

LOST IN VIDEO GAME MUSIC HYBRIDISATION:

Japanese video game industry influenced by Western and Eastern cultures in

The Legend of Zelda, A Link to the Past and Ocarina of Time

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MYLLY AKU: Lost in video game music hybridisation: Japanese video game industry influenced by Western and Eastern cultures in *The Legend of Zelda, A Link to the Past* and *Ocarina of Time*

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This thesis is about the hybridisation process of video game music. This is analysed from the perspectives of the video game industry and both Eastern and Western cultures. My hypothesis is that Japanese culture is not visible in Japanese video games due to the hybridisation process. Here, I use three different video games from The Legend of Zelda video series, because they tell an interesting story about the history of video game music in 1980s and 1990s. I focus on the Japanese video game company Nintendo, which I compare to other video game companies. In addition to this, I research the Japanese culture from the Eastern and Western perspectives. The hybridisation process happens both in video game industry and Japanese culture.

This hybridisation process is analysed in *The Legend of Zelda, A Link to the Past* and *Ocarina of Time*. Video game music has been researched from the viewpoints of cultural history, Western art music and technology studies. These studies can be applied here. From the viewpoint of the Japanese Nintendo, I compare different video game companies to each other, which shows the challenges of the industry and the power structures between these companies. With every video game in this research, I analyse how Nintendo survived in the video game industry. Next, I research how this survival process happened in these video games. Finally, I analyse Western and Eastern culture influences from the perspective of Japanese culture.

In every one of these video games, the hybridisation process is apparent in two perspectives. Every video game is defined by different time eras, which have had their own time specific problems. The survival process stood out clearly in the sound design aspect. Because these video games were crafted by the Japanese, Japanese culture could be heard through the influences of Eastern and Western culture. The cultural imprints of Japanese culture are tightly hidden, although they are apparent. The player's own culture affects whether she is from the West or the East. This research is also relevant with modern video games. The hybridisation process between Eastern and Western cultures is still visible in the video game industry.

Keywords: audiovisual analysis, video game research, cultural music studies, Asian studies

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Tämän työn tarkoituksena on tutkia videopelimusiikin hybridisaatioprosessia videopeliteollisuuden sekä idän ja lännen kulttuurien näkökulmasta. Hypoteesina on se, että japanilainen kulttuuri ei näy japanilaisissa videopeleissä hybridisaatioprosessin takia. Aineistonani toimii kolme *The Legend of Zelda* -sarjan videopeliä, koska ne kertovat mielenkiintoisen tarinan videopelimusiikin historiasta 1980- ja 1990-luvulla. Keskityn työssäni japanilaiseen videopeliyhtiö Nintendoon, jota vertaan muihin videopeliyrityksiin. Tämän lisäksi tutkin japanilaisuutta idän ja lännen kulttuurina. Videopeliteollisuus sekä japanilainen kulttuuri sisältävät molemmat oman hybridisaatioprosessinsa.

Tarkastelen tätä hybridisaatioprosessia *The Legend of Zeldan*, *A Link to the Pastin* sekä *Ocarina of Timen* kautta. Videopelimusiikkia on tutkittu kulttuurihistorian, länsimaalaisen taidemusiikin sekä teknologiatutkimuksen menetelmiä hyödyntäen, joten ne toimivat näidenkin pelien kohdalla. Vertaan videopeliyrityksiä toisiinsa japanilaisen Nintendoon näkökulmasta, mikä tuo ilmi teollisuuden haasteita ja yritysten välisiä valtasuhteita. Jokaisen videopelin kohdalla käyn ensin läpi Nintendoon historiaa siitä, miten se selvisi videopelien markkinoilla. Seuraavaksi tutkin sitä, miten nämä teollisuuden haasteet näkyvät selviytymisprosessina näissä videopeleissä. Lopuksi tutkin länsimaalaisuutta ja itämaisuutta japanilaisen kulttuurin näkökulmasta.

Hybridisaatioprosessi näkyy jokaisessa näissä kolmessa videopelissä kahdesta eri näkökulmasta. Jokaista videopeliä määrittää eri aikakaudet, joilla oli omat ongelmansa. Selviytymisprosessi kuului selkeästi näiden videopelien äänisuunnittelusta. Koska nämä videopelit ovat japanilaista alkuperää, japanilaisuus kuuluu sekä itä- että länsimaalaisten vaikutteiden kautta. Japanilaisen kulttuurin kädenjälki on visusti piilossa, vaikka se onkin kuultavissa. Tulokulma vaikuttaa tähän paljon, kuten se, onko pelaaja länsi- vai itämaalainen. Tämä tutkimus on relevantti myös modernien videopelien kanssa. Idän ja lännen hybridisaatioprosessi on esillä videopeliteollisuudessa tänäkin päivänä.

Asiasanat: audiovisuaalinen analyysi, videopelitutkimus, kulttuurinen musiikintutkimus, Aasian tutkimus

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Video game music hybridisation

In the modern video game discourse, there is still differentiation between North America as a Western market and Japan as an Eastern market. Sony dominated global markets with PlayStations and Microsoft is a great contender with Xbox. Nowadays, Nintendo follows its own path. Atari and Sega had stepped out of the ‘hardware as video game console’ -race long time ago but Sega now relies only to the game sales. Japan did not notice North American Microsoft Xbox at first but now that Sony moved its headquarters to California and has been neglecting Japan’s market, Microsoft came into the spotlight. (Millsapp 2021). The video game industry and its hybridisation process between Eastern and Western market regions is a discussion that still exists today.

The Legend of Zelda video game series is about Link who saves Hyrule from evil forces. This series has been pioneering the adventure genre with large overworlds and later with its influential third dimension implementations (Kohler 2016: 84-85 & 264). The video game music hybridisation is the main part of this research and it has not been researched before. How does the video game hybridization process happen? My hypothesis is that there are two main influences—the industry and the culture of product’s home nation. I am researching the 1980s and 1990s video game industry and cultural the Western and Eastern cultural influences in Japanese Nintendo’s The Legend of Zelda series. Here, I am not defying the genre of this video game. I am aiming for the universality of the video game industry on why there are certain strains that tell producers how the video games “should” be made. I will handle Nintendo as the main company, but I will compare it to the other companies in the video game industry. How does the hybridisation process happen between Japanese Nintendo and its greatest contenders as they try to appeal to the North American audiences?

This research consists of Japanese culture history and video game industry’s history so I also need to analyse the ‘Japaneseness’ in these video games. In which ways has Western and Eastern cultures influenced Japanese video games? Here I will use Japanese culture history from Meiji period (1868-1912), because that is when the Western

and Japanese hybridisation process started. There are numerous researches done with The Legend of Zelda series, but the actual Japanese culture in these video games has not been analysed. Most of the research also focuses on something else than music but there are couple of those in that field too. It can be hard to pinpoint the ‘Japaneseness’ in these video games, but I have come up with solution. As Japan is a country between the cultural West and East (Iwabuchi 2002: 7), I will analyse both Western and Eastern influences in the sound design.

I also tried to implement these methods in other video game series, like in Super Mario series, but it was not that simple. As both Super Mario and The Legend of Zelda series are made by Nintendo and the same team (at least the first games of the series), there are some similarities. The hybridisation process is clearer with the latter as its sound design choices can be implemented to Japan’s culture history and the video game industry’s history in precise historical ways. There are three Zelda games that I will use to this research. *The Legend of Zelda* (Nintendo EAD 1987), *The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past* (Nintendo EAD 1992) and *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time* (Nintendo EAD 1998). I will follow Karen Collins’s (2008: 125) example to shorten these names for overall readability. The names are hereafter in order *The Legend of Zelda*, *A Link to the Past* and *Ocarina of Time*. As I have shortened the Zelda games’ names, I also do this to the names of these consoles as they are getting long. Hereafter, Nintendo Entertainment System is NES and Super Nintendo Entertainment System is Super Nintendo, but Nintendo 64 stays the same. These shortened names have been canonised in various academic studies.

At first, I tried to analyse these Zelda games with only historical methods in video game history, but I thought that it left things unanswered. The historical time is crucial here but the Japanese culture itself gives the remaining answers. The hybridisation process is spot-on here as video games and Japanese culture have been influenced by the cultural West and East. With these video games, the hybridisation process started with Japan’s relationship to the West. As time passed, Japanese culture also implemented its Eastern roots, so the Japanese became a triad between Asia, West and East (Iwabuchi 2002: 7).

1.2 Choosing the version—*Zeruda no Densetsu: The Hyrule Fantasy, Kami-gami no Toraifoosu* and *Toki no Ocarina*

Video games are made into different versions and this choice depends on many factors. First the platform needs to be chosen. I have used the original Nintendo versions from these Zelda games. There are lots of different versions of these same games: ports, remastered versions and completely new remakes. One possible way is also emulation. Summers (2016: 42) suggests that emulators may not always give the perfect output of the video game music. This means that some songs may behave differently when different hardware is used, but this mostly applies to glitches and bugs. These are phenomena that accidentally occur, and I left these out of the analysis.

Rachael Hutchinson (2019: 46-47) says that the port itself does not make the original video game different and to use the original versions of video games is more of a personal choice. One important aspect is the point of view and what the analysis is consisting of. What things does a research analyse? For example, if she analyses differences European and Japanese versions, then it is important to underline this. Most of these differences are about graphical and text-related questions but on rare occasions, the music is also affected. For example, in *Gran Turismo* (Polyphony Digital 1997), the Japanese version has different musical styles than rest of the world (Summers 2016: 40). Another example is *Sonic CD* (Sega 1993) where the North American versions has different music than the rest of the world.

There also are some differences between Japanese, North American and European version of the games and I will explain this in the simplest way possible. The video games are shipped globally but there can be regional differences. The first Zelda was launched for the Japanese Nintendo Famicom's Disk System that was a peripheral. The Japanese Famicom and NES were the same video game consoles from inside but this peripheral added one more channel. I have played this Japanese version of *The Legend of Zelda* which was *Zeruda no Densetsu: The Hyrule Fantasy* (Nintendo EAD 1986) and the channel did not add anything significant to the music design. There was one additional sound channel involved but the overall game mechanics and the songs were the same.

A Link to the Past does not differ from the Japanese version *Zeruda no Densetsu: Kamigami no Toraifoosu* (Nintendo EAD 1991) in terms of music, as there are just some graphical differences. There is one music design difference in *The Ocarina of Time* and the Japanese *Zeruda no Densetsu: Toki no Ocarina* (Nintendo EAD 1998) but it is just one sample that was in the Fire Temple. This sample was an Islamic chant, and it has been removed from the second print of Japanese version so I will not analyse this song. This same sample has been appeared in newer video games like *Street Fighter V* (Capcom 2016) and it has been now removed with a patch.

I have also read from different sources and watched entire playthrough videos from these Japanese versions, therefore, these versions do not differ from musical aspects compared the European versions. The Japanese, North American and European versions do not drastically differ, and this is rare in music so I can use the European version with ease. I will use the original versions of these video games and listen to the music through the video game itself. These video games' soundtracks can be listened from Youtube but the context as a video game would be different and diminished. I also think the immersion is important when playing the video game and not just listening the soundtrack through Youtube. I will refer to these songs with their names and sometimes the themes of the places to decrease possible misunderstandings with the naming systems.

1.3 Terms

Video game as a term itself has a lot of meanings and I will differentiate the different uses of this word. There are home video games, computer games and arcade games. In my research, I will focus on the home video games. Computer games are played with a personal computer and arcade games are played in arcade halls. The term video game has evolved through time (Rough 2018: 72). It is hard to pinpoint what a video game is but Bartel (2018: 28) defines games, not video games specifically, as transmedial "...if it can move between any two medias". If Zelda games were for example chess, these games would have been transmedial because they could be played in 'real life' and with a video game console. As video games have a lot of different definitions, The

Legend of Zelda series must be defined in its own ways as a video game. It uses video technology (Rough 2018: 62), they are games with set of rules (54, 59), they use sound (64), they have a narrative (66) and they are fiction (67). This the definition of Zelda as a video game and this means that video games can be seen as a hybrid medium between game mechanics with narrative and fictive elements that use video and sound technologies. In my research I will refer to video games and games with the same word.

Video game generation is a term that differentiates video game consoles from each other with time periods. The consoles that I use can be set into different generations. Atari 2600 and NES are the second generation (late 1970s and 1980s) with 8-bit consoles, Sega Megadrive and Super Nintendo third (late 1980s and first half of 1990s) with 16-bit consoles and lastly Sony PlayStation and Nintendo 64 the fifth generation (second half of 1990s and early 2000s) with 3-D capable hardware. These do have some overlap as different consoles are released in different years in different regions (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 24). Therefore, I focus North America's and Japan's market regions to make the analysis clearer.

The first and third parties are terms that have to be defined. "Third-party licensees are external firms that develop or publish games for the first party's platform" (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 29). For example, if external firms want to make video games for Nintendo's consoles, they must have Nintendo's permission to do so. This makes Nintendo a first-party firm as it gives the platform for other companies. Now third-party can make games for Nintendo's consoles.

Classical music is a term that confuses. A proper term would be Western art music and I continue to use it throughout this research. Classical music would refer to the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Viennese Classical music period. This term has been used to describe the entirety of Western art music history so the Western art music itself is a more suitable term, where it includes the canonised history of Western art music (Gibbons 2018: 17-21.) In this research I will use Western art music as a musical style. The video game music in The Legend of Zelda series uses this style as a stylistic choice and this style is emulated with the hardware of each console's

prominent and capable ways. These video games do not include Western art music pieces themselves. Some video games already use existing songs but sound design in The Legend of Zelda series is composed entirely of new songs.

1.4 The Legend of Zelda video game series

The Legend of Zelda video game series turns 35 this year. There are lot of different Zelda games, but I will analyse the first ones in the series. There have been other Zelda games between these three, but I have chosen the main Zelda games in each corresponding video game console. This video game series is about Link, who is a young hero that tries to save the world. Link is easily mixed with the name Zelda as the name of the series does not suggest the main character of the video game. In these three Zeldas, Link saves Princess Zelda from the evil Ganon. In *The Legend of Zelda*, Link must first collect eight pieces of Triforces around Hyrule to fight Ganon. The Hyrule is a dangerous place and Link uses different items so he can venture deeper into the adventure.

In the next Zelda game, *A Link to the Past*, Link must again rescue Princess Zelda, but this time from the evil Agahnim, who is revealed to be Ganon in the end. After Link has collected three pendants from palaces around Hyrule, he acquires the Master Sword from the forest and then he battles with Agahnim. After Agahnim is defeated, he sends Link to the Dark World. *A Link to the Past* is about two dimensions between Light and Dark World that alter Hyrule in different ways. Everyone is looking different and the geographical locations are altered, which also affects the music. Link must now collect seven diamonds to beat Agahnim. When Link defeats him again, the final battle between Link and Ganon starts.

