alice in Fantasy Book (*Ehon no Kuni no Arisu*) in Shinjuku are both created and owned by the Diamond Dining (DD) Holdings company, of which there are also branches in Osaka.[9] There were once five individual DD Holdings *Alice* restaurants in Tokyo, but as of January 2023 three had closed, likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While Alice in Old Castle is "royalty" themed, Alice in Fantasy Book is a "picture-book" themed cafe that uses imaginative spatial

[9] "Alice in Fantasy Book" and "Alice in Old Castle" are both the official English-language versions of the Japanese names.

design and imagery from the Tenniel illustrations to create an experience much like stepping directly into an illustrated copy of *Alice*.

Much like Alice on Wednesday, Alice in Old Castle (*Kojō no Kuni no Arisu*), is not easy to find. Other than a few posters on the street, very little would indicate that a strange and magical world was just below street level. Housed on the basement level of a nondescript building on a corner in Ikebukuro, visitors must follow a curved set of stairs down from the street into a small foyer. This foyer leads to a long brick-lined passageway and the reception desk. One wall is decorated with a giant book, illustrated with a blown-up woodcut of Alice approaching a European-style castle. The image is not entirely authentic to the original *Alice* novels, but is a composite made up of one of John Tenniel's original 1897 engraved illustrations from *Through the Looking Glass* and an image of a castle that appears in neither *Alice* novel, but does match their visual style.[10]

From the foyer, guests to Old Castle follow a long passage through to the dining room. It is long enough to prevent a guest from seeing out the other side clearly, and makes a clear separation between inside and outside. One leaves the world of the street outside, and enters into a new space, much like Alice entering the looking-glass, or going down the rabbit hole. The passage opens into a large space designed to evoke the inside of a European castle. The walls are lined with brick, and suits of armor with the bodies of playing cards stand guard, representing the Queen of Hearts' sentries. At the center of the room is a "chandelier seat," a dining booth covered in lights meant to resemble a chandelier. There are several dining areas available in Alice in Old Castle. As the website copy explains,

[10] I visited Alice in Fantasy Book on January 20th, 2023 and Alice in Old Castle on March 1, 2023.

> "A large book appears at the door. When you turn the page, you find yourself lost in the Queen of Hearts' ancient castle. Pass through a brick corridor, and you arrive in the hall of the Queen's glittering "Crystal Ball." In the center of the floor is the "Big Chandelier Seat," where you can spend a magical moment inside the chandelier. You can also experience other parts of the Queen's gorgeous castle interior themed in red and black, including in the "Magic Mirror Dressing Room," surrounded by mirrors, and the "Red Seat," inspired by the Queen's Dressing Room. In a separate area there is also the "Sea Temple," a mystical space surrounded by aquariums that makes you feel as though you are on the ocean floor. The "Mermaid's Grotto," a private platinum room, can also be found here." (*Alice in Old Castle (Kojō No Kuni No Arisu)*)

As described by the restaurant's website copy, one can dine in the venue for the Queen's Crystal Ball (*Kuristuraru Budōkai*), in which one has the opportunity to sit inside a giant chandelier, and a "magic mirror dressing room," (*Mahou Kagami Doresu Rūmu*) which is made up of booths and lined with mirrors. Guests can also sit in the Queen's "Red Bedroom," (*Aka no Shinshitsu*), which is also lined with booths. Each booth houses a framed Venetian mask. At the end of this section is a diorama that guests are encouraged to interact with. This diorama consists of a table laden with tea things, flowers, mirrors, a clock, playing cards, and a statue of Disney's rendition of the March Hare. A large portrait of Queen Elizabeth I hangs behind the diorama. The portrait is one originally attributed to Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, but this version has been edited to evoke the Queen of Hearts, mostly by replacing Queen Elizabeth's jewelry with appropriately

themed items.[11] The final seating area of Alice in an Old Castle is ocean themed and lined with fish tanks that give the effect of an undersea grotto. The cafe also incorporates Disney's film version of *Alice* alongside Tenniel's illustrations by playing a constant loop of songs from Disney films.

At the Alice in Fantasy Book cafe in Shinjuku, like Old Castle, the visitor is greeted by a human-sized cutout of a book open to an illustration; this time of Alice and the March Hare. The visitor is then led by a waiter dressed in a maid or butler's uniform into the restaurant itself, which is broken up by clear plexiglass sheets that stretch from the backs of the benches to well above a visitor's head. These dividers have playing card inspired designs printed on them, obscuring the view across the restaurant. The effect is mazelike, like one might have entered a book itself. Though closer to Carroll's books – both literally and thematically – than Old Castle, Fantasy Book still plays fast and loose with Carroll's version of Wonderland. The cafe mixes indoor and "outdoor" space while folding all of the dining areas into the "living storybook" concept. The experience of the cafe is about both the experience of reading and the physicality of the book itself.

There are three different seating areas in the cafe reachable by wending one's way through the plexiglass maze. The cafe's marketing materials term these the "Neverending Tea Party," (*Owaranai Ocha Kai*) the "Eternal Masquerade," (*Eien no Masukarēdo*), and "Picture-Frame Gondola" (*Gakubuchi Gondora*). (*Alice in Fantasy Book (Ehon No Kuni No Arisu)*) The "Neverending Tea Party" area is the main floor of the cafe, and is decorated, appropriately, to reflect the tea party Alice has in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* with the Mad Hatter, the

[11] The complete changes from Gheeraerts's original painting are as follows: Queen Elizabeth's jewelry has been replaced with pink, heart-shaped pendants made of what appear to be gems; her face has been edited to appear younger; and her collar has been changed from white to black.

March Hare, and the Dormouse. The tables are black and decorated with bright pink roman numerals. The seating is made up of mismatched antique-style chairs, with high backs and patterned cushions. The booths and section dividers in the center of the space are covered in faux grass. The floor is checked green and black, and the texture is vaguely reminiscent of grass or turf.

The "Masquerade" section of the cafe adjoins the "Tea Party" section. The section is primarily booths, and decorated in dark reds and golds, with plenty of patterns. The most prominent decoration in this section is a large rendition of Alice in Tenniel's style, wearing a crown and with the March Hare. Like the opening illustration in Old Castle, this, too, is a composite of two different Tenniel *Alice* illustrations. Though the two are originally associated with *Alice*, they create a scene that does not exist in any of the original books. There is very little about this section that might signal "Masquerade," but the Venetian theme continues in the "Gondola" section, and with the Venetian masks of Old Castle. Like Old Castle, Fantasy Book completes the atmosphere with an ongoing loop of Disney film music. Like Alice on Wednesday, both of DD Holdings' cafes draw on European opulence, the Gothic, and the fantastic to build out their respective worlds.

Food, Space, and Commerce

"Themed" cafes and commercial food culture are not unusual in Japan. Known as *konseputo kafe*, or concept cafes, these cafes offer dining experiences that incorporate a given theme into their food and decor. It would be difficult to count the different experiences available. Multiple brands and franchises have their own themed cafes, such as in the Pokémon center MEGA Tokyo cafe in Ikebukuro, Sanrio's Pompompurin cafe, and the Snoopy Museum Tokyo's

Peanuts comics-themed cafe. The opening of the Asian tour of the play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* in 2022 prompted the Akasaka subway station entrance to be turned into a miniature Hogwarts and the street above into a mini shopping plaza, complete with a *Harry Potter* concept cafe and gift shop. Disney has also opened specialty themed cafes in Tokyo under the "Oh My Cafe" brand, which cycle through Disney themes and characters like *Peter Pan* and *The Little Mermaid*. This is not even to mention independent maid cafes, butler cafes, cat and other animal cafes, and so on. Diamond Dining offers a number of "concept" establishments in addition to its *Alice* cafes, including a vampire cafe in Ginza that serves a "night afternoon tea" in a black-and-red, Gothic space. Concept cafes vary widely in their alignment with fan culture; some, like DD Holdings' vampire-themed cafe, are not tied to any one fan object. Others, like the Pokémon cafe in Ikebukuro, are more along the lines of the traditional corporate themed space, like Disney's theme parks.

The concept cafe is an extension of the larger cafe culture in urban Japan. As CarrieLynn Reinhard, Julia Largent, and Bertha Chin write in the introduction to *Eating Fandom: The Intersections Between Fans and Food Culture,* "Food exists at the intersection between biological sustenance, physical goods, and sociocultural meanings… Food is a social construction, as symbolic of larger meaning as any other system of signs that circulate within a community." (2) Cafes and coffeehouses have acted as urban gathering spaces since the turn of the 20th century and have a long and storied history of serving as meeting places, creative spaces, and sites for political discourse. (White 7) They provide a social arena that is casual and safe from the noise and danger of the street, but not as private or intimate as a home. Cafes, coffeehouses, shopping centers, and bars are all commercial spaces that, in addition to selling merchandise, also sell a social experience. (White 132) The arrangement of any public space will

shape how it functions in the greater urban ecosystem. Concept cafes and themed stores take the role of these spaces and bring that social aspect to the forefront.

Online reviews on TripAdvisor, Yelp, and Google attest to the theme, not the food itself, being the draw for both of DD Holdings' *Alice* cafes. Many of the English language reviews give them low ratings, frequently commenting on the poor quality of the food. The Japanese language reviews tend to be high but note the theme and interior design as the major attraction. The food is not mentioned nearly as often, and if it is, it is secondary to the ambiance and "experience." The low ratings of the English language reviews may also be due to the fact that the cafes serve *yōshoku* (Japanese-style Western foods), the flavors of which might be startling to the unprepared tourist, and because staff may not have enough English language facility to offer English-only guests the same detailed service as Japanese-speaking visitors. Japanese customers at DD Holdings' *Alice* establishments are interested in an experience, and not so much the food or merchandise.

The benefit of an enclosed space like a theme park or *Alice* cafe is that creators have a general sense of the "outside" experience of their clientele. As Hernan Tesler-Mabé points out regarding Disney parks, part of the draw of a fairy-tale park is its foreignness: not as much foreign in the national sense, but an assumption of a daily lived experience. (200) Unlike a film or a novel, for which an author has no control over who consumes their work, the creators of a park or cafe know exactly what physical and cultural environment a customer is coming from and can adjust the atmosphere accordingly. In the case of American Disney parks, Cinderella's castle is so exciting not because of any specific allusions to real French castles, but because of its exotic "Europeanness" in contrast to the "outside" experience of a mid-century American, who was the target attendee of the original Disney parks. (Tesler-Mabé 200) In the case of Alice on

Wednesday and DD Holdings' two cafes, the space can be adjusted to the busy streets of Tokyo. Much as it would in the United States, citing European castles and masquerade balls creates an effective sense of otherness and mystery for customers entering out of a Tokyo commercial district. It is not so much the fact of Europe, but the contrast between "Europe" and the Tokyo that customers are transitioning out of.

Both cafes expand into fantasy worlds that hinge on a historical European-inspired world of wonder and the bizarre. Fantasy Book takes the concept of reading an original illustrated copy of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* or *Through the Looking Glass* and translates that experience into space. Old Castle creates a world ostensibly centered around a European castle. Rather than adapting the literal world of Wonderland from the novels or the 1951 Disney film, they take the underpinnings and concept of Wonderland and build out from them to create an *Alice*-world that can be categorized under *Alice*, but as an umbrella rather than as any form of adaptation. The edited images of Queen Elizabeth I, the mixing and matching of European time periods and locales (Venetian masks; a medieval fortress; tea parties; an ornate chandelier), and the composite, edited *Alice* illustrations are literal examples of the process of building an embodied experience that hinges on European-inspired *fushigi*.

Maids and Lolitas

So far, I have used three *Alice* establishments to discuss how Alice-world creates *fushigi* by means of mixed and matched European elements. In this section, I will expand the world of *Alice* to tie these case studies to other embodied practices, such as fashion. Fashion can be used to alter a body's orientation within and against space. Rather than simply transporting someone into a world, it can produce a world from the inside-out. While social/mental/physical space is

inherently linked to the body, as I have discussed at length already, fashion makes some of these connections explicit. Gothic-aligned gendered and embodied practices, including both cafes and fashion, saw an increase in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, at roughly the same time as the wave of interest in dark, adult retellings of *otogibanashi* that I discussed earlier in this chapter.

