

ALL THE EVIL OF GOOD:  
PORTRAYALS OF POLICE AND CRIME IN JAPANESE ANIME AND MANGA

By  
Katelyn Mitchell

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Department of Asian Studies  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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Approved:

INGER BRODEY  
(Student's Advisor)

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“Probity, sincerity, candor, conviction, the idea of duty, are things that, when in error, can turn hideous, but – even though hideous, remain great; their majesty, peculiar to the human conscience, persists in horror... Nothing could be more poignant and terrible than [Javert’s] face, which revealed what might be called all the evil of good”

-Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables* Volume I, Book VIII, Chapter III: “Javert Satisfied”

Abstract

This thesis examines and categorizes the distinct, primarily negative, portrayals of law enforcement in Japanese literature and media, beginning with its roots in *kabuki* drama, courtroom narratives and *samurai* codes and tracing it through modern *anime* and *manga*. Portrayals of police characters are divided into three distinct categories: incompetents used as a source of comedy; bland and consistently unsuccessful nemeses to charismatic criminals, used to encourage the audience to support and favor these criminals; or cold antagonists fanatically devoted to their personal definition of ‘justice’, who cause audiences to question the system that created them. This paper also examines Western influences, such as Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes and Victor Hugo’s Inspector Javert, on these modern media portrayals. It also examines the contradictions between these negative, antagonistic characters and existing facts and statistics – Japan’s low crime rate and generally high reports of civilian satisfaction with the police. This research will contribute to the growing field of Japanese cultural studies, examining a number of influential *anime* and *manga* as well as how they both affect and reflect society’s opinions. With civilians’ images of police currently undergoing major changes, this research will help in understanding the role fiction plays in defining the relationship between a country’s people, its laws, and its law enforcement.

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## Introduction: Portraying the Police

### Identifying the Role of the Law Enforcement in Japanese Fiction

On paper, Japan boasts one of the world's lowest crime rates. Civilians enjoy positive interaction with local police on a daily basis, visiting bright pink *kōban* or police boxes for directions, lost pet searches, and even restaurant recommendations. Meanwhile, Japan's detectives continually maintain a case clearance rate that ranks among the world's highest, and its courts maintain a conviction rate that *is* the world's highest – 99%. On paper, the Japanese police system is competent, effective, and maintains a positive relationship with the civilians it is tasked to protect. In Japanese literature, film, *anime* and *manga*, however, the police are significantly different. They are corrupt villains, bumbling incompetents, heartless justice-seekers, and hapless failures outwitted by the criminals they oppose. This image clearly has little-to-no basis in actual fact. Whence, then, did the overwhelmingly negative portrayal of the police in fictional media arise? The answer lies in Japan's legal and criminal history, in its traditional *kabuki* theater, and in cultural borrowing. Trends begun in *kabuki* and under the influence of Western authors, such as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Victor Hugo, have combined with select elements of the actual workings of the law enforcement and justice system to create the unique types of policeman seen in modern Japanese *anime* and *manga*.

Analysis of various *anime* and *manga* in which members of the law enforcement appear, beginning in 1967 and continuing to the present, reveals four distinct types of fictional police. The first, codified by the 1990 splatter-action animated film *Mad Bull 34*, are blatantly corrupt villains, no better than the criminals they oppose, willing to overlook the

vilest of illegal and immoral acts for the right price. They are also trigger-happy, carrying multiple guns and unloading bullet after bullet into their victim of the episode. This portrayal has appeared the least frequently and has not continued into the present.

The second type, and first of the three which will be covered, is the bumbling incompetent, as seen in the long-running *manga* and *anime* *Lupin III* and *Detective Conan*, as well as in *Sherlock Hound*, an animated adaptation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's stories. These characters are not particularly intelligent, and are characterized by the long time it takes them to catch their target, the number of incorrect accusations and false leads involved in the process, and the massive amount of collateral damage along the way. They are constantly tricked by even the most common criminal and fooled by even the simplest disguise. The bumbling cop is the oldest and most widely prevalent policeman seen in Japanese literature and media; its lasting appeal and frequent appearances can be attributed to its comedic potential and ability to add humor to otherwise tense stories and situations. It originated from character types present in the *kabuki* theater of the Tokugawa period. Examples include the guard Togashi Saemon in *Kanjinchō*, who is tricked into believing that a blank scroll is a list of donors to a temple, and that the disguised warrior bearing the "list" is a simple traveling priest, as well as various retainers of the shogun in *Yoshitsune Senbon Zakura*, who are prevented from capturing an exiled lord and his mistress via the clever tricks of a fox. Policemen sharing traits with these bumbling *kabuki* antagonists can be spotted in the *anime* *Lupin III* in 1971, less than a decade after the premiere of the very first *anime* (1963's *Tetsuwan Atomu*, better known as *Astro Boy*). Works featuring this character type are largely comedic, and are sources Incompetent policemen continued to make regular appearances throughout the 1970s, 1980s

and 1990s before being replaced by darker, less comedic character types towards the end of the latter decade.

Secondly, and also drawing inspiration from the traditions of *kabuki*, are the policemen who display some level of competence – until they are matched up with a certain criminal, usually a master thief or a serial killer. They become this criminal’s nemesis, chasing him or her down through crime after crime and scheme after scheme, always one step behind. This police officer is usually quite intelligent – but only for the purpose of providing a worthy opponent for their genius criminal adversary, yet the criminal is always just a little bit cleverer and faster on his or her feet. A unique feature of these stories is that the criminals, who are often dashing, fashionable and popular, are presented as protagonists, receiving support and positive reaction from readers and viewers, while the detective or inspector who seeks to put an end to their lives of crime will fill the antagonist’s role. One ‘parent’ of these criminals is the dashing *rōnin* (master-less samurai) hero of the Tokugawa-era plays, such as Yuranosuke, leader of the 47 *ronin* who fight to avenge their dishonored master in the *kabuki* classic *Kanadehon Chūshingura*. This roguish hero template is combined with the suavity of Western criminals, such as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s Professor Moriarty and Maurice Leblanc’s Arsène Lupin. Both Conan Doyle’s stories and Leblanc’s, especially those in which Lupin faces off against “Herlock Sholmes,” were translated into Japanese in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and remain popular to this day (Japan Sherlock Holmes Club site). This bland and consistently unsuccessful nemesis character, which was most popular during the mid-1990s and early 2000s, is neither truly Japanese nor truly Western, but a fusion of the two cultures.

The last type of policeman that can be seen in *anime* and *manga* does not originate in *kabuki* or classic Japanese literature, but is instead more directly a re-interpretation of the creations of European novelists. This character is a heartless justice-seeker, who will do anything to uphold his (or, rarely, her) own personal sense of justice. He does not care whether the criminals he chases are truly innocent or guilty; he cares only about bringing his quarry to justice. This cold-hearted officer of the law only began appearing in *anime* and *manga* as recently as the mid-1990s. He originates from a singular figure: Inspector Javert, the antagonist of Victor Hugo's 1862 French classic *Les Misérables*. *Les Misérables* was first introduced to Japan in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and achieved great popularity and influence, receiving multiple adaptations on a regular basis. Javert has made many appearances in film and television and onstage, and has served as a template for many characters in *manga* and *anime*. This character type, which continues to be prevalent in Japanese media today, is used for philosophical, and not comedic or emotional, purposes. His narrow views and extreme actions cause readers and viewers to question the nature of the justice system in which he operates.

Of the sources that contributed to the modern portrayal of police in *anime* and *manga*, *kabuki* theater is the most influential. The Tokugawa period's most widespread popular entertainment, *kabuki* was in itself illegal, its actors officially outcasts according to the strictly defined Tokugawa social pyramid. This outsider status was the result of their work's being seen as having no value; in a society which placed heavy weight on the production of material goods and deference to social superiors, the *kabuki* players' impermanent, irreverent products were considered criminal. Despite this, *kabuki* remained a popular form of entertainment throughout the Tokugawa period. Troupes flourished in the *ukiyo* ("floating

world”), or pleasure quarters, of every major city. The *bafuku*, the Shogun’s enforcers and the Tokugawa equivalent of police, attempted to shut down the troupes via force and to limit the actors’ extravagant lifestyle via a series of sumptuary laws. The Shogun’s government restricted everything from what types of cloth the actors were allowed to wear, to what gifts they were allowed to receive, to what sort of characters they were allowed to portray on stage.

Actors were forbidden from creating any representations of the Emperor, the Shōgun, or a number of high-level aristocrats. As a result, the *bafuku* and other low-level government officials became popular targets. Actors portrayed them as incompetent fools, constantly being tricked by dashing heroes, and ending up dead or disgraced. Any trick, trap or disguise created by the hero was enough to fool the hapless authorities. The onstage *bafuku* were not only bumbling failures who could never hope to outwit the dashing hero, but were also self-indulgent and enjoyed various vices more than Tokugawa society’s Confucian morality allowed. Authority figures were often shown gluttonously eating; imbibing wine or *sake* (and always becoming drunk and clumsy afterwards); or visiting the pleasure quarters, either to purchase a young woman or man to serve as a companion or – worst of all – to enjoy a *kabuki* play. The bumbling authorities seen in modern Japanese *anime* and *manga* have their roots in these comical, irreverent, gluttonous, foolish *kabuki* characters.

The genius criminal masterminds who oppose these foolish policemen also have their origins in the characters of *kabuki*. To communicate their disapproval of the Shōgun, the aristocracy and the *bafuku*, *kabuki* troupes for the most part avoided writing plays in which any of these characters played the hero’s role. Instead, the heroes of *kabuki* were either *rōnin*, usually seeking revenge for the death of their master or another family member or clever,



witty commoners who dared to rise above their government-mandated social status, coming into conflict with the authorities as the result. Examples of these heroes include the story of the 47 *rōnin*, adapted as *Chūshingura*, the most widely performed *kabuki* play of all time. Though the actual historical event on which the story was based occurred in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, to avoid censorship, *Chūshingura* not only renamed all historical figures appearing in the story, but also relocated the action to the early Muromachi period (the mid-1300s). It is the story of the lord Enya Hangan, who attacks a senior lord, Moronō, after the latter insults his family. He is forced to commit *seppuku* for raising a sword against his superior. His former retainers, all made *rōnin* by their lord's death, swear an oath of eternal loyalty. Led by former chief retainer Ōboshi Yuranosuke, the forty-seven *rōnin* concoct a clever plan to infiltrate Moronō's house and kill him. They deliver Moronō's head to their lord's grave before committing mass *seppuku*, joining Hangan in death. Yuranosuke and his comrades were seen by audiences as the embodiment of loyalty, courage, and other positive characteristics, while the highly ranked official Morono was seen as a scheming, cowardly villain.

Because the most distinguished actors of each troupe were also the primary playwrights, they wrote the starring roles which they were to portray to be as skillful and accomplished as possible. As a result, these lead characters were dashing rogues, fashionable, stylish, witty, sharp-tongued, and, of course, never short on lovers both male and female. The primary example of this is the play *Sukeroku*, created to display the skills of the Danjūro acting family. The titular character is a revenge-seeking samurai who disguises himself as a dandy and frequents the pleasure quarters, humiliating the various noblemen and authorities whom he encounters and winning the hearts of courtesans, one of whom, the beautiful and

popular Agemaki, becomes his exclusive mistress. Their law-enforcing opponents were no match for such heroes in either contests of the sword or battles of wits. However humble their upbringing, these protagonists were master strategists capable of coming up with clever ruses at the drop of a hat. Tokugawa audiences adored these roguish heroes and scorned the bumbling *bafuku* they defeated.

It was not only the fictional criminals who received the fans' adoration. The actors themselves were in many ways as much 'dashing criminals' as the characters they portrayed on stage. They lived their lives in flagrant disobedience of the sumptuary laws imposed upon them by the Shogun's government, plying their illegal trade day by day to sold-out audience houses. *Kabuki* actors, like their heroes, were flamboyant, fashionable, clever and witty, and enjoyed massive popularity among males and females alike. Many of their most ardent admirers were the very aristocrats who were mocked onstage, who would sneak into the *ukiyo* pleasure quarters (often in disguise) to enjoy the performances – and the pleasures – of their favorite actor or troupe. Another popular art form of the time, woodblock prints known as *ukiyo-e* (meaning "record of the floating world") often featured the dashing visages and fashionable costumes of the most popular actors of the time – souvenirs which, of course, were purchased in bulk by their adoring fans. The deeply entrenched culture of adoring criminals and mocking authority figures which *kabuki* created continues to endure decades and even centuries after the *rōnin* and *bafuku* themselves ceased to exist.

The literature of the West has also contributed greatly to the portrayal of authority figures in modern Japanese media. Western literature was not translated into Japanese or made widely available in Japan until after the Meiji Restoration of 1868, when a Japan seeking modernization began actively consuming everything Western. Despite the fact that

access to Western works did not begin until several centuries after the establishment of *kabuki*, Western characters and themes have also made a strong and lasting influence on Japanese literature and media.

During Japan's rush to modernize and Westernize during the Meiji period, the government naturally turned first to Britain, Japan's first (and, for a time, only) formal military ally. This "Britain-mania" which seized Japan lasted for the entirety of the Meiji and Taisho periods. Although Japan did not formally ally with France and America until World War I, trade relations allowed their literature, culture and tradition to permeate Japan as well. France's Napoleonic Code even served as influence for Japan's first official legal code, the Penal Code of 1880, which established a criminal justice system in Japan for the first time. Though the government made an attempt to expunge Western influences from Japanese culture in the 1930s and 1940s, when a series of arguments set Japan against Britain, France and the United States, it was ultimately unsuccessful, especially in regards to literature and media. The government could ban Western clothing, but it could not prevent authors from publishing books or creating films utilizing European or American stories, characters, and ideas.

European influence in Japan went beyond the popularity of pants over kimono and the use of German-inspired uniforms in the military. The introduction of Western literature provided Japan with a brand new genre of story for its authors to explore: the detective story, which had been unknown in pre-Meiji Japan. In *Purloined Letters*, a history of cultural borrowing in Japanese literature, author Mark Silver posits a theory as to why crime fiction did not exist in Japan before its importation from the West. He points out that the basic structure of the detective novel involves solving a crime via the collection of evidence and

the application of science, usually forensic or medical. “The Japanese justice system,” however, “had, before the reforms of the Meiji period...relied far more heavily on torture and forced confession than on physical evidence or forensic medicine” (Silver 3). The stories of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Maurice Leblanc, Edgar Allan Poe and other crime fiction authors, translated during the 1890s and 1900s, introduced the Japanese reading public to a new, less violent method of crime-solving. And within a few short decades, Japanese crime-novel fans were not just reading these Western imports, but crafting stories inspired by the characters they had come to love.

Early Japanese mystery and crime fiction starred main characters who borrowed appearance, personality quirks, and methods of reasoning from Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes. For example, Hanshichi, star of the first ever Japanese ‘master detective’ novel in 1917, was an Edo-period police detective who chose to forgo the torture and forced confession in favor of introducing Holmes’s signature deductive reasoning to his contemporaries. Edogawa Ranpo (his own pseudonym derived from the name of another Western mystery author, Edgar Allan Poe), created Akechi Kogoro in 1925, who shared even more similarities with Holmes, from his eccentric way of dressing to his information network consisting of young homeless boys. He was followed by Homura Kodo’s Heiji Zenigata, who, like Holmes, was the master of a variety of obscure branches of knowledge, including coin-throwing. Zenigata first appeared in 1931, a clear indication that the government’s attempts to remove British influences from Japan had failed. Though these characters clearly owed a great deal to Sherlock Holmes, they existed in a Japanese setting and operated within the Japanese justice system. These Holmes-descended creations were the first examples of a

unique Western-Japanese fusion which would, several decades later, enter the world of Japanese new media as well.

The Sherlock-like detective figure survived the purge of Western influence during World War II; though mystery authors were “banned from writing freely” during that time, less than a year after the war’s end in 1945, novelist Seishi Yokomizo revived the detective story with the exploits of sleuth Kosuke Kindaichi. Though Kindaichi was always “clad in kimono and *hakama*” he, like Kogoro and Zenigata before him, utilized Holmes-inspired reasoning and evidence-gathering techniques (Hirohiso 55). With the rise of television, film, and eventually *anime*, characters of this type continued to appear, especially in television programming, where detective dramas quickly became one of the most popular genres not just in Japan, but worldwide. Television was a perfect match for the detective story, allowing for a mystery-a-week format similar to the magazine serials in which Holmes himself first appeared. The Japanese fascination with the detective story in general, and Holmes in particular, is still present and evident. Though it is rare for Western programs to be dubbed into Japanese and broadcast in Japan, the Granada Sherlock Holmes series aired in Japan for over a decade to rave reviews. A study taken in the late 1990s indicated that the United Kingdom was among the most popular destinations for Japanese tourists traveling abroad, and that an interest in the Holmes stories or TV program was one of the top three reasons given for wanting to travel there.

A crime story, writes Mark Silver in *Purloined Letters*, consists of “two interlocking stories: the story of the investigation and the story of the crime that comes to light through that investigation” (Silver 2). A detective, even a masterfully created one, is only half of what a story needs to be a good mystery or crime story; it also requires a villain for the officer of

the law to oppose. There would be no Sherlock Holmes without Charles Milverton, Sebastian Moran, Irene Adler, Professor James Moriarty, and the numerous other criminals he has chased down and apprehended over the course of four novels and many short stories. The villains that Japan's *anime* and *manga* police face and chase are equally compelling and fascinating, not only because they are well-rounded, well-written characters, but because they represent a unique fusion of Japanese and Western storytelling which resulted in a memorable and now iconic figure: the dashing, gentleman criminal who outwits his police nemesis at every turn.

This character borrows a great deal from both dashing *kabuki* heroes which have already been discussed earlier in this paper and the *yakuza*, or members of organized crime. In the 1950s, following the scarcity of the war years, a subculture known as *kasutori* emerged. *Kasutori* emphasized material possessions and the glorification of anything that was the opposite of the 'wartime culture' created and promoted by the government. The Japanese people turned from patriotism and devotion to one's country to a glorification of the black market, the criminal underbelly, and salacious entertainment. The romanticizing of the *yakuza*, who were portrayed as elegantly dressed, intelligent, witty, and cultured, began during this period.

Like the *kabuki rōnin* and the *kasutori yakuza*, fictional criminals are educated, intelligent, and almost always impeccably dressed – favoring suits and ties, elegant dresses or fashionable heels even in the midst of a heist. They are popular, often enjoying a large fan club of those who are not aware of their secret life of crime (and, in some cases, even those who are). They are almost never lacking in opportunities for companionship with the opposite sex, and in some cases even manage to attract their nemesis him or herself. Their

primary characteristic, however, is almost always their genius – they are consistently smarter than their nemesis, even if said opponent is also considered a prodigy. Like their *kabuki* predecessors, they are capable of devising schemes at the drop of a hat, and are often masters of disguise as well.

While Ranpo, Kodo and their contemporaries pitted their creations against fairly non-memorable Japanese criminals, authors and directors of *anime* and *manga* took it a step further, applying the template originating in *kabuki* to existing Western characters, creating a criminal with a European origin and Western tastes but a very Japanese attitude towards crime and the authorities. For example, Maurice Leblanc’s famous gentleman thief, Arsene Lupin, gained a Japan-dwelling *yakuza*-connected grandson in the classic anime and manga series *Lupin III*. Sherlock Holmes’s most well-known nemesis, Professor Moriarty, has also been a target for Japanese reinterpretation, despite only appearing in two of the original Holmes stories. In the hands of director Hayao Miyazaki, Moriarty became a gentleman inventor of steam-based technology and the head of a massive criminal network. *Manga-ka* Gosho Aoyama, on the other hand, imagined Moriarty as the lord over a massive, frighteningly realistic digital realm.

The last character type examined in this paper came entirely from the West, and, despite growing popularity and frequently adaptation in Japan, has not deviated much from its original, entirely Western, form. The cold-hearted “Javert archetype” sees law as his entire life, eclipsing relationships and personal happiness in terms of importance. He will do anything to catch the criminals he is tasked with arresting, regardless of whether or not the ‘criminal’ has a sympathetic, valid motive, or is even wrongly accused. The source of this character, Victor Hugo’s Javert, stopped at nothing to capture the criminal Jean Valjean,

chasing him across France for over twenty years. When Javert is forced to confront the truth, that Valjean is a good and noble man who has redeemed himself many times over and has dedicated his life to doing good work, he is unable to overcome this shade of gray introduced into his black-and-white justice-and-crime worldview. Realizing that he cannot bring himself to arrest Valjean, he resigns from the police force in the only way he knows how: by committing suicide. In addition to numerous adaptations of the original story, characters who share Javert's beliefs and follow his story arc have become increasingly present in *anime* and *manga*.

