Theorizing Manga: Nationalism and Discourse on the Role of Wartime Manga

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Mechademia, Volume 4, 2009, pp. 20-37 (Article)

Published by University of Minnesota Press
DOI: *https://doi.org/10.1353/mec.0.0093*

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Theorizing Manga: Nationalism and Discourse on the Role of Wartime Manga

During the 1920s and '30s, Japan underwent an unprecedented expansion of its modern institutions. A mass culture emerged and media consumption expanded. As Japan's total war system intensified in the 1930s, the field of manga, one of the emerging visual media of the time, witnessed the rise and fall of the proletarian movement, the dominance of "*nansensu*" (nonsense) as a popular genre, and the increasing presence of war, whether physically or ideologically. This was also the period when cartoonists began theorizing about the nature of manga. After the Japan–China War broke out in 1937, discourse on the role of manga and cartoonists appeared as a response to Japan's wartime mobilization.

A close study of the discourse on the status of manga as expressed by cartoonists themselves reveals that, by defining manga as an ideal medium for conveying nationalism, cartoonists played an active role as agents of the war. They did not simply submit to state thought control in order to continue drawing manga. Rather, in the course of this theorization, they attempted to "recover" the artistic quality of manga from being merely a commodity of consumerism, as was the case with *nansensu* manga. This recovery was articulated by, for instance, the former proletarian cartoonist Katō Etsurō. This

discourse reflected the ambiguity inherent in the nature of manga as a hybrid of the visual and the verbal, as well as its marginalized identity as a subgenre of painting. The various desires and ideals of Japanese cartoonists regarding the future of the medium were subtly and intricately manifested in this discourse.

BY DEFINING MANGA AS AN IDEAL MEDIUM FOR CONVEYING NATIONALISM, CARTOONISTS PLAYED AN ACTIVE ROLE AS AGENTS OF THE WAR.

The discourse that connected war and manga began appearing in humor magazines—such as *Karikare* (Caricare),[1] *Osaka pakku* (Osaka Puck), *Manga ōkoku* (Manga kingdom), *Manga no kuni* (The country of manga), and *Manga*—as well as in monographs on manga after the Japan–China War broke out in 1937. The discussion continued until near the end of World War II. The discourse asserted that manga is important as a powerful agent of wartime propaganda; that in order to correct society's perception of manga as "lowbrow," cartoonists need to become more aware of the urgency of the current wartime situation; and that cartoonists should seriously study manga and improve their skills so that a "new type of cartoonist" would emerge.

A GENEALOGY OF PREWAR DISCOURSE ON THE ROLE OF MANGA

During the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) and Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), the popularity of "*nishikie*" (multicolored woodblock prints) was briefly revived, even though woodblock printing was gradually being replaced by lithography. During these international wars that brought Japan victories, *nishikie* manga (then called *ponchi*)[2] portrayed war as a colorful, visual spectacle and aroused patriotism among an enthusiastic mass audience.[3]

Discourse on manga—such as criticism and theory—first appeared in the late Meiji period (1868–1912). It was also around this time when the term "manga" started to mean "caricature." Manga scholar Miyamoto Hirohito has shown how manga as a subgenre of fine arts came to be formed in the late Meiji through the early Taishō periods (1912–1926). Miyamoto points out that, in the course of this process, the historical view of manga that traced its roots to *Chōjūgiga* (Scrolls of frolicking animals) of the twelfth century was "reinvented" in the modern period.[4] Various critiques of individual manga works and humor magazines originated at about the same time.

The first issue of *Hōsun*, an art magazine that began serialization in 1907,

THE FIRST CARTOONISTS ORGANIZATION, TOKYO MANGAKAI (TOKYO MANGA ASSOCIATION), WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1915 AND HELPED POPULARIZE THE TERM "MANGA."

contained the first installment of artist Yamamoto Kanae's three-part essay on contemporary humorous and satirical arts.[5] Manga had not yet acquired the contemporary meanings of "caricature," "cartoons," and so on. Yamamoto's early contribution was his attempt to theorize the characteristics of comic art by defining humorous art (*kokkeiga*) and satirical art (*fūshiga*). Yamamoto explained the distinction between *kokkeiga* and *fūshiga* as follows: while *kokkeiga* is lighthearted in nature and avoids direct criticism, *fūshiga* must have elements of criticism. *Fūshiga* could be humorous but no *kokkeiga* is critical. Thus, *kokkeiga* is usually objective and descriptive, while *fūshiga* is subjective and creative. Stimulation is the life of *fūshiga.* Having made this point, Yamamoto shifted his focus to the more general topic of Japanese art. According to him, the Japanese were not made to entertain profound thoughts because of the climate of Japan. As a result, few great *kokkeiga* or *fūshiga* had been produced. Intriguingly, Yamamoto used the term "manga" to critique Japanese comic art as something ambiguous and of lesser quality than *kokkeiga* and *fūshiga.* He followed his historical overview with a harsh criticism of manga as they were then being serialized in contemporary humor magazines such as *Tokyo pakku* (Tokyo Puck), *Osaka pakku,* and *Jōtō ponchi* (High-class caricatures).