The closest corollary DD Holdings' *Alice* cafes have, for example, are maid and butler cafes, which they resemble in both style and experience. Maid cafes became popular in Japan in the 1990s, as a response to and extension of dating simulation games. The premise of the experience is that the customer of the café is returning "home" after a trip out. The cafe vaguely mimics a European-style grand house, where "maids," or young women dressed in – typically – a French maid's outfit, will greet customers at the door to welcome them "home." The hook of the cafes is the relationship between maids and customers, as customers order food that is ostensibly prepared by the "maid." While there is strict professionalism between maids and customers and no physical contact, some maids will have regular customers who patronize their cafes specifically to interact with them. Butler cafes craft a similar experience, but are aimed at women, with young men serving as "butlers" instead of maids.

The atmosphere of a maid or butler cafe as one of role-play, one in which, for customers, a "real relationship develops with a fictional character, who is also real." (Galbraith 106) Maids are also able to come up with their own characters to some extent to personalities, hobbies, and birthdays, but the maid archetype remains consistent with the ethos of the individual cafe as well as the genre of the maid cafe overall. Tōru Honda describes maid cafes as a "2.5 dimensional space." (19) A maid cafe allows the experience of 2D imagination and gameplay to enter into 3D space, hence creating an in-between zone. As they come from video games but are not based on one game alone, maid cafes are a helpful model for what would come next with *Alice*. They are

based on games, but not on one single game. They construct a space in which it is possible for the 2D and 3D to meet. Likewise, the look of the maid outfit and the premise of the cafe, while not being explicitly *Alice*, inhabits the same universe of exaggerated European opulence and turn-of-the-century settings.

Food and cosplay are intimately linked as two forms of participatory culture that involve manipulating or otherwise incorporating the body into the fan experience. Traditionally, in terms of fandom, preparing and eating a food as depicted in a text allows a fan to interact intimately with that text and develop their emotional attachment to it. A fan might gather recipes of a text and share them within the fan-space, or provide information on certain types of food, preparation techniques, or methods of purchase for other fans. (Reinhard et al. 1) Much of the language of food and fan text is that of immersion. In her chapter on the relationship between the manga and anime *Black Butler* and the infamous Swallowtail Butler cafe, Sarah McGinley writes, "cosplay and other forms of participatory culture are arguably attempts to be closer to characters or inhibit their reality, and fans can literally consume aspects of the text by replicating the characters' foods. As a form of participatory culture, reproducing edible aspects of the text is a potent combination of affective and sensory experience." (105) Like DD Holdings' *Alice* cafes, McGinley notes that the food at the Swallowtail cafe is not the primary draw, but the experience of the cafe itself, or living in the fantasy. (113) In the case of *Alice* cafes and (most) maid and butler cafes, the food is not so much a way of bringing a customer closer to any one text but bringing them closer to a greater world. It is the food in combination with the decor of the space, wait staff's clothing, and other stylistic elements that make the world accessible.

The look of the French maid touted by the maid cafe also shares significant DNA with Lolita and Gothic Lolita street styles. Lolita subcultures, like the second wave of *otoginabashi*

retellings and the emergence of maid cafes, have roots in the 1980s. They began as primarily fashion-oriented movements, for which young women would dress in vaguely 19th-century, European-inspired fashions like aprons, wide skirts, and ruffled caps. Lolita is distinguished by what Theresa Winge describes as "anachronistic visual representations of Victorian-era dolls, covered from head to toe in lace, ruffles, and bows… usually young women (not girls), who dress in cute, childlike, and modest fashions without the overly sexualized appearance typically associated with Nabokov's Lolita." (47–48) Gothic Lolita, as a subset of Lolita as a whole, takes the look of the Lolita style and gives it a dark edge, replacing oftentimes soft, bright colors with black and other dark shades.

Both Theresa Winge and Sean Somers draw connections between Japanese Lolitas – particularly Gothic Lolitas – and *Alice*, noting the similarities between Lolita fashions and popular visualizations of *Alice*. (Winge 48; Somers 202) The Lolita style draws on Vladimir Nabokov's 1955 novel *Lolita* in its name, but in practice has very little to do with the novel. While the visual style overlaps significantly, the primary difference between maid cafes and Lolita fashion is in intent. Maid cafes cater toward men and offer patrons the opportunity to interact with the maids in a similar way to a dating sim. Although interactions are steadfastly innocent and no touching is allowed, the underlying premise of the maid cafe is a structured heterosexual interaction. Lolita fashion uses the same clothing and imagery as do maids, but the purpose is for building community among Lolitas. As with any subculture, a big part of fashion is to communicate to others within that subculture. For the young women who participate in Lolita, and specifically Gothic Lolita, those signs are frilly skirts, aprons, and Mary Janes.

Fashion or Cosplay?: Lolitas and Bounders Online

While *gosu-rori* is, much like *Alice*, difficult to pin down, contemporary Japanese Lolita subcultures often cross paths with *Alice*. For example, Instagram's *Arisu* tag (in katakana: アリス), while mostly dominated by Disney, includes a healthy sprinkling of Gothic Lolita cosplayers who have tagged both *Arisu* and/or some variation on *Rorita* (Lolita) and *Goshikku* (Gothic). On September 15, 2023, Japanese Lolita cosplayer Riru (@riririll) posted a photo of herself at Tokyo Disney in *gosuloli* attire, and tagged it, among other things, *Alice* and *Dizuni–boundo kōde* (Disneybound outfit). She is dressed in a bright red-and-green plaid knee-length pinafore, crisp puffed sleeves, lace details, and pigtails. The photo is framed as a selfie taken through a mirror with her cell phone, simply captioned "A room with many cute mirrors."[12]

Disneybounding, put simply, is the practice of incorporating cosplay into streetwear, and came to be due to a ban on explicit cosplay in Disney parks for visitors over 14. (Williams 205) Disneybounding involves incorporating color palettes, silhouettes, or individual articles of clothing such as a headband or a scarf, into "everyday" clothing. For example, a visitor to a Disney Park might wear a yellow skirt, a red headband, and a blue top - they might not be overtly cosplaying as Snow White, but their outfit incorporates symbols and themes that make it easy to draw the connection. Disney's ban on cosplay in its parks for visitors over 14 is due to potential confusion between cosplayers and "official" characters, and for child safety. The result, however, is that the relationship between fans and clothing becomes something much more complicated than straightforward cosplay. Cosplay and dressing up gives fictional characters "materiality," acting as "the suture between the unreal existence of the character… and the real performance space in which they talk, move and interact with others." (Godwin)

[12] "かわいい鏡がいっぱいある部屋"

Disneybounding effectively incorporates cosplay into not only streetwear but into the everyday lives of Bounders beyond the boundaries of theme parks, cosplay venues like conventions and competitions, or even the neighborhoods and specific streets that tend to house street fashions like Lolita.

A key difference between Disneybounding and street fashion like that of the Gothic Lolitas is that Disneybounding was created by fan interaction with a brand. Much as with most fan activity, there is a canon, or a central, official text to work from, and an entity that has ultimate control over that text. While *Alice* technically does have a canon, its themed spaces are interacting with it differently. *Alice* is part of the Disney universe, and much of *Alice* production pulls on Disney – such as Disney musical numbers playing on loop at both cafe locations – they are not bound *by* the world of Disney. They are something adjacent and separate. Fans that are interacting with the Alice cafes and other *Alice* worlds are not confined by the same fannish negotiations as Disneybounders, who must always be aware of, negotiate with, and at times intentionally or unintentionally push back on corporate Disney. I bring up bounding not only because of the connection to *Alice* through the 1951 Disney film and the predominance of Disney in *Alice* spaces, but because bounding is an intentional and open mediation of one thing into another – bringing cosplay to street clothes. Disneybounders are not simply mimicking a character but incorporating it into a mode of being. In a way, Disneybounding is the inverse of cosplay: Cosplay and street fashion both bring a separate world to life and allow practitioners to inhabit that world. Disneybounding does the opposite and incorporates a world into the everyday.

In terms of *Alice*, street fashion, cosplay, and bounding are interconnected, particularly in the realm of social media. Tags on social media platforms like Instagram are used for multiple

purposes, most commonly in order to attract engagement from people who share similar interests. People can follow a tag, or, more likely, have certain tags offered to them in their personal feeds.[13] This use of tags assists Instagram's algorithm to show creators' content to people who might be interested in engaging with it, whether by likes, follows, or other forms of engagement. Not only are individual tags important, but the combinations in which they are used. The individual tag *Gosliloli* (and other related tags) positions the associated photo in relation to other photos with the same tag. Additional tags spin the web of relations wider. By adding the *Arisu* tag, Riru, the cosplayer I referenced above, places the *Arisu* tag in direct relation to the *Gosiloli* tag, as well as both in relation to the *Disneybound* tag. While keeping in mind that tagging a post as one thing or another does not necessarily describe that post in full, it does place the post in relation to other posts within that tag. Other themes and tags that overlap with the *Arisu* tag are *Purinsesu* (Princess) and *Rococo* (referring to the ornate 18th century French artistic style), usually on cosplay or fashion-themed accounts. Even on social media platforms like Instagram, *Alice*-world is in relation with these other terms, aesthetics, and communities.

The use of tags in the digital world provides a shortcut to map the movement of worlds across modes. Vera Mackie calls the intersections of street fashion subcultures a transnational bricolage, made up of a multitude of varying inputs that are constantly changing and morphing as Gothic Lolitas "cite" their fashion inspirations. (7) Even without tags to make these citations somewhat more visible, fashion, and subcultural fashion in particular, is inherently citational. The social, fluid nature of street fashion highlights how shapes, colors, and textures travel. This act of citation itself is what binds together a stylistic community like that of the Gothic Lolitas.

[13] Tags are one of many ways in which Instagram's algorithm decides what content to feed to users.

Mackie homes in on the concept of darkness, particularly the color black, in Gothic Lolita fashion. The "Gothic" in the Gothic Lolita is what differentiates her from being merely a "Lolita." As Mackie points out, though, the color black is associated with many styles, including those of Goth, Punk, Bohemian, and some religious communities. (15) What makes a Gothic Lolita is the combination of the dark color with the other elements of her outfit. This includes the childlike dress and mannerisms commonly associated with *shōjo* culture, as well as the exaggeratedly European dress. These combinations echo the elements I have already noted in the Alice on Wednesday, Alice in Old Castle, and Alice in Fantasy Book spaces. They cannot be called fan practices per se – Lolita fashion is not produced by fans of Nabokov's novel, for example, and ostensibly have little to do with *Alice* – but nevertheless demonstrate how *Alice*-worlds intersect with these broader, more nuanced practices and webs of influence.

Alice Travel

The incongruity between Japan-based *Alice* worlds and the presentation of *Alice* tourist attractions and sites based in the UK help to round out how the *Alice* phenomena I have discussed so far encapsulates a specific interpretation of *Alice*-world. If embodied *Alice* practices and spaces in Japan are based in something akin to a Japanese definition of the Gothic, then UK spaces showcase a very different interpretation of that world. As an example, the *Aruco* 2020-2021 travel guide to London and the *Rarachitta* guide to England both have *Alice* tourism guides. Both follow a similar format, with large, brightly colored spreads on locations and activities. The *Rarachitta* spread is two-paged, and has photographs and detailed commentary on each of the recommended tea spreads. The spread features two different *Alice*-themed afternoon teas to be found in London – not only a tea, but an *Alice* themed tea. *Alice*'s prominent

placement suggests that clearly, an Alice-themed tea *while in London* is something the authors consider high on their readers' list of points of interest. The teas are, according to the guidebooks' presentation, very different from the themed cafes in Tokyo. Both are themed teas with themed items but are served by restaurants with an otherwise unthemed menu. One could consider the experience immersive – since one is in London – but the fairy-tale-like atmosphere touted by the DD Holdings' cafes and Alice on Wednesday's marketing materials is lacking. It does not encapsulate the Gothic spirit.

