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Manga in Japanese History

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Manga, or Japanese comics, have traditionally been a significant part of Japanese popular culture. However, Japanese comics do not exist in a vacuum; they are closely connected to Japanese history and culture, including such areas as politics, economy, family, religion, and gender. Therefore, they reflect both the reality of Japanese society and the myths, beliefs, and fantasies that Japanese have about themselves, their culture, and the world. The history of manga shows how they reflect and shape Japanese society and how they came to be what they are today.

Antecedents of Manga in Premodern Japan

Manga has a very long history in Japan that begins with caricature. The Japanese word *fūshi* (caricature) refers to criticizing or slandering the defects and shortcomings of society or of particular people. The word *fūshi-e* or "caricature pictures" refers to witty and sarcastic pictures that carry out this function (Shinmura 1991, 214). For example, Hōryūji temple was built in 607 and was rebuilt in the eighth century after a fire. In 1935, caricatures of people, animals, and "grossly exaggerated phalli" were found on the backs of planks in the ceiling of the temple (Schodt 1988, 28). Another temple, Tōshōdaiji, also has ancient caricatures suggesting that exaggerating features for humorous effect was a popular pastime (Kawasaki 1996, 8).

The most famous early caricature that many scholars consider a prototype of the manga form is Bishop Toba's (1053–1140) *Chōjū giga* (The Animal Scrolls). This work is a four-volume monochrome picture scroll (*emakimono*) of humorous brush-and-ink drawings of birds and animals. The scrolls show frogs, hares, monkeys, and foxes parodying the decadent lifestyle of the upper class. In one of the pictures, a frog is wearing a priest's vestments and holds prayer beads and sutras while other "priests" are losing at gambling or playing strip poker.

Later picture scrolls take a more serious treatment of the subject of religion, such as the *Gaki zōshi* (Hungry Ghost Scrolls), drawn in the middle of the twelfth century, and the *Jigoku zōshi* (Hell Scrolls), painted at the end of the twelfth century. Both

An *Ōtsu-e* (Ōtsu picture) of an ogre chanting a Buddhist sutra *(oni no nembutsu)*, typically sold to travelers during the Tokugawa period.
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Gaki zōshi and *Jigoku zōshi* instruct pictorially the Buddhist notion of transmigration in the six realms of existence. The *Gaki zōshi* depicts the realm of the *pretas* (hungry ghosts) who are suffering from hunger, and the *Jigoku zōshi* realistically shows the fearful realm of hell to be avoided at all cost (Shinmura 1991). *Jigoku-e,* or "hell pictures" used caricature, but the intent was to teach children basic Buddhist doctrines and ethics by showing scenes from hell. These "hell pictures" became very popular during the Tokugawa period; much like today's informational manga (*jōhō manga*), they used pictures with accompanying manga for instructive rather than comedic purposes (Shimizu 2002). Unlike today's mass-oriented manga, however, medieval emakimono were seen by only a handful of elites, such as "the clergy, the aristocracy, and the powerful warrior families" (Schodt 1988, 32).

With the Tokugawa period (1603–1867), woodblock-printing technology allowed a wide variety of caricatures and picture stories to be produced for commoner audiences. The town of Ōtsu near Kyoto sold *Ōtsu-e* (Ōtsu Pictures) to travelers who were on the main road from Kyoto to the north in the mid-seventeenth century. Ōtsu-e started as simple Buddhist-inspired folk art for prayer, printed using a crude and primitive process that was available to ordinary people (Kawasaki 1996, 10; Shinmura 1991,

329). Since the Tokugawa government was actively persecuting Christians, many people purchased Ōtsu-e to have a proof that they were not heretics. These pictures grew in popularity and developed themes that were secular, satirical, and sometimes scandalous, appealing to the many travelers along the Tōkaidō highway, who purchased them as souvenirs (Shimizu 1991, 23).

Toba-e pictures, witty and comical caricatures from everyday life, appeared in Kyoto during the Hōei period (1704–1711). The name Toba-e suggests that they were considered to be in the tradition of Bishop Toba; during the eighteenth century, their publication in Osaka marked the beginning of a commercial publishing industry that was based on woodblock-printing technology. In the succeeding centuries, Toba-e spread from Osaka to Kyoto, then Nagoya, and finally to Edo (today's Tokyo).

From the Genroku period (1688–1704) to the Kyōhō period (1716–1736), *akahon* also became very popular. Akahon literally means "a red book" with a red front cover. Akahon is one example of a popular and lowbrow genre called *kusazōshi* that were commonly referred to as "red books," "black books" (*kurohon*), "blue books" (*aohon*), or "combined volumes" (*gōkan*), based on the color of the cover and the specific method of bookbinding.

Akahon were picture books based on classic fairy and folk tales such as "The Peach Boy," "The Battles of the Monkey and the Crabs," "The Sparrow's Tongue," "Click-Clack Mountain," and "How the Old Man Lost His Wren." There were also smaller versions of akahon called *akakohon* or "small red books," and *hinahon* (dolls' books). Later, akahon evolved into picture books for adults consisting mostly of pictures with little text. Both Toba-e and akahon became popular commodities, whether they were hand-drawn or woodblock printed (Shinmura 1991).

Schodt (1991) sees modern manga as the direct descendant of *kibyōshi* and *ukiyo-e.* Kibyōshi (yellow-jacket books) like the red, black, and blue books that preceded them, developed from children's picture books. Kibyōshi, which mocked conventional mores through humor, jokes, satire, and cartoons, were often published as a series of monochrome paintings with captions. *Kinkin sensei eiga no yume* (Mr. Kinkin's Dream of Prosperity), written by the humorous poet and ukiyo-e painter Harumachi Koikawa (1744–1789), was a groundbreaking work. In the story, Mr. Kinbei (his nickname in the story is Kinkin), standing before the store front of Awamochiya, daydreams that he gets adopted by the rich Izumiya family and attains the height of prosperity. He leads a fast life but eventually gets kicked out of his adopted family (Shinmura 1991, 701, 843).

Ukiyo-e (pictures of the floating world) is a genre of folk illustrations that were especially popular among the urban merchant class during the Tokugawa period. Early ukiyo-e were painted, but it was woodblock printing that made them truly popular in the late seventeenth century. The most common ukiyo-e feature actors, famous beauties, and sumo wrestlers as well as landscapes, birds, and historical themes.

In 1765, Harunobu Suzuki started multicolor woodblock printing, marking the beginning of the golden age of ukiyo-e color prints (Reischauer 1990; Schodt 1988; Shinmura 1991). Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849), born in Edo in 1760, excelled in sketches and dynamic compositions in the ukiyo-e style. Hokusai's ukiyo-e masterpieces include multicolored woodblock prints of flowers and birds, "The Thirty-six Sceneries of Mt. Fuji," illustrations for novels, and other original paintings and drawings of beauties and samurai. Hokusai's *Furyū odoke hyakku,* a series of about a dozen woodprints, was drawn in the Toba-e style. The characters had extremely long and slim hands, limbs, and legs to give the readers a sense of dynamic action. Hokusai published his fifteen-volume *Hokusai manga* between 1814 and 1878. While this work did not use the Toba-e style, it did use caricature to criticize social conditions after the Tempō period (1830–1844), which was characterized by famine, a rise in prices, and peasants' riots. Hokusai was the first to coin the term manga, and his book became a bestseller.