The Taishō period is characterized by cultural and political liberalism. Mass culture, fueled by capitalism, brought modernity to the everyday life of Japanese. In the world of manga, this was the time when some of the earliest professional cartoonists emerged as "manga journalists," a prime example of which would be Okamoto Ippei. The first cartoonists organization, Tokyo Mangakai (Tokyo manga association), was established in 1915 and helped popularize the term "manga."[6] Efforts to situate manga historically began to mature during this time. For example, Ishii Hakutei's "Honchō mangashi" (History of Japanese manga) was a ten-part series of essays published in an art magazine, *Chūō bijutsu* (Central art), between January 1918 and May 1919.[7] This is probably the earliest comprehensive overview of the history of manga. Ishii defined the term "manga" as "the art that is carefree, not regulated by rules, and based on the free observation of mainly human life." He also pointed out that "manga flourishes naturally when a civilization reaches maturity and decadence permeates; therefore, the main focus of the history of manga should be in the Edo period (1603–1867)."[8]

The early Shōwa period (1926–1989) saw publication of monographs and

collected works that studied manga as a mass medium, partly due to a growing publishing industry as encouraged by the birth of mass culture and mass consumption. Major publications include the ten-volume *Gendai manga taikan* (1928, An overview of contemporary manga) published by Chūō Bijutsusha, the four-volume *Manga kōza* (1933–34, Lectures on manga) edited by Nihon Mangakai, *Shin Mangaha Shūdan manga nenkan* (1933, New Cartoonists Faction Group's manga almanac), and so on. Some art magazines, such as the 1927 *Bijutsu shinron* (New views of art; [vol. 1, no. 2]), published special issues on manga.

In the latter half of the 1920s, proletarian cartoonists—such as Okamoto Tōki, Yanase Masamu, Matsushita Fumio, Suyama Keiichi, and Iwamatsu Jun—began theorizing about the role that manga might play in cultivating the masses through promoting Marxist ideology. They attempted the theorization of manga as an effective means of agitation and propaganda (*ajipuro*).[9] This leftist movement was severely suppressed by the authorities and withered by the mid-1930s. The year 1933 is generally called "the season of apostasy" (*tenkō no kisetsu*), as many leftists—voluntarily or not—denounced Marxism. Jennifer Weisenfeld's study of the radical Japanese art group Mavo, which made a lasting mark on the 1920s avant-garde art scene, traced the paths the Mavo artists followed after 1933. This group included some of the above-mentioned cartoonists: "Some collaborated with the war effort, directly or indirectly; some were forced to apostatize or were allowed to work only if they refrained from any controversial activity; and some lived in self-imposed exile, completely out of the public eye."[10] Several former proletarian cartoonists—for example, Ōta Kōji and Katō Etsurō—went on to theorize the nature of wartime manga by shifting focus to the New Order and to how manga could contribute to the war effort.

THE DISCOURSE ON WARTIME MANGA BEFORE THE PACIFIC WAR, 1937–1941

Soon after the outbreak of the Japan–China War in 1937, the discourse on manga began to pay attention to the medium's relationship with the war. For instance, the founding declaration of the Tokyo Manga Institute stated:

> Printed and filmed manga can instantaneously make a million people laugh and feel happy. It can also easily achieve the important mission of mass cultivation through humor, which is often difficult to accomplish. Manga is an

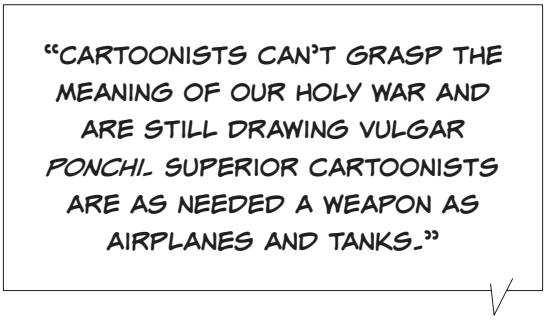
> indispensable political and economic weapon, and has grown into a powerful propaganda tool. In addition, it has absolute value as a sincere reflection and record of our time . . . Living under wartime tensions, whether at the war zone or at the home front, our people need enjoyable manga to cleanse their minds. They need them as much as they need food.[11]

Cartoonists Ōta Kōji, Kume Kōichi, Matsushita Ichio, and Onosawa Wataru organized this institute in April 1938. The institute's organ, the monthly magazine *Karikare,* began publication in June of the same year and put out a special issue on "war and manga" as well as several articles on wartime propaganda and the role of manga written by Ōta in 1939 and 1940 (Figure 1).[12]

Ōta and the rest of the coterie were arrested by the Special Higher Police (*tokkō*) in 1941, charged with involvement in "leftist cultural activities," and the magazine was discontinued in June of that year. There appears to be grave disparity between the content of the above-mentioned statement and the fact that the authorities had monitored the action of the coterie as if they were the remnant of the leftist movements that had been suppressed in the early 1930s.[13] Why did this "leftist" magazine *Karikare* make attempts to theorize the role of wartime manga? Was it simply a camouflage of their "leftist cultural activities"? I would argue that theorizing the wartime role of manga did not necessarily contradict their expression of leftist sentiment since they both were earnest undertakings done to elevate the status of manga as a serious and meaningful art. Significantly, this mission of emphasizing the power and usefulness of manga led artists to cultivate the masses by spreading revolutionary ideals as well as by promoting the causes of Imperial Japan.

FIGURE 1. The cover of *Karikare* 2, no. 6 (July 1939), a special issue on war and manga.