Aruco also includes many *Alice* references and places to visit. *Alice* comes up almost immediately, as soon as page five. The opening pages are a spread of photographs and themes, which will direct travelers to the relevant pages. *Alice* appears on the top left, as a photograph of what is labeled as an "afternoon tea," or teapot, plate of sandwiches, and the quintessential three-tiered stand. The caption translates roughly to "let's try the (much-discussed, famous, well-known) tearoom! There's Alice's afternoon tea, too." A couple of other pieces of media are referenced on this page, including the *Paddington* and *Harry Potter* films. These two references point to the film versions of these stories, since both are referencing the guidebook's pages on film-location touring. The next section pairs the *Harry Potter* book and film series with Alice tourism. The *Potter* sites are primarily film-focused, directing visitors toward the London and Oxford-based filming sites. The Alice page, on the other hand, directs visitors toward the "Alice Shop" in Oxford. (28–29) Lewis Carroll is referenced very briefly as having attended Oxford University's Christchurch College, but the *Alice* store is the primary focus.

UK-based *Alice* sites are more easily defined as fan-sites in the traditional sense. They are universally oriented around Carroll's original *Alice* book or Tenniel's illustrations. They take a similar form to the *Anne* tourism discussed in Chapter One in that they are based in very

specific instances from either Carroll's books or his life, and while they reference Wonderland, focus more on its creation than on Wonderland itself. The tone and emphasis of these guidebooks contrast remarkably with the *Alice* spaces discussed thus far. While *Alice* attractions are framed as a primary reason to visit London, the guidebooks' formatting and presentation lack the sense of mystery cultivated by Alice on Wednesday or Alice in Fantasy Book. Some of this is due to the sites themselves, which are English, and cater to global Carroll aficionados. However, the books do not frame these sites as such. The draw is not in visiting Wonderland, nor is it impersonating Alice at any point. The themed teas are framed simply as themed, not as a world to "step into," to quote the advertising copy of DD Holdings' *Alice* cafes. They have none of the strangeness or magical quality that DD Holdings' cafes or Alice on Wednesday offer a visitor.

Especially in contrast to the *Anne* tourism discussed in Chapter One, the stark difference between the two highlights a disconnect between the "origin" of *Alice*, and the ongoing, living, world of *Alice* in Japan. *Anne*-world allows those two – the "original" and the "world" to coexist nearly on top of one another. *Alice*, however, does not. Wonderland must be created. In Japan, *Alice* has become synonymous with a specific form of Gothic, *fushigi*-ized Wonderland. Japanese *Alice* spaces use the European Gothic as a vehicle for creating a sense of *fushigi*, offering an inhabitable *Fushigi no Kuni* (Wonderland). The physical *Alice* spaces discussed are not actually about *Alice*, Carroll's creation. They are about a portal into another dimension. Related embodied practices, like Gothic Lolita fashion, do similarly. They draw on the same sense of vaguely defined European-inspired *fushigi* to align with and incorporate themselves into *Alice*-world.

Alice provides a much more defined sense of place than *otogibanashi* like "Red Riding Hood" or "Cinderella," or even *Swan Lake*, but is fluid enough to be open to adaptation. *Alice*'s

translation as *The Country of Fushigi's Alice* brought *Alice* into contact with the history of the word *fushigi*, and all of the atmospheric associations that related to it, folding *fushigi* back in on itself to create a sense of European-inspired mystery. *Alice*-world, then, is not about any one place or any one object, but an overarching mood that orients itself around *Alice*. *Alice*-world's many physical manifestations – including cafes and clothing – are so many and so diverse in part because of the inherent diversity and flexibility that *Alice*-world affords. In the next chapter, I will explore what happens when a world no longer orients itself around the title of its literary origin.

Chapter Three

From *Little House* to Country Style: Fantasy Americana in Digital Space

Digital Dreamspaces

In her video "welcome to the home cafe," Japanese lifestyle vlogger nekoniwa invites viewers into a gentle vision of rural domesticity. Dressed in chunky sweaters, leather boots, and long, textured dresses, nekoniwa lovingly turns the soil in her garden, waters her plants, and narrates her cats' and chickens' imagined conversations through subtitles. She addresses the viewer directly, inviting them into her "cafe" as she makes crepes from scratch. The color palette is warm beiges and browns, and she uses stoneware, wood, and other natural textures to cultivate a soothing, rustic atmosphere. Nekoniwa presents a vision of nostalgia for a vaguely vintage-American rural life, complete with chickens, farm dresses, and fiddle music. The hook of nekoniwa's channel is that she is based in what she terms the "rural United States." Much of the ambiance and aesthetics of her videos emphasize this "rural American" sensibility. Nekoniwa's work harkens back to Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* series and the Japanese Country Style that I discussed in the Introduction, as well as some of the elements of *Anne of Green Gables* from Chapter One. This chapter will return to Country Style and place it on a continuum, from the early translations of Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* series, to nekoniwa's dreamy, Country Style YouTube worlds.

I argue that YouTube offers a very similar experience to the antique and lifestyle stores of the 1970s and 80s – a translation of embodied culture into a digital realm that interacts with physical space in its own unique way. Nekoniwa and creators like her are no longer tied to any form of Laura World, as defined by Wendy McClure, or *Little House*-world, to use the

terminology of this project. The connection to *Little House* has eroded over time, but the world remains, transitioning finally into what one can more accurately describe as a Japanese Euro-American Country mode.

Fan tourism *Anne of Green Gables* emphasizes how world and place overlap, forefronting the world's relationship with the physical landscape. Even though a world and a place can look the same, and even map directly onto each other, they are distinct entities. *Alice in Wonderland*, on the other hand, prompts a world that is wildly different from any "real" place. Rather than take a novel and map it onto a real landscape, *Alice*-world is inaccessible. The very nature of Wonderland prompts a world that is strange, magical, and mystical – one that fan tourism alone not only cannot satisfy but is inapplicable. The flexibility and diversity of *Alice*-world allows for a multitude of related moods and aesthetics to be included under the *Alice* umbrella, such as *Princess* or *Rococo*, and the vast and amorphous nature of *Alice* brings together fashion, food, and embodied space. There are multiple ways to enter or participate in the world of *Alice*.

Nekoniwa's Country Style YouTube worlds are an extension of these variations on world, embodiment, and physicality. Technologically, nekoniwa's medium is one that allows for a perfect kind of worldbuilding – anything can be created on and behind a screen – and inviting interaction from viewers. Long-form relaxation and comfort vlogs on YouTube are a genre that are predicated on soothing frazzled viewers and interacting with them in a very visceral sense.[14] It is a different kind of physicality, one that builds on the traditions and practices discussed in the prior chapters. If *Alice* extracts elements of Carroll's original world and expands on them,

[14] Mukbang videos, where a person on camera eats "with" viewers, and ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) videos, which are designed to elicit a nonsexual "tingle" on the scalp and neck, are two examples of related genres.

Nekoniwa does so to an even greater extent. I am not alone in arguing that Country Style and its aesthetic and thematic relatives can be traced back to turn of the century, translated girls' novels, and particularly *Little House*. Set against my other two examples, however, nekoniwa offers an interesting point of comparison. Nekoniwa builds a world that is nameless – it has no one source. This chapter will use the *Little House* novels as a starting point through which to analyze how this hybrid world can morph into a Country Style mode.

This chapter will be structured as a number of concentric circles: beginning with nekoniwa as a very contemporary example of "Country Style," I will then expand outwards to discuss how Country Style can be descended from and yet ultimately completely different than its forebears. I will return to my discussion of Wendy McClure's experience of Laura Ingalls Wilder's 1930s-40s series of *Little House* novels from the Introduction to use as a base from which to explore how a world like nekoniwa's might come to be. Nekoniwa could be read as a variation on McClure's Laura World, but that would be both simplistic and inaccurate. Nekoniwa never mentions *Little House* or any media related to it in her work. As I will discuss throughout this chapter, however, nekoniwa's world of vintage Americana shares DNA with the *Little House* books and other novels that resemble them. I will be using *Little House* as an example of one strand of DNA: not to claim a relationship in terms of adaptation, but as a form of evolution. Throughout the examples I will discuss in this chapter there is a throughline that emphasizes specific household objects, foods, sounds, and motifs that remain constant.

Vlogs as Medium

The vlog (video blog) has a not-insignificant body of scholarship attached to it, dating as far back as the mid-2000s. As a creative form, vlogging became more widely accessible when

the launch of platforms like YouTube (launched 2005) gave users the ability to upload videos to the internet with relative ease. Vlogs vary in content as much as written blogs do, but as a genre the lifestyle vlog is well established for such a recent medium. The lifestyle vlog can be defined as a video blog that documents a clearly defined "lifestyle" and shares that with a viewing audience. The unifying factor among them is that the subject of the vlog is demonstrating a way of life. Nekoniwa's videos are what is popularly known as a "slow living" vlog.

"Slow living" vlogs like nekoniwa's are an international genre that branches out into many smaller subcategories, each with its own stylistic quirks based on subgenre, national origin, and other factors. Across the board, slow living vlogs hinge on a philosophy of slowing down and savoring everyday tasks. Slow living presents itself in opposition to a hectic modern lifestyle as a way to remedy stress and burnout. Stylistically, vlogs tend to use long takes on natural landscapes, static shots and framing, and focus on labor that adheres to the (indoor or outdoor) landscape somehow. Oftentimes this will be domestic labor, like cooking and doing laundry, but not exclusively. The defining point is that these activities are aestheticized: they are not meant to be a realistic, if edited, reflection of one individual's life, but an openly stylized version of a lifestyle that prioritizes color, texture, and a soothing ambiance.

Nekoniwa is situated firmly within the world of Asian slow living vlogs. While slow living is an international trend and slow living vlogs can be found in many countries and languages, vlogs from East Asia (in this case referring to China, Korea, and Japan) tend to share specific stylistic and thematic characteristics. Most notably, these vlogs rarely if ever show creators' faces, typically focusing on the torso and the hands instead. Creators will communicate with viewers through subtitles instead of speaking to the camera or doing a voiceover. These subtitles are usually a running narrative of whatever is happening onscreen, interjected with

personal comments and asides. This tactic depersonalizes the video, making it easier for viewers to insert themselves into the world, but still allows viewers some kind of "contact" with the creator. On the whole, though, videos are world-focused, rather than creator-focused. Taking the face and voice out of the video emphasizes bringing the viewer into the world without using the creator's personality or realized self as a conduit, just their body and their written words on the screen.

An example of a Japanese creator in this genre is Kominka solo life, a YouTube channel focused on the creator's life living alone in an old house on the Izu peninsula. Kominka is a relatively small creator, with only 356 thousand subscribers on YouTube as of this writing.[15] One rarely, if ever, sees the creator's face, and long, static shots focus on the hands and body of the creator as he does — primarily — domestic work around the house. Kominka does include significantly more scenes of himself relaxing and doing leisure activities than nekoniwa does, but, like her, he often themes his videos around the seasons, and prepares dishes according to the season; seasonal vegetables and fishes, for example. He makes every dish by hand, to the extent that he will often make his rice on the stove (or over a campfire, as the case may be), sans rice cooker. The thrust of the channel is that "slow" living is quiet, calming, and an antidote to urban stress. Kominka states this ethos in multiple of his videos; nekoniwa does not state it so openly, but her videos point to a similar theme. The comments on her videos also echo this sentiment.

