# A History of *Manga* in the Context of Japanese Culture and Society

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MANGA, OR JAPANESE COMIC ART, IS A HUGE AND LUCRATIVE BUSINESS that is truly popular in Japan. Nowadays, it is also exported to many countries, influencing their popular cultures, children, youth, and the ways of the people. In this article, I briefly explore a history of Japanese *manga*, how it reflected events in Japanese society during various historical periods, and how it came to be what it is today.

*Manga* has humor, satire, exaggeration, and wit. The comic art includes caricature, cartoon, editorial cartoon, syndicated panel, daily humor strip, story-*manga*, and animation. Like any other form of visual art, literature, or entertainment, *manga* does not exist in a vacuum. It is immersed in a particular social environment that includes history, language, culture, politics, economy, family, religion, sex and gender, education, deviance and crime, and demography. *Manga* thus reflects the reality of Japanese society, along with the myths, beliefs, rituals, tradition, fantasies, and Japanese way of life. *Manga* also depicts other social phenomena, such as social order and hierarchy, sexism, racism, ageism, classism, and so on.

## The Japanese Character

Contrary to popular Western belief, the Japanese are a very comical people who love jokes and funny stories. The stereotypical images of the Japanese worldwide are based on the assumption that they are serious, reserved, diligent, determined, successful, and rigid. Many

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people may also perceive them as economic animals, domineering, cold, calculating, oversexed, cunning, and unfriendly. Both positive and negative Japanese images abound, but generally the Japanese are a humorous, witty, and funny people once they bring down the formal façade that they project to others, especially foreigners.

## The Japanese Language, Communication, and *Manga*

The Japanese culture belongs to what American anthropologist Edward Hall calls "the high context culture," in which people prefer to use more implicit, unclear, and ambiguous messages whose meanings are found in the context, rather than explicit, clear, and straightforward messages. According to Japanese anthropologist Masao Kunihiro, "English is intended strictly for communication. Japanese is primarily interested in feeling out the other person's mood" ("The Devil's Tongue"). Japan is a small island nation with a long history, and the people are homogeneous. In contrast, the United States, according to Hall, belongs to "the low context culture," in which messages themselves are important and everything must be spelled out.

Japanese communication, being in the high context culture, relies more on contextual cues such as facial expressions, gestures, eye glances, length and timing of silence, tone of voice, and grunts, all of which can be expressed in *manga* very eloquently. The high context communication depends more on visual and auditory cues. The Japanese language offers ample opportunities for word play, such as puns and double entendres, thanks to the abundance of homonyms and onomatopoeia. Both classical and contemporary Japanese literature, whether a novel, a *haiku* poem, or a play, attest to this point.

Japanese onomatopoeia is usually written with *katakana*, a form of Japanese characters. Japanese onomatopoeia is "much more integrated in the picture than western typography is capable of . . . Japanese characters are just as much a product of artistic activity as the surrounding drawing. It is calligraphy" (Pollman 12–13). As part of the picture in *manga*, the onomatopoeia is capable of "building up atmosphere and dynamics" (18). It also represents the psychological and emotional state of the characters. Japanese onomatopoeia is "often used to make precise the feelings one wants to convey on specific occasions or actions" (Marechal 149).

## *Manga* in Ancient Times

*Manga* and humor have a very long history in Japan. For example, Horyuji Temple was built in 607 CE in the ancient capital of Nara. Buddhism was officially introduced to Japan in 552 CE from Paekche, a southwestern Korean kingdom. Horyuji Temple burned in 670 CE, and was gradually rebuilt by the beginning of the eighth century. Horyuji is the oldest wooden structure in Japan, and probably the oldest in the world. Caricatures of people, animals, and "grossly exaggerated phalli" (Schodt, *Manga!* 28) were found on the backs of planks in the ceiling of the temple during repairs in 1935. These caricatures are among the oldest surviving Japanese comic art.

## *Manga* in the Middle Ages

Bishop Toba (1053–1140) is said to have painted with brush and ink "the Animal Scrolls"—humorous pictures of birds and animals—in the middle of the twelfth century. The monochromatic narrative picture scrolls consist of four volumes, and the first volume is considered the best. The scrolls depict caricatured beings such as frogs, hares, monkeys, and foxes engaging in everyday human activities, parodying the decadent lifestyle of the Japanese upper class of the period.

