



Title: The Influence of Manga and Taoism in Mexican Comic Sisters (2021)/ Line Research

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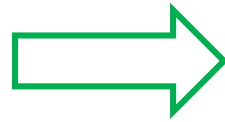
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Introduction

In this paper, we argue that the comic book *Hermanas* (Sisters) (2021), by Paulina Ramos, is the result of a productive consumption that assimilates oriental elements of Japanese manga: ways of doing, philosophy, and imagery, thus resulting in a hybrid product that transposes referents and imagery from similarity and conflict.



- First, the graphics of *Hermanas* (2021) assimilate the forms of the face, the childish characterization of the characters, the handling of emptiness, and the representation in black and white typical of Japanese manga. Concerning the story's philosophy, we can see it returns to Taoism, representing, Life and Death as complementary opposites of each other through allegories.
- Second: In this comic, the representation of Yin resorts to Western media and contemporary references, such as the image of Death with a skull on the head, which alludes to the religious reference of the scapegoat (often called Azazel in the Bible). The Yang takes up the myth spread across cultures of the symbolism of the renewing symbolism of the deer. The interaction of both characters alludes to the imagery of the vegetable tomb.
- Third, the conflict inherent to the cultural hybridization of its referents is present in the representation of polarized and opposed spaces (life-death forest, death-war desert) typical of Western Christian philosophy.
- Finally, the elements are mixed from the contact by the accentuation of the rapprochement between cultures, from which, the author made a productive consumption in which she assimilated elements from sympathies between her culture (graphic tradition, opposites in religion), which is not exempt from processes of conflict and tearing.

Introduction

Paulina Ramos

Publicación independiente

13.3x20cm

18 páginas

Interiores en blanco y negro, papel bond

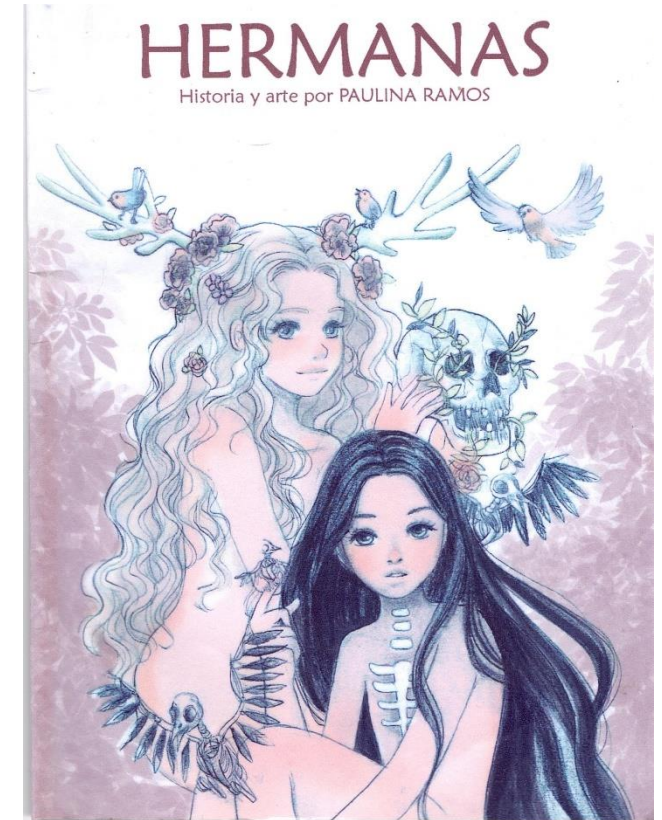
Portada en papel cuché a color

Situación inicial.

La vida y la muerte viven tranquilamente en el bosque

La vida y la muerte actúan en un incendio en el bosque. La muerte termina con su vida, la vida genera renacimiento. Con ello, descubren su sentido.

La vida y la muerte inician su viaje por el mundo, llevando a cabo el ciclo de vida.



(Ramos González, 2021)

Methodology

This work is based on a qualitative, interpretative analysis of the comic strip, based on its graphic and narrative elements. The methodology is structured in the following order:

- 1.- Formal description of some vignettes that conglomerate formal and thematic representative elements of the comic.
- 2.- Identification of iconographic and cultural references of the comic.
- 3.- Interpretative analysis of the processes of cultural hybridization implicit in the source of information.

