

Touhou Project : A Case Study of Fandom Commercialisation

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Abstract

The 21st century sees the commercialisation of fan practices within the Japanese doujin culture in which doujinshi is used for the corporate economy through distribution and development. This could potentially give more power to the media industries rather than the participants within doujin culture as industries take on more interest in elements of doujin culture, intervening in the participatory culture. To understand this phenomenon, there must be an understanding of how doujin culture functions on conventions and how companies could integrate into doujin fan practices. This research answered the key “What shifts can be observed on the infrastructure of doujin conventions in Japan from the early 2000s until 2019 through the commercialisation of fan practices?” This research examined the ways in which the fan practices surrounding the video game series *Touhou Project* get commercialised on the doujin convention Reitaisai, and how this shifts the convention from fan practices to a commercial culture. To answer the question, this research performed historical internet analysis using the Reitaisai website to analyse the number of attendees, their activities, and company attendance to map how the convention is slowly commercialising over the years through the concept of the infrastructure. The text by Hiroaki Tamagawa on the development of the doujin convention Comiket provided key in the analysis of Reitaisai and its commercialisation. Conducting the research, it became apparent that the *Touhou* doujin culture started as fan focussed on offline sites in 2004, but quickly started to make use of distribution companies in-and outside of Reitaisai. Gaming companies started to engage with Reitaisai around the 2010s by letting fans play their games, but in 2019 the commercial game *Cannonball* illustrated how fan practice and commercial culture can meet through promotion and collaboration. Here Reitaisai functions not only as a place for distribution, but also as a place for commercial and fan practice to meet. It illustrated how doujin units and commercial culture are not mutually exclusive but can work together on conventions. The commercialisation of doujin culture on Reitaisai indicates a shift from fan practices to a more commercial culture where both companies and fans make use of each other’s spheres.

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Introduction

Doujin Culture is a significant sphere within fan activity of manga, anime, and video games in Japan. Doujin culture refers to Japanese fans with specific interests that produce self-published works like comics, games, or music, and encourage the creative production of such fan works and the support of other people's fan works. All fan works are referred to as doujinshi and can be sold at conventions. The fans behind the production of doujinshi are referred to as doujin units, individuals or groups who make their own fan works and sell them at booths at conventions. Hiroaki Tamagawa refers to the infrastructure as a place where the roots of fan practice lay. The infrastructure is the starting point of fan practice, providing a space where fans can appropriate media in new ways and can meet other fans. This is what Tamagawa refers to as "...supporting fan activity..." through the infrastructure.¹ Tamagawa

¹ Hiroaki Tamagawa, "Comiket market as space for self-expression in otaku culture," in *Fandom unbound: Otaku culture in a connected world*, eds. Mizuko Ito, Daisuke Okabe and Izumi Tsuji (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2012), 108.

argues that the infrastructure can be in multiple places like “..the Internet, otaku specialty shops, and events,” but also clubs and conventions.² However, Tamagawa argues that the infrastructure of doujin conventions in Japan allows for more ways in which fans can perform their fan practices compared to the above-mentioned spaces.³ Tamagawa calls the infrastructure of doujin conventions “a specialized medium” for self-expression where doujin units can perform their practices free from commercial intervention.⁴ On the infrastructure, doujin units can perform their fan practices by displaying, exchanging, and distributing their doujinshi amongst themselves and other fans.

However, this research illustrated that throughout the years, starting in the early 2000s, the infrastructure of doujin conventions is shifting from a commercial-free space into a space where doujin fan practices are getting more commercialised. The nature of the infrastructure of doujin conventions is changing as companies started infiltrating the convention grounds to distribute doujinshi and do product collaborations. Therefore, it is important to discuss how the concept of the infrastructure to understand how its nature is changing through the commercialisation of fan practices like the distribution of doujinshi and the collaborative practices with companies for mainstream selling. Reitaisai is a Japanese doujin convention that experiences this commercialisation on the convention grounds. Reitaisai is an annual event entirely dedicated to fans of the *Touhou Project* or short *Touhou*. *Touhou* is a video game series produced by Team Shanghai Alice. On this convention, the shift from fan practices to a more commercial culture can be noted. The convention started in 2004 as a convention for and by fans, functioning as a ground for people to distribute *Touhou* doujinshi. Throughout the years commercial entities have started appearing around Reitaisai’s convention ground which distribute doujinshi and do product collaborations, indicating a shift in the convention from primarily fan practice to a more commercial culture. Therefore, it is important to analyse the infrastructure of doujin conventions in fan studies as this “specialized medium” is shifting away from being commercial free, and instead is becoming more commercialised through commercial practices like distribution and collaboration.

This research looked at the dimension of participatory culture within the phenomena of convergence culture. Henry Jenkins argues that convergence culture is a dynamic experience in which producers, consumers, and content are undergoing a technological,

² Tamagawa, “Comiket market as space for self-expression in otaku culture,” 109-110.

³ Tamagawa, “Comiket market as space for self-expression in otaku culture,” 110.

⁴ Tamagawa, “Comiket market as space for self-expression in otaku culture,” 110.

cultural, and social changes.⁵ Part of convergence culture is participatory culture in which people are getting more actively involved in fan practices surrounding media texts. Within this research, the commercialisation of fan practices on doujin conventions includes such a change within participatory culture. This research illustrated that Reitaisai and its participants are part of convergence culture through a growing commercialisation of fan practice, in particular distribution and collaboration, which changes the nature of the doujin convention infrastructure. To analyse this commercialisation, this research answered the question “What shifts can be observed on the infrastructure of doujin conventions in Japan from the early 2000s until 2019 through the commercialisation of fan practices?” This research illustrated how through more commercial distribution and collaboration on Reitaisai, doujin culture is shifting away from being heavily fan focussed into a stage of commercial integration. Here fan practice and commercial culture can coexist. The case study of the *Touhou* convention Reitaisai demonstrates how the participatory dynamics within convergence culture are changing as fans and commercial entities allow for integration.

The analysis of Reitaisai is important as it gains new insights into how the infrastructure facilitates new changes within convergence culture, and how we can perceive fan practices that are becoming more and more commercialised on this infrastructure. Furthermore, the case study of Reitaisai is relevant to the field of fan studies as previous fan studies like Jenkins have focused mostly on mass or mainstream media fandoms for their analysis like *Star Wars*.⁶ The analysis of niche fandoms like *Touhou* on Reitaisai, therefore, deserves more scholarly attention as it illustrates how seemingly smaller fan practices can become something larger through the commercialisation on conventions. The commercialisation of doujin culture on conventions changes the way in which fan practices can be perceived and it stresses the importance of studying other forms of fan practices outside of the mainstream, bringing new insights into the field of fan studies. Here it is illustrated how a niche fandom like *Touhou* starting on Reitaisai can become part of larger distribution points and collaboration project through the commercialisation of its fan practices on the infrastructure.