Manga started to permeate people's everyday lives along with *giga ukiyo-e* (funny or playful picture ukiyo-e) and illustrated newspapers. In 1867, the last year of the Tokugawa shogunate, the Japanese government displayed *Hokusai manga* and other picture books at the World Exposition in Paris (Reischauer 1990, Schodt 1988, 1991; Shimizu 1991; Shinmura 1991; Yasuda 1989), a sign of how these popular picture genres were becoming increasingly accepted by the authorities as part of mainstream Japanese culture.

Other types of pictures were more controversial. *Shunga* (spring drawings) was a popular type of ukiyo-e during the Tokugawa period; these woodblock print pictures show uninhibited Japanese sexuality and erotic materials. The lovers depicted in the shunga are rarely naked. They are clad in sensuous, loose-fitting kimonos, which were supposed to heighten sexual attraction. The naked sexual organs are exaggerated and it is obvious that the focus is the sexual act itself. Ecstasy is depicted by the comments next to the picture or by the facial expressions of the lovers. Shunga depict various kinds of lovemaking, including lesbian sex (which was then considered perfectly natural), *ménage à trois,* voyeurism, female autoeroticism, male homosexuality, and bestiality. Shunga also served as sex manuals for brides-to-be (Wilson 1989; Shirakura 2002). The kind of erotic caricature apparent in the genre also appears in contemporary adult manga (Ito 1994, 1995, 2002).

While the Tokugawa government had banned travel abroad in 1636 and Japan closed its doors to most other nations, in July 1853 the American Commodore Matthew C. Perry arrived in Japan and demanded that Japan open its ports. A tremendous amount of Western influence poured into Japan, and manga was profoundly influenced.

Charles Wirgman (1832?–1891) created and published the *Japan Punch* in Yokohama in 1862. Wirgman was a British correspondent for the *Illustrated London News* and a cartoonist who also taught oil painting to Japanese students. His cartoons depicted the tension and conflict between Japan and the West, and the *Japan Punch* continued for twenty-five years and 2,500 pages. It was popular among Western expatriates and Japanese residents alike, and is an indispensable resource for understanding the rapidly changing Japanese society at the beginning of the Meiji period (1868–1912). But it also illustrates the diffusion of Western culture into Japan (Kawasaki 1996; Schodt 1988;

The cover of Charles Wirgman's *The Japan Punch.* Note that the originally European Punch no longer appears in jester's costume, but is dressed and coiffured in traditional Japanese style.
(Reproduced with permission from the Kawasaki City Museum)

Shimizu 1991). Wirgman's cartoons show the ways in which foreign influences were assimilated to create modern manga. For example, Wirgman's cartoons often used word balloons, which many native Japanese artists, like Kyōsai Kawanabe, adapted to their own work. Kawanabe's Western-style political cartoons eventually became a staple in Japanese newspapers, such as *Nihon bōeki shimbun* (The Japan Commercial News).

Manga in Modern Japan

Up until the Taishō period (1912–1926), what we now call manga was referred to as *ponchi* (punch) and *ponchi-e* (punch picture) as well as Toba-e, Ōtsu-e, *Odoke-e, kokkeiga* (funny pictures), and *kyōga* (crazy pictures) (Shimizu 1991, 16). A French humor magazine called *Tobae,* which satirized Japanese government and society, was started in the foreign settlement in Yokohama in 1887 by Georges Ferdinand Bigot (1860–1927), a French painter. Although *Tobae* ceased publication after only three years, its style proved to be highly influential. Bigot arranged his cartoons in a narrative sequence, which (along with Wirgman's word balloons) led to modern Japanese comics (Kawasaki 1996, 80; Schodt 1988, 40; Shinmura 1991, 214; Shimizu 1991, 82–87).

Japanese manga have long been used for satire; this was particularly evident during the "freedom and people's rights movement" (*jiyū minken undō*) in the Meiji period. Taisuke Itagaki, Shōjirō Gotō, Shimpei Etō, and other political leaders, influenced by European thinkers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the liberal British philosophers, formed the first political party, the Aikoku Kōtō, in 1874. Around the same time, "manga

The front cover from Fumio Nomura's *Maru maru chimbun.*
(Reproduced with permission from the Kawasaki City Museum)

journalism," which engaged in political satire, began to appear in Japanese newspapers and magazines. One early example is the *E-shimbun Nihonchi* (Picture Newspaper Japan), a magazine first published in 1874 that closely imitated the *Japan Punch.*

Groups like the Freedom and People's Rights Movement used manga to get their antigovernment message out. For example, in 1877 Fumio Nomura first published *Maru maru chimbun,* a weekly satirical magazine. *Chimbun* satirized not only the Meiji government, but also the emperor and the royal family. Since he had violated the Japanese *zanbōritsu* (slander law) and the *shimbunshi jōrei* (the press laws), Nomura soon found himself in serious trouble (Reischauer 1990; Shimizu 1991; Shinmura 1989;

Yasuda 1989), yet the controversy increased the magazine's sales. Unlike *Tobae,* which cost eighty sen per issue, *Maru maru chimbun* was only five sen per issue and thus targeted the masses (Shimizu 1991, 95). It should be noted that various technological innovations—including zinc relief and copperplate printing, lithography, metal type, and photo engraving—made such magazines possible at this time. The developing transportation infrastructure and the mail service made it possible to turn journalism into a true mass medium (Shimizu 1991, 53).

American Influence on Manga

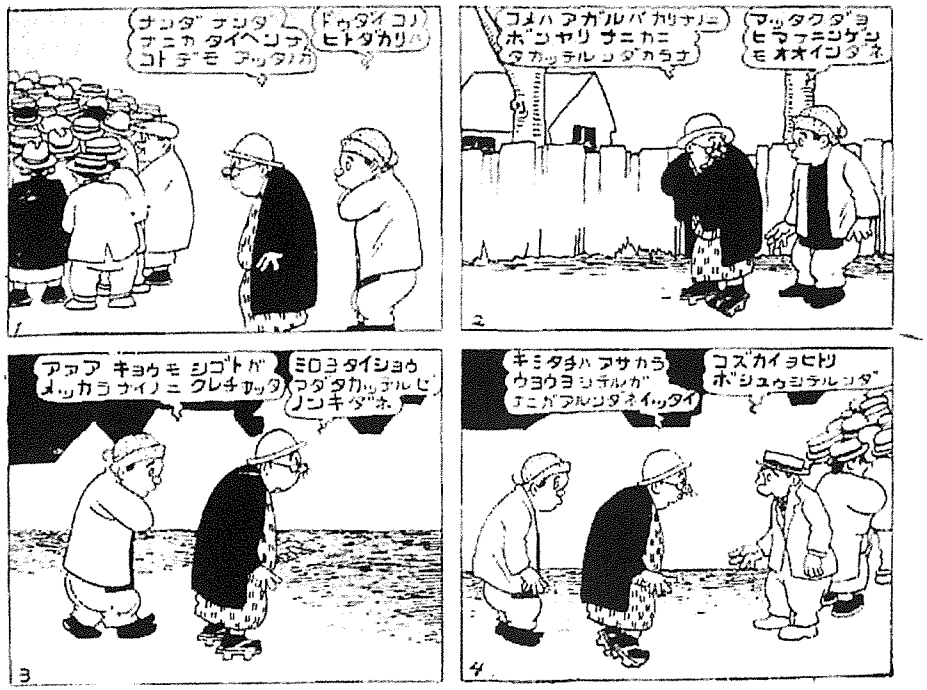
Rakuten Kitazawa (1876–1955) and Ippei Okamoto (1886–1948) helped popularize American cartoons and comic strips. Kitazawa drew manga for *The Box of Curios,* an English-language weekly published in the foreign settlements in Japan, and was hired by the daily *Jiji shimpō* (Current Events) in 1899. Kitazawa also created *Tokyo Pakku* (Tokyo Puck) in 1905. This was the first multicolor manga magazine in Japan, and it became an instant hit. Ippei Okamoto grew up in Tokyo, where the latest Western invention, *katsudō shashin* (moving pictures), was all the rage. Okamoto was fascinated with Western cinema and drew manga that were full of cinematic expressions and images. After he joined the *Asahi shimbun* in 1912, he became a popular manga artist.

