

Historical Adventures of a Post-historical Medium: Japan's Wartime Past as Represented in Manga

Jaqueline Berndt

1. Introduction: History light

Since comics in general and Japanese *manga*¹ in particular enjoy remarkable popularity, it is not surprising that they are attracting increasing attention as educational and research material. This pertains also to discourses of historical revisionism and neo-nationalism within the realm of popular media culture. Especially in regard to Japan with its exceptional proliferation of comics, a substantial influence on historical consciousness is easily assumed. While sociological audience research might be an obvious place to begin, the topic under scrutiny here also requires a consideration of the particular properties of the manga medium. As a scholar concerned with the aesthetics of comics as well as other visual arts, my paper focuses on the kinds of historical representation the manga genre permits. My intention is twofold: to raise awareness of the medium's limited aptitude for conventional enlightenment, and to question the very relevance of specifically historical approaches to the past.

Historians have pointed out that art is inclined to ascribe meaning to time in a way which differs from the historical mode insofar as imagination and fictionalisation are privileged over factual accuracy (Rüsen 2004: 373; Bann 2002). Art's particularity has grown into a general aesthetisation of culture during the last two decades. Depoliticised ahistorical experiences of time as a chain of disconnected moments, and lifestyles without a genuinely historical orientation prevail, facilitated by new visual, post-Gutenberg galaxy media (Rüsen 2004: 379; Angehrn 2004: 399). Contemporary manga series which revisit Japan's militarist past in the form of science fiction-like simulations

¹ Although caricatures, cartoons, and even animated films are occasionally called "manga" in Japanese, in this paper, the term signifies first and foremost graphic novels, or story manga. In contrast, the word "comic books" is too heavily laden with specific cultural references (that is, the style and publication format of American comics) to be a handy generalisation. Historically as well as stylistically, manga are characterised by serialisations in special magazines usually followed by bound book editions (*tankobon*) often consisting of dozens of volumes.

provide telling examples of such a state of *posthistoire* on the level of everyday media culture. I shall briefly introduce two of them.

In 2000, Kawaguchi Kaiji (b. 1948) launched a series titled not “Japan” or “Nippon” but “Jipangu” (Zipangu) which, even after 32 *tankōbon* volumes, has not yet concluded. As is customary for the majority of manga, the narrative commences almost in “real-time” when in the summer of “200X” the Japanese Maritime Self-defence Force casts off on its first foreign mission. On their way to Ecuador, the ships meet an exceptionally strong typhoon which transports one of the destroyers back in time. The name of this time-travelling ship is *Mirai*, meaning future, and thus the future literally intrudes on the past sharing with it the same present on the pages of the manga. Confronted with the “unsinkable” battleship *Yamato*, which sank in 1945, the captain of the *Mirai* finds himself in the lucky position of having a military-history geek (*otaku*) among his crew who is able to identify the place and time as the Battle of Midway (1942). When soon after Kadomatsu Yōsuke, executive officer and second in command, rescues Imperial Navy officer Kusaka Takumi from drowning, a suspense story unfolds revolving around historical facts and the endeavours of the fictitious protagonists to alter the course of history. Rendered in the same pictorial style, past and present are interlocked also in terms of narrative: in volume 5, for example, Kusaka rushes to Kyoto to see Ishiwara Kanji (1889–1949), “the person who pulled the trigger for this war” (vol. 5 [2001], p. 62); meanwhile, crew members of the *Mirai* search for this unfamiliar name on their computer.² History seems to be, first and foremost, about data knowledge.

Whereas “Jipangu” is being serialised in the weekly manga-magazine *Morning*, a similar manga has been appearing in *Evening*, another of Kōdansha’s periodicals, since February 2006: “Fantasy Warship *Yamato*” (*Mugen no gunkan Yamato*). The tagline which adorns the book edition (four volumes so far) reads: “With the support of the Yamato Museum and inspired by Abe Nobuhiro’s original story, the hero of documentary manga, Moto Sōichi is challenging the ‘what if...’ of history!” Otherwise known for comics about leukaemia and bone-marrow banks, or North-Korean kidnappings, Moto’s new story focuses on seventeen-year old Uehara Kurusu who is taken by his father, a TV producer, to the site of the sunken *Yamato*. After mysteriously fainting, he finds himself on board the battleship where he meets the young recruit Kaiba,

2 A recent military history book on Ishiwara Kanji recommends two manga as introductions to his life, Kawaguchi’s “Jipangu” and Motomiya Hiroshi’s “The Country is Burning” (*Kuni ga moeru*, to be discussed in section 3 of this paper). The latter is described as follows: “There are some problems with respect to historical facts, but it allows for an interesting read insofar as you can grasp the tide of history” (Kobayashi 2007: 119).

the only crew-member to whom he is visible. After his return to the present, he puts a photo taken with his mobile phone on the Internet and learns, again thanks to a military-history buff, that he visited the past in late 1941.

What sets Kurusu apart from the protagonists of “Jipangu” is not only his younger age and initial reluctance. Although he soon develops a similar interest in altering the course of history, to him, the war is a “game” (vol. 1, p. 80). Fired by a gamer’s ambition, he is determined to “become the bug that changes history” (vol. 2, p. 136). “After all, history is the greatest scenario ever” (vol. 2, pp. 134–135), his only problem being the (historical) “characters” who are not listening. Mentioned in passing, dialogue lines like the ones quoted here suggest aesthetic self-referentiality which, from a modernist perspective, is supposed to engender critical distance by disclosing the very mechanisms of fiction. Yet, used to such devices, skilled readers of contemporary manga may feel invited to take the narrative lightly rather than critically; to them, such devices signal playfulness – it is only a comic, after all.

The mingling of historical figures with fictitious ones applies to both series, as does the restraint shown towards pictorial experimentation, that is, towards any clouding of narrative or symbolic transparency. But Moto’s manga does not intertwine the different time settings as closely as “Jipangu” – vol. 2 depicts mostly the past in the present tense without Kurusu intruding – and, if Internet discussions are indicative of its overall reception, it is read more as a coming-of-age story than as a war tale. It does, however, provide some glimpses into contemporary historical consciousness.³ The following aspects are especially noteworthy: first, Moto depicts a youth, who abruptly turns from historical ignorance to neo-nationalist identity claims once he lets himself encounter the past;⁴ second, history appears as a matter not of critical investigation but of data collected and preserved by *otaku* experts; and third, the pastness of the past is underplayed in favour of its individual consumption

3 Not in regard to Japan, but to US-American allohistorical depictions, Winthrop-Young (2006: 892) arrives at the following conclusion: “It appears that the evolution of the Third Reich in official history and in alternate history have followed fairly similar paths. [...] Not that the work of ‘alternate’ historians presupposes that of ‘real’ historians; obviously, alternate histories do not profess to copy or compete with historiography.” For a historian’s account of how the war-time past has been revisited in Japan see Conrad (2003).

4 This is reminiscent of the reception of Kobayashi Yoshinori’s (b. 1953) manga which since the late 1990s have been striving to retrospectively assign meaning to the lost war in order to cope with the confusing present (Kobayashi 1998; 2001; 2003). Being the most politically-charged sample from Japan, Kobayashi can only be examined in Japanese. I shall not discuss his recent works in this paper because they are not story manga and, as distinct from the majority of the latter, explicitly political. Nevertheless, I will refer to them occasionally for those readers who are familiar with them.

here and now, which echoes not only manga's, or the manga industry's, general inclination towards reducing otherness, but perhaps also the new consumerist nationalism described by Aaron Gerow as "reducing the nation to an object of consumption and reducing national memory to the recollection of such popular cultural representations of history as children's manga" (Gerow 2000: 87), a stance that is not necessarily disadvantageous for undermining neo-nationalist historical revisionism.

At the risk of seeming too abstract to benefit the examination of historical revisionism in East Asia, below, I will first clarify some of the general properties of comics, a medium which has been characterised as a non- or post-historical one. In light of manga's diversity, I will then point out cultural particularities related to historical indifference before discussing three examples which approach the Manchuria of the 1930s–1940s from different stylistic angles. Realistic representation is a key issue here. Although well aware of the necessity of investigating historical consciousness in manga works which picture a fictitious past,⁵ I will focus on narratives with verifiable historical subject matter in order to make the discussion of manga as cogent as possible. Such a choice might also make it easier to compare prominent comics like Art Spiegelman's tale about the holocaust, *MAUS* (1989/1992; see Frahm 2006), Joe Sacco's committed reportage *Palestine* (1992–1994), and Marjane Satrapi's childhood memories about Iran *Persepolis* (2001–), with some of the few historical manga available in translation, especially Nakazawa Keiji's (b. 1939) semi-autobiographical "Barefoot Gen" (*Hadashi no Gen*, 1973–1987) about a boy's survival in Hiroshima (see Itō Yū/Omote 2006; Sabin 2006; Ōgi 2006; Yoshimura/Fukum 2006), and Tezuka Osamu's (1928–1989) "Adolf" (*Adorifu ni tsugu*, 1983–1985) whose action stretches from Nazi Germany in the late 1930s to the military conflicts between Israel and Palestine in the latter half of the 20th century (see Gildenhard 2006).

5 For example Miyazaki Hayao's "Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind" (*Kaze no tani no Naushikā*, 1982–1994), or to mention a recent example, Itō Yū (artwork) and Saitō Daisuke (scenario), "Imperial Guards" (*Kōkoku no shūgōsha*; serialised in *Ultra Jump* since July 2004). Based on the scenarist's fantasy novel (1998–2005), the latter presents a war tale in which a small island state reminiscent of Meiji Japan resists its almost overwhelming neighbour, an empire which resembles 19th-century Germany as much as Russia; it intermingles dragons and tigers with unpretentious depictions of war.