Why did this character, in his original form so closely tied to a country and a time period (post-Revolutionary France), gain such widespread popularity in Japan, miles and decades removed from the story which he originally inhabited? Much of the answer lies in the similarity between Javert's ideals and the warrior's code of *bushido*, around which the samurai, Japan's ancient warrior class, structured their lives. *Bushido* encouraged a devotion to honor and to each samurai's lords (the local *daimyo* or feudal lord, the *shogun*, and most of all the Emperor) similar to Javert's all-consuming devotion to justice. A samurai was encouraged to place his honor and his loyalty above all else, including his own life. When he dishonored himself or his lords, he was forced to commit the bloody, painful ritual suicide known as *seppuku* in order to regain his honor in death. In many ways, Javert's story arc in the original *Les Misérables* is similar to that of a dishonored samurai. When he allows Valjean to escape and therefore breaks his sacred sworn promise – to devote his life to the task of bringing Valjean to justice – he realizes that he can no longer consider himself an honorable justice-upholding officer of the law. Realizing that Valjean is a good, moral man but also that there is no way he can simply let Valjean live freely without breaking his vow,



Javert embraces what he believes to be the only choice remaining to him: he commits his own version of *seppuku*, throwing himself into the River Seine. Japan, a country already familiar with characters (both historical and literary) devoted to honor, could easily accept a character equally devoted to justice, and therefore the Javert-type character also became a fixture in Japanese *anime* and *manga*.

While it is clear that literature and fiction of both Japan and the West played a large role in the development of the modern portrayal of the police, did the actual workings of the Japanese police force contribute anything at all? The answer is yes, but to a significantly lesser degree than the contributions made by *kabuki* and European literature. Specifically, the negative traits and actions associated with the police force have sometimes been assigned to fictional police. In order to maintain their high case clearance rate, Japanese police, especially detectives, tend to focus a lot of effort on individual criminals, especially serial killers and high-level organized crime bosses. Often, the detectives attempt to assign as many unsolved crimes as possible to a single criminal, based on similarities in time, location and modus operandi of the crimes. To the public, this can be seen as a “nemesis” relationship between the detectives and the criminals on which they focus their efforts. It can also make the criminals themselves seem more intelligent and skillful, with a higher number of criminals (some correctly, some incorrectly) assigned to multiple similar crimes. The tendency of fictional police to cause large amounts of collateral damage in the process of arresting criminals is also drawn from an exaggeration of the workings of the real life police force. Gun-control laws in Japan are stricter than in most Western countries; only members of the police force are legally allowed to own and carry guns. As a result, guns are identified with the police more than any with other sector of society. This trend is reflected and

exaggerated in *anime*, where police wield not only guns, but sometimes bombs, high-powered cars, tanks, and even giant robots. These over-the-top weapons leave swaths of destruction in their wake, overturning cars and destroying roads and buildings as the police chase their prey.

The positive characteristics of the Japanese police are for the most part ignored in fictional portrayals of the police. Detectives who constantly chase the same criminal for years on end certainly cannot boast any sort of high case-clearance rate. The proliferation of series with criminal protagonists and crime-an-episode mystery series are not at all compatible with Japan's low crime rate. While the police are often shown accidentally destroying cars and homes and interrogating civilians as they track down their prey, there is no indication of the friendly day-to-day interactions between ordinary police officers, who work close to the civilians in numerous *kōban*, and the population of Japan. The police are generally seen as competent and satisfactory, and yet their negative aspects make their way onto the page or screen.

This paper utilizes a number of secondary sources relating to elements of the topic. A number of studies have been performed, the earliest in 1975 and the most recent in 2002, about the work of the Japanese police system, its effectiveness, and civilian responses to the police. These were extremely useful in understanding which elements of the real life police force made the transition into fictional representations, and which were not. I utilized books and articles on the history of cultural borrowing in Japanese literature, especially Mark Silver's *Purloined Letters*, which focuses on crime fiction specifically, to better understand the influence of the Western literary tradition. A number of these texts specifically reference Sherlock Holmes, his influence on Edogawa Ranpo and other authors of mystery fiction, and

the long-lasting ‘Sherlock-mania,’ which still persists in Japan to this day. Lastly, I utilized several texts in order to better understand the role of *kabuki* in influencing the bumbling portrayal of the authorities and the dashing, glamorous portrayal of criminals. These discussed the antagonistic relationship between the *bafuku* government enforcers and the *kabuki* troupes, as well as some of the specific examples of laws passed with the purpose of regulating actors’ lives and what they could and could not portray on stage. Since most of the existing secondary sources were published in the 1990s or earlier; they fail to extend the trends they analyze into the modern day. This paper focuses specifically on cultural borrowing and *kabuki* influences in modern media: *anime* and *manga*. This paper is unique in that it draws together a number of sources – Western literature, *kabuki*, and the real life police force – and analyzes the manner in which they create three distinct portrayals of the police, as incompetent, as nemesis to the successful criminal, and as seeker of justice.

This paper also analyzes several primary sources in the form of *anime* and *manga*. The *manga* analyzed in detail for the purposes of this paper are Naoki Urasawa’s *Monster*, Gosho Aoyama’s *Detective Conan*, and Tsugumi Ohba and Takeshi Obata’s *Death Note*. The *anime* primary sources are Monkey Punch and Hayao Miyazaki’s *Lupin III*, Hayao Miyazaki’s *Sherlock Hound*, Aoyama’s *Detective Conan* (specifically the film *Phantom of Baker Street*), Nippon Animation’s *Les Misérables: Shōjo Cosette*, Gen Urobuchi’s *Psycho Pass*, and Shinichiro Watanabe’s *Zankyou no Terror/Terror in Resonance*. Secondary sources include studies of the real-life workings of the Japanese police system, analyses of cultural borrowing from the West and its influence on Japanese literature, and texts discussing the relationship between *kabuki* and the Tokugawa government.

This paper will present the three types of police character chronologically based on their first appearance in either *anime* or *manga* and the years during which they appeared frequently in media. The bumbling incompetent arose the earliest, first appearing in *Lupin III* in the late 1960s *manga* and early 1970s *anime*. This portrayal enjoyed massive popularity until the late 1980s, at which point it began to die out in favor of other, more serious portrayals; however, it still appears sporadically. The idea of the detective or inspector as nemesis to a glamorous, charismatic criminal also originated in *Lupin III*, but became most prevalent in the 1980s and early 1990s. This portrayal is not as popular today as it was in earlier decades, but has not died out permanently. While Javert himself appeared in a one-hour animated special in 1979, the Javert-type character did not really make a serious appearance until the publication of the *manga Monster* in 1994. This portrayal gained further popularity in the 2000s and 2010s and is the most prevalent today, appearing in two *anime* within the past two years, *Psycho-Pass* and *Terror in Resonance*.

This paper provides a unique contribution to the growing field of Japanese cultural studies. It examines what factors combine to create the police as seen in books and on television – an image which is both affected by and in turn affects how ordinary civilians see the police. In a time when relations between the police and the people are undergoing changes, this research identifies and identifies historical and cultural trends in order to understand how portrayals and opinions of the police became what they are today – and how they might continue to change and develop in the future.

## Chapter 1: Laughing at the Law

### The Incompetent Policeman in Early *Anime* and *Manga*

Child visitors to the Gosho Aoyama Manga Factory in Tottori Prefecture have the opportunity to complete a series of puzzles throughout the museum which allow them to team up with kid detective Conan Edogawa to solve a case. Fans of the *Detective Conan manga* and *anime* jump at the opportunity to step into the kid detective's Power-Enhancing Super-Kick Shoes. For it is Conan, the teen genius trapped in the body of a child, along with his classmates and sidekicks, the "Junior Detective League," who provide the visitors with hints to the puzzles. Much like Conan himself, puzzle-solving fans receive no assistance from Kogoro Mori, Inspector Megure, Officer Sato, or any of the policemen and women who populate the long-running *Detective Conan* series. A visit to the *Conan* museum further enforces the message that children across Japan and around the world have been taught by the titular detective for twenty years: the authorities are useless and incompetent, and mere children working independently can succeed where the police have failed. A teenager in a child's body and his four child assistants can apprehend murderers, thieves and serial killers entirely on their own. Conan and the Junior Detective League are not the only example of incompetent authorities and competent dependents to which Japanese children and young adults are exposed. Readers of *manga* and viewers of *anime*, many of whom are children themselves, see children, teenagers and even animals solve crimes and catch killers while the supposed 'authorities', the police, trail helplessly behind. The result is a distrust of authority figures, and a positive view of vigilante justice carried out by those who in reality would be horribly unfit for the task.

*Detective Conan* is far from the only example of incompetent authority figures in Japanese new media; in fact, characters of this type have become a constant, enduring presence over several decades of *anime* and *manga*. While the earliest chronological example, Inspector Koichi Zenigata of the long-running *Lupin III* franchise, hails from a series aimed at older viewers, many other series are aimed at children and young adults. A notable example is Hayao Miyazaki and Tokyo Movie Shinsha's 1985 anime *Sherlock Hound*, which transforms the Great Detective, his assistant Dr. Watson, and the entirety of the familiar cast into furry, lovable canines. Other examples include the long-running manga *Kochikame*, which revolves around a group of policemen and women goofing off, participating in get-rich-quick schemes, and in general not doing any police work at all. The manga has been consistently serialized in *Weekly Shounen Jump*, Japan's most popular magazine among young male readers, since 1976. The popularity of stories featuring incompetent policemen continues, and competent policemen in *anime* and *manga* remain few and far between even to this day.

The portrayal of authorities in the new media certainly affects its readers' and viewers' perceptions of the justice system, especially young viewers, who are taught to face villains themselves rather than relying on their parents or the police. The trend visible in *Lupin III*, *Detective Conan* and others existed centuries before the rise of *anime* and *manga*. In order to understand the complex relationship between viewers/readers, the media, and authorities, the history of this trend must be examined, beginning with its origins in the Tokugawa period.

Fans of modern Japanese crime stories would be shocked to discover that the earliest installments in the Japanese canon of crime literature featured law enforcement characters

who were not merely intelligent, but *infallible*. During the seventeenth-century Tokugawa period, one of the most popular literary genres in Japan was known as the ‘courtroom narrative’. The courtroom narrative, originally an import from China, was not a ‘whodunit’ mystery in the traditional sense. A crime was presented to the reader, with its perpetrator already identified. The story revolved around a judge or magistrate correctly naming the guilty party, handing down the correct verdict, and assigning a sentence he deemed just, usually death or lifetime imprisonment. In *Purloined Letters*, a study of the development of crime literature in Japan, author Mark Silver explains that stories of this type flourished in the Tokugawa period’s “climate of authoritarian legal thought” and were used to “glorif[y] the state’s authority as it was embodied in the wise judges at these stories’ center” (Silver 16).

The most famous example of the courtroom narrative, Ihara Saikaku’s *Honcho-oin-hiji* or *Trials in the Shade of a Cherry Tree*, is a collection of forty-four stories. In every single one of them the magistrate, who has no name and is called simply “His Lordship,” correctly identifies the criminal and determines the exact details of the crime – often without gathering a single bit of evidence. *Trials in the Shade of a Cherry Tree* embodies the key difference between the Japanese courtroom narrative and the Western detective story: His Lordship’s methods would have left Sherlock Holmes in shock. Instead of utilizing evidence-gathering or forensic science, the magistrates and judges of courtroom narratives focused entirely on the interrogation of suspects. Their goal was not to find definitive material proof, but to extricate a confession from the guilty party; in the magistrate’s courtroom, such a confession was considered sufficient to warrant a guilty verdict and a conviction.

Silver contrasts the courtroom narrative with the Western detective story's prioritization of physical evidence above all. Unlike in the West, the Tokugawa government saw the suspect's confession of guilt as "remov[ing] the necessity of constructing a narrative of guilt based on potentially ambiguous evidence" and "lend[ing] an air of certainty to the judgment rendered" (Silver 25). To ensure that he gained the confession from the suspect he had chosen as the guilty party, the judge or magistrate relied on a variety of methods of torture. While His Lordship in *Trials in the Shade of a Cherry Tree* never makes an error, it is highly likely that the brutal methods of the Tokugawa judges resulted in a number of innocent victims making false confessions to crimes they did not commit under the influence of whipping, leg-crushing, and other popular torture techniques.

The central figures of these courtroom narratives, which remained one of the most popular genres of fiction through the early Meiji period of the 1860s, had little in common with Sherlock Holmes, Auguste Dupin, and similar characters popular in America and Europe. Ironically, however, the supposedly infallible, extremely unjust law enforcement officials such as His Lordship ultimately caused the introduction of the more modern, rational Western detectives and policemen to Japan. Kuroiwa Ruiko, the pen name of journalist Kuroiwa Shūroku, was a liberal, anti-authoritarian activist who translated famous Western crime novels in order to introduce the Japanese reading public to the more rational, evidence-focused methods featured in these stories. In the 1890s and 1900s, he used his self-founded newspaper, *Yorozu Chōhō* (or *Morning Report for the Masses*) to publish his translations of Western novels and philosophical tracts, especially those focusing on crime and justice. His translations include *Man or Devil?* and *The People's Luck*, two novels utilizing the standard 'whodunit' format, as well as several French classics including



Alexandre Dumas's *The Count of Monte Cristo* and Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, both translated in the early 1900s. Ruiko's readers were thus exposed to the modern French and English legal systems, to mysteries solved with physical proof rather than torture-based confessions, and – most importantly – to situations where the government-created systems of law and justice were not infallible.

Ruiko's translations, and translations of other Western novels that followed (including the entirety of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* stories and novels) introduced Japanese authors not only to the methods of forensic science and evidence-gathering, but also to duplicitous criminals capable of disguise, witty wordplay, and various forms of trickery. Unlike the infallible His Lordship, the characters who populated the first Japanese detective novels – such as Hanshichi and Heiji Zenigata – had to struggle and chase and fight in order to catch the right man. They made mistakes, they fell for traps and disguises, and they chased false leads; however, like their Western counterparts, they usually found the correct culprit in the end. Like Sherlock Holmes, who was duped in only a single instance throughout his illustrious career (detailed in the short story *A Scandal in Bohemia*), Hanshichi and his contemporaries were heroic figures who were nearly always victorious. Their methods were based in science and were significantly more humane, but these Meiji-era literary detectives still had much in common with the magistrates and judges who had preceded them. While his work may have permanently changed the crime fiction genre in Japan, Ruiko's translations were not themselves enough to give birth to the bumbling policemen who would later come to populate *anime* and *manga*.

To find the second ancestor of Kouichi Zenigata, Sherlock Hound and Kogoro Mori, one must turn to a group of artists who, like Ruiko, actively opposed the authoritarian

Tokugawa government. When Toyotomi Hideyoshi established a class system based on Confucian principles, known as *shinokosho* (an acronym formed using the first *kanji* character of each class) social classes were ranked based on their contribution to society. The samurai, who fought wars and protected the government and lords, were at the top, followed by farmers and artisans, who produced food and necessary material goods respectively. Merchants, who produced nothing of value themselves and merely handled and traded the items created by others, were at the very bottom. Actors, who not only did not create anything seen as valuable, but satirically mocked those that did, were left out of the system entirely. While traditional *noh* theater was still considered to have some cultural value, and a limited number of *noh* actors were allowed to retain status and perform for the courts of the shogun and the Emperor, troupes practicing the popular forms of *kabuki* drama and *bunraku* puppet theater were made outcasts, holding no position within the *shinokosho* system.

Though they had no official societal status, *kabuki* troupes were still under the rule of the shogun and his *bafuku* government officials, who passed a number of sumptuary laws restricting the lives of the actors even further. *Kabuki* actors were limited in what types of fabric and clothing they were allowed to wear, what kind of gifts and funding they were allowed to receive from patrons, and, most damaging to their lifestyles, which figures and events they were allowed to depict in their performances. Portraying any Emperor or Shōgun was expressly forbidden, and plays depicting current or recent events could be forcibly closed or, at worst, lead to the actors' arrest for treason.

The actors rebelled against the *bafuku*'s obsessive control and constant passage of new laws in the only way they could: by mocking them on stage. While they could not depict the Emperor, ordinary government officials and *daimyō* (domain lords) were acceptable

targets. Many of the popular *kabuki* plays of the Tokugawa period featured antagonistic *bafuku* officials (or their thinly veiled equivalents, as plays were re-written to be set in the past to avoid censorship) who were foolish, lustful, and easily tricked.

Bumbling, fallible authority figures were a central staple of both comedic and dramatic *kabuki*. The comedic *Sukeroku* has as its antagonist a high-ranking samurai, Ikyu, who is repeatedly taunted and tricked by the titular hero, a mere commoner. Sukeroku ends the play in a relationship with the courtesan whom Ikyu spent most of the story attempting to pursue. In the dramatic *Kanjinchō* (or *The Subscription List*), an official is set to guard a gate and prevent any warriors of the defeated Minamoto clan from passing. He is easily fooled, however, by the former lord Minamoto-no-Yoshitsune and his retainer Benkei's disguise as priests. Benkei successfully tricks the official into believing that the blank scroll he holds is a *kanjinchō*, or a list of those who have donated to his temple, and the official allows them to pass.

The courtroom drama and *kabuki* play of the Tokugawa period gave rise to the 'counter-cultural' authors of the late Meiji period and subsequent Taishō and Shōwa periods. Censorship and government propaganda coupled with Japan's crushing defeat in World War II did nothing to increase faith in authorities. One of the best known incompetent authority stories of this time is Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's *In a Grove*, later adapted into the Akira Kurosawa film *Rashomon*. *In a Grove* tells the story of a murder in which every person present claims to be the killer. Despite the magistrates' best efforts, both the story and the film end without the true criminal's identity coming to light. Distrust of authority during the tumultuous postwar period is almost certainly why Kurosawa chose to adapt *In a Grove* into a film in 1950, 30 years after its initial publication.

These enduringly popular *kabuki* dramas, crime literature, and film have served as an influence on modern-day *manga* and *anime*. Like Sukeroku and Minamoto-no-Yoshitsune, many characters in detective *manga* and *anime* utilize a myriad of disguises, wordplay, and clever plans seemingly thought up on the spur of the moment. The very first example of this is the *Lupin III* franchise, which premiered in 1971, less than a decade after the birth of *anime*. The titular character of *Lupin III* and his nemesis, Inspector Kouichi Zenigata, are in many ways not only the grandsons of French literary thief Arsène Lupin and descendents of Japanese detective Heiji Zenigata, but also a modern day reimagining of Sukeroku and Ikyu. Zenigata, like Ikyu, is constantly taunted and teased by Lupin during his attempts to catch the titular thief. He not only fails in his attempts to capture Lupin, but also is subjected to constant mockery while doing so.

Both men are also interested in the same woman, Fujiko Mine, Lupin's fellow criminal, who shares his intelligence, talent for disguise, and taunting nature, but adds to it her considerable sex appeal. Zenigata is often distracted from the chase by exhibiting lust for Fujiko, but is no more successful in wooing her than he is in catching her partner in crime. The extent to which Zenigata is distracted by his lust is so great that, at times, he is even distracted from the chase by the wiles of a woman who turns out to be not Fujiko at all, but Lupin himself in disguise.

Inspector Zenigata possesses a number of character traits which serve as the template for future bumbling policemen in *anime* and *manga*. As previously mentioned, despite being introduced as a supposedly genius policeman, he easily falls for simple tricks or basic disguises. While he assumes the perpetrator of any crime he investigates to be Lupin, and is usually correct, it takes him a long time to even begin to figure out Lupin's plan or escape

method. He discovers Lupin usually *after* the thief has already obtained whatever item he wished to steal (ranging from gold, jewels, and rare artifacts to the Statue of Liberty itself). The result is a chase scene, sometimes on foot but more often in cars, boats, planes, helicopters, hot air balloons, or other even more bizarre modes of transportation. These chase scenes tend to involve high amounts of collateral damage – cars being flipped over, innocent bystanders knocked into each other, buildings being damaged or even knocked over entirely. Of course, Lupin eventually escapes, leaving Zenigata not only empty-handed but forced to shoulder the entire responsibility for the resulting damages.