As modern manga became established in the mass media in the 1920s and 1930s, artists like Kitazawa, Okamoto, and many others visited the West. At this time, America was a center for comics and cartooning. Joseph Pulitzer's *The New World* was renowned for its *Yellow Kid* comic strips, and serialized comic strips had become a mainstay of American newspapers. Kitazawa realized that manga for children could dramatically increase newspaper subscriptions, so he started a Japanese version of *Yellow Kid* in the *Jiji shimpō*'s Sunday edition.

Manga and Political Repression

The Taishō period saw the rapid rise of parliamentary power and the leadership of party cabinets. The period was also characterized by urbanization, the emergence of a new, well-educated white-collar class, the spread of democracy, an increase in higher education, and the development of a strong industrial and business community. This liberalizing and Westernizing tendency has often been called the "Taishō Democracy."[1] This was also a time when the Japanese government regulated the content of motion pictures and other media, starting in 1925. The law gained teeth after 1931 with "thought control" police (*tokkō*) who had the power to arrest artists and editors deemed subversive because they harbored the dangerous "objective of altering the 'national essence.'" After the 1932 assassination of Prime Minister Tsuyoshi Inukai, freedom of speech, thought, and scholarship ended as communist, socialist, and liberal sympathizers were severely repressed, and some manga artists and editors were forced to recant their "dangerous thoughts."

The 1920s also saw the emergence of national manga heroes in *Shō-chan no bōken*



A scene from *Nonkina tōsan* (Easy-going Daddy) by Yutaka Asō.
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(The Adventures of Little Shō) by Katsuichi Kabashima and *Nonkina tōsan* (Easy-going Daddy) by Yutaka Asō. *Shō-chan no bōken* was a four-panel manga that ran in *Asahi gurafu* between 1923 and 1926. *Nonkina tōsan* appeared in *Hōchi shimbun*'s evening edition right after the Great Kanto Earthquake in September 1923. The main characters, Nontō and his buddy Taishō, are rather slow and tactless. They simply cannot adjust or adapt to the competitive urban lifestyle. The people in the Kanto area were discouraged in the aftermath of the massive earthquake. The sense of humor of Nontō and his buddy made them laugh and gave them peace of mind. The people sympathized with them and the characters in return gave them hope to keep living in a difficult time.

Manga and the War

In the 1930s, children's magazines started to include serialized comics with episodes that ran to a few dozen pages. Popular serialized comic stories were compiled and put together as deluxe hardcover volumes. The *Norakuro* (Black Stray) series by Suihō Tagawa ran in *Shōnen kurabu* (Boys' Club) from 1931 to 1941 and was compiled into ten volumes.

In this story, Norakuro, a black stray dog, joins the Imperial Army of Japan and rises from private to captain. Norakuro became a very popular mascot, reflecting the rising militarism of the time, and many *Norakuro* character goods were produced. *Bōken Dankichi* (Dankichi the Adventurer) was written by Keizō Shimada. The story, which reflects Japanese expansionism, revolves around Dankichi, a little Japanese boy who becomes king of a tropical island in the Pacific. *Bōken Dankichi* was serialized from 1933 to 1939 in *Shōnen kurabu* and eventually compiled into three hardcover volumes.

Starting with the so-called Manchurian Incident, an outbreak of war with China in 1937, Japanese totalitarian militarism escalated, and there was an international outcry against Japan. In December 1938, the Japanese government issued a book containing cartoons that had appeared in the newspapers of countries such as the United States, France, Britain, Argentina, and Canada. These cartoons criticized the Japanese invasion and depicted the Japanese as ugly aggressors. The book was distributed only among a limited segment of the government officials who needed to know how the world's other nations viewed Japan at the time (Reischauer 1990; Shimizu 1991). In August 1940, the Shin Nihon Mangaka Kyōkai (New Japan Manga Artists' Association) was established by integrating such groups as Shin Mangaha Shūdan (New Manga School Group), Sankō Manga Studio, and Shinei Manga Group. They published their first journal, *Manga,* in October 1940, and many manga depicted attacking and destroying the American and British armies. The journal printed 200,000 copies at its peak and became an important "current affairs magazine for the eyes" (Kawasaki 1996, 129–130).

After Japan went to war with the United States, the Japanese government demanded cooperation from the manga artists, who were forced to draw pro-war manga. Many artists contributed to the making of *Original Manga for Promotion of Victory in the Sacred War.* In May 1942, Rakuten Kitazawa became the head of Nihon Manga Hōkōkai, or the Japan Manga Patriotic Association, a group of artists who devoted their work to the war effort. As the war and the U.S. embargo progressed, materials such as paper became scarce, and newspapers no longer allocated space for manga. Many cartoonists were drafted and had to leave Japan for war zones, where they "created reports for the public back home, propaganda leaflets for the local populace, and leaflets to be dropped over enemy lines" (Schodt 1988, 57). Many of them also created erotic leaflets to be dropped to the Western troops in order to decrease the soldiers' morale and fighting efficiency.

A new genre of manga, *zōsan manga* (increasing production comics) also emerged during this period. As the name suggests, the manga was used to maintain and increase industrial workers' output, which was one of the government's primary concerns. In June 1944, Etsurō Katō edited and published *Kinrōseinen ga egaita zōsan mangashū* (Collection of Zōsan Manga Drawn by Working Youth). Katō had drawn the so-called "proletariat manga" or "left-wing manga" before the war, but during the war he supported the Japanese government since artists had to conform to the government's requirements or stop drawing. In 1948, three years after the unconditional surrender, Katō joined the Japanese Communist Party and drew cartoons depicting the current situation. Some manga artists sought refuge in the Japanese countryside in order to avoid metropolitan bombing attacks, and others died in air raids or from war-related wounds and diseases (Kawasaki 1996; Schodt 1988; Shimizu 1991).

Manga After World War II

In the years after the war, a number of new manga magazines were founded. These included *Manga kurabu* (Manga Club), *VAN, Kodomo manga shimbun* (Children's Manga Newspaper), *Kumanbati* (The Hornet), *Manga shōnen* (Manga Boys), *Tokyo Pakku* (Tokyo Puck), and *Kodomo manga kurabu* (Children's Manga Club). This manga boom lasted about three years. Most Japanese people at this time were hungry and poor; they were unhappy with current politics and afraid for the future. They were starving for entertainment and humor as well as for food. Manga was easily affordable, and the newly emerging civil society during the seven-year U.S. occupation provided an abundance of topics for satire.

