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The Post-World War II Development of Manga

Natsume Fusanosuke

Today, the word “manga” refers generally to a form of expression that combines images and text to develop an extended narrative over a number of pages, normally containing several panels per page.

But it was not until the 1920s and 1930s that manga emerged in the Japanese publishing market as a field of popular culture in its own right. Establishment of the mass media and of media for children in the modern publishing industry was what made this development possible. The popular fiction and film industries were booming, and serial publication of manga in newspapers and magazines flourished.

For example, *Shō-chan no bōken* [The Adventures of Shō-chan], a children’s manga with a story by Oda Shōsei and drawings by Kabashima Katsuichi, was a huge hit during its serialization from 1923 (Figure 1). Manga in those days were heavily influenced by the comic strips that ran in newspapers in Europe and the United States from the end of the nineteenth century.

Later, the manga originally developed mostly for children expanded among postwar baby-boomers and the generation that followed amid the postwar heyday of Japanese publishing. Overtaking satirical cartoons and comics aimed at the prewar generation, its market share eventually became dominant around 1970. Today’s manga and TV anime developed from these beginnings.

In the 1950s there was a fad for “emonogatari” (picture stories), which were a kind of text narrative that incorporated large numbers of often-quite-elaborate illustrations. Then came a shift to a new style of manga typified by the work of Tezuka Osamu, in which the story is developed through abbreviated, symbolic pictures. Both these developments led to the publication of large numbers of specialized monthly magazines, which continued to grow as the postwar consumer market expanded among the baby-boomer generation. Feeling the threat of the new media of television, publishers switched to a weekly format, and as popular serials in such weekly magazines were linked with television anime and live-action dramas, the size of the manga market burgeoned through the 1960s and 1970s. The first ever 30-minute serialized TV anime was *Tetsuwan Atomu* [trans. *Astroboy*], adapted by Tezuka Osamu himself from his own manga (see Figure 2). This ran from 1963 to 1966, for part of that time alongside the original manga version, which was serialized in a monthly manga magazine from 1952 to 1968. As Japan emerged from postwar reconstruction and entered a period of rapid economic



Figure 1. *Shō-chan no bōken*, Shōgakukan, reprinted 2003, p. 60.

growth in the 1960s, manga publishing and television anime programming were linked via character merchandizing and became growing industries.

With the movement in the 1960s and 1970s toward greater self-assertion and anti-establishment attitudes among young people, again led by the baby-boomers, many young people (both readers and creators) adopted manga as part of their own alternative culture. In these years, manga became youth-oriented and the content of stories became in many cases extremely youth-focused. This development had long-term consequences, giving rise to the “otaku” community, as it was later known, the main social group supporting manga and anime, along with the Comic Market (Komike) pop-up venues where enthusiasts sold their own self-published manga magazines. Publishers increasingly turned to narrative-based manga magazines aimed at the youth and adult market, and by the 1980s these publications dominated the market. During the 1980s, the rate of increase for *seinen* (“adult”) manga magazines overtook that for manga magazines aimed at children and came to make up half of the total number of copies printed for Japanese manga magazines for the first time after the war (Figure 3).

While the distinctions between adult and children’s manga were convenient labels for distribution and circulation, in reality the readership of such manga genres was quite diverse. *Shōjo manga*, for example, a genre of comic written by women for young female (*shōjo*) readers with few parallels anywhere else in the world, has great potential in the manga market. In the 1980s it led to the devel-



Figure 2. Cover of volume 3 of *Tetsuwan Atomu*, Asahi Sonorama, 1975.

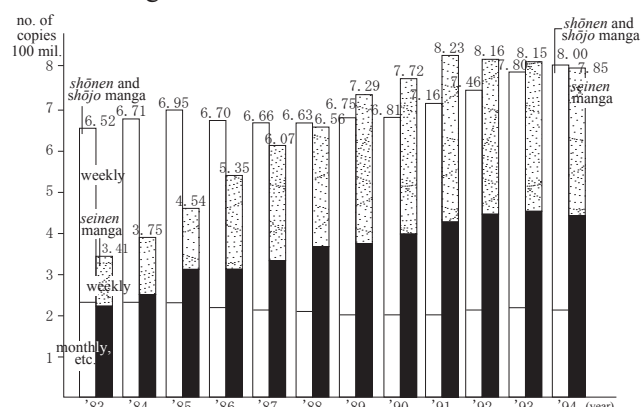


Figure 3. Chart showing estimated number of copies printed for comic magazines, 1983–94. Published in *Tsukuru*, October, 1995, p. 19.

opment of comics aimed at adult women readers. The weekly magazine *Shūkan shōnen janpu*, which has been the best-selling manga title since the 1980s, also has many women and grown-ups among its readers. Many men also enjoy reading “women’s” manga, and most popular titles tend to be read by men and women of all ages.

Nonetheless, starting also in the 1980s, magazines marketed for men and those for women began to be published separately by age bracket, with manga aimed at young children, grade schoolers, teens, and adults. Many magazines were also targeted at groups of readers sharing particular interests. This diversity was made possible not only by the huge size of the market and by the revolution that took place in manga in the 1970s as new approaches and styles of expression proliferated but also because the different categories of titles aimed at young readers, girls, and grown-ups had creatively synergistic effects on one another.

It seems likely that future generations will look back on the 1980s and early nineties as the golden age of Japanese manga. Those years produced many titles that became global anime hits and manga that became best-sellers in translation around the world. Among manga aimed at the “youth” market, perhaps the best known is *Akira* (serialized 1982–90, anime film released 1988) (Figure 4). In *shōnen* (boys) manga, the major global hit was *Dragonball* by Toriyama Akira (1984–95), while in *shōjo manga* the anime and manga title *Bishōjo senshi Sērāmūn* [trans. *Sailor Moon*] was hugely popular both in Japan and around the world (the anime ran from 1992 to 1997; this was a “media mix”^{*} title designed as an anime from the outset; the manga did not precede the anime version).



Figure 4. Cover of volume 1 of *Akira*, Kōdansha, 1984.

Japan’s bubble economy lasted through the second half of the 1980s and burst at the beginning of the 1990s. In publishing, the collapse came a little later, with the market continuing to grow until 1995. After this, however, sales plummeted, a decline that has continued into the present (Figure 5). Despite the ongoing shrinkage in retail space, the publishing industry continues to publish more and more titles every year. The result of this business model is a market (not only for manga but for books in general) that is heavily dependent on a small number of bestsellers, so that mid-list writers and their works struggle to survive at all. The market for ebooks and online publishing, which seemed promising for a while, is still in its early stages: the transition to a new market model is very slow.

^{*} “Media mix”

In the 1960s the increasingly interconnected markets for manga, television, and merchandising led to a multi-media marketing. Media mix (*media mikkusu*) is the made-in-Japan English name for this marketing strategy.

^{**} *Gekiga*

This is the alternative name for manga that dealt with more realistic and serious themes. The term later came to describe the revolutionary new style of manga led by manga aimed at young adults, leading to a “gekiga boom” that produced large numbers of magazines in the 1960s and 1970s. The movement came to an end in the 1980s.

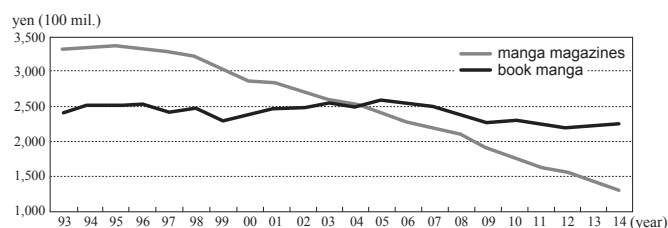


Figure 5. Chart showing shifts in sales of book manga and manga magazines (estimates) by value, published in Shuppan Kagaku Kenkyūjo, ed. *Shuppan geppō* [Publishing Monthly], February 2015, p. 4.

