



**Jean-Marie Bouissou**

## Why has manga become a global cultural product?

In the West, manga has become a key part of the cultural accompaniment to economic globalization. No mere side-effect of Japan's economic power, writes Jean-Marie Bouissou, manga is ideally suited to the cultural obsessions of the early twenty-first century.

### Multiple paradoxes

Paradox surrounds the growth of manga in western countries such as France, Italy and the USA since the 1970s, and of genres descended from it: anime (cartoons), television serials and video games. The first paradox is that, whereas western countries have always imagined their culture and values as universal and sought to spread them (if only as cover for their imperial ambitions), Japan has historically been sceptical about sharing its culture with the world. The Shinto religion, for example, is perhaps unique in being strictly "national": the very idea of a "Shintoist" foreigner would strike the Japanese as absurd.

The second paradox is that manga, in the form it has taken since 1945, is shot through with a uniquely Japanese historical experience. It depicts the trauma of a nation opened at gunpoint in 1853 by the "black ships" of Commodore Matthew Perry in 1853, frog-marched into modernity, and dragged into a contest with the West which ended in the holocaust of Hiroshima. It was this nation's children — call them "Generation Tezuka"<sup>1</sup> — who became the first generation of *mangaka* [manga creators]. They had seen their towns flattened by US bombers, their fathers defeated, their emperor stripped of his divinity, and their schoolbooks and the value-system they contained cast into the dustbin of history.

This defeated nation rebuilt itself through self-sacrificing effort and scarcely twenty years later had become the second economic power of the free world. Yet it received neither recognition (the 1980s were the years of "Japan-bashing" in the West), nor the security to which it aspired, before its newly-regained pride was crushed once more by the long crisis of the 1990s. Such a trajectory — unique, convulsive, dramatic, overshadowed by racial discrimination — differs radically from that of the old European powers, or that of young, triumphant America. Hence, it is all the more stunning that its collective imagination has spawned a popular culture capable of attaining "universality".

At the start of the twenty-first century, Japan has become the world's second largest exporter of cultural products. Manga has conquered 45 per cent of the French comic market, and *Shonen Jump* — the most important manga weekly

for Japanese teenagers, whose circulation reached 6 million during the mid-1990s — has begun appearing in an American version. Manga, long considered fit only for children or poorly-educated youths, is starting to seduce a sophisticated generation of French thirty-somethings. This deserves an explanation.

### Portrait of a French baby-boomer comics fan

The French baby-boomer generation who grew up in the 1970s had, like their Japanese counterparts, had been reading comics since childhood. Every week there was *Coeurs vaillants* or *Vaillant* — the former in communist families, the latter in Catholic households like mine. Then, as we moved to middle school, *Tintin* and *Spirou* appeared. *Pilote* took charge of those in high school and college. Then... nothing. However for the maturing baby-boomers in Japan, the manga industry invented *seinen manga* (for those over 20), then manga for workers, particularly white-collar ones, (*salaryman manga*), and ceaselessly churned out new genres: science fiction, horror, gag manga, series about sport, history, politics, economy, society, and — not least — pornography.<sup>2</sup>

In France, as my generation came of age, we had to make do with comics aimed solely at a particular subculture: elitist, male, at once intellectual, schoolboyish, and more or less rebellious. They were built on the zany absurdity of *Concombre masqué*, the frenzied wordplay of *Achille Talon* and the icy eroticism of *Jodelle* and *Pravda*<sup>3</sup> — and were far too sophisticated for the mass market. *Charlie Mensuel* livened up this highbrow cocktail with a dash of *Peanuts*, *Krazy Kat*, and *Andy Capp*, and the work of Italian cartoonists like Buzzelli and Crepax. But if the French censors tolerated *Charlie Mensuel* with his cerebral, sophisticated eroticism for the offspring of the intelligentsia, they were merciless in their attacks on the popular *fumetti* of Elvipress, filled as they were with sultry creations that would have set a mass readership dreaming. *Jungla*, *Jacula*, *Isabella*, *Jolanda de Almaviva*, and their scantily-clad adventurer sisters were barred from display and condemned to under-the-counter obscurity.