The Allied Powers, nevertheless, gave Japanese political artists more freedom than ever before. Although the headquarters of General Douglas MacArthur's allied occupation censored some manga to ensure that they did not satirize the general, royal family members were caricatured in many manga magazines such as *Shinsō* (The Truth) and the leftist *Kumanbati*. This was the only time, aside from the nineteenth-century "Freedom and People's Rights Movement," in which the emperor and the royal family were openly satirized (Shimizu 1991).

The Korean War was a godsend to Japanese industry. It produced a big American demand for Japanese goods, and by 1951, "Japan reached almost prewar levels of production and consumption per capita" even though trade was still less than the prewar level (Hirschmeier and Yui 1975, 242). The red purge began in June 1950, and it was the children's manga that started to be energized. Many masterpieces of children's and youth manga were produced by artists such as Osamu Tezuka, Eiichi Fukui, and Shigeru Sugiura.

Osamu Tezuka, the famous so-called "God of Manga," is considered the founder of modern Japanese manga. Tezuka was born in Osaka in 1928 and lived in Takarazuka for twenty years before he moved to Tokyo. His father was a fan of movies and showed his family many films from abroad; his mother often took him to the Takarazuka Theater, which featured an all-female troupe. He was in his teens when World War II started, and after the war he became determined to teach peace and respect for life and humanity through his manga, which became his consuming passion. Tezuka is known for his humanistic themes, including the preciousness of life, and his manga are full of narratives for readers of both sexes and all ages. He received many awards, and his manga elevated comics to the level of great respectability.

Tezuka's *Shin-takarajima* (New Treasure Island), published in 1947, dazzled young readers and sold more than 400,000 copies. His comics often used cinematic

techniques, such as close-ups and changing frames and points of view, which had a tremendous amount of influence on postwar manga artists. He could also "handle weighty themes and create complex characters as well as any novelist" through his manga (Schilling 1997, 263). Manga was now taken seriously as an art form to be enjoyed not only by children but also by adults (Amano 2004; Gravett 2004; Schodt 1988; Shimizu 1991; Shinmura 1991).

It was also at this time that story manga started to blossom. Popular American cartoons such as *Blondie, Crazy Cat, Popeye, Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck,* and *Superman* were translated and introduced to Japanese audiences. The people longed for the rich American lifestyle that was blessed with material goods and electronic appliances. Manga geared for children (*manga dokuhon*) and made available through rental stores (*kashiya*) or bookstores started at the end of 1954, and caused the second manga boom after World War II.

A new genre and technique of manga called *gekiga,* or "drama pictures," emerged in 1957. Manga artists such as Yoshihiro Tatsumi and Takao Saitō started to refer to their art as gekiga rather than manga because their manga read much like novels with very realistic and graphic pictures; it emphasized serious drama rather than comedy. Gekiga appealed to junior and senior high school students who had grown out of children's manga, and it later became popular among university students as its readers aged.

Sanpei Shirato's *Ninja bugeichō* (Secret Martial Arts of the Ninja) is a typical gekiga masterpiece, which was serialized between 1959 and 1962. It is like a historical novel in that it deals with various social issues, such as social stratification and the samurai class, in a feudalistic setting. At this time, the Treaty of Mutual Security and Cooperation with the United States was causing a great deal of social unrest. Japanese society was in turmoil, and university students and radicals were at the forefront of demonstrations and riots. *Ninja bugeichō* gained popularity among senior high and university students as well as adults, as its story paralleled what was going on in Japan at that time.

In March 1959, Kōdansha, one of the largest publishing companies in Japan, started to publish *Shōnen magajin* (Boys' Magazine), the first weekly comic magazine designed for boys and young adults. The magazine had a few hundred pages of manga and was primarily targeted to young males, but I also enjoyed it as a young girl. I used to spend hours reading *Shōnen magajin* and *Shōnen Sandē* (Boys' Sunday, a weekly also published by Shōgakukan) when I visited my grandparents' house where one of my male cousins lived.

Shōgakukan started publishing *Shōnen Sandē* in April 1959, only one month after *Shōnen magajin.* These two weekly magazines were not so radically different from the existing monthly manga magazines for boys, and the sales were not very good until the emergence of *Kyōjin no hoshi* (Star of the Giants, a baseball player's story) in *Shōnen magajin* in 1966 and *Ashita no Jō* (Tomorrow's Joe—a boxer's story) in 1968.

Kyōjin no hoshi was the story of Hyūma Hoshi, a boy who grew up to be a famous and successful baseball player for the Tokyo Giants. The story also featured Ittetsu Hoshi, his Spartan father, who had also played for the Giants years before. Hyūma had to go through many tough training sessions with his father: trials of different throwing methods, defeats, and so on. In *Ashita no Jō,* Danpei Tange, an ex-boxer, finds boxing talents in Jō Yabuki, a working-class Tokyo boy who has been sent to a juvenile detention center after an incident. Tange sends Jō postcards with various boxing techniques, which Jō learns and tries. Jō gains confidence when he realizes that he is capable of winning matches. *Ashita no Jō* is a classic story manga; it ran in *Shōnen magajin* for six years and influenced everyone from children to young adults and salarymen. According to Schilling, the readers most viscerally affected by Jō were "the students who were then fighting their own passionate struggles against Japan's power structures" (1997, 26).

The sales of *Shōnen magajin* topped 1 million in 1966, and, thanks to the popularity of *Kyōjin no hoshi* and *Ashita no Jō,* attracted even more fans. The sales of the boys' magazine exceeded 1.5 million at the end of 1968, the year *Ashita no Jō* debuted (Shimizu 1991, 190). Both *Kyōjin no hoshi* and *Ashita no Jō* are stories about hard work and perseverance as the keys to success, and their popularity could be related to the social and economic issues that were important in Japan at that time.

The 1960s and On

In The Economic White Paper of 1956, the Japanese government declared that the country was no longer in a postwar period. Japanese economic and industrial growth started to burst forth, and the people became very optimistic as the country began to catch up with the West. The 1960s saw an astonishing growth in the gross domestic product, the annual rate of which was over 10 percent over a period of ten years, and in 1964 the Olympic Games were held in Tokyo (Otsuka and Sasakibara 2001; Reischauer 1990). Gag comics started to be very popular at this time.

Fujio Akatsuka became "the king of gag comics." Akatsuka was born in Manchuria in 1935 and returned to Japan after World War II. He began his career by drawing manga for girls' comics, but in 1962 his *Osomatsu-kun,* a manga about a sextuplet and his five brothers, became a big hit in *Bessatsu shōnen Sandē.* He has produced many unforgettable, extremely funny, and unique characters such as Baka-bon's dad, Iyami, and Nyarome. Akatsuka's characters were hilarious with their refreshingly new gags, and they became national heroes. His manga were full of fast-paced and wacky parodies that were based on sharp observations of human behavior, psychology, and the realities of life. Akatsuka's manga were made into very popular animation television programs, such as the famous *Tensai Baka-bon* (literally, "the genius idiot"), which has appeared on TV Asahi since the 1970s to popular acclaim. In this series, Baka-bon's papa is particularly zany and very funny. For example, in the theme song of the animation, he sings "The sun that rose from the West sank in the East. . . ." Akatsuka's gags often entail such total nonsense with clever wordplay and include ridiculous scenes that are humorous because they go against conventional wisdom. That is, of course, Akatsuka's major point. Baka-bon's papa, who tries to be normal

but is totally irrational, shows how silly ordinary people's common-sense view of things really is.