With the domestic market thus in decline, the Japanese media have begun to run reports on the popularity of Japanese anime and manga overseas, as if in an attempt to salvage national pride. In fact, although Japanese manga and anime have been criticized in many parts of the world for their graphic treatment of sex and violence, they have nevertheless sustained high levels of market interest in many countries. Partly, this criticism has been caused by presentation and cultural misunderstandings: sometimes, for example, anime intended for young adults have been shown on children’s channels in some countries owing to an assumption that all “cartoons” were suitable for children. In Japan, in the process of the 1960s and 1970s through which manga became youth-oriented, sex and violence tended to be dominant themes among titles developed for late teens and young-adult readers. Demand for works dealing with such themes had become established over several decades. It is not surprising that misunderstandings and other issues arise in other countries where this situation does not apply.

Despite these problems, Japanese works that are intellectually sophisticated in terms of subject matter have received a positive critical response around the world. Since the 1980s and 1990s, the term “graphic novel” has become a common way of referring to comics with intellectual content aimed at adult readers, sparked by the success of titles such as *Maus* by Art Spiegelmann. Japanese artist Tatsumi Yoshihiro (1935–2015) became perhaps better known internationally as a graphic novelist than he was in Japan. Tatsumi had tried at the end of the 1950s to reform Japanese manga to make it more appealing to young adult readers, referring to his work not as “manga” but by the term *gekiga*, or “dramatic pictures.”^{**} His best-known work is *Gekiga hyōryū* [trans. *A Drifting Life*] (Figure 6), the autobiographical nature of which perhaps helped its reception among readers of graphic novels, which frequently have biographical content.

Another artist who has enjoyed international success, particularly in France, is Taniguchi Jirō, a babyboomer who made his debut in 1971 in the *gekiga* genre (see p. 16). From an early stage his work, mostly manga aimed at readers of his generation, was strongly influenced by European comics. Tezuka Osamu’s *Budda* [trans.

(Continued on page 14)



Figure 6. Cover of volume 1 of *Gekiga hyōryū*, Seirin Kōgeisha, 2008.

FICTION



Sawada Tōko

Born in 1977. Specializes in the history of Nara Buddhism. Sawada made her debut as a novelist in 2010 with *Koyō no ten* [*Lone Hawk Heaven*], which won the Nakayama Gishū Literary Prize in 2011. *Jakuchū* was nominated for the Naoki Prize in 2015.

Fictional account of the life of a great painter

Jakuchū [The Painter Jakuchū] By Sawada Tōko

Bungei Shunjū, 2015. 188 x 128 mm. 360 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 978-4-16-390249-4.

Itō Jakuchū (1716–1800) was an artist who lived and worked in Kyoto, and known for his brightly colored paintings of flowers and birds (especially roosters and other fowl) that skillfully fuse realism and imagination. Subtle brushwork evokes Jakuchū's personal view of life, one tinged with a hint of darkness. His work was popular during his lifetime, but he was largely forgotten from the beginning of the modern period onward. A major exhibition held to mark 200 years since his death, however, sparked a revival of interest in the artist and his work. One of the best-known collectors of Jakuchū's work is the American collector Joe Price.

This book is a novel with the artist as its main character. It draws on a wide range of scholarly research, but Jakuchū's

life is shrouded in mystery, so the story introduces some daring speculations. Although Jakuchū is generally held to have been a life-long bachelor, the author has him struggling with remorse at having driven his wife to suicide. The plot takes a mysterious turn when the wife's brother appears, plotting to avenge the wife's death by producing counterfeits of Jakuchū's works. The novel also traces Jakuchū's contacts in the Kyoto art world, including famous figures like Ike no Taiga, Maruyama Ōkyo, and Yosa Buson. It describes his struggles and reveals the secrets of his creativity and the hidden messages in his works. This dramatic portrait of Jakuchū and those around him gives a vivid impression of the realities and social issues of the times. (Yonahara)

Sukurappu ando birudo [Scrap and Build]

By Hada Keisuke

Bungei Shunjū, 2015. 188 x 128 mm. 128 pp. ¥1,200. ISBN 978-4-16-390340-8.

Kento left his job at a car dealership seven months ago and is looking for a new job while looking after his grandfather. His 87-year-old grandfather is not exactly bedridden, but is unable to live without help. Although always grumbling about how he wants to die, the old man has not given up his attachment to life. Observing his grandfather, Kento starts to doubt the meaning of his life of nothing but caregiving, and prepares to carry out a secret plan. Then one day he discovers his grandfather on the point of drowning in the bath and is shocked into realizing the meaning of life. He resolves to find a job, work hard and make the most of his life.

This novel addresses two prominent problems in contemporary Japan: the problem of caring for the aged and the apathy and lack of ambition of the

younger generation. The first concerns how to approach death and the second asks how one ought to live. Kento realizes that moving toward death is part of living and that the difficulty of dying is part of the challenge of life.

The need to be looked after by someone else may cause a person to give up their dignity. But once that line has been crossed, a person can depend totally on others. On the other side of the relationship, psychological fatigue often leads a caregiver to shun the cared-for member of a family out of self-preservation. Confronted by these strained relationships, Kento comes to understand the importance of living in a way appropriate to one's stage of life. (Chō)



Hada Keisuke

Born in 1985. In 2003 received the Bungei Prize for *Kokureisui* [*Cold Black Water*], his debut work. Other works include *Fushigi no kuni no danshi* [*Boys in Wonderland*], *Hashiru* [*Run*], *Mīto za bīto* [*Meet the Beat*], and *Metamorphosis* [*Metamorphosis*]. Received the 153rd Akutagawa Prize for this work.

Learning the meaning of life from those who face death



Yuzuki Asako

Born in 1981. In 2008 won the All Yomimono New Writers Prize for *Fōgetto mī notto burū* [*Forget Me Not Blue*]. In 2013, her novel *Ranchi no Akko-chan* [*Akko-chan at Lunchtime*] became a bestseller. The present book won the 28th Yamamoto Shūgorō Prize.

When friendship turns sinister and destructive

Nairu pāchi no joshikai **[The Nile Perch Girls' Nights Out]**

By Yuzuki Asako

Bungei Shunjū, 2015. 188 x 128 mm. 360 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 978-4-16-390229-6.

Eriko is an attractive office worker with a major trading company; Shōko is a full-time housewife. The two thirty-year-old women first encounter each other online. Eriko is a devoted follower of a blog that Shōko writes under the title “Diary of a No-Good Wife,” finding that the humorous observations of little events in this stranger’s life help her forget the stresses of her busy life. The two women happen to live in the same neighborhood and when chance brings them together one day, they soon find they are kindred spirits.

Despite seeming to have the perfect life as a career woman, Eriko in fact pines for a close friend she can confide in. But her desperate hunger for closeness makes her a nuisance and ends up driving Shōko away. In her attempts to correct this “mis-

understanding,” Eriko becomes even more obsessed, and soon crosses the line into stalking. Finally, she forces Shōko to agree to an overnight trip to a hotel in Hakone together. When the two women come home from this strange trip as fake best friends, their lives begin to spiral irretrievably out of control. The “Nile perch” of the title is a fish whose bland flavor is belied by its fierce temperament—violent enough to destroy entire ecosystems.

In dynamic prose, the author depicts how an ordinary woman can change into a “Nile perch.” The book also has some sharp questions to ask about the state of contemporary society and the harmful effect it can have on interpersonal relationships. (Nozaki)

Nagai iiwake **[The Long Excuse]**

By Nishikawa Miwa

Bungei Shunjū, 2015. 188 x 128 mm. 312 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 978-4-16-390214-2.