The last one is *Ocarina of Time*. Here Link tries to save the world from the evil Ganondorf who is Ganon in the human form. He wants to control Hyrule. Link must shift time between his child and adult timelines to destroy Ganondorf. Link plays ocarina in his adventures to help him in his quests. These songs help Link to travel and alter game mechanics like changing the time of day and open sacred doors. Here Link first

collects three Spiritual Stones to get the Master Sword. As Link pulls the sword from the stone, he has warped to the future and is an adult. Ganondorf has now ruined the natural balance of Hyrule. Link must now collect six medallions from different temples and their corresponding sages help Link. Link finally ventures to Ganon's castle and beats Ganondorf. In the last battle, Princess Zelda and Link defeat Ganon and seals him away from the world. Hyrule is once again saved.

1.5 Why I underline Nintendo as the main author and not the producer Shigeru Miyamoto or the composer Kōji Kondō?

It may seem weird to refer to the author of The Legend of Zelda series as Nintendo. First of all, I would like to underline the nature of this research as this is about global relations between the Japanese Nintendo and its contending video game companies. As I am researching this in a macro scale with different market regions like Japan and North America, I must take the whole company into account. If I would leave out of the historical process of video game industry, then I could only research the composer in these video games but I will refer to him still. The authorship in the video gaming industry is complicated. In the production process, the whole video game is the end-product that consists of different production processes that happen simultaneously and intertwiningly. There are for example composers, producers, art directors and supervisors who do different things (Consalvo 2016: 98.) It could be said that *The Legend of Zelda, A Link to the Past* and *Ocarina of Time* were made by Shigeru Miyamoto, but there are much more hands involved.

Kōji Kondō is also an important part of the production process as he is the composer. The team behind The Legend of Zelda series was small at first but as time went on, the team got more members and an increasing amount of positions. During the earlier days of video game industry, no one knew who were involved in the video game production process. This meant that producers used Easter eggs to have their own signatures in the video games. An Easter Egg is a secret surprise the player can find, that is not necessarily tied to the video game narrative. The first known one was the Atari 2600's *Adventure* (Atari 1979) in 1979. Warren Robinett signed his own work with a

hidden message that was behind a clever trick. There is a hidden room and within a text: “Created by Warren Robinett” (Montfort & Bogost 2009). The Eastern egg is an appropriate term because video game secrets and Eastern eggs are meant to be found in secret places. This author erasure can also be seen in *The Legend of Zelda*. This was one of the first video games that properly credited those involved in the creative process, even if were pseudonyms, as Shigeru Miyamoto’s was name S. Miyahon.

2 METHODS

2.1 Earlier video game studies

Video games have been researched different ways, but the main part of this research is about video game history. Steven L. Kent's (2001) research about video game history is an important source in this research. His work talks about video game history from different companies' point of view and this is important for the research. I have also used works of Montfort and Bogost (2009), Altice (2015) and Mailland and Driscoll (2017) to research specific histories of Atari 2600, NES, Super Nintendo and Nintendo 64.

These next studies mainly focus on the cultural side of video games. Chris Kohler's (2016) and Mia Consalvo's (2016) works research the cultural structures behind video games. The studies to this point have leaned towards Western traditions but Rachael Hutchinson's (2019) research studies Japanese culture in video games. These studies do not have that much music analyses, but I will refer to some of these.

The Legend of Zelda series has also been studied a lot and *Ocarina of Time* (Nintendo EAD 1998) is the most studied video game of this franchise. Tim Summers (2016: 193) has researched the ocarina instrument in *Ocarina of Time*. This ocarina is a crucial part of the overall game mechanics, but I left the instrument out of my analysis. Summers has researched it enough and it is hard to research the Eastern elements of the instrument. Karen Collins (2008: 125) has also researched *Ocarina of Time*, but her research relies on the sound mechanics of the video game with hardware specific applications. Whereas my research leans towards historical methods. Youtube user Save data (2020a & 2020b) has researched the sound design of this video game's temples, and I will use these analyses to help my research.

2.2 Ludomusicology–The musical approaches

I will only analyse these three already mentioned video games, but these researchers have also used other ones for their research purposes. These Zelda games are decades older than the ones other researchers use in their works, but it is not an issue. The same corresponding research methods can be applied to older games. Newer video games give a different kind of perspective that still applies to older ones. When I analyse these video games, my main method is the historical approach.

Tim Summers (2016: 21) uses a historical approach when he uses video games from different decades to form a broad landscape of music analysis: “This diversity reflects the broad landscape of games and the playful nature of its interrogation, where ideas and methods for understanding game music may operate over the entire domain represented by this media music.” This approach puts the video games in a historical context. To achieve this, I will also look at Japanese culture history from the Meiji period (1868-1912) to the launch of the *Ocarina of Time* in 1998. For my work I will use the corresponding years when these Zelda games were launched.

William Gibbons (2018) had also used historical approaches to study video game music through Western art music. With *BioShock Infinite* (Irrational Games 2013), he used the close reading method (2018:13). He studied the video game through music where and when the game was located. The close reading method in video games gives a better understanding of the game than just watching Youtube videos, because the place itself is important. The researcher cannot just watch videos because the gameplay mechanics may introduce something that cannot be conveyed through videos. I think video games do have this problem where close reading might be done by watching someone else doing the playing part via Youtube, or just listening to the video game music from streaming services. Indeed, this would then be video game music listening without the proper context of video game. When you play the video game and research it as a primary and not a secondary source from another source, you know you have the right version of the song, gameplay mechanics and graphics when you are playing it.

Gibbon underlines that time and place are not always the same: "...I'm interested in how *BioShock Infinite* uses the same tools for the opposite purpose: rather than anchoring the game in a particular time and place, the music keeps players temporally and geographically unmoored" (2018: 46). The time in The Legend of Zelda series is sometimes hard to define, but this is also something that is hidden in the context. The geographic setting in both time and space is the key here. Both time and space are also important in the main idea of this research—video game music hybridisation.

This research is leaning towards historical methods but there are two more as help methods. The historical advancements can also be seen with the function of video game music and technological advancements. The function of music can refer to aesthetics of Western art music, for example, Does music have a direct or non-direct social function (Hamilton 2008: 2), for example. The direct social function means music was made for specific social events like church or military (Hamilton 2008: 184). I can apply this to video games: Video game music can have a direct or non-direct social function. With this I mean that video games portray something in the game world. Gibbons (2018: 34) has analysed video game music to portray cultures and locations, but I will take a slightly different approach. I use this function of the video game music as to why a certain song plays in a specific context.

The technology is also a crucial part in video games, and this can be seen in the sound design. Karen Collins (2008) has researched the sound technology in video games. Collins has compared video game hardware between consoles that have been released in the same generation, like Sega Megadrive and Super Nintendo. I will also use this kind of method to pinpoint the hardware differences. The technology is still an important part of video games as they show what kind of things can be made. The technology restraints are not always unsatisfactory as they can allow creativeness to emerge as different kinds of workarounds (Montfort & Bogost 2009: 116).

2.3 Hybridisation in the Japanese and North American contexts

2.3.1 Hybridisation process

Hybridity means “A concept that has been much developed by cultural criticism and post-colonial studies, hybridity is concerned with degrees of cultural exchange between race, ethnicity, gender and class” (Beard & Gloag 2005: 63) and the process itself is called hybridisation. I propose a method of how the video game hybridisation process happens. In this research I will analyse cultural exchanges in two different angles: from the industrial point of view and from Nintendo’s home country’s culture. Here it is Japanese culture. First one is about Nintendo and its relation to the video game industry, where the company must respond to the actions of other companies in order to survive in the markets: I will call this industrial stress. The second one is about how Japanese video game culture is a hybrid between Western and Eastern cultures. I propose that these angles finalize the hybridisation process as video game music is about the industry and the cultural influences of product’s origin country are mixed together.

With The Legend of Zelda video game series, I will analyse the history of Nintendo in these corresponding publishing times, and I will use the Japanese culture history from the Meiji period (1968-1912) to the launch of *Ocarina of Time* (1998). The Meiji period is an appropriate starting point as Nintendo was founded in 1889 (Kohler 2016: 40).

The hybridisation process happens in the video games, but I do not just analyse the video game hybridisation. Instead, I will analyse musical layer of the video games. Video game and video game music hybridisation should not be mixed up. The video game hybridisation is evident here, but it is the umbrella term for this research. A researcher may search varying aspects of video games, but the music goes deeper than just analysing just the hybridisation of video games. The hybridisation process also happens in other forms of entertainment and art. I will underline that video games are a form of art or entertainment. According to Kania (2018: 221), not everyone sees video games as a form of art.

2.3.2 Japan survives through hybridisation–Japanese hybridism

What does the term hybridisation mean in the context of Japan? Foreign cultures influenced Japanese as early as in 16th century. But during the Edo period (1600-1867), Japanese isolated themselves (McQueen Tokita & Hughes 2016: 33.) The Meiji period (1868-1912) is more important because Western and Japanese culture got in contact with each other. This period has another name, and it is Meiji Restoration. Japan was in danger to be colonialised as it closed its borders from other countries. In order to survive, the Japanese culture had to appeal to the global world:

Its values and cultural practices had to be defined and translated in a way that would yield comparative value: in a manner that would make international exchange possible, and that would allow the nation to survive in a context of many competing nations. In short, Japan suddenly had to make sense to foreigners who did not intuitively and lyrically understand Japanese space. (Inouyue 2008: 107)

The modernisation of Japan was about surviving in the global world and the Japanese hybridism is a relevant term in this process. Koichi Iwabuchi (2002: 53) tells that “Japanese hybridism aims to discursively construct an image of an organic cultural entity, “Japan,” that absorbs foreign cultures without changing its national/cultural core“. This is one of the key elements what I am analyzing in three different Zelda games. As video games are aimed towards global market (Altice 2015: 199), there are still cultural elements from the production country’s origin. As The Legend of Zelda series is a Japanese cultural product, there are Japanese cultural aspects somewhere in the video game, and with this research, I will show where they can be seen in the music layer.

How has the hybridisation process happened before Japanese video games? The hybridisation process from the 19th century was a cross-hybridisation process between Japan and the West (Consalvo 2016: 8). The Westerners took elements from Japanese cultural products and the Japanese had already started the hybridisation process with music as “Westernization brought Japan a new profession: ‘composers’ (sakkyokka), trained in Western-style technique” (McQueen Tokita & Hughes 2016: 68).

The 20th century hybridisation happened in various cultural products such as manga, anime, film and video games as Japanese cultural products were imported to North America. The Japanese imports were liked for their style (Kelts 2006: 16, 18.) To continue with the hybridisation, there is a term that tells the specific elements of Japanese hybridisation. *Mukokuseki* (Jap. 無国籍) is an important word when it comes to the Japanese hybridisation. Koichi Iwabuchi tells that *mukokuseki* means that cultural product's "country's bodily, racial, and ethnic characteristics are erased or softened" so that the global appeal is possible (2002: 28). *Mukokuseki* was not solely used to erase its character as the term also had hybrid nature, where *mukokuseki* was used to mix different elements of various cultural origins (Iwabuchi 2002: 71). Therefore, the *mukokuseki* attaches both erasure and hybridisation measures. This *mukokuseki* aspect is hidden in the sound design and I will research this.

From a global perspective, Hollywood is highly involved of the modern hybridisation processes. Ivo Ritzer and Peter W. Schulze write about the Hollywood appeal of the film industry. This means that with the intention to succeed in the film industry, the movie must appeal to the Hollywood's audiences by having characteristic styles of Hollywood movies (2016:17.) This argument also applies to the video game industry, as video games wanted to have the global appeal, they started with appealing to the West (Altice 2015: 199).

Whereas *mukokuseki* aspect has a Japanese context, Iwabuchi (2002: 27) also gives this a global term 'culturally odorless', and this term means that "Any product has the cultural imprint of the producing country, even if it is not recognized as such". To simplify, it means that the cultural product must not have any indication to the origins of the production country, for example the Japanese imprint. In this context it is Western appeal, and as this research progresses, the global appeal is also evident. My analysis leans to this as well that even though the Western appeal is an important part, there still exist Japanese imprints as these video games are made in Japan. The *mukokuseki* aspect can be seen in manga and anime but it is also evident in video games. The "Japaneseness" in video games can be hard to find as Mia Consalvo (2016:4) shows that North American children did not know that Nintendo's games were indeed Japanese.

Now it is the best time to introduce the term industry appeal so that the hybridisation in this process has two different part. As Iwabuchi (2002: 28) a while ago said that there was a shift in appeal, the industry appeal is a better word because there was a shift from West to global. With this term, the hybridisation process happens between the global appeal, better said as the video game industry appeal, and the origin of the country in this context Japanese. As Japanese wanted to make video games, they had to appeal to the larger market. Through these Zelda games, we can see that there was also a shift to the global market, and this is why the term video game industry appeal is better, because it includes both Western, Eastern and therefore global appeal. Next, I will explain how the video game industry appeal happens through an overview of video game history.

2.4 Video game history through Nintendo's point of view and industry hybridisation theory

2.4.1 The language bias shifts the markets towards Western countries

Why was the video game medium itself Western centered? The video gaming industry was at first about North America because they were invented there (Kent 2001: 18). Japanese were also involved because they saw the potential of the growing market (Bernal-Merino 2015: 158.) The language of video games is important because the language options centralised on specific market regions. As the video games were a new industry, the language choices were non-existent, and the translation process was simple. The first video games only had Latin alphabets so the texts would be in English (Bernal-Merino 2015: 158.) Whereas the Japanese language usually has three scripts, hiragana, katakana and kanji, they can also use Roman-based Latin alphabet system as romajis. The use of English was not a problem for the Japanese as the letters were familiar.

“During the 1970s, games would normally be shipped in their original versions to the few foreign markets that were ready for this type of entertainment, and trade took place mainly in English between the US, Japan and the United Kingdom” (Bernal-Merino

2015: 159). As video game industry was an US invention, the trade market was based on English-speaking markets. The whole video game industry was based on Western worlds because the technology limited the language options. Even that Japan is not a western state, it still geographically exists between cultural West and East. It acts as a negotiator between the Western and Eastern cultures, so it had a chance to make an impact in the western dominated video game industry (Iwabuchi 2002: 6).

2.4.2 The home console history starts from the West

The Japanese were adopting an industry from the West, infusing it with their own traditions, combining it with their own interpretations of Western culture, then translating it back again into a novel, de-contextualized pastiche. This complex process continued to foster the same mix of attraction and puzzlement that struck players encountering Donkey Kong for the first time. (Altice 2015: 64)

Video game history has had lots of different companies involved. Though there has been the canon history of the market share winners, there still have been a lot of different video game consoles. With Nintendo's home console history, the story is U.S.-biased as canon history has resolved in the North America leaving other consoles like Turbo-Grafx-16 out of the story (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 59). I will research how Nintendo survived through the history of video game industry in the 1980s and 1990s, through three different Zelda games. My research is based on three games, and every one of these games have three different parts that I analyse. The first part is about the video game industry's stress through Nintendo, and the second part analyses how this stress can be heard in corresponding Zelda games. The third and final part is how the Japanese culture can be heard in these video games.