While it may seem that this character is only ‘bumbling’ because his opponent is so highly intelligent and crafty, this is not the case. Zenigata, and those that follow in his mold, are portrayed as hot-blooded and impulsive. Zenigata will assume that any crime was committed by Lupin, even if obvious evidence points otherwise. He will not think things through and will act impulsively during his attempts to catch the criminal as well – he will chase after anything that looks remotely like Lupin, even if it is an obvious body double or an inflatable doll wearing his trademark jacket. He is spared from complete incompetence only by the surprising savviness and skill which reasserts itself in one unique situation: when Zenigata and Lupin are forced to team up to take on criminals who pose a larger threat to the world than Lupin does.

In one of Lupin’s best-known film outings, Hayao Miyazaki’s *The Castle of Cagliostro*,<sup>1</sup> the government of the fictional Grand Duchy of Cagliostro is revealed to be corrupt. The country’s regent, Count Cagliostro, has been funneling large amounts of counterfeit money to the casinos of nearby Monte Carlo, as well as keeping the country’s true

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<sup>1</sup> *The Castle of Cagliostro* is translated into English by Streamline Pictures.

ruler, Princess Clarisse, imprisoned in the castle. Zenigata tracks Lupin to Cagliostro, initially believing that he intends to kidnap the Princess and steal the counterfeiting plates. When Lupin finally succeeds in convincing Zenigata that he is working against the Count, who is the true villain, the pair hatch a convoluted plan to expose the Count as a fraud at his own wedding. When Interpol demands he withdraw to avoid causing a political scandal, Zenigata chooses to pursue the truth, disobeys orders, and assists Lupin. In the end, they are successful; the Count is killed and the Princess is restored to her rightful throne. Throughout the movie, Zenigata is given a rare chance to be heroic and competent – but the status quo is ultimately restored as Lupin and Fujiko run off with the counterfeiting plates, leaving Zenigata to chase them hopelessly once more. His ultimate status of ‘the bumbling cop’ is never permanently revoked, only temporarily lifted during the few instances in which he works as Lupin’s ally.

While the series is still ongoing to this day, original author Monkey Punch stated in an interview in *The Rough Guide to Manga* that, were he ever to write an ending, it would be a stalemate; Lupin’s constant escapes and Zenigata’s constant chasing would end only when they “both get very old” (Monkey Punch). For now, audiences are still entertained by Lupin’s constant escapes and Zenigata’s constant failed apprehensions. Movies and movie-length Lupin television specials are released annually in Japan, with *The Gravestone of Daisuke Jigen*, released in 2014, as the most recent.

While Inspector Zenigata and his fellow *Lupin III* characters have become iconic both in Japan and worldwide, the *Lupin III* franchise is aimed at a young-adult-to-adult audience. Later Zenigata-like bumbling authorities, however, most frequently appear in media aimed at children and preteens. The 25-episode animated television series *Meitantei Holmes*, literally

“Great Detective Holmes” but translated into English as *Sherlock Hound*,<sup>2</sup> aired in 1984 and 1985. It was produced by Tokyo Movie Shinsha and directed by Hayao Miyazaki, who also directed *The Castle of Cagliostro* and several episodes of the first season of *Lupin III*. *Sherlock Hound* combined adaptations of famous Conan Doyle short stories with original plots created by Miyazaki, with the central theme of the story being Sherlock Holmes and constant companion Dr. Watson’s attempts to defeat the genius inventor and intellectual Moriarty.

*Sherlock Hound* differs from Western adaptations of the Holmes stories by casting the characters as different breeds of dog. Replacing the main cast with cute, funny, talking animals clearly marks *Sherlock Hound* as being intended for a young audience; some episodes were even shown in theaters as openers to Miyazaki’s feature films. But his transformation into a Pembroke Corgi is not the only change made to the beloved consulting detective. Conan Doyle’s Holmes “occasionally does experiments” involving bizarrely smelling and sometimes volatile chemicals, and, in his own words, “get[s] in the dumps at times and d[oesn’t] open [his] mouth for days on end,” but, these quirks aside, he is fundamentally intelligent, observant, and competent (Conan Doyle 1). *Sherlock Hound*’s ‘experiments’ more often than not explode in his face, utterly trashing the Baker Street flat which he shares with the Scottish terrier version of Dr. Watson – who himself loses much of his original characterization as an intelligent professional. This Watson is an overweight, slow-witted foil to Hound. Hound and Watson, however, still show a modicum of competence utterly lacking in Inspector Lestrade and the organized police force, which consists almost entirely of hot-tempered idiots. Lestrade himself is a bulldog, a breed

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<sup>2</sup> *Sherlock Hound* is translated into English by TMS Anime.

associated with stubbornness and short temper, both of which he possesses. His impulsiveness and short attention span inevitably result in his and his group of officers' failure to capture Moriarty, often meaning that Hound and Watson have to take up the chase themselves.

While Hound still possesses Holmes's brilliant observational skills, he is a much more human (ironically, given his re-imagining as a canine) and fallible character. He is inclined to attribute any given crime to Moriarty regardless of the actual perpetrator, and their relationship is much closer to that of Lupin and Zenigata than the actual Holmes and Moriarty. Rather than a cold warfare of intellectual games from afar culminating in a single, physical altercation which killed Moriarty and initially (until Conan Doyle's decision to resurrect the character) killed Holmes, Hound actively pursues Moriarty and his henchmen. Miyazaki uses his love of transportation technology – especially flight - to create a distinctly steampunk atmosphere for the show, which features several chase scenes between Hound and Moriarty, who utilize planes, blimps, ships, cars and even horses. While Hound usually successfully reclaims the items Moriarty steals, he never succeeds in apprehending the criminal mastermind, transforming Moriarty from a one-off character appearing in a single story to a recurring nemesis. This version of the great detective combines Holmes as Conan Doyle wrote him with the Japanese trope of the incompetent policeman, creating a character who always solves the crime, but doesn't always succeed in bringing the ones responsible to justice.

The original Sherlock Holmes was essentially asexual, possessing a "cold, precise but admirably balanced mind" that Watson describes as "the most perfect reasoning and observing machine the world has ever seen." His only relationship with a woman was his



respect for Irene Adler, one of the few people to beat him in a battle of wits, and whom he referred to “under the honorable title of *the woman*” (Conan Doyle 100). In contrast, Hound has obvious romantic interest in his landlady, Mrs. Hudson. Mrs. Hudson, who appears in most adaptations as an older woman, is in this adaptation an attractive young golden retriever named Marie. One episode, aptly titled “The Mrs. Hudson Kidnapping Case,” Moriarty kidnaps Mrs. Hudson, identifying her as “Hound’s only weakness” (Miyazaki 5). Holmes’s interest in Mrs. Hudson never develops into a full relationship; his crush on her is consistently portrayed and characterized as a weakness exploited by Moriarty. Mrs. Hudson serving as Hound’s Achilles’ heel, a weakness that detracts from his effectiveness at his job, is yet another example of the clear differences between Sherlock Holmes as written by Miyazaki and Conan Doyle’s “perfect reasoning machine.”

The differences between Holmes and Hound, and Hound’s status as an example of the incompetent authority figure, are best revealed by comparing the first novel in which Sherlock Holmes appeared, *A Study in Scarlet*, with the first episode of *Sherlock Hound*, “He’s the Famous Detective!” *A Study in Scarlet* is one of the most sedately paced of the Holmes adventures, and features one of the clearest examples of the typical mystery genre ‘parlor scene’. Holmes arrests the perpetrator, then calmly explains both his motive and the details of the crime to a stunned audience of Watson, Lestrade, and Lestrade’s fellow Scotland Yard officer Gregson. This explanation, which takes the form of a lengthy flashback, comprises most of the second half of the book, the rest of which describes the murderer’s death in prison before he can be brought to trial and Watson’s decision to begin publishing accounts of Holmes’s cases. The only action in this entire lengthy sequence is the narrator (Watson’s) brief description of Holmes arresting the perpetrator: “The fellow...put

down his hands to assist. At that instant, there was a sharp click, the jangling of metal, and Sherlock Holmes sprang to his feet again. ‘Gentlemen,’ he cried... ‘let me introduce you to Mr. Jefferson Hope, the murderer of Enoch Drebber and of Joseph Stangerson’” (Conan Doyle 65). There is no chase or action scene, the arrest goes smoothly, and Holmes proceeds to explain at length how he arrived at his conclusion and why the murder happened in the first place.

In contrast, “He’s the Famous Detective!” takes place at sea. Hound and Watson, both returning to England from various travels, are crossing the English Channel on a boat that is suddenly attacked by vicious pirates. Hound is forced to not only figure out why the pirates chose their ship to attack and which passenger they want to take prisoner, but also to drive the pirates off of the ship. With Watson’s help, he narrowly saves the day and brings the ship into harbor safely, but the pirate crew escapes before he can have them arrested. The episode is action-packed and tense, introducing the audience to Hound as a physical character who gains a partial victory in the nick of time rather than an intellectual who solves every detail of the case well in advance. It is also more appealing to a younger audience than the slow, sedate climax and denouement of *A Study and Scarlet*. Hound and Watson’s lesser competence is also established with the pirate crew’s eventual escape; two members of the crew even team up with Moriarty and serve as his less intelligent sidekicks and villainous foils to Watson. When TMZ Anime released the series with English subtitles on video hosting site Youtube.com, the episode order was changed. Instead of “He’s the Famous Detective!”, the first episode was “Little Martha’s Big Mystery,” which featured Hound solving a counterfeiting case and is a traditional mystery (in which Holmes correctly solves the case) rather than an action-focused story.

*Sherlock Hound* not only differs from the original Conan Doyle novels, but from British-produced new media adaptations of the series. The ongoing BBC series *Sherlock*, which features Holmes and Watson solving familiar cases in a 21<sup>st</sup>-century setting, establishes Holmes as a figure whom both characters and audience can trust. In *The Reichenbach Fall*, the final episode of the second season, Moriarty (cast, as he is in *Sherlock Hound*, as a recurring nemesis to Holmes) attempts to discredit Holmes by calling him a fake, insisting that the ‘crimes’ he ‘solved’ were actually committed by hired actors. The rallying cry of Holmes supporters in the show, *I Believe in Sherlock Holmes*, gained popularity on the other side of the TV screen as well. It became the mantra of *Sherlock* fans and the show’s major advertising slogan leading up to the release of the third season, which shows Moriarty exposed as a fraud and all doubts about Sherlock’s sincerity vanquished. In the two years between the second and third season, *I Believe in Sherlock Holmes* adorned T-shirts, phone cases, jewelry and posters and was graffitied on walls throughout the United Kingdom and United States. In direct contrast to Japan’s Holmes, who is introduced failing to capture pirates and continues displaying this fallible, untrustworthy image, contemporary Britain’s Holmes is associated with this powerful statement of hope and trust both in-universe and out.

The trend begun by *Lupin III* and continued by *Sherlock Hound* remained prominent in anime and manga throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. In the nearly 40 years of the manga *Kochikame*’s run, its police protagonists have not captured a single criminal. The aforementioned *Detective Conan* features the hilariously inept Kogoro Mori. Mori’s low competence is acknowledged diagetically so much that an urban legend begins to circulate, claiming he is only intelligent enough to solve cases *while he is asleep*. His weaknesses are

numerous – food, women, sleep, and money being only a few – and affect his performance greatly. The other most commonly appearing police characters, Inspector Megure and his subordinates Assistant Inspector Shiratori, Officer Takagi, and Officer Sato, are likewise portrayed as comic relief. Chapters focusing on them center on the development of Takagi and Sato’s office romance, and usually culminate in one of the two being kidnapped, threatened or otherwise inconvenienced, and the other forced to call on Conan for a rescue.

Children reading or watching *Detective Conan*<sup>3</sup> are encouraged to identify not with the authorities but with the super-intelligent Conan and his scrappy, vigilante-like sidekicks, the Junior Detective League. While Conan and his assistant Haibara are in reality teenagers trapped within children’s bodies by a criminal organization, the members of the Junior Detective League – Genta, Mitsuhiro, and Ayumi – are genuine elementary school children. Despite being aimed at a young age bracket, *Conan*’s crimes tend to be darker and scarier than those featured in *Lupin III* and *Sherlock Hound*. Lupin is a thief, and his plots primarily focus around stealing some sort of rare artifact. The crimes *Sherlock Hound* is called upon to solve are also almost entirely theft or kidnapping – another major deviation from the Holmes novels, which frequently feature murder. Conan, on the other hand, has taken down serial killers, bombers, organized crime, and international terrorists throughout 20 years of publication. His message is a dangerous one – the police are unreliable and cannot help you, and it is up to you, children, to solve the crime and take down the perpetrator yourself.

The appearance of incompetent police in *manga* and *anime* is still a common phenomenon today, not only in adult-oriented works but also children’s shows and series. As a result, children are raised not to trust the authorities, and seduced by positive portrayals of

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<sup>3</sup> *Detective Conan manga* translated into English and released as *Case Closed* by Viz Media.

vigilante justice, often carried out by young children or adorable talking animals. This raises the very important question – does a distrust of media policemen lead to a distrust of the police in the real world? Stories about bumbling cops are certainly both comedic and cathartic – Zenigata’s accidentally knocking over yet another building or Hound’s accidentally causing dangerous chemicals to explode cause audiences of all ages to laugh, and can serve as a source of stress relief – but is also worrying. Audience reactions are not limited to laughter and catharsis, but most likely also include growing distrust of and concern regarding the real-world authorities.

## Chapter 2: Feeling for the Felon

### Glorification of Genius Criminals and Degradation of their Detective Nemeses

“Theft. It is an especially sweet vice – more elegant than vandalism and more complex than simple robbery, a beautiful blend of secrets and crime and mischief and fear” (Yamamoto 1). This artsy paean to theft (here meaning elaborate, planned-out heists, and contrasted with small-scale ‘robbery’) forms the opening sequence to the 2012 anime *The Woman Called Fujiko Mine*,<sup>4</sup> one of the latest entries in the *Lupin III* mega-franchise. Set against a background of classical music, twining roses and naked female bodies, *Fujiko Mine*’s opening compares theft to both great art and great sex, while the narrator, Fujiko herself, repeatedly implores the viewer to “gaze upon [her]” (Yamamoto 1). And her command will be fulfilled – for both the character Fujiko and the creators of *Fujiko* know that people love watching crime.

Author Mark Silver describes a successful work of crime fiction as “two interlocking stories: the story of the investigation and the story of the crime that comes to light through that investigation” (Silver 2). This is certainly correct: without criminals, what mysteries would detectives have to solve? Without a Moriarty or an Irene Adler to oppose him, Sherlock Holmes is nothing more than an intelligent, rather antisocial man with odd habits – he is not the sort of person anyone would want to read about on his own. And it is not merely the detective genre which would be lost without its darker figures – what would a general be without an opposing army, or a superhero without a supervillain? Entire genres, such as the

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<sup>4</sup> *The Woman Called Fujiko Mine* is translated into English by FUNimation

enduringly popular ‘heist movie’ have been constructed around the central conceit of watching a crime unfold.

In 2014, American TV viewers tuned in to shows about covering up a murder (*How to Get Away with Murder*), the daily lives of criminals in prison (*Orange is the New Black*), and many other dark topics. Similarly, thousands of Japanese viewers watched *Magic Kaito 1412*, the story of a magician who uses his tricks to steal valuable artifacts, or *Zankyou no Terror/Terror in Resonance*, a show about teenaged terrorists planning to launch a brand new, super-powerful atomic bomb. While traditional detective series with heroic protagonists, such as America’s *Castle* and *NCIS* or Japan’s *Kindaichi Case Files* and *SMOKING GUN*, retain popularity, recent years have seen a definitive increase of media focused on criminals and villains – not that such media is a new invention, as *Lupin III*’s long-running popularity shows<sup>5</sup>.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Japanese media features bumbling policemen and detectives seemingly incapable of solving a single case. These characters do not exist solely as comic relief, though this is a role that they often serve. The policemen bumble so that their opponents – the well-dressed, highly attractive, suavely mannered, elegantly spoken thieves and killers – can shine all the more brightly. The criminals of Japan’s literature, theater, film, *anime* and *manga* are hyper-competent, intelligent, and talented, capable of carrying out the most seemingly impossible of plots and heists. They are geniuses, with their stories not in the format of *whodunit* but rather *howdunit* – *how* did Lupin manage to make the Statue of Liberty itself disappear – or *whydunit* – *why* have these youths formed a terrorist organization, and why do they want to release a bomb capable of killing millions?

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix A for a timeline charting this shift in tone

The opposite of ‘incompetent law enforcement’ is ‘super-competent criminal element’ and, together, these two character types are used to create both comedic romps and dark, tense stories that ask important questions about the nature of society and justice.

Just as these detectives and criminals oppose one another in modern film and television, so too did two genres oppose one another in the collections of early Japanese literature fans. The courtroom narrative, discussed in Chapter 1, starred infallible magistrates somehow able to determine every detail of a crime from minimal testimony and successfully to extract a confession from every arrested criminal. Its dark foil, equally popular during the early Meiji period as the courtroom narrative had been in the early Tokugawa period, was the *dokufu-mono*, also known as the “poison woman story.” *Dokufu* (毒婦) means “poisonous wife,” and comes from the cultural belief that physically weaker but more devious women would use poison as a murder weapon, rather than the swords and bows preferred by their male counterparts.

*Dokufu-mono*, stories of the exploits of female criminals, were a popular pulp-fiction genre which comprised nearly the entirety of early Meiji crime literature. The women discussed therein were portrayed as both dangerous and desirable. Mark Silver describes the *dokufu* as “silver-tongued, alluring, cunning, defiant, usually oversexed, and quick to steal or kill or both” (Silver 30). *Dokufu-mono* were often at least loosely based on the exploits of real life women, most famously Takahashi Oden, arguably the most well-known example of a minor criminal whose crimes were glorified in fiction. Takahashi, a somewhat notorious prostitute, thief, and gambler, was arrested in 1876 for the murder of a clothing merchant named Goto. She became the last woman executed via beheading in Japan, when her executioner so botched her beheading that he “[left] her dazed and flopping about in her own



blood” for several minutes (Schreiber 115). Many books and stories were written about her exploits, as well as a short play created by the Kikugoro family of *kabuki* actors.

Takahashi’s story is only a footnote in a much longer list of Meiji ne’er-do-wells in Mark Schreiber’s *The Dark Side: Infamous Japanese Crimes and Criminals*. Confined to a sub-section entitled “The Woeful Fate of a Poisonous Wife,” Oden’s crimes are briefly listed: gambling, prostitution, theft, and, finally, a single murder, for which she was arrested and executed. The bulk of the section discusses her botched execution and the subsequent implementation of hanging rather than beheading for female criminals. The sub-section ends with an offhand mention of the fact that “to this day, her name remains a household word among educated Japanese” (Schreiber 116). In a scholarly text about the real-life crimes of real-life criminals, there is very little to be said about Takahashi Oden. This is very unlike her appearance in fiction, where more focus is placed on her exploits rather than her death, and where she is the founder of an entire genre of criminal-protagonist stories.

In contrast to Schreiber’s *The Dark Side*, Silver’s *Purloined Letters*, which examines crime literature and fiction in Japan, has an entire lengthy chapter dedicated to Takahashi and the *dokufu-mono* genre. He discusses the various books and plays which were written about her, most famously Kanagaki Robun’s 1879 *Takahashi Oden yasha monogatari* / *The Tale of Takahashi Oden the She-Devil*. Robun’s story not only covers her actual crime, arrest, and execution, but adds to it a long list of additional crimes most likely not committed by the historical Takahashi. Most notably, Robun insists that Takahashi poisoned her late husband Naminosuke, making her a literal ‘poison woman’. Schreiber’s more factual text notes the cause of Naminosuke’s death as leprosy, and points out that Oden began her career as a prostitute specifically to hire an expensive, skilled doctor to treat him.

Oden as Robun and his fellow fiction authors portrayed her was not merely a criminal guilty of a few thefts and a single murder. She was the ultimate femme fatale, escaping from her humble origins and utilizing a variety of disguises and false identities to obtain the only two things she cared about: love and money. Her murder of the clothing merchant Goto Kichizō was not an isolated incident, but the final mistake that ultimately brings her to justice after a long career of crime and seduction. She was “an evil doppelgänger” of “the self-made man...she gambles, steals, cons and murders for selfish and personal gain” (Silver 55). Though Robun repeatedly refers to Takahashi as ‘evil’ and portrays the courts positively, incorporating excerpts from actual legal documents and transcripts of Takahashi’s trial, it is the *dokufu* herself, not the magistrates who convicted her, who captured the public eye.