I followed *Pilote* to the last issue and *Charlie Mensuel* through university, but long before then my sisters, who through school had fought with me every Wednesday for the copy of *Tintin* and *Spirou*, had stopped finding any series which paid the slightest attention to the concerns of young women. On the other side of the world, the "Year 24 Flower Group"<sup>4</sup> offered to Japanese girls of the same age mangas conceived and drawn by young women for young women. These had an aesthetic of their own, an attention to issues such as rape or unwanted pregnancy, and a female perspective on love and sex. In a highly macho society, where it was hard for girls to imagine a relationship on equal terms with a boy, these artists made good use of devices such as cross-dressing heroines, on the model of the celebrated "Lady Oscar" of Riyoko Ikeda's *Rose of Versailles*,<sup>5</sup> or relationships between teenage boys (*shonen ai*), which let the female reader identify either with the more effeminate or with the more virile. When their readers started working, their publishers invented "OL manga" (office lady manga). When they married they could read "ladies comics", peppered with rosy romanticism and rather crude *shonen ai* — a brief escape from the routine of the housewife.

Young Frenchwomen had meanwhile given up on comics. As for the boys, the highbrow culture of *Pilote* vanished as its readers left university. During the 1980s *Pilote*, *Charlie Mensuel* and *Hara Kiri* / *Charlie Hebdo* declined and

collapsed. Henceforth the publishers concentrated one-size-fits-all series "for children of 7 to 77 years". Preeminent here were the indestructible *Lucky Luke* and *Asterix*: neither fish nor fowl, more than children's comics but not truly grown-up, peppering childish scenarios with a lots of humorous hidden meaning for the sake of their adult audience.

Anybody who has also followed this process will understand immediately why manga was destined to become a global product: it had something to offer audiences diverse in age, sex, and taste. Neither French nor American comics could provide such variety. Where are the French cartoonists capable of reviving a famous sextagenarian doctor abandoned at the time of *Pilote*? One of the sisters who fought with me for *Tintin* as a girl is now passionate for Syuho Sato's *Say Hello to Black Jack*, a gritty view of Japanese hospitals as seen by a young intern.<sup>6</sup> That, at the very least, is a good base to attack the global market.

### The power of an industrial product

This unparalleled diversity is only one of manga's many advantages over the international competition. It also dominates through industrial mass production, which leads to low unit costs. In the 1970s, amidst skyrocketing global demand for children's cartoons on television, Japanese studios were producing episodes of the mega-hit *UFO Robot Grandizer* (known in France as *Goldorak*) for less than 3000 US dollars per minute. Compare that to 5000 US dollars per minute for *Tintin* produced by the French studios, or 4000 US dollars per minute for American series. Japanese studios produced four times as many episodes as their French counterparts (1800 per year against 450).<sup>7</sup> They also had substantial back catalogues: Japanese television had been showing children's anime series since Osamu Tezuka's *Astroboy*,<sup>8</sup> sponsored by the giant chocolate manufacturer Meiji, opened the floodgates in 1963. Private channels, present from the start alongside the single national chain NHK, were encouraged by their sponsors to cater to a young audience and were not subject to any censorship. In Japan, the television market was much richer, freer, more inventive and more active than in France, where viewers were confined to public channels until 1984. In the USA everything was private, but terribly constrained by the self-censorship of McCarthyism and political correctness. The creative freedom allowed to channels, along with abundant money from sponsors and efficient production by the studios, explains why Japan, during the 1970s, was able to invade the global market for children's television.

This first encroachment of Japanese pop culture onto the western market was crucial for what followed. Young fans of *Goldorak* and *Candy Candy* — the two most popular Japanese animated TV series among French youth at the end of the 1970s — grew into adults who would open the French market to manga with the all-conquering translation of *Akira*<sup>9</sup> in 1989–90. These people today form the most sophisticated group of fans. They have enabled French publishers in recent years to bring to market quality series for an educated adult audience. These include the *gekiga* ("dramatic pictures" — comics for adults, most popular between 1950 and 1970), Tezuka's adult series, or the work of the new generation of female cartoonists<sup>10</sup> who emerged during the 1990s and 2000s and whose works are now being translated in French almost as soon as they appear in Japan.