Even though one does not see any faces, and only rarely hear voices, Kominka tells his viewers in detail about where his home is, and, when he takes field trips, where he is going. Much of the appeal of the channel is not only in the rootedness Kominka espouses, but also in

[15] Kominka stopped updating his channel in December of 2023.

the accessibility; he takes care to name the towns he visits and will often link to BnB recommendations when he goes on trips. Although the mood and overall "mission" of Kominka's channel is similar to nekoniwa's, Kominka's take on space and the relationship between the space, the vlogger, and the viewer invites the viewer into a world that they have a chance of visiting or participating in themselves, much like a travel/lifestyle vlog. Similar channels that focus on travel and lifestyle are usually based in a specific location, and while lifestyle is a significant component of the channel's appeal, these channels also often hinge on interaction with, if not locals themselves, then with public spaces associated with that location, like markets, shops, or cafes. In each case, there is a sense of connection with not only the literal, corporeal space occupied by the vlogger, but with the vlogger's embodied experience within that space and the community and history associated with it. There is a sense of embeddedness in these videos in both place and in community (even if fabricated) that nekoniwa, despite her cultivated image, conspicuously lacks.

Another slightly different example of a Japanese creator in the slow living genre is Choki, who at the time of writing has 1.5 million subscribers on YouTube. Choki uses the same formal style as nekoniwa and Kominka, but unlike them her videos are purely indoor and domestic. She uses color and texture to evoke warmth, rest, and peaceful solitude. Her captions and subtitles tend to be motivational and uplifting for an exhausted, stressed-out viewer ("Small habits that heal a tired heart"; "A comforting video for sleepless nights"). Throughout her videos, Choki emphasizes that she lives alone, to the extent that a December 2023 video title reads, "I bought a small house to live alone in." Choki's location is unclear, much like nekoniwa and unlike Kominka. She mentions her nationality and that she is in Japan multiple times in video captions and titles, but that is as specific as she gets as to her location. Her videos are almost

exclusively indoors and encourage the cultivation of a comforting domestic space.

Food, Peace, and Solitude

In English, scholarship on Japanese lifestyle vlogs as a genre is surprisingly scant given their popularity. To date, Crystal Abidin is the only English-language scholar whose work examines vlogs such as these in depth. She points out the broader trend of home vlogs originating from East Asia that focus on the home and tout the virtues of reducing consumption and living simply. There is a more robust body of scholarship in the Chinese and Korean vlog space, which is helpful as a starting point from which to explore Japanese vlogs of a similar type. Chinese creator Liziqi dominates much of the discourse on East Asian lifestyle vloggers as one of the most popular, both domestically and abroad. Much like nekoniwa and Kominka, Liziqi posts long-form, aesthetically pleasing videos that romanticize her life in the Chinese countryside.

As of this writing, Liziqi has 19.6 million subscribers on Youtube and 25.6 million on the Chinese microblogging platform Weibo. In 2021 she broke the Guinness World Record for the most subscribers for a Chinese-language channel on YouTube. Li's videos focus on rural landscapes, traditional foods, and low-tech agricultural practices. Like my Japanese examples, her videos are quiet, slow, and emphasize the color and texture of the natural landscape. Her videos, which can run to over twenty minutes long, show Li preparing meals or traditional crafts, often literally from the ground up as she plants the seeds for the ingredients of the final dish. In form, Liziqi's videos are very similar to nekoniwa's work, with long static shots, an omniscient

3rd-person visual perspective (though Li does show her face), and subtitles that directly address the viewer.

Crystal Abidin notes that creators like Liziqi, Kominka Solo Life, Choki, and nekoniwa are one piece of a larger movement within East Asia that bring food and solitude to the fore. One-person households and eating alone more generally have become much more common in recent years across Asia. Japan, in particular, has seen a startling increase in solo living, far outstripping Taiwan and Korea as the runners-up. (Yeung and Cheung 1100–01) In Japan, eating alone is also on the rise, which for younger people is generally attributed to a decreased marriage rate. ("More Japanese Eating Alone amid Aging Society") One NHK survey from 2010 found that for 76% of the respondents, the time that they felt most connected to their family was when eating together. (Sekiya and Motonobu 4) A different survey from 2016, however, found that 58% of adults under 50 ate all or nearly all their meals alone, and that number has likely risen in the years since. (Murata and Masaki 4) Among survey respondents who said that they ate all of their meals alone, 60% said that the reason was that they did not have time to eat with others, and 28% that they lived on their own. (Murata and Masaki 4)

As I discussed in the last chapter on *Alice in Wonderland*, cafes have acted as crucial third places in Japan since the turn of the last century. Vloggers and other forms of internet community have stepped into the void created by the high social value placed on family and community meals and the increasing difficulty of organizing those meals, as well as the isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Trends like that of the South Korean mukbang video, for which a lone subject eats on camera, give viewers the opportunity to eat "with" someone, even if they are eating alone. "Home cafe" videos like Nekoniwa's and Choki's take the idea of eating alone and aestheticize it, turning it into both a solitary activity and a communal one. Creators

prepare elaborate meals slowly and with care, making and eating them alone. However, they also directly address viewers through subtitles and video descriptions, and viewers can interact with each other in the comments. Although vlogs of this type are not tactile or spatial in the traditional sense, they are designed to focus on the sensory in such a way that they are about as tactile as a one digital medium can be.

One might call the slow living genre one of accessible escapism. Nekoniwa and her contemporaries walk the line between a dream-reality at the same time as the possibility of actually living that reality. They aestheticize solitude, turning it into an enviable state of being. Some creators are more accessible than others – creators like Kominka, for example, who talk about specific locations in Japan and offer discount codes for rustic vacations, are at one end of the spectrum. Creators like Choki, who until recently lived in an undisclosed apartment somewhere in Japan, rest farther along the accessibility spectrum. Choki is careful about her privacy, and viewers do not know too much about her life outside of her channel. However, her channel implies that any young, burned-out urbanite could be able to live the life that she does. All it would take, her channel suggests, would be redecoration and a mindset shift.

In light of her peers, nekoniwa's channel is the least accessible, but the tradeoff is that it also allows for a world that feels rooted in fantasy. She remains grounded in the idea of her garden and home being "real", but the sense of potential for a viewer to join her and live a life like hers is significantly less so than her peers. Moving to the United States to live an aesthetically pleasing, rural lifestyle does not feel nearly as plausible as, say, taking a vacation in a *kominka* (Japanese-style old house) or redecorating one's urban apartment. The unspoken current running throughout the Japanese "slow living" genre, however, is economic class and

financial privilege – no matter how accessible and minimalistic the "slow" lifestyle seems, it still hinges upon the scant resource of free time. (Abidin 123)

An American Country Cottage Fantasy

Nekoniwa's channel grew significantly over the course of the early 2020s, but her audience and ethos remained consistent. The oldest videos on her channel still available as of the end of 2024 are from 2019. Although she posts her captions in English even in these early videos, most of her comments from this time are from viewers and creators based in Asia, primarily Japan, although some in Korea and other Asian countries like Malaysia. As nekoniwa's viewership grows, comments in other languages and from other parts of the world start to appear, and pick up considerably after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, despite her growing international viewership, nekoniwa's content and audience remains Japan-centric. As of 2024, her "about" page on YouTube remains wholly in Japanese with no provided translation, and while her videos have the option of overlaid translated subtitles in a wide variety of languages, the subtitles embedded in the videos themselves remain in Japanese only. (*Nekoniwa - YouTube - About*)

Nekoniwa's presence in the Japanese online space increased alongside her viewership. In March of 2021 she was featured on YouTube Japan's Twitter page as a "creator to watch." This was a major recognition for nekoniwa's growing channel, and the intent was to draw new viewers to her content. Since it was not posted by nekoniwa herself but by a major player in the YouTube arena, it is illustrative of what specific elements of nekoniwa's content draw in viewers, and what differentiates her from other creators in her genre. The tweet introduces the

channel as a depiction of "American country life," or "country living." The second part describes the experience a viewer might have while consuming nekoniwa's content. Her content is described as a "fashionable daily-life vlog," that feels "warm and comfortable." The tweet includes four screen captures from nekoniwa's videos, one of one of nekoniwa's cats, and two of her chickens (the titular "neko" and "niwa"). The final picture shows nekoniwa sitting with a cup of tea and a plate of cookies, wishing her viewers well through the captions. As a whole, the tweet promotes nekoniwa as a glimpse into a bucolic rural lifestyle with a specifically American flavor. (YouTube Kurieitā)

Nekoniwa emphasizes the landscape as much as she does the inside of her home and the activities she does onscreen. Most videos are seasonally themed around the garden or holidays, and open with long, static takes of the outdoors that highlight local wildlife and vegetation. Nekoniwa often notes changes in the availability of produce and other cooking or gardening ingredients. Many of her video titles contain variations on the words "country," "rural," or "cottage." This connection to landscape is similar to other creators in the genre, particularly those focused on rural lifestyles, like Chinese Liziqi or Kominka solo life. Despite nekoniwa's branding, though, the Americanness of her videos is based solely in that landscape. The only solid cue that viewers have of nekoniwa's affiliation with the United States is her word and the images we see of her garden and the outside of her home.

One rarely sees nekoniwa interact with anyone or leave her property. Other clues that she gives about the world she is building are atmospheric, such as in her farm dresses, the natural textures, and decor of her home. Nekoniwa is not rooted in any kind of social Americanness, but rather one that hinges on objects and the landscape. She may be based in the United States, but the only tangible connection to it is through her physical location. She manages to cultivate a

sense of groundedness in a specific locale shared by the other creators I have referenced, but does so without ever giving the viewer access to spaces outside of her own creation and curation. Nekoniwa manages to cultivate this sense of Americanness, mostly based on setting, that is in fact only tenuously tied to the United States - she is rooted in place, but not culturally. American, in this sense, does not refer to the United States as a political or social body, but rather a set of thematic and visual cues that ties nekoniwa to a larger set of images or themes that appeal to her audience.

Despite the emphasis on "Americanness," the option for translated subtitles, and a clearly international audience, nekoniwa's country-cottage vision seamlessly incorporates Japanese elements. She does not try to erase her Japanese identity, and despite the cultivated rural-American, vintage aesthetic, she often features Japanese foods and holidays into her videos. One such example is her crepe-and-whipped-cream variation on ehomaki, a sushi roll prepared for the Japanese holiday of Setsubun in February. Most of her videos are tagged as "Japanese vlog," and the Japanese subtitles overlay the video itself, giving them priority over the YouTube-generated translations. The result is a distinct aesthetic: an emphasis on rural-American nostalgia, but with Japanese flavor. These are not discordant components, but natural, and the world would be lacking without them. Nekoniwa's videos evoke a fully developed world that is both deeply rooted and also placeless - a sense of historicity that is understood to be both grounded in time and place and yet does not fit any existing model. In this way, her work ties into the legacy of Country Style that I discussed earlier in this chapter

Japanese Country Style (*kantori- sutairu*) is similar though not equivalent to American interior or aesthetic styles that might also be referred to as "country." Both emphasize handmade elements and a worn, lived-in atmosphere. In Japan, Country Style – specifically American

Country Style, as opposed to French or English Country – tends to emphasize the same elements that nekoniwa does. These include earthy textures, natural color palettes, and accents that reference log cabins, handmade textiles, folk art, and chunky pottery. Multiple of the Japanese interior design resources I consulted stated that American Country Style was specifically meant to evoke the American West, particularly pioneers. In practice, Japanese Country Style broadly encompasses a wide range of aesthetic styles, including ones that could more accurately be described as "farmhouse" than "pioneer," with an emphasis on large porches and painted floors rather than rough-hewn log cabins. Nonetheless, despite these, the connection between Japanese Country Style and "pioneer" still stands.