Nintendo is the focus here and as there is competition in the industry, the stress can be found in struggles between Atari, Sega and Sony against Nintendo. During the eras of NES, Super Nintendo and Nintendo 64, these three companies have affected Nintendo the most. The video game industry stress relies on several elements that I have seen, and they are apparent in most of the cases when there had been problems in the video gaming industry. The main stress is the competition about who makes the best video games. The stress is also related to the quality of video games, technological both in advancements and constraints, third-party policies and the choice of physical medium.

In the 1980s and 1990s, we did not have digital games that we could buy and download, so the mediums were different kinds of discs, cartridges and CD-ROMs. I have separated the technological discourses and the physical mediums because this comes evident, when I analyse the Nintendo 64.

To observe the video game history in Nintendo's point view, first, North American video game industry collapsed, and then Nintendo tried to save the industry by appealing to these consumers. The shift from Western to global appeal happened during time. Both the video game industry and its crash were centered in North America (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 42). Europeans were focusing on microcomputers (179) and Japanese started to get a hang of video game consoles (41-42).

During the era of Super Nintendo, Sega started to knock on Nintendo's doors because Nintendo had strict third-party policies (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 45-46). These third-party policies meant that Nintendo had strict control over how other production companies could make video games for its consoles. Sony was an important partner to Nintendo as it already had made Super Nintendo's sound chip (Collins 2008: 45). As Nintendo wanted to make the CD-ROM peripheral for the Super Nintendo, Sony was the best company partner with. But when the launch of Sony's Playstation (the little 's' is important here) happened, Nintendo betrayed them by announcing the deal with Philips. Nintendo was afraid of Sony, so they publicly humiliated Sony by cancelling the CD-ROM peripheral deal. Nintendo's problems started to pile up during this era, and the consequences were catastrophic when Sony launched the PlayStation (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 184-185.)

Nintendo's position in the video game industry is about the first part of the hybridisation as the Japanese company tries to take control in the North American-dominated market. How Nintendo survives and handles this? I suggest that the strain of the video game industry is about the Japanese *mukokuseki* aspect where Nintendo had to appeal to the North American masses by erasing its cultural roots. The *mukokuseki* hybridisation process happened as Nintendo tried to appeal to the North American audiences from North American and not from Japanese perspective.

Therefore, the industry worked as a place of identity erasure for the sake of the masses and then mixing North American culture to Japanese video games via hybridisation process. I will analyse this hybridisation process on how Nintendo managed to survive in the video game industry. In the next method, I will analyse how the Japanese cultural origins exist there even though they had to be muted with the intention of surviving in the industry.

2.5 Japanese culture

2.5.1 Japan as an Eastern and Western nation

First of all, it has to be declared that Japan is not a monolithic entity. “If Japan itself is not a solid entity, neither can its musical culture be reduced to a monolithic entity” (McQueen Tokita & Hughes 2016: 27). To have even a slightest grasp about what “Japaneseness” is, it is time to talk about Japan as a country that has been in a hybridisation process throughout the ages. As previously mentioned, the hybridisation process has been happening both in Western cultures and Eastern cultures. McQueen Tokita and Hughes (2016: 32-33) explain that Japanese culture has been under the influence of Asian countries in the Jōmon period (from circa 10 000 BCE to 300 BCE). This is why I am analysing the Eastern and Western influences in these Zelda games.

I cannot say that a certain song or genre signifies a certain country’s origin because the use of the music and context itself are important. For example the West influenced Japanese music in 19th and 20th century, so Japanese music can sound a lot like it. Still, there are certain themes and appearances of music that signify the “Japaneseness” of video game music. I could have made a genre analysis about certain music genres within a video game or how a certain video game would have certain type of music, but I am aiming to a wider range of how the Japanese influence can be found in any kind of games, whether outside of the music or video game’s genre. Nintendo works here as it had the general impact on the video gaming culture throughout 1980s and 1990s. With these following themes, I can show how the Japanese influence can be heard in The Legend of Zelda series. As we have seen previously, it is not that easy to

see a country's origins if the cultural product is aimed towards global market, and this happens especially with Japanese cultural products.

2.5.2 Eastern influence in Japanese culture–Silence

Donald Richie suggests that Western and Eastern consumers define emptiness in different ways. Westerners find it that there is nothing interesting in emptiness whereas Easterners think that emptiness itself is an aesthetic. Richie notes that “The empty is assumed to show something. Emptiness can be positive—it is always dynamic” (1988: 19.) What does the emptiness mean in music?

There is the Japanese term *ma* that Alison McQueen Tokita & David W. Hughes considered as a Japanese element in aesthetics that be heard in music (2016: 503). This term *ma* means “...an empty space full of meaning, which is fundamental to the Japanese arts and is present in many fields, including painting, architecture, music, and literature” (Davies, Roger J. & Ikeno, Osamu 2002: 52). In the context of video game music, the context of emptiness can be heard in silence. Tōru Takemitsu (1930–96) is a Japanese artist who has used silence in various ways. Burt (2006) says that the silence is essentially an Eastern element in Takemitsu's music rather than being a Western element (2006: 30). Silence is about anticipation, rest, space and an aesthetical method. This can be heard in the silent parts of *The Legend of Zelda* (Nintendo EAD 1987).

2.5.3 Western influences on Japanese culture–Hybrid music

During the Meiji period (1868-1912) Japan was influenced by the West and this had an effect on the music as well. “Western classical music was to play an important role in this development, and with a healthy dose of governmental intervention and guidance, it was adopted and eventually adapted into Japanese society” (Herd 2016: 528). Western art music plays an important part in these video games.

A Link to the Past (Nintendo EAD 1992) has more styles than *The Legend of Zelda*, and now we can talk about the hybrid music. As video game hybridisation itself is a complex process, there are also hybrid styles included within the game design. Western art music was not the only musical style that came from the West. There were also hybrid styles such as enka. Enka is a hybrid Japano-Western style where Japanese pentatonicism and Western-style tonic are mixed (McQueen Tokita & Hughes 2016: 54-55). Japan has various pentatonic modes that are based on tetrachords, and they do not have the tonic as Westerners have, so the term mode is more applicable here than the scale (McQueen Tokita & Hughes 2016: 53).

The hybridisation process is not only theoretical. The Japanese had used Western instruments since the Meiji period, as they tried to simulate the Western art style to make their own music (Herd 2016: 528-529). Their main goal was to find the blending of Eastern and Western elements in their music. Through time they mixed successfully Eastern and Western aesthetics and elements in their music as Japanese musicians started to make experimental music in the 1960s (Herd 2016: 545). As Japanese musicians made their own music, they also imported various musical styles from Western countries. They liked the Western exotism as they mixed their music with country music (Mitsui 2020: 153). North America worked as a Japanese hybridisation route in every part of culture as even Latin musical styles came from there and not Latin America (153). There are several songs in *A Link to the Past* that are hybrids.

2.5.4 Japan between the East and the West—From Western music to Global music

Japan can be interpreted as a triad of Western, Asian and Japanese cultures (Iwabuchi 2002: 5) though it has not always been like that. Like I mentioned before, the 19th century's arrival of the Western countries to the Japanese shores changed Japanese culture. Japan had to obey the Western nations so it would not be colonised, and this meant that the Japan had to be Westernised in order to survive. Japanese did not even have the term 'music' before the Westerners came (Mitsui 2020: 60). Another time

when Japanese started to look their identity from different perspectives was World War II.

Japanese cultural products appealed to the Western consumers for a long time, but this changed during the end of 20th century as they started to search their identity outside of Western culture: “Japan began explicitly and positively reasserting its Asian identity in the early 1990s after a long retreat following the defeat of World War II” (Iwabuchi 2002: 5). I mentioned earlier about the hybrid genres and that enka was important to the Japanese because it wanted to answer who they really were (Yano & Hosokawa 2016: 516). The positive reactions towards Asian identity meant that Japanese could find themselves not only in Western, but also in Eastern cultures as well.

This shift from Western to Eastern and therefore global appeal, also happened in video games. Nintendo had their fair share of own characters, but they did not specifically portray any nation. *Street Fighter II* (Capcom 1991) was one of the first video games that portrayed different nationalities, and Tim Summers has researched this phenomenon from musical aspects: “When individualization is important and graphical technology limited, music and musical stereotypes are a useful, if morally questionable, method of texturing characters” (2016: 77). This stereotypization can be analysed in multiple ways. Rachael Hutchinsin has researched this in Japanese video games. In *Street Fighter II*, this is the Othering of Japan in a situation where two opponents are fighting: “one winner and one loser, strengthens the essentialist constructions of Self and Other, expressed not only through visual representation but also through game rules and player options” (Hutchinson 2019: 143.)

This binarism can portray the Japan-US dichotomy where player one is set as the Japanese Ryu. The opponent, on the other hand, is set as the American Ken and this makes him be seen as the primary ‘Other’ (Hutchinson 2019: 157.) The Othering can also have positive connotations as in *Katamari Damacy* (Namco 2004) where the Otherness is upside down that Westerners see Japanese as others (Hutchinson 2019: 62-63). With *Katamari Damacy*, there is a discussion about how much cultural imprint could have shown so that the video game still appeals to the audiences outside Japan. This has always been a problem in Japanese video game history (Consalvo 2016: 177).

The Orientalism is also an important term in these video games as can be seen in *Katamari Damacy*, *Ōkami* (Clover Studio 2006) and *SoulCalibur* (Namco 1995):

The difference between *SoulCalibur* and games like *Katamari Damacy* or *Ōkami* is that this Orientalism is directly connected to Asia as the object of colonial discourse, continued into the present era. Where *Katamari Damacy* is firmly contemporary and *Ōkami* celebrates the past, *SoulCalibur* depends on timelessness and archetype perpetuate its colonialist constructions.” (Hutchinson 2019: 50-51)

Whereas Othering is about power structures, Orientalism is about stereotyping cultures. But in Japanese context, this is a complex term (Hutchinson 2019: 165.) With *Katamari* and *Ōkami*, the Orientalism has positive connotations as they show Japanese culture’s unique parts to the global audiences but with the *SoulCalibur*, there are negative representations of different nationalities. With the first two, Othering is about Othering self to the global and with latter, Othering is about Othering other cultures in the negative light. I am going to research these types of Otherings in *Ocarina of Time* (Nintendo EAD 1998), where Othering is about power structures and self-Othering is about Othering Japanese culture to other cultures.

3 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: VIDEO GAMES ARE NOT VIDEO GAMES AND EASTERN SILENCE

3.1 Nintendo saves the North America's video game market from Atari and learns from its mistakes

3.1.1 The crash of the video game industry gave Nintendo a chance to succeed

The video game industry did not start from Nintendo Entertainment System or Atari 2600, so we must go few years back before the launch of *The Legend of Zelda* (Nintendo EAD 1987). Japanese Famicom was launched in 1983 and the name meant family computer (Altice 2015: 12). Nintendo had its own console before the NES was invented, and next I will explain why Famicom itself was not enough. The Japanese Nintendo was made for Japanese consumers and this can be seen from its design as it looked like a toy: it was tiny, and it fit well to the Japanese living rooms (Altice 2015: 16). Problems arose as Nintendo wanted to import the Famicom to North America. How to appeal to Westerners? This question started the journey from the Japanese islands to the Western shores.

North America's video game crash in 1983 was the most important event that happened in the home console market and several reasons led to this. Computers were becoming popular as an alternative to video games (Willis 2019: 59). There were no limits on what producers could do and how much games Atari would print. Atari 2600's *Pac-Man* (Atari 1982) and *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (Atari 1982) had problems with quality and because of this, these games did not sell well. (Montfort & Bogost 2009: 133-134.) The quality of *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* is said to be the whole reason for the video game industry's crash but this was not the case. The overall structure of the video game industry leaned towards licences and ports (Montfort & Bogost 2009: 134). This meant that the name would sell video games, but it did not in the end because the quality was not adequate. The term video game was now tarnished and just this word scared North American consumers away (Mailland & Driscoll 2017:155). How these problems could be overcome?

3.1.2 Problems around the video game industry

Nintendo had to learn from Atari's mistakes so it could succeed in North America. Therefore, global success could be possible at some point. The main point was to distance itself from Atari, and Nintendo had publicly tried to do this (Kent 2001: 350). The term and quality of video games were a problem. Video games had to be marketed as something else than video games (Mailland & Driscoll 2017:156) and the quality of video games had to be monitored (Mailland & Driscoll 2017:40). To launch Famicom outside Japan, Nintendo aimed towards North American markets. North America was the gate to succeed in the global world. Nintendo started to modify the Famicom for the North American audiences and the naming was important.

Culture is the most important aspect of video games and because of this, there are different divisions in different regions to match the content to the consumers. This is the reason why there exists Nintendo of Japan and Nintendo of America (Altice 2015: 54.) As years passed, Nintendo also made more divisions like Nintendo of Europe. Nintendo had a chance of an import deal with Atari, but Atari delayed the partnership and after a while, the video game market crashed. Nintendo would have been destroyed if the deal with Atari had been made (Altice 2015: 17.) In the end, it was healthy for the market and especially for Nintendo. In 1985 Nintendo Entertainment System was launched in North America but it went through several different naming processes.

As Famicom was a problem since it had video game connotations, Nintendo first tried to name it as Advanced Video System, but it was not the right one. However, Nintendo Entertainment System was a more adequate name, and both of these names distanced the console from the negative connotations of video games. They went so far as to not market NES as a video game console. The audience was more interested in peripherals than the console itself. There was a light pistol game, Duck Hunt (Nintendo 1984) and a plastic robot peripheral called ROB that could help players as a second player with limited functions (Kent 2001: 286-288.) Nintendo was clearly aiming to sell the NES without any connotations to video games, but they still had video games in their mind. Kent (2001) wraps this up as: "Technologically speaking, ROB was a pretty simple

toy that offered very little play value. It was mostly a decoy designed to prove that the Famicom was not just a video game.”

As Atari did not have any control in the quality of their video games (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 40), Nintendo made some drastically changes to their third-party producer and publisher policies. Nintendo invented a qualification process called ‘Seal of Quality’. Now third-party firms had to follow certain rules and in the end process, Nintendo reviewed the video games before they were published to the consumers (Altice 2015: 105). This seal made it clear that video games had a great production quality so no one should not be afraid of video games.