The first sub-question is “What shifts in the infrastructure of Reitaisai in the early 2000s can be observed through its activities and participation numbers?” To answer this

⁵ Henry Jenkins, “Introduction,” in *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 3.

⁶ Henry Jenkins, “Quentin Tarantino’s *Star Wars*?,” in *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 131-168.

question this research made use of the work by Hiroaki Tamagawa.⁷ In the text, Tamagawa analyses the historical development of the doujin convention of Comiket from the 1970s until 2012 as a place for doujin activity. The lens of his research is primarily on the development of doujin conventions compared to more mainstream conventions. This is relevant to this research as doujin culture remains a form of participatory culture that has been rarely researched in fandom studies. Tamagawa's historical research is significant to this research as his text establishes certain trends on Comiket which helped to map out the development of Reitaisai, focussing mostly on the establishment of Comiket and early on negotiations between doujin units and bookstores for distribution. This research aimed to build upon Tamagawa's work by looking at the new developments within the commercialisation of doujin culture, in particular, the types of activities and distribution stores Reitaisai facilitates. Such new developments in this research include the promotion of the convention itself through book stores, the attendance of distribution stores on the convention grounds, and the attendance of gaming companies for product promotion. In relation to the commercialisation of fan practice on doujin conventions, these developments illustrate that the infrastructure as a place for doujin self-expression is becoming a space that is no longer free from commercial intervention through company integration on the convention grounds. The historical analysis of these developments has been done by discussing various snapshots of the convention's website from 2004 up to 2014. Reitaisai was first organised in 2004 and therefore the analysis of the snapshots from that year and onwards will be useful in mapping out the shift in fan practices. The discussion of the changing nature of the elements helped to illustrate the growing commercialisation of doujin culture.

The second question is "What shifts in the infrastructure can be noted through the commercial promotion of the game *Touhou Cannonball* on Reitaisai?" As the previous question helped answering how the infrastructure is shifting through commercial distribution, this question helped answering how commercial collaboration has also become part of the infrastructure of Reitaisai. This reinforces how the infrastructure is shifting from a space for and by fans, into a space where commercial distribution and collaboration are becoming part of doujin culture. The nature of the infrastructure has changed as *Cannonball* illustrates that it is no longer fan practices only that can be supported on Reitaisai, but also commercial texts like the *Cannonball* game. The infrastructure of doujin conventions has opened up as space for both doujin self-expression and commercial collaboration. This indicates a shift in the

⁷ Tamagawa, "Comiket market as space for self-expression in otaku culture," 107-132.

infrastructure through the commercialisation of doujin culture. This question focused on how gaming companies use the infrastructure of doujin conventions to promote their game. This was achieved by analysing how the first-ever mobile game *Touhou Cannonball* or short *Cannonball* from 2019 allowed fans and commercial to meet through collaboration on Reitaisai, and how the media company Aniplex returned to the doujin convention to promote the game and further shift the event towards commercialisation. Aniplex Inc. or Aniplex is a Japanese entertainment company focusing on animation and music, owned by Sony Music Entertainment (Japan) Inc.. As mentioned on the Reitaisai website, Aniplex promoted the *Cannonball* game on the 16th edition of Reitaisai meaning that commercialisation of fan practice not only entails commercial distribution, but also collaboration in which the infrastructure facilitates both fans and companies. The case of *Cannonball* illustrates how one can view the relationships between corporations and doujin units. The infrastructure of Reitaisai allows gaming companies to promote their collaborative works with doujin units, illustrating how the convention transforms *Cannonball* both into a form of fan practice as it is made for and by the fans, but also as a commercial product made for sales. This is relevant to the field of fan studies as both fans and companies acknowledge each other's existence and know how to make use of each other's spheres; the creativity and dedication of doujin units used to make the product and build an audience, and the possibilities of the commercial companies to spread the visibility of doujinshi and its culture. Companies discover the potential that doujin culture possesses by wanting to engage with it through the promotion of their product on Reitaisai, the place where doujin fan practice comes together. In turn, the infrastructure of Reitaisai facilitates these companies as it could enlarge the visibility of *Touhou* and its doujinshi, and could open up the possibilities for doujin units to one day also work together with gaming companies like Aniplex. Therefore, the shift from fan practices to a more commercial culture on Reitaisai is relevant as it allows doujinshi to become part of something bigger like a commercial game that brings *Touhou* fans together on the infrastructure of Reitaisai.

Literature Review

In this research surrounding the commercialisation of fan practice on doujin conventions, the concepts of commercialisation, doujin culture, original and parody, and the infrastructure were key. To apply these concepts to the case study, a basic understanding of convergence

culture by Henry Jenkins must be established as participatory cultures like doujin culture are part of it.⁹ Convergence culture is not a concept in itself, but rather a dynamic experience in which the above-explained concepts intersect. As Jenkins explains in a nutshell, convergence culture represents the constantly shifting relationship between producers, content, and consumers through different social, cultural, industrial, and technological changes.¹⁰ This indicates a shift in the triangle of producers, content and consumers as it raises questions about how each player stands in contrast to each other power-wise. Jenkins puts the focus of convergence on digital media and Web 2.0 that provide changes in the power dynamics compared to Tamagawa who argues for offline sites in his research on Comiket. In the text, Jenkins distinguishes three relationships that form convergence, namely media convergence, participatory culture, and collective intelligence.¹¹ These phenomena interrelate with each other, but this research will focus primarily on the participatory culture that is doujin, and how this fan practice on doujin conventions is shifted towards a more commercial culture.

As mentioned in the introduction, participatory culture focusses on the active consumer participation that is formed within convergence culture. However, Jenkins argues in the text that corporations nevertheless retain a more significant degree of power than individual consumers or even all combined consumers in a participatory culture.¹² Jenkins asks himself how with the expansion of media corporations participatory culture can still be maintained despite it being under the control of fans. Jenkins believes in the up-bottom and bottom-up dynamics that together form convergence culture, but that by examining these dynamics the corporations still have most to say. Jenkins states that despite the corporations gaining more power, fan practices have become more visible due to Web 2.0 "...forcing the media industries to confront its implications for their commercial interests."¹³ Corporations have to decide whether they satisfy consumer demands or not. Some corporations seek ways to "...channel the creative output of media fans to lower their production costs," which is much present in the case study of *Touhou* on Reitaisai where fan practice shifts towards more commercialisation as companies promote *Touhou* games on the Reitaisai convention.¹⁴

Within the dynamic experience of convergence culture, the commercialisation of fan practices in participatory cultures is taking place. Matthias Stork in his research on the

⁹ Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, 1-24.

¹⁰ Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, 2-3.

¹¹ Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, 2.