Country Style and *Little House*

This contemporary definition of Country Style corresponds to Hisayo Ogushi's discussion of the Depot 39 store in her article, "Little House in the Far East." During its tenure from the early 1980s to mid-2000s, Depot 39 American Country Mall in Tokyo sold antique furniture and other Country Style home goods imported straight from the United States. The store also had a cafe at which you could consume American-themed treats like apple pie and chiffon cake. Depot 39 published books as well, instructing readers on how to use dried flowers or stencils to cultivate a "Country Life." The emphasis on not only design but experience echoes nekoniwa's videos. Using the same basic ingredients, she takes the form of Depot-39 and translates it into a digital medium. Ogushi traces the connection between Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* novels as well as *Anne of Green Gables* as two major influences on 1970s and 80s

kawaii and *shōjo* Country Style culture. She argues that novels like the *Little House* "sowed the seeds of American western idealism" that would later emerge in *shōjo*. (Ogushi 36)

A Brief History of *Little House*

Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* novels are a perfect storm of American mythology that has, by means of overt effort, happenstance, and a very long game of telephone, resulted in nekoniwa's American rural-domestic dream. The novels are semi-autobiographical, fictionalized narrative of the life of a young Laura Ingalls, a pioneer child in the mid-late 1800s. Over the course of the eight-book series, Laura and her family travel by covered wagon from the forests of Wisconsin south across the Great Plains to Kansas, and then north again to De Smet, South Dakota. They are simply written from a child's point of view, focusing on everyday events in the lives of the fictionalized Laura and her family. Events such as the building of a log cabin, making corn-husk dolls, navigating hoop skirts, and the delights of store-bought candy are lingered over and described in loving detail. All is set against a backdrop of the Great Plains, with the exception of the first and second books, *Little House in the Big Woods* (1932) and *Farmer Boy* (1933), which are set in the Big Woods of Western Wisconsin and upstate New York, respectively. Both the landscape and everyday events are described with an equal amount of detail, an emphasis that carries through in Depot-39, nekoniwa, and other examples of Country Style.

Contrary to popular lore, the *Little House* novels were not written solely by Laura Ingalls Wilder, but in extensive collaboration with Wilder's daughter, Rose Wilder Lane. Much as Wilder's image was that of an old woman writing down her memories in fictionalized form,

those memories in fact underwent significant editing and rewriting before they were published. While they are loosely based on Wilder's childhood they are more a product of the time they were written than a recollection of times past. The celebration of values such as frugality and hard work while maintaining an optimistic worldview was not uncommon for literature of the 1930s, the decade in which the *Little House* books were written. (Fellman 57)

Pioneer stories were particularly popular in both children's and adult literature at this time. Gary Schmidt, in his writing on children's literature, argues that Depression-era pioneer narratives linked the "democratic experiment" with the "pioneer experience." (4) The pioneer narrative was thought to be "quintessentially American," and that the tenacity and perseverance of pioneers were models for young Americans growing up in the throes of the Great Depression. (4) Books like *Little House* offered despairing, impoverished families a narrative that directly addressed their contemporary hardships, but were also romantic, nostalgic, and allowed them to connect to a heritage that could see them through hard times. (4) Both authors also made conscious choices on how to represent the past in tandem with the contemporary political climate. Neither were fans of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal economic plan and were of the opinion that the programs were intrusive at best, a threat to personal freedom at worst. (J. E. Miller 182) They were especially offended by the farm relief programs, interpreting them to imply that they would not survive without government assistance. (Fellman 58) While Wilder's political leanings were in line with her demographic of farming Ozarkians, Lane took a more radical stance, referring to herself as an "anarchist," or "libertarian" rather than simply conservative. (J. E. Miller 185)

The contents of the *Little House* books reflect these views. The focus on survival and independence – and the buffing away of the more gruesome details of the Pioneer experience –

pushes a narrative that rejects the necessity of public assistance or intervention. Within this context, the strong themes of grit, hard work, and particularly self-reliance that run through the text of the *Little House* books become even more prescient. They tout a form of nostalgia that fits nicely into a sub-niche of literature that offered hope in the midst of the hardships of the 1930s. They also offered a justification for those hardships; the suggestion that American nation-building was difficult, but moral and justified for a greater purpose. The open politics of the authors only make explicit the implicit messaging of the genre overall.

Many other scholars have taken up the mantle of contextualizing the *Little House* books, and can do much more justice to the complexities of Wilder's novels than I can here.[16] However, it is important to note that the picture painted by *Little House* and stories like it elides the brutal realities of the journey Westward. Although the fictionalized Ingalls family encounters great hardship during their travels, it is still a highly edited narrative. Wilder softens or completely omits some of the more difficult to stomach incidents. Her brother Charles Ingalls, for example, who died at the age of 9 months, is not mentioned at all. Neither are many of the more tragic deaths, illnesses, unsavory behavior, and gruesome injuries Wilder recollects in her autobiography.[17] One of the more significant omissions in *Little House on the Prairie* (Book 3,

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[16] See Fellman, Anita Clair, *Little House, Long Shadow: Laura Ingalls Wilder's Impact on American Culture*, University of Missouri Press, 2008.

Reagin, Nancy, "Whose Homestead Is It?: Little Houses on the Prairie and the Cultural Politics of White Colonial Settlement in the United States," in *Media, Place and Tourism*. Routledge, 2024.

Miller, John E, *Laura Ingalls Wilder and Rose Wilder Lane: Authorship, Place, Time, and Culture*. University of Missouri Press, 2008.

Green-Barteet, Miranda A., and Anne K. Phillips, *Reconsidering Laura Ingalls Wilder: Little House and Beyond*. Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2019.

[17] Wilder's autobiography was first written in 1930, but never published, despite multiple efforts on the parts of Wilder and Lane. It was finally published in 2014 with extensive annotations. The annotated autobiography was a product of the Pioneer Girl Project, a years-long project dedicated to assembling, transcribing, and contextualizing the many existing handwritten and typed drafts of the manuscript. pioneergirlproject.org.

Wilder, Laura Ingalls. *Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography*. South Dakota Historical Society Press, 2014.

1935) is that the Ingalls family were living in Kansas illegally, squatting on Indian land in the hopes of buying it cheaply once the Native population had been forced out. (Fellman 18) While it is unsurprising these events would have been omitted or heavily edited for a youthful (white) audience, the fact remains that the version of the pioneer experience first presented to young readers in 1932 is significantly more romantic than the reality.

The hold that the *Little House* books had on children like Wendy McClure in the 1970s becomes clearer if one considers how they were a product of nostalgia and narrative-building from the very beginning. As McClure writes in her memoir *The Wilder Life*, "(Laura World) shared space with the actual past… it didn't take much more than, say, the sight of a dusty glass oil lamp on the wall above a booth at a suburban Bonanza to make me feel like I was communing with Laura while I ate my cottage fries. Which I preferred to think of as pan-fried potatoes." (3) McClure's "Laura World" was not much more foreign to readers of the 1930s as they were to her in the 1970s. As one draft of Wilder's autobiography cozily begins, "When grandma was a little girl…" (1) Even in the 1930s, for many children the world of log cabins and covered wagons would have seemed a faraway one.

The "sharing of space" that McClure describes, or the vague sense that Laura is both a part of the actual past as well as fictional "Laura World" can be traced back even to the beginning. As a child in the 1970s, McClure was likely the child or grandchild of an original *Little House* reader, who would have been introduced to the story during the Great Depression. Generally speaking, a child in the American Midwest would be in exactly the right frame of mind to understand and participate in the world of the text. McClure's focus on physical objects and food as ways to commune with and enter Laura World echoes the details in the books themselves as well as the 1970s NBC television series, which I will discuss presently.

Little House in Japan

I have devoted this time to the social and political origins of *Little House* in the United States as a means of leading into its legacy in Japan. *Little House* was introduced to Japan after World War II under the same program as *Anne of Green Gables*. The US General Headquarters/Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP)'s translation program prompted Japanese publishers to publish translated English-language books. These books had been selected specifically by the US Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) as titles that would promote what were deemed democratic ideals. As a report submitted to SCAP by the United States Education Mission stated, "Our greatest hope, however, is in the children… We are not devoted to uniformity; as educators we are constantly alert to deviation, originality, and spontaneity. That is the spirit of democracy." (1) With these goals in mind, the choice of *Little House* as one of the books to translate and teach in Japanese schools makes sense, as the novels were already creating and teaching a certain definition of "Americanness," which in part hinged upon ideals like individuality, "originality," and "spontaneity." Just as the pioneer narrative wove itself into a vision of individual freedom and democracy at home, so too, the Occupation supposed, it would in Japan.

The sixth book in the *Little House* series, *The Long Winter* (1943) was translated and published in Japan first, in 1949. It was soon followed by the first and third books, *Little House in the Big Woods* (1932) and *Little House on the Prairie* (1935), respectively. *The Long Winter*'s translation and publication was a recommendation from the wife of General Douglas MacArthur, who loved the series. (Suzuki 67) MacArthur himself knew Wilder personally and considered narratives of the American frontier to exemplify democratic ideals. (Suzuki 69) On the Japanese side, *The Long Winter* was received well and endorsed by both educational bodies like the

Japanese Library Association, as well as popular readership polls. (Suzuki 68) It was not as runaway a success as *Anne of Green Gables*, however, and did not go on to a second printing,

Little House on the Prairie and on TV

Having established how the narrative of *Little House* was established and how it came to Japan, the final question is how *Little House* inspired Country Style fashions and home goods like those of Depot 39, ultimately building a "Country Style" world as found in nekoniwa's video archive. In addition to the novels themselves, another major contributing culprit in shaping the "look" of Country Style is the American *Little House on the Prairie* television show that first aired in the US on NBC in 1974 and in Japan on NHK in 1975. NBC's *Little House* was developed by producer Ed Friendly, adopted grandson of Laura Ingalls Wilder, Roger Lea MacBride, and Michael Landon, who would play Charles Ingalls on the series. Landon was well-known at this point for his role in the Western *Bonanza*, which ran on NBC from 1959-1973.

NBC's *Little House* was envisioned as a reimagining rather than a pure adaptation of Wilder's novels, and many of the changes "cleaned up" the books for a 1970s viewership. (Fatzinger 42) The Ingalls girls, for example, were sent to school in shoes, not barefoot, and the NBC Ingalls family lived in a house with a solid frame rather than a sod home dug into a hill. Michael Landon was quoted saying that he did not want the main characters to come off as the "poorest kids in town." (Wilkins) The show also softened many of the thematic elements to fit the form and contemporary standards. The relationship between the children and their parents was made warmer and more verbally expressive, for example, and while the show faced social issues head-on in a way the novels did not, it also favored neatly tied off storylines and clearly

articulated moral lessons.[18] The show was additionally adapted to target middle-aged women, rather than children like the original novels. (Fatzinger 42)

The show aired in Japan on NHK 1975-82, with the final spinoff season airing separately in 1991. According to NHK, a programming officer recommended *Little House* for purchase due to the show's family values and the centrality of the prairie itself, a natural landscape not found in Japan. (NHK, "Little House on the Prairie | Programs | NHK Archives (dai sōgen no chīsana ie ｜ bangumi ｜ NHK ākaibusu)") *Little House* bounced between 8pm weekday slots until it settled into the premium Saturday at 6pm time slot in 1978. (NHK, "Broadcast Schedule (hōsō risuto)") American Western culture such as music, radio, and magazines, had been popular since the 1950s. (Chun 253) Television Westerns like *Laramie* (US: NBC, 1959-1963; Japan: NET TV (NET *terebi*), 1959-1963) and *Bonanza* (US: NBC, 1959-1973; Japan: NTV, 1960-1965) were also popular, especially in the 1960s. (Chun 253)

Characters played by American actors were larger than life on Japanese television, and remained so when they visited Japan. Robert Fuller, star of *Laramie*, was even permitted to bring a gun to a meeting with Prime Minister Ikeda in 1961 as a means of keeping him recognizably "in character" for viewers. (Chun 253) However, despite the exotic appeal of the Western, characters like Robert Fuller's in *Laramie* had to be adapted to fit Japanese tastes, or "recast… in a Japanese mode." (Chun 262) A major way that this "recasting" was made possible was by means of dubbing. Most American television shows, including *Little House*, were dubbed into Japanese when they aired. The very nature of the dub transplants a Japanese voice into the body

[18]Amy Fatzinger discusses how the desire for neat, clear moral lessons impacts the representation of Native peoples in both the books and adaptations in her article, "American Indians in Television Adaptations of Little House on the Prairie."

of an American character. Not only are the literal words translated into a comparable audio form, but a dub also translates the nonverbal elements of language.