It may be cheaply mass-produced, but manga is also a high-quality consumer good. In this sense, the global success of Shueisha or Kodansha is no different

from that of Toyota or Sony. As a product of exceptional quality, it brings pleasure to the mind by satisfying six fundamental psychological needs: the will to power, the need for accomplishment, for security, for excitement, for escape, and the need to be distinct.<sup>11</sup> Manga's success in that respect is due to the exceptional freedom allowed to it since the end of the Second World War, and increasingly to a number of peculiarities of Japanese culture.

### **(Almost) uncensored exuberance**

Despite its stereotype, Japanese culture is much less repressed than western cultures, which are constrained by Judeo-Christianity and political correctness. It is much less inhibited about sex.<sup>12</sup> Phantoms, superstitions, numerous spirits, monsters (friendly and not), and a healthy dose of the irrational all survive in Japan's collective unconscious, thanks to the country's late entry into modernity, its ignorance of Cartesian philosophy, and its lack of intolerant monotheism. Good-natured exuberance that in France would be considered vulgar, even offensive, is tolerated in Japan; public drunkenness receives little of the opprobrium that it does in the West and television gags often involve farting and burping. The taste for tears and for miserable heroes<sup>13</sup> runs so deep that even Prime Ministers — including Yasuhiro Nakasone (1982–7), Ryutaro Hashimoto (1996–8) and Junichiro Koizumi (2001–5), all otherwise regarded as tough men — have been unashamed to weep in public. All this finds its place in manga, which is consequently much livelier than its French equivalent. The gentle (if a little obsessed) *Titeuf*,<sup>14</sup> favourite of the French playground, cannot compare to a monkey-tailed boy riding a supersonic cloud, trained by a lecherous old man, accompanied by a tiny pig and a miniature monk — a boy who battles countless enemies, some using enormous farts as chemical weapons; who saves the earth and other planets and then saves the earth again, defeating hundreds of villains; who sees his friends die, dies himself, is brought back to life with them, and dies again; who chats with God and finds, among other things, that He's not much to write home about; who becomes father and grand-father without really growing up — and so on for 10 000 pages. That's a summary of Akira Toriyama's convoluted epic *Dragon Ball*, world champion of all categories of manga. This cultural UFO may have horrified western parents and teachers, but it embedded itself deeply in the youthful imagination worldwide. It was not constrained by that rational heritage of the Enlightenment which is alien to young spirits of every nation and to Japanese cartoonists alike.

Manga fantasies were no more limited by editors and authorities — or at least, they were much less constrained than in the West. In America, comics were hobbled by the 1954 Comics Code. In France, the Commission for Supervision and Control of Publications for Children and Youths relentlessly sanitized the world of comics and hindered imports from 1949 onwards, before gradually falling dormant at the end of the 1980s. The Japanese authorities, reacting against the repressive excess of the loathed military regime, did not dare restrict free speech. The government was doubly cautious because mangas were being produced by the most powerful publishing houses.

The push for censorship, beginning in the 1960s, came primarily from the omnipresent parent-teacher associations, but without much success. The case of Go Nagai is typical. Nagai is famous in the West as the creator of *Goldorak* and other giant combat robots, but is better known in Japan for his utterly vulgar, bawdy and transgressive series *Harenchi gakuen*, which began in 1968. This is set in a "shameless school" (the meaning of the title), where, when they aren't getting drunk, organizing crooked gambling, or shitting in the corridors,

the main business of the boys and the professors is lifting up skirts of (often uncomplaining) girls, stripping them stark-naked and sometimes beating them thoroughly — and getting due retribution from the (not so) "weaker sex". For four years the great publisher Shueisha, which printed the series (intended for middle school boys!) in its flagship weekly *Shonen Jump*, withstood the outraged complaints of the PTAs. The authorities never dared intervene. Nagai brought the series to a close in 1972 with a heavily-armed attack on the school by parents and conservatives of all stripes, which led to a general massacre. In France or the USA, this series would have been strangled by censorship from the first issue.

The production of manga structurally favours such playful exuberance. Systematic pre-publication in serial form and the continuing control of popularity via *dokusha kado* — feedback forms inserted into the weeklies, allowing readers to rank each series — obliges *mangaka* to "stick" in the imagination of their readers. This readership is predominantly teenage — and there is no question that teenagers of every country are much more interested in a thousand and one ways of making out and losing their virginity than in the pun-filled adventures of *Asterix*. Besides, constant competition between *mangakas* forced them into an arms race something like McDonald's now-defunct Super Size strategy. Here the customer is offered not extra chips, but extra romance, extra action, extra burlesque, extra supernatural, extra sex — and sometimes all of these at once.