For example, in *Karikare,* Ōta touched on the effectiveness of Chinese anti-Japan cartoons that use drastic means of propaganda: "It is necessary to stress domestic propaganda and agitation, though we must not forget that powerful international propaganda (targeted at the enemy or those who remained neutral) has also helped lead this war to victory." He bemoaned the fact that, although



Japanese "manga, too, must take on this task of enforcing propaganda, offering more sophisticated form and more content than [Chinese] cartoons," the only countermeasure the Japanese authority took was to ban the import of Chinese cartoon magazines, mainly published in Shanghai, that condemned Japanese imperialistic aggression. Chinese cartoonists routinely engaged in anti-Japanese propaganda, but, as Ōta pointed out, Japanese manga artists were oblivious to the current situation. Silly "*nansensu* manga are rampant in the domestic market . . . Cartoonists can't grasp the meaning of our holy war and are still drawing vulgar *ponchi*.[14] Superior cartoonists are as needed a weapon as airplanes and tanks."[15] Ōta also discussed an example of wartime propaganda in Europe during World War I, and principles of wartime propaganda that employed the theory of mob psychology. Furthermore, he maintained: "Our country's manga should focus on helping people realize the ideals of the New Order of East Asia, not on 'how to slander others.'" In order to achieve this goal, "an urgent prerequisite is to establish theories of propaganda and to develop [a cartoonists'] organization."[16]

Kitazawa Rakuten, who founded the full-color, large-format manga magazine *Tokyo pakku* during the Russo-Japanese War and made it the most popular humor magazine of the time, also remarked several times on the topic of war and manga. His essay in the "war and manga" special issue of *Karikare* (July 1939) compared the current situation to that of the Russo-Japanese War and criticized the censorship of manga by the authorities. He first emphasized the potential power of manga: "When the emotions of our nation are uplifted, then the potential of manga can be elevated to its best. It has an immeasurable power to kindle animosity toward the enemy and guide the direction of mass movements." He also maintained, "At this time when we need to unite the will of Japan's subjects, manga is the most effective instrument of all in directly reaching peoples' hearts." He pointed out, however, that state censorship had placed a limit on cartoonists' competence: "Manga hasn't played a large role in the China Incident (*Shina jihen*) because of the complex nature of the current situation, and because of the narrow-minded thought control exerted by the authorities. I do hope that those in power will be generous enough to let cartoonists employ their skill."[17]

At another time, in a *zadankai* (roundtable talk) published in *Manga* in August 1941,[18] Kitazawa again repeatedly complained that the government is

ignorant of the importance of manga as an effective propaganda tool: "Politicians have very little understanding of manga . . . [They] should think of ways to make better use of it"; "It's not that complicated. They should have cartoonists create manga in order to boost the morale of Japanese troops and to strengthen the readiness of the home front. Why don't they let us do that? It's totally frustrating"; "It's not that contemporary cartoonists are incapable of contributing; it's that the government doesn't appreciate manga at all. They think that manga is just some funny, goofy, laughable thing . . . Manga has a far more important mission than that."[19]

The foreword in the subsequent September issue of *Manga* further articulated the mission of cartoonists for internal and external propaganda:

> We need to expel the persistent, imperialistic Western culture from China, from Vietnam, and from Thailand, and extend to them our culture based on Japanese ethics . . . We need to emphasize not the evil of the West but the brightness of our culture—as supported by constructive, compassionate, absolute war ideologies. Starting here, we should go on to develop a progressive style. We are already mobilized. We need to follow the imperial army with pens as our weapons. At times we act as a propaganda corps. At other times we should become pacification units. At still other times we ought to participate as journalists, contributing to the culture of war with our continuous criticisms based on ideologies in support of the New Order.[20]

The above examples illustrate that contemporary cartoonists in the late 1930s and early '40s, just before the Pearl Harbor attack, were made aware of the role that manga ought to assume for wartime propaganda and enlightenment, and they demanded that manga be brought into play. Additionally, it often becomes apparent that cartoonists were discontented with their society's disregard for manga's usefulness. It should be further noted that this discourse at the same time expressed discontent directed toward the current state of the manga scene and toward cartoonists themselves. The target of blame was often *nansensu* manga, a genre that became very popular and commercially successful during the 1930s.

When "*ero guro nansensu*" (erotic grotesque nonsense), a global culture with strong American flavor, swept Japan, new genres of manga such as *ero* manga and *nansensu* manga sprang into popularity. Miriam Silverberg situates *ero guro nansensu* within a global context and uses the term in an expansive way to cover the mid-1920s through the early 1940s rather than only the first few years of the 1930s, as has been the case in Japanese scholarship.[21]

Nansensu manga became prevalent in popular magazines such as *Asahi gurafu* (Asahi graph), a large-format visual magazine, and *Shin seinen* (New youth), a high-class entertainment magazine targeted at urban youth. According to Okamoto Ippei, who played the leading role as a professional cartoonist during the Taishō period, *nansensu* manga suggested, as is the case with the English "nonsense," "the trivial, the silly, the insignificant, a joke," with the added "meaning of transcendence and playfulness." It transcends all reality, logic, and living, and corresponds to human "desire in a modern sense" that "seeks for the world of sensational playfulness where one could forget oneself and be delighted."[22] Modern masses in Japan, too, demanded a similar sensibility in manga.

It was particularly significant that young cartoonists whose selling point was *nansensu* manga organized a production group, the Shin Mangaha Shūdan (New Cartoonists Faction Group), in 1932. This innovative collaboration among aspiring cartoonists proved successful and achieved commercial success. Yokoyama Ryūichi was a star cartoonist of the group, for instance. He embodied the *nansensu* manga style and quickly established his popularity. Yokoyama's drawing style was refreshingly simple and playful; unlike his predecessors who heavily used dialog, he depended less on the verbal and more on speedy movements of the characters and visual humor. His most well-known work is the family comic strip *Fuku-chan,* which ran in the daily newspaper *Asahi shinbun* between 1936 and 1944 (Figure 2).