Nintendo also had to follow these rules as well so the quality would be consistent. The memorable characters helped form a healthy base for Nintendo as they had done since *Donkey Kong* (Nintendo R&D1 1981). This leads us to the innovation. The *Donkey Kong* was not originally about Mario Pauline and Donkey Kong. In 1981, Mario was called Jumpman. These three were originally characters from Popeye (Kohler 2016: 50). Nintendo could not obtain the license, so Shigeru Miyamoto started to work on something original. This worked great as *Donkey Kong* was an arcade hit. *Donkey Kong* made it clear that audiences wanted innovative designs and characters (Kohler 2016: 50). Innovation has always been crucial to video games but in different eras, they happened in different situations. How innovation gave character to video games in the era of NES?

Video games were not portrayed as video games so there was something that set them apart from older video games. They had a paradoxical identity, that at the same time, they were and were not video games. NES was portrayed as a machine from the outside, but it had to function like a toy (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 156). Japanese Famicom and North American NES drastically differed from the outside. Whereas the Famicom looked like a small white, gold, and red box, NES looked like a domestic VCR with its grey colour palette. The difference was even seen in the controllers, so the Western appeal was underlined even in the hardware and outlook aspects. Nintendo also tried to underline that NES was indeed a home console and not an arcade console with different kind of games than before (Altice 2015: 119). These are the problems

that have been overcome in this era from launching of the Famicom in 1983 to the launch of Super Famicom in 1990. Next, I will analyse *The Legend of Zelda* and how it survived despite the strains of video game industry—How it distanced itself from older video games?

3.2 Testifying that Nintendo's video games are not same as Atari's video games

3.2.1 Overview of *The Legend of Zelda's* musical styles and the function of the music

Before I start to analyse the industry's stress, what kind of songs are there and what is the function of music in *The Legend of Zelda*? In Hyrule outskirts, there plays a song called 'The Hyrule Field Theme'. This is the song that plays most of the playthrough and the 'Dungeon Theme' comes second as it is played in almost every dungeon. The last dungeon makes an exception, as Death Mountains plays a different song, 'Death Mountain Theme'. 'Title Theme' is almost the same song as 'The Hyrule Field Theme', but it just plays in slower tempo. These four have their musical style as a common factor as they portray Western art music. 'Game Over Theme' is the intro of the 'Ending Theme' so these two songs form the last style of blues.

As we can see, the Western styles are dominant in Japanese video game, but I will come back to this discussion later. Now the function of these songs is also important to analyse because video game music portrays various elements such as environments (Collins 2008: 132). Most songs portray geographical locations as Link advances his journey, the music changes depending on where he is. 'Game Over Theme', 'Ending Theme' and 'Title Theme' portray a state of game where the playthrough has either ended or is about to start. I would say that music portrays Link's location inside and outside the playthrough. The function of music is important as I progress to *A Link to the Past* and *Ocarina of Time* later.

3.2.2 Video games are not just video games—From arcade machines to entertainment systems

When I say that video games are not just video games, I am talking about the Japanese Nintendo's distancing journey from the North American Atari. As the word video game had terrible connotations, something had to be done in different ways to persuade the North American consumers to play Nintendo's video games. This leads to that video games are not the same kind of video games as they had been before the video game market's crash in 1983. So, how *The Legend of Zelda* disconnects from the negative connotations of video games?

There was a distinction between home console games and arcade games with the NES. The Japanese Famicom was made particularly for arcade games like *Donkey Kong* (Altice 2015: 119). Things were different with NES as Nintendo engineered it for home consoles and *Super Mario Bros.* (Nintendo EAD 1985) is the greatest example of this with wider worlds and rich game mechanics like running and jumping in athletic ways (Altice 2015: 119). The hardware of the Japanese Famicom and NES were similar, but they still had different focuses. As I have previously mentioned that Atari leaned towards ports like *Pac-Man*, Atari had much more ports than just arcade games. The shift from arcade games to home console games also meant that Nintendo wanted to distance itself from Atari. Arcade games themselves were not seen as negative, but the way Atari handled them was the problem (Montfort & Bogost 2009: 23).

This transition from arcade games to the home consoles can be seen in the music as video games were now made with small teams consisting of programmers, designers and composers (Altice 2015: 117). During Atari's days teams were much smaller as the first Atari 2600 games were made by one programmer, but later games were made by a small team (Montfort & Bogost 2009: 102-103). The composer as a team member was new to Nintendo. Atari rarely had outsider composers because programmers were in response of the music, as well as other parts of production (Montfort & Bogost 2009: 131.) As Kōji Kondō was introduced to Nintendo's production team, video games now had music made especially for them.

The Legend of Zelda tried to distance home console games from arcade games by the enormous play area in the game. As this home console video game had a broader game world than previous games, it needed space to save those long playthrough sessions. The memory was important in *The Legend of Zelda* as it was one of the first video games to include a saving mechanism. This meant that save points can be used to save the progress of the game so the player could continue the game, even after she had turned the console off (Altice 2015: 185.) As video game worlds grew larger in home console games, so did the amount of songs in a video game. There were now multiple songs, and the function of the songs are evident here. As there were more places, this implied that there were more songs. Even though they can be heard as backing tracks in *The Legend of Zelda*, this added variety to sound design.

3.2.3 Western art music as representations of quality and innovation

The distancing from arcade games also sparked the identity of home console video games. As Kent notes: “Nintendo’s most important message was game quality” (2001:150), this quality can be seen with delicacy in *The Legend of Zelda*. To talk about the quality of sound design, it is time to compare the hardware to the older consoles. As Atari 2600 only had two channels, its sound hardware was not adequate for polyphonic music. The tuning between sound channels was off so it was almost impossible to play in tune. This meant that most songs consisted of just one channel that only played a short melody line (Collins 2008: 21-23.) NES on the other hand, had five sound channels and one of these channels could play short audio samples. All channels were mixed into mono output (Collins 2008: 25.) What was a great way to promote the new sound technology of NES?

Western art music has been used in video games before *The Legend of Zelda* and this had practical uses. Gibbons (2018: 93) explains that *Gyruss* (Konami 1983) was the first video game to use Western art music but it used an already existing piece ‘Tocatta and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565’ (Bach 1883). It was a galactic shooter game. The use of Western art music in *Gyruss* was about capturing the audience’s attention as arcades were crowded with flashing lights and bleeping sounds. It also worked as a

benchmark that video games can now play Western art music, and this had the cool factor in it (Gibbons 2018: 95-96.) Western art music is the most prominent musical style in *The Legend of Zelda* and Kōji Kondō has made these songs directly for video game so these are not already existing songs. Western art music captures the attention of the player already in the title screen. This also underlines that newer home consoles as different–NES indeed can play and emulate Western art music.

Western art music leads us to the innovation part. The innovation distanced Nintendo from Atari as Nintendo its own underlined identity. Montfort & Bogost (2009: 26) sum up that most Atari 2600s video games lacked originality as they were mostly ports. I formerly said that *Donkey Kong* (Nintendo R&D1 1981) was supposed to be a licenced game of the Popeye franchise, but this was not possible due to licencing problems. This was fortunate for Nintendo as Miyamoto made whole new characters that were successful. This also happened with *The Legend of Zelda*, but this time, in sound design.

‘Hyrule Field Theme’ was supposed to be Maurice Ravel’s ‘Boléro’ (1928). Legend of Zelda’s composer Kōji Kondō wanted to use this piece, but its licence had not yet been expired (Nintendo.com 2016). This problem was overcome by making a whole new song, ‘Hyrule Field Theme’. This innovative way of doing thing was crucial to Nintendo as they tried to distance themselves from Atari, who had used ports and had problems to come up with original franchises. Of course, they had original ideas as Montfort & Bogost (2009: 26) noted, but Nintendo really did make their own things from characters and game mechanics to sound design. The question why Western art music was used in Japanese video games comes to conclusion soon.

3.2.4 Western art music as an aesthetical choice–Hybrid nature of video games between family computers and entertainment systems

As video games were a new form of medium, there was no established set of rules of what video games should be. There was a lot of space to innovate but the negative connotations were the greatest obstacle. Nintendo had distanced itself from arcade

games by learning from Atari's mistakes. But to make an impact that newer video games were different, video games also had to innovate beyond video games. One way to this is to loan elements from different mediums. How can Nintendo show the hybrid nature of video games?

Western art music itself got a lot of attention in *The Legend of Zelda's* sound design. Earlier I said that in video games, the use of Western art music was about benchmarking the new hardware of NES and getting the player's attention. The connotations of Western art music reach deeper. As William Gibbons has been researching Western art music through different video games, there have also been contact points between video games and films. The space that Western art music was played in concert halls has now changed, as they play the films too. This space can be seen as a hybrid where Western art music simultaneously exists in both spaces—in film and in concert hall. Audience on the other hand thinks that Stanley Kubrick's music is first attached to his films and after that to the musical style (2018: 79.) With the hands of Kubrick, Western art music represents Kubrick's style. The connotations of much older composers like Bach or Haydn are diminished and Western art music became an aesthetic that portrays the film.

This aesthetic use of Western art music in the film industry can also be applied to video games. In *The Legend of Zelda*, there are two types of aesthetic uses. The first one is about setting the time period of the video game. As Gibbons suggests that video games portray historical eras, video games can be set in a historical context with its sound design. Western art music has connotations that this kind of musical style is used to portray 'older' times, so it has been used as a stereotypical method to immerse the player to the past times (2018: 36-37.) Gibbons also notes that video games do not have to match precise time periods (2018: 42). I can use this method to put *The Legend of Zelda* in a broader period.

When Western art music is analysed in context of Japan's history, it underlines the time when this musical style has influenced Japanese culture. Western art music was introduced to the Japanese in 1854 (Mitsui 2020: 3) but it was integrated into the culture during the Meiji period (1868-1912). Blues style also can be heard through the

history of Japan as in the late 1930s (Mitsui 2020: 78). This puts *The Legend of Zelda* somewhere around 1930s. I must underline that the time is not exact, and it can twist reality. Gibbons had researched *BioShock Infinite* (Irrational Games 2013), and its understanding of time is not exact. It twists the time through music in various ways such as using songs, that were recorded way later than *BioShock Infinite's* ongoing year 1912.

When playing *The Legend of Zelda*, I think that the game mechanics imply that the video game is set to much earlier time periods than first half of 20th century. For example, there is no electricity or signs of industrialisation. It might be impossible to pinpoint the exact time or even the time period, but it is worth it to try to analyse it as it can propose new ideas. I do not think that every part of the video game like graphical side and the musical side portrays the same exact time. Whereas the music resembles the first half of the 20th century, graphics and other mechanics like used items do not match this.

I can go deeper with this if I start to analyse the religious parts of *The Legend of Zelda*. Japanese video games have had religious content in them (Altice 2015: 110) and Link's shields have a Christian cross in them. If we put this video game into a chronological timeline, there are even more paradoxes. We can do it in a Eurocentric way to portray the Middle Ages, or we can do it in a historical perspective of Japan. We can put the video game in a timeline before the Tokugawa period (1600-168) when Christians influenced Japanese culture for the first time (McQueen Tokita & Hughes 2016: 33). Another timeline could have been in the Meiji period as Western cultures influenced Japanese culture. The Meiji period is underlined with the use of Western art music.

I agree with William Gibbons that the music tells a story that cannot be seen in the same way in other parts of video games such as graphics and overall game mechanics. This same time paradox is present in with *BioShock Infinite* as the music, graphics and game mechanics do not come together (2018: 46). The immersion of time through video game music is the key part as the Gibbons concludes that the historical immersion is more important for the player than historical accuracy (2018: 42).

The second aesthetic use of Western art music is about dichotomies. Gibbons explains that Western art music often signifies high culture in Kubrick's films (2018: 79). The "high" and "low" culture is the dichotomy that can be seen in art. Which cultural products are defined as high or low has been a problem, but Western art music itself has been regarded as high art (2018: 22). Video games are not particularly high or low art. Gibbons' answer concludes what I am also analysing here: "The cultural positioning of these two prominent media at the opposite ends of the spectrum of 'high' and 'low' arts creates remarkable opportunities and challenges for game designers, players, and classical music supporters" (Gibbons 2018: 12). To research Western art music in video games, the research itself gives a lot more answers than just defining video games as 'high' or 'low' art. Due to the hybrid nature of video games, video games a medium is one that mixes cultural products of 'high' and 'low' together.

This dichotomy exists in *The Legend of Zelda* as the distinction happens inside the Western music as Western art music and blues. When the player first plays *The Legend of Zelda*, she notices that the Western art music makes an impact. The first bars of the 'Title Theme' capture her attention. The faster version of the same song as 'Hyrule Field Theme' portrays the video game world when she controls Link throughout the Hyrule. As she ventures into the dungeons and to the final dungeon, the Western art music plays in those locations, so the sound design seems to be streamlined.

This dichotomy is impossible to hear if the player does not complete the game. If she plays *The Legend of Zelda* and does not beat the final boss, Ganon, she cannot hear the 'Ending Theme'. Therefore, the whole sound design implies that it is leaning only towards the Western art music. When the end finally comes, the musical style change puts *The Legend of Zelda* in a vacuum. Sound design has forgotten the existence of Western art music and it has been changed to a blues song. The change of musical style is so strong that it musically distances players from older video games. As I have earlier unveiled that *The Legend of Zelda* was one of the first video games to have ending credits, the musical style change also underlines this. Now video game producers were credited like in any other medium, but they still used pseudonyms. This sums that newer video games were a hybrid medium between video games and other mediums.

To conclude this section about video game's identity, the Japanese Nintendo distanced itself from the North American Atari in an attempt to make video games appeal to the different market regions. The goal of reaching global appeal with video games had to be started somewhere and North America was a great place to do that. The English language limited the available regions that could play video games and European consumers preferred computer games (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 179). Western art music was used to benchmark new video game technology and the style itself became an aesthetic choice by portraying past times and distancing the video games from earlier video games. Now that the hybridisation process has been started as the Japanese Nintendo fixed the North American Atari's mistakes, how can the Japanese culture be seen in *The Legend of Zelda*?

3.3 The Eastern silence as a part of the Japanese culture

As seen in the previous parts, it is hard to say what was the "Japaneseness" part of those analyses. I would say that there was no sign of Japanese culture in them. This is why the video game hybridisation process is complex. Even though the Japanese Nintendo tries to appeal to the North American masses by distancing itself from Atari via hybridisation process, the Japanese culture is hard to see there. I think the *mukokuseki* aspect being both erasing and hybridising method is underlined here. As Nintendo tried to appeal to the masses, it erased the Japanese culture in the video games. The video game hybridisation process was about correcting mistakes. The Japanese Nintendo succeeded despite of the North American Atari's mistakes because it had a plan to make new kinds of video games that separated themselves from the negative connotations. This is what makes the video game industry unique and now I will move to the Japanese culture analysis.