2. Comics, manga and historical indifference

If history is to be understood as the arranging of incidents in a temporal order which allows for contact with the real and, consequently, meaningful, or to put it differently, as an endeavour which interrelates occurrences with their representation in coherent narratives (see White 1987), comics share some of its structural characteristics, at least pertaining to the deliberate sequentiality and developmental structure found in "graphic novels"⁶ or story manga. What complicates the matter, however, is that comics are, first, not only temporal but also spatial narratives; second, not necessarily obliged to the same "real" as historians;⁷ and third, only rarely self-contained works, being fundamentally open mediators of communication dependent upon relationality, above all their readers' participation. I shall explain these aspects briefly.

Comics are a highly ambiguous medium. They intertwine the verbal (as script) and the pictorial to such an extent that the first assumes qualities of the latter and vice versa. Likewise they interrelate time and space, as is evident, for example, from the disconnected moments materialised in single panels which get connected spatially on the page. Being translations of time into space, comics make readers shift their attention as much between reading and watching within the single panel as between panel and page, in other words, between sequential parts suggesting temporal succession and the (double) page as a whole which offers these parts simultaneously. Whereas in film, the "present" constantly replaces the "past" evoking impressions of development, at least visually, in comics, previous images can much more easily be revisited. Although the single panel gains its *raison d'être* mainly by reaching beyond its frame and often forward, this almost "historical" aspiration to other single moments of the pictorial sequence is levelled out by the very coexistence of these moments on the same page, or as part of the same book. Thus, comics provide preconditions for a peculiar parity between temporality and spatiality.

Attributing temporality to comics' verbal component and spatiality to its pictorial side, while ascribing historical potential to the first, is tempting but too simple. Almost concurrently with Scott McCloud's influential meta-comic

6 Being well aware of the attempts at elevating comics by reference to literature, as was common during the adult comics boom in Europe and America around 1990, I use this term rather for structural signification, that is printed fictions which intertwine the "graphic" (pictorial) and the "novelistic" (linguistic, verbal) for the sake of story-telling.

7 Without directly touching upon manga but certainly applicable to it too, Witek (1989: 13) states: "Comic books in America have not often been used to tell stories about real lives and actual events. The comics tradition for us lies elsewhere: in the realms of fantasy, of wish fulfilment, of projections of power, and in the ritual repetition of generic formulas."

Understanding Comics (1993) which disseminated the definition of “sequential art”, Sabine Gross published her study on cognition, medium and materiality in the reading process. Although she did not touch upon comics and probably therefore has not been noticed by comics experts, her discussion of scriptural and pictorial text is stimulating insofar as it challenges established assumptions. Interrelating cognitive psychology and reception aesthetics, she demonstrates on the one hand how “astonishingly little sequential” (Gross 1994: 15) reading verbal text is, and on the other, how sequential the perception of two-dimensional pictures: “The picture is in its entirety accessible to the eye, but perceptible only through the temporal succession of scanning it [...]” (ibid.: 100). Challenging Susanne Langer, the equations of discourse with succession and of presentation with simultaneity are questioned here. Furthermore, Gross foregrounds the fact that conceptions of verbal text and its allegedly linear reading actually rest upon oral, not written language. According to her, the encoding of script as well as pictures involves both spatial and temporal operations.

Whereas Gross highlights the materiality and iconicity of script on the one hand, she pursues a constructivist discussion of pictures on the other. Her emphasis on “reading” points less to representational contents than to referentiality, that is, the actually “unnatural” relation of pictorial signs to external reality often deliberately overlooked in modern culture. Although pictures appear to be more hetero-referential than script at first sight and, thus, invite mimetic readings, subjecting comics to criteria of mimetic realism runs the risk of underplaying their specific critical potential. Assertions of how certain works represent historical events need to consider that the medium’s semiotic heterogeneity potentially distracts the reader from treating signs constantly as direct gateways to (in our case, historical) reality. After all, unlike photography or film, comics do not depend on an object to be shot. In effect, they escape more easily the kind of realism which rests upon naturalising semiotic arbitrariness by means of highly motivated signs. According to Ole Frahm (2000), reading comics requires as much attention to external references as to the internal intertwining of the signs. Consequently, he characterises comics as a form of parody. Deploying neither the comical nor Linda Hutcheon’s definition of parody as “repetition with critical distance” but rather Judith Butler’s concept of performative identity, Frahm points out that comics parody *structurally*, especially modernist notions of truth and authenticity, or, semiotically speaking, the existence of a factual link between sign and external reality.

The parody of comics, therefore, is to be found in the constellation of, on the one hand, the stabilising of a common object of reference of the signs and, on the other hand, its destabilising character because of the material heterogeneity of the signs. Because of

their own identity of ‘signness’ which refers to nothing but further repetitions, the repetitions both confirm and diffuse one identity. We can read the different repetitions, for the sake of their being different, as confirmations of a common object of reference, or as transgressions of referentiality: a reading of comics always works both ways (Frahm 2000: 189).

As parody, comics embrace ambiguities not only between the scriptural and the pictorial or between the materiality and the representationality of signs, as pointed out by Frahm, but also between silliness and earnestness, exaggeration and authenticity claims, escaping historical reality and confronting it. Thus, comics are structurally capable of raising doubts about conventional binaries and respective certainties. However, in daily life, such an intricate balance is less often called for than the privileging of one side over the other at the expense of ambiguity. Among regular readers, comics are either appreciated as a comforting medium which reduces complexities and as such is especially welcome in times of rapid social change accompanied by an informational overkill. Or they are praised for the opposite, that is, their aesthetic ability to reconcile the semiotically and perceptually incompatible.

Understanding comics as a “parody on the referentiality of signs” (Frahm 2000: 179) helps the reader to reconsider the actual relevance of representational contents. Obviously, it is as much relativised by the general characteristics of the comics medium as by recent cultural change. Whereas in Europe and America autobiographical accounts are highly appreciated, contemporary manga, even idiosyncratic creations, favour the codified, playful and fantastic over the authentic, serious and “natural”. On top of that, many readers today are less attracted by story content than by technical craftsmanship, well known artists whose previous works they like, visual spectacle, intertextual references, and cute characters. Noteworthy in this regard is also the community-building capacity of manga, that is, manga as a shared language which can be easily copied and utilised as a tool for communication among kindred spirits.

Symptomatic of the declining interest in content is, among other things, the fact that words in speech-balloons sometimes do not even need to be literally read anymore since they do not aim at representation, but at indication, for example, of a speaker’s mere presence. Whereas manga has been developing a distinctive symbolic language since the 1940s by codifying almost everything – rendering even pictorial forms into something to be “read” rather than watched – this codification has been losing its symbolising function. For our purposes here, it is sufficient to note that content-oriented readings are not necessarily obsolete but need to be contextualised and relativised. This applies, last but not least, to extractions of political messages from certain manga – by teachers, for example, who have been using Nakazawa Keiji’s “Barefoot Gen”

for peace education, or historians who have been criticising Kobayashi Yoshinori's revisionist accounts of Japan's militarist past. After all, the political quality of specific manga works is not necessarily an issue of contents.⁸

However, more often than not, even content-oriented readings get off the allegedly main subject. Recent inquiries of what people remember about their childhood experience of reading "Barefoot Gen" at school have revealed that memories of spectacular, exciting or horrific images are usually more prevalent than pacifist messages; some even recall their being attracted by Gen's freedom of action under the completely unregulated conditions in Hiroshima after the dropping of the bomb (see Itō Yū/Omote 2006). This deviates, of course, from Nakazawa's initial intentions, but the reception by the general Japanese public has not matched these intentions either. Instead of encouraging a critical pacifism by confronting the reader with recurring horrific images, the horror has become digestible, the intended provocation harmless (Fukuma 2006b: 49). Not once have conservative circles disapproved of this manga's availability in school libraries; nobody deploys it to question the existence of nuclear power stations in earthquake-ridden Japan, or to criticise the recent political attempts at re-militarising the country.

Apparently, "Barefoot Gen" has contributed to an apolitical remembering of World War II. One might suspect the very medium of manga as well as Nakazawa's specific style which was heavily influenced by his series' first publication site, the boys' manga magazine *Shōnen Jump*, to be crucial in that regard. Irrespective of the changes the medium has seen since the 1970s, manga differ from history textbooks insofar as the reader cannot be made to read them. Manga have to captivate in a consumable manner.⁹ This raises the issue of how to narrate the horror of the atomic bomb and keep the reader hooked at the same time (see Yoshimura 2006). Nakazawa's protagonist Gen, although himself affected, acts as an observer and, thus, a mediator who allows for a certain distance towards the horror depicted. Other manga artists, such as Kōno Fumiyo (b. 1968) in her prize-winning short-story "Town of Evening

8 Whereas Penney (2007) tries to refute those historians who do not acknowledge the pluralistic and partially subversive character of manga by applying their very means, that is, clinging to content-analysis as if the content could be separated from entertaining impacts and issues of form, Ōtsuka (2006: 133) points out that the political is also to be found in the stylistic. He mentions *Manga kenkanryū* (2005, 2006, by Yamano Sharin – see Yamanaka in this volume), which deliberately deploys a graphic style popular among manga fans (related to a practice called *moe*) for malevolently attacking the recent "Korean wave" in Japan. For a discussion of pacifist intentions in Japan's post-war media history from a sociological perspective, see Fukuma (2006a).

9 Even Gen has become subject of fan affection as a cute character, see Gen Production (1995): <http://www.kamatatokyo.com/home.html> (20/03/2007).

Calm" (*Yūnagi no machi*),¹⁰ choose to narrate indirectly by focusing on the aftermath of the bomb.