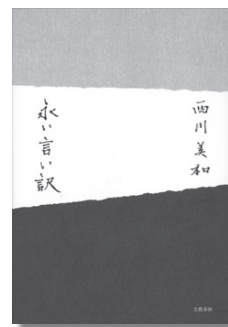
Before making his debut as a novelist, Kinugasa Sachio is happily in love with his wife Natsuko. But as he becomes famous, he loses interest in her and they drift apart. One day, Natsuko goes on a trip with her friend Yuki and both women are killed in a traffic accident. News of the tragedy reaches Sachio after he has spent the night with his lover.

Perhaps because of his affair, Sachio doesn’t seem especially affected by his wife’s death at first. Then he visits Yuki’s husband Yōichi’s home. Yōichi works as a truck driver and is often away from home overnight on long-distance assignments. Sachio takes to visiting twice a week to help look after Yōichi’s two young children. As he gets to know them, he finds his feeling for family life coming back and starts to imagine what Natsuko’s

feelings must have been. It is at this point that he makes an unexpected discovery when he comes across a message left on Natsuko’s cell phone.

The novel is narrated by several different characters and chapters alternate between narrative perspectives. But this is no *Rashōmon*-like chaos of competing versions of the truth; instead, the divergent perspectives come together in the end as a united story.

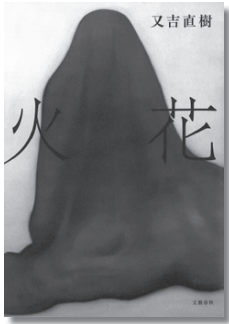
Details of daily life, the novel shows, turn out to be essential if we are to find meaning in life. The closest relationships can be threatened if communication breaks down. This novel depicts the emotional journey by which one man rediscovers love and the meaning of life after bereavement. (Chō)



Nishikawa Miwa

Born in 1974. Movie director and author. Won a number of prizes in 2006 for the movie *Yureru* [*Sway*]. Written works include *Kinō no kamisama* [*Yesterday's God*]. Nagai iiwake was nominated for the Yamamoto Shūgorō Prize and the Naoki Prize in 2015 (see also JBN Nos. 53, 62).

A novel of love, loss, and understanding



Matayoshi Naoki

Born in 1980. Partner of the comedy duo Peace. Author of Dai-ni tosho-gakari hosa [No. 2 Book Department Assistant] and Tōkyō hyakkei [One Hundred Views of Tokyo], and co-author of haiku collections Masaka jūpu de kuru to wa [Arrival by Jeep!].

*Best-selling novel
by a popular
comedian*

Hibana [When Sparks Fly]

By Matayoshi Naoki

Bungei Shunjū, 2015. 188 x 128 mm. 152 pp. ¥1,200. ISBN 978-4-16-390230-2.

Aspiring comedian Tokunaga is just 20 years old when he meets Kamiya, an entertainer four years his senior. Tokunaga is immediately struck by the integrity of the older man's performance of a rapid succession of original gags spun out without seeming to be dependent upon the audience reaction. From that night on, Tokunaga regards Kamiya as the only teacher he wants to follow.

As a condition for taking on Tokunaga as an apprentice, Kamiya orders him to watch closely everything he does and says with a view to one day writing his biography. Tokunaga admires Kamiya's strong sense of pride and idealism, even though he ends up living in a state of poverty as a result. Tokunaga comes to understand the true meaning of comedy and laughter, and continues to refine his own routines. He

begins to understand that some young artists are blessed with almost instant success, but many others remain unknown, their talents never receiving the recognition they deserve.

Kamiya is clearly among the latter. He is poor and in debt, and his girlfriend leaves him. Meanwhile, Tokunaga makes a reputation for himself and starts to appear on television. A distance opens up between the two men. Kamiya comes up with a remarkable gag that he believes will revive his fortunes, but with dubious success.

Based on the personal experiences of the author, a successful comedian, the book won the 2015 Akutagawa Prize and became an overnight bestseller. It gives a glimpse behind the scenes of the hugely popular world of comedy. (Nozaki)

Burakku oa howaito [Black or White]

By Asada Jirō

Shinchōsha, 2015. 190 x 128 mm. 302 pp. ¥1,500. ISBN 978-4-10-439405-0.

The first-person narrator meets Tsuzuki Eiichirō for the first time in years at a classmate's wake. After the ceremony, he accepts an invitation to visit the luxurious penthouse apartment where Tsuzuki lives. Tsuzuki tells him about a succession of strange dreams he has had around the world.

Not long after starting work in a large trading company, Tsuzuki has a dream at a lakeside hotel in Switzerland. When he sleeps on a white pillow, he has pleasant dreams, but they turn into nightmares when he sleeps on a black pillow. The uncanny experiences continue, and he has bizarre dreams in a number of places, including Palau, Jaipur, Beijing, and Kyoto.

Through the stories of these dreams, we get a panorama view of the state of modern Japan. Tsuzuki's grandfather was

a director of the South Manchuria Railway who, foreseeing Japan's defeat, secretly moved his fortune back to Japan. After the war, he eventually finds work with a large trading company. Tsuzuki's father was in the same line of work, and now Tsuzuki himself, born after the war, is the third generation to belong to the elite. But the experiences of the three generations have been quite different. The dreams he has had at various exotic places reflect the experiences of these three generations.

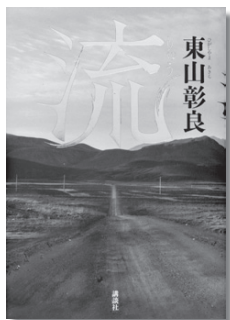
The narrative style, in which the lines between dream and reality gradually blur, suggests a philosophical resignation reminiscent of Zhuangzi (Chuang-tzu): reality dissolves into a dream-like state when a person dies, and human life itself can be seen as nothing more than a dream. (Chō)



Asada Jirō

Born in 1951. In 1995 won the Yoshikawa Eijirō New Writers Prize for Metero ni notte [Riding the Metro]. In 1997 he won the Naoki Prize for Poppoya [The Railroad Man]. Served as chairman of the Japan branch of PEN in 2011 (see JBN No. 67).

*Modern Japanese
history depicted in
dreams*



Higashiyama Akira
Born in Taiwan in 1968 under the name Wang Zhenxu. In 2002, won the Silver Prize and Reader's Choice Prize in the "Kono Misuteri ga Sugoi" Award for Tādo on za ran [Turd on the Run]. In 2009 won the Ōyabu Haruhiko Prize for Robō [On the Roadside].

*Murder mystery
 and coming-of-age
 drama in 1970s
 Taipei*

Ryū **[Flow]**

By Higashiyama Akira

Kōdansha, 2015. 188 x 130 mm. 408 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 978-4-06-219485-3.

Taiwan, 1975: a year marked by the death of the generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. The novel's young protagonist, Qiusheng, loses his grandfather, killed by a person or persons unknown. His grandfather had fought for Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang against the Communists in China's civil war before fleeing to Taiwan after the Communist victory. There are stories that he was also involved in some grisly incidents during the war, including the massacre of a Chinese clan suspected of collaborating with the Japanese. But who would want to kill him now, when those events are distant memory? And why? These are the questions that constantly gnaw at Qiusheng throughout an unruly, aimless youth. When he is discovered taking an important exam on behalf of a disreputable friend, he finds himself stuck in

a school for students with no prospects, regularly getting into fights and experiencing his first taste of the joys and sorrows of love. Later, visiting Japan and finally China, he comes face-to-face with the secrets surrounding his grandfather's death.

The author's family is originally from Taiwan, and moved to Japan when the author was nine years old. This background gives the book literary significance as the story of an immigrant author tracing his roots in Japanese. But more important still are the natural flow and humor of the writing and its thrilling story. Combining a requiem to his father's and grandfather's generations with a coming-of-age story, this book, which won the 153rd Naoki Prize, marks the arrival of a major talent. (Nozaki)

CRITICISM

Etō Jun to Ōe Kenzaburō **[Etō Jun and Ōe Kenzaburō]**

By Koyano Atsushi

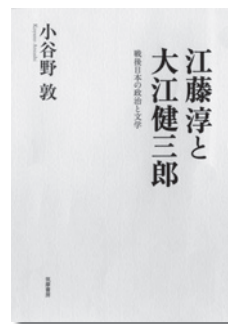
Chikuma Shobō, 2015. 188 x 128 mm. 416 pp. ¥2,400. ISBN 978-4-480-82378-6.