As *The Legend of Zelda* was made in Japan, it spans several questions. Where are the Japanese musical styles? Why is there no instruments like Shakuhachi, Koto or Taiko drums? As I mentioned earlier, Japanese culture is hidden somewhere in *The Legend of Zelda*. I think Eastern silence is the best way to describe the visible Japanese cultural

part of this video game. Eastern silence fills the missing parts of the sound design that the hybridisation process between video game industry's struggles could not show.

First, I remind that *mukokuseki* and Iwabuchi's 'culturally odorless' terms are different (Iwabuchi 2002: 27-28). The *mukokuseki* aspect is about erasure of Japanese cultural imprints but it is also about the hybridisation process between different cultures, whereas the 'culturally odorless' is used in a more global sense. I think the Japanese culture has to be underlined here and as the *mukokuseki* aspect can be used both as an erasing and hybridising process, I will use this term here.

As video game markets were aimed towards Western audiences, they had a certain bias towards them. Sound design mostly consist of Western art music. The blues song destroys the consistency of using only Western art music and this has a distancing impact. I will continue the Western hybrid style analysis with *A Link to the Past* where I can make a more coherent analysis why the Western art music is the dominating musical style. The sound design also has a third musical category and this one is even harder to notice. The audible Japanese culture in *The Legend of Zelda* is about silence.

There are rare occurrences in *The Legend of Zelda* where there is just silence. As Link starts his adventure, he must go the cave to acquire the sword. There is an Old Man saying the famous line "It's dangerous to go alone. Take this". As Old Man speaks, there is a text line sound. After his phrase ends, there is complete silence. There are similar occurrences throughout Hyrule, and the silence is only in certain locations. There are caves scattered around Hyrule and these are silent. In every cave, there are characters, but they do not always talk to Link. Does the silence appear only in parts of the game where character interaction is involved?

These side characters also appear in dungeons and like Old Man, they give tips to the player. In some occurrences, they block your way like Hungry Goriya in the seventh dungeon. In these sections, the geographical music keeps playing and it is not interrupted even by the text line. Even the ending scene has music involved as princess Zelda speaks while 'Ending Theme' plays. So, the silence is only in caves that are scattered around the Overworld of Hyrule.

As I have also analysed the music outside the playthrough area, the silence also appears in the save file screen and this screen appears after the player presses the Start button. Here she can continue her playthrough, start a new one or delete an existing save. So, the caves and this screen are the only places where there is silence. The silence is underlined in *The Legend of Zelda* as there is music in every other place throughout the video game. As I earlier talked about that Western art music tried to capture the attention of the gamers, silence works in a completely different way. We can also talk about the sound design of arcade halls as Karen Collins suggested (2008: 9), that sound levels had to be high “...in order to rise above the background noise of the arcade, attract players, and then keep them interested”. Now that *The Legend of Zelda* is played in homes, silence was now usable as an aesthetic sound design choice.

Japanese culture through Eastern silence happens in these rare occasions. The shift from arcade halls to home environments made it possible to have silence as a part of the sound design. The player can take a deep breath in the silence and it adds a dynamic layer to the sound design. In this analysis, the involvement of Japanese culture in the sound design was minimal in *The Legend of Zelda* but it is now proven to still be there. Since *ma* is also about much more than just silence, the silence can be heard in the songs also. McQueen Tokita and Hughes (2016: 60) describe *ma* term as follows: “In its sense as timing, it indicates the space between sounds, the optimum length of a pause that provides maximum effect in either sound or movement”. The silence and the maximum effect can be found in the sound design of *The Legend of Zelda*.

In the ‘Dungeon Theme’, there are two pulse lead lines that play the arpeggiating part. I would argue that in a Western setting, the first pulse channel would play melody and the second would be solely reserved for the sound effects. The sound design is done in a dynamic manner. As sound effect plays, the corresponding channel is muted, and the sound effect loans this channel. The arpeggiated part is split between two channels as channel one plays the first note, channel two plays the second note, channel one plays the third note and so on. In other words, the arpeggio line plays in turns between the two pulse channels. This way the music continues to play despite the sound effects, as the music channels are temporarily muted for the sake of sound effects. This gives the sound design’s entirety its maximum effect between music and sound effects. The

temporal silence happens both in music and sound effects. The concept of *ma* is complex, and I cannot simply say it is just silence. Rather, it is a certain kind of silence that us Westerners have difficulty to grasp but it can be found in the sound design of *The Legend of Zelda*.

Silence itself in a video game has deeper meanings. As video game technology was biased towards the English language because technology was not mature enough to trace more complex writing systems, the instruments as well were biased towards Western instruments. The upcoming CD period was ready for indigenous instruments, so the hardware of this era was not mature enough to portray more complex Eastern music (Gibbons 28: 34). I think the silence is the only musical expression that even slightly has an Eastern feel to the sound design. I analyse this further later in this research.

The *mukokuseki* aspect of *The Legend of Zelda* is strong here but it will change during newer installations. I think it is important to show the hybridisation part between the Japanese Nintendo and the North American Atari. After this, the cultural imprint is easier to find. Sometimes, it may be challenging to find but it is always there, at least somewhere in the cultural product. Japanese culture was hidden in there, under the Western music. Western music itself is also Japanese music and I will analyse this next with *A Link to the Past* (Nintendo EAD 1992).

4 *A LINK TO THE PAST: THE SUPER IN NINTENDO AND WEST-ERN HYBRID STYLES*

4.1 Console Wars between Sega and Nintendo interrupt Nintendo's monopoly position and its plans

4.1.1 Sega Genesis challenges Nintendo's empire

Nintendo had the monopoly status in the late 1980s. This means that Nintendo controlled most of the video game industry in the home console section. In the 1980s, Atari was the main rival of Nintendo, but Sega appeared as the new challenger. Now, things were different because the status of the video game industry had been 'purified' from Atari's negative connotations. Video game markets were biased towards North America as the console war between Nintendo and Sega outed the history of NEC's (Nippon Electric Company) TurboGrafx-16, which dominated Japanese markets after NES and before Super Nintendo's arrival (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 59). North America was an important market region and nowadays, it still is.

It is hard to pinpoint Sega as a North American or Japanese company as it was invented by North Americans, but its ownership has shifted between Japanese and North American owners (Kent 2001: XI, XII). Even though its video game department is considered Japanese (Kent 2001: 102). In 1986, Sega tried to compete with Nintendo with the Sega Master System (Kent 2001: 303) but it failed. Nintendo had a strong sense of identity with its own characters like Mario, Zelda, Donkey Kong and Metroid. They had marketed video games as something else which led to positive feedback and they had great relationship with other video game studios (Kent 2001: 306). As Nintendo had already grabbed all the major third-party firms, Sega was left out of the competition (Kent 2001: 360) and Nintendo dominated the video game markets with over 90 percent of the market share (Kent 2001: 324). Sega had to do something to compete with Nintendo. I have earlier said that the poor conditions of third-party developers was the first clue on how Sega could shock Nintendo's monopoly status.

Sega Megadrive's name was the same everywhere, excluding North America. There it was called Sega Genesis. In 1988, Megadrive was launched in Japan and in 1989, North America saw the Sega Genesis. I will continue using the name Genesis as I did with NES, as North America was still the key region on the home console markets. Also, Sega focused North America. Japanese markets were first dominated by NES and then TurboGrafx-16 (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 54.)

In Japan, Sega Genesis did not sell well so something had to be done quickly. Sega of America was the key component on rumbling Nintendo's monopoly state (Kent 2001: 424). Tom Kalinske was hired for as the president of Sega of America and his plans worked against Nintendo. Sega of America's former president Michael Katz invented Sega's famous marketing slogan against 'Genesis does what Nintendon't' (Kent 2001: 2001). This slogan was based on who had the most powerful console in the market. As NES was the direct competitor for Genesis, Sega criticized Nintendo for its old hardware.

Now, Tom Kalinske took the plan even further. First, they dropped the price of Genesis. Then they had to make better games. They started with bundled-in games, meaning the video game came bundled with the console. Tom Kalinske changed the bundled-in *Altered Beast* (Sega 1989) to something better. *Sonic the Hedgehog* (Sonic Team 1991) was made especially for the Sega Genesis and it became the bundled-in game. Tom Kalinske's plans further involved making games towards North American audiences and he made a marketing campaign against Nintendo, where the famous slogan worked perfectly against them (Kent 2001: 427.) The marketing campaign and the whole plan worked so Nintendo had to be extra careful with Sega.

One key element was the Electronic Arts game studio who had been pioneering sport games as they were important for the North American audiences (Willis 2019: 3). Electronic Arts already had experience with computer games and Nintendo had wanted to hire them earlier but Nintendo's strict third-party policies, so Electronic Arts made a deal with Sega (Kent 2001: 306-307). The celebrities were something that Nintendo could not own so Sega used them to promote their games (Kent 2001: 406). With Electronic Arts, Sega could promote sports games, new technology for the Genesis

and celebrity marketing. *John Maddend Football* (Kent 2001: 407) included all these things. Sega saw the importance of third-party developers as business partners whereas Nintendo did not (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 187).

4.1.2 Super NES or Super Nintendo?

The naming of the systems was once again different. In 1990, Super Famicom was launched in Japan and in 1991, Super Nintendo launched in North America. Super Nintendo name was used everywhere outside Japan (Maillan & Driscoll 2017: 57-58.) Super Nintendo Entertainment System had different names attached to it but, Super Nintendo and SNES all refer to the same system. Differences still existed between the Japanese Super Famicom and the North American Super Nintendo on the hardware level. Super Famicom was a round box with the ‘colours of the rainbow’ logo printed on it whereas the North American Super Nintendo was a rectangular box so it would be closer to a domestic VCR. Super Famicom controllers had had coloured A, B, X and Y buttons but the controllers of Super Nintendo had a purple and gray colour palette (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 105).

Nintendo was forced to make a new video game console. As Nintendo announced it, they had nothing to show and it was just hype. They did this because they were afraid of NEC’s recently launched Turbografx-16. The technological aspects of this console were scaring Nintendo. This also makes the hypothesis of the word super in Super Nintendo: “...Super Famicom. Ta-dah! Everything people loved about the Famicom (or the NES) would still be there, only better, so the name hinted at [it]” (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 53.) As NES tried to convince consumers that video games were not same games as they were with Atari, Nintendo had to convince that Super Nintendo was not just a super version of NES. It had to convince both the new and existing players. Nintendo could overcome the challenge with better video games, and appealing to North American audiences via sport elements and the mascots were now even more important.

Nintendo had a paradoxical identity with NES as it had to be seen as both an Entertainment System and a home console. Super Nintendo also had an identity problem. Nintendo had to convince parents and existing fans of why they should buy a new video game console because they already had NES. Consumers were confused about these video game generation gaps that newer game consoles could not play older games (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 59.) Super Nintendo was one of the first video game consoles that would not be backwards compatible. (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 31-32). Atari 7600 could play Atari 5200 and 2600 games, but Super Nintendo could not be used to play the huge catalogue of NES. Nintendo had a problem with its image as a children's console and Sega used this against Nintendo with their marketing strategies. As they were trying to focus on other things, Nintendo did not answer this marketing immediately. Their new marketing campaigns became evident after the release of *A Link to the Past* (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 173.)

Sonic was Sega's best answer to Nintendo as Nintendo had showed with their own characters that they were an important part of their success (Altice 2015: 55). This era was about mascots as they were everywhere like cereal commercials, Saturday morning cartoons and now in video games. For Nintendo, this meant that they had to improve their existing characters or make new ones. They did improve the old ones as they had a strong line-up of characters from various video game genres and improving this can be seen by setting genre standards to the video games (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 27). As *The Legend of Zelda* (Nintendo EAD 1987) was the first Zelda game, how did *A Link to the Past* (Nintendo EAD 1992) improve it?

Electronic Arts also did not want to work with Nintendo as NES was not powerful enough (Kent 2001: 409), so the hardware stress of the console's computational power and its limitations became a problem both with third party studios and competitors like Sega. It was time for Nintendo to appeal to wider audiences with technological power but first Nintendo had to convince the customers. The mascots were one part of the convincing strategy as Nintendo did not have innovative plans or to repeat what I earlier said, a rushed plan to match the hardware of TurboGrafx-16. The super word of Super Nintendo was important because Nintendo was aiming to make iterations of existing franchises and not new existing games (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 124). Here,

the old mascots were handy as they did not need to make new games. The innovation was made with new hardware, so Super Nintendo indeed was just a Super version of NES and not a whole new console. I will dissect how Nintendo balanced between innovation and familiarity in *A Link to the Past* while fighting the console war with Sega.

4.2 More than super entertainment

4.2.1 Overview of *A Link to the Past*'s musical styles and the function of the music

How does the generation gap between NES and Super Nintendo affect the game music? With *The Legend of Zelda*, music was used in a simple way as it represented geographical locations or the state of the game, whether it was the start, game over or the ending screen. *A Link to the Past* adds dynamics to the use of the music. In the beginning of the story, there is a scene where Link has to save Princess Zelda from Hyrule Castle and a rain effect is used here. The rain plays outside and inside the Hyrule Castle as it is integrated into these following songs. 'Time of The Falling Rain' represents the rescue sequence and 'Hyrule Castle Theme' represents a geographical location. After Link has rescued Princess Zelda and they are safe in a sanctuary, the song 'Time of The Falling Rain' does not play anymore as it is replaced by the 'Hyrule Field Theme'. The rain has stopped in 'Hyrule Castle Theme'.

The new element of music functionality is the story progression through music. When player does certain things, the music does not stay the same anymore. The most important scene happens in the Lost Woods. At the beginning of the quest, Lost Woods has its own theme but after Link has pulled the Master Sword from the stone, this theme is gone and it is replaced with the 'Hyrule Field Theme'. Link has to go to Hyrule Castle again to rescue Princess Zelda. The Kakariko also has its own theme. After Link has tried to save Zelda and he is transported to the Dark World, the 'Kakariko Village Theme' is replaced again with 'The Hyrule Field Theme'.

Also, geographical locations in *A Link to the Past* have more definitive functions as there are two separate dimensions the Light and Dark World. ‘Hyrule Field Theme’ mostly plays everywhere in Hyrule, but the Dark World consists of ‘Dark World Theme’ and ‘Black Mist’ that plays in Death Mountain and Skull Woods. The mist that hovers on Death Mountain’s volcano is signified with music.

Other uses of the songs are about characters. Princess Zelda has her own theme and so does the several maidens that Link rescue in the dungeon’s of the Dark World. These two themes appear to be almost same so the characters are not underlined with music. In addition to this, there is boss music. In *The Legend of Zelda*, the boss rooms did not have their own songs. The last boss Ganon has a boss song that separates the fight from other fights, and I will analyse this later. As there was much more space in the cartridges, there were more songs and they could be used much richer ways. There was much more dialogue than before, so the conversations had character in them. In *Ocarina of Time* (Nintendo EAD 1998), this is taken even further.