A good example is Akatsuka's story "Baka wa Nihonsei ga ii no da" (The Best Fools are Made in Japan!), an episode of *Tensai Baka-bon* that first appeared in Kōdansha's *Shūkan shōnen magajin* (Weekly Boy's magazine) before it was published as part of a collected anthology of his work (*tankōbon*) in 1969. In this wacky tale, Fujio makes fun of Baka-bon's mother's old school friend, Non-chan, who brags constantly about her recent trip to America. Non-chan is an unbearable bore who thinks that everything American is better than what is made in Japan. She refuses to take the drink At-chan offers because it is not imported. Even her pet is an obnoxiously barking imported breed. When Baka-bon's dad meets Non-chan, he asks if her dog is another one of the old classmates, and when she barks he remarks caustically, "Wow, she barks in English!" (2000, 58–69). Akatsuka here is poking fun at Japanese who have gone overboard over Western culture at a time, in the late 1960s, when, interestingly enough, high-quality Japanese goods, like electronics and cars, were about to become American obsessions.

Regardless of their popularity, however, both the violence in gekiga and the silliness of the gag comics were attacked as bad influences on children's morale and behavior (Amano 2004; Schodt 1988).

The 1960s was also the time when certain manga started to be produced by dividing the labor between the manga writer, who is more or less like a scenario writer, and the manga artist, who draws the pictures for the story. Since many artists also hired several assistants, manga eventually became produced in the so-called "production system." This system enabled the comic magazines to be published weekly. At the end of 1966, the sales of *Shōnen magajin* topped 1 million, and in three years it surpassed 1.5 million copies.

In 1968, the magazine *Shōnen jampu* (Boys' Jump) was introduced. It featured many manga rookies, such as Gō Nagai and Hiroshi Motomiya, and became an instant hit. Nagai's *Harenchi gakuen* (Infamous School) was criticized as vulgar since it introduced overt eroticism to children and was so controversial that parents publicly burned it. Nagai depicted both male students and teachers preoccupied with catching glimpses of girls' panties or naked bodies. I still remember the days when the boys in my sixth-grade homeroom class started acting out the socially unacceptable actions of Nagai's manga protagonists in a classroom or schoolyard. When they were disciplined, the boys claimed that they were just imitating the manga.

Many parents, women's associations, and PTAs throughout Japan protested that *Shōnen jampu* was a bad influence on children (Ito 2000, 1991; Schodt 1988). In spite of these protests, *Shōnen jampu* remained very popular throughout the years. It sold over four million copies in one week in December 1984 and years later, the December 2004 issue sold over 6,530,000 copies. During this period, the average sales of the weekly magazine were 3,400,000 copies. The first volume of *Shōnen Jump* (in English translation) was published in the United States in January 2003.

Two manga magazines for adult manga maniacs were created in the 1960s. They contained not only manga, but also commentaries and criticism as well as a venue for readers to submit their own manga. By encouraging amateur artists to submit their works, they created a gateway for many to become professional manga artists. In 1964 *Garo,* which had many gekiga-type pictures, was published by Katsuichi Nagai, who was very impressed with Sanpei Shirato's gekiga. The magazine was actually created to carry Shirato's new manga, *Kamui-den* (*The Legend of Kamui*). Nagai gave Shirato "total editorial control, prompt payment and star billing" (Gravett 2004, 42). In January 1967, Osamu Tezuka started the monthly manga magazine *COM* for real story manga. *COM* was characterized by a touch of urban sophistication, but it went out of business by 1972. *Garo* was sold to a new owner in 1997.

From the end of 1967 to the beginning of 1968, many manga magazines for adult men were founded one after another. These included *Manga panchi* (Manga Punch), *Manga goraku* (Manga Entertainment), *Manga akushon* (Manga Action), *Biggu komikku* (Big Comic), *Yangu komikku* (Young Comic), and *Purei komikku* (Play Comic). Many similar magazines for adult men followed suit, since those readers who grew up reading boys' manga were now becoming adults. Since the 1960s, millions of manga magazines have been sold, and their animated television versions and related merchandise have also enjoyed great popularity and commercial success. Some best-selling manga used the powerful marketing ploy of being symbiotically linked to animated films and TV shows as well as character goods and toys (Gravett 2004; Ishinomori 1998; Kawasaki 1996; Mizuno 1991; Otsuka and Sasakibara 2001; Schodt 1988; Shimizu 1991).

Shōjo manga, or "girls' comics," emerged in the 1960s. *Shōjo furendo* (Girls' Friend) and *Māgaretto* (Margaret) started in 1963, and *Shōjo komikku* (Girls' Comics) in 1968. These magazines, as well as *Nakayoshi* (Good Friends), came with supplements such as cards, stickers, and paper dolls, and they became very popular among the girls who had started to recognize that they were not just children but "girls." It was the time when girls "started hating ugly stuff, boys, and dirty, violent things" and collected "cute color pens, erasers, writing boards, folders, pencil cases, notebooks, etc." (Evers 2001, 6).

The 1970s and On

When it first emerged as a new genre, shōjo manga had many stories that dealt with girls' dreams and fantasies. Interestingly enough, it was male manga artists who established this new genre. The cute heroines and beautifully drawn pictures captivated the hearts of many Japanese girls. The year 1972 was when those female shōjo manga artists who were born around 1949 started to blossom. Women manga artists now drew manga for females and they started to dominate the genre. They included such stars of the industry as Keiko Takemiya, Machiko Satonaka, Moto Hagio, Ryōko Yamagishi, and Yumiko Ōshima. Their beautifully drawn protagonists and emotion-packed scenes attracted not only young female readers but also adult males. According to Schodt,

these women artists are "wealthy; their female fans are fanatically devoted; they are respected in society-at-large; and they are given almost total creative control over their work" (1988, 97). The genre of shōjo manga was expanded by female artists in the late 1960s and early 1970s. It included stories that dealt with sportswomen, epic stories, and stories based on history (Schodt 1988).

What are some classic examples of shōjo manga during this period? The Japanese volleyball team won the gold medal in the Olympic Games held in Tokyo in 1964. The success and victory of the team, nicknamed "Witches of the East," gave some artists impetus to highlight athletics in their stories, which often accented sportsmanship as a major theme. The broadcast of the live-action drama series *Sainwa V* (The Sign Is V) by TBS Television started in 1969. The drama was based on the manga of the same title written by Shirō Jinbo and drawn by Akira Mochizuki. It ran in *Shōjo furendo* from 1968 to 1970. The peak rating of "The Sign Is V" was 39.9 percent, and it became one of the most popular television series in thirty years (Clements and Tamamuro 2003, 274).