A slightly older example, war tales for boys (*senki manga*) which were familiar to Nakazawa himself and the first generation of his readers, deserve some attention. Peaking in 1964 and disappearing ca. 1970, this genre is usually analysed from a contents-oriented perspective. "Manga war stories in the years 1956–1967 were, then, much in line with the dominant discourse of war [...]. Children were being shown a war that was tamed, miniaturised and thereby rendered fascinating rather than terrifying" (Nadar 2003: 73).

Similarly content-oriented, Penney introduces an example of the "war fantasy formula" which reveals itself to be a "powerful counter-narrative" insofar as it "focuses on the tragedy of war for all sides while still clearly showing the Japanese side as the agent of victimisation" (Penney 2007: 40). According to Itō Kimio, however, the idealised boy protagonists of manga series such as Chiba Tetsuya's (b. 1939) "Hawk in the *Shidenkai* Fighter" (*Shidenkai no taka*)¹¹ were popular among young male readers not so much because of their political meaning but rather because of their protagonists' courage, mobility and capacity to act as morally incorrupt young men against depraved adult Japanese characters (see Masuda et al. 2005: 152–163). In addition, in the early 1970s, readers of girls' comics (*shōjo manga*) caused a shift in their generic realm, from quasi-documentary and autobiographical accounts of civilians' (and, as such, mostly women's) suffering at the end of World War II to romantic dramas taking place against a backdrop of war as an exceptional circumstance permitting the expression of heightened emotions. Although pacifist at first glance, the clean and pretty girl protagonists whose hardships are obviously not so unbearable, soon make it clear that peace education is not at the heart of these stories.¹²

In addition to the above-mentioned aspects which affect the historical impact of certain manga, there are general doubts as to whether comics should be

10 First published in *Weekly Manga Action* in September 2003, it was awarded the Grand Prize in the manga division of the 8th Media Arts Festival 2004 (by Japan's Agency of Cultural Affairs); English translation available (San Francisco: Last Gasp 2007).

11 Serialised in *Shōnen Magazine*, 1963–1965. The protagonist is a young pilot of a "Violet Lightning (Modified Version)" (*Shidenkai*), a type nicknamed "George" by the Americans (see Nadar 2003: 60, footnote no. 3). Coming to acknowledge his enemies as humans, he struggles with growing disbelief in the war, but finally sets off on a kamikaze mission from which he does not return.

12 To Suzuki (2005: 35), Satonaka Machiko's (b. 1948) "Tomorrow Shines" (*Asbita kagryaku*, in *Shūkan Shōjo Friend*, 1972–1973) is representative of the "romanticising" trend, whereas Tomoe Satō's (b. 1932) "The Red Rucksack" (*Akai ryūkkusakku*, in *Ribon*, 1972) is typical of the more realistic war stories in *shōjo manga*.

expected to contribute to historical discourse. Drawing not on comics but on cyborg cinema, Sue Short states, "Popular culture promises, at best, to give narrative and symbolic coherence to popular questions and anxieties. It does not promise structural solution; historical analysis and practice – history, in a word, is supposed to do that" (Short 2005: 178–179).

German film historian Georg Seeßlen (2002), for example, has emphasised that comics cannot escape their "mythological" inclination – as long as they aim at characters with which the reader can empathise – and that they therefore are to be assessed not in relation to an "objective historical truth", but rather to "the availability of symbols and the possibilities for partaking in significations". On top of that, he maintains that there are basically three ways of highlighting history in comics: first, an apparently "objective" kind of narrative which affirms rationality in its attempt at resisting mythologisation; second, a critically "biased" kind which aims at counter-myths, in other words, at resisting one form of mythologisation by means of another; and a third kind which engages in the exploration of historical myths by mobilising the specific devices of comics as an open form of questioning. A manga example of the first of Seeßlen's categories would be Egawa Tatsuya's (b. 1961) recent series about the Russo-Japanese War (*Nichiro sensō monogatari*)¹³, and of the second the above-mentioned "Barefoot Gen",¹⁴ while for the third – best exemplified by *MAUS* – I cannot think of any Japanese example apart from works like Maruo Suehiro's which question historical time by means of an intensified spatialisation. There, graphic perfection brings the speedy progression typical for manga to a halt, and pictorial spaces become laden with signs of "nature" to such an extent that they render the attempt at historical understanding futile (see Berndt 2006).

Another scholar who has disputed comics' historical potential is David Carrier, who claims that comics are a post-historical art form, in regard to both

13 Serialised in *Shūkan Big Comic Spirits* (2001–2006) and afterwards published in 22 *tankōbon* volumes, this manga had just reached the occupation of Port Arthur in the Sino-Japanese War (1895) when it ceased publication in the fall of 2006 due to a diminished interest in its continuation both by the author and the readers.

14 My categorisation differs from Adams' (2003), who foregrounds "Barefoot Gen" as an example of realism next to Spiegelman's *MAUS* and Joe Sacco's *Palestine*. To him, realism is "resistance to assimilation into the myth-making process" (Adams 2003: 241), and he explains, among other things, that "The gratuitous violence of the children depicted throughout the novel ["Barefoot Gen"] was resistant to US sanitising of comics as manifested in the 1950s Comics' Code" (ibid.: 56). A thorough analysis of the realism of "Barefoot Gen" lies beyond the scope of this paper, but already this manga's apolitical functioning in contemporary Japan (mentioned earlier in this section) suggests a new complexity in recollecting the past within comics and without, in other words, a constellation which has outgrown previous oppositions of "myth-making" vs. "realism".

their lack of an autonomous history comparable to that of painting, for example, and their way of story-telling, due to usually serial publication as essentially open-ended narratives. With the help of Arthur Danto's *After the End of Art* (1997) Carrier points to the local (European) and temporal (modern) relativity of his own professional tradition – art history – when he observes, "One of the reasons that comics are difficult to analyse is that the working tools of art historians are designed to deal with historical development. Perhaps comics are thought marginal because in art we expect progress" (Carrier 1997: 114).

At first glance, Carrier's assumption does not seem to apply to contemporary Japanese comics. As magazine series, most manga rely necessarily upon a developmental narrative which, unlike mostly open-ended American comics, typically reaches a final conclusion if it is not abruptly cancelled. On top of that, most of the stories deal with the subject of growing up, in other words, individual development which has been of crucial interest to the target readership of teenagers since the 1970s.¹⁵ But, as mentioned above, teenagers who regularly consume manga exhibit increasing indifference towards the priority of the narrative nowadays.

In view of this situation, Itō Gō published a book titled provocatively *Tezuka is dead*. Challenging established critics who had been complaining that manga had lost its earlier appeal, he argued that the source of this appeal had changed, from dramatic stories to that of game-like settings and cute characters, so-called *kyara*. As distinct from traditional realistic *characters* (*kyarakutā*) these *kyara* lack indexical corporeality as well as psychological depth, and fascinate consumers by means of their non-realistic actuality. Recalling Vilém Flusser, they can be understood as "technical images" which, unlike "traditional images", serve as screens for projections (of various desires) rather than as representations, offering symptoms instead of symbols and, thus, furthering easy consumption while resisting intellectual information, not to mention enlightenment. Admittedly, the manga works chosen for this paper do not fall into the *kyara*-centred category, even if they display resemblances between their stories and games, as through the voice of the protagonist, Kurusu, in "Fantasy Warship Yamato". But the increasing disinterest in conventional narratives functions as a context for intentionally historical manga, especially with regard to young readers.

What manifests itself as an indifference towards reading stories is a historical indifference which applies to a whole range of phenomena within contemporary manga culture, from particular subject matter and ways of story-telling to manga history in general. The globally as well as locally most

15 I have discussed this in Berndt (2004).

successful kind of manga is characterised by stories staged in parallel worlds and fantasy environments, and the majority of manga consumers prefer contemporary works to the often unknown “classics”. Japanese bookstores and “manga cafés” (*manga kissa*, which function partly as comics libraries) mirror what counts most for regular readers. There, the book editions of manga are arranged according to, first, the site of their publication (the respective magazine and/or publisher), and, second, within that category, according to author, but not year. In other words, affiliation to a specific industrial location is given more importance than historical categorisation. Admittedly, thanks to the increasing number of reprints since the 1990s, there are now more old works available than ever before. Yet, at the same time, these old manga are less and less approached historically, not least due to the overwhelming quantity of them. Even dedicated fans are not able to gain a view of the whole anymore, something history has been promising in modern culture. Under such circumstances, it does not come as a surprise that holding onto data prevails over attempts at coherent interpretation – see the appearance of *otaku* experts in the two works introduced in section 1.

The indifference towards both the history of manga and historical narratives within manga, however, is twofold. First, it can be understood as part of a world-wide transformation influenced by globalisation and information technologies. From this perspective, the proliferation of certain – that is, fundamentally post-historical – kinds of manga seems to replace older, modernist forms of narrative comics. Whereas such an assertion is underpinned by a *temporal* approach, there is a *spatial* one, too; the indifference appears to involve Japanese as local peculiarities. Not only recent bestselling series, but even alternative (often short-story) manga show an inclination to “escape” history, although for different reasons. In the works of manga artists who are not at the centre of mainstream production – such as Tsuge Yoshiharu, Hanawa Kazuichi, Maruo Suehiro, Taniguchi Jirō, or Takano Fumiko – history is often only indirectly present as a violent form of progress, a modernisation which has facilitated standardisation and efficiency at the expense of the essentially weak individual. Their rejection of historical storytelling (apparent in both subject matter and stylistic preference for spatialising time) can be regarded as a simple withdrawal from but also as a critical stance towards a society whose elites have been emphasising development in terms of economic growth as their favourite political strategy.