In one of the pictures, a frog is wearing priest's vestments and has prayer beads and sutras, and some "priests" are losing at gambling or playing strip poker. The narrative and originally painted picture scrolls are national treasures of Japan, along with other scrolls such as *Gaki Zoshi* ("hungry ghost scrolls") drawn in the middle of the twelfth century, and *Jigoku Zoshi* ("hell scrolls") painted at the end of the twelfth century. The viewing of these scrolls was limited to a handful of people, including "the clergy, the aristocracy, and the powerful warrior families" (Schodt, *Manga!* 32).

## *Manga* in the Tokugawa Period (1603–1867)

The town of Otsu near Kyoto sold *Otsue*, or "Otsu pictures," to people who were traveling on the main road from Kyoto to the north in the mid-seventeenth century. *Otsue* began as simple Buddhist pictures for prayer and as a form of souvenir talisman, but later included secular,

uninhibited, comical, and satirical themes. They were printed using a primitive form of printing and were available to ordinary people (Shinmura).

The publication of *Tobae* pictures, a style of witty and comical caricature of Japanese everyday life, began in Kyoto during the Hoei period (1704–1711). The name *Tobae* stems from Bishop Toba. The publication of *Tobae* books in Osaka marked the start of the commercialization of *manga* at the beginning of the eighteenth century. They were printed using woodblock and spread from Osaka to Kyoto, Nagoya, and then to Edo (today's Tokyo) during the Tokugawa period (1603–1867). Osaka was then a city center where publishing businesses were flourishing with a rapidly increasing urban population.

From the Genroku period (1688–1704) to the Kyoho period (1716–1736), so-called *Akahon* became very popular. *Akahon* literally means "a red book" with a red front cover. In its inception, *Akahon* was a picture book based on 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 Wen." Later, *Akahon* became a picture book for adults even though the main portion of the book consisted of pictures, not text. *Tobae* books also became popular because they were like the variations of *Akahon*. *Manga* became a commodity to be sold to the public, whether it was hand-drawn or woodblock printed.

Frederik Schodt (*Sex and Violence*) considered that *manga* is the direct descendant of *kibyoshi* and *ukiyoe*. *Kibyoshi*, or "yellow-jacket books"—like *Akahon* (a red book), *Kurohon* (a black book), and *Aohon* (a blue book) that preceded them—grew out of picture books for children. The yellow-jacket books later referred to popular reading materials with pictures that were published during the An'ei period (1772–1781). *Kibyoshi* contained jokes, satire, and cartoons for adults.

*Ukiyoe* literally means "the pictures of the floating world," and it is a genre of popular folk pictures. It was especially popular among the urban merchant caste, the leaders of the Tokugawa culture. The merchants' art and leisure activities that revolved around the urban amusement quarters were characterized by hedonism. In the early stage of its development, there were original paintings of *ukiyoe*, but it was through the woodblock-printing version that *ukiyoe* as art blossomed and truly became popularized starting in the late seventeenth century. The most common subjects of *ukiyoe* included actors, famous beauties,

and *sumo* wrestlers, as well as landscapes, birds, and historical themes. In 1765, Harunobu Suzuki began multicolor woodblock printing, and this was the beginning of the golden age of color prints (Reischauer).

Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849) is a very famous *ukiyoe* artist whose masterpieces include woodblock pictures of flowers and birds. Among his works are "The 36 Sceneries of Mt. Fuji," which are multicolored *ukiyoe* woodblock prints, and illustrations for novels and other original paintings and drawings of Japanese beauties and samurai. Hokusai published his fifteen-volume *Hokusai Manga* at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when he was fifty-four years old. Hokusai used the so-called *Tobae* style, which depicted humans with long, skinny limbs, in his "Furyu Odoke Hyakku," but he did not use the style in his *Hokusai Manga*. Hokusai started caricature that criticized the establishment after the Tempo period (1830–1844). The period was characterized by famine, a rise in prices, and peasants' riots. In *Hokusai Manga* volume twelve, published in 1834, Hokusai caricatured the aristocratic and samurai class.

Hokusai was the first to coin the term *manga*, and his book became a best-seller. *Manga* began permeating people's everyday lives, along with "*Giga Ukiyoe*" (funny picture *ukiyoe*) and newspapers with illustrations. 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 (Schodt, *Manga!*; Schodt, *Sex and Violence*; Shimizu; Shinmura; Yasuda).