In the original production of *Little House*, the voice and the physicality of the actors are in sync both literally and figuratively. In a Japanese dub, the physicality and the voice are separated into two separate entities and layered on top of each other. In English, mannerisms and movement are paired with the inflections, tones, filler words, and voice of the actor – sounds that may not be in the script but add to the audience's understanding of the character. In a Japanese dub, the mannerisms, movement, and body of the actor are layered with a Japanese voice, complete with the inflections and tones belonging to a Japanese character. Transplanting a Japanese voice into an American body brings the character to an indeterminate in-between point. In the case of *Little House*, it brings Charles, Caroline, Laura, Mary, Carrie, and the other characters closer to a Japanese viewer while retaining their visual Americanness. In a way, a dub creates a parallel "world" much like that of adaptive translation in literature: it is no longer the world of the original, but one that combines foreign visuals with more localized cultural cues through the spoken dialogue.

At this point, true American Westerns in the style of *Laramie* or *Bonanza* were no longer being aired on Japanese television as frequently. Deemed too violent, they were increasingly replaced by Japanese-made shows, which had risen markedly in production value by the mid-1960s. (Chun 268) An exception to this rule was *Little House*, which was one of only six foreign shows aired during Japanese prime time in 1975. (Chun 269) Though *Little House* had the trappings of a Western – complete with a co-star known for Westerns – it was at its heart agreed to be a "sentimental," family-oriented production. ("Programing" 18) *Little House*, while it may have given the main characters shoes and updated to (and invented) more modern storylines,

held onto the look and feel of the pioneer story by means of its textural detail. A significant portion of the pilot is devoted to setting the scene, including nearly three full minutes of the Ingalls' covered wagon traveling across the prairie with minimal cuts and without dialogue or music. The costumes have more of a sense of antiqued 1970s garb than period-accurate wear – Charles, for instance, wears a particularly modern button-up shirt – but care is taken with the silhouettes, like with the covered wagon. The women wear sunbonnets, sleeves and dresses are kept long, and the fact *of* the prairie is emphasized in the camera and sound work.

In many ways, the visuals of NBC's *Little House* echo the same elements that nekoniwa would later pull on. Its prime television slot, the focus on textural detail, the distinct and exotic setting, and the centrality of female characters made it a perfect match for what was already a boom in Japanese women's and girls' culture. As discussed in the introduction and throughout this project, the 1970s were a golden age of manga and anime aimed at girls, and of literature and other media aimed at women. *Little House* was a "Western" starring a little girl and generally aimed at a female viewership, and would have been the only major influence in Japan as to the visuals of girlhood in the American West. The combination of the two: the legacy of the *Little House* books as well as the interpretation – particularly the visuals – of the NBC adaptation built a version of Americana that is recognizable in Country Style and its offshoots.

Imagining the Frontier

The history of *Little House* in Japan, and especially the popularity of the television show, provided a foundation for the development of Country Style. Since most Japanese would have seen the NBC adaptation in the dubbed Japanese, the world of *Little House* already had Japanese elements incorporated into it. By extension, the world of the American West in girls and

women's culture was also shaped by the NBC dub as the only major visual influence. In this section, I will explore how the world of the American West and Country Style extended beyond *Little House* and into something bigger. The 1979 *shōjo* manga *Maimee Angel* acts as a midway point between *Little House* and a more diffuse world.

Maimee Angel is a very rough adaptation of the story of *Little House*. It is not a straightforward adaptation, but shares enough detail to be recognizable. Although some details differ, the broad strokes are very similar, and even some names are kept relatively consistent (Maimee's cousin Alman, for example, similar to *Little House* Laura's love interest, Almanzo). The manga stars Maimee, a young girl in the American West, and begins when Maimee's family sets out for Oregon in a covered wagon caravan after her father's death. In the spirit of both *Little House* as well as contemporary *shōjo* heroines, Maimee is independent and free thinking, and she pushes West despite the hardships she encounters on the trail. The manga visually anchors itself in the literal landscape of the American West, but takes extensive liberties with other elements like plot and other details. Similar to the style of a Hollywood Western, the first few pages situate Maimee and her mother as small figures against a majestic backdrop of pines, mountains, meadows (2). Maimee and her family are introduced universally outside, traipsing through the mountains, leaping over creeks, working in the garden, and otherwise interacting with the out-of-doors.

Maimee and her mother and sisters are typically dressed in aprons, floral patterns, big ruffles, bows, and tall boots. Their outfits resemble the Ingalls girls' in NBC's *Little House*, and nearly identical to the clothing nekoniwa often wears. One panel on page 9 shows Maimee's mother working in the garden in a kerchief and a large apron. She has her back to the reader, while the garden is lush and fruitful. The framing, setting, and style of the panel could be a still

out of one of nekoniwa's videos. Even though Maimee's mother talks about the hardships since Maimee's father's death, the images still evoke the fruitfulness of her garden. Other, more general details that correlate between nekoniwa's video archive and *Maimee Angel* also include the care taken with the landscape, domestic setting, and clothing. The manga emphasizes natural textures whenever possible, including in Maimee's home and surroundings. The wood of Maimee's log cabin home in the opening pages is articulated with careful detail, as are the covered wagons once Maimee and her family leave for Oregon. The wagons have floral curtains at the front, and flowers are a recurring motif throughout the manga.

The thematic connective tissue between *Maimee Angel* and nekoniwa is that of solitude and feminine competence. *Maimee Angel* is a *shōjo* manga that showcases a brave heroine whose trials, tribulations, and triumphs are framed against an imaginary version of the Oregon Trail. Even when she is not technically alone, the imagery emphasizes how dwarfed she is by the landscape, and how alone even a group of people might be in the wilderness. Maimee's survival hinges on her perseverance and competence. These are common themes in *shōjo* manga, and *Maimee Angel* adapts the preexisting narrative of the American West, as evinced by *Little House*, to great advantage. The slow living vlogging genre also hinges on solitude. For nekoniwa, solitude is but one part of her brand, partly aspirational and partly a nod to the solitude her viewers already likely experience.

A key component of the slow living genre is competence, which can be thought of as the flipside of the tenacity Maimee exhibits. Slow living creators often show themselves cooking, gardening, doing domestic chores. They showcase the basic skills of keeping oneself alive, with emphasis that they are doing it on their own.[19] Slow living is an overwhelmingly feminine genre,

[19] This is with the caveat that one rarely knows how any one slow living creator actually supports themselves financially.

despite outliers like Kominka solo life, and the overlap between peaceful domestic self-sufficiency and *shōjo*'s emphasis on girls' independence is not a far leap. Country Style or Country-Style-inspired is not unusual in the Japanese slow living genre, and arguably both Choki and Kominka have Country Style elements to them. However, nekoniwa takes the connection all the way to the end. The correlation between the specific items – boots, dresses, patterns, furniture – as well as the association with a North American natural world comes together to build a world that supports solo feminine independence.

Expanding into Mode

While nekoniwa's channel and content are associated with a certain flavor of "Americanness," the style, themes, and tone draw on a legacy of translation and adaptation. Although nekoniwa's work is not overtly connected to the mythology of the frontier, the specificities of how she builds her world help construct a spider-map of oblique references and citations**.** Nekoniwa and creators like her are not trying to mimic any specific lifestyle in a socio-cultural sense; they are not trying to reconstruct a historical period, or blend in or even interact with any kind of local community. Instead, they are drawing on a plethora of sources that, when unraveled, demonstrate how objects, colors, textures can become detached from their "original" contexts and become associated with a more diffuse landscape.

Nekoniwa's video archive and the *Maimee Angel* manga are unrelated pieces of media, but the distinctive details suggest that they share DNA. Their shared traits are specific, and are oriented around environmental, textural, and sensory detail. Thus far, I have defined worlds as still somewhat tied to a title or anchor. *Anne* tourism is oriented around *Anne of Green Gables*, and *Alice* culture is still united around *Alice in Wonderland*, despite how it has departed from the

original novel. *Little House*, *Maimee Angel*, and nekoniwa, on the other hand, share elements of the same world. They are not united under the same title, but by underlying textures, moods, and themes that have developed over time in conjunction with a certain vision of rural Americana. They are united under the umbrella of an imaginary "America," which is defined by these textural, atmospheric, and thematic factors. This in turn allows nekoniwa to draw on multiple sources and reference points in order to build her own unique world. She is able to use "rural United States" as a way of orienting herself and her genre.

One can think of worlds like that of nekoniwa's rural America as a kind of umbrella world, which can be better described as a mode. Although it stems from individual titles, and has a traceable history, it is no longer associated with any one thing, but rather a composite. Its defining characteristics are the same as the elements that make up worlds like that of *Anne* or *Alice*, like color, texture, cultural objects, and so on, but the connection to any one title has dissipated over time, leaving the world behind. Nekoniwa's virtual world is her own, but it also falls under the umbrella of what could be called a new form of Country Style, or a Country mode. *Anne*-world, as well, could be said to fall under the Country Style umbrella, as *Anne*-world too has many of the same rustic, homemade, sensory elements.

In this case, the world of *Little House* is no longer the world of *Little House*, but a fantasy associated with a real landscape, much like *Anne*. Unlike *Anne*, though, this fantasy has come full circle and is not mapping a world onto the landscape, but rather using place as a shorthand, more like *Alice*, to build out the world. As I will explore in the final chapter, *Anne*-world and *Alice*-world both demonstrate different ways for worlds based in literature to manifest in space. Nekoniwa and Country Style return us to the question of an overarching Japanese Europe, or Japanese Euro-American mode. In this case, a world is associated with a place that otherwise has

no reason to be associated with it (an individual title or unifying factor). In the next chapter I will discuss the connections between these worlds, how they might overlap, and what a fully articulated Japanese-European mode might look like moving forward.

In Conclusion: Fantasy is Real, History is Fantasy

The impetus for this project has been a lifetime of observation of the many variations on "Europe" that exist in Japan. Although it is not uncommon to see utterly fantastical and astonishingly fictional variations on a vague form of "Asia" in American and generally Western-originating media, to see a similar process reflected back is less so. Untangling what this might mean means untangling also definitions of place, national identity, and cultural overlap. While the phenomenon I discuss here is easily identifiable on the surface level, actually tracing it and tracking it means articulating each element and tracing their connections to each other. Focusing on embodied and spatial variations of this phenomena focuses the issue even more. The literal act of worldbuilding that takes place when a narrative or constellation of narratives is translated into world and then into space highlights the gaps and particularities between modes, as well as how symbols and objects morph over the course of these many translations.

Throughout this dissertation I have cited individual scholars who have done comprehensive studies on specific English-languages titles similar or contributing to *shōjo* anime, manga, and culture. For each of my case studies, there is a not insignificant body of work that speaks to how *shōjo* culture is tied in with, adapted from, or is otherwise related to a particular title. There are also many other examples that I have not discussed here that follow a similar theme. The question of *shōjo* and European worlds is not untrodden territory at all, and I focused on *shōjo* because of the significant overlap between 2D and 3D cultures. This project, however, attempts looking at the bigger picture, pulling together these many titles and looking at them together as part of a genre. One might say that the three case studies targeted in this

dissertation are examples of three perfect storms – a title arrives by whatever means, and morphs into something else due to just the right cocktail of external factors.

I chose my three case studies because of a combination of their prevalence in Japan, their diversity, and the distinct ways in which they manifest materially and spatially. *Anne of Green Gables* offers the most straightforward example, through fan tourism. *Anne of Green Gables* tourists on Prince Edward Island in Canada are drawn to visit because of the possibility of visiting *Anne*-land. *Anne*-land is distinct from *Anne*-world, as *Anne*-land is a visitable landscape. *Anne*-world is much more amorphous, universally agreed-upon, and accessible by means of any number of avenues. However, even so, Japanese versions of *Anne*-land, as demonstrated by touristic materials, do not necessarily line up with the place itself. In this case, the *Anne*-world brought to PEI by tourists layers itself on top of the landscape. The possibility of visiting *Anne*-world brings landscape and world together.