¹² Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, 3.

¹³ Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, 133.

¹⁴ Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, 134.

participatory practices within the Glee fandom describes the commercialisation of fan practice as providing fans "...the opportunity to move from fan to professional through performative labor and spatial convergence within an industrial transmedia geography."¹⁵ Fans can therefore perform on a professional level in the media industry through making the fan creative works meet with such media companies. Here fans can move from amateur works produced for themselves to more professional work for a broader audience. However, Stork mentions that on the other hand, it makes fan practice part of the "commercial entity" for promotion and exploitation.¹⁶ This research illustrated that the commercialisation fan practice within doujin culture can allow for more professional opportunities like distribution and can offer opportunities for collaboration where media companies return to the infrastructure for promotion. Whether this challenges the power balance fan practice and commercial balance can be disputed. Nevertheless, commercialisation as concept remains important as it illustrates the shifting relations between producers, content, and fans in convergence culture by making fan practices part of the commercial culture.

To elaborate more on commercialisation, Mark Deuze argues in the text on the commercialisation of fan blogs that convergence culture has both the function of reinforcing the agenda of the corporations and making money, but also that it leaves fans able to enact agency due to the products produced by the corporations.¹⁷ This is relevant to this research as *Touhou* and its doujinshi are integrated into collaboration projects with media companies like Aniplex which indicates the shift the focus more towards commercialisation of fan practices. As Stork argues doujin culture is not merely for and by fans but has become part of a more professional distributing and developing process Deuze argues that the commercial culture and fan practice sphere should not be seen as two binary oppositions, but rather as "...co-existing, mutually enabling, and symbiotic."¹⁸ This indicates that fan practice and commercial culture are making use of each other's spheres. Deuze states that corporations employ a strategy that causes them to engage with convergence culture. Firstly, to enable corporations to intervene into the participatory (digital) culture, secondly, to make the fan practices part of the production process, and thirdly to make it possible for corporations to keep "consumer-

¹⁵ Matthias Stork, "The cultural economics of performance space: Negotiating fan, labor, and marketing practice in Glee's transmedia geography," eds. Mel Stanfill and Megan Condis, *Transformative works and cultures* 15 (2014) : 4.10.

¹⁶ Stork, "The cultural economics of performance space: Negotiating fan, labor, and marketing practice in Glee's transmedia geography," 4.10.

¹⁷ Mark Deuze, "Corporate appropriation of participatory culture," in *Participation and Media Production: Critical Reflections on Content Creation*, eds. Nico Carpentier and Benjamin De Cleen (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishers, 2008), 6.

¹⁸ Deuze, "Corporate appropriation of participatory culture," 6.

turned-producers” in hand.¹⁹ The intervening, or rather meeting of corporations and doujin culture is present on the infrastructure of Reitaisai due to commercial booths and distribution. Fan practice as part of the process is visible in *Cannonball* where doujin units and Reitaisai contributed to the development and promotion of the game. Thus just as Jenkins, Deuze looks at the technological aspects of participatory culture within media, but takes on a more positive stance about the “...dual nature of the corporate embrace” instead of Jenkins’ more vast participatory culture in which corporations exert the most power.²⁰ This is relevant to this research, as it illustrates that the phenomenon of fan practice commercialisation within convergence culture does not have to be negative, but can instead be a positive shift with more opportunities for both sides.

This research focusses on a specific form of fan practice commercialisation, namely that of doujin culture in Japan. Hiroaki Tamagawa refers to doujin “as self- financed, self-published works created by an individual or collaboration between individuals.”²¹ Doujin culture refers to Japanese fans that produce derivative works based on media texts like anime, manga, and video games. These self-made works are considered doujinshi and can be distributed and sold at doujin conventions, events focussed on the facilitation of doujinshi where fans can sell their work to other people for profit. People who produce doujinshi make up their own producer names like Amateras Records or EastNewSound. Doujin producers can produce individually or in a group. When looking at the list of participating names on doujin conventions, it is unclear from the name of the producer if it is one person or a group so when referring to doujin producers this research spoke of units instead of people or participants. The content such units produce can be CDs with remixes of *Touhou* soundtrack, (R18+) manga with *Touhou* characters, or fan games As this research illustrated, such doujinshi get commercialised on conventions through what Deuze earlier referred to as corporate intervening into participatory cultures, creating a shift from fan practices to a more commercial culture.²²

Tamagawa further elaborates on doujin culture by making a distinction between original and parody doujinshi. Original doujinshi are not based upon a pre-existing text and parody takes elements from existing texts and reforms these elements to their own desires. Parody does not refer to the sense of making fun of original work, but rather working from it

¹⁹ Deuze, “Corporate appropriation of participatory culture,” 9.

²⁰ Deuze, “Corporate appropriation of participatory culture,” 9.

²¹ Tamagawa “Comiket market as space for self-expression in otaku culture,” 108.

²² Deuze, “Corporate appropriation of participatory culture,” 9.

to produce something outside the original's canon. To sum it up original doujinshi is everything made by Team Shanghai Alice and all the doujinshi on Reitaisai are parody as they are produced by fans of *Touhou*. These distinctions are relevant to discuss as this research focussed mostly on the commercialisation of parody doujinshi on Reitaisai.

The concept of the infrastructure by Tamagawa has already been discussed in the introduction but will be elaborated on to clarify how doujin culture and commercialisation tie in with this concept. The infrastructure is the starting point of fan practice, providing a form of distribution channel for doujinshi from which fans can appropriate media in new ways. On this infrastructure, doujin units can perform their practices free from commercial intervention. The infrastructure of doujin conventions is a space for fan activity where doujin units are given the possibility to display and distribute their works behind booths, communicate with other fans, and hold competitions. The infrastructure encourages the existence of niche fandoms like the *Touhou* community, expanding the possibilities for participation. Tamagawa states that such participating doujin units consisted of "...manga review circles, fan clubs of professional manga artists, and university manga societies."²³ These diverse groups are all brought together on the infrastructure, forming what is called doujin culture. However, this research illustrated that the infrastructure is shifting from a commercial-free space into a space where doujin fan practices are getting more commercialised. Above mentioned types of participants are no longer the only ones on Reitaisai, but also of companies that commercialise doujinshi distribution and promote their goods, changing the nature of the doujin infrastructure. This is what Tamagawa argues is the blurring of fan practice and commercial culture.²⁴ According to Tamagawa, doujin units are discovering commercial ways to distribute their works and thereby interrelate commercial and fan practice "as commercial publishers have come to actively seek out doujin artists..." and take elements from doujin culture.²⁵ The infrastructure of fan practices has turned into a space where doujin culture is shifting towards a more commercialised culture. Despite that this research may be older, the results are still relevant to the aim of this research as it analyses how doujin conventions like Comiket have developed over the years. The importance of the infrastructure for fandom cannot be denied as it forms a network for many fans. As this research illustrated, the commercialisation of fan practices facilitated by the infrastructure could change the way in which fandom can be perceived, how fan practices need to be taken more seriously as they get

²³ Tamagawa, "Comiket market as space for self-expression in otaku culture," 114.