The animated television series *Attaku nambā wan* (Attack No. 1) debuted at about the same time as *Sainwa V. Attaku nambā wan* was written by Chikako Urano, a female manga artist, and serialized in the weekly *Māgaretto,* a rival manga magazine of *Shōjo furendo,* from 1968 to 1971. It is a story of Kozue Ayuhara, a volleyball player who becomes the best player in the World Championship.

The themes of *Sainwa V* and *Attaku nambā wan* include sportsmanship, friendship, injuries, fights, falling in love with the handsome male coach, competition, jealousy, dogged efforts, and any other human emotions involved in winning games. These manga were, in a sense, the girls' versions of *Kyōjin no hoshi,* and *Ashita no Jō,* which appeared in boys' comics and were also made into animated television series. I was in the sixth grade when *Sainwa V* and *Attaku nambā wan* started. Like other readers, I was exposed to the moral lessons that these manga taught while I was growing up in Japan—to persevere in any situation, and to always work hard in order to accomplish one's goals. Such stories played an important role as agents of socialization for children growing to maturity in the competitive, fast-paced world of modern Japan.

Atenshon puriizu (Attention, Please) is a story manga created by merging Itsuo Kamijō's original story and Chieko Hosokawa's drawings. It ran in *Shōjo furendo* and was made into a television drama, airing in the successful *Sainwa V*'s time slot after *Sainwa V* ended in 1970.

Atenshon puriizu was one of the very first manga that could be classified as "occupation training." It depicted modern career women who were glamorous flight attendants in uniform. The manga was originally written for girls, but the live-action television drama attracted male as well as female viewers. The story covered many aspects of the job, particularly the women's on-the-job training. The episodes taught viewers a lot about the effort it takes to master one's work as the protagonists made mistakes and learned their lessons in a real-life setting (Clements and Tamamuro 2003). This informational drama impressed upon me the importance of English as an international language; since being fluent was advantageous for the characters in the show. Many viewers including myself, began to study English very hard in order to succeed in the future. Without watching *Atenshon puriizu* at such an impressionable age, I might not have been able to write this essay in English.

Another classic example of shōjo manga during this period is Riyoko Ikeda's *Berusaiyu no bara* (*The Rose of Versailles*), an epic story that dealt with the French court in the years and days leading to the French Revolution. The manga started in the weekly *Māgaretto* in 1972. The story featured three main characters: Marie Antoinette, the queen of France; Hans Axel Von Fersen, her Swedish lover; and the androgynous Oscar Francois de Jarjayes, a fictitious creation by Ikeda. Oscar was a dashing commander of guards who was actually a woman who was brought up as a boy. The series, consisting of more than 1,700 pages, was published as a set of eleven paperbacks and captivated the hearts of many Japanese girls. A friend of mine in her forties from Niigata reminisces, "I was totally absorbed with *The Rose of Versailles* when I was in senior high school. Ikeda's dramatic story, a masterpiece, with the theme of the French Revolution in the historical background, moved my heart beyond the realm of manga. I think every Japanese girl read that manga without exception in those days." All the girls in my eleventh-grade homeroom class were crazy about the story in 1974. We read it during class periods and lunch at school, on the trains and subways, and at home. The story is so captivating because it depicts the royal family, love stories and affairs, fashion, human relationships, and because the reader can learn so much about French history from reading it. The historical figures such as the king and queen of France, Maria Theresa of Austria, and the revolutionaries came to life in Ikeda's manga, and they eloquently told the readers their stories.

The popularity of Ikeda's series came to be known as the *Berubara būmu* (*Berubara* is a Japanese nickname, an abbreviation for *The Rose of Versailles,* and *būmu* is a "boom"). The boom, which started in 1975, was supported by not only girls but also by women of all ages. There are no age boundaries when it comes to love and romance. *The Rose of Versailles* was so popular that the mass media and Japanese men started to notice, and it became a social phenomenon.

The story was also made into a musical staged by the famous all-female Takarazuka Revue, which ran from 1974 to 1980, again from 1989 to 1991, and most recently in 2006. The Takarazuka company sold many records, photograph books, and posters; character goods based on both the manga characters and the Takarazuka actresses' incarnations of the characters were also popular. The story manga was also made into a live-action movie using Caucasian actors, and was shot in Versailles, France. Ikeda's other famous and popular works include *Empress Ekaterina* and *The Glory of Napoleon—Eroika.* It should be noted that Osamu Tezuka lived in Takarazuka City for twenty years and his story manga, like *Black Jack, Hi no tori* (*The Phoenix*), and *Ribon no kishi* (*Princess Knight*), were also adapted by the Takarazuka troupes into musicals.

Starting in the 1970s, the theme of sexuality, especially male homosexuality, was incorporated into shōjo manga. According to Ōgi, "Instead of showing a shōjo dreaming of romance with a boy, they showed boys and focused on boys' love" (2001, 151). Girls' comics that portray male heroes and their world are referred to as *yaoi,* or

boys' love comics. "Yaoi" is an otaku subculture term that originated in the 1970s. It is a Japanese acronym for *yama nashi, ochi nashi, imi nashi* (no climax, no point, no meaning), and came to refer to comics with explicit homoerotic storylines. However, yaoi comics should not be considered as a niche genre made by and for gay men. Yaoi are written by and for women as well as girls. The boys' love comics offer a sharp contrast to the other type of girls' comics, which focus more on the psychology and emotion of female characters and on their development as human beings. Moto Hagio is considered a pioneer of boys' love stories characterized by adolescents' sexuality and violent emotions. Hagio's works also include philosophical themes, children, and loneliness (Amano 2004, 398–401; Gravett 2004, 88; Schilling 1997, 100–103; Schodt 1988; Shimizu 1991).

According to Aihara and Takekuma, shōjo manga reveal a changing pattern of objects of desire over the years. The first male heartthrob for young girls was "the prince" from the Takarazuka Revue. In the 1970s it became "the foreigner," a somewhat realistic and handsome Caucasian man with extremely long legs and "the captain" of a sport team. The 1980s saw the emergence of "the rebel" when "heavenly expectations in shōjo manga have come down to earth" (2001, 28–29).

Aesthetically drawn young boys have been very popular among girls and women throughout Japanese history. There are also many fans of the all-male kabuki theater and the all-female Takarazuka theater in which some of the actors play the roles of the opposite sex and wear the opposite sex's clothing. In Japan, there has been a long tradition of homosexuality and cross-dressing in theater, and it has been much more tolerated than in other countries. Popular openly gay actors, singers, writers, and commentators abound in the Japanese mass media today.

The production of Japanese comics has always revolved around men—male artists, editors, and publishers—and they reacted to yaoi comics with revulsion, which caused a sensation. The mass media criticized such stories as decadent and degenerate, using hyperbole to characterize these kinds of stories as a "violation" of manga. However, this issue of homosexuality also stimulated the industry creatively. Today, one can find many successful female artists and editors in Japan. The continuing popularity of yaoi comics also suggests that Japanese women are not shocked by gay themes.

Manga in this period also dealt with issues concerning other minorities. The Nihon Chōsen Kenkyūsho (Japan Institute of Korean Studies) protested against a manga story, *Otoko michi* (The Way of Men), that was serialized in *Shōnen Sandē* in August 1970. In this manga, Koreans and Chinese, who are ethnic minorities in Japan, were depicted negatively. They were drawn as intimidating the Japanese merchants at a black market or trying to rape Japanese women at the end of World War II. The publishers explained that they had no intention of discriminatory treatment but were forced to apologize (*Kumamoto nichinichi shimbun* 1991).