Etō Jun (1932–1999) and Ōe Kenzaburō (b. 1935) are two of the dominant figures in Japanese literature of the postwar period. Both have left rich literary and critical monuments, but politically the two men could hardly be farther apart. Primarily a novelist, Ōe earned himself a substantial international reputation and the Nobel Prize. Politically, his stance has been rooted in a democratic, pacifist position that might be described as the mainstream stance among postwar Japanese intellectuals. He has also been an energetic and prolific critic. Etō Jun, on the other hand, who made his debut as a critic around the same time as Ōe in the late 1950s, espoused nationalism and actively supported conservative governments.

Koyano's study gives an account of Etō's life and character and his struggle to

succeed in the closed world of Japanese literature. But perhaps its more particular contribution is the unified portrait it paints of Ōe's fiction and criticism, bringing together the twin strands of his work in an overall analysis and drawing a unified picture of the man and his work in its totality.

Koyano argues that Ōe's political writings, which at first glance seem written from a position of healthy idealism, in fact hide an attraction to the grotesque similar to the kind that appears in his fiction and a subliminal longing for the extinction of the human race. At the same time, elements of humor (notably lacking in Etō's writing) have sustained Ōe through his long and prolific career. This book can also be read as a concise history of postwar Japanese literature in general. (Karube)



Koyano Atsushi

Born in 1962. Novelist and critic. His Motenai otoko [Unattractive Men] became a best-seller in 1999. Won the Suntory Prize in 2002 for Seibo no inai kuni [A Land Without the Holy Mother]. Nue no ita ie [The House of the Chimera] was nominated for the 152nd Akutagawa Prize.

*Two giants of
 Japanese
 literature*



Chūjō Shōhei

Born in 1954. Professor at Gakushuin University. Numerous works include *Kettei-ban Furansu eiga 200-sen* [200 French Films: A Definitive Selection], *Manga no kyōyō*: Yonde okitai jōshiki hisshū no meisaku 100 [The Culture of Manga: 100 Essential Masterpieces Everyone Should Read].

*Manga as a mirror
of contemporary
Japan*

Manga no ronten [Topics in Manga]

By Chūjō Shōhei

Gentōsha, 2015. 173 x 108 mm. 774 pp. ¥1,700. ISBN 978-4-344-98380-9.

Manga is more than simply an entertaining pastime: in contemporary Japan it has become a valuable vehicle for interpreting the world, capable of tackling all kinds of subject matter and philosophical approaches. That is the opinion of the author, a professor of French literature and well-known film critic. Because it is unfettered by aesthetic or artistic restrictions, manga is able to freely offer rawer depictions of the state of the world, both in its positive and negative aspects, than literature and other older forms of expression.

From this position of admiration for the potential of manga as a contemporary art form, the study discusses several hundred manga titles published over the last ten years and highlights their points of interest. Ten years ago, the author points

out, Japanese manga was already addressing subjects like war, terrorism, and social inequality. Manga has consistently seemed to predict the future and is often several steps ahead of the times. Through his reading of recent manga—from popular titles like *Death Note*, *Hyōme Mono*, *Twentieth-Century Boys*, and *Pluto* to lesser-known cult favorites, the author seems to reveal the subconscious of contemporary Japan. He also discusses French *bandes dessinées*, for which the market has been very lively in recent years, and makes clear the remarkable creative achievements of Japanese manga. Readers will surely want to read many of the manga under discussion for themselves. (Nozaki)

Nihon no shunga, enpon kenkyū [A Study of Japanese Erotic Art: Shunga and Enpon]

By Ishigami Aki

Heibonsha, 2015. 146 x 210 mm. 384 pp. ¥6,500. ISBN 978-4-582-66216-0.

Large numbers of *shunga*, erotic depictions of men and women in acts of love, and *enpon*, which collected these erotic artworks into book form, were produced and circulated during the Edo period (1603–1867). Behind the depiction of sex so characteristic of *shunga* was a view of sex as built on mutual desire rather than simply one-way desire. It was the union of male and female that was the foundation of true happiness. The depictions of free, untrammelled sex in the *shunga* are relaxed, joyful, and often humorous. Although the oversized genitalia might be the first aspect to catch the eye, a closer look reveals the richly diverse culture of Edo, including literature and the performing arts, minutely interwoven into the pictures and the inscriptions in the backgrounds.

Shunga had its roots in China, and incorporated elements from European art before flourishing as a distinctively Japanese mode of expression. Many *shunga* were produced by some of the greatest *ukiyo*e artists, and were popular across the social spectrum during the Edo period, as printing technology evolved and the publishing industry developed.

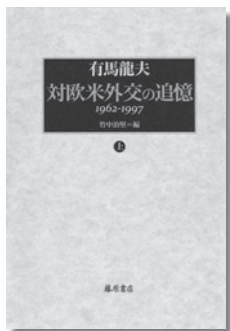
The dawning of the modern period led to a tendency to play down many of the habits and customs of Edo culture, and the *shunga* tradition fell into decline. Since a major exhibition at the British Museum in 2013, however, in which the author of this book was also involved, the reputation of *shunga* has been on the rise again around the world—including in Japan. The author sheds new light on the *shunga* tradition. (Yonahara)



Ishigami Aki

Born in 1979. Completed a Ph.D. in literature at Ritsumeikan University in 2008. Specializes in the history of early modern literature. Received a Young Scholars' Prize from the International Ukiyoe Society in 2015.

*New scholarship
on shunga prints
and enpon books*



Arima Tatsuo

Born in 1933. Received a Ph.D. from Harvard. Joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1962 and later served as head of the ministry's North America bureau. His works include The Failure of Freedom: A Portrait of Modern Japanese Intellectuals (Harvard University Press, 1969).

*An insider's view
of international
diplomacy*

***Tai-Ōbei gaikō no tsuioku 1962-1997* [Reminiscences of Diplomacy with Europe and America 1962-1997]**

By Arima Tatsuo, edited by Takenaka Harutaka

Vol. I: Fujiwara Shoten, 2015. 188 x 128 mm. 392 pp. ¥4,200. ISBN 978-4-86578-003-1.

Vol. II: Fujiwara Shoten, 2015. 188 x 128 mm. 384 pp. ¥4,200. ISBN 978-4-86578-005-5.

Arima Tatsuo is a well-known Japanese diplomat. He occupied important positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the cabinet at times when Japan faced serious major international challenges, and he played a key part in finding resolutions to diplomatic issues that included the return of Okinawa to Japanese sovereignty, Japan-U.S. textile negotiations, the Structural Impediments Initiative, and the Gulf War. He has also had a career as a scholar of political philosophy and is the author of a well-known study of Japan in the early twentieth century.

These volumes, based on a series of interviews by political scientist Takenaka Harutaka, provides a behind-the-scenes entry into the world of international

diplomacy. In trying to solve a given diplomatic problem, who would participate in policy-making decisions within the Japanese government, and how did negotiations take place during that decision-making process? How do Japanese diplomats interact with their counterparts from other countries, and how do they attempt to persuade them? This work will certainly become a must-read for anyone wishing to understand Japanese diplomacy. The interviews also make clear that the experience and human contacts Arima built up as a student at Harvard and a member of academia were crucial to his later diplomatic career. (Karube)

HISTORY

***Chōsen ōkōzoku* [The Korean Royal Family in Imperial Japan]**

By Shinjō Michihiko

Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2015. 173 x 108 mm. 272 pp. ¥840. ISBN 978-4-12-102309-4.