From a comparative perspective, there seems to be a profound cultural difference between comics authors like Art Spiegelman and their Japanese colleagues, as if historical interest were much more deeply rooted in modern European/American culture than among those Japanese comics artists who

are not willing to settle for simple answers to historical and cultural issues. Part of Japan’s modernisation has been a discourse of cultural self-definition which replaced temporal as historical with spatial categories, calling traditionalism “Japaneseness” and modernism “Westernness”. Many alternative manga apparently respond to this discourse by overplaying it to a degree which allows for critical reflection. But although they may exhibit an interest in complexities similar to Spiegelman’s, they often refrain from becoming historically explicit. On the whole, Japan’s manga culture is characterised by a remarkable split. While alternative and short-story manga as well as the recent *kyara*-centred productions demonstrate an indifference, if not refusal to participate in the construction of meaning in a historical sense, many mainstream comics indicate a persistent desire for such narratives, whether underpinned by an awareness of the impossibility of ultimately realising it, or by a belief in the necessity of representations which ease the burden of contemporary complexity by providing clarity and order.¹⁶

3. Favouring realistic representation: three manga about Manchuria

It goes without saying that there are various ways of approaching the past in comics, but what actually attracts the most discursive attention are realistically rendered manga and/or realistic readings of manga. Adams (2003), who dedicated a whole dissertation to this subject, defines realism as a socially engaged, radical practice which disseminates information hitherto unknown and resists distortions by the dominant media. He pursues “realism as politics, a critique of beliefs and values, as opposed to realism understood as the correspondence of depictions to pre-existing ideas about lifelike representations” (Adams 2003: 26). In this regard, he cites “Barefoot Gen” as an example of a politically aware artistic work, a realist historical account whose “cartooniness” he finds reinforces the authenticity and marginal status of its narrator (*ibid.*: 89).

Remarkably, Adams’ discussion suggests that the “critique of beliefs and values” in comics is generally realistic, namely in the sense of a leftist

16 A word about cultural boundaries within manga is called for here. Whereas the application of Euro-American notions of commercial mainstream vs. *auteurisme* to manga risks implying a dichotomy which has not had a comparable significance in modern Japan, recently, the matter has been complicated further by the disintegration of the previously crucial manga genres (such as *shōnen manga*, *seinen manga*, *shōjo manga* etc.). This situation may justify my otherwise disputable generalisations in section two.

demystification. Penney's pursuit of "subversion" and "resistance" is also based on an opposition – that between established views and critical counter-narratives – but it would probably not occur to him to seek an example of the latter in Kobayashi Yoshinori's works. In his highly biased comics essays, Kobayashi claims to speak for the displaced and dispossessed when he recalls the patriotism of his grandfather's generation (see Richter in this volume) while deploying manga-specific exaggeration and graphic-design techniques of pictorial agitation. Apparently, to him and his readers, the reality of Japan's past and present can only be accessed by discarding established versions of historical and political realism, especially liberal and leftist ones. On that score, Kobayashi's work appears to be in line with a dominant characteristic of manga. As Schodt (1988: 132) has put it, "Comics [manga] thus depict a fantasy world outside rigid conventions, where the truly impossible is possible. While comics can convey a message about reality, very few of them depict it realistically."

Although in different ways, Adams and Kobayashi both escape "realism" in the narrow sense of mimesis or indexicality. But as readings of Kobayashi's manga, for example, suggest, both his fans and critical analysts turn a blind eye to the fantastic, the stylised and the caricatured when dealing with historical topics.

Below, I shall introduce three historical manga that are much more realistic than "Barefoot Gen", due in large part to their sites of publication which attract an older readership: Takemiya Keiko's (b. 1950) "The Scent of Crimson" (*Kurenai nihofu*) (1994–1995),¹⁷ Yasuhiko Yoshikazu's (b. 1947) "Rainbow-coloured Trotsky" (*Niji-iro no Torotsuki*) (1990–1996),¹⁸ and Motomiya Hiroshi's (b. 1947) "The Country is Burning" (*Kuni ga moeru*) (2001–2006),¹⁹ the last of which caused a political scandal in autumn 2004 and is therefore probably the best-known (due to its press coverage, at least among Anglophone readers, although not necessarily among Japanese manga fans).

Published by authors of almost the same age, these manga all tell stories about pre-war Manchuria in order to introduce contemporary readers to concealed parts of Japanese history. The very fact that two of them were created in the early 1990s indicates a popular-cultural interest in the subject which

17 First serialised in the (now defunct) monthly *Big Gold*, November 1994 to October 1995; 3 vols. by Shōgakukan.

18 First serialised in *Comic TOM*, first book edition of 8 vols. by Shio shuppansha, 1992–1997.

19 First serialised in *Shūkan Young Jump*, November 2002 to March 2005, with an interruption in fall 2004; 9 vols. by Shūeisha. For a discussion of this manga as a "barometer of political development in contemporary Japan" see Rosenbaum (2007).

paralleled or even preceded the "Manchuria boom" in historiography.²⁰ All three manga have in common not only that they frequently add syllables which make Sino-Japanese characters readable for a non-specialised audience, but also that they insert historical information into the flow of the fictional narrative – explanatory text and footnotes about imperialist vocabulary, verbal quotations, maps, redrawn photos, and collages of newspaper fragments (fig. 1).²¹

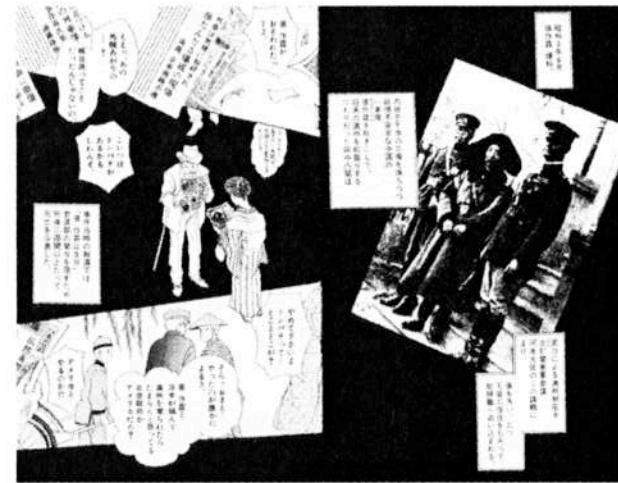


Figure 1

Source: Takemiya, "Kurenai nihofu", vol. 1 (1994), pp. 112–113.

In order to emphasise historical indexicality further, they all deploy photo-realist pictures of cities and landscapes, especially at the beginning of a sequence. Such panoramic "shots" stay with the reader as afterimages which add weight and visual depth to the following character-dominated, often planar panels.²² Last but not least it is noteworthy that the three examples chosen here refrain from rendering ethnic differences visible. Apart from clothes and accessories which were not necessarily reliable signifiers in the multi-ethnic

20 For a survey of respective publications in English see Wilson (2005).

21 The citation of manga pages below is indispensable for my argumentation and confined to smallest possible quantity. All samples are given as double-page spreads in order to both respect the artist's design and the single image's immediate context.

22 Relating 3-D illustrations to 2-D characters allows readers to generate an imaginary plasticity. Although not limited to manga, in video-games, this device serves characters' bodies (by providing detailed still and reduced moving images) rather than pictorial spaces.

region of Manchuria, the reader has to cling to names and other linguistic devices, that is, arbitrary signs, in order to identify nationalities. Thus, the graphic idiom as such facilitates the impression of equality. Whether this works as a visualisation of the ideal underlying the establishment of the Republic of Manchukuo, the concord between different peoples, or alternately, a levelling of otherness (which is dominating contemporary manga in a commercial way), depends on the reader.

Takemiya Keiko, one of *shōjo manga* innovators in the early 1970s, has proved since then that comics for girls are very capable of tackling with issues such as gender, violence and social power even while appearing decorative, romantic and small-scale at first sight. Not without reason was she appointed professor of the then manga department, now college at Kyoto Seika University in 2000. In “The Scent of Crimson” she tells a story about Manchuria in a generically female idiom which, unconventionally, does not settle for romantic love but rather demonstrates its impossibility under the conditions of modern patriarchy – as if the romance which Manchuria embodied for numerous Japanese men was not available to women. Actually autobiographical, although with altered names, the narrative begins in the early 1990s when forty-year old Makiko, the first-person narrator, meets her elegant eighty-year old great-aunt. Acting as the readers’ focaliser, Makiko admits to not knowing enough about the past (vol. 1, p. 22). She soliloquises that she was nine years old when she first learned about her mother’s Manchurian origin, and a high-school student when she was let in on the fact that both her grandmother and aunt had been working over there as *geisha* (fig. 2), that is, in a profession whose reputation was diminished by the anti-prostitution law passed after World War II. Numerous flashbacks introduce these women’s lives in a (interrupted) chronological order, spanning three *tankōbon* volumes.

Volume 1 begins by recalling the end of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905 when Makiko’s grandfather married the owner of a *geisha* house in Manchuria. It depicts the arrival of two girls who are being adopted by this establishment in 1917, and follows their lives – as a married woman harassed by her mother-in-law, and as an unmarried *geisha* who has to live off her patron – until the time of the battle of Nomonhan in 1939. Due to her protagonists’ rather small realm of action, Takemiya refrains from letting well-known political personalities appear as characters, but, as mentioned before, she introduces basic historical facts, for example, quotes from the 1932 “Proclamation of the Establishment of the State” (vol. 1, p. 171). Thus, she points to the political framework of these women’s lives which seems to have been personally negligible for some time. This changes in volume 2, which takes the narrative up to 1946, at which point they leave Manchuria only to experience different

hardships in post-war Japan, as described in volume 3. The last pages of the manga pay respect to people like Makiko’s aunts “who despite losing everything built the world of today, understandably at the cost of psychological repression” (vol. 3, pp. 313–314).