The magistrates who arrest Takahashi in *Takahashi Oden yasha monogatari* are figures pulled directly from a Tokugawa period courtroom narrative. They are infallible, correctly accusing Takahashi of all of her numerous crimes and selecting the correct, just punishment for her misdeeds: death. However, the courtroom narrative was abolished almost completely during the late Meiji period with the influx of translated Western crime novels to Japan, and Japanese authors’ subsequent adaptation of Western (especially Conan Doyle-inspired) styles and characters in their writing. Despite this, the *dokufu-mono* continued to be a popular genre, making the transition from literature into film (and eventually television) during the Taisho and Showa periods. These modern *dokufu*, however, were not opposed by infallible courtroom narrative magistrates as Robun’s Takahashi had been.

Abe Sada, a woman arrested for the murder and mutilation of her lover in 1936, is seen as one of the most famous of the modern *dokufu*. Like Takahashi, her crime was expanded, sensationalized and fictionalized, sparking nationwide interest. In her

interrogation, which was later published, Sada noted that “the paper compared [her] to Takahashi Oden” (Johnston 205). “Sada mania” was even more widespread than Takahashi’s popularity had been, spawning books, short stories, poems, plays, and a number of films. Like the stories about Takahashi, these adaptations focused more on the dual sensual-but-cruel nature of Sada rather than the actual details of her crime and arrest. One of these films, the 1976 *In the Realm of the Senses*, was banned in multiple countries for its portrayal of explicit sexual activities. In his account of the case, titled *Geisha, Harlot, Strangler, Star: A Woman, Sex, and Morality in Modern Japan*, author William Johnston posits that “Abe Sada has never faded from memory since May 1936” (Johnston 2). Even the title of Johnston’s text reflects the glorification of Sada: she is neither just a criminal nor just a woman, but somehow a geisha, a harlot, a strangler *and* a star, a rather long list of titles for a single person to bear.

Unlike the magistrates who convicted Takahashi, the judge and court at Abe’s trial were not portrayed as unfailing avatars of justice. Abe herself openly criticized the court’s treatment of the incident, complaining that she was “misunderstood as some kind of sexual pervert” (Schreiber 189). The judge, who admitted to being sexually aroused by the trial proceedings, sentenced Abe to only six years in prison, four less than the prosecutor had requested. She was ultimately released early after serving only five years, and continues to live free from jail to this day – clearly not the victim of any divine, perfect justice as Robun considered Takahashi’s sentence to be. Sada admitted her own guilt and begged to be punished, but managed, as a result of the court and the public’s reaction to her story, both to receive only minimal chastisement and to become and remain a nationwide sensation.

From Takahashi's execution via beheading to Abe's shortened sentence, to Fujiko Mine's constant escapes from the bumbling Zenigata, the effectiveness of the justice system in detaining and punishing the 'poison women' has experienced a clear and marked decrease. The 'poison woman' is still an important and popular figure in modern Japanese media, and is still portrayed as beautiful, clever, skilled, and sexually desirable, but she is no longer a criminal to be apprehended, but rather a protagonist or ally to be cheered on, audiences watching with baited breath as she commits her latest heinous act or seduces her latest hapless lover. The poison woman is far from the only influence present in the modern day glorification of criminals, but she is a crucial one.

If Fujiko can be seen as the spiritual descendent of Takahashi and Abe, then her sometimes-ally sometimes-rival sometimes-lover Lupin is the spiritual descendent of a different but equally clever type of criminal. Lupin is roguish, charming, capable of winning the heart of any woman he desires, a master of disguise, and, most importantly, always successful. His thefts over the past decades have included valuable artifacts, staggeringly huge amounts of money and jewels, lost treasures from the *Titanic*, and even the Statue of Liberty. His popularity endures. Like Fujiko, Lupin's origins are decidedly pre-modern – dashing, charismatic rogues such as he frequently served as the main characters of *kabuki* plays. Lupin is one of the latest example of a centuries-long tradition in Japan of placing the suave criminal in the role of protagonist, earning him or her sympathy, support and even attraction from the audience.

*Kabuki* actors did so much more than portray these roguish heroes on the stages of the Tokugawa pleasure quarters. In many ways, the actors, who performed their roles despite *kabuki's* illegal status, *were* the criminal-heroes they portrayed. Performing in a *kabuki* piece

was illegal by order of the Tokugawa shōgunate, which granted legality only to the traditional *noh* theater popular in the Emperor's court. However, *kabuki* actors were difficult to arrest, due to their troupes' massive popularity and the high-ranking *kabuki* patrons (often themselves nobles or members of the Shogun's government) who would be implicated in such an attempt.

So *kabuki* flourished, despite the government's passage of increasingly restrictive laws limiting the subject matter of the plays, the materials actors could wear as part of their costumes, and which locations actors could utilize for visiting their guests and patrons. Most damningly, actors were forbidden from receiving guests in their dressing rooms or personal quarters, severely limiting the encounters for which dedicated fans paid a significant sum. The actors, however, flaunted the government's attempts to restrict their actions, performing plays with only thinly veiled political commentary, and garbing themselves as they saw fit. For example, the Ichikawa family, historically *kabuki*'s most famous and popular acting family, adopted as one of their 'Eighteen Great Plays' *Sukeroku*, the story of an "*otokodate*, or 'chivalrous commoner'...who had taken upon himself to be a champion of the common people whenever he found them being oppressed by bullying samurai who were exceeding their privileges" (Harris 201). Ichikawa Danjuro II, who first played the title role, included as part of his costume "a head-band dyed with an expensive purple dye which...up to that time had only ever been used by the Shōgun" (Harris 201). Kabuki actors cultivated a personality of risk-takers unwilling to bend to the government's cruel laws, which gained the troupes even more popularity and fame. Actors had fan clubs and admirers among both males and females of the upper classes, who purchased souvenirs such as fans featuring the actor's faces, and paid to spend time with their favorites despite the laws forbidding it. Tokugawa

audiences both got to see Ichikawa Danjuro or Nakamura Kanzaburō play *rōnin* avenging their master or servants tricking government officials on stage and feel the thrill of knowing that they, sitting in the audience at these illegal performances, were in some ways collaborating with the criminal heroes the actors both portrayed and embodied.

Early *anime* and *manga* featuring these skilled criminal protagonists are primarily light-hearted, and have much of the glitz and theatricality of the *dokufu-mono* and the *kabuki* plays. The premise of the already-discussed *Lupin III* reads like some sort of joke – a *kabuki* rogue, a poison woman, a gunman and a samurai walk into a museum, steal everything of value, and escape with the hapless police on their heels. Though the series contains its dark moments and does not shy away from gunfights, the shady criminal underworld, or sexual content, its comedic nature is foremost. Viewers experience the thrilling rush of Lupin & Co. pulling off another successful heist, ultimately knowing that it's *just* theft, and there are much worse crimes to commit and criminals to commit them out there, personified by the villains that Lupin and Zenigata will occasionally team up to defeat. Other criminals in the series are murderers, rapists, and mob bosses – consistently portrayed as worse than the “*just* a wildly successful master thief” Lupin.

Other criminal-focused series of the 1970s and 1980s are similarly light-hearted comedies. They feature ridiculous unrealistic premises and constant reminder via juxtaposition with worse criminals that the protagonists were *just* thieves. Examples include *Magic Kaito*, an ongoing *manga* begun in 1987 by Gosho Aoyama, author of *Detective Conan*. Titular protagonist Kaito is a thief who uses magic tricks to steal various famous gems from around the world. His goal of stealing these gems before a mysterious, shady organization can do so (whose members also happen to have killed his father) make Kaito a

sympathetic character despite his frequent crimes, and the use of magic tricks requiring years of study makes him a genius. *Cat's Eye*, an anime airing for one season in 1983, starred a trio of cat burglar sisters clad in brightly colored spandex, who steal works of art and seduce various men in the process. The series is comedic and its main characters also rendered sympathetic by the revelation that they are only forced into a life of crime due to blackmail by an evil relative. Shows such as *Lupin*, *Kaito* and *Cat's Eye* allow audiences to watch suave, savvy, attractive criminals pull off thrilling heists and beat the incompetent police without questioning the morality or justice of what they were witnessing.

The audience's emotional reaction to these early stories was a mix of sympathy (he/she's only a criminal because of his/her sad backstory) and catharsis (it's *okay* to enjoy watching these criminals do bad things, because *worse* criminals exist and are the *real* bad guys). In recent years, criminal protagonists have become darker and more inclined to commit murder or large-scale acts of violence rather than 'merely' theft. The focus switches from these protagonists as 'better than other criminals' to 'dangerously competent, charismatic geniuses who are successful and alluring *despite* how horrible they are'. They still elicit an emotional reaction from the audience, but this reaction is fascination and attraction rather than sympathy. While *Lupin III* still gets a new movie every year and *Magic Kaito* was rebooted in 2014, they now exist alongside psychological thrillers such as Urasawa Naoki's *Monster*<sup>6</sup> and Ohba Tsugumi's *Death Note*,<sup>7</sup> featuring heartless characters who team up with neo-Nazis or literal gods of death to commit strings of murders which are never justified via a sympathetic backstory.

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<sup>6</sup>The *manga* of *Monster* is translated into English by Viz Media

<sup>7</sup> The *manga* of *Death Note* is translated into English by Viz Media

While *Monster* contained the first major example of this criminal type, in Japan – namely, the cruel murderer and master of disguise Johan Liebert, *Death Note* is notable for having this new criminal as the central protagonist. *Monster* at least had the charismatic-but-sadistic Johan opposed by the moral and kind doctor, Tenma, who was a compelling character in his own right. *Death Note*, which originated as a *manga* in 2003 and later received a complete animated adaptation as well as a series of live-action movies, has no moral antidote to its main character, handsome-but cruel Yagami Light, aka ‘Kira.’ After a death god grants Light the ability to kill anyone whose name he knows, Light uses this power to rid the world of those he considers evil and unworthy of living. His victims range from criminals on death row to detectives that get in his way. He frequently refers to himself as “Justice” or “God,” and slowly his goals metamorphose from punishing the wicked to creating a new world where he can be the ultimate ruler.

Light is one of the best examples of the genius criminal, amassing not only fans but a massive cult of personality including those who literally worship his ‘Kira’ persona. As Light, he is affable, intelligent, and frequently described as one of the most popular boys at school, pursued by numerous girls. His intelligence is so great that his father, the Chief of Police, allows him to join his elite task force despite being only a high school student. As Kira, he is an international sensation, seen as a “God” or “savior” by people all around the world, with chapels built to him and funds set up in his name. He has a huge number of both male and female admirers; at one point in the story, he is romantically involved with both a super-popular singer idol who has sworn to follow him everywhere as well as with an educated TV newswoman, while a male prosecutor in his employ also has feelings for him. His skill and charisma are such that, until the final chapters of the *manga*, only a small



handful of characters even begin to suspect that he is the one responsible. He successfully defeats and outfoxes all of the world's greatest detectives, and, though he is finally brought to justice and killed, it is not by any human hand, but by his death god associate, who has become bored with him. He is a criminal so skilled that he is literally beyond the reach of human justice, and killable only by something divine.

While Light does have a character who opposes him (a private detective named L), L is neither attractive nor sympathetic. Odd-looking, dirty and antisocial, L exhibits more villainous appearance and behavior. Readers also have difficulty getting to know him, as little is ever learned about his history – even his real name remains a secret until the release of a companion volume several years after the *manga*'s completion. Readers and viewers do not have a positive emotional reaction to L in quite the same way they do to the evil but alluring Light.

The first encounter between Light and L occurs in a surprisingly mundane setting: on a university's campus. L, already suspecting Light's true identity as Kira, enrolls in the same university as him, utilizing the alias "Ryuuga Hideki." Even L's choice of alias reflects their status as nemeses; *Ryuuga* (流河) means "flowing river" while *Hideki* (旱樹) means "dry timber." The name invokes water and wood, providing an elemental contrast with "Light." At the university's opening ceremonies, Light and "Hideki" are identified as the class representatives, having received a previously unheard-of perfect score on their entrance examinations, and are called upon to give an unrehearsed speech together. Figure 1 immediately establishes the contrast between Light's sharp suit and composure and L's wrinkled shirt, mussed hair and slouched posture.



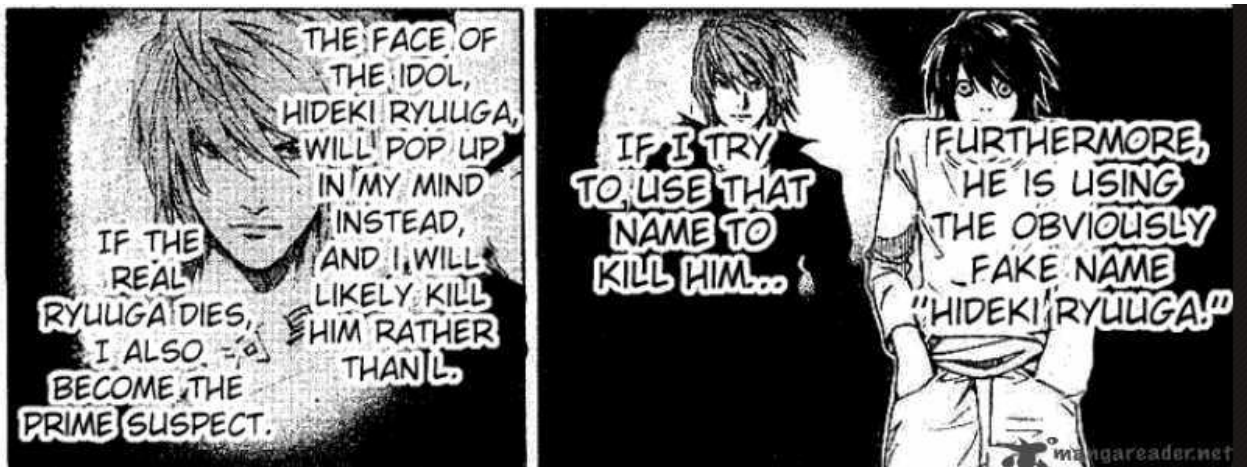
**Figure 1 - Light and L ascending the stage at the entrance ceremony.**



**Figure 2 – Students comment on the differences between Light and L**

The end of their entrance speech marks the beginning of the chapters-long mental game of chess between the successful serial killer and the scruffy detective. L reveals his true identity (but not his name) to Light, and asks for his help on the Kira Task Force. What follows is no less than four pages of nothing but L and Light's internal monologues, as each analyzes and re-analyzes the other's intentions and reactions. Ultimately, L is unable

successfully to conclude whether or not Light is Kira, despite his gut instinct and strong suspicions. On the other hand, Light perfectly figures out L's motives and identifies every detail of his plan. He realizes that "Hideki Ryuuga" is a fake name, and that if he tries to use that name, someone else named "Hideki Ryuuga" will die, and he will become the prime suspect (See Figure 3). He is able to remain composed and nonchalant throughout the entire ordeal, not giving L any hints as to his identity. He emerges victorious in this first encounter, as he knows L's true identity but L does not know his.



**Figure 3 - Light's internal monologue successfully identifying the details of L's plan**

In another attempt to get Light to slip up and give up some clue as to his identity, L pretends to be Light's friend and challenges him to a "friendly" game of tennis. Figure 4 shows the crowd of fans surrounding the match, interested in seeing a clash of 'genius' following their unconventional shared speech. Their internal monologues continue, each thinking quickly as they try to defeat each other not only in tennis, but in their larger battle of wits – interpreting each other's movements and asking seemingly innocuous questions about each other's childhoods to gain more information.

Though the tennis game is a seemingly minor event in the 108-chapter, several-hundred-page manga, it is in actuality the first of many victories which Light will win over L, and a clear example of how Light is glorified and portrayed as suave, skilled, and always one step ahead in comparison to L. Light realizes L's true motive for instigating the match. "*At the end of this match, this asshole will approach Yagami Light,*" Light thinks, "*expecting the supposed amateur...to let loose a few tasty morsels of information. Stuff that only Kira would know*" (Ohba 20). Surrounded by a mob of cheering female fans, Light both handily wins the match and foils L's plan. Instead of spilling any information, he asks to join L's task force investigating the Kira case. He reasons: "*Should Yagami Light be part of the investigation, Kira gains an edge against L. Knowledge of L's progress also covers the leakage of information identifiable only by Kira*" (Ohba 20). Rather than leaking information as L had hoped, Light maneuvers himself into a position where he can learn more about L's identity, as well as keep tabs on the knowledge the police has on the Kira case. As a member of the task force, he has access to the police's entire store of knowledge on Kira, so he can avoid letting any information spill that might incriminate himself.

Though L tells Light at the end of the match that he believes Light to be Kira and that their interactions have only strengthened his suspicions, in truth he has gained no new knowledge and it is Light who has come out on top. This scene sets the tone for the rest of their antagonistic relationship. Though both are initially introduced as geniuses (having perfect scores on their college entrance exams), Light is more suave, better looking, better dressed, and more popular with the ladies (Fig. 1). More importantly, he possesses greater intelligence, capable of remaining one step ahead of L at nearly all times. Every element of Light's character, from his appearance to his personality to his intellect, is carefully

calculated by author Tsugumi Ohba to encourage the audience to feel positive emotions toward and root for Light rather than L.

In their first interaction as in their entire nemesis relationship, L's only consistent advantage over Light is the various aliases he uses: Ryuuga Hideki, Ryuugazaki, Eraldo Coil, Deneuve, and, of course, L. Light requires L's true name in order to kill him; this is consistently shown as the only piece that he is lacking. L's intelligence, looks, and social skills are inferior to Light's, and he manages to survive as long as he does through a combination of constantly analyzing Light's moves, as he did during the tennis game, and cleverly keeping his name hidden. Names in *Death Note* have great power – they are the only information a death god needs about a person in order to kill them – and for much of the story his ability to manipulate names is L's only source of control over the situation. The initial tennis match between Light and 'Ryuuga Hideki' turns out to be indicative of things to come; as much as L tries, Light is always one step ahead. It is our glorified, suave, skilled criminal protagonist who wins the victory over the slovenly, supposedly heroic detective with many names. It is hard to feel any sympathy for L as his attempts to corner Light result in his own death at the hands of 'Kira'. His defeat occurs only halfway through the series, and he is soon forgotten as Light's popularity and success only grows. Though both men were introduced with perfect exam scores and called 'geniuses' by the spectators at their speech, it is Light who emerges victorious with both the true 'genius' title and the attention and support of characters and audience.



**Figure 4 - Light and L on the tennis court.**

In short, the gradual shift over the past three decades from sympathetic, comedic master thieves to complex, attractive murderers and terrorists has necessitated the creation of a new form of antagonist. Lupin and Zenigata and Kaito and Inspector Nakamori's police squad are equal but opposite foils to one another in that both possess comedic potential: the former in the sheer audacious scale of their heists, the latter in their utter inability to capture their nemeses. But a bumbling, always-incorrect, property-destroying police set against Light or Johan would *not* be funny – it would be dull, with the criminals allowed complete free rein without ever being chased or truly opposed. The result has been the character type best embodied by L: the 'Genius' Detective. This character often has no connection to the existing justice system (as it has been so long established in media is full of bumbling idiots). He is supposedly brilliant, but exists primarily to show that the criminal protagonist is *more* of a genius. He is less of a fully developed character and more of a reminder to the audience that the criminal is the one whom they should support. The detective will inevitably meet his

match at the hands of the work's brilliant, deadly protagonist – usually fatally, as death is the most definitive proof of the criminal's victory.

*Monster* contains several examples of this character type, all of whom end up as victims of Johan's seemingly endless string of murders. Richard Braun is an alcoholic private detective who attempts to track down Johan as a distraction from his alcohol cravings. A mere two volumes after his introduction, he encounters Johan in person and is brutally and carelessly pushed off of a roof. Wolfgang Grimmer is a violent, somewhat unstable investigative reporter who tracks Johan to learn more about his childhood and understand his motives. As a central theme of the work is that Johan's reasons for committing crimes are utterly inhuman and *cannot* be understood, Grimmer naturally ends up dead for his efforts. The systematic elimination of many characters who attempt to oppose Johan encourages the reader to focus their attention on the brilliant, charismatic 'Monster'. *Monster* does at least present one fully sympathetic character, the compassionate and innocent Dr. Tenma, but even Tenma's presence within the narrative (and eventual happy ending – he leaves Johan behind and joins Doctors Without Borders) does not fully detract from the fascination and appeal of the eponymous Monster, Johan Liebert.