True, the hero of *Dragon Ball* marries and procreates in total harmony with the social order. True, the hero of Toru Fujisawa's international best-seller *Great Teacher Onizuka*,<sup>15</sup> a boorish rascal with a heart of gold, now a teacher, nobly refuses the advances of schoolgirls offering him their virginity, no matter how much he dreams of them. Make no mistake: manga has its morals! *Shonen Jump*'s motto is "Friendship, Effort, Victory". But these slogans are too conventional to truly affect the reader. It is also true, as Sharon Kinsella has shown,<sup>16</sup> that tolerance seems to have declined since the 1980s. Still nervous of openly limiting free speech, the authorities have sub-contracted surveillance of "harmful manga" [*yugai manga*] to associations of elders and matriarchs discretely appointed by the local authorities. Yet this does not stop manga showing much that would never be allowed in a French or an American comic. Nonetheless — worried parents and teachers, take note — all this has done nothing to increase the Japanese crime rate.

### **An aesthetic for global post-industrial youth (1): *Akira*, or dynamic disillusionment**

Market segmentation, product development, efficient production, lack of censorship, treating universal themes, appeal to the teenage mind — these explanations for manga's global success are still too limited. If we consider precisely *when* manga went global, and the themes and characters that succeeded on the western market, we can observe the unsatisfied cultural demand that they were meeting. How did the unique historical experience that has nourished the public imagination of postwar Japan become universal? Or, more precisely, how could it approach "universality" in developed nations in post-industrial capitalism? Here, I will briefly consider three significant themes in the global success of manga at the turn of the century: the apocalypse, science, and the individual.

Modern manga was born in the fire of Hiroshima, which Saya Shiraishi calls its "original experience":<sup>17</sup> the story of a group of young orphaned survivors,

united by friendship and the will to live, who fight in a post-apocalyptic universe with indomitable hope until a new dawn arises. This traumatic formula recurs in myriad forms in manga and anime. In early examples, such as Keiji Nakazawa's *Barefoot Gen* (1972), heroic youths with unbelievable optimism fight with clear consciences to rebuild a better world. When presented abroad in the 1980s, this version achieved little success in a West that had been experiencing a long postwar boom and that considered itself master of the world. More deeply, the Apocalypse, in a Judeo-Christian world, is God's business, not something susceptible to human intervention. Every attempt to translate *Gen* ended in dismal failure.<sup>18</sup>

Over the course of the 1980s, Japanese post-apocalyptic manga changed its character as it fell into the hands of a new generation of mangaka. Born in the 1950s, the last of the baby-boomers could be called "generation Otomo", after the creator of *Akira*. Their experiences were radically different from the previous generation. They had no direct memory of the war, and their parents had avoided talking to them about it. They had seen almost nothing of the social and political upheavals of the 1960s, and the hardships of postwar reconstruction had scarcely affected them. Their most vivid memories of youth were of the movement in 1968, led by their elder brothers, which had ended in total defeat. Whereas in France, the militants of 1968 could believe that they had brought immediate, decisive social change, the much more violent and longer-lasting Japanese movement did not change the status quo, and ended in bloody, self-destructive terrorism. "Generation Otomo" offered a very different interpretation of the "original experience" from that of Nakazawa. In Otomo's version, the post-apocalyptic universe is senseless, the heroes wander in chaos, certainties evaporate, the differences between Good and Evil are murky, and the conclusion offers no hope of a better world.