Figure 2

Source: Takemiya, “Kurenai nihofu”, vol. 1 (1994), pp. 90–91.

By deploying the grammar of *shōjo manga* with its constant switching between different time periods, Takemiya succeeds in highlighting the distant past in a way which brings it close to the female reader while making its otherness felt. As distinct from classic *shōjo manga* such as Satonaka’s story about the Japanese withdrawal from Manchuria (see footnote 12), Takemiya does not privilege one subjective perspective but introduces the views of several women in different periods. It is through such devices, not merely because of Makiko’s age, that this manga addresses a readership beyond teenagers.

Whereas Takemiya deliberately chooses to tell a rather “small” story insofar as she re-approaches Japan’s problematic past from the angle of women more or less bound to the domestic realm, Yasuhiko Yoshikazu outlines a much larger historical scale in his series “Rainbow-coloured Trotsky”. Quite exceptionally, Yasuhiko began his career as a character designer for animated TV series and contributed, for example, to the famous “Mobile Suit Gundam” (*Kidō senshi Gandamu*),²³ before he converted to manga,

23 First TV series 1979, directed by Tomino Yoshiyuki. Since 2001, Yasuhiko has been publishing the new manga adaptation “Kidō senshi Gandamu THE ORIGIN” in the magazine *Gun-*

a genre which, according to him, allows for a more personal mode of expression, not least concerning Japan's history. In a panel discussion with Kure Tomofusa on 18 February 2007, organised by the International Manga Museum Kyoto, Yasuhiko explicated his intention to interest young people in political and social issues through historical manga. Not confining himself to modern history, Yasuhiko created, for example, a manga about Japan's alleged first emperor, Jinmu Tennō,²⁴ in which he tried to approach the *Kojiki* mythology with a decidedly historical imagination. Remarkably, he did not first publish this series in a magazine, but rather as a book in order to circumvent the editorial interference that tends to occur in the leading manga magazines.

Subsequently serialised in a rather minor magazine, the story of "Rainbow-coloured Trotsky" revolves around Umbolt, an orphan from Inner Mongolia whose parents, a Japanese secret-service officer and a Mongolian woman, were murdered. After a short flashback to Umbolt as a child catching sight of someone he later learns to have been Trotsky in his parents' hut, the manga's action begins in 1938, when he becomes a student at the newly founded Nation-Building University (*Kenkoku Daigaku*) in Xinjing, the then "New Capital" of Manchukuo established on the site of the city Changchun.²⁵ Today mainly remembered in the context of Aikidō due to Tomiki Kenji and Ueshiba Morihei who taught there (fig. 3), Yasuhiko introduces this university as an astonishingly multicultural place populated by idealist young men of Han Chinese, Korean, Manchu, Japanese, even Russian descent, or to rephrase it, as a rare manifestation of the Concordia Association's initial pan-Asianist vision. Soon Umbolt gets involved in anti-Stalinist Japanese plans to invite Trotsky as guest professor. Taking this setting as his starting point, Yasuhiko unfolds a narrative in which historical and fictitious figures appear on the same stage, exhibiting the same physical presence and psychological depth. Umbolt frequently meets Ishiwara Kanji as well as Tsuji Masanobu (a historical figure who apparently invites frequent caricature, not only in this manga). He also encounters Amakasu Masahiko, and once even Kawashima Yoshiko, but these persons also live a life of their own within the fiction. The reader follows the protagonist on his way through a labyrinth of political interests and power relations between Japanese military, local warlords, Chinese farmers and Russian spies, while also being provided with information of which the protago-

dam Ace (Kadokawa shoten), also available in English translation as "Mobile Suit Gundam: The Origin" (Viz Comics, since 2002).

²⁴ *Jinmu. Kojiki maki no ni* (Jinmu. Kojiki vol. 2), 5 vols., Tokyo: Tokuma shoten, 1992–1995.

²⁵ For an account of this university see Tamanoi (2005). In his study on Manchukuo as being developed not as a colony but as a nation-state, Duara (2003: 65) mentions the slogan *kenkoku* (founding the nation-state) as a crucial expression of Manchukuo's governmentality.

nist is ignorant through sequences in which he does not appear as well as through verbal explanations which often employ the future perfect tense (an eminently historical language stressing the causal link between the fictional present as past of the future and the future as the more immediate past of the reader).



Figure 3

Source: Yasuhiko, "Niji-iro no Torotsukii", vol. 1 (2005), pp. 178–179.

Without over-psychologising, the narrative invites the reader to empathise with Umbolt. Just as his multi-ethnicity and his parents' tragedy make him an outsider, so does his explicit refusal to fight for Japan. Although due to specific circumstances, both aspects recommend him to those contemporary readers who are unfamiliar with that period and place and also with committing themselves to something beyond their personal realm. Similar to highly privatised worldviews of the late 20th century, people are more important to Umbolt than nations. Accordingly, the driving force behind the narrative is a very personal quest: to disclose why his parents were murdered and by whom. In volume 8, shortly before he dies near Nomonhan (without being finally reunited with his pregnant Chinese wife), he finds out that his parents were sacrificed as unwelcome witnesses by those for whom they were working – the commanders of the Guandong Army, including the admired Ishiwara – as they had been involved in underhand dealings related to the failed attempt to establish Mongolia's autonomy from the USSR. Combining an outsider's personalised view with action rendered in strong, dynamic lines, Yasuhiko manages to captivate the reader, turn private views into a critical stance towards the past,

and introduce a historical spectrum which was not common knowledge in the early 1990s and probably is not today either.²⁶ After all, even historians maintain that, “With the importance that post-war historians have placed on the Manchurian Incident of September 1931, Inner Mongolia has often been overlooked” (Boyd 2002: 290).

Yasuhiko’s pictorial style is not exactly idiosyncratic but compared to Motomiya Hiroshi’s it is highly elaborate. The latter’s manga reveal the deployment of a modular principle, especially evident in characters who look the same (and thus reduce pastness) whether performing as contemporary salaryman Kintarō, the protagonist of Motomiya’s most popular series of the same name,²⁷ or as imperial bureaucrat Honda Yūsuke in pre-war Manchuria, the central character of his more recent manga, “The Country is Burning”. Interiors which look too large for the figures placed within them may suggest political tasks too large for the protagonists to cope with (fig. 4), but they also raise doubt about Motomiya’s “authorship”, in the twofold sense of artistic ineptitude and leaving most of the job to assistants²⁸ – neither of which is necessarily detrimental to a manga’s success, as long as the story-telling works, which is certainly the case here.

26 Yamada (2004) discusses nine manga series in regard to their representation of pre-war Manchuria, especially their removal of respective post-war taboos. Referring to the works by Takemiya and Yasuhiko, she points out that the maturation of manga genres for adult readers in the 1980s was crucial for explicitly historical accounts of the past, but she also concedes that such accounts became possible only by a deviation from previous “manga-likeness” (that is, the mere consumption of historical background for the sake of entertainment).

27 Serialised in *Young Jump* since 1994.

28 Whereas each instalment of the manga-magazine series was attributed to “Motomiya Hiroshi AND Third Line, Ltd.” (*Sādo rain kabushiki gaisha*), the *tankōbon* edition credits only Motomiya himself.



Figure 4

Source: Motomiya, “*Kuni ga moeru*”, vol. 6 (2005), pp. 14–15.

“The Country is Burning” portrays the life of fictitious Honda Yūsuke, who is the son of a poor farmer, but who, thanks to his adoption by a rich landlord, has been able to pursue a career as a civil servant in Tokyo. The narrative begins in spring 1927 when Honda has just begun to work in the Ministry of Commerce, and it concludes in 1985 when he dies in Sakata, outliving the narrative’s other two main characters, the equally fictitious Matsumae Yōhei and the historical Ishiwara Kanji. Right at the beginning, the 25-year old Yūsuke is invited to a study group where Ishiwara spectacularly cuts a map of the world in two with his sword, in order to remove Japan from the centre. This anticipates not only the close relationship between him and his young protégé, but also the theme of this manga to be developed later – that it is wrong to regard Japan as the centre of the world, and that “Manchukuo is not an appendage of the Japanese empire” (fig. 5). Yūsuke is sent to the new state for the sake of “wedding agriculture to empire” (Young 1998: 100), and in 1932, he is put in charge of the Japanese settlers. Other characters also in Manchukuo are Yūsuke’s initial rival in love, Yōhei, the son of a wealthy *zaibatsu* entrepreneur who rejects his father’s involvement in Japanese imperialism and chooses the pan-Asianist path by joining Chang Kai-shek; Shōko, who later becomes Yūsuke’s wife; and Yōhei’s Chinese companion Meika, who is close to the “last emperor” Puyi. All of them embody the early ideals underlying the Concordia Association, voicing anti-imperialist as well as

anti-capitalist criticism. The men even try to discard their Japaneseness in order to become truly Manchukuo citizens (vol. 7, p. 113).



Figure 5

Source: *Young Jump*, no. 42 (2004), p. 164.

"Manchukuo is not an appendage of the Japanese empire" is the primary tagline of the advertisement for vol. 7 of the *tankōbon* edition, placed next to the first page of instalment no. 87, the second half of which does not reappear in the book edition due to its depiction of the Nanjing Massacre.