Results

1.- The graphic forms and canons of manga are assimilated; while conceptually, Taoist philosophy is taken up again, representing, life and death as complementary opposites of each other through the use of allegories

Morphology:

- Canon of the face and body (graphic synthesis)
- Neoteny
- The page as a whole-Predominance of image over text
- Vacuum handling
- Black and white representation of Japanese manga.

- The graph shows the Taoist philosophical foundation Yin Yang



(Ramos González, 2021)

2. In the representation of yin, Western, media and contemporary references are used, such as the image of death with a skull on its head, which alludes to the religious reference of the scapegoat. The yang takes up the widespread myth between cultures of the renovating symbolism of the deer. The interaction of both characters alludes to the imaginary of the vegetable tomb.

- The desert as a place where demons live
- Visual reference of the goat skull

“And he will bring Aaron the calf of the sin offering that is his, and he will make reconciliation for himself and for his house. Then he will take the two male goats and present them before the Lord at the door of the Tent of Meeting. And he shall cast lots for Aaron on the two goats; one lot for Jehovah, and another lot for Azazel. And he will bring Aaron the goat on which the lot will fall by Jehovah, and offer it in atonement. But the male goat on which the lot falls for Azazel, he will present it alive before the Lord to reconcile him, to send him to Azazel to the desert "(Leviticus, 16:6)

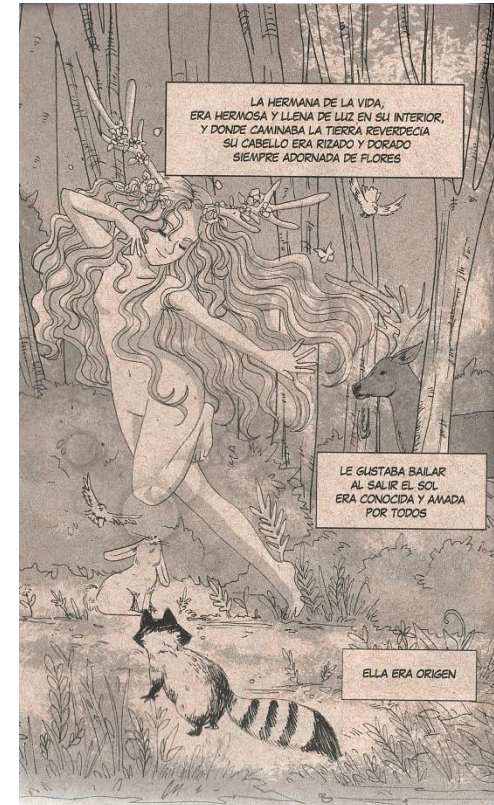


(Ramos González, 2021)

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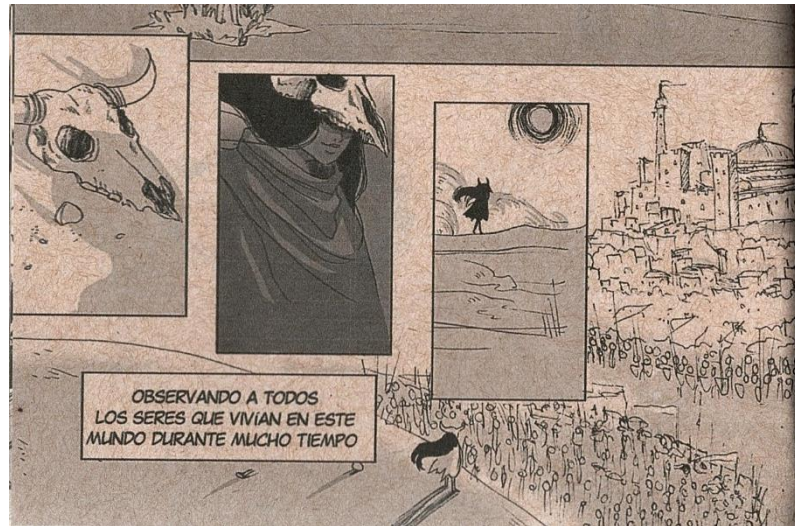
Symbolism of the deer linked to the tree and renewal.