At the same time, criticism of this new genre and its creators became increasingly harsh. Katō Etsurō was probably the most vocal leader of the anti-*nansensu* manga critics. Katō himself had changed his ideological orientation twice in his life: from leftist to ultranationalist in the 1930s, and from ultranationalist to communist after the war.[23] As early as 1934, in an essay in the fourth volume of *Manga kōza,* he asserted that the success of

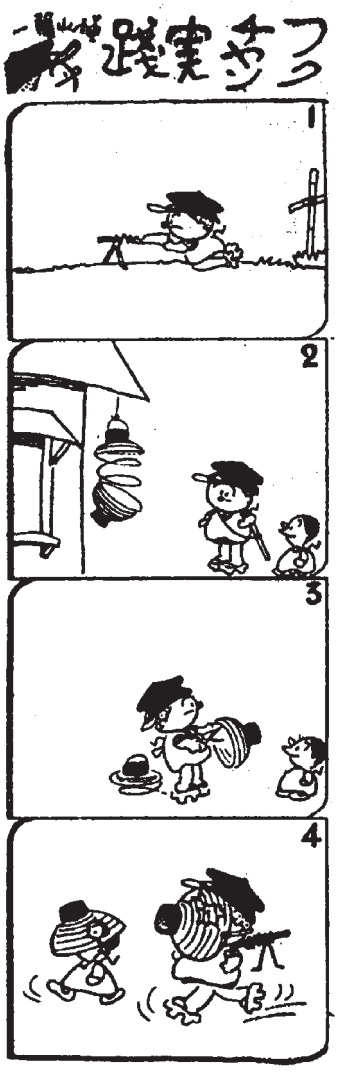


FIGURE 2. In this installment (August 23, 1941), one of many episodes of wartime children at play, Fuku (the five-year-old protagonist) displays his innovative prowess: he can make gas masks from a broken lantern. This is an example of the pantomime humor Yokoyama excelled at. Yokoyama Ryūichi, "Fuku-chan jissen" (Little Fuku practice), *Asahi shinbun,* August 23, 1941. Reprinted with permission by Yokoyama Takao.

the Shin Mangaha Shūdan is "not the well-deserved success of an art organization but merely the commercial success of a business organization," and that its commercialism "did help acquire a market, but, at the same time, created a decadent atmosphere that is most shameful to an artist, by producing a large body of work purely for commercial reasons."[24] Katō's argument presupposes that manga is art and that its connection to commercialism would degrade its status. This premise that "manga and art are synonyms" is likely a product of the discursive process that began in the late Meiji period. This explanation situated manga as a subgenre of painting, resulting from how the modern fields of literature and fine arts developed separately, divorcing themselves from the word-picture symbiosis commonly used in works of *kusazōshi* (woodblock-printed, illustrated literature) that were popular from the eighteenth century.[25] In the 1930s, when the profession of cartoonist had been well established and the commercialization of the medium accelerated, there emerged a vigorous argument that manga had been corrupted and its more artistic potential should be revisited.

In the same essay, Katō further pronounced that *nansensu* manga is in fact merely an obsolete *ponchi* with a new label, and that its substance is only "a piece of caricature that imposes meaningless laughter on the reader," lacking elements indispensable to "genuine" manga that "enlightens, strengthens, and comforts the masses."[26] As such, Katō was one of the first to criticize severely the Shin Mangaha Shūdan and *nansensu* manga. It is not clear whether his position at this time was that of a proletarian or a nationalist cartoonist, but he probably was already leaning toward the latter since his anti-*nansensu* rhetoric would last until the end of the war. The feud between Katō and the members of the Shin Mangaha Shūdan gradually became worse. We will return to Katō and his theory on war and manga as it was accelerated following the attack on Pearl Harbor in late 1941.

Katō was not alone in arguing that *nansensu* manga was a source of evil that degraded manga in general. As we have seen, Ōta Kōji described *nansensu* manga as "silly" and "vulgar" in *Karikare*. In the first issue of his magazine *Manga ōkoku,* Shimokawa Hekoten, who was known for his *ero* manga, called cartoonists who draw *nansensu* manga "amateurs." According to Shimokawa's typology, the world of manga fell into the following classifications: fascist (Germany and Italy), socialist (Russia and France), and the nonsensical or anti-political (Japan, Great Britain, and the United States). He maintained that, at the time when Japan, Germany, and Italy were forming alliance, it was not acceptable that Japan was caught up only in *nansensu* manga. He further argued that, in Japan, the era when professional cartoonists drew for

newspapers was long gone, and that the era when amateur cartoonists drew *nansensu* manga for popular magazines had begun. But now was the time for people to demand better manga than what amateurish *nansensu* manga could produce, a situation in which only truly professional cartoonists could flourish.[27]

ACCORDING TO SHIMOKAWA'S TYPOLOGY, THE WORLD OF MANGA FELL INTO THE FOLLOWING CLASSIFICATIONS: FASCIST (GERMANY AND ITALY), SOCIALIST (RUSSIA AND FRANCE), AND THE NONSENSICAL OR ANTI-POLITICAL (JAPAN, GREAT BRITAIN, AND THE UNITED STATES).

Others grieved over the lack of awareness on the part of cartoonists. For instance, a "manga review" page of *Osaka pakku* in November 1941 commented on the recent trend of "so-called light political manga" by cartoonists who had aimlessly drawn *nansensu* manga and children's manga until recently. It pointed out the problem that cartoonists lack awareness and self-examination, which leads to an irresponsible attitude of "opportunism" (*binjōshugi*).[28] In a subsequent issue, the same review page asserted that "today's manga world is 90 percent corrupted," and that very few cartoonists are aware of their own responsibility. Indeed, many do not understand the gravity of their situation, thus allowing "fate to lead the art of Japanese manga to its destruction."[29] Along with these concerns regarding the present situation of the manga world, an emphasis was made on the need to study manga, including a call for cartoonists to improve their skills in order for a "new type of cartoonist" to emerge.