²⁴ Tamagawa, "Comiket market as space for self-expression in otaku culture," 126-127.

²⁵ Tamagawa, "Comiket market as space for self-expression in otaku culture," 126.

to become part of something bigger.

Methodology

The infrastructure is an important concept to this research as it helped structuring the analysis by looking at how Reitaisai started as a specialized medium for doujin units but has become more commercialised through commercial distribution and collaboration. The infrastructure formed an important concept in mapping out various developments within the commercialisation of fan practices like the integration of commercial booths, and product promotion. This research performed qualitative historical internet analysis of the Reitaisai website on the commercialisation of fan practice using the case of *Touhou* to illustrate how fan practices are getting more commercialised on the infrastructure. Conventions could potentially contribute to the growth in power of fan practice through its commercialisation, but that subject would be better off as further research. Previous research in fan studies has focussed mostly on ethnographical research. For example Nicolle Lamerichs in *Local anime fandom in Japan, USA and Europe*.³⁹ Francesca Coppa's research on fan activities from the late 1950s until the 1990s in America, but it is also important to look fan activities from other countries to examine what different fan practices may be discovered like doujin culture.⁴⁰

This research chose to examine fandom from a historical perspective through the concept of the infrastructure by Tamagawa, looking to map out fandom commercialisation on conventions in Japan from the early 2000s until 2019. As stated before, this research attempts to build upon Tamagawa's historical approach on the development of the Comiket convention. In his historical research, Tamagawa examines how the conventions function as a place for fan activity by looking at the infrastructure of Comiket from the 1970s until 2012, and how it has developed over the years. Tamagawa looks at what the infrastructure offers in terms of providing a doujin distribution network by mapping out how Comiket was created and what its infrastructure could provide fans compared to other conventions, namely facilitating parody doujin units and give them the possibility to distribute. Tamagawa's research establishes the intertwining of commercial and doujin culture of distributing as the number of Comiket attendees increases and the organization has to seek new ways of

³⁹ Nicolle Lamerichs, "The cultural dynamic of doujinshi and cosplay: Local anime fandom in Japan, USA and Europe," *Participations* 10, no. 1 (2013): 154-176.

⁴⁰ Francesca Coppa, "A brief history of media fandom," in *Fan fiction and fan communities in the age of the Internet*, eds. Karen Hellekson and Kristina Busse (North Carolina: McFarland 2006,) 41-59.

providing ways to facilitate such fan distribution. However, Tamagawa's research does not include new developments like the integration of distribution and gaming companies on the convention as mentioned in the introduction. This research made use of the concept of the infrastructure by Tamagawa in its analysis to examine the number of participating parody doujin units on Reitaisai, what the activities of the doujin units entail, and how companies started to become part of the infrastructure through distribution and promotion as well. This helped illustrating how the infrastructure as a place for doujin activity is shifting more towards a commercial culture, or what Tamagawa refers to as the intertwining of commercial culture and doujin productions.⁴² This helped to note how doujin culture is shifting from fan practices to more commercialised forms of fan activities on the infrastructure, as doujin units kept growing and with that growth companies became more interested in doujin culture. It is therefore important to re-examine the concept of the infrastructure and how the infrastructure of doujin conventions allow for new developments within fandom commercialisation.

This research chose to analyse doujin culture in Japan, as it is the starting point of the fan practice. It helped to illustrate how the fandom *Touhou* started off in Japan, but through commercialisation has become a global phenomenon. Information regarding doujin units, corporations, and activities of Reitaisai were retrieved from the official convention website to perform historical analysis. As *Touhou* does not have its own archive or website, this research relied on the official convention website to acquire trustworthy information. However, the archive of the Reitaisai website only goes back to October 2017 since the website has been renewed multiple times and changed URLs. Utilizing the tool of the internet archive tool Waybackmachine snapshots of the official website could be retrieved from 2004-2006 and 2011-present. Other internet archive tools like Archive.fo could only go back to 2013 when entering the URL of the official website, which would limit the range of the research. Furthermore, the first sub-question focusses on the time range from the early 2000s, meaning that the snapshots from Waybackmachine would be more relevant than those of Archive.fo. In total, this research used three snapshots from 2004, two from 2006, and one from 2011, 2013, and 2014 from Waybackmachine to discuss elements of earlier versions of the convention. It must be noted the information recorded by the internet archive is limited by the number of snapshots taken, meaning that in-between snapshots a change may have occurred. The Waybackmachine does not archive pictures of the site, but rather snapshots from a given time on the website, which limits the way in which the analysis can be structured. Furthermore,

⁴² Tamagawa, "Comiket market as space for self-expression in otaku culture," 127.

between 2007 and 2010 the archive is unable to retrieve snapshots due to a change in the convention's URL which forms a limitation to this research.

For the second question, this research chose to analyse the game *Touhou Cannonball* as it is the first *Touhou* mobile game where doujin units and fans could produce for the game and not just distribute. This research analysed how the collaboration of the game formed a collaboration between doujin artists and media companies like Aniplex outside of conventions, but does seem to promote their products on convention grounds to gain product value. Here Reitaisai can be considered a launching site for the game. Furthermore, *Cannonball* ties in with chapter 1 as the game had its own booth at Reitaisai which can be seen from the official Reitaisai website which illustrated well how commercial culture and the infrastructure tie in with each other. Therefore, this research did not analyse the production of the game or its content but rather how Aniplex infiltrates the convention grounds to promote the game and connect to doujin fans, and what this means for the commercialisation of fan practice. The focus laid on how *Cannonball* connects to Reitaisai as its infrastructure allowed Aniplex to attend the convention, the place where all *Touhou* fan activity comes together. Therefore, *Cannonball* is relevant to examine as the case study illustrated that companies recognize the infrastructure as a space to build audiences and connect to the doujin culture that originally created *Touhou*, indicating that fan practice and commercial companies do not have to be estranged. *Cannonball* is an example of how the infrastructure can represent a product as a form of fan practice as fans could interact with the game on the Reitaisai convention and actual doujin units worked on the game. However, it also represents a commercial product as it is made by a gaming company that wants to use it for sales and uses the infrastructure to find an audience. The information regarding *Cannonball* was gathered from the official website. As there was no direct information to be found about the process of approaching the doujin units by Aniplex, this research focussed more on how the collaboration between doujin and commercial culture is present at Reitaisai. The analysis of *Cannonball* on Reitaisai is essential as it builds on Tamagawa's research by going beyond distribution and how fan practices have commercialised more since Tamagawa's research through collaboration and promotion with companies as well.