4.2.2 Mascots and video game genres in the new generation

This era was different than the last one. As Nintendo tried to save the video game industry, they had to overcome Atari’s problems while having competition. Sega had learned from Nintendo that mascots were the key to the success. Sonic was a fast and edgy character and the music in *Sonic the Hedgehog* amplified these characteristic elements. Nintendo had characters like Mario, Zelda, Donkey Kong and Metroid with their distinctive musical styles. Mario had groovy and jazz-like styles, Metroid had dark electronic themes. Donkey Kong resembled Mario’s music but during that time, the sound design incorporated more Latin, jazz and blues styles. Nintendo’s naming system is misleading sometimes, as Metroid does not represent Samus and Zelda does not represent Link. Sometimes consumers say that Samus is Metroid and Link is Zelda.

Super Nintendo also had new mascots, video game genres and innovations but these were underlined later in the Super Nintendo’s life cycle. Now, Nintendo wanted to make video games from existing characters because they had a strong line-up of

existing games. There actually was a second Zelda games between *The Legend of Zelda* and *A Link to the Past*. The game was *Zelda II: The Adventure of Link* (Nintendo EAD 1988), but it was vastly different due to its platforming and RPG-like elements. Even to this day, the newer Zelda games did not use game mechanics of this second Zelda game. The video game mechanics in *A Link to the Past* defined what The Legend of Zelda series was about. How did Nintendo refine Link as a character in *A Link to the Past*?

The Western art music plays a lot in this Zelda game, too. So, why is this the dominating musical style? As Nintendo was focusing on making existing franchises better (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 124), this also applied to The Legend of Zelda series. This can be heard in the Western art music. With *The Legend of Zelda* and *A Link to the Past*, the time immersion was important. As I said with *The Legend of Zelda*, it is hard to pinpoint a precise time in neither Western or Japanese history. The Western art music was also used in *A Link to the Past* to portray ‘older’ times to underline the historical immersion.

As I have talked about the Japanese *mukokuseki* aspect, Japanese influences are hard to hear in the sound design and I think the Western art music portrays this. William Gibbons explains that certain musical styles also represent nationalities, such as Western art music can depict the character’s nationality (2018: 32). As Japan also had Western art music, I can use this same argument later but what does Western art music tell about nationality in the global markets? I earlier mentioned that video games were aimed towards North American markets and this led to the erasure of cultural imprints. Especially cultural imprints of Japanese cultures were hard to notice. Mia Consalvo gives an example where North American children could not tell that Japanese video games indeed were Japanese (2016: 4). The Western art music would depict Link as a Western character and it was important since the fight between Nintendo and Sega was happening in North America. This leads this analysis to the point where Link can be seen both as both a Western and a Japanese character.

If a Western consumer plays *A Link to the Past*, there are some parts of the video game that can cause confusion. When Link pulls the Master Sword from the stone, Western

players may see the intertextuality with King Arthur. Tim Summers thinks ‘The Hyrule Field Theme’ represents Robin Hood as this character’s theme has a similar horn sections and Link also has a green tunic (2016: 163-164). Japanese player, on the other hand, could see a reference to Japanese Shinto religion as the sword represents one of the three sacred regalias (Cali & Dougill 2013: 21).

All in all, The Legend of Zelda series can be seen as depicting older times and Link himself as a Western character. The music was an important part when Nintendo wanted to underline that Western music defines this video game series. ‘Hyrule Field Theme’ is one of the few things that connects *The Legend of Zelda* and *A Link to the Past* together. The Hyrule Field does not look the same as before, the game mechanics are now much more complex, and even Link looks completely different character. Even though ‘Hyrule Field Theme’ was an enhanced version of the one in *The Legend of Zelda*, it had the strongest connection with the player who played Zelda games before. The Western art music also portrayed princess Zelda, seven maidens and bosses, so this musical style was used in various ways. Link, on the other hand, did not have his own theme but the ‘Hyrule Field Theme’ stood out as a Link’s theme and has been canonised within time.

4.2.3 North American sports in the new generation

As North American liked sports, video games also worked as a nostalgic throwback to the older games the players had played with Mattel’s Intellivision and Atari 2600 (Willis 2019: 2). Sega had a great amount of sport title deals. Is this something that can be heard in *A Link to the Past*? I must simplify things at first. With sports games, it is also about the competition and just sports per se. There actually was a money making minigame in *The Legend of Zelda* that player could gamble for rupees so she would either win or lose her money. *A Link to the Past* on the other hand has several minigames.

There are minigames of digging, chest opening, arrow shooting and running. First three have a theme that stands out from the rest of the sound design. Most of the songs

in *A Link to the Past* are symphonic or they have an overall serious tone. The theme that plays around with minigames, is a joyful theme. This tone shift also has a dynamic impact as the overall sound design has tension. The running minigame is different from the other minigames. The ‘Hyrule Field Theme’ plays before, during and after the minigame so it stands out. It could also be about geographical location as the running minigame is outdoors and the other ones are indoors.

A Link to the Past is indeed using the video game music in multiple ways. I think this competitive side of this video game was about the sports appeal. Overall video games were getting easier than they were before. The arcade games work with coins so the player could play one or a couple of rounds of the game and then she needs to buy more credits to play the game again. As home consoles were different, the difficulty did not need to be hard as a means to make the player pay more credits. With minigames, players could have the competitive side from these side missions so everyone could enjoy video games.

4.2.4 The better games in the new generation

Sonic was fast and Sega’s slogan ‘Genesis does what Nintendon’t’ was running on television commercials. Genesis was Megadrive outside North America, NEC had TurboGrafix-16 and Nintendo had Super Nintendo. Every one of these names had powerful indications in them. Genesis is also a strong word. Since the hardware’s horsepower was underlined, *A Link to the Past* and other reiterations of familiar games worked great as they could be compared. This was important because Super Nintendo was not backwards compatible with the NES titles. It originally had this function, but it was omitted later in the development (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 101). This meant that consumers had to buy same video games they already had, but this was not the case. Video games had newer iterations on new consoles to sell the new systems. They also were not same old games because they were running on more advanced game consoles. This was the paradoxical nature of video game iterations as Nintendo tried to convince the consumers that the characters are familiar, but the video games are new. How Nintendo succeeded in this with *A Link to the Past*?

As Super Nintendo was aimed to have great graphical and audio features (Kent 2001: 431), Western art music worked as a benchmark in *The Legend of Zelda*, so it also works here. ‘Hyrule Field Theme’ is a great song to compare the differences between these two video games. Immediately, it is evident that *A Link the Past*’s version sounds richer. There were now twice the sound channels and the mono output had been upgraded to stereo. Now the sounds can come from more than one direction whereas in *The Legend of Zelda*, everything came from left, right or centre depending on player’s own audio settings on the television or external sound hardware.

In each console generation, the sound architecture matures. Sega Genesis was one of the first video game consoles to use FM synthesis and it also had one PCM sample channel (Collins 2008: 39-40). Super Nintendo went quite the opposite direction as it had a sound chip that consisted of eight PCM channels (Collins 2008: 45-46). Every one of these channels could play recorded audio. With Super Nintendo, *A Link to the Past* could sound like a proper orchestra. This technological shift from tone generators and FM synthesis to the sound samples was praised by the audience (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 101).

At first, Nintendo had problems with the market lead position (Kent 2001: XV), but it managed to pull off their own plan against Sega. Sega was distracted with the CD-ROM medium, but Nintendo refined its marketing strategies. This led to that Super Nintendo was the most sold console during this era (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 101.) North America was still an important market region in the video game industry and this bias has left out the history of NEC’s TurboGrafix-16 from the canon. There were some other video game consoles as well, but it is also evident that with video game history, that the stories of winners are told. Western bias is so strong that two Japanese companies wanted to shift the marketing focus on North America. Of course, Japan is one of the three largest video game regions alongside North America and Europe. The next generation was about three video game companies which were all Japanese.

4.3 Western art music in Japanese video games

4.3.1 Western art music in *The Legend of Zelda* and the whole video game series

As I earlier talked about whether Link is a Western or a Japanese character, the context is important. Since the Meiji period (1868-1912), Japanese also played and composed Western art music. Western art music also signifies that Link is Japanese as the musical style has been played there for over a hundred years. The problem is that this depends on whether the player knows this or not. This concludes why Japanese and Western players see video games in different ways.

Western art music in Japanese context has a strong *mukokuseki* aspect in it. Even though this musical style is nowadays also considered as Japanese, for non-Japanese people, it is hard to see as a Japanese musical style. This is on point with the meaning of Iwabuchi's 'Culturally odourless' term: "Any product has the cultural imprint of the producing country, even if it is not recognized as such" (Iwabuchi 2002: 27). For Westerners the musical style is Western and for the Japanese, it is Japanese since the Meiji period. Addition to this, Gibbons suggests that Western art music was used to signify national and geographical locations. For example in *Punch-Out* (Nintendo 1987) the composer's nationality is used to signify a character from the same country "The German boxer Von Kaiser, for instance, is introduced via a brief quotation from the "Ride of the Valkyries" portion of Richard Wagner's opera *Die Walküre* (1870)" (Gibbons 2018: 32,24.) Therefore, 'Hyrule Field Theme' in all the *Zelda* games is used in a similar way. As the Japanese composer Kōji Kondō has made this theme, the song indeed is Japanese according to Gibbons' argument.

It is an entirely different discussion on why Western art music is the dominating style and not contemporary Japanese music. Here, *The Legend of Zelda* (Nintendo EAD 1987) gives insight to this. With NES, it was impossible to emulate certain instruments like indigenous Japanese instruments. The pitch was not the problem as the NES's synthesizer sound architecture could play pitches beyond the Western 12 tone system. (Altice 2015: 255-256, 277.) Could the culture also have an effect to the overall sound

design and used musical styles? Altice underlines that music in NES's games: "...leaned heavily on Western genres—especially rock and classical—such choices were based more on the composer's taste" (2015: 256). I would argue against this, as the context still is that video games had integrated Western appeal to them. If the video game crash would have hypothetically happened for example in China, I think there would had been contemporary Eastern music and not Western art music.

How would have North American players reacted to *The Legend of Zelda* if there had been Eastern music? History-centred arguments apply here as well. I think that the overall use of Western art music in certain films and popular culture had an impact to this video game's sound design as well. Like I mentioned earlier, Tim Summers had musical connotations with Robin Hood in 'The Hyrule Field Theme'. Robin Hood indeed is the closest Western character resembling Link. From a technological perspective, Western art music had been emulated with synthesizers in the second half of 20th century, so it was familiar. I think the overall use of familiar Western art music in film and it working with synthesizers led to the musical style being in *The Legend of Zelda*. Western art music portrayed huge adventures, pre-industrial time periods and technological improvements in video game sound design. This indeed was Western centred as the whole point of NES was to appeal to the North American players.

4.3.2 Western art music in *A Link to the Past*

The technology was ready to play any instruments as the sound architecture was based on eight sound channels that could play any samples. Still, the sound design only had Western instruments. I think I can analyse this problem without using the memory constraints of the cartridge medium. Why Western art music was still underlined in the sound design?

I think this is about the characterisation of The Legend of Zelda series. Because this video game series was already having Western art music as its dominant musical style, they did not need to use other styles in *A Link to the Past*. Nintendo could show that Super Nintendo was a better game console than NES because they both used Western

art music, so the comparison was easy to make. Sample capabilities adds realism to the older synthesizer-based sound design. These music capabilities also showed that NES was better than Sega Genesis because it could use its every sound channel to play samples (Collins 2008: 45-46). It would have been possible to use synthesized samples, so the overall sound design would have portrayed *The Legend of Zelda*. The realistic samples were more important for the industry.

In *The Legend of Zelda*, the Western art music was seen as an important musical style and this applies here as well. There are some other musical styles involved but Western art music is the dominant one in *A Link to the Past*. The importance is based on the frequency of appearances and what the music signifies. At first, it seemed that *The Legend of Zelda* had seamless sound design that only consists of Western art music, but this long tension is relieved as the ending scene switches sound design towards blues music. Even though *A Link to the Past* had it as a dominant style, the stylistic variations are rich. There are symphonic and heroic songs like ‘Hyrule Field Theme’, calm songs played a harp ‘Beginning of the Journey’ and three different eerie dungeon themes. Because video game songs were previously catchy loops, new generation allowed to make huge songs with multiple sections. (Collins 2008: 44). Now, the ending credits consists of a long symphonic song instead of a blues song like in *The Legend of Zelda*.

4.3.3 4.3.3 Beyond Western art music

The signification on the other hand is a different story. Western art music is used to portray important story progression events, characters and locations. The other styles are portraying optional things like the fortune teller, minigames and shops. Their style also differs as they sound comedic, whereas the Western art music have a serious atmosphere. I describe these next songs as hybrid songs. These songs are not Western art music, but due to the limited amount of instruments in *A Link the Past*, they sometimes do sound like it. The song ‘Fortune Teller’ has synth sounds which play a monotone rhythm in the bass register. Later, a strange melody is added in high register and it changes the atmosphere. This melody line sounds like beeps and whirls from outer

space, rather than a synthesizer playing a piano line from son montuno style. These atmosphere splits also happen in the chest opening mini game's theme, 'Guessing-Game House'. Piano plays fast roots and fifths on the bass register. On top of this, flute and strings play melody. Suddenly, there is a piano break that is rhythmic. Piano accents a rhythmic melody in a bass register, and this melody is played with horns and a flute.

Both splits have an atmosphere change. Karen Collins (2008: 28) explains that songs with only one or two sections were used in boss battles to create tension. These two section songs created tension with the atmospheric change. I think progressive rock has influenced this and this style had been already used in older video games (43). I think these hybrid songs have gone the same way as did progressive rock artists in the 1970s but in the reverse way. As progressive rock bands were now influenced with Western art music (McParland 2017: 37), here in *A Link to the Past*, Western art music was influenced by rock music. The end products in both hybridisation processes are songs that include rock and Western art music elements. In 1970s, Western art music influenced progressive rock as orchestrated sections were played with band instruments but in *A Link to the Past*, rock is played with Western orchestra instruments. The end products in both situations are progressive rock songs.

The last one is rather strange. The final battle happens between Link and Ganon. There are two kind of boss battles. The main dungeons have their own bosses and then there is Agahnim who has two battles. The boss battle theme 'Anger of the Guardians' is shared between Agahnim and other bosses. This theme is a rhythmic Western art song that resembles march band music. After Link has defeated Agahnim for the second time, Agahnim transforms into Ganon. The story progression happens here through music as boss battles before Ganon have their own theme. This was one of the new music functions in this video game's sound design. This is not solely based on one musical style. Ganon is also the last boss in *The Legend of Zelda* but he does not have his own theme. The concept of boss battles was something new, so these battles did not have their own music at the time (Montfort & Bogost 2009: 130). 'Death Mountain Theme' plays in the last dungeon but when Ganon appears, a small cadence introduces him. After that, 'Death Mountain Theme' continues to play.