The series consists of a total of 99 instalments (subsequently re-published in book form in 98 chapters). During its first two years, it progressed rather slowly with each *tankōbon* volume depicting about six months of the protagonists' lives. The setting of the characters allowed the introduction of numerous political and economic issues, including the role of the South Manchurian Railroad and the Guandong Army, the living conditions of the Japanese settlers and their conflicts with Chinese residents, and relations between the Kuomintang and the Communists. Besides, since the characters' social position is rather close to the Japanese political elites, the latter's decision-making processes feature at greater length and more directly than in Takemiya's or even Yasuhiko's narratives. Sometimes, these elites' power play is demonstrated through its effects on the characters, for example when Shōko and her baby-son are kidnapped by alleged Chinese bandits but actually used by Amakasu to get photographs for propaganda purposes on the eve of the Manchurian Incident (vol. 5, pp. 28–29). Violence – in an economic sense (the poverty of Chinese farmers), and in a military sense (battles and tortures, for example, of a Korean independence fighter in volume 7) – is depicted in two, often alternated ways: on the one hand, in the style of press photographs redrawn in impersonal lines which show anonymous people from a distance, without recognisable facial expressions, and on the other, in the style of mangaesque exaggeration reminiscent of the metaphorical use of physical

action in "Barefoot Gen" (and its realistic misunderstandings by certain non-Japanese readers).

This stylistics applies also to instalments 87 and 88 which were subjected to a degree of censorship unprecedented in manga.²⁹ When in September 2004, the Nanjing Massacre was depicted, *Young Jump's* editorial department received fierce complaints in regard to this manga's "distortion of history", and felt compelled to interrupt the series temporarily on 13 October.³⁰ The bone of contention was a redrawn photograph of a Japanese soldier and a half-naked woman (fig. 6), the use of which in Iris Chang's book *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* (1997) had already been attacked in manga form by Kobayashi Yoshinori.³¹ Just as he had done three years earlier, so critical voices now accused Motomiya's manga of falsification. Pointing to alterations of the soldier's uniform as well as the exclusion of a third (Chinese) man, apprehension was expressed that the reference to a highly charged but inauthentic photograph – which had not been proven to have been taken in Nanjing after a rape – would have a bad effect on young readers due to its presentation "as if it were the truth". Apart from the fact that the magazine *Young Jump* is not addressed to under-age readers, the concern for such details is as much noteworthy here as the conviction that this manga would have an (undesirable) realist effect. First of all, this raises the question of how Motomiya achieves such a "truthful" impact, usually leaning heavily upon exaggerations, for example by means of stereotypically physicalising emotions, which includes Ishiwara Kanji mischievously poking out his tongue like a little boy and thus appearing amiable (vol. 1, p. 78).

29 Vol. 9 of the revised book edition omits 23 pages completely (the latter half of instalment 87, actually printed in issue No. 42, 16 September, and the whole instalment 88, printed in no. 43, 22 September 2004). For providing me with copies of the original magazine edition, I would like to thank Takeuchi Miho (Yokohama National University) and Kanazawa Kodama (Kawasaki City Museum).

30 See Anonymous 2004, 2005, and for a political contextualisation Rosenbaum (2007).

31 Kobayashi (2001: 344). Shortly after, he cites one panel from Ishizaka Kei (b. 1956), a leftist artist with a Chinese mother. In her manga "The Peaceable" (*An'onsokur*, first serialised in *Young Jump*; book edition vol. 1, 1983–1987; in total 7 vols., Tokyo: Shūeisha), she points to the suffering of the women in Nanjing, in a way similar to Motomiya.



Figure 6

Source: Motomiya, "Kuni ga moeru", in: *Young Jump*, no. 43 (2004), pp. 118–119.

Instalment no. 87 commences with a night-time fight between two Japanese settlers and two Chinese, apparently bandits, during which one of the latter dies by a Japanese sword. The rural swordsman is appalled at having killed for the first time, and to compound his distress, his victim is discovered to be a fifteen-year old boy. In retrospect, the deadly sword and its under-age victim anticipate the following depiction of the Nanjing Massacre. Abstract and therefore left untouched were the two two-page spreads at the beginning, showing explosions, aeroplanes and the name "Nanjing", before presenting The *Asahi* Newspaper's (rearranged) headlines about the occupation of the enemy's capital. Then, the scene switches to Tokyo where the population celebrates the event with a lantern procession, and here the omission sets in. On the next two-page spread, the last one of this instalment, an anonymous off-screen narrator emerges who recollects the indiscriminate killings of civilians, including the technical details of decapitation with the sword (fig. 7). The first page of instalment no. 88 (fig. 8) features General Matsui Iwane at the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal, engaged in a kind of internal monologue voicing his helplessness in Nanjing and his regret, before the date of his execution – 23 December 1948 – is mentioned in the lowest panel. Inconsistent with this

historical fact, however, the reader is instructed at the very bottom of the page, "This work is fiction. There is no relation at all to real persons, groups, events etc."



Figure 7

Source: Motomiya, "Kuni ga moeru", in: *Young Jump*, no. 42 (2004), pp. 182–183.



Figure 8

Source: Motomiya, "Kuni ga moeru", in: *Young Jump*, no. 43 (2004), p. 105.

The next two-page spread takes us back to 13 December 1937, and the anonymous narrator who is temporarily replaced by a (pictorially present) Japanese newspaper journalist witnessing the death march of countless civilians to be gunned down at the port on the pretext of executing disguised Chinese soldiers, as one officer explains. The following double-page switches back to the narrator's voice whose confession about his involvement in the torture of prisoners as well as the rape of Chinese women is accompanied by redrawn photographs, among them the above-mentioned one (fig. 6). Bibliographical references (limited to book titles and publishers) are given at the bottom of the following page, on which finally, two familiar characters appear: Yōhei and his girl-friend Meika (fig. 9). Paralleled by the narrator's last words that "we" ordinary soldiers were ordered to kill, Yōhei bawls at some soldiers to fetch their commander-in-chief Matsui Iwane. With the words "he will never be forgiven as a human being",³² instalment no. 88 comes full circle. In the last page's margin, the readers are encouraged to write to Motomiya about the representation of Japan and the Japanese; the address given is that of the editorial department.



Figure 9

Source: Motomiya, "Kuni ga moeru", in: *Young Jump*, no. 43 (2004), pp. 120–121.

³² *Young Jump*, no. 43 (2004), p. 123.

Motomiya takes sides.³³ But whereas, for example, Kobayashi Yoshinori is in charge of his own journal *Washizummu* (see Richter in this volume) nowadays, Motomiya published his series next to others in a manga magazine which is not committed to a specific political orientation and treats political issues as a means of satisfying its consumers rather than as an end in itself. Although Motomiya's manga was not cancelled after the interruption in October 2004, the years 1938 to 1985 pass by as if shot by a time-lapse camera, occupying only a dozen chapters. Deeply disappointed by the state, Yūsuke does his utmost to help the settlers return to Japan before spending more than a decade in a Siberian camp. When he finally comes home and is approached by a ministry official with recruitment intentions, he knocks the man down expressing once again disgust for Japan's elites. During his last years, he mostly follows political events on TV. After his death, the manga's last two-page spread lists how many people died in World War II.

Remarkably, the accusations of misrepresenting the Nanjing Massacre focused on the adaptation of one single photograph and deliberately refrained from discussing the connectedness of historical events and their representation within the narrative. Such attention to matters of detail is not rare in modern Japan; among other things, it is consistent with a certain notion of realism which Ōtsuka Eiji has traced back to the late 1930s. Just as Ishiwara Kanji calls for rationality in the conduct of war in volume 9 of "The Country is Burning" (p. 59, about 100 pages before the depiction of the Nanjing Massacre), realistic (scientifically-based) representations marked the beginning of a truly modern manga for children, mostly boys, at about the same time. While retaining cartoonish characters and fantasy settings, accuracy in every detail of machinery and bird's eye views of panoramic landscapes, rendered according to the principles of European central perspective, made children experience the war not as something related to ideology or politics, but first and foremost to technical skills. Manga like "Mars Expedition" (*Kasei tanken*, 1940)³⁴ even inserted photographs of unseen landscapes. Thanks to the camera's mediation, young boys obtained the perspective of a pilot or scientist and enjoyed realistic effects without being able to verify these effects' reality. According to Ōtsuka, this photo-realist, accurate and visually distancing mode of representation allowed for a technology-centred fascination unclouded by corporeality,

³³ Mentioned in passing, in August 1973 a manga by him appeared in the wake of Nakazawa Keiji's "I Saw" (*Ore wa mita*) in the autobiographical series (*Mangaka jiden shirizuki*) published by the manga magazine *Bessatsu Shōnen Jump*.

³⁴ By Ōshiro Noboru (artwork) & Asahi Tarō (scenario), not serialised in a magazine but published by Nakamura shoten as part of this publisher's manga book series.

death³⁵ or even politics. As *mecha*, that is, machinery which is not anthropomorphised and, as such, distinct from Disney-like cartooning, the war-time interest in technical details has been inherited by Japan's post-war subculture and handed over to the now so-called *otaku*. In the world of manga (and anime), realism is often limited to a "fetishism of weapons" (Ōtsuka 2006: 132).

By focusing on the relation between parts and wholeness, Ōtsuka provides an explanation of manga's often observed vacillation between realism and (not mythology but) fantasy: "The settings [of the 1960s war tales] were depicted with an intense realism, in striking contrast to the romantic fantasy of the plotline" (Nakar 2003: 61).³⁶ In view of Ōtsuka's discussion, the attacks on "The Country is Burning" appear rather *otaku*-ish insofar as they isolate the panel under scrutiny from its context within the manga narrative and insist solely on technical accuracy. But neo-conservative critics of Motomiya's manga and *otaku* have more in common; their deliberately apolitical stance proves to be highly political, whether unconsciously or not.

"The Country is Burning" does not resist unintended "realistic" readings, especially because its fictional world is structurally too self-contained. Whereas "Rainbow-coloured Trotsky" finally arrives at the reader's present (in 1992–1994) and closes with a picture of Umbolt's grown-up son, Motomiya's manga narrative does not explicitly refer to contemporary Japan. Admittedly, in the magazine, the reader is addressed by extra-diegetic means such as words in the page margins. These relate the protagonists' rather personal story to national issues as does the pictorial and verbal alteration between personalised and generalised modes of representation. Unlike Umbolt, Yūsuke defines himself with respect not only to persons but also to a nation, albeit a utopian one. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that neo-nationalists take this manga at its word.

