Lesson Plan

"Manga Vs. Comics"

Instructor: Matthew Barbee
Class: Intermediate Integrated English
Skills: Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking
Required Time: 4 class periods (90 min/class)

Student Learning Objectives:	Materials:
Students will . . . 1. Read and understand an authentic English text. 2. Use spoken and written English to respond to an authentic English text. 3. Identify and recall specific details after reading an authentic English text by answering comprehension and critical thinking questions. 4. Acquire new English vocabulary. 5. Express ideas and opinions in English using conversation and discussion skills. 6. Use question and answer skills to identify a picture. 7. Use written English to respond to a written prompt during a timed-writing exercise.	• Reading article (pdf) • Reading worksheet • "Who Am I" cards • Role-playing and storyboard worksheets • Writing Portfolios • Student score and comment sheets

Day 1

TIME	TASK	PROCEDURE
Homework		Teacher: • Pass out the "Manga Vs. Comics" worksheet. Students: • Answer the three questions in Section A before reading. • Read the article "The Rich Variety of Japanese Manga" and following instructions in Section B. • Use context clues in the article and a dictionary to define vocabulary in English and translate to Japanese in Section C. • After reading, answer questions in Sections D and E, comprehension check (1-6) and critical thinking (1-3) on worksheet.

Day 2

TIME	TASK	PROCEDURE
10	**Warm-up:** "Who Am I" Activity	Teacher: • Give each student a card. Students: • Tape cards to back or hold on their foreheads. Students do not look at their own card. • All students walk around the class trying to guess who is on their card. • Students may only ask yes or no questions in English. After they ask one student, they must move to the next student and ask another question. • When a student can correctly guess their card, they may sit down. Teacher Follow-up: • Ask individual students if they like their character. • Ask about the characters' manga or comic. • Ask about each characters' motivation or goal in their manga or comic story, what do they do, etc. • Ask if they could be any character in any manga or comic, what would they be and why.
20	**Review Homework**	Students: • In groups, students check their answers to sections A, B, C, and D with other students. • One lead student from each group goes to the board to write their group's answers for their assigned section or questions. • For Section E, each student takes a turn discussing their answers with their group. Teacher: • Review the answers on the board, make corrections or discuss where necessary.

10	**Introduction to Role-Play Presentations**	Teacher: • Hand out role-play worksheets. • Assign or let students choose new groups. • Introduce role-playing presentations and the guidelines. • Review the scoring rubric.
50	**Group Work**	Students: • Form new groups and begin planning their role-playing scenes. The may assign tasks such as writers, storyboard artists, character roles, director, etc. • Plan their scenes, choose vocabulary. • Begin writing or storyboarding their scene
Homework		Finish writing and story-boarding role-play scenes. Write comprehension questions to ask other students after each presentation.

Day 3

TIME	TASK	PROCEDURE
15	**Warm-up:** Writing Portfolio	**Prompt:** *If you were a super hero, what power would you have and why? What would your do with your power? What power would you not want to have and why? Finally, give yourself a new, super hero name.*
5	**Post Writing Activity**	Students: • Each student shares what they wrote with their group. • Each group chooses one lead student to share with the class. Lead students rotate for each writing activity.
20	**Group Work**	Students: • Review their scripts and storyboards • Plan the staging for their scenes. • Read through their scenes. Teacher: • Check scripts. • Walk around and answer questions, help where necessary.
50	**Group Practice**	Students: • Separate around the class and practice staging and speaking. Teacher: • Walk around and answer questions, help where necessary. • Sit with each group, listen to their scenes, give feedback on content and pronunciation.
Homework		Practice and memorize role-play scenes.