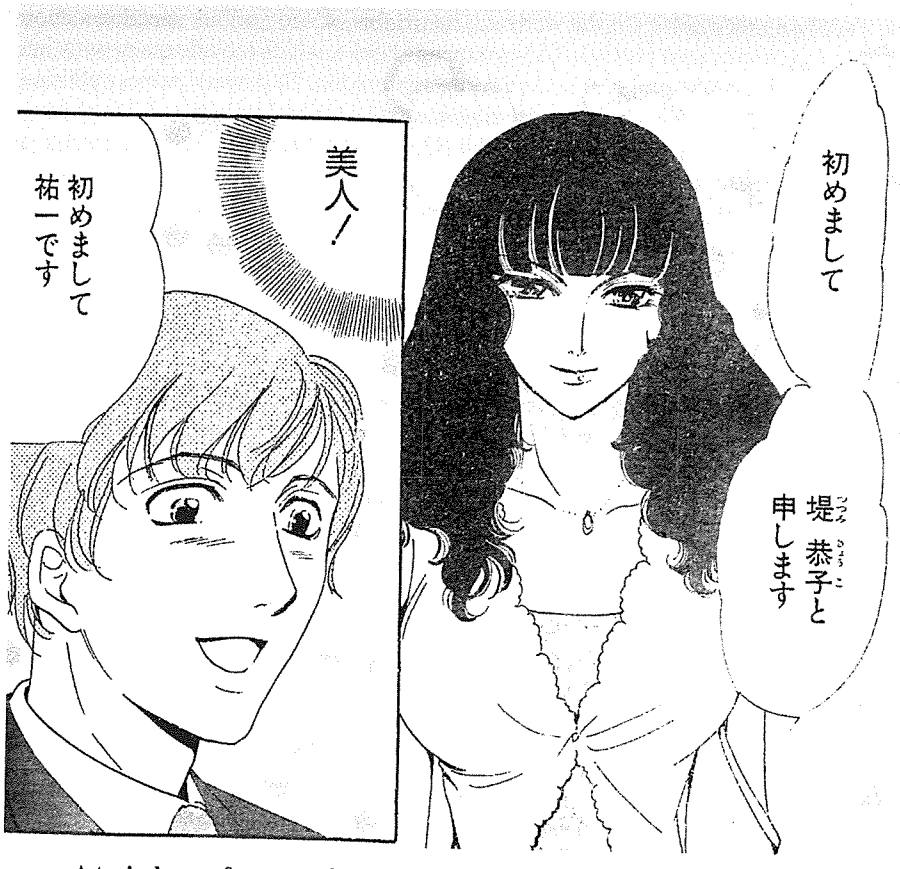
During the 1970s, general magazines read by Japanese businessmen also started to include *kyōyō* manga (academic or educational manga). This new category is referred to as "information manga," "expository manga," or "textbook manga." According to Tchiei (1998), they do not have a narrative structure and the protagonists in this genre are "applying themselves to the study of the origins of and various anecdotes about food, liquor, and annual festivals." Kyōyō manga books, which include many witty and comical drawings and explanations, are comparable to the "Beginners" series published in the United States, like *Foucault for Beginners* (1993) by Lydia Alix Fillingham.

In 1977, Hanazono University used Jōji (George) Akiyama's Tokugawa-era tale of an easygoing Samurai, *Haguregumo,* as part of its entrance examination questions, and a public university also incorporated kyōyō manga in 1984. In 1985, works by Osamu Tezuka and Sanpei Satō were also used in elementary school textbooks for the Japanese language. The publication of a book-length manga by Shōtarō Ishinomori, *Nihon keizai nyūmon* (Introduction to the Japanese Economy), followed, and was eventually translated into English as *Japan Inc.* and published by the University of California Press in 1988. A French version was published in Paris in 1989. The books soon became bestsellers, triggering the publication of many more educational manga. There are also many "educational" manga stories that provide readers with special knowledge about an occupation or a historical figure or event. They include such topics and occupations as a professional killer, surgeon, gynecologist, mahjong player, horse racer, cameraman, detective, CEO, schoolteacher, cook, fisherman, Adolf Hitler, a singing group, and a sushi chef. They all tell fascinating inside stories that the readers might not be exposed to otherwise. Informational manga have become increasingly popular. In 2004, for example, the Japanese Defense Ministry announced that, in an effort to increase readership of its densely written 450-page annual defense white paper, it planned to issue a manga version "to enhance public understanding of Japan's defense needs."

The 1980s and On

Manga gained true popularity and legitimacy as an entertainment medium in the 1980s. This manga boom exploded with skyrocketing sales. For example, *Shōnen jampu* sold 2.5 million copies in 1982, with sales increasing to more than 5 million in 1988 (Shimizu 1991, 38–39). Many new comic magazines for adults appeared, and manga automatically meant high profits. The 1980s was also the time of Japanese economic expansion, when the so-called "bubble economy" led more than 85 percent of the population to classify themselves as middle class.

Redikomi, or Japanese ladies' comics, was established as a genre for adult women in the early 1980s. It is the most recent newcomer to the manga scene. Its readers range in age from fifteen to forty-four (which, interestingly enough, roughly coincides with a woman's childbearing years). Artists for girls' comics used to retire in their late twenties and thirties, but the popularity of ladies' comics led them to continue drawing for the new adult audience. The publication of *VAL* and *FEEL* started in 1986. They contained explicitly erotic scenes, and were drawn for adult women. Such freedom of sexual expression characterized ladies' comics of the early years, and it tended to be associated with female characters. The tendency to draw more and more sexually graphic scenes escalated until the early 1990s. The themes of ladies' comic stories included falling in love, romance, mate selection, family life, female friendship, sex, and lust. More contem-



A typical scene from one of Midori Kawabata's ladies' comics *VAL* and *FEEL*.
(Copyright Midori Kawabata)

porary themes include such social, psychological, and personal issues such as divorce, domestic violence, abortion, relations with in-laws, and female diseases.

Redikomi magazines published by major publishing houses, however, have almost no pornography. Magazines such as *YOU* (published by Shūeisha), *Jour* (Futabasha), and *BE LOVE* (Kōdansha) focus more on the realities of everyday life experienced by modern housewives, office workers, and college students (Erino 1993). By the end of the 1990s, many stories from redikomi also became popular movies and television series. Today's manga is definitely a very popular and successful multimedia form of entertainment (Ito 2000, 2002).

In 1990, a sign that manga had finally become fully respectable came with the Japanese Ministry of Education's prize for manga, which officially recognized it as an artistic and cultural resource of Japan. The first award was given posthumously to Osamu Tezuka (Mizuno 1991). That same year, the animation studio Nippon Animation started production of *Chibi Maruko-chan* (Little Miss Maruko). This anime was based on Momoko Sakura's story of the same title that ran in *Ribon,* a girls' comic periodical, in 1986. Both Sakura's manga and its anime version shown on the Fuji Television Network attracted many fans of various ages. *Chibi Maruko-chan* became a national sensation and also had strong sales in collectibles and character-related merchandise.