In conclusion, the most clearly codified example of the 'Genius' Detective is L. He operates independently but is hired by the official police force once they realize that their own efforts to apprehend Kira will not be enough. He is an intelligent but asocial detective who chooses to solve crimes, not out of any sense of duty or devotion to the truth, but because he finds it amusing and an escape from the boredom life otherwise provides. He is on the surface a Sherlock Holmes-like figure – but unlike Holmes or the Holmes-inspired characters created by Japanese authors such as Edogawa Ranpo and Homura Kodō, he lacks

depth as a character. He has little personality but many quirks: he only eats sweets, he refuses to brush his hair or clean himself up in general, and he is an insomniac with constant dark circles under his eyes. His investigative methods, such as enrolling in Light's high school, are unorthodox but not particularly successful. When he dies, he is replaced by a series of similar characters (most notably M/Mello and N/Near,) who are *also* quirky, asocial, fairly intelligent private detectives who fail to defeat Light. As the next 'L clone' is introduced, it gets harder and harder for readers to sympathize with or care about this endless parade of similar, one-note supposedly intelligent detectives, which only increases the appeal of the greater genius Light.

The relationship between criminal and authority as a central theme in literature and media is new neither to the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries nor to Japan. The glorified, charismatic, intelligent, successful criminal character type has, however, developed and achieved unique popularity in Japan; in more recent years, the bland 'Genius' Detective was created in modern anime and manga to glorify these criminals even further. From bumbling policemen who caused audiences to laugh, Japanese media progressed to genius criminals that at first made audiences sympathize with them, and later evoked guilty fascination and attraction. While charismatic criminals are still widely present in *anime* and *manga*, in the next chapter we will examine how one-dimensional 'genius' nemeses evolved as well: into policemen who are used by authors and directors to ask questions about the effectiveness of the law and the true definitions of 'crime' and 'justice'.





### Chapter 3: Judging Javert

#### Using Hugo's *Les Misérables* to Critique the Justice System

This thesis's two previous chapters have analyzed character types that engage the viewer in distinct and different ways. The bumbling policeman prototype serves an entertainment purpose: he makes audience members laugh and cheer and hide their eyes in secondhand embarrassment as he crashes through yet another famous monument along his endless pursuit. Viewers do not question why he fails so frequently, they merely laugh as he does so. The suave, smooth, genius criminal plays with emotions, manipulating viewers' minds along with those of his or her fans and supporters. Viewers are attracted to his or her good looks and charismatic personality, simultaneously disgusted by the horrendous acts he or she commits, and intrigued at his or her increasingly complex schemes. If the character is created well, the allure can often outweigh the disgust, as readers and viewers find themselves rooting for the 'dark side'. The emotional response these characters trigger in fans of their stories is complex, fascinating and multi-layered, but viewers rarely question *why* they are responding in that way. It is a widely accepted truth both in Japan and worldwide, especially in recent years (with the trend at its peak in the mid-1990s and early 2000s) that 'bad guys' are alluring, fascinating, and attractive, often more so than the 'good guys' who oppose them.

Bumbling cops make us laugh, suave genius criminals make us react emotionally, but the third law-related character type, the most contemporary both in historical origin and in appearance in Japanese media, makes us ask *why*. This type raises important questions both societal (examining systems of law and law enforcement and their effectiveness) and

philosophical (calling into question the very definition of concepts such as ‘justice’, ‘morality’, and ‘right and wrong’). Such characters are rarely if ever the source of comedy and, while the criminals they face may be skilled, intelligent and charismatic, it is difficult mindlessly to root for them when they are opposed by an equally complex and three-dimensional policeman or investigator. Perhaps the greatest difference between this type and the two that came before it is that instead of being an amalgamation of literary and historical precedents, it derives nearly in its entirety from a single character in a single book by a single author, published comparatively recently –Victor Hugo’s 1862 French masterpiece, *Les Misérables*.

“If souls were visible to the eye we would clearly see the strange fact that each individual of the human species corresponds to some species of the animal kingdom...the peasants of the Asturias believe that in every litter of wolves there is one pup that is killed by the mother for fear that on growing up it would devour the other little ones. Give a human face to this wolf’s son and you will have Javert” (Hugo 169-170). With these lines Victor Hugo introduces readers to Inspector Javert, the tireless man of the law who will chase protagonist Jean Valjean across years and miles with the sole purpose of putting him back in jail for the rest of his life. Even these first lines reveal Javert as a complex character meant to raise questions in the minds of those who encounter him. Before he is even given a physical description, he is used to introduce the broad philosophical concept of the correspondence between the human soul and members of the animal kingdom. It is an image that recurs, with Javert’s ‘wolf-like’ determination and dedication to hunting down criminals forming a core element of his character.

Following this introduction, Hugo spends three pages on Javert's history, beliefs, ideals, and habits. Hugo characterizes Javert in great detail, yet also succinctly explains that this complex and multidimensional character is in essence a fusion of two simple beliefs: "respect for authority and hatred of rebellion" (Hugo 171). In a narrative of wide scope, which examines such themes and events as the legal system of post-revolutionary France and the student uprisings of June 1832, Javert serves as the lens through which Hugo asks the readers to question these things. Hugo presents Javert's judgment of events, filtered through his unwavering black-and-white devotion to the letter of the law, and readers are encouraged to identify where he is wrong and to seek out the contradictions whose existence he refuses to acknowledge. When Javert is convinced that former convict Valjean can never redeem himself for the unpunished crime of destroying his parole papers, readers are forced to conduct their own judgment of Valjean – he must earn the redemption from them that he cannot from Javert. Javert infiltrates the student rebellion and opposes their cause with the sternness of one who cannot comprehend the ability of society to change from its established order; it is the readers who imagine these changes that the uprising, had it been successful, could have wrought. And when Javert himself at last doubts – confronted with unshakable evidence that Valjean is, despite his crimes, a truly good man – the reader is offered the chance to judge this man who has spent the story judging others. Opinions of Javert, analyses of his actions, judgments on his final decision to commit suicide after his worldview is shaken, are many and varied – but the one thing they are not is simple.

*Les Misérables* was first introduced to Japan 38 years after its initial publication. It appeared in translation in 1900 in the *Yorozu Chōhō* (*Morning Report for the Masses*), a newspaper published by liberal activist Kuroiwa Shūroku, writing under the pen name

Kuroiwa Ruiko. Kuroiwa, a strong opponent of the Japanese government of the time, used his translation of Western texts to promote his belief in the need for revolution and a complete overhaul of the social system. Japanese readers were introduced to *Les Misérables* in the role of social and philosophical tract rather than merely as literature. After a positive reception to Ruiko's translation, Japanese adaptations of *Les Misérables* began to be created every few years with surprising regularity. Eight live-action Japanese films have been produced, most under the title *Aa mujo* (roughly translating to *Ah, Misery*) but several under variant titles, including *Kyojinden (In the Land of the Giants)* in 1938, *Kami to Akuma (Gods and Devils)* in 1950, and *Nihon Jean Valjean Monogatari (Japan's Story of Jean Valjean)* in 1988. Additionally, Japan has produced three animated adaptations: 13 episodes of the long-running series *Manga Sekai Mukashi Banashi (Manga World Classic Stories)* in 1978, the made-for-TV film *Jean Valjean Monogatari* in 1979, and the 52-episode anime *Les Misérables Shōjo Cosette* in 2007. Non-television Japanese adaptations include a 2013 *manga* and *Arm Joe* (a pun on *Aa mujo*), a fighting-style video game featuring characters from the novel as well as a literal avatar of Justice and a robotic clone of Valjean. Of all the countries in the world that have adopted and adapted *Les Misérables*, the sheer volume of adaptations produced by Japan is among the greatest.<sup>8</sup>

Japan has also been home to many successful productions of the 1985 musical. Japan was also the only non-Western country represented in the 1988 *Les Misérables: Complete Symphonic Recording*, with a Japanese actress, Shimada Kaho, singing the role of Éponine. The first Japanese production opened on June 17 at Tokyo's Imperial Theater, produced by the Tōhō Company. After a several-month run there, it began a tour of Japan that is still

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<sup>8</sup> See Appendix B for a complete list of Japanese adaptations of *Les Misérables*.

ongoing in 2015, including several returns to the Imperial, where *Les Misérables* has become a staple of its repertory. No fewer than six Japanese-language cast albums have been released: two in 1994, one featuring each of the original Valjeans, and four in 2003, featuring each of the four actors who had played the role on tour since. The Tokyo production made several interesting casting decisions unique to Japan. First, each actor aside from those playing Valjean and Javert also doubled as at least one of the show's minor ensemble roles, creating the image that "the main character of *Les Misérables* is the crowd" and that "the individuality of its characters is subsumed within the chorus, the nameless, faceless downtrodden" (Senda 261). Theatrical scholar Senda Akihiko, who reviewed the original production for his book *The Journey of Contemporary Japanese Theater*, felt that this decision helped *Les Misérables* better portray "the realities of urban life," an important issue in Japan, home to the world's largest metropolitan area (Senda 263).

The second unique casting decision which the Tōhō production made was to cast two actors (Takita Sakae and Kaga Takeshi) in the shared role of Valjean and Javert. Takita and Kaga would switch who played Valjean and who played Javert at a set point or points throughout the show. Senda describes the effect this technique has on the audience: it makes them see that "Valjean and Javert, the hunter and the hunted, the people who seek justice and the cold-blooded men who wield the power: at first glance they seem to be altogether different but...we come to realize that both function like a reciprocal plus and minus within a larger system" (Senda 264). The similarities between Valjean and Javert are underscored not just by the musical motifs that they share (*Valjean's Soliloquy*, in which he resolves to turn his life around and become a better man, is musically identical to *Javert's Suicide*) but by them literally existing as two interchangeable actors portraying both roles. As in its many

film and *anime* adaptations, *Les Misérables* in Japan is presented to viewers, readers and audiences in a way that forces them to think about deep themes, recurring images and larger issues.

But direct adaptations are not the sole influence that *Les Misérables* in general, and Javert in particular, has had on Japan. Characters who share many traits with Javert have appeared in *manga* and *anime* beginning in the mid-1990s. Though these characters appear in stories spanning a variety of genres and plots, they share a number of characteristics identifying them as examples of the “Javert archetype.” These men (and, occasionally, women) possess a devotion to the law above all else – though “law” does not always mean the written legal system of their home, and can refer to a self-created definition of the concept. Often, they will see themselves as a representation or embodiment of the law, the sole entity with the duties of dispensing justice, identifying and arresting criminals and bringing them to justice. The “Javert archetype” will almost always be or at least start the story as a part of the official police system, rather than operating as a freelancer such as Sherlock Holmes or L. He or she will believe in the law and organized legal systems ahead of larger concepts such as “truth” or “morality,” at least at the beginning of the story.

The “Javert archetype” will be pitted against criminals who are usually sympathetic, as Valjean was in the original work – either falsely accused or having sufficiently achieved redemption in the eyes of society or a higher power. If his opponent is not sympathetic; however, and instead arises from the “suave, charismatic criminal mastermind” archetype discussed in Chapter 2, this criminal will at least be a well-developed character with complex motives that, combined with the “Javert archetype’s” pursuit of him or her, calls into question some aspect of society or the law. In most cases the “Javert archetype” will pursue a

single criminal throughout the course of the narrative, with which he will possess a nemesis relationship again similar to the one discussed in Chapter 2. If he does occasionally come up against single-arc or single-episode villains, the larger antagonist will either be the one pulling the strings or quietly waiting in the background, observing the “Javert archetype’s” progress at every moment.

Throughout the course of their antagonistic relationship, encounters with the criminal he pursues and with the world he inhabits will inevitably cause the “Javert archetype” to question his firmly held beliefs and the laws which he has followed throughout his life. This questioning may be the result of a single event (as in the original, where Javert’s life was spared by Valjean following his capture at the barricades of the student revolution) or a gradual awakening over the course of a longer story. Ultimately, a final confrontation (such as the aforementioned life-sparing) will occur between the two nemeses. This confrontation is not usually physical in nature, but more heavily focused around dialogue, debate and mind games. Who emerges victorious from this confrontation, if there is a victor at all, varies depending on the story, but the “Javert archetype’s” fate remains the same. He commits suicide, either literally as the original did (in his case jumping off of a bridge into a treacherous part of the River Seine) or metaphorically / symbolically by removing himself from his position within the legal system and “killing” that which forms his identity: the role he has played for what is in most cases the majority of his life.

This description seems overly specific, but as of 2015, at least four distinct examples of this character type, unassociated with *Les Misérables*, have appeared in Japanese *anime* and *manga* alone. The first is Inspector Heinrich Lunge of the long-running *manga* *Monster* by Urasawa Naoki, who chases a falsely accused doctor instead of the child serial killer who



is the true culprit. *Monster* achieved massive popularity; the *manga* ran from 1994 to 2001, and an extremely faithful *anime* adaptation was produced in 2004-2005. *Monster* also contains an example of the genius, charismatic criminal type discussed in Chapter 2 – the actual culprit of the crimes of which an innocent doctor is falsely accused - facing off against a police inspector that I consider the earliest example of the “Javert archetype” in *manga* or *anime*.

While *Monster* may be the first example of the Javert-type character, it is far from the last. In 2012, legendary *anime* director Gen Urobuchi created *Psycho-Pass*,<sup>9</sup> a dark crime thriller set in a world where one’s potential to commit crime is judged at all times. With its heavy focus on crime, *Psycho-Pass*, like *Monster*, features a pairing of the criminal type from Chapter 2 and the “Javert archetype” of the current chapter. The Javert in this case is Kogami Shinya, a policeman whose dedication to catch a single criminal causes him to develop criminal potential of his own. When his criminal potential bars him from a continued position within the established justice system, he commits symbolic suicide and, erasing himself from the system, continues to pursue his nemesis in the role of a vigilante. The complex society in which Kogami and his nemesis, Makishima, exist, based so completely around crime and the definition of the criminal, forces the viewer to create and decide on his or her own definitions of concepts such as “justice” and “criminal.”

Two years after *Psycho-Pass*, in 2014, yet another legendary *anime* director, Watanabe Shinichiro (known for such classics as *Cowboy Bebop* and *Samurai Champloo*) created a Javert of his own in *Zankyou no Terror* (alternately translated as *Terror in*

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<sup>9</sup> *Psycho-Pass* is translated into English by FUNimation.

*Resonance and Terror in Tokyo*).<sup>10</sup> FBI agent Five dedicates her life to the pursuit of a terrorist organization known as Sphinx, believing that she is the only one capable of bringing them to justice. Completely ignoring Sphinx's sympathetic motives and the message they are trying to communicate to the public, she stops at nothing – including sacrificing the lives of innocent civilian bystanders – to capture them and put them behind bars. It is only when she is brutally confronted with the truth that Sphinx is constantly one step ahead of her and that she has no hope of foiling their plans that she abandons her lifelong chase. She follows the path of the original Javert most literally; she sets her car on fire, perishing in the resulting blaze and ending her life on her own terms. Despite that, she differs from him the most in personality, her ruthlessness and cruelty forcing audiences to question how upside-down a world must be if terrorists are the sympathetic protagonists and an FBI agent is the brutal antagonist.

Additionally, Javert-type characters have not been limited to *anime* and *manga*. The internationally popular video game series *Gyakuten Saiban* (translated as *Ace Attorney*)<sup>11</sup> released its first installment in 2001 and its latest in 2014, with several more planned in the future. The protagonist, defense attorney Phoenix Wright, believes in the collection of evidence and the concept of 'innocent until proven guilty'. His opponents are a series of prosecutors, each with a Javert-like belief that only he or she has the right to determine innocence or guilt, regardless of whether evidence contradicts his or her decision. The most Javert-like character is Miles Edgeworth, who begins the series as heartless and unconcerned with questions of guilt or innocence. After he himself is falsely accused of murder, however,

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<sup>10</sup> Prior to the release of an English translation, the accepted translation among fans was *Terror in Tokyo*. The official English translation by Noitamina titles it "Terror in Tokyo."

<sup>11</sup> English translation is provided by Nintendo.

he is forced to question the code of the prosecutor which he had been raised to follow. He initially seems to be following Javert's path literally, with an attempted suicide, but he changes his mind at the last moment and commits a symbolic suicide instead, taking a leave of absence from his position and studying to become a defense attorney. The series, which contains a thief named Jean and a red-vested revolutionary leader, is one of the examples most clearly derived from Hugo's original, and its courtroom setting is used to analyze the relative fairness of judge-based vs. jury-based trials.

These stories share similar themes and characters, but in many ways are extremely dissimilar from one another. *Monster* and *Zankyou no Terror* are set in our world, while *Psycho-Pass* exists in an alternate, futuristic, technologically advanced society. *Monster* is deeply political while *Psycho-Pass* and *Zankyou no Terror* are more thriller-like and *Gyakuten Saiban* is an episodic mystery series. The killer of *Monster* operates on an international scale, committing crimes all across Europe. *Zankyou no Terror* and *Psycho-Pass* take place entirely in Japan. These series seem to possess more differences than they do similarities – but all of them contain a character who utilizes the same template. In short, why do such different series have one character type that ties them together – *why Javert?*

The answer lies in the unique capacity of the “Javert archetype” to raise societal and philosophical questions about the nature of truth, law, justice and morality. As the Javert judges criminals, so to do the readers judge the Javert. As a Javert sees the world in black and white, so it falls to the readers and viewers to fill in the shades of grey. And when the Javert inevitably begins to question his long-held beliefs as his entire world crumbles around him, the readers and viewers question right alongside. Each of these stories depicts different

themes and raises different questions, but in each case it is the Javert character and his relationship with a criminal nemesis that helps to raise them.

What questions a viewer asks of a work of fiction depends on the viewer's reactions and how he or she relates to the text. Different viewers with different opinions and reactions, however, will for the most part find themselves asking similar questions about similar concepts and ideas. For example, questions raised by the original Javert in *Les Misérables* and its adaptations include: What makes a man guilty? Is redemption, forgiveness or absolution possible after one has committed a crime? Do existing legal systems contribute to the creation of Valjean-like criminals, who struggle for redemption but are denied it by society? Inspector Lunge of *Monster*, who chases a truly innocent man because he refuses to believe in the existence of the 'monster' child Johan, makes readers ask how – and if -- one can bring justice to a killer who does not possess a human moral code, and thus cannot truly be considered human. He also brings into question the role of proof in an investigation, and whether it is the policeman's job simply to arrest the man he has been told to arrest or to first look for all possible evidence.

Kogami Shinya, existing within a world defined around crime and the potential for crime, raises questions on an even broader scale – who can judge criminality? Can those who are themselves criminals judge other criminals? Can humanity truly define what “crime” and “criminal” mean, and build a society in which all agree with these definitions? He also highlights the contrast between an organized justice system and the concept of the vigilante, as he fills both roles over the course of the series and has distinct successes and failures within both. Lastly Five, standing in opposition to arguably sympathetic terrorists, raises questions of motive – can criminals truly have sympathetic motives and, if they do, is it

important to consider these motives before arresting or chasing them down? Given that terrorism is usually a crime sending a message, is it important for the authorities to listen to that message, or should they simply focus on stopping the crimes? More frighteningly, in the final episodes, as Sphinx successfully remains one step ahead of the FBI and police long enough to release an atomic bomb at high altitude, viewers find themselves asking: Does our current system of laws and law enforcement truly protect us from criminals and criminal acts? These are large, deep, often terrifying questions, and they could not be placed so clearly into the mind of the viewer without the aid of the Javert-type characters who make us ask them.

While Javert's historical journey is significantly shorter than that of either the bumbling incompetent or the genius criminal and his nemesis, he has undergone development over the decades and centuries as *Les Misérables* has been adapted around the world. Most significantly, the 1985 musical adaptation characterized Javert rather differently than the original novel; the musical has gained widespread popularity equal to or arguably surpassing that of the novel, meaning that its characterization of Javert and others is more prevalent internationally than Hugo's original incarnation. Even in Japan, a country that had great familiarity with the original novel and had adapted it many times over before the musical even existed, post-1985 adaptations of Javert or characters based on Javert tend to show at least some evidence of the musical's influence.

It is important to analyze Javert's character in depth in order to understand the elements which other "Javert archetype" characters have borrowed from the original, as well as the ways in which they are different. The original Javert of Hugo's 1862 novel is, despite Hugo's fondness for lengthy descriptions, characterized quite brilliantly, simply and briefly

on two different occasions. Both occur within the chapter “Vague Flashes On the Horizon,” which serves as Javert’s first introduction into the story after he has taken on the position of inspector in the town of Montreuil-sur-Mer, where Valjean, disguised as the mayor “Monsieur Madeleine,” has found refuge. The first is the comparison between Javert and a vicious wolf, cited earlier in this chapter. The second, arguably the most concise and accurate summation of Javert’s character, is worded thusly: “This man was a compound of two sentiments, simple and good in themselves, but he made them almost evil by his exaggeration of them: respect for authority and hatred of rebellion; and in his eyes theft, murder, all crimes were merely forms of rebellion” (Hugo 171). While he respects authority, he is neither religious nor an extreme royalist; the law is his only code and creed. His past is discussed only briefly in this same introduction scene: “Javert was born in prison...He would have arrested his own father if he escaped from prison and turned in his own mother for breaking parole. And he would have done it with that sort of interior satisfaction that springs from virtue” (Hugo 170-171). He developed his absolute belief in the law in order to separate himself from his criminal parents, believing that the circumstances of his birth forever forbade him from holding any role within society except for one of “those who guard it” (Hugo 170). He becomes an officer of the law not out of belief in any higher power, but because he sees it as the only path available.