The archetype of this metamorphosis is Katuhiro Otomo's *Akira*. Kaneda, a pale shadow of the positive heroes of earlier manga, is an escapee from a reformatory wandering in the ruins of Neo-Tokyo. In the face of the apocalypse he obstinately pursues petty personal aims: avenging the deaths of his companions killed by his former-best-friend-turned-mutant Tetsuo, and winning the love of the young Kay. Groups, including Kaneda's own biker gang, are destroyed. Ties of friendship are betrayed. Tetsuo, the homicidal mutant with the power to destroy the planet, is at heart just a poor kid who dreams of snuggling up in the arms of the mother who abandoned him. The immature Kaneda shares this dream at a subconscious level, to judge by his relations with women who under pressure all prove stronger and clearer-headed: young Kay, his Pygmalion Lady Miyako, or Chiyoko, the guerilla mother-figure. All attempts to rebuild the world, such as Lady Miyako's community, fail dismally, and the final challenge to the international community from the "Great Toyko Empire" looks like a teenage romp. To the last page, rebuilding the world remains a mere dream.

*Akira* is the manga that broke open the French comics market to manga. One reason is perhaps accidental: *Akira* was the first complete serial available to former *Goldorak* fans who had grown up and were able to lay out a healthy 1274 Francs to buy all 13 volumes. But the appeal ran deeper: the disillusionment in *Akira* awoke deep echoes among "Generation *Goldorak*" in France. Born in the late 1960s, these children had come of age surrounded by doubt and disappointment. Utopias were over; the communist dream had evaporated; the socialist presidency of Francois Mitterrand (1981-95) had lifted so many hopes only to dash them. The postwar economic boom was a distant memory and globalization was starting to worry Europe. The media and

the literati were in thrall to postmodernism, which meant an end to certainty. Tellingly, *Pilote*, the last of the rebellious, utopian comics magazines of the Sixties generation, finally gave up the ghost in 1989 — just as Glenat, then still a middle-ranked publisher which manga would push to pole position in the following decade, was gearing up to launch *Akira* in France. The baby-boomer comics fans, typified by *Pilote*, had ceded place to "Generation Bof" (generation "whatever").

*Akira* fed this generation's nostalgia for *Goldorak*, but also corresponded to its outlook. The double-punch was unstoppable. Disillusionment in Japan had roots much deeper and more tragic than that of the French youths, and it led to the appearance of the so-called *otaku*, those hardcore manga fans whose demanding passion was not always compatible with a full — even normal — social life. This at times apparently pathological social phenomenon only reconciled itself with society at the start of the twenty-first century. But even if the state of mind of French "Generation Bof" could look like the dreamy escapism of coddled children, disillusionment in the West was destined for greatness, helped along by the death of utopias, the unprecedented threats of environmentalism and terrorism, and a general rebalancing of power at the expense of Old Europe. Manga's dramatization of this offered, beyond the charms of the exotic, the great advantage of not being passive or demoralized. It was even, paradoxically, dynamic. *Akira* is a non-stop whirlwind. Otomo masked meaninglessness and defused hopelessness with relentless action and multiple interpretations (anti-Americanism, anti-militarism, humanitarian-Buddhist religion), and by evoking an incoherent yet fascinating New Age hodge-podge, a strange new dimension in which the mysteries of DNA and humanity mutated into a higher state (never mind that many were red herrings, they filled the reader's mind one after another). The success of various forms of the post-apocalyptic genre brought by manga to the Western market represents not a youth that refused to fall into despair, as with *Barefoot Gen*, but a youth that wanted to be distracted and to reconcile disillusionment and dynamism.

On the French market, the post-apocalyptic genre went from bad to worse, with the success of serials such as *The Legend of Mother Sarah*, drawn by Otomo, followed by *Dragon Head*, *She*, *The Ultimate Weapon*, and *The Drifting Classroom*.<sup>19</sup> In the first of these, even the dream of rebuilding the world has vanished. In the other three, the senselessness of fate and the powerlessness of the characters are total. From here on, nobody knows the causes of the apocalypse, and only death awaits the protagonists. But the success of these serials in France shouldn't make us think that manga fans had been plunged into bottomless despair. Rather, it indicates that they had become connoisseurs able to appreciate the varied flavours of their favourite genre on their own terms.

### **An aesthetic for global post-industrial youth (2): farewell to *Astroboy***

The apocalypse was just one aspect of Hiroshima's legacy for Japanese collective memory, and through it for manga. It was science that had produced the nuclear inferno — science mastered by the Americans better than by the Japanese, science against which all Japanese courage was powerless. From this, the Japanese learnt that only by mastering science could they regain their place in the world. Science thus became the object of a veritable cult in postwar Japan. The adults had failed in war; the future lay in the hands of their children, who, thanks to science, would build it up better than ever.