Their response stems also from the manga's emphasis on story content and empathy which is not distracted by any radicalism of form. The narrative advances smoothly without disturbing flashbacks or anticipations (the above-mentioned Matsui Iwane example being rather exceptional); the characters'

35 Miyamoto (2002) has demonstrated how the destruction of characters' bodies was gradually removed from the long-running manga series *Norakuro* (by Tagawa Suihō, 1931–1941 in *Shōnen Kurabu*), for the sake of both rendering death invisible, even in codified form, and, closely related, increasing diegetic realism.

36 To add another example: "Japanese comics may be among the most violent in the world, but when World War II is portrayed romantically the emphasis is usually on the bonds formed between men under stress; on death, not of the enemy but of Japanese troops (tragic death has a romantic overtone to it); or on the machinery of war — *the planes, ships, and weapons*." (Schodt 1988: 75, emphasis J.B.).

emotional responses and respective facial expressions lack complexity; the specific ambiguity of comics is not deliberately exhausted. Instead of making felt that comics (as spatial and highly self-referential narratives) structurally escape authenticity, and playing this disposition off against political discourses of authenticity, for example, by juxtaposing and layering different notions as well as media in a way which reveals their relativity, "The Country is Burning" opts for an impression of coherence. Its rather conventional aesthetics allows for only one kind of counter-narrative, that is, for countering one sort of nationalism with another, while abstaining from problematising nationalism as such in times of globalisation. Thus, this manga merely illustrates what Duara clarified for Manchukuo as the "regime of authenticity". To Duara's method however — "a spatial (or perhaps hyperlinked) mode of historical writing that presents a challenge to linear histories based mainly upon a causal and evolutionary method" which still considers "causal and linear analysis" (Duara 2003: 4) — there is no equivalent despite this method's closeness to some of the aesthetic properties of comics outlined in section two. Not incidentally has Duara developed his historical method with regard to "a place of paradoxes, where it becomes difficult to disentangle imperialism from nationalism, modernity from tradition, frontier from heartland, and ideals of transcendence from ideologies of boundedness" (Duara 2003: 1). Manga, although fundamentally paradoxical itself, has not yet met that place's challenge.

4. Concluding remarks

In his *On the Concept of History* (1939) Walter Benjamin argued against a narrow notion of historical realism (in the mould of Ranke): "[...] to articulate the past historically does not mean to know that past 'as it really was'. It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger" (Benjamin 2003: 292ff.). With regard to comics, which have mainly served as a medium for expressing dreams and desires, Benjamin's claim can be seen as a call to consider the facts as well as the fantasies revolving around them. But his words raise not just the issue of to what degree historical consciousness is necessarily tied to realism, rational coherence and "readable" messages. They also suggest a challenge to the very significance of historical approaches to the past, and favour the coexistence of incommensurable temporalities and spatialities. Not in regard to manga but to recent animated films, first and foremost from Japan, Thomas Lamarre has pointed out that the descendant of Benjamin's dialectical image, the "multilectical image", relates to the past in an

iconic and fetishist, that is, non-historical, non-indexical way, which nonetheless “does force movement and produce subjects in time” (Lamarre 2006: 177). Here, imagination outweighs documentation, and multilayered coexistence, for example between different modes of representation, takes precedence over a coherence-seeking resolution of alleged inconsistencies.

The examples introduced in sections one and three of this essay suggest that manga should be considered as symptomatic of general cultural transformations, yet not to expect too much of content-oriented readings. Unlike Penney, I do not take entertainment or fantasy for something which has to be put aside in order to access deeper critical meaning. I rather find appearances as well as the intricate balance between surprising readers while meeting their expectations (or vice versa) to be crucial for any pop-cultural form of resistance to established political views. Although I do not wish to diminish Penney’s efforts at foregrounding the “pluralistic character of Japanese war representation” and the existence of “challenging counter-narratives”, from the perspective of comics studies I find such endeavours of decreasing relevance beyond the academic realm, and also methodologically problematic in that he tries to beat those he criticises at their own game. As I have demonstrated above, entertainment is less threatening to the development of critical views of Japan’s wartime past than an exclusive obsession with technical details at the cost of political and historical thinking, the refusal to change perspectives (between past and present, distance and empathy, various persons and social groups), or the neglect of manga’s particular potential to raise doubts about certainties and boundaries. One of these is the notion that the past can be narrated either by historical means *or* fantasy, another that fictional accounts of the past can be either enlightening *or* amusing. While focusing on such oppositions, the very importance of specifically historical recollections is unlikely to enter the field of vision.

In asserting the critical potential of manga, it is vital to explain why certain works are chosen and how “typical” they are. For example, Maruo Suehiro’s comics cannot easily be compared to Matsumoto Reiji’s (due to their different generation, site of publication, relation to genre stylistics, readers’ horizon of expectation etc.). Likewise, an unreflective equation of Kobayashi Yoshinori’s essayistic provocations with Kawaguchi Kaiji’s longwinded narratives risks appearing unfounded, notwithstanding ignorance towards different periods of origin. With respect to the manga series discussed here, I pursued on the one hand their respective reality effects (regarding the representation of historical facts as well as pictorial and narrative particularities of style), and on the other hand, how they captivate and involve their readers. It is feasible and necessary, even for those who confine themselves to textual analysis, to take into account

the fact that readers do not form a homogeneous group, and that authors cannot prevent them from reading “against the grain” however laudable their intentions.

Unlike Kobayashi Yoshinori’s publications, all narratives discussed above exhibit an inclination to recollect ideals and sacrifices which does not indicate a direct influence of globalisation on the choice of subject matter, and which is rarely linked to the Japanese people as such; even if this is the case, as in “The Country is Burning”, it does not lead to a national success-story. Furthermore, these works do not address Japanese citizens as such but, more specifically, manga readers, and not in general, but preconditioned by the respective site of publication and genre. Widely deploying conventional realism, that is, favouring a high degree of semiotic transparency, they risk critical contents staying ineffective. At the same time, these pictorial narratives are certainly capable of opening doors to the past, mediating between memories and experiences. As with historical fiction in literature or film, in manga, too, the historical is, if relevant at all, just one aspect among many, and as such should neither be over- nor under-estimated.

Bibliography

- Adams, Jeff N.P. (2003), *Graphic Novels and Social Realism. Three Case Studies: Keiji Nukagawa's "Barefoot Gen", Art Spiegelman's "Maus" and Joe Sacco's "Palestine"*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Liverpool (UK).
- Angehrn, Emil (2004), “Kultur und Geschichte – Historizität der Kultur und kulturelles Gedächtnis”, in: Jaeger, Friedrich/Liebsch, Burkhard (eds.), pp. 385–400.
- Anonymous (2004), “Nanjing Massacre Manga to be Modified”, in: *The Japan Times Weekly*, 20/11.
- Anonymous (2005), “Le revisionnisme dans les manga”, in: *TOUTENBD*, <http://www.toutenbd.com>, 5 September.
- Bann, Stephen (2002), “Cinema and the rescue of historicity. Change Mummified: Cinema, Historicity, Theory. By Philip Rosen (Review)”, in: *History and Theory*, Theme Issue 41 (December), pp. 124–133.
- Benjamin, Walter (2003), *Selected Writings*, ed. by Eiland, Howard/Jennings, Michael W., Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Berndt, Jaqueline (2004), “The Time of Comics. Reading a Post/Historical Art Form from the Perspective of Manga”, in: *AESTHETICS* (Special Issue: *Looking at Japanese Culture*), Japan Society for Aesthetics (ed.), no. 11, March issue, pp. 13–19.
- (2006), “‘Adult’ Manga: Maruo Suehiro’s historically ambiguous comics”, in: Berndt, Jaqueline/Richter, Steffi (eds.), pp. 107–125.

- /Richter, Steffi (eds.) (2006), *Reading Manga: Local and Global Perceptions of Japanese Comics*, Leipzig: Leipzig University Press.
- Boyd, James (2002), "In Pursuit of an Obsession: Japan in Inner Mongolia in the 1930", in: *Japanese Studies*, vol. 22 no. 3, pp. 289–303.
- Butler, Judith (1990), *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, New York: Routledge.
- Carrier, David (2000), *The Aesthetics of Comics*, University Park, PA: Penn State University Press.
- Chang, Iris (1997), *The Rape of Nanking. The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II*, New York: Basic Books.
- Conrad, Sebastian (2003), "Entangled Memories: Versions of the Past in Germany and Japan, 1945–2001", in: *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 38 no. 1, pp. 85–99.
- Danto, Arthur (1997), *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Duara, Prasenjit (2003), *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern*, Boulder, CO: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Flusser, Vilém (1990), *Die Schrift*, Göttingen: Immatrix (first edition 1987).
- Frahm, Ole (2000), "Weird Signs. Comics as Means of Parody", in: Magnussen, Anne/Christiansen, Hans-Christian (eds.), *Comics & Culture. Analytical and Theoretical Approaches to Comics*, Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press/University of Copenhagen, pp. 177–191.
- (2006), *Genealogie des Holocaust. Art Spiegelmans MAUS – A Survivor's Tale*, München: Wilhelm Fink.
- Fukuma, Yoshiaki (2006a), "Hansen" no media-shi. Sengo Nihon ni okeru seron to yoron no kikekō ("Anti-war" Media History: Public Sentiment and Public Opinion as Rivals in Postwar Japan), Kyoto: Sekai shisōsha.
- (2006b), "Genbaku manga" no media-shi (Media History of "A-bomb Manga"), in: Yoshimura, Kazuma/Fukuma, Yoshiaki (eds.), pp. 10–58.
- Gerow, Aaron (2000), "Consuming Asia, Consuming Japan: The New Neonationalist Revisionism in Japan", in: Hein, Laura/Selden, Mark (eds.), *Censoring History: Citizenship and Memory in Japan, Germany, and the United States*, Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, pp. 74–95.
- Gildenhard, Bettina (2006), "History as Faction: Historiography within Japanese Comics as Seen through Tezuka Osamu's Manga Adolf", in: Berndt, Jaqueline/Richter, Steffi (eds.), pp. 95–106.
- Gross, Sabine (1994), *Lesezeichen. Kognition, Medium und Materialität im Leseprozess*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Hutcheon, Linda (1985), *A Theory of Parody: The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms*, New York: Methuen.
- Itō, Gō (2005), *Tezuka izu deddo. Hirakareta manga hyōgenron e* (Tezuka is Dead. Postmodernist and Modernist Approaches to Japanese Manga), Tokyo: NTT shuppan.
- Itō, Yū/Omote, Tomoyuki (2006), "Barefoot Gen in Japan. An attempt at media history", in: Berndt, Jaqueline/Richter, Steffi (eds.), pp. 21–38.
- Jaeger, Friedrich/Liebsch, Burkhard (eds.) (2004), *Handbuch der Kulturwissenschaften, Bd. 1: Grundlagen und Schlüsselbegriffe*, Stuttgart, Weimar: J. B. Metzler.