Unlike most film versions and the musical, novel Javert does not spend the entirety of the 1500-page epic pursuing Valjean and Valjean alone, though their multiple encounters across the years are definitively portrayed as the result of a shared destiny. He is portrayed as competent, intelligent, and frequently successful at his job. He is shown arresting numerous criminals throughout the text, including Paris’s most deadly street gang, the Patron-Minette,

previously described as “a sort of mysterious robber with four heads preying on Paris wholesale” and “a monstrous polyp of evil that inhabits the crypt of society” (Hugo 724). He even successfully arrests Valjean once. An innocent man is accused of being Valjean, and, after ‘Monsieur Madeleine’ reveals his true identity to save this man, Javert sends him back to prison. It is only after Javert rediscovers Valjean in Paris after a second successful escape that he becomes fixated on the recapture of Valjean.

Javert’s attempts to recapture Valjean in Paris fail as he himself ends up a prisoner of a group of student revolutionaries, whose ranks he attempted to infiltrate as a spy. Recognized by Valjean, who has joined the uprising, Javert is shocked when his old enemy spares his life. Despite his goal of recapturing Valjean, he spares Valjean’s life in turn when he finds the former prisoner leaving the barricade carrying the body of an injured student. What follows is a twelve-page chapter consisting almost entirely of Javert’s thoughts and internal monologue, culminating in the abrupt completion of his character arc: his suicide via jumping off a bridge into the River Seine. Hugo’s pacing decision here is quite deliberate: upon his introduction to the reader, Javert’s entire character as well as his personal history was able to be summarized in a mere three pages of text. He was a simple, uncomplicated man able to be summarized in simple, uncomplicated terms, his entire being distilled into a few sentiments. When Javert questions himself following his sparing of Valjean, he “cease[s] to be uncomplicated” (Hugo 1320). He doubts everything that he believed and held true, and is “compelled to acknowledge” the true nature of Valjean as “a beneficent malefactor, a compassionate convict, kind, helpful, clement, returning good for evil, returning pardon for hatred, loving pity rather than vengeance...kneeling on the heights of virtue, nearer angels than men” (Hugo 1322). His entire worldview, which was centered around the law, his own

duty of upholding it, and the necessity of punishment for those who break it, has been called into question. He acknowledges that freeing Valjean was the right thing to do but cannot come to terms with himself for having done so. He feels that “he himself...had just been kind. Therefore he had become depraved” (Hugo 1324). After having pursued a single, straightforward path throughout the story, he is suddenly faced with a choice: doing what he has been ordered to do by his superior, the Prefect of police, or doing what is right according to “that other superior...this new chief, God” (Hugo 1325). He ultimately realizes that, as he cannot bring himself to return and arrest Jean Valjean, he must both resign from the police force, which he does by leaving a letter for the Prefect, and “send in his resignation to God,” which he does by ending his own life (Hugo 1325). He ends his life both mentally and physically caught between the law and God, as he throws himself into the section of the Seine which lies between the Palais de Justice and the cathedral of Notre Dame. The last thing he sees before his death are these two buildings, reduced to mere “features in the night” (Hugo 1330). After many pages of mental agony and questioning, the actual execution of Javert’s final decision is carried out very briefly: “there was a dull splash, and the night alone was admitted to the secret convulsions of that obscure form which had disappeared under the water” (Hugo 1330). Though he doubted himself and questioned himself at last, he died much as he lived: in a simple and uncomplicated manner.

Because the 1985 musical version of *Les Misérables* has become an international sensation, including gaining extreme popularity in Japan, it is also important to identify the changes which were made to Javert’s character in this version, as this version of Javert has also served as an influence for other “Javert archetype” characters. Because the musical is naturally a compressed adaptation, telling a story that spans 1500+ pages in the space of 3



hours, there is not room to examine Javert's beliefs and motives at length as Hugo does in the original novel. Specifically, the crisis of faith which Javert experiences prior to his suicide, between his loyalty to the police force and his newly discovered responsibility to God, is eliminated entirely. Javert is portrayed as a strongly Christian character throughout the musical. He considers Valjean, a criminal on the run from the law, to have "*fallen from God*" and explicitly compares Valjean's crime to the exile of Lucifer from Heaven: "*and if you fall / As Lucifer fell / You fall in flame.*" Similarly, what was mere obedience to authorities and the following of orders which he had been given in the novel became a strong patriotic loyalty and a belief in royalist government systems in the musical. His infiltration of the student uprising is shown as motivated not only by orders, but also by personal desire to quash any form of revolution. In the closing scene of Act I, he explains the motivations behind his actions: "*One more day to revolution / We will nip it in the bud / I will join these little schoolboys / They will wet themselves with blood.*" When his true identity is revealed and he is taken prisoner by the revolutionaries, he responds with an angry personal attack: "*Shoot me now or shoot me later / Every schoolboy to his sport / Death to each and every traitor / I renounce your People's Court.*" While Javert is still a complex character, with his worldview and inner struggles revealed in his soliloquies "Stars" and "Javert's Suicide," his motivations and beliefs are shifted in the musical so as to be more easily understandable in a shorter amount of time. His suicide scene remains remarkably unchanged; however, with the accompanying song's lyrics drawn in many places directly from the original text.

The other major change made to Javert's character in the transition from book to musical is the addition of his single-minded obsession with finding and capturing Valjean and the accompanying marked decrease in his competency and skill as an officer of the law.

An additional scene, the very first, is added of Valjean being paroled from prison. It contains dialogue between the two characters which establishes their mutually antagonistic relationship. Javert is introduced insisting on Valjean's criminality while Valjean attempts, unsuccessfully, to defend his actions to Javert. The following lines are taken from the musical's opening song:

JAVERT: *Now, prisoner 24601. Your time is up and your parole's begun. You know what that means.*

VALJEAN: *Yes, it means I'm free.*

JAVERT: *No, it means you get your yellow ticket-of-leave. You are a thief.*

VALJEAN: *I stole a loaf of bread!*

JAVERT: *You robbed a house!*

VALJEAN: *I broke a windowpane. My sister's child was close to death, and we were starving.*

JAVERT: *You will starve again unless you learn the meaning of the law*

*(From Les Misérables: Complete Symphonic Recording)*

In addition to this new scene, Javert's successful arrests of other criminals are removed in order to highlight his single-minded pursuit. In the original text, Javert arrests Valjean and sends him back to prison for a second time after successfully foiling his attempt to escape Montreuil-sur-Mer. In the musical, Javert's victory is changed into a victory for Valjean, who knocks Javert out with a chair leg and escapes. As this scene directly follows the song *The Confrontation*, which establishes Valjean and Javert as similar characters with

equally strong motivations and conviction, Valjean's victory here shows his convictions and determination to be stronger than Javert's. This element of their relationship which was never present in the original text. Additionally, Javert's arrest of the Patron-Minette gang is removed. While he does capture them following their unsuccessful attempt to rob a rich man, the gang's collaborator Thenardier reveals to Javert that the man they were trying to rob was actually Valjean in disguise. As a result, Javert begins immediately to think about his desire to catch Valjean, and lets the entire gang of captured criminals go in favor of pursuing Valjean instead. This singular fixation on Valjean and Valjean alone is the element of musical Javert most commonly included in later adaptations of Javert and in other "Javert archetype" characters.

The first two animated adaptations of *Les Misérables*, the thirteen episode arc of *Manga Sekai Mukashi Banashi* and the animated film *Jean Valjean Monogatari*, were released at the end of the 1970s (1978 and 1979 respectively) to a limited audience and equally limited popularity. The *Manga Sekai* version was never completed, adapting only the first two parts of the novel. *Jean Valjean Monogatari*, though created by the well-known studio Toei Animation, was released as a TV movie and received poorly for its attempt to compress the story into a mere 69 minutes. After these two less-than-successful attempts, Japanese animated adaptations of *Les Misérables* disappeared for several decades. *Les Misérables* would not be re-adapted into *anime* format until 2007's *Shōjo Cosette*, with a *manga* adaptation following in 2013. The arrival of the musical during this time kept *Les Misérables*' popularity in Japan alive, and the first example of the "Javert archetype" character would appear in a *manga* that at first glance seems to have nothing in common with Javert's source material at all.

This *manga* is *Monster*, which began publication in 1994 in the *seinen* (*manga* aimed at an adult male audience) magazine *Big Comic Original*, and ran for 162 chapters (18 volumes) until its completion in 2001. The previous chapter discussed the titular killer, Johan Liebert, and the question of whether or not human justice can truly be applied to such a creature, and whether or not a human can ever truly understand the mind of a monster.

The “Javert archetype,” Inspector Heinrich Lunge, is merely a small piece in the complex puzzle of characters surrounding the kind Dr. Tenma and the heartless Johan. An inspector working for the *Bundeskriminalamt* (German Federal Criminal Police Office), Lunge is the officer in charge of investigating a string of serial murders beginning in 1986, with the murder of several doctors at Eisler Memorial Hospital, where Tenma was employed and Johan was treated. He immediately pegs Tenma as the most likely suspect and refuses to believe Tenma’s story of the murderous boy Johan, believing it to be impossible and fantastic. He continues to believe in Tenma’s guilt for the next nine years, and devotes himself obsessively to solving the case and proving Tenma to be the culprit once and for all. He sacrifices everything for the chase, including his wife and daughter, who abandon him, believing he has become too exclusively focused on his work. His single-minded dedication to his goal and his following of Tenma across Germany are clearly similar to Javert, especially the more obsessive musical version of Javert. His personality also bears many similarities to Javert’s – he holds justice above all, including even truth, believing that Tenma is guilty because the evidence points that way despite Tenma and several other characters’ affirming the existence of the “monster” Johan. He is confident in his own judgments and believes that his sole duty is to arrest Tenma and bring him to justice, causing him to ignore the possibility that another killer might truly be behind everything. Tenma, who is

kind, beloved by his patients, good with children, willing to provide medical care to any injured person regardless of his or identity, and above all completely innocent, also bears several similarities to Valjean (though Valjean was initially guilty of theft while Tenma is falsely accused of all his ‘crimes’). Their mutually antagonistic relationship mirrors that of their predecessors from *Les Misérables*; however, the existence of a third party (Johan), who is not only guilty but monstrous and cruel, makes their story significantly more complicated.

Lunge’s story contains many plot parallels with Javert’s, making him one of the “Javert archetype” characters who bears the most direct similarities with the original. Many of the key events in Javert and Valjean’s story also occur within Lunge and Tenma’s. Just as Javert and the French police initially mistake an innocent man named Champmathieu for Valjean, Lunge mistakes the “Johan” Tenma accuses for a split personality within Tenma himself. Tenma saves Lunge’s life just as Valjean does for Javert at the barricade; Tenma uses his doctoral skills to treat Lunge after he is shot by an insane man who believes Lunge is out to get him. Javert saves Valjean from being arrested by allowing him to leave the barricade with the injured Marius instead of apprehending him. Lunge aids Tenma in a similar manner by refusing to stop him when, after he has been apprehended by the police, he escapes from the prison where he was being held.

Like Javert before his suicide, Lunge also undergoes a crisis regarding his belief in justice and his own ability to determine the truth once he is faced with photographic evidence of Johan’s existence and connection with the murders he believed Tenma to have committed. Unlike Javert, however, his ‘suicide’ is symbolic: he resigns from the *Bundeskriminalamt* and begins pursuing Johan alone. Ultimately, he helps Tenma by killing one of Johan’s allies, and later testifies regarding Tenma’s innocence in the final trial which results in the doctor’s

name being cleared for good. At the end of the series, Lunge is revealed to have become a professor at a police academy, teaching the next generation of officers of the law to learn from the mistakes he made during his own career. His ending is significantly happier than the original Javert's; although he sacrifices the job he had held for years and which had taken up all of his time, energy and interest, he manages to find a new role in the law enforcement system by educating future police. He even succeeds in repairing his relationship with his estranged daughter, who had cut off all contact with him because she felt that he only cared about his job and catching criminals. His ending fits the overall theme of *Monster's* conclusion: though monsters exist in this world, and it may be that they can never truly be defeated either by human justice or human kindness, there is still hope for a brighter future free from these monsters for those who can hold on to their humanity.

Lunge shares many similarities with Javert both physically and in his mannerisms, speech, and the way he is perceived by others around him. The similarities between the two characters not just in the key events of their stories but in their very appearance and habits makes it highly unlikely that Urasawa Naoki was not in some way inspired by Hugo's original. In his first appearance, Javert is described as possessing "a snub nose...thin lips...a small head, large jaws...between the eyes a permanent central crease like an angry star, a gloomy look, a pinched and ferocious mouth, and an air of fierce command" (Hugo 171). Besides the references to Javert's thick sideburns and large amount of hair, this could easily describe the image of Lunge in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 5: Lunge as he first appears in the *Monster anime***

Both characters are also associated to some extent with nervous habits. Javert is mentioned in his first appearance as sometimes taking snuff, and he does so upon several other occasions, usually after the successful completion of an arrest. Lunge has a consistent habit of moving his fingers as though he is typing on air, which he describes as “entering every bit of information into the floppy disk in my head” (Urasawa 5). The two characters also possess similar manners of speech. They are direct, sometimes condescending to those below them, and both speak and think with extreme conviction. They are quick to make judgments – Javert frequently refers to Valjean with terms such as thief, convict, and malefactor and (in the musical) utilizes his prisoner number, 24601, instead of his name. These forms of address make it clear that Javert has judged Valjean’s character and found him to be guilty, deserving of nothing but arrest and, in the musical, arguably less than human as Javert refuses to grant him even a name. Lunge decides very early in the story (in Chapter 24 of the *manga*) that Dr. Tenma possesses a split personality named ‘Johan’ who is a cold blooded killer, and that the young boy named ‘Johan’ who Tenma accuses of the

murders is really just a reflection of that split personality. He speaks with confidence and self-assuredness about how he has “the case of Dr. Tenma solved inside of [him]” and how all that remains is for Tenma to be arrested and brought to justice (Urasawa 24).



**Figure 6: Lunge summarizes his convictions regarding the Tenma case**

The scene in which the parallels between Lunge and Javert are most clearly apparent occurs in chapter 60 of the *manga*. Having traced Tenma to Munich, Lunge interrogates Dr. Rudi Gillen, a criminal psychologist suspected of collaborating with Tenma. Despite insisting that he respects Dr. Gillen’s work and utilizes Dr. Gillen’s theories in his own investigative work, Lunge initially completely refuses to believe Gillen’s insistence that Johan is real and Tenma is innocent. He even ignores the lengthy analysis written by Gillen based on data collected from the previous murder cases attributed to Tenma, which proves the necessary involvement of a criminal other than Tenma. Gillen’s response to this is harshly to analyze Lunge and the relationship between Lunge and Tenma, making several statements which reveal Lunge’s absolute fixation on Tenma’s guilt and his utter refusal to



accept any judgments other than his own – both traits shared by Javert in his pursuit of Valjean.

Referring to Lunge's habit of 'typing' the information he has heard in order to record it into his brain, Gillen points out that "the instant your hand records that information, it becomes subjective...that's how you've always done your work! Your hand's memories are correct, your judgments are all unmistaken!" (Urasawa 60). He explains that the information 'typed' out on air by Lunge's hands (objective) is then processed through Lunge's brain and Lunge's beliefs (subjective) meaning that his supposedly cold, rational, "unmistaken" judgments can never be completely objective. The criminal psychologist also effectively identifies the root cause of Lunge's constant insistence on Tenma's guilt (See Figure 7). "Aren't you terrified of making mistakes?" Gillen asks. "To you, Tenma absolutely must be the killer here. If not, your identity will fall apart" (Urasawa 60). Gillen's analysis of Lunge's mental state, and the deep connection between his self-identity and the judgments he makes regarding the guilt of others, is extremely similar to the muddled state of Javert's thoughts following his rescue by Valjean. Javert finds himself "obliged to acknowledge...a crack is possible in the immutable; judges are men; the law may be deceived; the tribunals may be mistaken!" (Hugo 1324-1326). The analysis of Lunge by Gillen and the incontrovertible evidence of Lunge's mistake which Gillen provides – a photograph of Johan Liebert, proving his existence to Lunge once and for all – parallel the rescue of Javert by Valjean and Javert's subsequent acknowledgment of Valjean as more than a criminal. Both are single moments in which a character's identity and worldview are shattered and they are painfully forced to admit that they have spent a very long time being very wrong about something important.



**Figure 7 – Gillen confronts Lunge with proof of Johan's existence**

The similarities between Lunge and Javert are deliberate and striking. The character of Lunge; however, is a good deal more than simply an homage to Hugo and *Les Misérables*. *Les Misérables* is a story with important social, political and historical background; it was written in a post-revolutionary France following the reinstatement of the monarchy and several unsuccessful student revolts. During this time, the law enforcement system was

known for overly harsh punishments and caring more about putting people in jail than actually upholding justice. Similarly, *Monster* is a socially and politically charged story as well as an in-depth examination of several deep philosophical questions. It was written in the mid 1990s, when Japan was still struggling to recover from the collapse of its “bubble economy.” The overall dark and sometimes despairing tone with its somewhat hopeful and uplifting ending seem perfectly suited for this time period, juxtaposing Japan’s suffering with the hope of eventual recovery.

*Monster*’s political connections cannot be overlooked either – the story takes place in Germany and features radical groups of neo-Nazis as well as human experiments explicitly stated to be aimed at creating the ‘next Hitler’; Johan is interpreted by many characters as being the perfect leader for the ‘master race’. Protagonist Kenzo Tenma is the only Japanese character of note, though he does interact with several characters belonging to other minority groups in Germany, including Turkish workers and Vietnamese immigrants. Despite the German setting and Nazi references, none of the racial or social groups encountered by Tenma are portrayed as more or less ‘good’ or ‘bad’. There are both villainous and heroic characters of all races, and Johan, the primary villain, has a racial background that is extremely indistinct. His mother was Czech, his father’s identity is never known, he was raised in Germany, he speaks a wide variety of European languages, and is frequently described as being ‘generic’ and ‘forgettable’ in appearance, and thus not being identifiable with any particular race. Johan, who is not bigoted against any group, unlike the German extremists who raised him, but hates all of humankind equally, is an ultimate, monstrous evil which exists above and apart from petty human judgments and feuds.

Lunge, though a German character working for a German organization, exists largely outside of the political and social tensions present within the story. His role is that of the implacable man pursuing a false judgment in which he has the utmost trust and confidence. He is more closely connected with the story's philosophical elements; as the primary police character, and one of the few policemen who does not wind up dead very soon after his first appearance, he, like Javert, can be seen as a representation of the justice system as a whole. He represents the justice system's inability to comprehend the kind of inhuman evil that Johan embodies, and the mistakes that are made by those in power as a result of this incomprehension. Each volume of *Monster* begins with a quote from the book of Revelation: "Who can become like this beast? Who can oppose this beast, and fight him?" (Revelation 13:4). The characters who become able to understand Johan and thus oppose him are Dr. Tenma, Johan's fellow experiment survivor Wolfgang Grimmer, and Johan's twin sister Anna. Even after he admits his mistake, Lunge is never admitted into this group – he never confronts Johan directly, and his role in the 'final battle' is fighting and defeating Johan's second-in-command, a German assassin who uses the alias Roberto. The organized law enforcement system ultimately falls short of what is needed to oppose the 'beast' Johan. Lunge's status as "Javert archetype" is used to represent this through his misguided chase and the necessity of completely altering his world view and committing a symbolic 'suicide' (removing himself from his position as an officer of the law) before Lunge can even begin to aid the cause against Johan.