Tezuka Osamu's *Astroboy* is the series most typical of this mentality — as well as being the most celebrated manga of all time.<sup>20</sup> The little nuclear-powered robot, created in 1952, epitomizes the "scientific youth", whose mission is to establish a just order of the world, with Japan at the forefront. Astro rights wrongs in every corner of the world, including the United States. But the following half-century changed the cult of science just as it had changed the utopia of post-apocalyptic reconstruction. As early as the late 1960s — before than the West — Japan began to grapple with severe pollution. Tezuka himself was disillusioned when he created *Black Jack*, twenty years after *Astroboy* (published in English by Vertical). His new hero, a virtuoso surgeon, works miracles, but society makes him an outlaw. He can save lives and sometimes souls, but the radical future promised to the young readers of *Astroboy* has been buried under human stinginess, greed and meanness. During the 1990s, as manga began its world conquest, science was becoming evil and dangerous. Now series portray the revenge of nature or supernatural forces against pollution and genetic modification, or the manipulation of deadly viruses.<sup>21</sup> Science appears as the mother of all dangers, threatening to destroy or enslave humanity. This theme, which like post-apocalyptic disillusion was all but ignored in French comics, is today earning a large readership abroad, as pollution and global warming dominate headlines worldwide. Science gone bad, dramatized first in Japan, has become a problem for all humanity.

Yet "postscientific" manga, as with the post-apocalyptic genre revisited by Otomo, manages to explore its themes of mad science and world-destroying pollution without sinking into despair. Thus, in *Inugami*, nature's reaction to pollution triggers deadly, extreme plant growth that almost wipes out the Japanese. But when a pair of teenagers merge with the "tree of life" that has caused the disaster, new beings emerge which are able to survive within this increasingly Eden-like environment. Just so in *Parasite*: the cannibal species sent to earth to punish humans for polluting the planet ends up breeding with them. Here we find the same New Age ideological medley evoked by Otomo in the last volumes of *Akira*: humanity ascending to a new dimension; humans endowed with superior DNA; nature's role in the dawn of a new spirituality. Never mind whether this is a mere aesthetic trope — what matters is that the sentiment dovetails with the spirit of western youth at the turn of the twenty-first century: a yearning to re-enchant a world stripped of the certainties of Reason, drained of the structure brought by modernity's utopian Master Narratives.

The world of manga, far better than that of comics, has been able to tune itself into the zeitgeist, to meet this demand for new meaning, however hare-brained. The premodern Japanese world of *kami*, *oni*, *yokai* and *yure* (spirits, demons, monsters, and ghosts) was spared the ravages of intolerant monotheism that destroyed their Western counterparts. Only later was it shrivelled by modernity, which reached Japan only in the mid-nineteenth century. Modern Japan thus retains what Anne Allison has called an "animist unconscious".<sup>22</sup> This permeates manga, requiring only the opportunity to graft itself to New Age themes. Here too there is a paradoxical reversal. The features which most radically distinguish Japan from the West (lack of monotheism, lateness of modernity) are precisely those which have given it pride of place in the "postmodern universalism" that today competes with the Enlightenment rationality of the eighteenth century. In Japanese manga, no rationality denies that a pair of teenagers can fuse with a "tree of life"; that a peasant can meet *yokai* on every street corner; that the gods of a village will arise to rout the gangsters and the corrupt politicians polluting it; that an honest traveller might find himself in a village all of whose inhabitants (headless women included)

make gleeful love to all comers; and that Artificial Intelligences may liberate themselves to conduct their own affairs.<sup>23</sup> This joyous, mad folly cannot re-enchant a world emptied of meaning by post-industrial capitalism, but at least it can respond to latent demand. The final paradox is that manga represents a cultural product that generates considerable profits for this same post-industrial capitalism.