In the 1930s, a number of amateur cartoonists regularly appeared in major magazines as contributors. Accordingly, study manuals and how-to books were targeted at these aspiring amateurs. By the middle of that decade, an increasing number of would-be cartoonists formed local manga clubs in different areas across the nation. Thus, newly established manga institutes and magazines all proposed to train amateurs and inexperienced cartoonists to become "the new type of ideal cartoonist." For example, a 1937 foreword in *Manga no kuni,* a magazine devoted to amateur cartoonists, emphasized the important mission of cartoonists after the outbreak of the Japan–China War: it is not just a dream that cartoonists like Louis Raemakers in the Netherlands, whose caricature led to the downfall of the German Emperor during World War I, could spring up among readers.[30] The above-mentioned founding declaration of the Tokyo Manga Institute in April 1938 also stated: "A new cartoonist who can respond to the demand of the modern world needs to be born."[31] In the first issue of its organ *Karikare,* cartoonist Tomita Tateo

argued: "The military is said to have acknowledged the power of manga and is seeking cartoonists who could create powerful manga. However, there are currently no cartoonists who could respond to this calling. There are only lazy opportunists trying to take advantage of the current situation."[32]

These commentaries constantly reminded cartoonists and would-be cartoonists that they must keep working hard at improving their drawing skills and staying informed about the current situation of the war. To them, the present was never good enough. *Nansensu* manga, which remained in vogue even in the early 1940s, was perceived in this discourse as the root of all evil, one that had corrupted the quality and status of manga. The artistic qualities of manga required saving by a new kind of cartoonist. The embodiment of these manga discourse ideals came to mean someone who would be able to elevate the status of manga from a mere commodity of commercialism by making it a superior, powerful, and persuasive expression of war. Manga's savior would have to be someone who could disseminate the ideologies of Imperial Japan and further the cause of their holy war.

KATŌ'S THEORY OF WARTIME MANGA AND A UNIFIED CARTOONISTS ASSOCIATION

As we have seen, the discourse on war and manga just prior to Japan's Pearl Harbor attack in late 1941 represented two sides of the same coin. Criticism of the corruption of the manga world represented by *nansensu* manga was also an embodiment of discontent toward professional cartoonists' obsession with commercialism, unwillingness to progress, and indifference to current affairs (*jikyoku*). The discourse uniformly predicted that this "new type of cartoonist" would emerge from aspiring amateur cartoonists. In spite of the urgent need for such figures, however, it was not clear what the exact qualifications of this new cartoonist would be, except that he be the antithesis of a *nansensu* cartoonist. In the meantime, under the mobilization law of the New Order, the Shin Nippon Mangaka Kyōkai (New Cartoonists Association of Japan) was established to consolidate cartoonists, and its organ, *Manga* magazine, was founded in 1940 despite various oppositions and contradicting opinions among the members. This was the first step to address one of the concerns expressed by the discourse on war and manga: that the state government underestimated the power of manga. Nevertheless, this association fell short of unified efforts to produce effective propaganda because they never reached consensus as to the definition of "desirable manga under the New Order."[33]

"MANGA IS AN ART THAT SHOULD WARN OF OR ACTIVELY ATTACK ALL THINGS IN THE WORLD THAT ARE UNJUST, IRRATIONAL, UNNATURAL, OR INCONGRUOUS WITH A WILL OF THE NATION."

Not long after the start of the new integrated cartoonists association, Katō Etsurō left the association and created a separate organization, the Kensetsu Mangakai (Constructive Manga Association), with several other cartoonists who followed him. By then, Katō's relationship with the members of the Shin Mangaha Shūdan, who occupied the central position of the Shin Nippon Mangaka Kyōkai, had deteriorated because of his ongoing criticism of them. With Pearl Harbor and the expansion of the war in the Pacific, Katō published a book, *Shin rinen manga no gihō* (A new philosophy on the techniques of manga), in 1942, as part of the activities of the Kensetsu Mangakai.[34] At this time, Japan was winning a series of battles in the Pacific; and it is here, in this book, that Katō's theorization of manga became directly connected to the war. He submitted a new definition of manga in this treatise: "Manga is an art that should warn of or actively attack all things in the world that are unjust, irrational, unnatural, or incongruous with a will of the nation." Manga is "a perfect integration, a balance of political thought and artistic quality," and can only become a perfected art when it acquires both thought—the ability to observe and to recognize "the unjust, irrational, unnatural, incongruous" in a just and profound way—and artistic quality, which is the ability to most accurately and strongly express what is observed.[35] With this ideal in mind, Katō himself tirelessly produced propaganda manga during the war. He was a regular of *Osaka pakku* (which changed its title to *Manga Nippon* in 1943) (Figure 3) and was in charge of the single-panel manga published daily in *The Japan Times* between 1941 and 1945.

According to Katō, cartoonists since the beginning of the Shōwa period had been extremely "individualistic" and had forgotten their own nationality. Thus, there could not be any real development of a national art. This also explained why the insipid *nansensu* manga, directly imported from America, were allowed to become mainstream, and why several proletarian manga became nothing more than a tool of the international Communist Party.[36] In a section titled "Atarashiki mangaka no ninmu" (The responsibilities of the new cartoonists), Katō spoke to those newcomers who would become the next generation of manga artists. He encouraged them to make every effort to study and to correctly capture the essence of manga as an art form. They were not to forget that manga should not be considered only as a means of earning money (*shokugyōteki shudan*) but should be recognized for its ability to express and propagate important human values.[37]