A second potential reason for Urasawa's use of the Javert archetype in *Monster* is shown via an examination of the ultimate divergence of Lunge's story from Javert's. The two share many similarities until the moment when their worldviews are 'shattered'. Both

undergo a lengthy, confused thought process, but come to two very distinct conclusions: Javert, that he must end his life, and Lunge, that he must end his position as an investigator and do what he can to aid Tenma and stop Johan. The ends of their stories are very different, as Javert ends his life and Lunge goes on with his, even improving himself. In the final chapter, he is shown happily working as a teacher and has reconnected with his estranged daughter and grandson. Urasawa's following of the Javert story until its end, then replacing the literal suicide with a symbolic one and giving Lunge one of the happiest endings out of the entire cast, furthers *Monster's* ultimately hopeful message. Readers of *Monster* who are familiar with *Les Misérables* or the stories of other "Javert archetypes" are subconsciously forced to notice the contrast between the final circumstances of the two characters, and recognize how much happier and more hopeful Lunge's ending is. The final message of *Monster* is that those who retain their humanity can escape from ultimate monstrous evil, and there is hope that they can live happy lives in the end. The conclusion to Lunge's story only reinforces this.

The 74-episode *anime* adaptation of *Monster*, which shared the original *manga's* high level of success, concluded in late 2005. Two years later, the second animated example of the "Javert archetype" appeared on Japanese television screens: the original himself. In January 2007, Nippon Animation restarted their *World Masterpiece Theater* programming series, thought to be defunct, with *Les Misérables: Shōjo Cosette* (*Les Misérables: The Young Girl Cosette*).<sup>12</sup> *World Masterpiece Theater*, which adapted well-known works of American and European literature (including L. M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*, J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, and Maria von Trapp's *The Story of the Trapp Family Singers*) into *anime* form,

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<sup>12</sup> *Shoujo Cosette* is translated into English by the author of this paper.

had ceased production a decade ago in 1997. After a decade of producing *anime* not adapted from Western literature, such as *Hunter x Hunter* and *Corrector Yui*, Nippon Animation made the conscious decision to restart the *World Masterpiece Theater* with *Shōjo Cosette* as its inaugural entry. The *anime* ran for two full seasons, totaling 52 episodes in length, and was primarily inspired by the original *Les Misérables* novel, rather than the then more well-known musical.

While the decision to create *Shōjo Cosette* cannot be directly attributed to the success of *Monster*, the years between the latter's premiere in 2004 and the former's in 2007 feature a spike in the production of *anime* in the mystery and crime genres. This included the *anime* adaptation of *Death Note*, discussed in Chapter 2, no fewer than seven *Detective Conan* movies or movie-length specials, the first two entries in the eight-movie mystery series *Kara no Kyōkai*, and horror-crime thrillers *Higurashi no Naku Koro ni (When the Cicadas Cry)* and *Red Garden*. One may not be able to draw a direct line from *Monster* to *Shōjo Cosette*, but *Monster* did herald an increase in the popularity and production of crime stories, which almost certainly influenced Nippon Animation's choice of a crime-focused novel to begin the revitalization of *World Masterpiece Theater*.

As the title implies, *Shōjo Cosette* shifts the protagonist's role from Jean Valjean to his adopted daughter, Cosette. The story begins with single mother Fantine leaving Cosette in the care of a pair of innkeepers, the Thénardiens, who are cruel to her and work her like a drudge. Original protagonist Valjean is a side character who initially appears only in episodes featuring Fantine, who works at the factory he owns. He becomes a major player only after Fantine dies and Valjean journeys to the inn to rescue and adopt Cosette. Additionally, because Cosette is a supporting character in the original novel, and there are few scenes

featuring her before her adoption by Valjean, *Shōjo Cosette* adds additional scenes and episodes not present in the original text, a technique commonly referred to by fans as “filler”. Examples of this technique include Episode 3, “A New Friend Chou-Chou,” in which Cosette and the innkeeper’s son Gavroche find a stray dog and take him in while having to hide him from the animal-hating Madame Thénardier, and episode 7, “Lost Éponine,” in which the Thénardier couple’s eldest daughter, Éponine, runs away, and Cosette must find her before bad weather sets in. The shift in protagonist from Valjean to Cosette and the addition of new Cosette-centric material results in Javert serving a more minor role than in the original novel. Valjean and Javert’s conflicting ideals and mutually antagonistic relationship, while still important, is no longer the central conflict of the piece. The story now begins with Cosette’s desperate attempts to survive her harsh treatment and, following her adoption and growing up in Paris with Valjean, her attempts to carry out a relationship with her love interest, Marius, despite Valjean’s disapproval and Marius’s desire to risk his life fighting in the student uprisings.

The reduction of Javert’s role necessitates some decrease in the complexity of his character – 52 episodes, though lengthy for an *anime*, is not a sufficient amount of space for fleshing out characters originally introduced in a 1500-page novel. Much of Javert’s backstory is cut out. What information viewers do receive regarding his criminal parents and his upbringing in jail, which served as his motivation for becoming a policeman and the primary source of his utter hatred of lawbreakers, is revealed significantly later than in the novel, where it accompanies his introductory scene. Additionally, because the story starts with Cosette at the inn, scenes of Jean Valjean in prison, where Javert served as one of his guards, or of Valjean breaking his parole and disappearing, which Javert considered a

personal failure, appear only in brief flashbacks. This removes much of the depth of antagonism between Javert and Valjean, and results in Javert coming across as overly paranoid and suspicious when he arrives in the town of Montreuil-sur-Mer, where he has been assigned to the post of Inspector, and immediately begins investigating the benevolent Mayor Madeleine's supposedly criminal past. Viewers are introduced to Javert himself before they are introduced to his connection to Valjean or to the reasons behind his abiding distrust and dislike of criminals. This creates an initial impression which is significantly more one-dimensional than the detailed characterization provided in his introductory chapter, "Vague Flashes on the Horizon," or even the dialogue with Valjean in the musical's opening number, "Work Song."

Additionally, *Shōjo Cosette* was reworked to be suitable for a significantly younger audience than either the original *Les Misérables* or the 1985 musical. Earlier entries in the *World Masterpiece Theater* primarily included children's literature, such as *Anne of Green Gables*, *Heidi*, and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, and aired as a part of the children's programming block on the Fuji Television channel. In order to match the tone of the series and fit better with the previous entries, Nippon Animation worked to alter an exceptionally dark, bloody, tragic story into something appropriate for preteens. The focus on a young girl, rather than an old, morally complex former criminal, is only one of the changes made in order to create a kid-friendly *Les Misérables*. The character of Chou Chou, Cosette and Gavroche's devoted canine companion, was certainly added for 'kid appeal', and he often serves as a light-hearted diversion from darker plotlines, such as Cosette's being frequently beaten by the Thénardiens or Gavroche's being kicked out and forced to live on the streets. Fantine's occupation following her firing from the factory is changed from prostitute to



beggar, and many of the deaths occur off-screen (most of the participants in the student uprising) or written out entirely. One of the deaths removed is Javert's suicide – though he stands on the bridge over the Seine and contemplates going through with it, he ultimately reconsiders and continues his life. He is even allowed a redemption which Hugo's text never grants him – he arrests Thénardier when the former innkeeper attempts to disturb Marius and Cosette's wedding, and he is seen visiting the grave of Jean Valjean following his former adversary's own passing. This is a significant alteration to his original character arc, and results in the message the viewer draws from his story being drastically different from what Hugo originally intended.

Though Javert's mental turmoil following his rescue by Valjean is still present, and ultimately still places him within the role of sympathetic antagonist which he inhabits in the original text, many of his scenes feature visual, auditory and dialogue cues which portray him as more of an outright villain than other adaptations. Specifically, his introductory scene at the end of episode 2, appropriately titled "Jean Valjean's Secret," is accompanied by music and visuals more suited to the onscreen entrance of a Disney villain than the far-from-evil Javert. He steps out of a carriage onto the streets of Montreuil-sur-Mer as the sky, clear until this point, spontaneously darkens, sending torrential rain pounding down and plunging the scene into near-darkness. A single bolt of lightning flashes as his foot touches the cobblestones. In the resulting blinding flare, all that the viewer can see is Javert's face – long, sharply angled, ugly, more similar in appearance to *Monster's* Inspector Lunge than any of the other large-eyed, round-faced characters which inhabit the story (See Figure 8 for comparison). He wears dark clothes and sports a constant frown, only strengthening his villainous appearance. Ominous music builds, in contrast to the saccharinely sweet pop tunes

which form the rest of the soundtrack. In his office, Mayor Madeleine / Jean Valjean is struck with a sudden sense of foreboding, seemingly without reason. Despite Eponine's near-constant bullying of Cosette and her parents' fondness for harsh work and harsher punishment, the character who is associated most closely with traditional 'villain' imagery is none of the Thénardiens, but rather Javert.



**Figure 8 – A visual comparison of Lunge (on the left) and *Shōjo Cosette*'s Javert (on the right).**

His entrance scene is not the only moment when Javert's character is simplified and made more explicitly villainous in order to make the story more interesting and comprehensible for younger viewers. In the original novel, while he is defined by his "respect for authority and hatred of rebellion," this respect is extended to the current ruling government simply because they are the ones in charge and making the rules (Hugo 171). He is not a royalist, and has no particular love for the current King of France; he hates the revolution because it breaks the law and disturbs the established order, not because it opposes the current system of government. In Javert's mind, he "had a superior, M. Gisquet [the prefect of police]" and "never dreamed of" the necessity or existence of any "other superior" (Hugo 950). He serves as a spy and infiltrates the group of student revolutionaries because it is a "political mission" to determine "whether it is true that the malefactors have instituted

intrigues,” assigned to him by the Prefect of Police (Hugo 950). When he is captured, he makes no comment other than to ask when the students will kill him and, when they decide to allow Valjean to kill him, says “That is just” (Hugo 955). Javert speaks very little throughout the entire ordeal at the barricade – one of the chapters in this section is even entitled “Javert Laconic.” He makes no comment and gives no opinions regarding the students’ actions or his own motivations; he is merely a police officer carrying out the duty assigned to him by his superior.

In contrast, the Javert of *Shōjo Cosette* is portrayed as a royalist and extreme patriot, who strongly supports the current monarchy and chooses to infiltrate the uprising as a spy of his own volition. He is shown to be the leader of a group of policemen and members of the National Guard who are in charge of crushing the uprising, and he himself formulates the plan to spy on the students. In an original scene composed for the *anime*, he gives a speech to the National Guard just before the beginning of the uprising: “We have to arrest the treasonous people. This is all for our motherland, France. A country is, in other words, a monarchy. If its citizens do not heed the orders of the government, then the country will not stand. To empower order, law and stability – in France!” (Sakurai 39). This scene is intercut with a scene of the students’ leader, Enjolras, giving a much more positive speech to the revolutionaries, the language of which parallels Javert’s address to the Guard. “A country is, without a doubt, a place where people live. If it could not allow its citizens to live in peace, then the country holds no meaning. To empower freedom, equality, and brotherhood – in France!” (Sakurai 39) The final shot of these parallel speeches is a split screen featuring both characters passionately shouting “In France” to their respective audiences (see Figure 9). The wording and staging of this scene alters Javert’s role as spy from its original function, a plot

device intended to bring him back into contact with Valjean and set up for Valjean's sparing of his life, establishing him instead as a foil to and antagonist for the revolutionaries as well as for Valjean. This reworking of Javert as the singular antagonist to two separate protagonist groups, Valjean/Cosette and Enjolras/Marius/the other students, increases the 'villainous' elements of his role within the narrative.



**Figure 9 – Javert (on the left) and Enjolras (on the right) simultaneously shouting the conclusion of their parallel but opposite speeches prior to the uprising.**

Javert's personality is also significantly altered in order to fit him more accurately into the 'villain' role. In the original novel, when Javert encounters Valjean disguised as Monsieur Madeleine in Montreuil-sur-Mer, though he develops suspicion regarding Madeleine's identity over the course of their association, he remains polite and respectful. Madeleine, as the mayor of the town, is in his official capacity superior to Javert, who holds the role of police inspector. Javert defers to Madeleine in their interactions, and "spoke to him with profound respect" even once he has begun to have suspicions regarding the mayor's identity (Hugo 176).

The clearest example of this genuine respect and polite interaction comes when Javert mistakenly believes his suspicions to have been proven false (as a man named Champmathieu has been arrested under suspicion of being Jean Valjean) and requests that Mayor Madeleine suspend him from his position of inspector. His behavior is described as such: “On entering he bowed to M. Madeleine with a look in which was neither rancor, anger, nor defiance...without saying a word or making any gesture, he waited in genuine humility and tranquil resignation, until it should please Monsieur the Mayor to turn toward him, calm, serious, hat in hand, and eyes cast down with an expression between that of a soldier in front of his officer and a prisoner before his judge” (Hugo 204). He presents his case for his own dismissal in the style of a formal report, apologizing several times to his superior for his improper actions, explaining that “In my life I have often been severe toward others. It was just. I was right. Now if I were not severe toward myself, all I have justly done would become injustice” (Hugo 210). This incident reveals Javert to the reader as an honorable man, who is willing to admit when he has acted incorrectly and will submit to his superior to be punished as is found fitting. Javert’s apology to Madeleine and attempted resignation are a key scene in the original novel, and a very revealing moment for Javert’s character. Though not included in the musical’s original score, it was deemed important enough to be added in, as an additional verse to an existing song, the “Runaway Cart Sequence,” in the 2012 film version. The wording of the scene is very similar, with all of the formality, respect and apology contained in the original text clearly present.

JAVERT:

*Monsieur le Maire, I have a crime to declare.*

*I have disgraced the uniform that I wear.*  
*I've done you wrong; let no forgiveness be shown.*  
*I've been as hard on every rogue I have known.*  
*I mistook you for a convict; I have made a false report.*  
*Now I learned they caught the culprit, he's about to face the court.*  
*[...] He will pay, and so must I.*  
*Press charges against me, sir.*

These scenes of Javert's behavior towards Valjean in Montreuil-sur-Mer have little in common with the same scenes in *Shōjo Cosette*. In the novel, Javert's suspicions of the mayor arise only after serving for a length of time in the town, and the Inspector never allows them to cause him to deviate from his duty. He also never accuses Madeleine directly of being Valjean, and indeed only brings up the suspicions he harbored to the Mayor when he is apologizing and requesting dismissal. In contrast, the more villainous Javert of *Shōjo Cosette* expresses his suspicions to Mayor Madeleine during their very first conversation, which occurs during the otherwise lighthearted Episode 3, "A New Friend, Chou-Chou". He also states his thoughts in a very rude and direct manner, unlike the humility and respect the original Javert always showed to Mayor Madeleine.

The Japanese language contains a wide variety of strictly delineated levels of formality, making the true extent of Javert's rudeness and lack of respect incredibly clear. As someone in an official capacity (police inspector) introducing himself to a higher-ranking official (mayor) that he does not know, it would be expected of Javert to use *keigo*, the formal mode of speaking, when addressing Madeleine, and humble speech when describing

himself or his own actions. Initially, he does greet Madeleine with the proper level of formality: 『お工作中、失礼いたします。新しく赴任して参りました。警部のジャベルと申します。』 (Sakurai 3).<sup>13</sup> Afterwards, he immediately brings up his past as a warden at the prison of Toulon and the physical resemblance between Mayor Madeleine and a former convict, Jean Valjean, currently wanted for breaking parole.

As soon as he begins talking about Valjean, Javert switches from honorific *keigo* to a mix of standard *desu-masu* form and informal short-form. Both, especially the latter, are casual modes of speaking highly inappropriate for one to use when addressing one's superior.

「昔、トゥロンで看守の仕事をしていたことがあるのですね...そこにとても怪力の大男にいました。なんども脱獄をこころに出獄後も、少年から銀貨、奪いました。再犯です。今度捕まれば終身けいは免れないでしょ。失礼ながら、あなたのお顔を拝見したとき、その男のことを思い出しました』 (Sakurai 3).<sup>14</sup>

While Javert uses a few humble words such as 拝見 (*haiken*), the humble form of “to see,” he ends his sentences with *desu/deshita*, *masu/mashita*, *ne*, and the primarily casual *deshō*, which translates to “don’t you think” or “wouldn’t you suppose.” He also refers to Valjean/Mayor Madeleine as *あなた* (*anata*), one of the most casual variants of the word “you.” In Japanese, it is considered impolite to address your partner directly as “you” in conversation, unless you are very close friends or family, because it otherwise comes across as rude and confrontational. Javert’s “apology” of 失礼ながら (*shitsurei nagara*) is a too-

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<sup>13</sup> “Please forgive me for interrupting your work. Let me humbly introduce myself as the newly appointed police inspector, Javert.”

<sup>14</sup> “Long ago, I was a guard at Toulon. There, there was a big man with superhuman strength. He tried to escape many times, and after getting out of jail, he stole a kid’s silver coin. It was a repeat offense. If he’s caught again, he’ll be imprisoned for life, don’t you suppose? Sorry, it’s just that when I look at your face, I’m reminded of that man.”

brief “sorry” that is also several levels of formality below the appropriate apology for the situation, especially given the gravity of the accusation he has just made (implying the existence of a connection between a respected mayor and a common thief). Javert’s rude manner of speech is intended either to deliberately bait Valjean, unsubtly indicating a lack of respect for his supposed superior, or to imply that a connection exists between them (which, if Javert suspected correctly, would be the case, as Javert was a guard at the prison where Valjean was held) and that they are not merely officials and future co-workers meeting for the first time. Regardless of how his words are interpreted, this version of Javert possesses none of the humility and honorable behavior which the original exhibited in all of his interactions with Mayor Madeleine until the exact moment that Madeleine revealed himself to have been Jean Valjean all along.

Javert’s first conversation with Valjean is not the only point in *Shōjo Cosette* where his more unsympathetic characteristics are present. Throughout the entirety of the first arc, which takes place in Montreuil-sur-Mer, Javert is shown to be universally despised by the town’s population. He allows those who he arrests to be harshly treated and manhandled by his subordinate policemen – who are all identical and near-faceless, leaving Javert as the sole actual representative of the law enforcement present within the show. He scares small children (the siblings of Valjean’s assistant Alain) by questioning them too harshly about the mayor. He receives angry glares and hushed whispers wherever he goes, and one tavern owner even complains to Mayor Madeleine that Javert’s presence in the establishment is bad for business. His devotion to the law is heightened and accompanies an obsession with rules and procedure. At one point, when a townspeople shares his negative opinion of the mayor with the already suspicious Javert, Javert insists that the man follow procedure and give his



official complaint at the police station, even though the man is helping Javert with his attempts at gathering evidence against the mayor.

While Javert's apology and request for dismissal is included, the scene loses much of the respectful and humble attitude which the original possessed. Javert continues to use casual *desu/masu* language throughout his apology, and refers to Valjean again as *anata*, the overly formal and direct form of "you." He does not bow at any point, despite being explicitly mentioned as doing so in the original text of *Les Misérables* and bowing being an important sign of respect in Japanese culture. His only gesture of respect is a slight nod to Valjean upon exiting the room, in contrast to the proper bow he accorded the mayor during their initial introduction. His language also implies that his original suspicions have not entirely been put to rest. When Mayor Madeleine asks whether Javert is satisfied with the prefect's decision to arrest Champmathieu and put him on trial for the crimes of Jean Valjean, Javert's response is "I had no choice but to accept his reply" (Sakurai 9). Despite the words of his apology otherwise mirroring the original text, his choice of word forms and physical behavior indicate that the genuine humility and regret both novel and musical Javert felt at this moment are not shared by their *Shōjo Cosette* counterpart.

Despite this Javert's more cruel characterization, and the removal or reduction of much of what makes him a sympathetic character, the Javert of *Shōjo Cosette* receives a significantly happier ending to his story than practically any other versions of the stoic Inspector. The altered ending comes as a shock to any viewer familiar with any version of *Les Misérables*, as the switch occurs at the last possible moment. Javert's story unfolds as expected – he infiltrates the barricade, Valjean spares his life, and Javert spares him in turn by allowing him to escape with the injured Marius. Javert stands on the bridge,

contemplating his actions and the crumbling of his world view with words very similar to those used in the original text. “What did I do? The law is the ultimate form of justice. If one commits a crime, one will not be forgiven no matter the reason. I have let Jean Valjean go. Why did I do this? Jean Valjean is a criminal! Wouldn’t arresting him be carrying out justice...Once a criminal, never a philanthropist! Am I mistaken? Am I mistaken?” (Sakurai 46). He leans over the edge. His hat – a symbol of his official position as Inspector - falls into the water. He prepares to make his final jump...and, all of a sudden, the sun rises over Paris, providing a foil to all of the times his mere presence darkened the sky and called the storm. Breaking into a smile for the first time in the entire series, Javert exclaims “People are able to change!” as tears pour from his eyes (Sakurai 46). Whispering “Jean Valjean” almost reverently, he watches the sun slowly rise over the steeple of Notre Dame. Unlike in the novel, where his final act traps his body between the Notre Dame and the Palais de Justice, the symbol of faith and the symbol of the law, here the symbol of law and mortal authority is completely absent from any shot, with God and faith dominating in the form of the sun-gilded cathedral. His mental crisis resolved and his worldview rebuilt, Javert walks away from the fateful bridge, and into life as a better man.