Results

Chapter 1 : The consumers that turned into producers

This chapter focussed on the question “What shifts in the infrastructure of Reitaisai in the early 2000s can be observed through its activities and participation numbers?” This was achieved by looking at Tamagawa’s historical approach to conventions through the concepts of the infrastructure and parody. It became evident that Reitaisai started as a fan focussed event for distribution but through the increasing number of parody units on the convention, companies became interested in doujin culture as well. These companies provided commercial distribution points and entered the convention ground. As the fan practice of doujinshi distribution gets more commercialised, a shift can be noted from fan practices to a more commercial culture can be noted.

1.1 The infrastructure of fan practices

Doujinshi are self-published works by individuals or groups of people that share common interests in a particular media. It is a term that originates from Japan and therefore refers in most contexts to Japanese fans, despite the rapid increase in foreign doujin units and their popularity according to conventions like Comiket in 2009.⁴³ Conventions are ways for doujin units to distribute their doujinshi to a vaster audience by selling them to their fans. Tamagawa uses the term infrastructure to refer to sites like conventions where fans of media texts can perform fan practices like in doujin culture. Sites like conventions are the roots of where all fan practice start and from where fan practice reaches out to other ways to exchange works like the internet. An example of such convention for the *Touhou* doujin community is Reitaisai, an event wholly dedicated to *Touhou* where doujin units can exchange and distribute work amongst themselves and other fans. Tamagawa takes on a historical approach to his research on Comiket starting in the late 1970’s Japan until 2012 to analyse how the convention and its practices have developed throughout the years through documents and interviews. Tamagawa states that research surrounding self-publication in Japan has focussed mostly on commercial publishing which according to her neglects the non-commercial.

⁴³ Ko-Ichi Ichikawa, “The Comik Market today and overseas participants,” presented December 30, 2009, <https://www2.comiket.co.jp/info-a/C77/C77CMKSymposiumPresentationEnglish.pdf>

Tamagawa starts by explaining that Comiket started as a market for doujin artists and therefore differs from “convention style” markets that enjoy broader activities like lectures, concerts, and corporate vendors besides selling fan works, terming it a “doujin style” market where the focus is on the facilitation of doujinshi.⁴⁴ Reitaisai started as a doujin style market with fan-related activities. The growth of parody doujin units became interesting for (distributing) companies and the convention became more commercialised. Therefore, fan practice starts to become more commercialised on the infrastructure of Reitaisai.

1.2 The start of parody doujinshi

Tamagawa first explains how a non-commercial convention like Comiket has grown out of a commercial convention like Nihon Manga Taikai, because of the existing hierarchies between the commercial culture and fan practice on the Taikai convention where professional artists and commercial companies got invited. Comiket Market was therefore created, an event entirely dedicated to doujin which encouraged fans to produce non-commercially. Here Tamagawa clarifies the distinction between original and parody doujinshi where the first category is not based upon a pre-existing text and the second category takes elements from existing texts and reforms these elements to their own desires.⁴⁵ In the case of *Touhou* the derivative doujinshi from the games is called “parody” and the texts by Team Shanghai Alice are “original”. This makes *Touhou* and its doujinshi stand out within Tamagawa’s separation of the categories as it is both original and parody compared to other doujinshi that is either original work or parody of a (commercial) media text. The discussion of these categories is of importance as Reitaisai facilitated more and more parody doujin units allowing for more units to distribute their doujinshi. The increasing numbers of parody units also interested distribution companies that commercialized the convention. According to Tamagawa parody doujinshi began to grow around 1980 due to a new rule on Comiket which granted fans the possibility to distribute their work on conventions and become producers. Before 1980 the convention consisted of parody doujin units. Compared to Comiket, Reitaisai already started as a parody convention in 2004 made by fans and for fans which encouraged *Touhou* fans to create their own fan works and gain the possibility to distribute them at a convention. Jenkins describes that “...fandom does not preserve a radical separation between readers and

⁴⁴ Tamagawa, “Comiket market as space for self-expression in otaku culture,” 108

⁴⁵ Tamagawa, “Comiket market as space for self-expression in otaku culture,” 114.

writers.”⁴⁶ Within doujin culture, the distinction between consumers of doujinshi and doujin units is fading as the infrastructure encourages consumers to produce their own works. Doujin units engage and consume the works of other units through interaction on doujin style markets. As Tamagawa describes, the infrastructure of Reitaisai not only provides a space for the *Touhou* fans to interact but also a way for the doujin community to share and distribute work “parody” works. Stork argues in his research on the Glee fandom that fan practices of producing and distributing are a form of expression seen as “...labor as leisure and fun...” something which is done in one’s free time. However, Reitaisai illustrates that fan practice is more than a form of leisure.⁴⁷ The infrastructure grants fans the possibility to distribute and share their work on offline spaces. Profit can be made through sales. As illustrated in this research, the power fan practice through the growing number of parody units through distribution gave doujin culture more recognition which interested companies.

1.3 Reitaisai

By looking at the Reitaisai newsboard from August 10, 2004 till August 15, 2006, the website did not mention a form of commercial entities on the convention grounds. Looking at a snapshot from October 14, 2004, the planned events section the first Reitaisai arranged events like a karaoke party, rock-paper-scissor tournament with prizes, a doujin sales spot, and a joined launch party for doujin groups.⁴⁸ The website also organized a sample magazine competition where approximately 100 sample magazines were exhibited and could be read through. People could also email the organization for project suggestions for the event. This indicates how Reitaisai began as a non-commercial convention focused on fan activities and the facilitating of doujin distribution, a real doujin style market. There are no corporate booths or lectures by professionals which Tamagawa in the first paragraph of this chapter ascribes to more commercial convention style events. Jenkins argues that conventions provide a space and training ground for self-publishing artists to work towards professionalism through the development of skills, and “...perhaps most importantly, self confidence before entering the commercial marketplace.”⁴⁹ Here Jenkins states that through the infrastructure of conventions

⁴⁶ Henry Jenkins, ““Get A Life!”: Fans, Poachers, Nomads,” in *Textual Poachers : Television Fans and Participatory Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 45.

⁴⁷ Stork, “The cultural economics of performance space: Negotiating fan, labor, and marketing practice in Glee’s transmedia geography,” 2.7.