A certain genre of *ukiyoe* was also popular during the Tokugawa period: *shunga* (spring drawings), whose woodblock print pictures show shamelessly uninhibited Japanese sexuality and erotic materials. *Shunga* also served as sex education manuals for new brides-to-be (Wilson). This tradition can be found in many contemporary adult *manga* for both men and women (Ito, "Images"; Ito, "Sexism"; Ito, "The World").

Charles Wirgman (1832?–1891) created and published *The Japan Punch* in Yokohama in 1862. Wirgman was a British correspondent for the *Illustrated London News* from 1861 to 1887. He was also a cartoonist and taught oil painting to Japanese students. Wirgman reported several important historical events of the day in his magazine: the Namamugi Incident, in which some British men were attacked and killed by the samurai from Satsuma in 1862; the Satsuma-British War in 1863

(a consequence of the incident in the previous year); the bombing of Shimonoseki by the fleets of Britain, the United States, France, and Holland (1863–1864); and Harry Smith Parke's (British ambassador to Japan) meeting with the last Tokugawa Shogun Yoshinobu in Osaka. Much conflict existed among the Tokugawa Bakufu government, anti-Bakufu forces, and the Western nations at the end of Tokugawa Shogunate; the conflict was a very appropriate subject for Wirgman's *manga*. This was also the time when Western ships made ominous visits to Japan, demanding that Japan open its ports. The Japanese government was obliged to sign unequal treaties with the West, and the power of the government began to decline.

*The Japan Punch* lasted twenty-five years and totaled 2,500 pages. It was very popular among the foreigners living in the settlements, as well as the Japanese residents. *The Japan Punch* is also a very important historical document and is indispensable for understanding the rapidly changing Japanese society at the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate, the beginning of the Meiji Restoration, the history and development of the foreign settlement in Yokohama, and the diffusion of Western culture into Japan (Reischauer; Schodt, *Manga!*; Shimizu).

The term *ponchi* (stemming from the English word "punch") began to refer to what we call *manga* today. Words such as *Tobae*, *Otsue*, and *Kyoga* ("crazy pictures"), all of which referred to caricature and witty pictures, were replaced by the term *manga*. Interestingly, Wirgman's *manga*, which often employed word balloons for his cartoons, influenced many native Japanese artists, such as Kyosai Kawanabe.

A French-style humor magazine called *Tobae* was published in the foreign settlement in Yokohama in 1887 by George Bigot (1860–1927), a French painter. He studied at the National Academy of Fine Arts in Paris and was influenced by *japonisme* (Japanism). Other European artists who were influenced by the Japanese prints from the mid- to late nineteenth century included Monet, Manet, Gauguin, and other impressionists, as well as Van Gogh. The diffusion resulted in the development of new painting techniques of realism. The *Tobae* magazine was published twice a month for three years and satirized Japanese government and society. It was only possible because the foreign settlements had extraterritorial jurisdiction rights. Bigot, whose narrative patterns were arranged in sequence, began influencing the development of modern Japanese comics along with Wirgman's *manga* (Shimizu).

## *Manga* in Modern Japan

### Manga *and Politics*

One of the most important functions of Japanese *manga* in its long history is satire, and the satire of authority was most dynamic during the civil rights and political reform movement known as the Freedom and People's Rights Movement, which started at the beginning of the Meiji period (1868–1912).

Taisuke Itagaki, Shojiro Goto, and Shimpei Eto, the leaders of the new Meiji politics formed the first political party *Aikoku Koto* in 1874 after they submitted a proposal for the establishment of the National Assembly. These men were highly influenced by Jean Jacques Rousseau and the liberal British philosophers of the day. Around this time, "*Manga* journalism," which satirized the period and Meiji politics, appeared in the Japanese newspapers and magazines. *Manga* began influencing Japanese politics, and in 1874, *Eshimbun Nihonchi* ("picture newspaper Japan") was published. The magazine imitated *The Japan Punch*. In 1875, the Japanese government issued *Zanboritsu* and *Shimbunshi Jorei* ("slander law" and "the press laws"), which censored and controlled speech and journalism (Reischauer; Shimizu; Shinmura; Yasuda).