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- <sup>1</sup> Osamu Tezuka (1928–1989), nicknamed *Manga no kamisama* [the god of manga]. The appearance of his *Shin Takarajima* [New Treasure Island] in 1947 is traditionally considered the beginning of contemporary manga.
- <sup>2</sup> Salaryman manga: *Division Chief Kosaku Shima*, by Kenshi Hirokane (Kodansha, 2000). Politics: *Eagle. The Making of an Asian–American President*, by Kaiji Kawaguchi (VIZ Media, 2000). Economy: *Japan Inc.*, by Shotaro Ishinomori (Lanchester Press, 1996). Society: *Naniwa kinyudo* [Making money the Osaka's way], by Yuji Aoki (no English translation).
- <sup>3</sup> *Le Concombre masqué*; created in 1965 by Mandryka. *Achille Talon*, created in 1963 by Greg. *Les Aventures de Jodelle* (1966) and *Pravda la survireuse* (1968) by Guy Pellaert.
- <sup>4</sup> 24 of the Showa period = 1947. The group included Riyoko Ikeda, Yumiko Igarashi and Ryoko Yamagishi (all born in 1947), Moto Hagio (born in 1949) and Yumiko Oshima (born in 1950).
- <sup>5</sup> No English translation.
- <sup>6</sup> No English translation.
- <sup>7</sup> Anne Baron–Carvais, *La Bande dessinée*, Paris, PUF, 1985, 108.
- <sup>8</sup> English translation: Dark Horse.
- <sup>9</sup> By Katsuhiro Otomo. The first manga series (13 vol.) to be completely translated into French. English translation: Dark Horse, 2000.
- <sup>10</sup> Mari Okazaki, Moyoco Anno, Erica Sakurazawa, Yayoi Ogawa, Kiriko Nananan, Yamaji Ebine, Q–ta Minami.
- <sup>11</sup> Jean–Marie Bouissou, "Japan's growing cultural power. The case of manga in France" in Jaqueline Berndt (ed.), *Reading Manga from Multiple Perspectives*, Leipzig, Leipzig Universitätsverlag 2006.
- <sup>12</sup> See Nicholas Bornoff, *Pink Samurai. An Erotic Exploration of Japanese Society*, Grafton Books, 1991; Joan Sinclair, *Pink Box. Inside Japan's Sex Clubs*, Harry Abrams, 2006.
- <sup>13</sup> See Ian Buruma, *A Japanese Mirror, Heroes and Villains of Japanese Culture*, Jonathan Cape Ltd., 1984.
- <sup>14</sup> By Zep, Glénat, 11 volumes since 1993.
- <sup>15</sup> English translation: TokyoPop.
- <sup>16</sup> Sharon Kinsella, *Adult Manga. Culture and Power in Contemporary Japanese Society*, RoutledgeCurzon, 2000.
- <sup>17</sup> Saya Shiraishi, "Doraemon goes to Asia", in T. Shiraishi and P. Katzenstein (eds.), *Network Power, Japan and Asia*, Cornell University Press, 1997.
- <sup>18</sup> A volunteer translation, by the American pacifist group Project Gen, was abandoned after only two volumes, as were attempts in France by Les Humanoides Associés (1983) and in Britain by Penguin Books (1989). The French translation was finally completed by Vertige Graphics (2003–7), and a complete English translation is under way.
- <sup>19</sup> Respectively by Takumi Nagayasu (art), Minetaro Mochizuki, Shin Takahashi and Kazuo Umezu. English translation: Dark Horse, VIZ Media, Carlsen Verlag and TokyoPop.
- <sup>20</sup> Based on citation count made by the author across 16 French, Japanese and American encyclopedias and academic works about manga. *Astroboy* was the most-cited series.
- <sup>21</sup> Revenge of the nature: Masaya Hokazone, *Inugami*; Itoshi Iwaaki ; *Parasite*. Genetic modifications: Fuyumi Soryo, *ES: Eternal Sabbath*; Deadly viruses: Hiroki Endo, *Eden*; Naoki Urasawa, *20th Century Boys*. All are best sellers in France, but only *ES* and *Eden* have been translated into English, by Del Rey and Dark Horse respectively.
- <sup>22</sup> Anne Allison, *Millennial Monsters, Japanese Toys and the Global Imagination*. University of California Press, 2006.
- <sup>23</sup> Respectively in Shigeru Mizuki, *NonNonBa*; Jinpachi Mori and Kanji Yoshikai, *Tajirakao, l'esprit de mon village*; Yoji Fukuyama, *Voyage à Uroshima*; Shirow Masamune, *Ghost in the Shell* (English translation: Dark Horse).

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