Among other things, the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty of 1910 involved the merger of two monarchical states, as the Japanese Empire absorbed the Korean Empire (1897-1910). The reality of this, of course, was an act of subjugation by which the Japanese Empire aimed to extinguish Korea as a state and reduce it to the status of a Japanese territory. But Japan sought to project the annexation as having come about following consent between two equal states. One manifestation of this was the treatment given to the Korean royal family.

Until now, little consideration has been given to the status conditions of the Korean royal family during the Japanese colonial period. This ambitious work aims to fill that gap in historical research.

The Japanese bestowed on the former

emperor of Korea the title of “king” (*ō*) while his close male relatives became “dukes” (*kō*) under the Japanese state. The official order of precedence placed their families between the Japanese Imperial household and the Japanese aristocracy, and they were protected at government expense. Although they were under government supervision, they were treated with a considerable respect. This is the first study to shed light on this distinctive aspect of Japan’s control of Korea, and should provide useful points of comparison with the colonial policies of other powers. (Karube)



Shinjō Michihiko

Born in 1978. Received his Ph.D. in 2009 from Kyushu University. Since 2015, associate professor of international exchange at Ferris University. Specializes in modern history of Asia, particularly Korea. Also the author of Tennō to Kankoku heigō [The Emperor and the Annexation of Korea].

*The place of the
Korean royal
family in colonial
Japan*



Hattori Hideo

Born in 1949. Professor at Kyushu University, where he specializes in Japanese medieval history. Author of *Kawara no mono, hinin, Hideyoshi* [*Kawara-no-mono and Hinin Outcasts, and Hideyoshi*] and *Bushi to shōen shihai* [*Warriors and Control of the Shōen Estates*].

What really happened when the Mongols invaded Japan?

Mōko shūrai **[The Mongol Invasions of Japan]**

By Hattori Hideo

Yamakawa Shuppansha, 2014. 188 x 128 mm. 536 pp. ¥2,400. ISBN 978-4-634-15061-4.

Legend is often mixed with historic fact in discussions of the failed Mongol attempts to invade Japan in the thirteenth century. The exhaustive research done for this book leads to a number of new discoveries: including the fact that “divine winds” (*kamikaze*) were not as decisive in turning the battles in Japan’s favor as often asserted.

Regarding the first attack, in 1274, Hattori draws closely on *Kanchūki*, the diary of a court noble, together with records kept by the shogunate in Kamakura. He concludes that Mongol forces fought for seven days but were unable to force a victory. They finally decided to withdraw after storms compounded their losses at the Battle of Dazaifu.

Surviving records claim that as many as 900 vessels attacked Japan in 1274. But

the author shows that two-thirds of the fleet was made up of small boats used as landing craft and for other purposes carried by the larger ships, and there were only around 300 larger ships that could navigate on the open seas. The Mongols could not commission ships on the continent and procuring what they wanted from Korea of the Goryeo dynasty was difficult as well, providing them enough sailors for only 112 vessels. This was the number of ships that actually attacked Japan.

Similar misunderstandings have occurred, Hattori shows, owing to misreadings of the historical record regarding the second battle of 1281. The “divine winds” that blew that year, for example, caused massive damage not only to the Mongol forces but to the Japanese fleet as well. (Chō)

RELIGION AND FOLKLORE

Shōrui kuyō to Nihonjin **[Animals Memorials and the Japanese People]**

By Nagano Hironori

Genshobō, 2015. 188 x 128 mm. 240 pp. ¥2,000. ISBN 978-4-86329-112-6.

All around Japan, graves and monuments can be found dedicated to the spirits of animals—oxen, horses, whales, sea turtles, crabs, even rice plant pests and silk-worms. Most date from the Edo period or later, and considerable numbers well into modern times. Together they tell an eloquent tale of the historical relationship between Japanese people and the animals with whom they share their islands.

From ancient times, people did not consider human beings and animals as intrinsically different. Both were viewed as living things part of the cycle of birth and rebirth through incarnation. But in order to survive, people had to take the lives of other animals in various contexts, including hunting, fishing, and agriculture.

One of the meanings of these monuments was to enable people to assuage

their guilt at having taken the life of another creature. The author argues that the traditional Japanese attitude to the natural world was diametrically opposed to the thinking that prevailed in the West, where animals and nature were regarded as existing for the benefit of man.

Full of observations on the traditions and history of different regions, the author examines the relationship between humans and other living creatures in Japan. The book looks at the wide range of ways animals were memorialized after death, including traditions revering whales as “messengers of the gods” and memorials for cavalry horses of the modern army. The author interprets these traditions as showing the lingering impact of Japan’s distinctive animist traditions. (Yonahara)



Nagano Hironori

Born in 1960. Specializes in the history of modern Japan. Publications include *Kaidō no Nihonshi* [*Japanese History in Its Highways*], *Aru mura no bakumatsu, Meiji* [*How One Village Experienced the Meiji Restoration Era*].

Memorials to the souls of animals and Japanese animism



Tagame Gengorō

Manga artist born in 1964. Began serializing gay manga and novels in the magazine Sabu in 1986. Tagame is also a collector and historian of Japanese gay erotic art from the late 1950s to the present day. Works include Pride and Kimi yo shiru ya minami no goku [Do You Remember the South Island's POW Camp?].

A man comes to terms with a gay brother-in-law

Ototo no otto [My Brother's Husband]

By Tagame Gengorō

Vol.1: Futabasha, 2015. 182 x 127 mm. 176 pp. ¥620. ISBN 978-4-575-84625-6.

The fact that Japanese culture has traditionally been tolerant of male homosexuality and gay culture is well known around the world. Manga works by this author, originally written for a gay readership, have already been published in translation overseas. Despite this widespread tolerance of the homosexual minority, however, considerable barriers remain between the gay community and majority culture. The fact that gay marriage is still not legal in Japan is one example of a strong tendency to regard gay people as something of a taboo in mainstream society.

This is the first full-length work that Tagame has written for a general readership. The story deals with a heterosexual Japanese man whose life is turned upside down one day when a gay man—and a

foreigner at that—suddenly announces he is coming to stay. His visitor is a Canadian man who has been living with the man's brother, and has come to Japan following the death of his partner. At first hesitant and uncomfortable, the Japanese protagonist gradually becomes aware of his own prejudices and comes to accept the newcomer as his “brother's husband.” This manga skillfully depicts the difficult topic of understanding between sexual majority and minority culture within the familiar context of a domestic drama. (Karube)

Mizuki Shigeru no Izumi Kyōka-den [Mizuki Shigeru's Biography of Izumi Kyōka]

By Mizuki Shigeru

Shōgakukan, 2015. 210 x 147 mm. 306 pp. ¥1,600. ISBN 978-4-09-186847-3.

Izumi Kyōka (1873–1939) is known as a writer of beauty and illusion. His work, richly imbued with an air of gothic romance, made him modern Japan's leading writer of “fantastical” literature. He also wrote plays and haiku, and many of his works have been turned into films. Now the manga artist Mizuki Shigeru (born 1922) has turned the life of the writer into a manga with distinctively eerie atmospheric touches.

Kyōka was born in Kanazawa in Ishikawa prefecture, an old castle town where many attractive streets lined with old wooden buildings still survive today. The winding waterways and alleys of the old town are the perfect setting for intriguing stories. Growing up here had a major impact on Kyōka's writings, many of which are deeply imbued with the tra-

ditional oral ghost stories the writer would have heard as a youngster.

At the time Kyōka was writing, Japan was in the throes of headlong modernization as the country changed beyond recognition and turned toward war. Kyōka felt ill at ease in the real world around him, and the upheaval of the times served to strengthen his fascination and imaginative identification with other, imaginary worlds.