⁴⁸ “企画イベントについて,” Waybackmachine, uploaded on October 14, 2004,

<http://web.archive.org/web/20041014201311/http://www.reitaisai.com:80/reading/index.html>

⁴⁹Jenkins, *Textual Poachers : Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, 46.

doujin units can become more professional through skill-developing which can bring them to more commercial ways of distributing and sharing works. Thus, Reitaisai being an infrastructure for primarily fan activities does contribute to the promotion of professionalism of fan works. On the application form from October 14, 2004, for doujin units it is stated that forms are attached to leaflets distributed to events like Comiket, but also stores like Toranoana and Melonbooks.⁵⁰ This illustrates how Reitaisai not only uses the infrastructure to encourage doujin units to produce and distribute but also makes use of commercial stores like Toranoana and Melonbooks to spread its visibility. Therefore despite being a doujin style market, Reitaisai already starts making use of distribution points to promote *Touhou* doujin culture outside of conventions. It illustrates that in 2004, the infrastructure gives fans the opportunity to distribute under non-commercial conditions, but with more power follows also an interest in the promotion through commercial stores. Here fan practice start to slowly move towards commercialism, despite the event still focusing on fan activities only as illustrated before.

Tamagawa explains that around the 1980s when parody doujinshi began expanding on conventions due to its distribution possibilities for fan work, conventions from the 2000s and onwards started to grow in doujin unit numbers. Another snapshot from October 14, 2004, from the Reitaisai website, mentions that they maintained a maximum of 200 parody doujin units in the beginning year of the convention.⁵¹ When looking at a snapshot from February 12, 2005, the website mentions that due to a considerable number of applications a lottery had to be drawn, indicating that *Touhou* parody units were much present.⁵² This could relate to the promotion of doujin culture through leaflets which got distributed through offline-sites like Comiket and commercial stores, which encouraged fans to become doujin units. Furthermore, by looking at the participation spaces from a snapshot from March 28, 2006, the number of participation spaces for the event is 500, indicating that the number of parody units on Reitaisai has increased by 300 between 2005 and 2006 meaning offline sites do function as a way to flourish fan practice as argued by Tamagawa.⁵³ Having looked at a snapshot from 2004 it can be seen that Reitaisai started as an infrastructure for doujin units to distribute their

⁵⁰ “申し込み方法（郵送の場合）,” Waybackmachine, uploaded on October 14, 2004, <http://web.archive.org/web/20041014020742/http://www.reitaisai.com:80/circle.html>

⁵¹ “募集数,” Waybackmachine, uploaded on October 14, 2004, <http://web.archive.org/web/20041014020742/http://www.reitaisai.com:80/circle.html>

⁵² “申し込みサークル様へのお知らせ,” Waybackmachine, uploaded on February 12, 2005, <http://web.archive.org/web/20050212201213/http://www.reitaisai.com:80/clist.html>

⁵³ “募集概要,” Waybackmachine, uploaded on March 28, 2006, <http://web.archive.org/web/20060328174507/http://www.reitaisai.com/participan.html#circle>

work and hold non-commercial fan activities, where fan practices become something more than leisure. However, a snapshot from that corresponding year illustrates that Reitaisai uses commercial stores like Toranoana and Melonbooks to promote doujin units to attend the convention which indicates that despite the convention being fan-focused commercialism is not necessarily out of the question. Comparing a snapshot from 2005 and 2006, it can be noted that the convention has increased the number of participating parody doujin units by 300 which eventually leads to interest by commercial distribution companies, indicating a shift from fan-focused to a more commercial form of fan culture in the 2000s as they start to coexist.

1.4 Growing markets

Tamagawa explains further in his historical analysis that with the growth of parody doujin units, commercial bookstores started to become a way for doujin units to distribute their work through negotiation. Jenkins argues that the role of the infrastructure is much more than a training ground for doujin artists as “...materials sometimes become a limited source of economic profit as well.”⁵⁴ Touhou doujin units are able to sell their works at conventions like Reitaisai to other fans and make a possible profit. However, Reitaisai was only held once a year until Reitaisai started organizing an autumn edition from 2014 onwards, meaning that *Touhou* doujin units have limited times for distribution on the convention. Therefore other distribution points could seem attractive for doujin units. Looking at a snapshot from the Melonbooks website from July 7, 2006, it can be seen in an announcement that the store started selling the latest *Touhou* doujinshi from Reitaisai, indicating that doujin units could not only sell their works at conventions but also at bookstores.⁵⁵ The Melonbooks website in 2021 holds over 12604 *Touhou* doujin works, illustrating that there is a significant market for doujinshi and that stores are willing to distribute them.⁵⁶ Commercial stores are therefore not part of the convention, but more of an extension of the infrastructure as units could now distribute outside of conventions as well. However, Jenkins states that “semiprofessional

⁵⁴ Jenkins, *Textual Poachers : Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, 49.

⁵⁵ “大人気！東方系作品最新作ぞくぞく登場！ 特集ページはこちらからどうぞ！,” Waybackmachine, uploaded on July 7, 2006, <https://web.archive.org/web/20060707045241/http://www.melonbooks.co.jp:80/>

⁵⁶ “東方 Project,” Melonbooks, accessed January 19, 2020, <https://www.melonbooks.co.jp/tags/index.php?genre=%E6%9D%B1%E6%96%B9Project>

companies are emerging to assist in the production and distribution of fan goods....”⁵⁷

Looking at a snapshot of September 29, 2011, on the website of Reitaisai there is a section for “exhibiting companies” with a list of stores and companies on the convention grounds. On this list are distribution companies like Hobby Japan, Melonbooks and Toranoana.⁵⁸

However, due to missing snapshots on the Waybackmachine between 2007-2010, there is a possibility it may have occurred earlier in this period. These distribution companies or doujin vendors function also as physical stores in Akihabara and online stores, where doujin artists can register for sales of their works. Thus, in 2006 the stores started with doujinshi distribution outside of the convention and around 2011 also started attending the conventions. Tamagawa argues that “commercial and doujin publications have become intertwined,” where the infrastructure provides a space where both commercial and doujin artists exist alongside each other and where both stand on an equal level of power.⁵⁹ It can be noted that fan practice is getting commercialised on Reitaisai but also outside of the conventions where doujinshi can be distributed through physical and online commercial stores.

This chapter explored the way in which Reitaisai shifted from a fan-focused convention to the integration of commercial entities in the early 2000s through distribution. It started in 2004 as an event for the facilitation of parody doujinshi and non-commercial fan activities. The infrastructure functions as a space where doujin units can meet, but also make a profit of their works according to Jenkins. Fan practice became something more than leisure. However, the convention made use of commercial bookstores to distribute promotion leaflets for parody groups, indicating that fan practice and commercial are not mutually exclusive in the case of Reitaisai. Between 2005 and 2006 the increase of participating parody doujin units can be seen on the convention which interested companies. In 2006 the Melonbooks website started selling Touhou parody doujinshi from Reitaisai on their website, and around 2011 Reitaisai itself facilitates commercial distribution stores on their convention. Therefore, Reitaisai has shifted from a non-commercial doujin style market made for and by fans to a more commercialized form of the infrastructure. By expanding on Tamagawa’s idea of the infrastructure by looking at the case of *Touhou* doujin culture on Reitaisai, this research adds to the debate of the commercialisation of fan practice by concluding that the commercialisation of distribution on Reitaisai indicates a shift from fan practices to a more

⁵⁷ Jenkins, *Textual Poachers : Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, 47.