In *A Link to the Past*, Ganon's theme 'Prince of Darkness', consists of modern Western art music and rock that is mixed together as a progressive rock song. The song starts with a fast downward horn section run. After this, the whole song is in 7/8 time. Snare drum plays straight eight notes with additional fast fills. Piano plays arpeggios in bass register, and timpani accents these arpeggios. The brass section plays long notes at first. After seven beats, a brass section plays on the first beat, but the first sound lasts for one 16th of a note. The second 16th note is immediately played, and this is tied into a longer note. In the next section, the brass section plays a syncopating rhythm. Snare continues in the same rhythm, but the timpani is omitted. Now, the piano plays arpeggios from bass to centre register with sudden arpeggios up and down. This song is strange and funny because it sounds like the 'Guessing-Game House', but with different instruments and in 7/8 time instead of 8/8 time.

Western art music in *Zelda* games have special signifiers as they signify importance of events and characters. They also portray pre-industrial times, and they work as a benchmark for the new video game technology. Western art music as a musical style is both Japanese and Western. Therefore, the Japanese music is hidden from the North American audiences because they automatically recall this as Western music. This hidden Japanese culture also strengthens the *mukokuseki* aspect of this video game. Western art music also plays an important role in *Ocarina of Time*, but there is much more musical styles than ever before.

5 OCARINA OF TIME: CHARACTERS ARE IMPORTANT AND JAPANESE CULTURE AS A WESTERN AND EASTERN HYBRID

5.1 Nintendo lost its monopoly state

5.1.1 PlayStation for third-party developers

After Super Nintendo, things were not great. The battle with Sega was a success, but Sony was problematic for Nintendo. Nintendo and Sony had a shared history as Super Nintendo's sound chip was made by Sony (Collins 2008: 45). Earlier I mentioned that Genesis failed to appeal to the masses in the later generation, as they had problems with Sega CD and the 32X peripherals. These peripherals were made so Genesis could have a longer life cycle. This did not work out, as these cost too much and they did not have video games (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 142). Nintendo also tried to have their own CD system but later they decided differently. *Donkey Kong Country* (Rare 1994) had rastered 3D graphics to compete with the upcoming 3D technology (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 147). Nintendo implemented Super FX chip to the cartridges so the video games would look better, because now the cartridges had more memory and computational power. *Star Fox* (1993 Nintendo EAD & Argonaut Software) was the first video game that used this chip, and it was the first 3D game for Super Nintendo (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 147). The CD deal started with Sony, but Philips ultimately had the deal, and this made Sony angry as Nintendo betrayed them (Kent 2001: 451-452). This was the beginning of still ongoing story of Sony PlayStation with capital 'S'.

In 1994, Sony Computer Entertainment (nowadays Sony Interactive Entertainment) launched PlayStation in Japan, and in 1995, it was launched in North America. The naming differences between market regions were now gone. Sony had finally succeeded to make the console appeal to the third-party developers. Nintendo still had the same old corporate problems with third-party developers, and the cartridge format was lacking behind, as PlayStation and Sega's new Saturn used CD-ROM as a medium. CD-ROMs were easier to manufacture and they were cheaper (Kent 2001: 504.)

Nintendo declared that cartridges had faster load times (Kent 2001: 504). They surely did, but at what cost?

Third-party developers also saw the problems with cartridges. Nintendo's own video games were critically acclaimed, such as *Super Mario 64* (Nintendo EAD 1996), but third-party developers had problems (Kent 2001: 538). The memory was the main problem, as CD-ROMs had tens of times more usable memory for game assets like audio (511). Nintendo 64 was the much more capable system in hardware specifications (504), but this was not enough. There were no *Final Fantasy* games after the *Final Fantasy VI* (Square 1994), which had an extraordinary naming system outside Japan. The *Street Fighter* series was absent, and the *Mega Man* series found home elsewhere. Now, *Final Fantasy VII* (Square 1997) was a PlayStation exclusive and this was the cartridge medium's fault (542-543). PlayStation even had new exclusive characters like *Crash Bandicoot* which was a new franchise. Sony did not even have to make its own characters, because its platform was so popular with third-party publishers and developers (537-538). *Final Fantasy* series jumped to PlayStation, but Nintendo had *The Legend of Zelda* series. *Ocarina of Time* (Nintendo EAD 1998) was what Nintendo offered.

5.1.2 Global Nintendo 64

The naming system was now unified globally, therefore, Nintendo 64 had the same name in every market region. This also meant that the Western appeal was no longer happening as the appeal shifted from the Western to the global appeal. This meant, that Japanese could make their own culture appear even more. Did this really happen?

Sega was not the main contender to Nintendo anymore in the video game industry, as Sony made things much better. Nintendo now had to compete against Sony to hold its market leader status. This meant that they had to appeal to the third-party developers, and they had to have strong characteristic elements in their existing franchises. Now that I have explained most of the sound design elements in previous *Zelda* games, I

can concentrate on only one. In this video game generation the industry's strain can be simplified between horsepower and available memory, characteristic elements and third-party developers into one element – the variety of musical styles.

Now that video game technology was more advanced, characters were also much more realistic. This also meant that they had their own sound effects. Characters did not speak, because the recorded audio still took a huge amount of memory (Mailland & Driscoll 2017: 511). Third-party developers also wanted more memory as I have earlier demonstrated. The huge variety of musical styles was the answer on how to appeal to the third-party developers, to show video game cartridge as a medium had enough memory. The appeal was now the global, as there were no name differences, and I will argue this more later. The appeal can be demonstrated with *Ocarina of Time* in its sound design.

5.2 Western influenced sound design in *Ocarina of Time*

5.2.1 Overview of *Ocarina of Time*'s musical styles and the function of the music

In the former video game examples I have analysed multiple themes, but *with Ocarina of Time*, the whole theme is circulating around the topic that is the rich selection of musical styles. *Ocarina of Time*'s sound design is vastly more complex than former *Zelda* games. In *The Legend of Zelda* (Nintendo EAD 1987), the function of the music was simple, but in *A Link to the Past* they had variety in functions and musical styles. *With Ocarina of Time*, the greatest improvement of music was its function as a characterising attribute. Now, Princess *Zelda*'s own theme is nuanced, and no one else has the same theme. The most important characters have their own themes. Now, side character also had thematic characteristics.

The geographical locations are now nuanced with different musical styles, but the 'Hyrule Field Theme' is still the song that plays most of the playthrough. This song is

the most important song, as it also has all of the functions integrated: geographical, event progression and characteristic functions define the 'Hyrule Field Theme' in *Ocarina of Time*.

This song plays in Hyrule Field and in several other places. It has an interesting mechanic in its form. This song lasts five minutes, but the form is interrupted with the day and night cycle. The form of this song is defined by Link's actions. When Link does something, the form of the song changes. The most notable one is the battle section where the song takes a dramatic turn. As the mood changes from heroic to dramatic there are dissonances in the melody. Other sections seem like they come at a random pace. When the day begins, 'Hyrule Field Theme' plays, but during the night, it stops. During night, there are just nature's sounds like signature calls of crows and wolves. 'Hyrule Field Theme' can be seen as Link's own theme, because this song plays in several places that are not based on Hyrule Field like Lake Hylia, Death Mountain Trail and Zora's Fountain. This means that this song portrays geographical location as Hyrule Field, the events of Link's actions like calm and battle scenes and also Link himself. 'Hyrule Field Theme' can not be simplified for just one function.

5.2.2 Video game characters and multiple cultures

In *Ocarina of Time*, there a lot of different character types. In former Zelda games, every person could have seen as a Hylian like Link, but this is not the case anymore. The majority of the population consists of Hylians, but now there are tribes that depict different cultures. They don't depict real world cultures per se, but they do have different characteristic elements between each group.

Hylians are put on a pedestal, as Princess Zelda and Link are the most important characters. Ganondorf is also a key character, but he is not Hylian. I explain him later on. Hylians can be characterised by their outlook and where they are living their daily lives. Every Hylian can be seen as white Caucasian characters, and they have differentiating characteristics, as they are not tied to one gender, at a certain age or monotonous physical outlook. They do their daily chores mostly in Hyrule Market and Kakariko

Village. There are some rare other places like Lake Hylia's Fishing pond and the carpenters' rescue mission in Gerudo Valley. Kokiri tribe mostly resembles Hylians as they are white Caucasian characters, but they differ in age. They are forever children and do not grow up. They are always in the Kokiri Village and Lost Woods. The Hylians and Kokiris do have a lot shared characteristic elements but the rest of the tribes differ vastly.

Goron, Zora and Gerudo tribes differ from others. First, Gorons do not have human characteristics as they resemble animals. Their skin tone is a mix of brown and yellow. Darunia is their tribe leader who is characterised as a male with his big beard. Death Mountain and its closest geographical locations are tied to the Goron's living areas. Zoras are aquatic characters who have fish and human like characteristics. Their skin tone is white. All other Zoras are thin and look like other Zoras except the King Zora and his daughter Princess Ruto. They live around the Zora's Fountains. Gerudos resemble humans like Hylians and Kokiris, but they are brown-skinned. They are a tribe that consists of only females, but a male is born once in 500 years. This male who was born happened to be the evil Ganondorf. Apart from Ganondorf, Gerudos live in the Gerudo Valley. These are the main characteristic styles of different cultures in *Ocarina of Time* and I will analyse how these characteristic differences can be heard through the music.

5.2.3 The importance of Western art music in the sound design

As we have seen before in former Zelda games, Western cultures, and namely North America, has influenced the sound design. This is also evident with *Ocarina of Time*, but the range of musical styles is so vast that there are styles from everywhere. There are also imported musical styles that have come to the Japanese shores through North America. To start this analysis, I will first research the Western influence in the sound design.

Western art music is once again underlined in the sound design but as there are lot of other musical styles, this musical style is used in different ways than other styles. This

musical style is used in important places and with important characters. Western art music has more value than other musical styles in the sound design, and refers to Western art music is seen as a 'high' art. First, only the main characters' themes resemble Western art music. Ganondorf is later revealed as Ganon and they both have several themes. Princess Zelda has the same theme she had in *A link to the Past* (Nintendo EAD 1992) and Link can be linked to the 'Hyrule Field Theme', as I have explained before.

Addition to this characterisation, in every cut scene the music is Western art music. No matter who talks or where the conversation happens, the song is always portraying Western art music. For example, when Link beats temple bosses, sages reward him with the corresponding medallions. When he beats Fire Temple, Gorons' leader Darunia gives him the Fire Medallions and the song 'Chamber of the Sages' plays. This song refers to this place Chamber of the Sages but it could play a different version or the same song with different instruments when Darunia was involved in the conversation. This same phenomenon happens with Zora Ruto and Gerudo Nabooru. Sometimes the music is tied to the place and sometimes to the character. Only Link, Princess Zelda and Ganondorf are tied to the Western art music, whereas dialogues of the other characters are tied to the music of the geographical location. Therefore, the main characters have their own themes underlined whereas with the other characters, the music is Western art music. This also applies to the enemies and bosses. Every enemy has the same marching Western art song. Every mini boss has the same song and so does every boss battle. Only Ganondorf's and Ganon's battles have different songs.

5.2.4 Geographical others and imported styles

As Japanese imported Western styles from North America they also imported styles from other cultures through North America. The importance of North America in the hybridisation process is so underlined that even the Latin styles, such as rumba and mambo, came from there and not directly from Latin America (Mitsui 2020: 153). Why was this evident with the 1990s video games?

As *Street Fighter II* (Capcom 1991) was one of the first video games where nationality and culture were underlined, characters and cultures could be portrayed by music with different instruments and musical styles (Summers 2016: 77). This was also evident with the *Zelda* series as Western art music was used to portray characters. In earlier *Zelda* games, there was not a lot of different characters. The only ones were Hungry Goriya in *The Legend of Zelda* and Zora King in *A Link to the Past*, but they were not underlined with music. Western art music was not the only musical style that portrayed characters' nationality in the 1990s (Gibbons 2018: 34).

Now that the Western art music has showed its importance in the overall sound design, other musical styles play their role in the geographical sense. I think the sound design shows a dichotomy in the musical styles different characters have. This is not just about the Western art music. As Link and Princess Zelda are Hylians, their themes portray Western art music, but it is not the case with every other Hylian. Western art music does play in the Castle's Market, but in Kakariko Village and Lon Lon Ranch, the style is country music.

Country music made it to the Japanese shores after the Second World War. Japanese were fascinated by North America and its culture through Western films (Mitsui 2020 92-93.) I think the sound design in *Ocarina of Time* is a dichotomic web. The use of Western country music and Western art music also has a dichotomy that Link and Princess Zelda are more important than other Hylians. Paradoxically Kokiris are portrayed with Western art music. I think the use of this style signifies nostalgia about how things were better when everyone was young as Kokiris never grow old and they always remain children.

After the main characters, Hylians and Kokiris, there are other cultures that are seen as other than 'us'. Gerudos, Gorons and Zoras are seen as second-class citizens. First of all, it is hard to visit their home places. The Death Mountain Trail is behind the gate that a Hylian guard secures. Link must get a permission letter from Princess Zelda and give this to the guard so Link can see the Gorons. There are two entrances to the Zora's domain. The first route in the Zora's domain is dangerous and the other route in Lake Hylia is something only Link and Zoras could use as there are diving involved. With

Gerudo Valley, Link cannot go there in the child timeline. In Link's adult timeline there is a broken bridge between Hyrule Field and Gerudo Valley. He has to use the Epona horse to get across it.

Gerudos, Zoras and Gorons live in isolated locations. So do Kokiris but the route to there is simple, whereas these other routes leading to the Gerudos, Zoras and Gorons are complex and dangerous in nature. These characters are never seen in other places than their corresponding home locations, whereas Hylians are doing their chores around Hyrule. Another argument is that who gets to play instruments. Only Hylians play instruments and before the final battle sequences, Ganondorf plays the pipe organ.

These three tribes have their corresponding songs. Gerudos are portrayed with 'Gerudo Valley Theme' that is a flamenco song. It contains strummed guitar chords, trumpet riffs and clapping hands that resemble the way castanet is played. 'Zora's Domain Theme' represents Zoras. This is an afro-cuban song with shakers, congas, bongos and steel pans accompanied with a guitar melody. 'Goron City Theme' represents Gorons, and this song is also afro-cuban. Whereas the 'Zora's Domain Theme' leans more to the Caribbean style, this song is not as melodic. There are congas, a cuica and a synthesized xylophone with another synth layer. The problem is with these songs and styles is that these songs are only played in limited areas. Gorons and Zoras have only one geographical location where these songs are played.