The manga introduces readers to some of Kyōka's best-known works, including *Kuroneko* [Black Cat] and *Kōya Hijiri* [trans. “The Holy Man of Mt. Kōya”]. The motifs of his novels, which depict love, vengeance, and wandering spirits, have a sense of mournfulness that continues to speak powerfully to people in contemporary Japan. (Yonahara)



Mizuki Shigeru

Born in 1922. Numerous works include Gegege no Kitarō and Akuma-kun. His NonNonBā won Best Comic Book award at the Angoulême International Comics Festival in 2007 and an Eisner Award for Sōin gyokusai seyo! [trans. Onward Towards Our Noble Deaths] in 2012. Made a Person of Cultural Merit in 2010.

The life and times of Japan's master of gothic

No. 1: Multivolume *Zenshū* and *Kōza* Series: History and Society

In this section we take the opportunity to introduce readers to some types of works being published in Japan that we generally do not present in the New Titles pages. In this issue and the next we take a look at some notable sets of works of particular writers or on a specific subject (*zenshū*) and “lecture series” (*kōza*).

The multi-volume works known as *zenshū* are generally collections of the works of an individual author or anthologies bringing together works by multiple authors on a single subject. Undertakings of this kind, sometimes producing massive anthologies, have waxed and waned several times over the past few decades, but for some time until recently, only a relatively small number of such collections were coming out. Publishers in Japan seemed to have felt that *zenshū* no longer made good sense business-wise.

The first of the major *zenshū* booms was propelled by the appearance in 1926 of the 62-volume *Gendai Nihon bungaku zenshū* [Anthology of Modern Japanese Literature], published by Kaizōsha. Quite unlike earlier anthologies, these volumes sold for one yen per 1,000-page volume, achieving widespread success as the perfect answer to people’s appetite for education and culture in an age of mass literacy and burgeoning popular culture. Numerous single-author anthologies followed, along with sets on other subjects like politics, history, and philosophy. Kaizōsha was in difficult financial straits before its pioneering anthology came out, but the publication is said to have rescued the company and put it back on a solid financial footing again. The first *zenshū* craze was underway.

Another boom took place in the postwar years, spanning the 1950s and 1960s. Kadokawa Shoten had a big success in 1952 with *Shōwa bungaku zenshū* [Anthology of Literature of the Shōwa Era], published in 58 volumes and one supplement, also rescuing the company after a period of poor sales. The following year, publication began of the *Gendai Nihon bungaku zenshū* [Anthology of Modern Japanese Literature] (Chikuma Shobō), in 97 volumes with two supplementary volumes. Further anthologies followed from other publishers, including Kōdansha, Kawade Shobō, and Shinchōsha. The postwar enthusiasm for huge anthologies was similar in many ways to the one that had taken place in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

Literary anthologies produced for a popular readership were in the vanguard of the *zenshū* boom in both quality and quantity, reflecting the educational and cultural aspirations of the new middle classes, the newly affluent class of people with a certain amount of disposable income. In this sense, the anthologies were symbolic of economic growth. The literary *zenshū* were followed by non-fiction anthologies like *Sekai nonfikushon zenshū* [Anthology of World Non-Fiction], *Nihon no rekishi* [History of Japan]. At the same time, a number of encyclopedias were released, competing for sales and continuing to expand the market. The rapid growth of the Japanese economy and the huge expansion of access to higher education led

to a steady succession of publications reflecting a widespread appetite for culture and education. In due course, as economic growth first stabilized and then slowed, publishers began to realize that churning out encyclopedic anthologies was no longer an effective means of making money, and the fashion began to fade.

Over the past few years, however, there has been a definite trend for publishers once again to put together major anthologies of Japanese or world literature. One characteristic of these recent series is that they tend to be edited and selected by a single well-known figure. A typical example of this would be the comprehensive anthologies of world literature and of Japanese literature, each in 30 volumes, compiled and edited by the writer and critic Ikezawa Natsuki.

In fields other than literature, too, recent anthologies and lecture series tend to be compiled from the personal perspective of an individual supervisory editor. These recent sets generally reflect the latest scholarly research and an awareness of the important issues of the times. In that sense, trends in their compilation are signs of the changing tenor of the times. Below, I introduce a few of the most noteworthy anthologies that have been published (or are being published) in recent years in the fields of history and society.

Iwanami kōza Nihon rekishi [Iwanami Course on Japanese History], 22 vols. Iwanami Shoten, 2013 and ongoing.

This fourth edition of Iwanami’s series on Japanese history was planned to commemorate the company’s centenary as a publisher, and it goes without saying that research and writing on history reflects changes in the political, social, and economic climate. Past editions of the series certainly did a fair job of presenting the latest academic work in the field at the time they were published. But the triple-pronged disaster—the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear meltdown—that hit Tōhoku in 2011 marked a major turning point and offered an opportunity to fundamentally review the nature of Japanese society. This new series is the first to take into account this altered state of affairs.

The basic approach of the *Iwanami kōza* series is to present a cross-section of the latest research presented by experts in a wide range of fields. One of its distinguishing characteristics is the way it looks at a diverse range of subjects including the economy, social structure, religion, and culture, all centering around the political system. The aim of the series is to draw up a new image of Japanese history. This publication follows three years of prepara-

tion by 200 scholars focused on this overall goal. The series is sold on an advance-purchase plan according to which readers reserve and pay for the complete series before publication.

***Sōsho: Shinsai to shakai* [Series: Earthquake Disasters and Society], 11 vols. Iwanami Shoten, 2012–14.**

The Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster that struck on March 11, 2011 was without parallel in modern times in terms of the scale of the damage it caused and the geographical extent of the area affected. In particular, the disaster at the nuclear power plant in Fukushima prefecture was like nothing Japan had experienced before.

The idea behind this series was to consider the significance of this colossal disaster and its impact on Japanese society. The series begins by acknowledging that Japan is a chain of volcanic islands subject to frequent natural disasters, discussing the threat of soil liquefaction such as occurred in many areas following the 2011 earthquake, and speculating about the possible consequences of the Nankai Trough earthquake that is expected to hit in the near future. The series also examines what our relationship with nature ought to be, given the recent earthquake disaster experiences.

One of the unprecedented aspects of the 2011 disaster was the nuclear disaster it caused—the first of its kind in the world, given that the causes were quite different from those that led to the Chernobyl disaster. Even at this point today, the meltdown situation at the power plant is not clearly known. Analysis of the particulars of low-dose radiation exposure, too, is still underway. This work also recommends that under these circumstances, Japan ought to pursue a path freeing itself from dependence on nuclear power generation.

Taking these aspects of the disaster into account, the series looks at how general information about the earthquake has been communicated to the public since “3/11,” discusses the question of preserving memories and records of disasters, and also touches on the question of how scholars should appropriately address these questions. The series provides much food for thought on the various problems and issues relating to earthquake disasters and society.

***Inō-zu Taizen* [Complete Edition of Inō Tadataka's Maps], 7 vols. Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2012–14 (see also Events and Trends, JBN 82).**

Inō Tadataka (1745–1818) is well known as the person who, along with his team of surveyors, carried out the first accurate cartographic survey of the Japanese archipelago some 200 years ago.

In 2001, facsimiles of 207 of Inō's maps were discovered in the Library of Congress in the United States, leading to an exhibition called *Amerika Inō zu ten* [An Exhibition of Inō Maps from the United States] that toured several cities in Japan in 2004. This was followed in 2006 by the publication of *Inō daizu sōran* [An Overview of Large Maps by Inō] by Kawade Shobō Shinsha. This latest collection brings together Inō's maps from collections inside and outside Japan.

These maps represent the beginnings of modern Japanese cartography. That such maps of the archipelago were possible 200 years ago is testimony to the passion and hard work of Inō Tadataka. The collection contains 792 maps in all, including 246 original maps.

***Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku* [The Official Record of the Shōwa Emperor], edited and compiled by the Imperial Household Agency, 19 vols. Tōkyō Shoseki, 2015 and ongoing.**

The *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku* was announced by the Imperial Household Agency in September 2014 as a 61-volume set that will come to approximately 12,000 pages when complete. The series soon became a topic of considerable conversation and speculation among journalists and scholars. It makes use of numerous official records and documents written by the emperor's aides, and represents 25 years of careful curative work by a team of editors at the Agency. Promising to cover a huge range of subjects, the series has the potential to change the image of Emperor Hirohito (1901–89) and his place in history.

The first volumes were followed almost immediately by a number of commentaries, another indication of the extraordinary level of interest in the materials. *Shōwa tennō jitsuroku no nazo o toku* [Interpreting the Mysteries of The Official Record of the Shōwa Emperor] (Bungei Shunjū) and *Shōwa Tennō jitsuroku to sensō* [The Official Record of the Shōwa Emperor and the War] (Yamakawa Shuppan) are just two examples among many.

The emperor was on the throne for 64 years, longer than any of his predecessors, and his life coincided with times of dramatic upheaval. The first volume covers the first 12 years of his life, as he receives the name Hirohito and grows up surrounded by many of the figures who had built the country into a modern state under the reign of his grandfather, Emperor Meiji. The volume covers the death of Emperor Meiji and the dramatic suicide of General Nogi Maresuke that followed. The accounts paint a vivid picture of war and peace, the people and the state. The second volume follows on chronologically, covering the emperor's experiences as a student aged 13 to 19. Personal information including his medical record and academic results has been omitted.

The official record contains clear evidence shedding light on all aspects of the emperor's life: from the custom of marking Christmas in the palace and letters to his father the Taishō emperor, to the revelation that the conference in the presence of the emperor at which the decision was finally made to accept the Potsdam Declaration started at 3 minutes past midnight on 10 August 1945 rather than late on the evening of the ninth, and insights into his inability to stop the march to war despite feeling upset by the highhandedness of the military before the war and the regrets he suffered after the war as questions continued about his responsibility, as well as many well-known episodes depicted in detail here. There can be little doubt that this will serve as a primary source for learning about the history of the imperial house.

(Kiyota Yoshiaki, President, Shuppan News Co., Ltd.)

(Continued from page 3)

Buddha] has also been treated as a graphic novel in translation.

These works possess qualities and subject matter that suggest they will continue to be read long into the future both in Japan and other countries.

In Japan, however, many fans and scholars disapprove of the tendency to single out these intellectually oriented works alone as “art,” at the expense of the many other manga and anime titles published each year. Thanks to the diversity of the publishing market, works that in other countries might seem to be underground or alternative have been sold and read as part of the mass culture. There are often no clear divisions between “highbrow” and “lowbrow.” Having grown up in this market, many Japanese manga fans argue that it is the sheer volume of works published, most of them destined to be discarded and forgotten as soon as they are read, that allows a small number of outstanding works to survive and flourish, thanks to robust competition.

As I have said, Japanese manga is an extremely diverse medium. In many cases it is easy to spot clear evidence of foreign influence. It would therefore be a mistake, I feel, to look for specifically Japanese cultural reasons for what makes Japanese manga unique. It is a characteristic of all popular culture that it tends to lack clear dividing lines; individual titles and genres in and outside of Japan are

constantly influencing one another in dynamic ways, and the art form as a whole is always shifting in unpredictable ways. This is what makes popular culture so effective at communicating across national borders.

So what are the chief characteristics of Japanese manga? The first is probably a publishing market that, despite its recent travails, remains huge by global standards, and the diversity that results from it. The fact that just about any subject can be treated in manga form, from fine food to child rearing, the strategy game of *go*, and classical music, shows the close relationship the medium enjoys with people’s daily lives in Japan. It is surely true that studying manga remains key to understanding the life and culture of the country as a whole.

Natsume Fusanosuke

Born in 1950. Manga columnist whose work takes in manga, essays, and criticism, and professor at Gakushuin University. Received the third Tezuka Osamu Special Manga Prize for his criticism in 1999. Major works include Tezuka Osamu wa doko ni iru [Where Is Tezuka Osamu?] (1992), Manga wa naze omoshiroi no ka [What Makes Manga Fun?] (1997) and Manga ni jinsei o manande nani ga warui? [What’s Wrong With Learning About Life from Manga?] (2006). His paternal grandfather was the famous novelist Natsume Sōseki.

Events and Trends

The 2015 Japan Foundation Awards

The recipients of the awards this year are Wang Yong, Professor/Director, Institute of East Asian Studies, Zhejiang Gongshang University, China; Tomita Isao, composer, Japan, and the Sibiu International Theatre Festival, Romania.

In 1984, Wang Yong was a student of the “Ohira School” (precursor of the Beijing Center for Japanese Studies), established by the Japan Foundation in 1980 for training Japanese language teachers in China. In the three decades since his encounter with Japan and the Japanese language there, Wang has focused on the development of both Japanese studies in China and cultural exchange between Japan and China. He has been a leader in China in the area of research into the history of Japanese-Chinese cultural

exchange, and several of his leading works have been well received in Japan.

Tomita, whose starting place as a composer was the pursuit of “the reverberation of sound,” released recordings of famous classical works on the synthesizer. His works became hits in various parts of the world, winning top slots in the classics division of famous record charts in the United States and garnering recognition for Tomita as an international artist. Tomita’s method of not only creating the sounds, but performing and recording each orchestral part himself, became the model for the personal studio approach to music production that is the norm today, and this shows the immense influence that Tomita had on domestic and international artists and musicians across all genres. In 1998, the symphonic fantasy *Tale of Genji* composed and conducted by Tomita

combining traditional Japanese instruments with an orchestra and synthesizers was performed in Tokyo, Los Angeles, and London. More recently, his *Symphony Ihatov*, which portrays the world of Miyazawa Kenji, drew attention by using Hatsune Miku, the “vocaloid” (virtual idol) immensely popular among youth throughout the world, as the soloist.

The Sibiu International Theatre Festival was inaugurated in 1994 and is now considered one of the most important theatre festivals in Europe. Since 1995, it has brought a wide range of Japanese works in the performing arts, ancient to modern, to Western audiences, including Nakamura Kanzaburō XVIII in a performance of *Natsu matsuri Naniwa kagami* by the Heisei Nakamura-za theatre company. As of 2015, seventy-three Japanese companies and personalities have appeared at the festival.

Akutagawa and Naoki Prizes Announced

The screening for the 153rd Akutagawa and Naoki Prizes was held on July 16, 2015. The Akutagawa Prize went to Matayoshi Naoki, 35, of the comedy duo Peace for *Hibana* [When Sparks Fly] and to Hada Keisuke, 29, for *Sukurappu ando birudo* [Scrap and Build]. The former originally appeared in the February issue of *Bungakukai* and the latter in the March issue of the same magazine. The Naoki Prize was awarded to Higashiyama Akira, 46, for *Ryū* [Flow], published by Kōdansha.

Matayoshi was born in Osaka. *Hibana* is a novel describing the relationships between a young comedian and an older one whom he respects as a teacher (see p. 6). This is the first time that a winner of the Akutagawa Prize is a comedian. Two million copies of *Hibana* in book form have been printed, the largest number ever, surpassing the 1,316,000 copies printed of Murakami Ryū's 1976 book *Kagiri-naku tōmei ni chikai burū* [trans., *Almost Transparent Blue*].

Hada was born in Tokyo, and had been nominated for the Akutagawa Prize three times previously. *Sukurappu ando birudo* is about a young man looking after his elderly grandfather (see p. 4).

Higashiyama was born in Taipei, his father having come from mainland China. When he was nine they moved to Japan, and he now lives in Fukuoka prefecture. It was his first nomination for the prize. *Ryū* is set mainly in Taipei in the year 1975; a young man searching for the reason his grandfather was killed finds it in one aspect of the Second Sino-Japanese War (see p. 7). The decision to select the work was a rare unanimous one by all nine judges.