The antigovernment Freedom and People's Rights Movement and *manga* played important roles in developing freedom of speech. Things not allowed to be voiced aloud could be expressed in *manga* drawings. In 1877, Fumio Nomura, a samurai from Hiroshima, began publishing the *Maru Maru Chimbun*, a weekly satire magazine covering current events for the Dandansha Company. Chimbun, which means "novel gossip" or "novel story," rhymes with *shimbun*, or newspaper. The objects of Nomura's satire were not limited to the government, and they often included the emperor and the royal family. The Japanese government tried to oppress him, but the magazine increased its sales as the Freedom and People's Rights Movement became more popular. According to Shimizu, *Tobae* magazine cost eighty sen, whereas *Maru Maru Chimbun* cost only five sen. Of course, the magazine targeted those who were interested in satire and who could afford it—Japanese intellectuals, journalists, and those involved with the French schools (Shimizu 95). *Maru Maru Chimbun*, on the other hand, was for the masses.

## Manga *and Technology*

Various factors contributed to the emergence of mass production of *manga* satire in a very short time, among which is the advent of zinc relief printing, copperplate printing, lithography, metal type, and photo engraving technology (Shimizu). The development of infrastructures such as transportation and mail service, and the heightening of the civil rights movement also contributed to the process. *Manga* truly became a medium of the masses.

## Manga *and the American Influence*

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 he started working for the Jiji Shimpo Company in 1899 after Yukichi Fukuzawa, one of the founding fathers of modern Japanese society, discovered his talent. Kitazawa created *Tokyo Pakku* ("Tokyo Puck"), a monthly color cartoon magazine, in 1905. Kitazawa's style was sophisticated, refined, and real, and it led to his wealth and fame. His success motivated many youths to draw *manga* as an occupation. Okamoto joined the Asahi Shimbun Newspaper Company in 1912, and started drawing *manga*.

It was in the 1920s and 1930s when modern Japanese *manga* began to blossom. Many *manga* artists, including Kitazawa and Okamoto, traveled to the United States and other countries. The United States had become a leader in comics in the early twentieth century. *The New World*, established by Joseph Pulitzer, started "Yellow Kid" comic strips in 1896, and serial comic strips became a definite part of American newspapers. Kitazawa started a Japanese version of "Yellow Kid" in the *Jiji Shimpo* newspaper's Sunday edition. He wanted to make that edition something that all members of a family could enjoy. The *manga* for children was considered an important factor in increasing subscriptions to newspapers. Kitazawa's characters were printed on playing cards and made into dolls. The year 1923 saw the emergence of national *manga* heroes in *Sho-channo Boken* ("The Adventures of Little Sho") and *Nonkina Tosan* ("Easy-going Daddy"). In the 1930s, fat monthly children's magazines started including serialized comics whose episodes ran to a few dozen pages (Schodt, *Manga!*; Shimizu).

## Manga *and Oppression*

The Taisho period (1912–1926) saw the rapid rise of parliamentary power and the leadership of party cabinets. This period was also characterized by urbanization; the emergence of a new class of well-educated white-collar workers and a new Westernized lifestyle; the spread of democracy; new humanistic, aesthetic, and proletarian literatures; an increase in higher education; and the development of a strong, self-confident business community (Reischauer).

However, during the 1920s and 1930s, the government also started to have more control over speech and thoughts. It established the Peace Preservation Law in 1925. After 1931, the law was enforced with the "thought control" police. Those artists and editors who harbored subversive and "dangerous" ideas were intimidated, and many were imprisoned. After the assassination of Prime Minister Inukai on May 15, 1932, freedom of speech, thought, and scholarship were taken away from the Japanese people, and communist, socialist, and liberal thoughts were oppressed. Some *manga* artists and the editors were among those who were forced to recant their "dangerous thoughts," along with other intellectuals, leftist political and labor leaders, and students. According to John Lent, "Cartoonists who attack the state or the established order have always faced problems—risking death, injury, and other forms of harassment and torture" (7).

## Manga *and the War*

After the so-called Manchurian incident, an outbreak of war with China in 1937, Japanese totalitarian militarism escalated. This resulted in international outcry against Japan. In December 1938, the Japanese government issued a book with cartoons depicting the Manchurian incident. The book appeared in newspapers in the United States, France, Britain, Argentina, and Canada. The cartoons were unfavorable to Japan, and the book had "Private" printed on its cover. It was distributed only among a limited segment of the government officials who needed to know how the other nations viewed Japan at the time (Hirschmeier and Yui; Reischauer; Schodt, *Manga!*; Shimizu; Yasuda).

Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and went to war with the United States. *Manga* went to war, too. As the war and the US embargo progressed, materials such as paper became scarcer, and space

was no longer allocated for *manga* in the newspapers. Many cartoonists were drafted and had to leave Japan for war zones such as China, Java, Burma, the Philippines, and Borneo. According to Schodt, they "created reports for the public back home, propaganda leaflets for the local populace, and leaflets to be dropped over enemy lines" (*Manga!* 57). Many also engaged in creating erotic leaflets to be dropped to the Western troops in order to decrease the morale and fighting efficiency of soldiers who were worried about the faithfulness of their women back home (Schodt, *Manga!*; Shimizu).

Many other *manga* artists sought refuge in the Japanese countryside in order to avoid metropolitan bombing attacks, and still other *manga* artists died in air raids and from war-related wounds and diseases. The war ended on August 15, 1945, with Japan's unconditional surrender.

*Zosan Manga* ("increasing production comics"), a new genre of *manga*, emerged during World War II. As the name suggests, the *manga* was used to promote the workers' willingness to maintain and increase industrial output, which was one of the government's primary concerns. In June 1944, Etsuro Kato edited and published *Kinroseinenga Egaita Zosan Mangashu* ("Collection of Zosan [increase production] Manga Drawn by Working Youth"). Kato published an instructional book for drawing *manga* in 1942, and he was also engaged in promoting groups of working youth who were interested in drawing *manga*. Interestingly, Kato used to draw the so-called proletariat *manga*, or left-wing *manga*, before the war, but he switched his position and went along with the Japanese government during WWII. There was simply too much control of thoughts and speech at the time. To keep drawing *manga*, the Japanese artists had to conform to the requirements set by the government. In 1948, three years after the unconditional surrender, Kato joined the Japanese Communist Party. As Karl Marx cleverly observed, the ruling ideas of the society are the ideas of the ruling class, which was the Japanese military at the time of the war.

## Manga *after WWII*

The kind of *manga* that emerged after WWII reflected what was going on in Japanese society—politics, culture, economy, and race and ethnic relations—at the time of publication.

In the years following the end of war, there was a rush to found new *manga* magazines, including *Manga Kurabu* ("Manga Club"), *VAN*, *The Kodomo Manga Shimbun* ("Children's Manga Newspaper"), *The Kumanbati* ("The Hornet"), *Manga Shonen* ("Manga Boys"), *Tokyo Pakku* ("Tokyo Puck"), and *Kodomo Manga Kurabu* ("Children's Manga Club"). This *manga* boom lasted about three years. The majority of Japanese people were hungry and poor right after the war; they were not satisfied with the government politics, and had fears and uncertainty about the future. The country was devastated, and the people were starving for entertainment and humor. *Manga* was easily affordable, and the newly emerging civil society after the unconditional surrender and the seven-year US occupation provided an abundance of topics for satire.

The headquarters of General Douglas MacArthur's allied occupation censored *manga*, so there is almost no *manga* that satirized the general. Nevertheless, the Allied Powers gave Japanese political artists more freedom than ever before. Emperor Hirohito, along with other royal family members, were caricatured in many Japanese *manga* magazines such as "*Shinso*" ("The Truth") and the leftist "*Kumanbati*" ("The Hornet")—not to mention in many editorial cartoons of other European nations and the United States from between the time of the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905) to World War II. It was only during this time, and during the Freedom and People's Rights Movement in the nineteenth century, that the emperor and the royal family were openly satirized.

Children's *manga* started to become more popular starting in the early 1950s. Many masterpieces of *manga* targeting children were produced at this time by Osamu Tezuka, Eiichi Fukui, and Shigeru Sugiura. Tezuka's *Shin Takarajima* ("New Treasure Island") was published in 1947. With 200 pages, it dazzled young readers and sold more than 400,000 copies. Tezuka is considered the founder of modern Japanese *manga*, and his comics that used cinematic techniques had a tremendous amount of influence on postwar *manga* artists (Schodt, *Manga!*; Shimizu).

Story *manga* became very popular after World War II. American cartoons such as Blondie, Crazy Cat, Popeye, Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, and Superman were translated into Japanese and introduced to Japan. The people longed for the rich American lifestyle that was blessed with material goods and electronic appliances. *Manga Dokuhon* ("Readers") started at the end of 1954, and it 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 Saito referred to their art as *gekiga* rather than *manga* because their *manga* read much like novels, with very realistic and graphic pictures. *Gekiga* emphasizes the seriousness of the drama, and the comical aspect rarely appears. *Gekiga* appealed to junior and senior high school students and, later, to university students as the young readers aged.