Day 4

TIME	TASK	PROCEDURE
10	**Warm-up:** Tongue Twister Activity	*He **th**rew **th**ree free **th**rows.* *The **th**ree **th**ick **th**ieves **th**rew **the** fea**th**er **the**re.* *Red lea**th**er, yellow lea**th**er.* *Betty loves **the** velvet vest best.* *She sells seashells by **the** seashore.*
70	**Role-Play Presentations**	Students: • 5-minutes for final rehearsal. • Each group comes to the front of the class to perform their scene. • During each scene, other students give feedback using student score sheets.
10	**Post Presentation Activity**	Students: • Finish student score sheets. • Discuss scores, student to student oral feedback. Teacher: • Give overall oral feedback. • Official teacher scores and written comments to be given following week.

Manga vs. Comics

A. Before You Read

Answer the following questions before reading the article "The Rich Variety of Japanese Manga."

1. Do you like to read Japanese manga or Western comics? Why or why not?

2. What manga and/or comics do you know? List as many as you can think of off the top of your head.

3. a. What are the differences between Japanese manga and Western comic books? b. Which do you prefer and why?

B. Reading for Fluency and Context

Read the article "The Rich Variety of Japanese Manga" twice. Follow the directions below.

- As you read the first time, circle any words that you don't know, but don't stop to use a dictionary. Just keep reading and try to understand the meaning of the text.
- When you finish, look up the words that you didn't know and make notes in the text.
- Read the article a second time. Match the following main idea sentences to each paragraph.

Paragraph

1. _____   a. A major theme in manga focusses on how to live.

2. _____   b. The themes found in manga and literature are very different.

3. _____   c. The history of rental comics is responsible for a widening fan-base.

4. _____   d. Japanese manga are longer than Western comics which provides some benefits.

5. _____   e. A new, perhaps more negative, genre of manga is becoming popular.

6. _____   f. Japanese manga have many themes which originated from rental comics.

7. _____   g. Japanese manga have a different style that Western comics, especially their length.

C. New Vocabulary

After reading the article, use a dictionary to define the following words in English. Also, make a note of the Japanese translation.

1. convoluted _____

2. nonconformist _____

3. protagonist _____

4. pseudo- _____

5. boom _____

6. bottleneck _____

7. subjugation _____

8. foe _____

9. transcend _____

10. introverted _____

D. Comprehension Check

Answer the following questions before reading the article "The Rich Variety of Japanese Manga."

1. How is the style of Bande Dessinée comics different from Japanese manga?

2. What is the Bildungsroman style of storytelling? Name two books or movies that are examples of this style.

3. What are two benefits to the long length of Japanese manga?

4. How did the tradition of rental comics lead to many different themes and genres of manga?

5. How is manga different from Japanese literature?

6. In what ways is the Sekai-kei style of manga different from earlier styles of manga?

E. Critical Thinking

Answer the following questions before reading the article "The Rich Variety of Japanese Manga."

1. In your opinion, what are the (a.) positive and (b.) negative effects of reading manga or comics?

   a.

   b.

2. Kyoto Seika University has an entire department and library dedicated to manga? Do you think this is a waste of resources or beneficial to Japan? Please give two reasons for why you think so.

3. If you were the author of a new manga series for today's teenagers, what would it be about? Think about the title, theme, story, and main character. Be prepared to share your answer with the class.

Manga/Comic

ROLE-PLAYING

Name _____

Class _____

Work with your group to create a 4~5 minute role-playing scene. Each group will consist of 4 to 5 members. Be sure to follow the role-play guidelines below and be creative.

Role-play Guidelines:

1. ***Choose a scenario.*** *Choose a well-known manga or comic to base your role-playing scene and characters on. You can choose either a Japanese manga or a Western comic for your inspiration. Each scene should feature an argument where two sides disagree about something. Why are they having the argument, what are the two sides, how do they resolve the argument?*
2. ***Use 10 vocabulary words.*** *Select 10 vocabulary words from the next vocabulary test to use in your scene. Don't let your words limit your scene. Be creative and choose words that your characters may actually use. You may change tense, amount, or add/subtract suffixes.*
3. ***Prepare a script and a story board.*** *Use the attached worksheet to write your script and make a story board. Please make copies or attach extra paper as needed. Each group must submit 1 copy of their full script and story board before their performance.*
4. ***Prepare 3 listening comprehension questions.*** *When your group finishes performing your scene, you will ask the audience 3 listening-comprehension questions about your scene. They can be multiple choice, short-answer, or True-False.*
5. ***Use good delivery.***
   - *Use a loud voice.*
   - *Speak slowly.*
   - *Don't turn your back to the audience.*
   - *M**emorize your scene.***
   - *Use gestures, emotion, or body language to make your message clear.*
6. ***Practice.*** *Meet with your group outside of class and practice together. The best role-plays are well rehearsed. Use the practice checklist.*