Higashino Keigo's Challenge and Evolution over the Three Decades

In 2015, Higashino Keigo, 57, is in his 30th year as a writer. Since 2006, when he won the Naoki Prize for *Yōgisha X no kenshin* (trans., *The Devotion of Suspect X*), his name has always been in the list of the top ten bestselling books of the year in the literary division (according to publish-

ing distributor Tohan Corporation).

From the time of his debut up to and including *Jūji yashiki no piero* [The Clown at the Cross-shaped House] (1989), Higashino wrote conventional mysteries such as solving a locked-room murder case. With *Nemuri no mori* [The Forest of Sleep] published in 1989 he broke with convention by emphasizing writing so that the reader would enjoy the drama unfolding behind the mystery.

It was also in 1989 that Higashino, a graduate from the College of Engineering, Osaka Prefecture University, took up the challenge of writing science mystery. In *Chōjin keikaku* [Bird Man Project] (1989), he portrays the development of the potential abilities of a ski jumper. In 1995 he came up with *Tenkū no hachi* [The Bee in the Sky], in which a nuclear power plant is attacked by terrorists, and via this and other works he began to produce the Galileo series in 1998 with a talented physicist as the protagonist. *The Devotion of Suspect X* is part of the series.

Government-run Database of Manga and Anime

The Agency for Cultural Affairs has launched the "Media Arts Database" (in Japanese), a large-scale database providing information on works in the genres of manga, animation, video games, etc. The database can be searched online by title, author, date of publication at <https://mediaarts-db.jp>

The database lists a total of some 250,000 manga volumes and some 80,000 manga magazine issues published since the early part of the Meiji era, some 9,000 titles of animation film (anime) works released in theaters or aired on television since 1917, as well as some 35,000 titles of games that came out since 1972 including home video games and "Space Invader" and other games played at "game centers."

"Love Live!" Hits a Responsive Chord with Youth

"Love Live!" is a Japanese multimedia project revolving around nine fictional high school girls who organize a school idol group "μ's" (pro-

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Arts and Culture Department
The Japan Foundation
4-4-1 Yotsuya, Shinjuku-ku
Tokyo 160-0004 Japan
Tel: +81-3-5369-6060; Fax: +81-3-5369-6038
Email: booknews@jpf.go.jp

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nounced "Muse") to prevent their Otonogizaka Gakuin school from closing; they promote the school by singing and dancing. It is a story about their growth as individuals through working together to overcome difficulties.

The "Love Live!" project launched in a video game magazine in 2010. Its animated version, which appeared in 2013, ignited the project's popularity. Domestic users who played the smartphone app game exceeded 11 million in July 2015. The movie version, released in June 2015, is also successful; for three consecutive weeks it was at the top of the two-day (Saturday and Sunday) box office ranking (survey by the Kōgyō Tsūshinsha).

The key to the success is media mix strategy. The "Love Live!" project unfolds across multiple media—the smartphone game, the television anime, and the movie—thereby continuing to attract fans. It increases the fan base by exploiting the special features of each medium. How a group of ordinary high school girls grow as individuals by working together to overcome their worries and troubles apparently strikes a responsive chord with young people.

Guardian of Aesthetic Manga

Taniguchi Jirō ponders the rave reviews his manga have received in Europe, especially France. The French government has made him a Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters, Louis Vuitton and Cartier asked him to do artwork to enhance their luxury brand images, and most recently, the Louvre commissioned him to create a tribute manga to the world's largest museum.

"It's hard to imagine why the French love my work so much," Taniguchi says bashfully. "Unlike Japanese, who tend to skim through a comic magazine and throw it in the trash, they read my manga carefully and repeatedly."

Typical Japanese manga are full of colorful characters and engaging storylines, but Taniguchi's recent works display the qualities of tranquil poetry. They take up low-key activities of everyday life and depict them in a highly detailed drawing style commonly associated with French graphic novels, known as *bande dessinée* (BD).

"Those who grew up with BD are accustomed to savoring each scene in a manga and examining its deeper meaning," says Taniguchi. While visiting a suburb of Lyon during the shooting of a French live-action film adapted from his award-winning manga, *Haruka na machi e* [trans. *A Distant Neighborhood*], Taniguchi was caught off guard by an admirer. "I was surprised when a young boy came up to me and started asking me questions—very astute ones—about my work," he says.

The two-volume manga, which won the Alph-Art award for best scenario at the 2003 Angoulême International Comics Festival in France, is not something that teenagers can easily appreciate. It is about a 48-year-old Japanese businessman returning to the town where he grew up and being transported back in time to his youth.

Slipping back in time is Taniguchi's favorite theme. In the Louvre project entitled *Sennen no tsubasa, hyakunen no yume* [Guardians of the Louvre], a Japanese manga artist, reminiscent of Taniguchi himself, visits the museum and meets works of art and artists from various periods. Oscillating between dream and reality, the protagonist finds himself in the midst of the painful history of the museum and those associated with it.

"I like to look back across time, taking readers to places where they can console the spirits of the deceased and find the rays of hope in life," says Taniguchi. "The time-slip manga is nothing new, but I used more than 10 pages to make the time lapse look real, a luxury a manga book can rarely afford," he adds.

Taniguchi devised a protagonist who is sick in bed in a Paris hotel, exhausted from a long promotional tour in Spain. Though feeling dizzy, he bestirs himself to visit the Louvre as he wants to make the most of his five-day stay in Paris. But, suffering from a lingering fever and the absolute solitude resulting from his ignorance of the language, the man slips into a trance in which he meets the Greek goddess Nike, one of the guardians of the museum.

"The Louvre revealed everything to me, from basement to roof, providing guidance and inspiration," says Taniguchi, who was given lodgings at a Paris apartment for a



A compelling scene from Taniguchi Jirō's 136-page full-color, hard-cover graphic novel, *Sennen no tsubasa, hyakunen no yume* [Guardians of the Louvre] (Shōgakukan, 2015). The English version is slated for publication in April 2016.

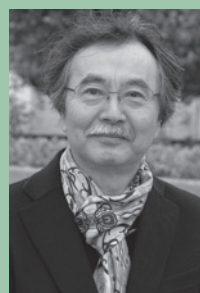
month and a permit to walk around the museum even on Tuesdays, when the museum is closed to the public.

From March 2016, the city of Versailles will join the Taniguchi fanfare, showing some three hundred originals at its museum, Espace Richaud, which is situated very close to the Palace of Versailles. The works to be shown at the former chapel of the royal hospital include *Aruku hito* [trans. *Walking Man*], which was nominated for the Eisner award for best U.S. edition of international material in Japan; *Kamigami no itadaki* [trans. *The Summit of the Gods*], a mountain-climbing adventure; *Kodoku no gurume* [trans. *Solitary Gourmet*]; and an unfinished manga series, *Icare* based on texts by his European idol and sometime colleague, Jean Giraud Mœbius.

In Japan, a deluxe art book carrying sketches and paintings of Taniguchi from his earliest days to the present is slated for publication in the upcoming months. With a global audience in mind, the text of the 250-page-long album will be in English, French and Japanese.

No other living manga artist in Japan has captured the heart of the European public as completely as Taniguchi. And, like the guardians that watch over Taniguchi's Louvre, he himself may well be a guardian of the world of aesthetic manga.

(Kawakatsu Miki, freelance writer)



Taniguchi Jirō

Born in 1947. Received the Tezuka Osamu Cultural Grand Prize for the trilogy *Botchan no jidai* [trans. *Botchan and Its Times*]. His *Haruka na machi e* was awarded the Alph-Art Award for Best Scenario at the 2003 Angoulême International Comics Festival in France. *Kamigami no itadaki* took awards at the 2002 and 2005 festival. He has won prestigious comic awards in Italy and Spain. Taniguchi's work is available in more than 10 languages.