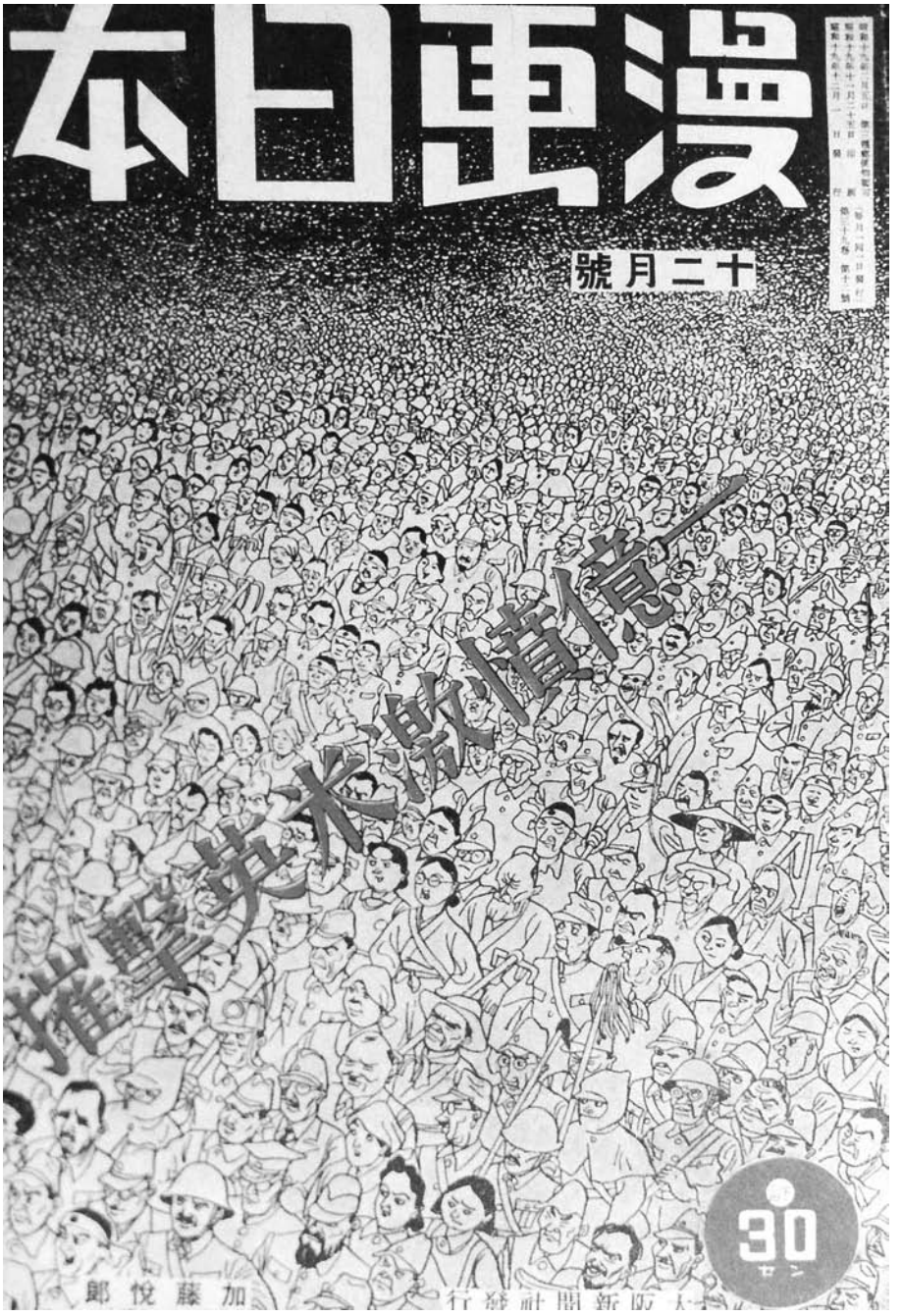


FIGURE 3. Katō filled the entire cover of *Manga nippon* in December 1944 with innumerable Japanese citizens. All are prepared to fight against their enemies—the United States and Great Britain. The phrase that runs across the cover in red says: "the angry one hundred million will defeat America and England."

In the final chapter of his book, Katō discussed the New Order of manga, asserting that liberalism and individualism have been obstacles to the uniting of cartoonists for the cause of war ever since the China Incident. His rhetoric assumes here an equating of commercialism/utilitarianism and liberalism/individualism. He repeatedly emphasized that they contaminate the cartoonists' consciousness. Not only this, but they became an obstacle that prevented the uniting of cartoonists following the outbreak of war in China. He argued that only the eradication of the liberalism then current among so many would allow for the creation of an "intelligence warfare unit."[38] Katō concluded his book by proposing a blueprint for a unified cartoonists organization: "We artists-cartoonists are soldiers on the propaganda front. This is our calling to fulfill. Grounded in a national, ethnic consciousness, our glorious duty is to unify manga production, which is the most powerful aspect of the propaganda war. We must actively engage ourselves."[39] The unified organization envisioned here was actually proposed as the "Nihon Mangakai" (Japan Cartoonists Association) by three cartoonists, Shimokawa Hekoten, Asō Yutaka, and Shishido Sakō, but was never actualized because it failed to gain support from the members of the Shin Nippon Mangaka Kyōkai.[40]

CONCLUSION: MANGA, WAR, AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE NEW CARTOONIST

In sum, the discourse on war and manga since 1937 embraced cartoonists' various intentions and desires, and assumed a role of urging cartoonists to become agents of the New Order and to produce manga vital to fighting the propaganda war. In this discursive space, a number of operations were intricately entwined: the attempt to purify the impure and ambivalent nature of manga as a mixed medium, the effort to elevate the status of manga by linking its nature as a verbal and visual form with propaganda, the attempt to warn manga against becoming a commodity of commercialism, and a call for cartoonists to awaken to their artistic potential.