Alice in Wonderland, as discussed in the second chapter, could have also taken on this same kind of manifestation in Japan. There are opportunities for *Alice* aficionados to visit *Alice* sites in England, where it was conceived and written, and where "official" *Alice* sites are available for touring. However, as much as *Anne of Green Gables* materials, sites, and adaptations in Japan are anchored in the so-called reality of Prince Edward Island, *Alice in Wonderland* is the complete opposite. *Anne* tends to be rooted in or at least close to *Anne of Green Gables*, the novel. Variations on *Alice*, on the other hand, are freewheeling and diverse, united only by the name *Alice* and a sense of *fushigi* as in the Japanese title of *Fushigi no Kuni no Arisu*. The layering that we see take place in the case of *Anne* is not the case with *Alice*. *Alice* takes the world that is layered on top of the landscape in *Anne* and extracts it from any real location. *Alice*-world is united around a sense of *fushigi*, and just the right combination of factors

make participation in that world possible. The departure of *Alice*-world from being anchored in any kind of real place makes alternative embodied modes easier to relate to one another. Establishments like Alice on Wednesday and DD Holdings' Tokyo *Alice* cafes offer a way to enter *Alice*-world, but the way that *Alice*-world manifests also makes non-spatial, but nevertheless material and embodied, evocations of *Alice*-world, like fashion and bounding, possible.

Finally, my third chapter on the evolution of Country Style YouTube vlogs takes the first two examples – the layers of world and landscape in the case of *Anne*, and the way *Alice* has manifested itself in many forms that focus on mood, rather than traditional historical/spatial boundaries – and combines them. I return to Wendy McClure's concept of Laura World and Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* series as a starting point to explore the connections between contemporary digital worlds, manga adaptations of *Little House*, the 1970s NBC television adaptation, and the cafes and shopping experiences of Depot 39. Digital worlds like that of nekoniwa's are rooted in the material culture of the 1970s, 80s and 90s, but offer a different kind of materiality, focusing on sensory elements and interaction with viewers while still remaining behind a screen. Digital space allows for a different kind of "physical" worldbuilding than in Chapters One and Two, which also makes it more flexible. There is an emphasis on the "reality" of rural Americana, as in the case of *Anne*, but there is a similar sense of placelessness and emphasis on mood as in *Alice*. Country Style models a form of umbrella world, made up of multiple influences that can be associated with many different individual titles. In the section to follow I will expand this idea to return to the initial question of how there might be an overarching Japanese-European mode.

Europe as Fantasy

Throughout this project I have focused on three English language classic children's literary titles for the sake of clarity, simplicity, and specificity. But although I have chosen three distinct titles and phenomena to examine and toggle between, there is also a constellation of related works that come up repeatedly in relation to *Anne of Green Gables*, *Alice in Wonderland*, and *Little House*. While there are multiple, including titles such as Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, mentioned briefly in the introduction, and Frances Hodgeson Burnett's *A Little Princess* and *The Secret Garden*, which I will discuss in a presently, a particularly prescient example is that of *Peter Pan*. Scottish playwright J. M. Barrie's 1911 novel (published under *Peter and Wendy*) was a contemporary of *Anne of Green Gables* in English, and first translated into Japanese in 1924. I reference it briefly in Chapter One, as one of *Anne of Green Gables* expert Miki Okuda's few chosen non-*Anne* translations, and again in Chapter Two, as one of the animated Disney films that was released in Japan at around the same time as *Alice in Wonderland*. Though I do not speak to it directly, *Peter Pan*, alongside *Alice*, is also another common source for Disneybounding.

In Japan, *Peter Pan* follows a similar trajectory to *Alice in Wonderland* as an English children's novel translated before World War II and later released as a Disney film in the 1950s. The reason that one finds so much scholarship on *Alice in Wonderland* in Japan and so little on *Peter Pan* can be boiled down to the simple fact that *Peter Pan* enjoys nothing like the popularity, success, and multitude of translations and adaptations that *Alice in Wonderland* does. *Alice in Wonderland* was multi-translated and multi-adapted before 1920, while *Peter Pan* was translated in the mid-20s and had only a few new translations over the course of the next 10 years. These two timelines are not entirely equivalent, as *Alice* had an entire 20 years before the

year 1920 in Japan and *Peter Pan*'s timeline was interrupted by World War II. Even so, the prevalence and hold that *Alice in Wonderland* has in Japan in comparison to *Peter Pan* is palpable.

Disney's animated *Peter Pan* was released in Japan in 1955, only two years after the Disney *Alice in Wonderland* film in 1953 and with no other feature-length animated releases in the intervening years. An anime adaptation of *Peter Pan* by Nippon Animation was additionally released in 1989, in the same World Masterpiece series as the beloved *Anne of Green Gables* anime. And yet, while *Peter Pan* is certainly still well-known in Japan, and is sometimes referenced in conjunction with *Alice in Wonderland*, *Peter* does not enjoy the rich, varied, and explicitly *Alice* culture that *Alice in Wonderland* does. I bring up this discussion of *Peter Pan* not as an example of a less successful *Alice*, but as a novel that, despite its comparatively middling legacy, still lurks in the background, helping to make up of the tissue of Japanese European inspired worlds as I have defined them in this project.

As noted in Chapter One, *Peter Pan* is one of the few other English language novels translated in full by *Anne of Green Gables* expert Miki Okuda. Okuda also connects *Peter Pan* to Chapter Three, on Country Style and the *Little House* series, through her work on the translations of Caroline Strom Collins's *The World of Little House*. *Little House*, which comes up repeatedly throughout this dissertation even in conjunction with the entire chapter I have devoted to it, is another of Okuda's few non-*Anne* translated works. Though these worlds are separate, they rub shoulders with and influence each other by means of their juxtaposition. One of Okuda's few original non-*Anne*, non-translated works, *The Illustrated World of British Fantasy* (*Zusetsu Eikoku Fantashī no Sekai*), features a collection of classic British children's literature, most of which can be thought of as *otogibanashi* as discussed in the chapter on *Alice in Wonderland*.

Each chapter features photographs, illustrations, and discussion of each featured title in the style of Okuda's *Anne* travel books. She includes *Peter Pan* and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, as well as other British children's titles like J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, C. S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia*, and Frances Hodgeson Burnett's *A Little Princess* and *The Secret Garden*.[20]

An interesting point about these last two inclusions in Okuda's collection of "British fantasy" is that these last two titles are not, in fact, fantasy. They are fiction, but with no magic, fantasy, or even elements of magical realism to be found. At the time of their publication (1905 and 1911, respectively), both were works of contemporary children's fiction that spoke directly to the issues and discourses of the day, including the English colonial presence in India, class, child labor, and poverty. And yet, in Okuda's vision of the world, both belong in the realm of British fantasy; alongside *Alice in Wonderland* and *Peter Pan*. The novels of Francis Hodgson Burnett share many of the characteristics of the other works in Okuda's collection. Both are well-known in Japan, and both had anime adaptations in the 1980s and 90s. The *A Little Princess* anime adaptation also aired in the same Nippon TV World Masterpiece series as *Anne of Green Gables* and *Peter Pan*.

Although not all the stories in the collection are necessarily "girls' novels," these two adapt themselves well to *shōjo*, both in the simple terms of clothing and other aesthetics, as novels based in the early 1900s, as well as in terms of narrative. Both star little girls in adverse

[20] The full list of titles featured in Okuda's book is: The *Harry Potter* series (1997-2007), by J. K. Rowling; *Five Children and It* (1902), *The Phoenix and the Carpet* (1904), and *The Magic World* (1912) by E. Nesbit; *The Secret Garden* (1911), *A Little Princess* (1905), and *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1886), by Frances Hodgeson Burnett; *Peter Pan* (1911), by J. M. Barrie; *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking Glass* (1872), by Lewis Carroll; *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1950-56), by C. S. Lewis; *The Wind in the Willows* (1908), by Kenneth Graham; *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* and other selected stories (1902-30), by Beatrix Potter; *A Traveller in Time* (1939), the *Little Grey Rabbit* series (1929-75), the *Tim Rabbit* series (1937-64), and the *Sam Pig* series (1939-65) by Alison Uttley; and the *Green Knowe* series (1954-76), by L. M. Boston

circumstances who traverse between "worlds" – the literal Secret Garden of *The Secret Garden* and the rags/riches dichotomy of *A Little Princess*. Both join *Anne of Green Gables* and the *Little House* series as examples of girls' novels set in the turn of the century or earlier that have been lumped in with "fantasy" works – quite literally, in this case. The only missing – and yet crucial – detail that separates these works from "true" fantasy in the collection is the presence of fantastical elements. In this case, it seems that the fantastical elements that would define fantasy in an English language setting are no longer as relevant.

Shōjo only makes up a slice of what the Japanese-European mode encompasses, however. And while my case studies here all intersect with *shōjo*, and indeed, *shōjo* is an undeniable presence in the Japanese-European mode as a whole, the presence of titles that are not oriented toward any gender in particular, like *The Chronicles of Narnia*, brings us back full circle to the very broad range and great fluidity of the Japanese-European.[21] "British fantasy" in the context of Okuda's book does not mean "novels in the fantasy genre by British authors." Instead, it shifts the meaning of the title to imply that each of these novels depicts a form of fantasy. Even if the books were not intended or written as fantasy, in the context of this collection their worlds are as fantastical as Narnia or Neverland. The ease with which Japanese depictions of English-speaking locations and pseudo-Europes slide between historicity and blatant fantastical world building is better explained by also approaching these non-fantastical works as a form of fantasy. The history they depict is not history in the sense of a tangible linear past, but a form of imagination. This perspective helps to contextualize the thread of exoticism that runs through all three of my case studies. Although I focus on *fushigi* specifically in the case of *Alice*, and the ways in which

[21] *Peter Pan*, while typically considered a boys' adventure story in English, has had both *shōjo and shōnen* (the boys' equivalent to *shōjo*) adaptations in Japan.

European elements can be combined to create a sense of the strange or bizarre, exoticism also runs through *Anne* and Country Style.

As discussed in the Introduction in the realm of translation, the "the Occident" in early Meiji translation resembles relatively concurrent representations of "the Orient" in European arts and literature. The freewheeling translation of culture, locations, and cultural markers resembles that of movements like *japonisme* in Europe and North America. These are not an exact corollary, as these two movements were not exactly contemporary to each other, and as Orientalism as defined by Edward Said is founded on centuries of power struggle and cultural hierarchy particular to the European relationship with Asia. However, it is not entirely unrelated, as the relationship between Japan and the rest of the world was built upon a specific relational foundation. There is a hard line in the early Meiji period when European arts and culture became broadly accessible in Japan, and this too is based in a particular perspective on relations of power between Japan and Europe. "Europe," as it might be broadly defined in those early days of Meiji, is definitively "other." The differentiation one might make between the United States, Canada, Britain, and continental Europe is undermined by their cultural similarity to each other, and their cultural difference from the pre-Meiji.

Over the course of my case studies, the material objects that remain constant are dependably those that have some amount of cultural specificity, or at least meaning, attached to them. These include items like the patchwork quilts discussed by Miki Okuda in her writing on *Anne of Green Gable*s, and is extended to foodstuffs, like Okuda's translation of *From the Kitchen of L.M. Montgomery*, or the recipes also translated by Okuda from Carolyn Strom Collins's *The World of Little House*. Maid and Butler cafes, even, as discussed in Chapter Two are predicated on the experience of being a "Lord" or "Lady" in a supposed English manor

home. Although Chapters One and Three are not explicitly about cafés like Chapter Two, both *Anne of Green Gables*, and *Little House* have had at least one café referenced in this project: *Anne*, the café in Tokyo discussed in the opening of that chapter, and *Little House* the café housed in the Depot 39 home goods store. Nekoniwa's digital "home cafe" also falls into this category.