The story revolves around a third-grade girl, Maruko, and her daily life with her family and schoolmates. It is set in an idealized version of the early 1970s, a time perceived as "the good old days" before the erosion of traditional family and community values in the competitive high-tech Japan of "examinations hell," video games, and rampant consumerism. The characters are often mischief-makers who come up with schemes for one-upmanship. They also have personal flaws, but each episode ends with the child's particular problem at home or school resolving in a happy ending. It is interesting to note that *Chibi Maruko-chan* aired in 1990 when the mass media exposed some shocking social problems that directly affected children, such as cases of student deaths from school officials' corporal punishment and classmate bullying. *Chibi Maruko-chan* provided children with a haven from the harsh reality of school life (Schilling 1997).

During the 1990s, several of Fumi Saimon's story manga were made into hit television dramas; the first was *Dōkyūsei* (Classmates), broadcast in 1989. Her *Tokyo Love Story* was broadcast by the Fuji Television Networks in 1991. *Tokyo Love Story* is a manga masterpiece that is representative of Saimon's artistry, and its four volumes sold more than 2.5 million copies. As a television drama, it was an instant smash, with a peak rating of 32.3 percent (Clements and Tamamuro 2003, 323). *Tokyo Love Story* had all the ingredients for successful television drama, known as "trendy drama," which began with *Dakishimetai* (I Want to Hug You) in 1988. Trendy drama became all the rage in the 1990s. The protagonists were in fashionable careers, wore the latest designer clothes, drove expensive cars, and lived in extremely stylish modern apartments. *Tokyo Love Story* was one of the best-loved television dramas of the 1990s, and its success was followed by many imitations.

The story revolves around Rika and her relationships, particularly with Kanchi, a new staff member at Rika's company. Rika starts to have feelings for Kanchi, but he still loves his old flame Satomi. When Satomi confesses to Kanchi that she is now living with his best friend, Ken'ichi, Kanchi is devastated by the news. At this moment of weakness, the lovelorn Kanchi is seduced by Rika after she propositions him with the words "*Ne, sekkusu shiyo*" ("Well, let's have sex!"). This begins an awkward love triangle that becomes the all-consuming interest of the drama. Rika's one-liner became famous, and led many girls to try to imitate her. Through a cartoon character, Japanese women found a way to assert their sexuality more forcefully than before.

At the end of the 1990s, manga cafés (*manga kissa*) started to appear all over Japan. For an hourly fee, fans have access to manga of various genres, including past works, and a quiet place to read them. According to Television Asahi's special on manga that was broadcast on October 15, 1999, there were about three hundred manga cafes in Tokyo alone, which had replaced karaoke establishments.

There are two major types of manga café—the coffee shop and the pay library. In the former, customers order drinks and food and can read manga for 60 to 90 minutes. In the latter, the café charges customers an hourly fee, and they can bring their own food or buy drinks. Many big cafés have as many as thirty thousand copies of manga (Asahi Shimbun 1998), and some offer services such as Internet access and CD and DVD players. Since they are usually open twenty-four hours, customers who miss their train home can stay at a manga café and get hot showers, toothbrushes, underwear, and so on.

Japanese anime rivals manga in its number of fans. There is, of course, a commercial synergy between them, with high-selling manga being made into animated films and television programs that are then exported to many other countries. In 1999, the anime *Pokémon* (an abbreviation for "pocket monster") became something of a social issue in the United States, as many preteens became addicted to the movie, television series, and trading cards. *Time* magazine even featured *Pokémon* in its November 1999 issue. Another Japanese anime, *Yu-Gi-Oh,* seems to be the next wave in the new millennium.

Since October 1999, many new TV dramas and soap operas have been based on manga characters and stories. Television networks are assured success when they see that the manga has already been very successful. Manga stories, characters, and style have also jumped to other media such as the cinema, video games, radio, and theater (*Men's Walker* 1999).

In October 2002, the first independent Japanese manga corner was exhibited at the international book fair in Frankfurt, Germany, one of the oldest and largest fairs in the world. Japanese manga have spread to France, Italy, and Spain, and in Germany two translated Japanese manga magazines are published (*Mainichi shimbun* 2002). In the United States, the last few years have witnessed anime displays in video stores and manga/graphic novel sections in many of the chain bookstores.

Manga remains ubiquitous today as a lucrative industry in Japan. There were 297 comic magazines published in 2004, and the estimated number of copies published was 1,134,000,000. One out of every three books published in Japan was a manga (*Shuppan* 2005). Manga is available online and on cell phones, even in a society that boasts one of the best literacy rates in the world. It is one of the most widespread forms of popular culture, and will surely continue to be for years to come.

Moreover, as Japanese manga and anime are increasingly exported, their cultural value is becoming further legitimized in Japan. In December 1999, the Japanese Education Ministry gave concrete expression of this acceptance by approving the application submitted by Kyoto Seika University (Kyoto, Japan) to create a School of Cartoon and Comic Art, which began operation in April 2000. It is the first such school at any four-year university in Japan (Thorn 2007). Additionally, in its 2000 White Paper on Education, the Ministry of Education also noted for the first time that manga is a very important form of contemporary communication (*Asahi shimbun* 2005). In 2002, the Association of Manga Artists and the five major manga publishers agreed to officially name November 3 Manga Day.

Manga's power is tied to its versatility as a visual medium of communication. It creates fascinating images and text that can provide political and social commentary, instruct, socialize, and entertain in any number of ways. It is also a commercial engine with the potential for economic and cultural impact—for example, by instigating fads in sports and hobbies, like the recent obsessions with tennis and the Japanese game of "Go." Some criminals have even said that they got their ideas from manga. In 1999, an ex-employee of a loan company was arrested for extortion. He coerced his client when he needed money by threatening, "Sell your kidney. I can sell it for three million yen or so. Your eye can be sold for a million yen." He got the idea from a manga called *Minami no teiō* (The King of Minami) (Ito 2000).

Manga also has the power to cause controversy. The year 2005 saw the publication of two controversial manga: *Ken Kanryū* (Hate Korean Wave) by Sharin Yamano and *Manga Chūgoku nyūmon* (Manga Introduction to China) by George Akiyama and Kō Bunyū. Both became bestsellers in Japan, and are similar because they argue that, sixty years after the end of World War II, it is time for Japan to stop apologizing and time for Korea and China to stop blaming Japan for all their problems.

What will happen to manga in the future? New technology now makes it possible to read manga on the Internet and on cell phones. One can download "electronic manga" for a fee. This offers many advantages, like conserving space and the ability to access manga virtually everywhere and at any time. They also often appear with special sound effects, and, during certain highlighted scenes, the telephone vibrates, which adds to the drama. Electronic manga appeals to those who have not read comics, and this audience may eventually purchase comic books because they liked the electronic version (*Asahi shimbun* 2005). As baby boomers who grew up reading manga get older, there surely will be a new genre of manga for the elderly. Manga is Japanese pop culture and manga is forever.

Note

1. During this period, manga artists had a sideline of making postcards that depicted the everyday life of the ordinary people, family, customs and manners, and social conditions (Kawasaki 1996, 99). These constitute interesting sociological and anthropological data on this period in Japanese history.