In 1943, the Nihon Manga Hōkōkai (Japan Manga Service Association) was created as a "part of the mobilization and simplification of the art industry" by the culture division of the government-controlled Taisei Yokusankai (Imperial Rule Assistance Association). This organization is said to have become "consistently under the total control of the state government."[41] In other words, the cartoonists' will to be mobilized for the cause of the war, as shown in the discourse examined, and the state's needs to fully utilize manga

for wartime propaganda finally came together at this moment. This discourse did help prepare cartoonists' active participation in the fascist order, yet the idealized "new cartoonist" who could create manga that integrates thought and art never emerged during the war, since those who actually came to play the central role in producing manga to fight the holy war were the members of the Shin Mangaha Shūdan—such as Yokoyama Ryūichi, Kondō Hidezō (Figure 4), and Sugiura Yukio—who established their status by popularizing *nansensu* manga. Why did *nansensu* manga become a target of criticism and the antithesis of manga that would have been created by the "new type of cartoonist"? This line of argument is consonant with the increasing criticism of the general trend of "*ero guro nansensu*" in wartime Japan. *Nansensu* manga was most closely associated with an all-pervasive American culture that was vigorously attacked and suppressed as decadent and capitalistic during the war years. Even the manga artists who were labeled *nansensu* cartoonists had adjusted their drawing style to be more appropriate for wartime mobilization.

FIGURE 4. "Roosevelt," by Kondō Hidezō, on the cover of *Manga,* February 1943. Kondō, chief editor of the magazine, drew many caricatures of political leaders for the cover during the war. His favorites were Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, who appeared repeatedly on the cover of the magazine.

One could also say that the ideal cartoonist as described by the prewar and wartime discourse was prepared during the war and appeared once the fighting ended. For example, Katō Yoshirō, who flourished as the creator of the longest-running newspaper manga *Mappira-kun* (Mr. No Way) after the war,[42] was an active amateur cartoonist who submitted his works to magazines such as *Manga* and *Asahi gurafu,* and often received prize money.[43] It is also known that Tezuka Osamu, who was called "God of manga" in postwar Japan, avidly studied and imitated prewar manga like *Fuku-chan*. Tezuka is said to have created more than three thousand pages of unpublished manga by the end of the war.[44] In *Mechademia 3,* an essay by Ōtsuka Eiji points out that Tezuka's pictorial techniques seen in his patriotic wartime sketch "Shōri no hi made" (Till the Day of Victory) deployed a combination of an anime-style influenced by prewar Disney and the realistic depiction of weaponry influenced by wartime

"scientific realism," elements of which were carried forward in his postwar manga.[45] The sudden political shift from fascism to liberalism brought by Japan's defeat in 1945 turned the country's ideological focus from the war to a wider consideration of the various ideological positions of different artists. The hybridity of the medium itself invited a wide range of expression appropriate to the fragmented nature of postmodern culture. Postwar Japan has seen the growing popularity of manga as a monstrous medium whose impure and ambiguous nature—a mixture of word and image—became an engulfing force. This "new type of manga artist" who emerged in Japan after the war made full use of manga in order to convey their ideals, be it Tezuka's humanism or Katō Yoshirō's satire on social hypocrisies and contradictions in the rapidly changing postwar society.

Notes

1. This magazine used both *katakana* "*karikare*" and romanized "caricare" ("caricature" in Italian). The *katakana* version was used for the title on the cover.

2. This term originates from Charles Wirgman's humor magazine *Japan Punch* that was started in Yokohama in 1862. For more on this magazine, see Shimizu Isao, *Nihon manga no rekishi* (The history of Japanese manga) (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1989), 29–52. *"Ponchi"* was popularly used to describe the humorous or satirical combination of words and pictures at the turn of the century, until it was transformed and eventually replaced by a new term, "manga," at the end of the Meiji period. For the process of this transformation, see Miyamoto Hirohito, "The Formation of an Impure Genre—On the Origins of *Manga*," *Review of Japanese Culture and Society* 14 (December 2002): 39–48. His related research on the conceptualizaion of the term "manga" is discussed in "'Manga' gainen no jūsōka katei—kinsei kara kindai ni okeru" (The stratifying process of the notion of "manga": From the early modern age to the modern age), *Bijutsushi* (Journal of the Japan Art History Society) 154 (March 2003): 319–34.

3. Kawasaki-shi Shimin Myūjiamu, ed., *Nihon no manga sanbyakunen-ten kaisetsu zuroku* (Three hundred years of Japanese manga exhibition catalog) (Kawasaki: Kawasaki-shi Shimin Myūjiamu, 1996), 77.

4. Miyamoto, "The Formation of an Impure Genre," 39.

5. Yamamoto Kanae, "Gendai no kokkeiga oyobi fūshiga ni tsuite" (On contemporary humorous and satirical arts), *Hōsun* 1, no. 1 (May 1907): 3; no. 2 (June 1907): 3; no. 3 (July 1907): 3–4. Yamamoto was one of the founders of the magazine, which lasted until 1911 (thirty-five issues). Others who participated in this magazine include Ishii Hakutei, Kosugi Misei, Morita Tsunetomo. They were young *yōga* (Western-style paintings) artists and engravers who were interested in establishing the genre of artistic caricature. See Shimizu, *Nihon manga no rekishi,* 119, 123. This magazine carried a number of works of this kind. A special manga issue of *Hōsun,* February 1909, was an attempt to collect "ideal manga" (note that they use this term). Another unique feature of this issue was that all the texts

other than the announcement, which claimed that "Japanese characters won't remain the mixture of *kana* and *kanji* forever," was romanized. It noted that they "wanted to see how beautiful the pages should look with all-romanized texts."

6. Kawasaki-shi, *Nihon no manga,* 89.

7. Ishii Hakutei, "Honchō mangashi," *Chūō bijutsu* 4, no. 1 (January 1918): 139–42.

8. Ibid., 139.

9. For a firsthand account of the proletarian manga, see Matsuyama Fumio, "Puroretaria manga shōshi" (A short history of proletarian manga), in *Nihon puroretaria bijutsushi* (History of Japanese proletarian art), eds. Okamoto Tōki and Matsuyama Fumio, 103–52 (Tokyo: Zōkeisha, 1972).