Sanpei Shirato's *Ninja Bugeicho* ("Secret Martial Arts of the Ninja") was serialized between 1959 and 1962. It dealt with various social issues in a feudalistic setting and attracted many university students and adults. Seventeen volumes of *Ninja Bugeicho*—about 6,000 copies each—were published. Shirato's *manga* was read very widely by those readers who frequented *manga* book rental stores. These pay libraries were just like today's video rental stores, and they numbered 30,000 nationally. The *manga* rental market died in the 1960s. Fast-paced, wacky gag comics full of parodies started to be very popular at this time. Fujio Akatsuka became "the king of gag comics." Both the violence in *gekiga* and unproductiveness of the gag comics were attacked as a bad influence on children's morale and behavior (Ito, "The Manga"; Schodt, *Manga!*).

In March 1959, Kodansha, one of the largest publishing companies in Japan, began publishing *Shonen Magajin*, the first weekly comic magazine designed for boys and young adults. *Shonen* literally means "boy/boys," and *Magajin* is "magazine." The magazine had a few hundred pages of *manga*. *Shonen Magajin* was primarily targeted at young males, but girls also enjoyed reading it.

Shogakukan started publishing its weekly *manga* magazine *Shonen Sande* ("Boys' Sunday") in April 1959, only one month after *Shonen Magajin*. These two weekly magazines were not so radically different from the existent monthly *manga* magazines for boys, and the sales were not very good until the emergence of *Kyojin no Hoshi* ("Star of the Giants"—a baseball player's story) and *Ashita no Jo* ("Jo of Tomorrow"—a boxer's story) in *Shonen Magajin* in 1966 and *Shonen Sande* in 1968, respectively. The stories in these two sports-guts comics series were written by the same individual under two different pen names, Ikki Kajiwara ("Star of the Giants") and Asao Takamori ("Jo of Tomorrow"). The pictures were drawn by Noboru Kawasaki ("Star") and Tetsuya Chiba ("Jo").

"Star of the Giants" was the story of Hyuma 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 played for the Giants years before. Hyuma had to go through many tough training sessions with his father. In "Jo of Tomorrow," Danpei Tange, an ex-boxer, finds boxing talents in Jo Yabuki, a young boy sent to a juvenile detention center. Tange sends Jo postcards with boxing techniques, and Jo learns them and tries them out. Jo realizes that he is capable of winning in boxing matches and gains confidence.

Both Hyuma and Jo had guts to overcome difficulties to achieve their dreams. They always worked hard even though their efforts did not always end successfully. Sweat, blood, and tears often symbolized their great efforts in the *manga*, and the Japanese could easily identify with their efforts to succeed. "You always do your utmost best in any situation"—this was the message that "Star of the Giants" and "Jo of Tomorrow" sent to the readers and the nation as a whole. The stories were about human growth, growing pains that accompany it, hard work, dogged efforts, and perseverance. Both of these *manga* were made into TV animation and became instant hits (Otsuka & Sasakibara; Schodt, *Manga!*).

The Japanese government declared in the Economic White Paper of 1956 that the country was no longer in a postwar period. Japanese economic and industrial growth began in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and the people were very optimistic. It was the time when Japan finally started to catch up with the West. Toward the end of 1960, the government published a policy paper titled "National Income Doubling Plan," which was attained within seven years. The 1960s saw an astonishing growth in the gross national product, whose annual rate was over 10% over a period of 10 years. In 1964, the Olympic Games were held in Tokyo, and the International World Exposition was held in Osaka in 1970 (Hirschmeier and Yui; Reischauer; Umesao). The popularity of both *manga* is related to the mentality of the Japanese at the time, and what was happening in Japanese society in terms of economy and industry.

The 1960s also marked the period when certain *manga* began being produced by two people: the *manga* writer, who was like a scenario writer, and a *manga* artist, who drew the pictures for the story. Many artists also hired several assistants, and *manga* was produced like a company in the so-called production system. This system enabled the

comic magazines to be published weekly. At the end of 1966, sales of *Shonen Magajin* topped one million, and in three years it surpassed 1.5 million copies. In 1968, *Shonen Jampu* ("Jump") began. It featured many rookies, such as Go Nagai and Hiroshi Motomiya, and became an instant hit. Go's *Harenchi Gakuen* ("Infamous School") was criticized as vulgar because it introduced overt eroticism to children. Go depicted both male students and teachers preoccupied with catching glimpses of girls' panties or naked bodies. Many parents, women's associations, and PTAs protested (*Kumamoto Nichinichi Shimbun*, May 10, 1991; Schodt, *Manga!*). Despite this incident, *Shonen Jampu* remained very popular. It sold over four million copies in one week in December 1984. The December 20, 1994 issue of *Shonen Jampu* sold 6,530,000 copies. The average sales of the weekly magazine today is 3,400,000 copies. The first English volume of *Shonen Jump* was published in the United States in January 2003 (*Mainichi Shimbun*, November 28, 2002).