⁵⁸ “出展企業一覧,” Waybackmachine, uploaded on September 29, 2011, https://web.archive.org/web/20110929165359/http://www.reitaisai.com/ex_corp.html

⁵⁹ Tamagawa, “Comiket market as space for self-expression in otaku culture,” 127.

commercial culture. The next following discussed how companies did not only contribute to distribution, but also collaborated with doujin artists like Aniplex, part of Sony Music Entertainment which developed the first *Touhou* mobile game in October 2019, Japan.

Chapter 2 : Fan Productions as part of the process

This chapter focussed on the question “What shifts in the infrastructure can be noted through the commercial promotion of the game *Touhou Cannonball* on Reitaisai?” This was achieved by looking at how the infrastructure is operated by companies to promote their goods but also urges for collaboration between doujin units and companies. It illustrated how the commercialisation of doujin culture not only involves distribution but also developing where fan practice and commercial culture can perform simultaneously. Here, Reitaisai not only functions as an infrastructure for doujinshi distribution but also functions as a site for the promotion of commercial *Touhou* goods where doujin culture and commercial meet.

2.1 Working together

According to Jenkins companies and fans can reinforce each other’s goals while at other times struggle over content creating a convergence culture in which “corporate convergence coexists with grassroots convergence.”⁶⁰ What can be seen throughout Reitaisai’s history is around 2011 booths for exhibiting companies started to appear where bookstores became part of the infrastructure. Here the shift from fan practice to a more commercial form of fan culture can be seen as both coexist rather than stand in opposition. Commercial bookstores do not exceed the number of units or fans at the convention. A snapshot from July 10, 2013, shows that the number of participation spaces is 5,000 compared to the 4,000 spaces in 2011 indicating that despite the integrating of commercial stores the number of parody groups is still flourishing.⁶¹ However, Jenkins and Deuze discuss that some scholars argue that the ‘harnessing’ of fan power constructs “...a more diverse and responsive media culture...” with room for creativity, whereas other scholars consider it a form of exploitation of fan

⁶⁰ Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, 18.

⁶¹ “募集要項,” Waybackmachine, uploaded on July 10, 2013, <https://web.archive.org/web/20130710193802/http://reitaisai.com/yoko/>

works.⁶² This room for a more diverse media culture can be pictured with the launch of distribution service Play,Doujin! on 1 September 2014 on the official @PlayStation_jp Twitter where multiple *Touhou* official and parody games got released for the Playstation. *Touhou* sees at the beginning of the 2010s strong commercialisation of its fan practice through global distribution on consumer consoles. Further commercialisation is also present at Reitaisai. Besides fan activities like illustration contests, a snapshot from May 2, 2014, shows that corporate booths are also present at the convention. These corporate booths refer to large Japanese gaming companies that develop and distribute games globally. At booths like Bandai Namco and Konami fans can play rhythm games like SOUND VOLTEX II -infinite infection- and Taiko no Tatsujin with *Touhou* songs. This indicates that the gaming industry is not only interested in the global distribution of doujinshi, but also wants to enter the infrastructure through the promotion of their games.⁶³ This is one of Deuze's earlier mentioned corporate strategies where companies intervene in the participatory culture through for example gaming booths at conventions. Jenkins and Deuze argue that companies are dependent on loyal customers which can be done through not only intervening in participatory culture but also as Deuze mentions by making fans part of the commercial process. Such is the case for the collaboration of *Cannonball* which indicates how the commercialisation of doujin culture creates a shift from fan practices to a more commercial culture on conventions.

2.2. Touhou Cannonball

As mentioned before an example of this is the collaboration between doujin culture and Aniplex in 2019, where parody doujin units got to work on the soundtrack and artwork for the game *Cannonball*, a party-like board game for the smartphone. In the official folder for *Cannonball*, all parody doujin artists that worked on the game are illustrated. Doujin unit IOSYS is mentioned as soundtrack director, indicating that doujin culture is no longer a mere fan practice but becomes part of the commercial process, indicating its commercialisation.⁶⁴ This can be further argued as Jenkins states that

⁶² Henry Jenkins and Mark Deuze, "Editorial convergence culture," *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies* 14, no.1 (2008) : 6.

⁶³ "博麗神社例大祭 企画," Waybackmachine, uploaded on May 2, 2014, <https://web.archive.org/web/20140502004307/http://reitaisai.com/kikaku/>

⁶⁴ "東方キャノンボール Project 発表記念本 内容公開!," Touhou Cannonball, accessed December 14, 2020, <https://touhoucannonball.com/special/book/>

the commercial entertainment industry set standards of technical perfection and professional accomplishment few grassroots performers could match

indicating that doujin units can match up to commercial producers.⁶⁵ By making doujin culture part of the production process through integrating parody doujin units not only the importance of the capability of doujin units is being reinforced but also the representation of *Touhou* and its community, further commercialising doujin culture through collaboration. Deuze states that the consumer turned producer has become part of the content creation by commercial companies in a swift way and that through making the fan practices part of the commercial process the consumer turned producers can be controlled.⁶⁶ As mentioned before, *Touhou* parody doujinshi cannot be controlled by producers since it is not derivative of a commercial text, but *Cannonball* illustrates how the blurring of fan practice and commercial culture goes beyond distribution in-and outside of conventions as units can also produce commercially. This also goes against Stork who argues that fans become part of corporate control and exploitation. Nelle Noppe argues that “..existing hybrid economies for fan work can show companies how allowing fan work to be sold can make consumers open their wallets.”⁶⁷ The collaboration with units can encourage fans to interact with the product. Lawrence Lessig states that “for here too money can’t buy you love, even if love could produce lots of money,” explaining that media companies like Aniplex would have to remain fans and doujin units content similar to what Jenkins earlier argued about the enhancement of the value of intellectual property which cannot be completely taken in by corporations.⁶⁸

2.3 Back to the infrastructure

The collaboration goes back to Reitaisai, as on the official *Cannonball* website it was announced that the game would be playable on Reitaisai 16, 2019 Japan where fans could visit panels of the developers, voice actors, and could get free booklets and stickers. Aniplex and *Touhou* fans could interact with each other, indicating how fan practice and commercial

⁶⁵ Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, 135.

⁶⁶ Deuze, “Corporate appropriation of participatory culture,” 9.

⁶⁷ Nelle Noppe, “Why We Should Talk about Commodifying Fan Work,” *Textual Echoes: Symposium* no.8 (2011), <https://dx.doi.org/10.3983/twc.2011.0369>.