10. Jennifer Weisenfeld, *Mavo: Japanese Artists and the Avant-Garde, 1905–1931* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 252–53.

11. This declaration was an insert of *Karikare* 1, no. 1 (June 1938). The insert indicates that the institute was founded as a training school for amateur cartoonists.

12. These are: Ōta Kōji, "Sensō to manga joron: Manga no chikara o saininshikiseyo" (Introduction to war and manga: Reconfirm the power of manga), *Karikare* 2, no. 5 (June 1939): 11; Ōta Kōji, "Sensō to manga 2 (War and manga 2)," *Karikare* 2, no. 6 (July 1939): 2; and Ōta Kōji, "Senji senden to manga" (Wartime propaganda and manga), *Karikare* 3, no. 9 (October 1940): 2, 5.

13. Kajii Jun, *Tore, yōchō no jū to pen: Senjika mangashi nōto* (Take the chastening gun and pen: Notes on the history of wartime manga) (Tokyo: Waizu Shuppan, 1999), 176.

14. By this time, the term *ponchi* came to signify manga that are outdated and low quality. See Suyama Keiichi, *Nihon manga hyakunen* (One hundred years of Japanese manga) (Tokyo: Haga Shoten, 1968), 11–19.

15. Ōta, "Sensō to manga joron," 11.

16. Ōta, "Senji senden to manga," 2–3.

17. Kitazawa Rakuten, "Sensō to manga," *Karikare* 2, no. 6 (July 1939): 3.

18. "Rakuten sensei ōi ni kataru" (Master Rakuten holds forth), *Manga*, August 1941, 12–21.

19. Ibid., 19.

20. "Kantōgen" (Foreword), *Manga,* September 1941, 7.

21. Miriam Silverberg, "The Ero Gro *[sic]* Nonsense of Japanese Modern Times," in *Iwanami kōza kindai Nihon no bunkashi 7: Sōryokusenka no chi to seido* (Iwanami lecture series on modern Japanese cultural history 7: Knowledge and system under total war), eds. Komori Yōichi et al., 61–109 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2002).

22. Okamoto Ippei, "Sōron" (General remarks), in *Manga kōza,* vol. 1, ed. Nihon Mangakai (Tokyo: Kensetsusha, 1933), 8–9.

23. Regarding Katō's ideological transformation, see Shimizu, *Manga no rekishi,* 161–64. Also see John Dower, *Embracing Defeat* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), 65–73, for how Katō's little booklet published in 1946 captured the Japanese sentiment during the first year of the U.S. occupation. Two years later, Katō joined the communist party.

24. Katō Etsurō, "Gendai Nihon mangadan no tenbō" (A perspective on the contemporary Japanese manga establishment), in *Manga kōza,* vol. 4, ed. Nihon Mangakai (Tokyo: Kensetsusha, 1934), 166–67.

25. Miyamoto, "Formation of an Impure Genre."

26. Katō, "Gendai Nihon," 180–81.

27. *Manga ōkoku,* February 1937, 2.

28. Minatogawa Rokkō, "Manga jihyō: Muri shicha akan" (Manga review: Take it easy), *Osaka pakku,* November 1941, 14–15.

29. Shidōken Mondo, "Manga jihyō: Aru hi no taiwa" (Manga review: An occasional dialogue), *Osaka pakku,* December 1941, 20.

30. "Kokuminteki kensetsu to sōzō no daininen e" (Toward the second year of national foundation and creation), *Manga no kuni,* December 1937, 3.

31. See note 11.

32. *Karikare* 1, no. 3 (August 1938): 7.

33. For the situation surrounding the foundation of the association, see Inoue Yūko, "Senjika no manga: Shintaiseiki ikō no manga to manga dantai" (Wartime manga: Manga and manga groups under the New Order), *Ritsumeikan daigaku jinbunka kenkyūjo kiyō* (Ritsumeikan University Humanities Institute bulletin) 81 (December 2002): 103–33.

34. Katō Etsurō, *Shin rinen manga no gihō* (Tokyo: Geijutsu Gakuin Shuppanbu, 1942). The members of this group published several other books as well. See Shimizu, *Manga no rekishi,* 15–17.

35. Ibid., 15–16.

36. Ibid., 5–6.

37. Ibid., 23.

38. Ibid., 164–65.

39. Ibid., 171.

40. Inoue, "Senjika no manga," 115–17, for details. Cartoonist Kobayashi Takeshi recorded that Katō was actively advocating this organization.

41. Ibid., 117–8.

42. "Okuyami: Katō Yoshirō-san (mangaka) ga kokyū fuzen no tame shikyo" (Obituary: Mr. Katō Yoshirō [manga artist] dies of respiratory deficiency), *Nikkan spotra* (January 2006), http://www5.nikkansports.com/general/obituary/2006/20060106-9416.html (accessed May 5, 2008). According to his obituary, Katō's *Mappira-kun* ran in the evening edition of the daily *Mainichi shinbun* for forty-seven years (1954 to 2001), which makes it Japan's longest-running newspaper manga.

43. Katō Yoshirō, personal interview, December 28, 1993.

44. Tezuka Osamu, *Boku no manga jinsei* (My manga life), Iwanami shinsho series (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1997), 100, 105, 210.

45. Ōtsuka Eiji, "Disarming Atom: Tezuka Osamu's Manga at War and Peace," trans. Thomas Lamarre, *Mechademia 3: Limits of the Human,* ed. Frenchy Lunning, 111–25 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).