Two *manga* magazines for adult *manga* maniacs were created in the 1960s. They not only had *manga* but also commentaries and criticism on *manga*, as well as a readers' corner for readers to submit their personal *manga*. In 1964, *GARO*, which included many *gekiga*-type pictures, was published, follwed by *COM* in 1967. *COM* was characterized by a touch of urban sophistication, but it went out of business in 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; among them are *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"). Those readers who grew up reading *manga* for boys were becoming adults, and they needed a different type of *manga* entertainment. They could not live without reading *manga*. Millions of *manga* magazines have been sold, along with the popularity of their animation versions on TV and related merchandise, since the 1960s. Some popular *manga* existed symbiotically with their animation and character goods and toys (Ishinomori; Mizuno; Otsuka and Sasakibara; Schodt, *Manga!*; Shimizu).

*Shojo manga*, or "Girls' Comics," emerged in the 1960s. *Shojo Furendo* ("Girls' Friend") and *Maagaretto* ("Margaret") began in 1963, and *Shojo Komikku* ("Girls' Comics") in 1968. These magazines and *Nakayoshi* ("Good Friends") came with supplements such as cards,

stickers, and paper dolls, and they became very popular among the girls who started to recognize that they were not just children, but "girls." It was the time when the girls "started hating ugly stuff, boys, and dirty, violent things," and collected "cute color pens, erasers, writing boards, folders, pencil cases, notebooks, etc." (Evers 6).

*Shojo manga*, when it first emerged as a new genre, had many stories that dealt with girls' dreams and fantasies. Interestingly, *shojo manga* also attracted adult male readers. Around 1972, female *shojo manga* artists who had been born around 1949 started to have great careers. *Shojo manga*, formerly drawn only by male artists, was now drawn by many female artists. They began dominating the genre, and included such stars of the industry as Keiko Takemiya, Ryoko Yamagishi, Moto Hagio, and Yumiko Oshima. According to Schodt (*Manga!*), they were described as: "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" (97). The genre of *shojo 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, *Manga!*).

The Japanese volleyball team won the gold medal in the Olympic Games held in Tokyo in 1964, and some *shojo manga* included sportsmanship as the major theme in their stories. The TV drama series *Sainwa V* ("The Sign Is V") and the TV animation series *Attaku Nambaa Wan* ("Attack Number One") began in the late 1960s. Both were based on the *manga* of the same titles that appeared in *shojo manga*, and dealt with the volleyball teams. Their themes centered on sportsmanship, friendship, injuries, fights, falling in love with the coach, competition, jealousy, superhuman efforts, and other emotions involved in winning the games. They were in a sense comparable with "Star of the Giants" and "Jo of Tomorrow" that appeared in boys' comics, and were also made into TV animation series. This was the time when many *manga* and animation had the theme of sports such as judo, tennis, soccer, baseball, and boxing. The lessons that these *manga* taught influenced youth growing up in Japan. Young people learned how to persevere in any situation and to always work hard to accomplish goals. These *manga* stories were teachers and agents of socialization (Ito, "Japanese Ladies'").

Starting in the 1970s, the theme of sexuality, especially male homosexuality, was incorporated into the stories of *shojo manga*.

According to Fusami Ogi, "Instead of showing a *shoujo* dreaming of romance with a boy, they showed boys and focused on boys' love" (151). This is in sharp contrast to the other type, which focuses more on the psychology and emotion of female characters, their development as human beings, and their life stories. Aesthetically drawn young boys are very popular among the Japanese girls and women. In Japan, there has been a long tradition of male homosexuality, and it has been much more tolerated by the people as compared with other societies. Popular openly gay actors, singers, writers, and commentators abound in the Japanese mass media today.

The world of Japanese *manga* has always revolved around men—male artists, editors, and publishers—and they reacted to the topic of male homosexuality as repulsive, which caused a sensation. The mass media criticized that this kind of *shojo manga* was decadent and degenerating; it was "raping" the *manga*. However, this issue of homosexuality gave the *manga* industry much stimulus (Kumamoto Nichinichi Shimbun, July 5, 1991).