■ **Group Members:**

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

■ **Scenario:**

■ **Vocabulary used:**

Planning:

Manga or Comic used:

Story: What is the conflict? What is the outcome?

Characters: Protagonist? Others?

Notes:

Manga/Comic Role-Play
SCRIPT (4~5 minutes)

■ **Title:**

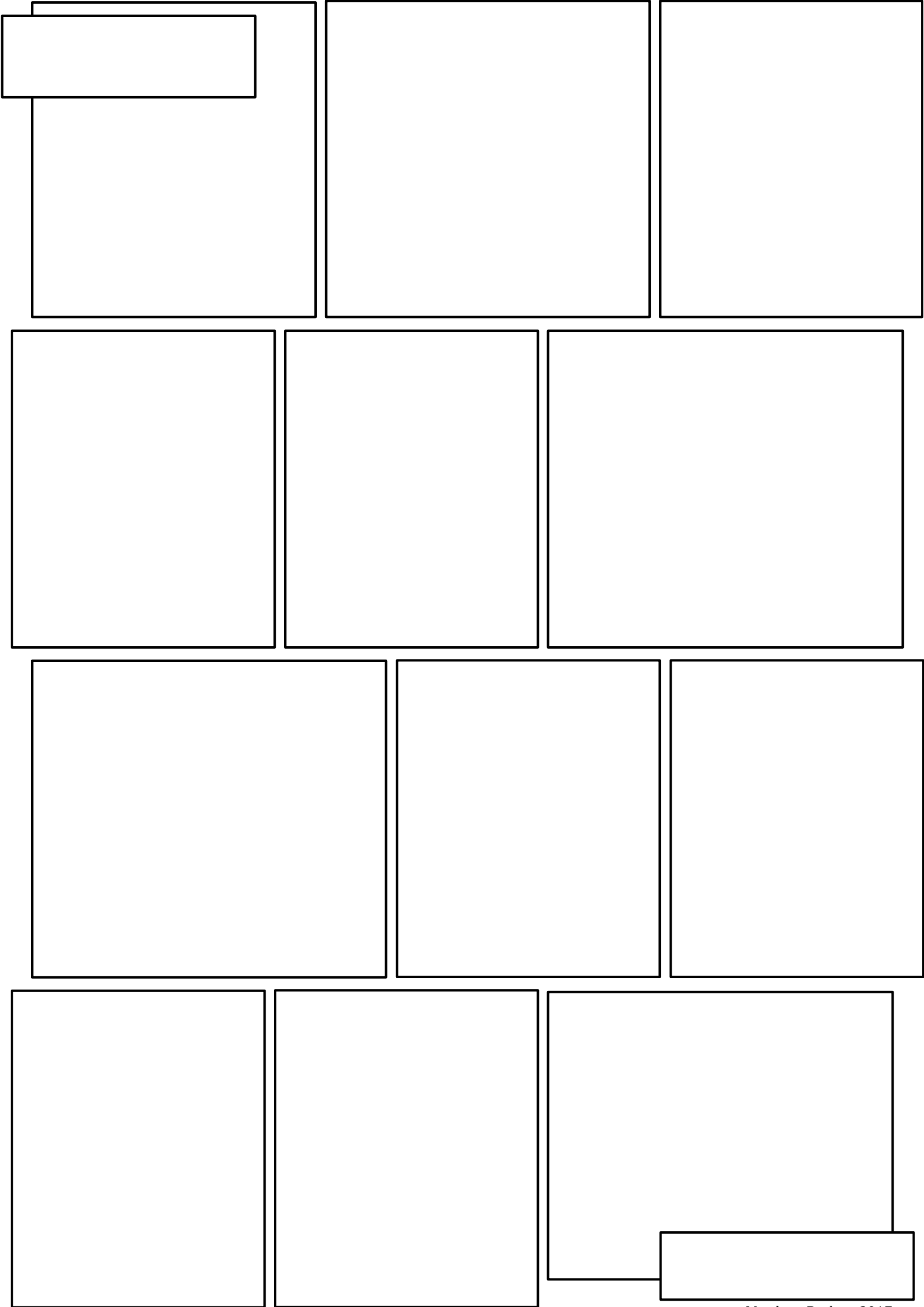■ **Comprehension Questions:**

1.

2.

3.

Practice Checklist:

☐ *Use 6 phrases or 10 keywords.*

☐ *Speak loud, slow, and clear.*

☐ *No backs to audience.*

☐ *Scene is 4 - 5 minutes long.*

☐ *3 Questions are prepared.*

☐ *We practiced together several times before class.*

☐ *Scene is MEMORIZED!*

(Please submit 1 script per group.)

Goku	Monkey D. Luffy	Light Yagami
Dragon Ball Z	One Piece	Death Note
Naruto Uzumaki	**Korra**	**Pikachu**
Naruto	Avatar	Pokemon
Doraemon	**Spiderman**	**Batman**
Doraemon	The Amazing Spiderman	Batman
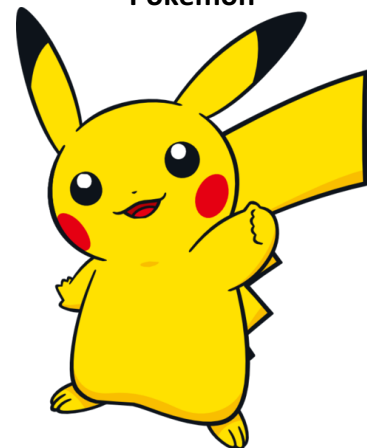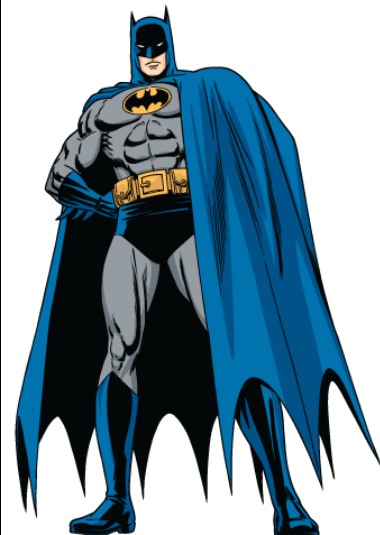
PHOTOS: SEIYA KAWAMOTO

Japanese *manga* has become a huge medium, packed with an astounding richness. How did it develop? We asked critic Shohei Chujo.

Japanese *manga* has a number of features that set it apart from, say, the *Bande Dessinée* comic tradition of Belgium and France, or the whole genre of American comics. Perhaps the most important of these is the great length of the stories in Japanese *manga*. *Manga* are based on weekly serials—as long as a particular *manga* remains popular the series can continue more or less indefinitely, unfolding into a long and convoluted storyline. The majority of *Bande Dessinée* comics are published in standard-size volumes of around 60 pages, with each volume a complete story in itself. There is thus a limit to the number of frames that can be used, and the story cannot be stretched out. Stylistically speaking, the pictorial completeness of each frame means that this type of comic is not well suited to depicting continuous movement.