⁶⁸ Lawrence Lessig, “Hybrid economies,” in *Remix: Making art and commerce thrive in the hybrid economy*, (London: The Penguin Press, 2008) ,178.

culture work together.⁶⁹ By promoting the commercial goods at conventions, Aniplex builds trust from doujin fans and builds value around their product. This is achieved by direct contact with doujin culture through the infrastructure. The distribution of the official folder happened even earlier on Autumn Reitaisai 2018 before the game was released This indicates how the infrastructure is relevant to commercialisation as Reitaisai can be considered the launch site for the game through promotion.⁷⁰ This meeting of fan practice and commercial would have been harder outside of the convention elaborating on the importance of the infrastructure as a place for fan practice and commercial culture to flourish. This is similar to what Jenkins argued earlier in the debate on collaboration by stating that

the fan’s labor in enhancing the value of an intellectual property can never be publicly recognized if the studio is going to maintain that the studio alone is the source of all value in that property.⁷¹

This indicates that the value of *Cannonball* is not only built through Aniplex, but the meeting of Aniplex with doujin culture which indicates the commercialisation of fan practice. Furthermore, the Reitaisai website mentions that new information will be released of the game, illustrating how fans are encouraged to go back to the infrastructure to get the latest access and information on the game.⁷² The development of the collaboration between fan practice and commercial seems to go back to the infrastructure like Reitaisai to enhance its product value through interaction with doujin culture, and in fact, makes fans willing to play the game as argued by Noppe. This again reinforces the argument that the infrastructure contributes to the distribution of *Touhou* doujinshi, both non-commercial and commercial. However, Noppe argues as well that collaboration could possibly open its doors to “...an industry that is intent only on profit and has frequently shown itself hostile...” towards creators of fan works.⁷³ Aniplex takes on a form of transparency by integrating doujin culture in the production and promotion process and gaining a trustworthy audience through value building on the infrastructure like Reitaisai. Doujin units can see how commercial companies

⁶⁹ “5/5(日)秋葉原 UDX の 1F 屋外イベントスペース「サボニウス広場」にてイベント開催!” Touhou Cannonball, accessed December 13, 2020, <https://touhoucannonball.com/news/?id=50583>

⁷⁰ “東方キャノンボール Project 発表記念本 が「博麗神社～秋祭り 2018」にて再頒布決定!” Touhou Cannonball, accessed February 14, 2020, <https://touhoucannonball.com/news/?id=48817>

⁷¹ Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, 138.

⁷² WayBackMachine, “東方ゲームショウ 2019!”

⁷³ Noppe, “Why We Should Talk about Commodifying Fan Work,” <https://dx.doi.org/10.3983/twc.2011.0369>

like Aniplex offer professional and new opportunities for doujin units instead of what Jenkins argues is the indifference and distrustfulness of companies of fan input and demands.

This chapter analysed the way in *Cannonball* illustrates the commercialisation of fan practice on Reitaisai through collaboration with units and the promotion of the game on Reitaisai which builds product value. Here Reitaisai functions not only as a place for distribution, but also as a place for commercial and fan practice to meet. As can be seen, *Touhou* games get globally distributed around the 2010s, but media companies also enter the infrastructure to promote their games to fans. More recently in 2019, *Cannonball* illustrates how a collaboration between fan practice and commercial which does not only involve distribution but also can involve development and promotion. Just as other gaming companies promoted their games on Reitaisai in 2014, *Cannonball* does as well by letting commercial and doujin culture interact with each other which indicates the commercialisation of fan practice. It illustrates how both acknowledge each other in a co-existing relationship. This research adds to the debate on commercialisation of fan practice by going beyond the distribution on the infrastructure by analysing how outside the conventions fan practices further collaborate with commercial companies through the collaboration of *Cannonball*, and how such companies return to the infrastructure to promote their goods.

Conclusion

This research analysed the commercialisation of fan practice on doujin conventions in Japan from the early 2000s until 2019. By examining the *Touhou* doujin culture on Reitaisai a shift from fan practices to a more commercial culture can be seen at the doujin convention. Based on historical research of the activities and audience attendance of Reitaisai and *Cannonball* this research concluded that not only through commercialised distribution, but also collaboration and promotion a shift can be noted on Reitaisai from fan practices to a more commercial culture. Doujin conventions function as spaces where fans can interact and perform under non-commercial conditions, being a site where fan practices are created. Doujin conventions are an essential distribution channel for fan works, and this research illustrated how such space can become commercialised where fan practice can become part of something bigger. Most importantly, it can be perceived how a niche game has become part of a broad distribution and development process through the commercialisation of its fan practices. Fan practice is no longer something to be considered for leisure only but as part of

convergence culture where it can become part of larger commercial processes. Through using the concept of the infrastructure, commercialisation, doujin culture, and original and parody it can be seen how both fan practice and its commercialisation start at offline sites and from there flourish into coexistence. The limitations that this research struggled with is that there was no previous academic research done on a specific doujin fandom like *Touhou* and the commercialisation of its markets. This made it difficult to compare and built on research of doujin culture. However, this can also be considered positive as this research did contribute to this part of fan studies by providing insights on the shifting power dynamics of fans and commercial in Japan.

Looking at the current media landscape, it can be questioned if fan practices are rewarded properly when it comes to its collaboration with commercial media companies and if the commercialisation of fan practice challenges power balances between doujin culture and companies. Who gains which reward in the end? Do fans get exploited for their work? This is a concern expressed by Jenkins who argues that companies hold power over fan works.⁷⁴ Noppe argues similarly that that industries are only out for profit and neglect fan work.⁷⁵ Storks also argues that fans are used for promotion to become part of the commercial entity.⁷⁶ However, John Banks and Mark Deuze state that such critical scholars think that fans are unaware of their works as a practice from which economic profit can be achieved by companies.⁷⁷ This is a dimension of convergence culture this research was not able to analyze due to the time and word limit. For further research on the topic of the commercialisation of doujin culture, it may be interesting to look once more at these scholars to analyse the aspect of fan labor and exploitation. Here the focus can lay on how different rewards besides money can generate fulfillment and what these entail looking at doujin culture. One thing is certain, and that is the important role doujin culture fulfills within a participatory culture by showing what fans are capable of.

⁷⁴ Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, 3.

⁷⁵ Noppe, "Why We Should Talk about Commodifying Fan Work,"

<https://dx.doi.org/10.3983/twc.2011.0369>

⁷⁶ Stork, "The cultural economics of performance space: Negotiating fan, labor, and marketing practice in Glee's transmedia geography," 4.10.

⁷⁷ John Banks and Mark Deuze, "Co-creative labour," *International journal of cultural studies* 12, no. 5 (2009): 426.

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