Nihon Chosen Kenkyusho (Japan Institute of Korean Studies) protested against a *manga* story, "Otoko Michi" ("The Way of Men"), which was serialized in *Shonen Sande* in August 1970. In this *manga*, Koreans and Chinese, 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, when Japanese society was in confusion. The publishers explained that they had no intention of discriminatory treatment, but were forced to apologize (*Kumamoto Nichinichi Shimbun*, May 24, 1991).

During the 1970s, general magazines mostly read by Japanese businessmen started to include *kyoyo manga* ("academic or educational *manga*"). This was a new category of *manga* referred to as "information *manga*," "expository *manga*," or "textbook *manga*." According to Go Tchiei, they did not have a narrative structure, and the protagonists in this genre of *manga* were "applying themselves to the study of the origins of and various anecdotes about food, liquor, and annual festivals."

There are also many educational *manga* stories that provide readers with special knowledge and information about an occupation, historical figure, or event. They include such topics and occupations as a professional killer, a surgeon, a gynecologist, a mah-jongg player, a

horse racer, a cameraman, a detective, a CEO, a schoolteacher, a cook, a fisherman, Adolf Hitler, a singing group, and a sushi chef.

*Manga* in general truly gained popularity and legitimacy as entertainment in the 1980s. Another *manga* boom emerged, and the sales of weekly and monthly magazines skyrocketed. Many new comic magazines for adults were issued, and *manga* automatically meant high profits. The 1980s was also the time of Japanese economic expansion, when the so-called "bubble economy" allowed more than 85% of the population to classify themselves as middle class.

*Redikomi*, or Japanese ladies' comics, was established as a genre of *manga* for adult women in the early 1980s. It is the most recent addition to the *manga* scene. The readers range in age from 15 to 44 (which, interestingly enough, coincides with the childbearing age).

Before the emergence of ladies' comics, the *manga* artists for girls' comics retired in their late 20s and 30s. The popularity of the newly created genre allowed artists to continue drawing for adult females. The publication of *VAL* and *FEEL* began in 1986, and sexual and erotic scenes were drawn for adult women. This freedom of sexual expression characterized the ladies' comics of the early years. The genre of *Redikomi* tended to be associated with female pornography when they first appeared, and for some time, increasingly erotic, gross, and sensuous scenes were drawn; this tendency escalated until the early 1990s.

*Redikomi* magazines published by more established major publishing houses have almost no sexual scenes. Magazines such as *YOU* (Shueisha), *Jour* (Futabasha), and *BE LOVE* (Kodansha) focus more on the reality of everyday life experienced by modern housewives, office workers, and college students. By the end of the 1990s, many stories from *redikomi* were made into popular movies and TV series. Today's *manga* is definitely a very popular and successful multimedia entertainment (Erino; Ito, "The World").

In October 2002, the first independent Japanese *manga* corner was exhibited at the Frankfurt Book Fair in Germany, one of the oldest and biggest international book fairs in the world that deals with novels, children's books, and translated books. Japanese *manga* was already very popular in France, Italy, and Spain, and two translated Japanese *manga* magazines are now published in Germany (*Mainichi Shimbun*, November 28, 2002).

*Manga* forms a significant part of Japanese popular culture today. A total of 278 comic magazines were published in 1998, for example, and

the estimated number of copies published was 1,472,780,000 (Ito, "The World"). *Manga* is read by all people in Japan, ubiquitous in a society that boasts one of the highest literacy rates in the world. Many *manga* cafés—which are stocked with tens of thousands of comics books of various genres, comic magazines, newspapers, and provide Internet service—emerged in the late 1990s. Manga cafés are now more popular than "Karaoke Box," where one can order food and drinks and sing along with friends to karaoke music. The new millennium saw the emergence of *manga* café chains that are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week (Ito, "Growing Up").

*Manga* affects behavior and social trends by creating booms in sports and hobbies in Japan. The most popular game today is the Japanese game of "go," and the most popular sport is tennis. Some criminals testified in court that they got their ideas from *manga* (Ito, "The Manga Culture"). In 2002, the Association of Manga Artists and the five major *manga* publishers agreed to have November 3 officially designated "The Manga Day." *Manga* is one of the most popular forms of mass entertainment and an agent of socialization in Japan, and will continue to be so in the years to come.

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