The long, drawn-out style of the stories found in Japanese *manga* is particularly well suited to the *Bildungsroman* style of stories which depict the moral or psychological development of an often nonconformist protagonist. The length of Japanese *manga* has also become important for telling extended stories of protagonists who take on a series of powerful foes one after another while aiming for the top, as if in some kind of tournament-style game. This is a popular theme, of which Akira Toriyama's *Dragon Ball* is a perfect example. Another point relating to the length of Japanese *manga* is that the longer the sto-

ries, the more the artists are able to weave in details, enabling them to showcase their vast range of abilities. Furthermore, the technique of connecting frames both horizontally and vertically allows artists to create a pseudo-sense of motion.

Another fascinating thing about Japanese *manga* is the incredible variety of themes. There are *manga* dedicated to sports, games such as mahjong, and even *manga* aimed specifically at girls. The roots of this diversity can be traced back to the tremendous boom in rental comics after World War II. These comics were drawn specially for the commercial lending libraries that made a living by lending out popular novels and comics for a nominal fee. A new genre of comic subsequently developed—dramatic comics for adults that were drawn with more realism and with more of an edge than children's comics. At the time, the most popular comics were those drawn by the likes of Osamu Tezuka for a young readership. In the case of Tezuka, though, the subject matter was often limited because a lot of his comics were read by children. Compared to these, rental comics depicted themes of love—without shying away from sex—and violence, or sketched the lives of people on the margins of society, for an adult readership. These comics thus became a sort of melting pot with an extraordinarily anarchic power of expression, into which went anything to satisfy the appetites of the readers.

The world of rental comics became more radical still with the publication of the experimental comic magazine *Garo* in 1964, and it has since developed into the present-day style of *manga* aimed at young people. Even Tezuka was inspired to adopt the techniques of the dramatic comic style into his work. Looking

back, it is now abundantly clear that the power of the rental comics was an important trend in *manga*, and that without this power *manga* would sooner or later have ended up as no more than media for kids.

The all-encompassing variety of *manga* is completely different to literature. Japanese literature since the Meiji period (1868–1912) has mainly focused on issues facing modern-day individuals, and is gradually entering a bottleneck. *Manga*, on the other hand, goes further than the inner problems of the individual, dealing with all manner of desires. Through its response to the varied desires of its diverse readership, *manga* has spawned a vast array of sub-genres.

However, one of the central features supporting the development of Japanese *manga* has always been the way it earnestly poses the question of how we should live our lives. This is obvious in the way Takehiko Inoue's *Vagabond* has become such a huge hit. *Vagabond* is a series based on half of the lifetime of the historical figure Miyamoto Musashi (1584–1645), a master swordsman who lived during the Edo period (1603–1867). Part of the attraction of this series is, of course, the powerful portrayal of a violent world, but more than this there are unmistakable themes of human existence to be found within the work, such as the subjugation of a foe stronger than oneself, or the fact that life

itself transcends those who live it. I think it is plain to see that the existence of this firm foundation to *manga* means that no matter how many *manga* come out depicting worlds with broken-down values, the fundamentals of *manga* will remain unswayed. This is very important for children—my feeling is that when they think seriously about the weighty topic of what life is, only *manga*, and not contemporary literature, addresses this question.

Recently, a whole new genre of *manga*, known as *sekai-kei*, or "world *manga*," has gained enormous popularity. The main feature of this genre is storylines in which a protagonist who normally leads an introverted, private life turns up as the central figure in some giant mission to save the world as we know it. As an example, this "world" feature can be found in abundance in the popular *manga*, *Death Note*. The *manga* is totally split between the sections depicting the reality of everyday life at home and at school, and the protagonist's ability to change the future of the world through use of the Death Note. Society, which one would expect to link the general concept of the world with issues of the individual, is completely abstracted. You could probably say that this is a rather dangerous sign. There are some extremely negative elements to the *manga*—it has its fair share of violence, destruction and murder, and rather than being presented as things that go hand-in-hand with pain, they are totally game-like images just for consumption. This is completely different to the *Bildungsroman* style I mentioned earlier, and I believe it heralds the start of a whole new wave of Japanese *manga*. ◼

SHOHEI CHUJO is a professor of French Literature at Gakushuin University, and a critic of *manga*, film, literature and jazz.