'Gerudo Valley Theme' on the other hand is played in the entirety of Gerudo Valley. With this song, it seems that Gerudo Valley is entirely detached from Hyrule via music and visual elements. There also happens this kind of geographical differentiation in *A Link to the Past*. In Light World, 'Hyrule Field Theme' plays throughout Hyrule in every place. But in Dark World, 'Dark World Theme' does not play everywhere. The mist of the volcano detaches Death Mountain and Skull Woods from rest of the Dark World. This also happens with music. Whereas in *A Link to the Past*, outskirts of Dark World detaches from Death Mountain and Skull Woods in a geographical and graphical sense, In *Ocarina of Time*, this detachment between Hyrule Field and Gerudo Valley is cultural.

5.3 The hidden Eastern influenced sound design in temples of *Ocarina of Time*

During the later time on the Super Nintendo's console generation, Japanese cultural products started to appeal more to the Eastern countries. This shift from Western to the Asian countries is the opening for the global appeal now that the West was not the main focus anymore. The 1990s was an important decade for Japanese as they started to search for their own identity beyond the Western cultures (Iwabuchi 2002: 5). In 1994, Japan finally launched the transnational satellite broadcasting in Europe and gradually in Eastern countries (2002: 86-87). This was the perfect timing to search the Japanese self in through music and here, in the sound design of *Ocarina of Time*.

As with former *Zelda* games, it is hard to pinpoint the 'Japaneseness' in these video games as they are hidden deep in the video game design. But with the silence in *The Legend of Zelda* and the Western music in *A Link to the Past*, there is something Japanese also hidden in *Ocarina of Time*. With geographical locations and characterisations being more diverse, this can also be applied to the temples that Link visits when he is an adult.

In *Ocarina of Time*, there are six temples—Light, Forest, Fire, Water, Spirit and Shadow—that Link must face in order to save Hyrule from evil Ganondorf. When Link beats the boss of the temple, he rescues the sage of the temple and this gives Link a corresponding Medallion. When Link has all the six Medallions, he can finally face the Ganondorf. The sound design in these six temples differs from rest of the sound design. When Link is a child, there are three dungeons but their sound design differs from these dungeons. Also the last dungeon, Ganon's Castle, differs. As the player first discovers these places, she may think that the music is just ambient music. This is more evident with the first child dungeons and Ganon's Castle, but these six temples have a deeper meaning.

Temple of Light differs from the rest of the temples in its sound design and its visual appearance. This is a Catholic church from the outside but in the inside, it does not resemble one. This theme portrays Gregorian chant. This temple works as the main

temple, because there, Link can change the time between child and adult timelines. Chamber of Sages is located here, where the Sages of each temple give Link the corresponding dungeon's Medallion, and this temple has the most conversations throughout the game. The importance of Western art music in the sound design is underlined here as Temple of Light is the main temple, but with the other five temples, things are different.

I can show my point with three of the dungeons as these five dungeons have Eastern elements in them. Youtube user Save Data has analysed the instrumentation of these temples with his followers, so I can use these videos to help my research. I think this tells the state of the Eastern influences of this video game, that these influences are so deep in the video game, that one researcher is not enough. There is a large amount of instruments and several samples that are modified in the sound design, so it is really hard to just listen and dictate the used instruments. Ambient music is the first thing that comes to mind with these temples. I think this thought decreases the importance of the Eastern elements in these songs. Every one of these themes is a looped song, and none of these songs have just Eastern influences, as there are other elements involved.

Water Temple's theme has a glass harmonica, chimes, a 'trickling of water' sample, an Indian Bansuri flute and a Middle Eastern string instrument qanun (Save Data 2020a: 0:07:23). I think these songs already have the hybrid nature of sound design, as did some of the songs in *A Link to the Past*. This time, the hybrid process is about Western and Eastern influences. In *A Link to the Past*, the hybrid songs tried to emulate the Western art music style in motivic movements but here in *Ocarina of Time*, the atmosphere is leaning towards Eastern traditions with the use of Eastern scales and both rhythmic and melodic motives. These traditions can also be seen in the overall architecture of Water Temple (Save Data 2020a: 0:07:23). I think that in *A Link to the Past* the hybridisation process happened between Western art music and rock as progressive rock, and in *Ocarina of Time*, the hybridisation was about Eastern influences and ambient music.

Spirit Temple's theme has only Eastern and Middle Eastern instruments. There is a Chinese gong, an Armenian woodwind instrument duduk, an Egyptian percussion instrument darbuka and an Indian bowed instrument dilruba (Save Data 2020b: 0:09:55). This theme also has same kind of melodic and rhythmic motives as did Water Temple's theme. To emphasize the Eastern influence in these songs, I think the Japanese 'ma' that I used in *The Legend of Zelda*, also applies here. These two themes have an excessive use of silence in the instruments, as instruments give space to other instruments.

One thing that sums up all the five temples, except, Temple of Light is the hybrid nature. Now that the hardware was mature enough, every kind of instrument could be played with the use of samples (Gibbons 2018: 34). *A Link to the Past* also used samples, but the increased memory made it possible to use all kinds of samples in clever ways. The hybrid nature of songs can also be found in the use of samples as Forest Temple's and Water Temple's themes reuse same samples (Save Data 2020a: 0:04:12 & 0:05:10).

5.4 The problems about Othering and Orientalism

Now that the Eastern and Western influences have been analysed, has *Ocarina of Time* anything to do with Othering and Orientalism? The Orientalism in temples leans more towards positive Orientalism as is seen in *Katamari Damacy* and *Ōkami*. The temples do have a drastically different sound design when compared to other places. It is hard to pinpoint Eastern elements in the temples as they are not that easy to hear. The ambient atmosphere in earlier dungeons suggest that these later appearing temples are also just ambient music without prominent identity.

Because video games were made predominantly for the Western audiences, these Eastern influences are hard to notice and this underlines the *mukokuseki* aspect of Japanese cultural products. I think that Kōji Kondō wanted to show their Eastern roots and these temples worked great for this. As Orientalism is about stereotypization, the Eastern hybrid songs in the temples are stereotyped songs. None of those songs are, for

example, strictly Japanese, Chinese, Eastern or Middle Eastern but they are a hybrid of these cultural influences. This can be seen as a form of self-Orientalism. This is about Japan's relation to the Eastern countries so the Western audiences see Japanese cultures as 'Orient' and not for example Japanese.

With Othering in *Street Fighter II*, there was a Japan-US binary where Japan was the hero and the American character was the opponent. Let's start here with who is the evil one and how is this portrayed in music. Ganondorf is the main villain of this video game. He is a Gerudo character, and this can imply that Gerudos are evil, but this is not the only factor that underlines this. The first encounter with Gerudos is a negative encounter, as Link must save the carpenters from the Gerudo's Fortress, because Gerudos have captured them. When it comes to music, Link must fight Gerudo guards in order to save the carpenters from prison cells and the music in these battles is the same song that plays when Link fights against mini bosses. Another strange musical appearance is in the Spirit Temple, where Link fights against Nabooru, and the same song from mini boss battles begins. Nabooru is brainwashed by the evil sisters Kotake and Koume, which are Ganondorf's mothers.

When Ganondorf is also a Gerudo, Gerudos can be seen in the negative light as an evil tribe, but this resolves in the sound design and in the story. This complex type of evil is not the first time when *Ocarina of Time's* producer and supervisor Shigeru Miyamoto has used this type of narrative, as this was also happening in the Donkey Kong series. Chris Kohler describes that in the video game *Donkey Kong* (Nintendo R&D1 1981), Donkey Kong who captured Pauline, was not evil but misunderstood. In the second instalment of this series *Donkey Kong Junior* (Nintendo R1D1 1982), Donkey Kong himself is now captured. Where Mario tried to save Pauline in *Donkey Kong* (Nintendo R&D1 1981), Donkey Kong is the main villain, but in *Donkey Kong Junior*, Mario is the evil one (2016: 48.)

This kind of villain narrative also happens in *Ocarina of Time*. In the battle between Nabooru and the Gerudo guard, the music and the story signify temporal evil. After the event is resolved, the Gerudo guard is fine with Link, and Nabooru helps him, as she is one of the six sages who gives Link the Spirit Medallion. Ganondorf still remains

but it must be underlined that Ganondorf is just the human form of the evil Ganon. This also comes clear with the use of Western art music as this musical style portrays both Ganondorf and Ganon. Ganondorf is excluded from the Gerudos. An argument is directly found in the game as Nabooru declares this about Ganondorf before she gets brainwashed "...I'll never bow to such an evil man!".

In the end, there is no binary between Hylians and Gerudos that can be seen in the Othering discourse. This would be a different topic if the situation would not be resolved. The Othering ultimately resolves in the end, as there is an ending credits song that is a hybrid mix of multiple songs. During this scene, everyone is dancing in the Lon Lon Ranch and having a great time. Even Gerudos, Gorons and Zoras are involved. I think the Gerudos were seen as an evil tribe, but this was temporal and now it is resolved with the music that is a hybrid of multiple songs and where everyone is dancing together.

All in all, the Othering is still happening in the sound design of *Ocarina of Time*. Western art music dominates in every important event in the story as I have already shown. This is the most important part with the music in video games. Graphics and game mechanics without the music can not show everything. If there would have been no music in *Ocarina of Time*, the story would have been different. The last scene that I talked about where everyone has gathered to dance is about Western art music. Only that songs that are Western art music are mixed in together in this final song and there are only Western instruments. Therefore, the Othering resolves in the story but not in the sound design.

Despite all the efforts Nintendo made in this console generation, Sony took the market leader's position already in 1997 and Nintendo could not make things better (Kent 2001: 558). Even though cartridges store huge worlds and the vast amount of musical styles for example in *Ocarina of Time*, cartridges still cost much more than CD-ROMs and they were harder to operate from third-party producer's and publisher's points of view (Kent 2001: 511 & 539). Still, the appeal had shifted from North America as a Western appeal to the global appeal, as North America was not underlined that much. It still is an important marketing region, but so are the other regions like Europe and

Asian countries, especially Japan. The hybrid nature of Japanese video games is the key ingredient here. The hybridisation process in *Ocarina of Time* was global.

6 DISCUSSION

The *mukokuseki* aspect in Japanese cultural products is a reoccurring element. At first, it may seem that there are no cultural imprints. Japanese culture imprints still occur in video games, but they are hard to notice. In the beginning of video game history, the Western appeal had to be taken seriously. Language choices were limited due to technologic restraints, so the Western appeal was evident because English was the language of the video games. Graphics and text may not always be the best way to portray something in a video game. For example, text lines have to be translated, so the original message may lose its meaning. Music does not have this limitation.

The Western appeal can be found in the instrument choices as Eastern influenced instruments were hard to notice. Because Japanese culture is influenced by Eastern and Western traditions, Western art music also showed the Western influence on Japanese music. North America imported different musical styles to the Japanese shores, like rhumba from Latin America. When Japan started to form its own identity from in the East, the ‘Japaneseness’ in the cultural products also appealed to the Eastern, and therefore global markets. Now Japanese video games had space to have Japanese culture in them.

Music adds a layer to the video games that other assets, such as graphics, cannot add. Music in *Zelda* games shows that it amplifies the significations of geographic locations, story event progressions and adds layers to the characters. Western art music seemed to be the most important musical style in these three *Zelda* games, but more styles appeared as time progressed. As technology matured, more musical styles were available for use. The sample-based technology was the key here, as now video game consoles could play real instruments, so they were not needed to be emulated as synth versions.

One important aspect of the video game hybridisation process is who is playing these video games. As I showed with *A Link to the Past*, Japanese and North American players would interpret things differently, and this refers to their past experiences. This is also important for the overall video game research. There have not been many studies

that analyse the Japanese cultural of aspects of Japanese video games. We need to underline the Japanese culture in these video games. Still, Western research methods and Western points of views can be easily applied to the Japanese video games because Japanese cultural products have Western influences in them.

I left the ocarina instrument out of the analysis, as it had been analysed already. It was hard to find Eastern influences of the instrument, but I think this would have needed religious studies due to its instrument's ritualistic origin. I also left out the Fire Temple's theme because the methods would have been different. It would be better to research why this same Islamic chant sample has been used in multiple video games, and even in the recent ones. The vague naming systems in the original sample packs such as this sample's name 'Track 76', gives a hint as to why these samples have been used.

The video game music history and history of Western art music history could be researched. For both, the technological aspect is an important factor. Music changed from monophonic to polyphonic and during time, more voices were added. Ocarina of Time could easily play orchestrated songs, and 'Hyrule Field Theme' was a great example of this. Concert halls were not only places to hear music as music could be played from the radio. This also happened to video games as arcade halls were not the only places to play video games, because Atari 2600 and NES standardised the home console experience.

Other video games, that would be interesting to research, are the Donkey Kong and the Tomb Raider franchises. What happened when the Japanese Donkey Kong was later produced by a British Rare? When the British Eidos Software was bought by Square Enix, what happened to the video games? The hybridization discourse is much more complex here as the Tomb Raider and Donkey Kong characters have been made by mixing different stories, characters and cultures. Now, they have merged with a game studio that comes from another culture. Both video games could be used to describe the Japanese and the British hybridization in the sound design. The whole Rare company's history could be portrayed by the hybridization process. It was a European producer, then it got a deal with the Japanese Nintendo and later, the North American

Microsoft bought it. In addition, now the old Rare's producers make games for every console via Playtonic Games. Rare's history could be analysed how different cultures have shaped their video games.

As I researched these video games, I also explored musical aesthetics in these video games. The Western philosophical question about autonomous music can be researched in these games, as there is a clear technological innovation: *The Legend of Zelda* portrays geographical locations, *A Link to the Past* portrays events and *Ocarina of Time* portrays characters. The musical autonomy could be described with 'Hyrule Field Theme'. This research could also use Japanese and Eastern aesthetics.

The hybridisation process in the video game industry was about the winners. Nintendo lost its monopoly state, and its reputation went down generation after generation. Nowadays, Nintendo does great with its Switch console, as it has abandoned the console wars tradition and does things in its own way. Nintendo uses innovative ways to stay relevant, and it does not follow the typical form of who has the most powerful hardware. The hybridisation process happens every day and Eastern countries are becoming more important to the video game industry. Japan has a special place, as it is still counted as one market region and is not included with the rest of the Eastern countries.

There are lots of different ways to research video games, and I think the hybridisation process is one of the important factors defining what video games are about. Video games can be seen as a hybrid medium. Also, the industry's history leans towards Eastern and Western cultures. The hybridisation process can also be seen in the graphics, but the process works in different ways in the sound department. Video game music is not just music. Its context is important.

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