2007’s *Shōjo Cosette* is actually the *second* Japanese adaptation of *Les Misérables* to implement this drastic change. Toei Animation’s 1979 made-for-TV movie, *Jean Valjean Monogatari*, contained an abridged version of the change-of-heart scene. Javert stands on the bridge, wondering if people can truly change; though his epiphany is neither as verbal nor as pronounced as his *Shōjo Cosette* counterpart’s, and there is no symbolic rising sun to accompany it, he seems to reach the same conclusion: that they can. He walks away as his hat, once again serving as a symbol of his official role, falls into the water – but, unlike the

later Javert, he is never seen again following that scene, and the viewer has no idea as to what happens to him next or whether he successfully redeems himself or changes his life.

Why do two distinct Japanese adaptations make the drastic choice to remove this crucial moment, when no other country's adaptations have ever (outside, perhaps, of certain school or children's productions of the musical) done the same? Removing the suicide scene significantly alters Javert's character arc. The original Javert is a man who, despite his devotion to the law above all and his perception of the world in black and white, is fundamentally good, fundamentally honorable. In the moment when he arrests Valjean at Montreuil-sur-Mer, Hugo describes him as representing "all the evil of good" (Hugo 291). His suicide is his own strange version of honor, the only way he can comprehend of making up for the mistakes he has made, the wrongs he has done to Valjean the good man by never being able to see him as anything more than Valjean the criminal. As much as Valjean, forced to turn to thievery after his parole because he cannot find work, is a product of the fundamentally flawed 'justice' system and the equally flawed society it supposedly protects, so too is Javert another flaw in the same system. Once he has realized this, the only solution he can find is to remove himself from the system entirely – to turn in his resignation to the highest authority of all: God. Javert's death is tragic, but it is *just* – he is atoning for his wrongs in a way he cannot if he remains in his role as policeman, continuing to do wrong by good men such as Valjean.

Without this ending, what remains of his story? The Javert of *Shōjo Cosette* has his epiphany that people can change, but viewers see very little of what he *does* with that redemption (and, in *Jean Valjean Monogatari*, viewers see even less – Javert never appears again after the Seine). He appears in two other scenes: arresting Thénardier after he threatens

Marius and visiting Valjean's grave to show respect to his deceased opponent. His arrest of Thénardier is supposed to indicate the changes he has made in his life, as he tells the bound former innkeeper that people can change and that he believes Thénardier can someday repent and redeem himself. He is still functioning in his role as a policeman, and he is still very physically brutal towards his captives, telling his prisoner "I'll arrest you over and over again" (Sakurai 51). While overtly closely related, *Shōjo Cosette's* Javert may, ironically, be the example which conforms the *least* to the "Javert archetype" model.

There are two ways in which the Javert of *Shōjo Cosette's* revised story arc can be interpreted. On the one hand, it can be seen as providing a message of hope, which fits with the overall brighter and more positive tone of *Shōjo Cosette* when compared with the original emphasis on the flaws within society and the suffering of the lower classes. *Shōjo Cosette*, while not shying away from long imprisonments or failed revolution, by focusing on Cosette, presents the viewers with both a Cinderella story, in which a mistreated girl finds a kindly father and a life of luxury, and a love story with a happy ending, in which Marius is rescued from the barricade, and he and Cosette are eventually wed and have a child of their own. Javert's new story, like *Monster's* Lunge before him, contributes to the overall hopeful message in a way that the character of Javert does not usually do. As discussed in the preceding paragraph, however, it is possible to read darker undertones into Javert's story arc, which seems cut off and incomplete without his ultimate sacrifice.

As with other examples of the "Javert archetype," *Shōjo Cosette's* Inspector must be analyzed within a wider social and historical context. Why did Nippon Animation make the deliberate choice to restart their long on-hold *World Masterpiece Theater* at the time they did, and with the story they did? Why was Javert's death one of the few elements of the

original story which was selected for removal? This choice cannot be attributed solely to the adaptation of *Shōjo Cosette* for a younger audience (as many other significantly more gruesome deaths were left in), just as Nippon Animation's decision cannot be attributed solely to the popularity of *Monster* and other crime and mystery *anime*. Since its first appearance in Kuroiwa Ruiko's *Yorozu Chōhō*, Japan and *Les Misérables* have had a close and meaningful relationship. Adaptations of the story have recurred during times of great upheaval and social change – the end of the Meiji period, the transition between Taishō and Shōwa periods, on the eve of and just after the end of World War II, several times during the American occupation, and during the transition between the Shōwa and Heisei periods. In 2007, when *Shōjo Cosette* aired, Japan's economy was finally beginning to recover from the bursting of the bubble in the 1990s. While several social problems were present which could resonate and connect with the story's themes - the widely held feeling that political reforms were creating a greater and greater rift between social classes, the beginning of what is still an ongoing population decline, the disconnect between older and younger generations – the national attitude had finally begun to shift towards hope. Nippon Animation chose to take a story which has always held a connection to the people and society of Japan, despite its Western origin, and adapted it to be brighter, happier and more triumphant than ever before. The Japanese people in the mid 2000s were ready for a brighter *Les Misérables*, which *Shōjo Cosette* ultimately provided.

Like the reason for adapting *Les Misérables* at certain distinct times, the reason behind the removal of Javert's suicide can be found via an examination of Japanese history. Suicide has historically played a large role in Japanese culture, specifically in the *bushido* code of the samurai (warrior) class during the Tokugawa and earlier periods. Samurai who

had brought shame upon themselves or their lords, who had committed any sort of offense, or who had been captured by the enemy, were required to commit *seppuku*, a form of ritual disembowelment. *Seppuku* was considered an extremely honorable death, and was limited to members of the samurai class and their wives. It is likely that Javert's suicide was removed either because he is not of the samurai class, or because the motivation behind his death was not considered to be honorable. In the original novel, Javert's suicide is clearly associated with his personal, somewhat warped sense of honor. It is easy, however, to interpret his motivations as cowardly rather than honorable: running away from his mistakes rather than being willing to face and fix them, acknowledging that his world view is flawed and crumbling but making no effort to rebuild it. His method of committing suicide could also be seen as a 'coward's way out'; rather than the slow, bloody and artistic ritual of *seppuku*, he throws himself into a river, ending everything quickly and breaking his body and bones in the process. Clearly, motivations for removing the suicide scene exist beyond mere child-friendly editing or the desire to communicate a slightly more hopeful message.

Though it has had a relatively short history so far, the "Javert archetype" has already established itself as a complex character type that both asks serious questions and can be used to provide a message of hope. In many ways, these hopeful endings earned by *Monster's* Lunge and *Shōjo Cosette's* Javert (and *Psycho Pass's* Kogami – though his role as the "Javert archetype" is limited as the story focuses on a series of criminals rather than solely his nemesis, he does successfully defeat his opponent and survives with both his life and a new 'career' as a vigilante) are antithetical to the message of the original Javert's death. Hugo's original novel denied Javert any chance for redemption, and presented death as a fitting punishment for the mistakes he had made throughout his life. While Japan's "Javert

archetype” characters have been overall very faithful to the original Javert’s story and character arc, dramatic changes in ending and message have created a character that is unique to Japan but still faithful to Hugo’s creation. It is likely that the “Javert archetype” will continue to appear in *anime* and *manga* in 2015 and beyond, though current trends indicate that the character will continue to change and develop.

## Conclusion: Fearing for the Future

### What *Zankyou no Terror* Means for the Continuing Portrayal of Police and Justice

In 2014, *anime* legend Watanabe Shinichiro created the first show to contain examples of all three character types discussed in this thesis, including a “Javert archetype” whose story and ending were anything but hopeful. *Zankyou no Terror* (*Terror in Residence* / *Terror in Tokyo*) was discussed in Chapter 2 for its portrayal of charismatic criminals, the two-man terrorist organization Sphinx. Sphinx members Nine and Twelve are both sympathetic, having been raised as part of a heartless government experiment, and successful, consistently foiling the police and setting off bombs in government offices, train cars, and even police stations. The Japanese policemen that oppose them continuously fail to stop these explosions, decreasing their reputation among citizens who begin to support and even cheer for Sphinx. While Nine and Twelve and the Japanese police force are well-written but standard examples of the charismatic criminal and the bumbling policeman, the Javert who enters the story in the fifth episode marks the beginning of a transformation of that archetype.

Watanabe plays with the Javert archetype by initially introducing a ‘false Javert,’ the detective Shibazaki. Though Shibazaki has no personal connection to Nine and Twelve, his extreme hatred of bombs and the men who set them off seems to create a nemesis relationship between the characters. In the first episode, Nine and Twelve steal plutonium from a secure facility, leading Shibazaki to believe that their goal is to create a nuclear explosive. Shibazaki gives a speech to one of his co-workers about his childhood in Hiroshima. “I hated summer,” he explains, “The city became frighteningly quiet because the



old people almost never left their houses...I spent a lot of time with my grandma, but it was like she was stolen by summer. That's what it felt like" (Watanabe 3). However, this seeming vendetta against Nine and Twelve never comes to fruition. Shibazaki makes the decision to investigate their pasts and try to understand their motives, distrusting the rest of the force's disinterest in knowing their history. Once he has revealed himself to be a genuinely honest, kind character willing to work outside the boundaries of the law in order more fully to understand the situation, the true Javert takes the stage.

Five is a somewhat mentally unstable Japanese-American CIA agent whose only goal in life is to capture Sphinx and punish them for their actions – whether with arrest or with death, the viewer remains unsure. In contrast with Sphinx, whose attacks usually take place in empty areas and cause only property damage, Five is perfectly willing to set traps of her own that risk the lives of civilian bystanders. Her methods drive Shibazaki, who disagrees with them, out of the police force and causes him and a few allies to begin working independently, unwilling to be associated with her. Eventually, the reason for her pursuit of Sphinx is explained: she was raised as part of the same government experiment as Nine and Twelve, but, unlike them, was considered the project's only 'success'. She believes that her superior intelligence and their shared history render her the only one capable of judging them – and she has judged them guilty and deserving of execution.

Five's story arc very closely follows the original Javert's. She was raised in a government facility which treated its captive children very harshly – 'born inside a jail'. Instead of growing up to become a criminal like Nine and Twelve, she joined the organized law enforcement system – becoming one of 'those who guard society'. She uses a series of plans and traps to chase Nine and Twelve – criminals known by numbers instead of names,

reminiscent of Jean Valjean's '24601' - but, when they all fail, her world crumbles as she is forced to admit that their intelligence is superior and that they are always one step ahead of her. Realizing that she will never be able to catch them, she chooses, like Javert, to end her life. "Nine, I could never beat you," Five finally admits as she shoots a bullet into a puddle of spilled gasoline, burning herself to death. Her suicide even serves as a deliberate contrast to Javert's, ending her life with fire instead of water.

Five's story parallels Javert's not to ultimately subvert it and create a more hopeful ending, as in *Monster* and *Psycho-Pass*, but to highlight her cruel behavior and shocking actions. The 'law' to which Five devotes her life is neither the Japanese nor American legal system but her *own* law, an unwavering belief in her own superiority and ability to judge the criminals around her, especially Sphinx. While Javert (and Lunge and Kogami) perform many inarguably good actions, such as arresting other criminals and ultimately (in Javert and Lunge's case) sparing the lives of their nemeses, Five is never shown pursuing anyone other than Nine and Twelve, and gladly kills civilians and breaks as many laws as she needs to do so. Just as Nine and Twelve show the continued intensification of criminal protagonists – from Lupin's goofy thefts through Johan and Light's murders to Sphinx's atomic-bomb building terrorists – so too does Five present a darker, more intense and *scarier* "Javert archetype." Viewers do not laugh at or sympathize with Five and, though she may cause them to ask questions (foremost among them, 'Can the police truly protect us from terrorists?'), the primary viewer response to such a character is *fear*. If the unhinged woman singing "London Bridge" to herself as she orders a bomb set in a crowded airport represents the police, viewers have moved beyond merely questioning them into actively *fearing* them.

It is too soon to say if Five will be an exception to the general trend or if she heralds the beginning of a new, fourth, portrayal of police in modern media. Since *Zankyou no Terror's* conclusion, no new *anime* or *manga* focusing around police has been published. However, as real-life relationships between people and police continue to change, certainly their fictional portrayals will change as well.

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## Appendix A:

### Appearance and Categorization of Police in Anime and Manga

*The letters appearing at the end of each entry's description indicate the categories of police and criminal characters appearing in the work. **V** indicates outright villainous, corrupt policemen. **I** indicates incompetent policemen used for comedic purposes. **G** indicates charismatic genius criminals who are opposed by the police. **J** indicates appearances of the “Javert archetype”*

*This list does not reflect every appearance of a police-affiliated or criminal character in the history of anime. It highlights works which primarily focus on police, detectives and investigative agents*

**1953** – *Crime and Punishment* - One-volume manga by acclaimed author Osamu Tezuka, adapting the Russian novel by Fyodor Dostoyevsky. **V, G**

**1967 (manga) 1971 (anime)** – *Lupin III* - Long-running series consisting of a manga, several anime, dozens of movies, video games and board games. Gentleman thief Arsène Lupin III leads a gang of criminals who commit daring heists and steal famous objects, all the while constantly pursued by the hapless Inspector Zenigata. **I, G**

**1976** – *Kochikame* – Extremely popular and long-running comedy manga, still producing new material today. Centers around a group of policemen who are never seen doing any actual police work or catching any criminals. **I**

**1980 (novel) 1985 (anime)** – *Dirty Pair* - Series of novels adapted into an anime about a pair of female investigators chasing criminals in space. They are nicknamed “Dirty Pair” due to the massive amount of damage their chases inevitably cause. **I**

**1981 (manga) 1983 (anime)** – *Cat's Eye* – Manga and anime about three sisters who live double lives as waitresses and art thieves. One of the sisters is engaged to a policeman who consistently fails to figure out her identity. **I, G**

**1984** – *Sherlock Hound* – One-season anime about the adventures of Sherlock Hound and his assistant Watson in a world inhabited by dogs. Mixed adaptations of existing Arthur Conan Doyle stories with original plots. Notable for portraying Holmes as rather bumbling and Moriarty as a suave mastermind. **I, G**

**1986 (manga) 1988 (short videos)** – *Dominion Tank Police* – Manga and series of short animated videos set in a futuristic world where the police ride military-style tanks. The titular police squad is known for their love of violence and destruction. **V, I**

**1986** – *Mad Bull 34* – Manga about the 34<sup>th</sup> Precinct of the NYPD, led by a violence-loving officer nicknamed “Mad Bull”. **V**

**1986 (manga) 1996 (anime)** – *You're Under Arrest!* – Long-running series about two female members of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department. Episodic and lighthearted, it focused on the girls' hapless attempts to balance their personal lives with their police jobs. **I**

**1988 (manga) 1989 (film)** – *Mobile Police Patlabor* – Manga and animated film series set in the year 2000, where the police patrol in robots instead of cars. The main characters accomplish very little due to constant encounters with red tape and paperwork. **I**

**1989 (manga) 1990 (anime)** – *AD Police Files / Dead-End City* – Manga and three-episode anime about police in the future who are primarily responsible for catching rogue criminal robots. Because their opponents are robotic, they are more heavily armed and violent than normal police. **V, I**

**1989 (original anime) 2004 (remake)** – *Riding Bean / Gunsmith Cats* – Long-running anime which was eventually remade. Features a criminal named Bean who is relentlessly targeted by the police for the crime of aggressive driving, but always escapes. **V, I, G**

**1994 (manga) 1996 (anime)** – *Detective Conan* (American title *Case Closed*) – Ongoing manga and anime about a genius detective stuck in the body of a child, who assists an incompetent police detective in catching various criminals, including a sinister underground organization. **I, G**

**1994 (manga) 2004 (anime)** – *Monster* – Mystery/horror manga about a doctor who saves the life of a young boy who goes on to become a serial killer, and is then pursued by a detective who falsely accuses him for the boy's crimes. **G, J**

**1995 (film) 2002 (anime)** – *Ghost in the Shell* – Animated film and later anime dealing with a security task force in the mid-21<sup>st</sup> century. They live in a technologically advanced society and are responsible for tracking down hackers and cyber-terrorists. **G**

**2001 (game) 2006 (manga)** – *Ace Attorney* – Video game series and accompanying manga in which the player controls a defense attorney and attempts to prove the innocence of various crime suspects. They are constantly opposed by prosecutors who range from justice-obsessed to villainous. **V, G, J**

**2002 (manga) 2006 (anime)** – *Black Lagoon* – Thriller manga / anime centering around characters who are gangsters, mercenaries and members of organized crime cartels. They frequently bribe the police who are corrupt and only care about money. **V, G**

**2003 (manga) 2006 (anime)** – *Death Note* – Manga and anime about a man who teams up with a god of death to become a serial killer. He is opposed by a genius detective and a team of policemen who consistently fail to determine his identity. **I, G**

**2007** – *Les Misérables: Shōjo Cosette* – Anime adaptation of the novel by French author Victor Hugo, about a former convict who redeems himself but is pursued by a justice-driven police officer. **J**



**2012** – *Psycho-Pass* – Anime about a police unit in a futuristic world where one's brain is periodically scanned to determine the likelihood that one will commit a crime. One of the members becomes so obsessed with pursuing a single escaped criminal that he becomes a potential criminal himself. **G, J**

**2014** – *Zankyou no Terror* – Anime about a two-man terrorist group who successfully set off a series of bombs around Tokyo. They are opposed by a mysterious FBI agent whose only goal is to bring them to justice. Possibly indicates the emergence of a new, fifth category, a "Javert archetype" who is villainous and violent as well as justice-focused. **G, J**

## Appendix B

### *Les Misérables* in Japan: A Timeline

1900-1902 – *Les Misérables* is translated by Kuroiwa Ruiko (Kuroiwa Shūroku) and serialized in the newspaper *Yorozu Chōhō* (*Morning Report for the Masses*)

1910 – *Aa mujo* (*Ah, Misery*), the first Japanese-language film adaptation

1923 – *Aa mujo*, two films directed by Kiyohiko Ushihara. Intended to be a four-part film series, only the first two films were produced before the project was cancelled

1929 – *Aa mujo*, film directed by Seika Shiba

1931 – *Janbarujan* (*Jean Valjean*), film directed by Tomu Uchida. It adapts only the first volume of the original text and focuses exclusively on Valjean's story

1938 – *Kyojin-den* (*In the Land of the Giants*), film directed by Mansaku Itami. Characters are renamed with Japanese names.

1950 – *Re Mizeraburu : Kami to Akuma* (*Les Misérables: Gods and Demons*), film directed by Daisuke Ito

1955 – *Aa mujo*, film, director unknown

1964 – *Aa mujo*, film, director unknown

1977 – *Cosette*, one episode of the animated television program *Manga Sekai Mukashi Banashi* (*Manga World Classic Stories*), focusing exclusively on Cosette's story

1978 – *Aa mujo*, thirteen episodes of the animated television program *Manga Sekai Mukashi Banashi*, adapting the first two volumes of the original text

1979 – *Jean Valjean Monogatari* (*The Story of Jean Valjean*), made-for-TV animated movie produced by Toei Animation

1980 – *Inochimouyuu* (*Life and Courage*), 23-episode live action TV series, produced by NHK

1985 – Japanese premiere of the musical version of *Les Misérables*. A touring production is still ongoing.

1988 – *Nihon Jean Valjean monogatari* (*Japanese Jean Valjean's story*), live-action TV series, set in Japan rather than France

1994 – Release of two Japanese-language cast albums of the musical, one featuring each of the original actors to play Jean Valjean in Tokyo's Imperial Theater production

1998 – *Arm Joe* (a pun on *Aa mujo*), an independently developed video game for the PC, featuring one-on-one fights between the characters

2004 – Release of four additional Japanese-language cast albums of the musical, one featuring each of the four actors who have played Jean Valjean in the touring production

2007 – *Les Misérables: Shōjo Cosette* (*Les Misérables: The Young Girl Cosette*), 52-episode animated television series, produced as part of Nippon Animation's *World Masterpiece Theater* series

2013 – *Les Misérables*, *manga* adaptation written and designed by Takahiro Arai and serialized in the magazine *Monthly Shounen Sunday*