The fluidity with which worlds slide into each other is more easily explained by imagining all of them as a form of fantasy. The "reality" of Prince Edward Island and the possibility of visiting *Anne*-land is made even more enticing if one considers how it, in conjunction with the other related titles I have discussed thus far, is treated as a fantasy that also happens to have a fully realized, tangible, tourable location attached to it. This fantasy is exactly as fantastic as the worlds of *Peter Pan*, *Harry Potter*, or *Narnia*. *Alice in Wonderland* lends itself more easily to the idea of fantasy, but again, the ease with which elements of *Alice* detach, re-attach, and rearrange themselves while still under the title *Alice* speaks to the fluidity and flexibility of the mode as a whole. Additionally, it crystallizes this idea that these titles all share space, and that the space that they share is based in an underlying, ever-shifting world of its own, open to be experimented and played with (or in) at will.

Considering space, world, and mode

Focusing on space and materiality brings up issues of land and movements through space. Throughout my observations and study of this phenomena in Japan, the European mode has remained consistent. To connect a distinctly European world to literary works from Britain and (primarily Western) continental Europe is one thing, and relatively traceable from source to contemporary manifestation. Layering that same mode onto colonized lands like those of North

America, however, complicates both the object of study and the analysis. Rolling the United States and Canada into this European mode winds legacies of colonialism and conquest into its DNA. As discussed in the cases of *Anne of Green Gables* and Country Style vlogs, North America is represented as an extension of a fictional Europe. Indigenous peoples, African diaspora, or diaspora from other parts of the globe are typically not treated as cultural members or contributors. That most Japanese-European media represents “America” as a culturally European place is not necessarily surprising, and also not an unfaithful representation of many (or most) of what source material there may be.

What is typically thought of as "American" literature is usually a product of the European diaspora, and particularly at moments of literary influence in Japan. Issues of colonialism and North American racism are present in Japanese narratives, but the premise of the world is of European origin. The often violent or damning depictions of European violence toward non-European peoples or cultures, such as those that take place in the manga *Maimee Angel*, based on the pioneers of the *Little House* series and discussed in Chapter Three, still rests on the premise that “America” equals a European cultural, visual, and material landscape. Focusing on material and embodied manifestations of this European mode isolates these worlds down to their most fundamental components. The juxtapositions, objects, and other objects contained within these worlds must be chosen intentionally. The context of an original text, or even a more traditional adaptation or translation, is stripped away to leave only what is essential to the construction of that world in space behind.

Looking forward

Treating all of these titles and associated worlds as related and interlinked brings me to a final case study. I will close this project by exploring what happens when a Japanese mode that comes from specific relations and translation of texts from one to the other is looped back toward English-speaking audiences. The December 2024 film *The Lord of the Rings: The War of the Rohirrim* offers a contemporary and different way of thinking about the crossing lines of exoticism, nationality, language, and so on that I have covered in this project. The film was created as part of New Line Cinema and Warner Brothers' *The Lord of the Rings* franchise, complete with cast and crew crossovers from director Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy from the late 1990s and early 2000s, based on J. R. R. Tolkien's novels of the same name. The plot of *Rohirrim* is based on an obscure figure of in-universe lore, and in terms of production is an entry into a well-established, English-language franchise. The interesting and most relevant detail to this project, however, is that *Rohirrim* is also an anime, directed by Japanese director Kenji Kamiyama. Kamiyama has worked on multiple *Ghost in the Shell* films and television shows, and has been in the anime industry since the 1980s. Prior to *Rohirrim*, Kamiyama worked on similar anime productions adapted from English language franchises, including an anthology of *Star Wars* spinoffs, and a series based on the *Blade Runner* universe. These, however, followed a similar trajectory to the other titles I have discussed thus far, as they were translated from English into Japanese. *Rohirrim* is not translated so much as applying a particular history of representation on top of a pre-configured world.

The Lord of the Rings, a three-book epic originally published by J.R.R. Tolkien in 1954-5 and translated into Japanese in the 1970s is on the fringes of the constellation of titles that include *Alice in Wonderland*, *Anne of Green Gables*, the *Harry Potter* series, *Peter Pan*, and so

on. It is not a children's book, and not easily adapted or summarized, but still considered a "classic" English language text. It has a relatively minor presence in Japan, but would not be out of place in Miki Okuda's collection of "British fantasy novels." In fact, Okuda even briefly mentions Tolkien in relation to his friend and contemporary C. S. Lewis, author of the *The Chronicles of Narnia* and to whom an entire chapter is dedicated. (72) Tolkien's work is an enormous presence in the fantasy genre in English, and in its own way, Middle Earth occupies a similar space to fairy tales and mythology, much in the same way as *otogibanashi*, and perhaps even moreso than titles like *Alice in Wonderland.*

Tolkien's world of Middle Earth, in which most of his fiction is set, was conceptualized as what Tolkien biographers and scholars have termed a "mythology for England." (Chance 2) Based in his academic work as a Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford University, Tolkien drew on not only Old and Middle English literature, but also on the cultures and historical languages that contributed to its development, including Finnish, Welsh, Old Norse, and Old High and Middle German. (Chance 2) He was also active in fairy-tale and folklore studies.[22] In this way, Middle Earth might be thought of as having gone through a similar process as the creation of *Alice*-world or *Anne*-world; a synthesis of multiple inputs and translations between texts, languages, and modes that creates a fairy tale or mythology out of "real" roots. While Middle Earth also has numerous famous visual renditions and its own robust fan community and culture, it was also created as a fairy-tale variation on a specific body of literature. In this sense, Japanese European mode is, in fact, an excellent medium through which to tell stories based in Middle Earth. Adapting Middle Earth into an anime taps into a similar kind of fantasy Europe that I have been discussing throughout this dissertation.

[22] See: Tolkien, J. R. R., Verlyn Flieger, and Douglas A. Anderson. *Tolkien on Fairy-Stories*. Expanded ed., with Commentary and Notes. London: HarperCollins, 2008.

While there is already a robust tourism and material culture centered around the New Zealand filming sites for Peter Jackson's 1990s *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, Middle Earth is relatively unique (although not the only example) in English-language spaces in that it is both old and well-developed enough that elements of the world at large can be separated out of the source and spun into a combination of world, worlds, or mode of their own that act more like the phenomena surrounding Japanese *Alice*, *Anne*, and Country Style than traditionally defined fan activity. One widespread example of this is in the tabletop role-playing game *Dungeons and Dragons* (*D&D*), which borrowed Tolkien's fantasy racial framework, among other things, for its gameplay structure.[23] Since its inception in the 1970s, *D&D* has incorporated many elements of Tolkien's world into its own, renaming, reconceptualizing, and popularizing concepts originally unique to Middle Earth. (Cote and Saidel 231) Among these are the concept of "elves" as tall, humanlike entities rather than the small, spritely figures of European folklore, and "halflings," three-foot-tall humanoids original to Tolkien. Both are standard playable "races" in *D&D* and have since entered the standard English-language fantasy lexicon. While there are still avid fans of Tolkien, the various adaptations of *The Lord of the Rings*, and of *Dungeons and Dragons*, unique elements of Middle Earth have filtered through and into the broader fantasy universe so that people who enjoy or use them may or may not be a fan of any of the originals.

Rohirrim is the first of its kind to pull together the Japanese-European mode and a European mythology but produced by and intended primarily for an English-speaking viewership. The production is a combination or a coming full circle of the phenomena I have

[23] The usage of the word "race" in Tolkien to refer to multiple human and non-human entities is not entirely synonymous to "race" as a description of a group of people based on supposed shared physical or other characteristics. The differentiation between the two, how they are both used, and how fantasy "races" intersect with racist legacies within Tolkien, *Dungeons and Dragons*, and the fantasy genre at large is an ongoing debate among both scholars and fans.

been discussing throughout this project. While there have been many other productions in English that have used anime or otherwise Japan-originating style, none so far have applied European fairy-tale worlds as exemplified by *Anne*, *Alice*, or Country Style to a European-originating mythology. The film was ostensibly intended to appeal to fans of Peter Jackson's original trilogy. The reception, however, was mixed. Among critics, the film was universally praised for striking animation, but many felt it failed to deliver in terms of storyline and characterization. Interestingly, several reviewers attributed their lukewarm response to the story to the fact that the film is meant to tie in with Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* trilogies, terming it a "*Hobbit* prequel for diehard fans," and that "Tolkien diehards… may be grateful for whatever 'The Lord of the Rings' morsels they can find." (Debruge, "Hobbit"; Coyle, "Lord of the Rings") Among the nebulously defined "diehard fans" discussing the film online in forums such as Tumblr and Reddit, some found the film's many references to the Jackson *Lord of the Rings* films in the script, storyline, and visuals to be appealing, while others found it forced and contrived.

Ultimately, the *Rohirrim* anime walked an odd line between strict adherence to the world of Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, and complete deviation from it. The script held clear callbacks to lines from the films, some of the visuals were exact copies of shots from the original trilogy, and Stephen Gallagher's soundtrack even borrowed leitmotifs from composer Howard Shore's scores. In light of these efforts to keep the world united and continuous, the discontinuities present in *Rohirrim* are startling: errors in geography, for example, in a universe of films that consistently opens on a hand-drawn map, and continuity errors that create a noticeable rift between *Rohirrim* and the world it is meant to contribute to. While there is negligible public commentary on these discontinuities from the film's creators, the exacting

adherence to one definition of the "world" of the original trilogy in *Rohirrim* is in contrast to the way other Japanese-European worlds have developed over time. Instead of the fluidity, creativity, and communal nature of the worlds of *Anne*, *Alice*, and Country Style, *Rohirrim* gave the world of Middle Earth very little room to be fully embraced by its new form, resulting in a hybrid that was neither one thing nor the other.

The example of *Rohirrim* is an interesting one in that it is the first major attempt to marry a Japanese form with a European mythology for an English-speaking audience. However, the execution also opens up and exposes the role of communal engagement with the mode itself. The stilted execution of *Rohirrim* demonstrates a misunderstanding of how a form like the Japanese-European operates in the Japanese context, and of how the same form might in an English-speaking one. Repeatedly, throughout the history of the Japanese-European, including within my case studies, there has been tension between participants in given worlds and corporate powers and rightsholders. But the control that Disney has over the rights to certain versions of *Alice*, for example, has not prevented *Alice* cafes from creating unique and distinct *Alice* spaces. Nor has it prevented *Alice* from becoming an entity and a world all of its own that incorporates but is not a slave to the Disney film. Even *Anne*-world, which has the simplest relationship between text and world of my three examples, is not locked into the world of the *Anne of Green Gables* Licensing Authority. *Anne* fans have continued to take their own tours and make their own experiences according to their own engagement with *Anne*-world. In all three cases, participants in the worlds have not necessarily pushed back when restricted by commerce or copyright. Some cases, like that of Disneybounding, is a direct interaction with a corporate or otherwise powerful entity. Many, however, like that of Gothic Lolitas, or of Depot 39's American goods and furniture, are simply an adaptation in response to an organic desire on the part of the participants of a certain

world. These desires ebbed and flowed with what was available at that time, be that education, social spaces, fashion, commerce, manga and anime, or travel. The world of Middle Earth is privy to similar phenomena, including the *D&D* universes as well as the vast networks of Tolkien- and Middle Earth-inspired fashion, travel, lifestyle, and design that pervade English-speaking fantasy communities. *Rohirrim*, however, by taking too literal of a perspective on what a "world" entails, ironically fails to fully engage the world as it already exists.

In conclusion, this project has attempted to track and define the intersections between literature, materiality, and world. The pervasive presence of a distinct kind of "Europe" in Japanese media opens up questions of place as well as national and historical identity. Where and when is a freewheeling variation on European history meant to be, exactly? Does it matter? How does a mode so rooted in time and place become placeless? This project follows the lines of three case studies in an attempt to trace their transformations from written, translated text, into their own respective worlds that expand far beyond words on the page. This expansion causes worlds to eventually intersect with each other, creating a fluid and ever-shifting mode. This mode is definable not by any one internal element, but by its approach to time, space, and history: this Europe is a fantasy, built on a literary foundation that has since evolved into an organism all of its own.

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