- Kobayashi, Daisaku (ed.) (2007), *Ishiwara Kanji Manshūkoku o tsukutta otoko* (Ishiwara Kanji, the Man Who Made Manchukuo), Tokyo: Takarajimasha.
- Lamarre, Thomas (2006), "The First Time as Farce: Digital Animation and the Repetition of Cinema", in: Brown, Steven T. (ed.), *Cinema Anime. Critical Engagements with Japanese Animation*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 161–188.
- Masuda, Nozomi et al. (2005), "Jendā to sensō to manga" (Manga, War and Gender), in: *Manga kenkyū*, vol. 8, pp. 140–169.
- McCloud, Scott (1993), *Understanding Comics, the Invisible Art*, New York: Harper Collins.
- Miyamoto, Hirohito (2002), "Aru inu no hansei. Norakuro to 'sensō'" (The First Half of a Dog's Life: Norakuro and War), in: *Manga kenkyū*, vol. 2, pp. 50–71.
- Nakar, Eldad (2003), "Memories of Pilots and Planes: World War 2 in Japanese Manga 1957–1967", in: *Social Science Japan Journal*, vol. 6 no. 1, pp. 57–76.
- Ōgi, Fusami (2006), "Barefoot Gen and MAUS: Performing the Masculine, Reconstructing the Mother", in: Berndt, Jaqueline/Richter, Steffi (eds.), pp. 77–91.
- Ōtsuka, Eiji (2006), "Tezuka Osamu to Fujita Tsuguharu" (Tezuka Osamu and Fujita Tsuguharu), in: *EUREKA*, June issue, pp. 129–147.
- /Ōsawa Nobuaki (2005), *"Japanimeshon" wa naze yabureru ka* (Why "Japanimation" Will Go Down), Tokyo: Kadokawa.
- Penney, Matthew (2007), "'War Fantasy' and Reality – 'War as Entertainment' and Counter-narratives in Japanese Popular Culture", in: *Japanese Studies*, vol. 27 no. 1, pp. 35–52.
- Rosenbaum, Roman (2007), "Motomiya Hiroshi's *The Country is Burning*", in: *International Journal of Comic Art*, vol. 9 no. 1, pp. 591–609.
- Rüsen, Jörn (2004), "Typen des Zeitbewusstseins – Sinnkonzepte des geschichtlichen Wandels", in: Jaeger, Friedrich/Liebsch, Burkhard (eds.), pp. 365–384.
- Sabin, Roger (2006), "Barefoot Gen in the US and UK: Activist Comic, Graphic Novel, Manga", in: Berndt, Jaqueline/Richter, Steffi (eds.), pp. 39–57.
- Schodt, Frederik L. (1988), *Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics*, Tokyo, New York: Kodansha International (first edition 1983).
- Seeßlen, Georg (2002), "Gerahmter Raum – Gezeichnete Zeit", in: Klein, Michael et al. (eds.), *Ästhetik des Comic*, Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, pp. 71–90.
- Short, Sue (2005), *Cyborg Cinema and Contemporary Subjectivity*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Suzuki, Megumi (2005), "Shōjo manga no naka no 'sensō'. Okinawa, Manshū o butai ni egakareru 'shōjo tachi no sensō taiken'" ("War" in Girls Comics. Representations of "Girls' Wartime Experiences" Set in Okinawa and Manchuria), in: *Manga kenkyū*, vol. 8, pp. 32–36.
- Tamanai, Mariko Asano (2005), "Pan-Asianism in the Diary of Morisaki Minato (1924–1945), and the Suicide of Mishima Yukio (1925–1970)", in: Tamanai, Mariko Asano (ed.), *Crossed Histories: Manchuria in the Age of Empire*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, pp. 184–206.
- White, Hayden (1987), *The Content of the Form. Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*, Baltimore, London: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Wilson, Sandra (2005), "Bridging the Gaps: New Views of Japanese Colonialism, 1931–1945", in: *Japanese Studies*, vol. 25 no. 3, pp. 287–299.
- Witek, Joseph (1989), *Comic Books as History. The Narrative Art of Jack Jackson, Art Spiegelman, and Harvey Pekar*, Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

- Winthrop-Young, Geoffrey (2006), "The Third Reich in Alternate History: Aspects of a Genre-Specific Depiction of Nazi Culture", in: *The Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 39 no. 5, pp. 878–896.
- Yamada, Tomoko (2004), "Manga no naka no 'Manshū' – shijutsu to fikushon sono mishōka no nagare" ('Manchuria' as Depicted in Manga – Historical Facts, Fictions, and the Current of Leaving Things Undigested), in: Tsukuba daigaku bunka hiyō kenkyūkai (ed.), *"Hon'yaku" no ken'iki. Bunka, shokuminchi, aidentiti* (Realms of "Translation": Culture, Colonies, Identity), Tsukuba: Isebu 2004, pp. 573–588.
- Yoshimura, Kazuma (2006), "'Hadashi no Gen' no inpakuto: Manga no zankoku byōsha o meguru hyōgenshi-teki ichikōsatsu" (The Impact of "Barefoot Gen": Some Thoughts from the Perspective of Manga Aesthetics about the Representation of Cruelty in Comics), in: Yoshimura Kazuma/Fukuma Yoshiaki (eds.), pp. 246–293.
- /Fukuma Yoshiaki (eds.) (2006), *"Hadashi no Gen" no ita fūkei: sensō, manga, kioku* (Landscape with Barefoot Gen: War, Manga, and Memory), Matsudo: Azusa shuppansha.
- Young, Louise (1998), "Colonizing Manchuria: The Making of an Imperial Truth", in: Vlastos, Stephen (ed.), *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*, Berkeley, CA et al.: University of California Press, pp. 95–109.

Manga Works

- Chiba, Tetsuya (2006), *Shidenkai no taka* (Hawk in the "Shidenkai" Fighter), 4 vols., Tokyo: Chūō kōron shinsha.
- Egawa, Tatsuya (2001–2006), *Nichiro sensō monogatari* (Tales About the Russo-Japanese War), 22 vols., Tokyo: Shōgakukan Big Spirits Comics.
- Itō, Yū (artwork) and Saitō, Daisuke (scenario) (2005–2007), *Kōkoku no shugosha* (Imperial Guards), 4 vols., Tokyo: Shūeisha (Young Jump Comics Ultra).
- Kawaguchi, Kaiji (2000–to date), *Jipangu* (Zipangu), 32 vols., Tokyo: Kōdansha (Morning KC).
- Kobayashi, Yoshinori (1998, 2001, 2003), *Shin Gōmanzōmu sengen SPECIAL: Sensōron I, II & III* (New Manifest of Arrogantism SPECIAL: On War I, II & III), Tokyo: Gentōsha.
- Moto, Sōichi (2006–to date), *Mugen no gunkan Yamato* (Fantasy Warship Yamato), 4 vols., Tokyo: Kōdansha (Evening KC).
- Motomiya, Hiroshi (2003–2006), *Kuni ga moeru* (The Country is Burning), 9 vols., Tokyo: Shūeisha (Young Jump Comics).
- Nakazawa, Keiji (1980–1993), *Hadashi no Gen* (Barefoot Gen), 10 vols., Tokyo: Chōbunsha.
- Takemiya, Keiko (1994–1995), *Kurenai nihofu* (The Scent of Crimson), 3 vols., Tokyo: Shōgakukan (Big Gold Comics).
- Ōshiro, Noboru (artwork) and Asahi, Tarō (scenario) (2003), *Kasei tanken* (Mars Expedition), ed. by Shimazaki Haruko, Tokyo: Maruzen.
- Yasuhiko, Yoshikazu (2005), *Niji-iro no Torotsukū* (Rainbow-coloured Trotsky), 8 vols., Tokyo: Chūō kōron shinsha
- (1992–1995), *Jinmu. Kojiki maki no ni* (Jinmu. Kojiki Volume 2), 5 vols., Tokyo: Tokuma shoten.

»Global History«
Volume 3

Edited by Sebastian Conrad, Andreas Eckert and Ulrike Freitag

Steffi Richter (ed.)

Contested Views of a Common Past

Revisions of History in Contemporary East Asia

Steffi Richter is professor of Japanese studies at Leipzig University, Germany.

Campus Verlag
Frankfurt/New York