- Night regime
- Cyclic symbols
- Double denial
- Botanical symbolism
- Imaginary of the vegetable tomb: birth of life from death
- In this regime the Taoist imaginary can be inserted



(Ramos González, 2021)

3.-The conflict typical of the cultural hybridization of the referents, is present in the representation of polarized and opposed spaces (forest life-death, desert death-war) typical of Western Christian philosophy.



-Judeo-Cristian vision of the desert as desolation, the inhospitable
-Desert landscape of great sand plains and dunes (ergs).



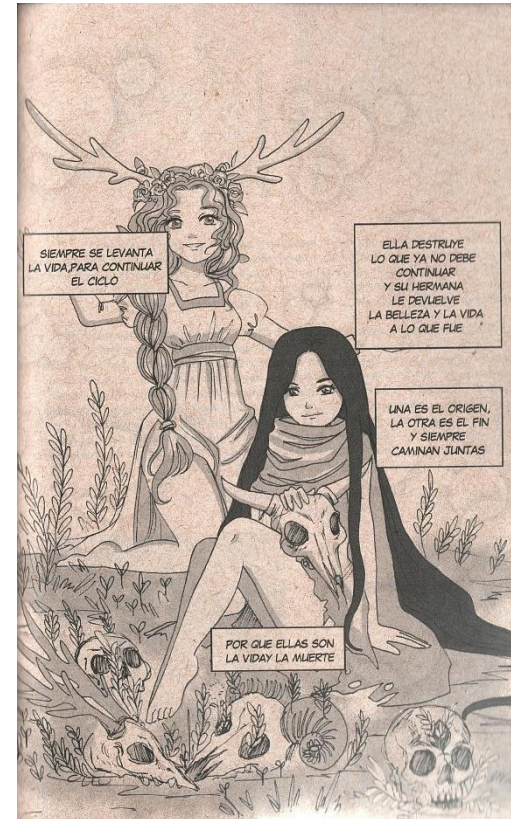
(Ramos González, 2021)



Forest
It converges with the imaginary of the night regime and cyclical symbols
Opposition and complementarity

4.- The elements are mixed from the proper contact of the accentuation of the rapprochement between cultures, from which, the author carried out a productive consumption in which she assimilated elements from sympathies between her culture (graphic tradition, opposites in the religion), which is not exempt from processes of conflict and tearing.

- Exchange processes accentuated with the neoliberal model
- Overlap and cultural integration from diffusion (external contacts) (Kroeber, 1963)
- Hybridization/Acculturation (more or less reciprocal, but incomplete (Kroeber, 1963: 236)
- Attractor: opposites in Taoism and Christianity, graphic tradition of comics in both countries.
- Convergences between the Western nocturnal imaginary and Taoist philosophy
- Inconspicuous conflict: spatial opposition



(Ramos González, 2021)

Conclusions

- 1.-Open oriental influence of the Japanese mass products, not only in the philosophical aspects of the comic but in its graphics and narrative (Moreover Durand)
- 2.- A cultural product derived from constant exchanges extended in a relatively short time, between cultures, specifically the Mexican culture and its contact with the Japanese mass media; this contact nurtured the Mexican graphic tradition with narrative, graphic and thematic forms, which were uncommon in our country; the process of cultural hybridization that allowed the emergence of this work was the cultural diffusion, which allowed the identification of coincidences, sympathies, points of convergence and overlapping between different elements that are generating not only a comic strip in an isolated way, but are giving way to a whole generation of creatives that mix and reinterpret these new creative forms.
- 3.- The attractor is the religious-philosophical convergences and the graphic tradition of both countries, while the point of conflict visible in the comic, is observed as a slip perhaps unconscious of the culture of the author, who at some point in the story presents the graphic polarization of the spaces in which the characters move, which brings a conceptual and symbolic polarization.
- 4.-The main contributions of this work is this first attempt to integrate an analysis where both the micro aspects of the source, translated into its graphics, narrative, and philosophical concept, are interpreted and understood in a broader macro-structural framework, marked by the idea of analyzing and describing how this process of contact, exchange, overlapping and cultural hybridization with its convergences and conflicts could have been carried out.

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