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NARRATING HISTORY IN THE MANGA 'JUDO NO REKISHI-KANO JIGORO NO SHOGAI' (1987) ANDREAS NIEHAUS

DOI

10.18573/mas.58

KEYWORDS

Kano Jigoro, Kodokan, judo, manga, biography, historiography, identities

CITATION

Niehaus, Andreas. 2018. 'Narrating history in the manga 'Jūdō no rekishi – Kanō Jigorō no shōgai' (1987)'. *Martial Arts Studies* 6, 52-61. doi.org/10.18573/mas.58

ABSTRACT

Kano Jigoro (1860-1938), the founder of Kodokan Judo, is one of the most prominent representatives of modern Japanese martial arts. In this article, I will focus on the biographical manga 'Judo no rekishi – Kano Jigoro no shogai' ('The History of Judo – The Life of Kano Jigoro') (1987). By analysing the techniques that are applied on the textual as well as pictorial level to create authenticity and historical facticity, we will get a better understanding of the strategies by which collective ideas and norms within a specific historical and cultural context are created in judo. Biography is a hybrid genre that unfolds its effect and its power in the space between fiction and non-fiction, telling a life story by applying literary techniques. Accordingly, historians as well as sociologists have questioned the value of biographies for understanding the past, criticizing the genre for its 'artificial creation of meaning' [Bourdieu 1986] and reducing the biographer to a fiction writer. With biographies becoming a success in popular culture, the genre finally seems to have comfortably settled in the land of fiction, far beyond the reach and – maybe more importantly – the interest of historians. I argue, however, that it is premature for historians to discard or disregard biographies in popular media.



Figure 1

INTRODUCTION

January 1891. On a steamer in the Indian Ocean. A young, small Japanese man demonstrates the art of judo to fellow travellers and is challenged to a fight by a huge Russian officer who questions the effectiveness of the demonstrated techniques. Although his Western fellow travellers fear the worst, he succeeds in throwing his Russian opponent on the ground and even protects the officer's head when he hits the planks [see Figure 1]. The audience is duly impressed; the young man explains that he used Japanese judo. Asked for his name by the defeated Russian, he answers: 'Kano Jigoro'. Accompanied by the bystanders' applause, both shake hands in friendship. When arriving in Yokohama, news about the incident had by then been published in the newspapers. Kano's disciples await him at the pier. Kano (dressed in a suit), followed by his determined followers (dressed in 'traditional clothes'), leave the harbour to spread Kodokan judo throughout the world [see Figure 2].¹

This 'mini-narrative' introduces Kano Jigoro (1860-1938) in the manga 'Judo no rekishi – Kano Jigoro no shogai' ('The History of Judo – The Life of Kano Jigoro') [1987, 6 volumes],² a manga which, the wrapper claims, is a work of history: 'The main objective of these volumes under the general editorship of the Kodokan Judo World Headquarters is to draw the history of judo based on historical facts (*shijitsu*)'. Although controversial in European educational environments [see Dong 2012], using graphic novels as educational material for history classes in schools or public awareness campaigns is rather common in Japan. They have been used in food education (*shokuiku*), public manners (*Edo shigusa*), and most recently as manuals to inform citizens of what to do in the case of a missile attack by North Korea (Hokkaido Prefecture).

Historical manga are generally produced with the help of historians and are often based on solid historical research. Graphic novels, through their entertaining character, certainly make history accessible to a broad(er) public and, by inspiring imagination, increase the understanding of a historical period or figure.³ The manga analyzed in this article certainly aims to educate and entertain equally. As the



Figure 2

1 The story is told again, but in more detail and according to the chronology of narrated time, in Volume 3 of **Judo no rekishi – Kano Jigoro no shogai**. See Kodokan [1987: 140-169].

2 The drawings were made by Sakuma Masaaki, who is also known for his art in the **Horror Comics** series and more prominently for his adult manga in the **Manga special** series as well as the manga **Kyabakura Uranikki**. The text was written by Hashimoto Ichiro (1936-) who joined Asahi Sonorama Publishing and started the **Sankomikkusu** series. Later, he worked for Shonen Mangasha and was responsible for the **Yangu komikkusu** series.

3 For theoretical approaches to comics/graphic novels, see e.g. Varnum, Robin, and Gibbons [2002]; MacWilliams [2008]; Perper and Cornog [2011]; and Dong [2012].

banderol states: 'While enjoying one can learn about the history of judo (*Tanoshimi nagara judo no rekishi ga manaberu*)'. However, approaching institutional history via the biography of its founder – especially when under the editorship of that institution – raises questions concerning modes of historical (re)presentation and objectivity.

What do we expect from a biography? To quote Hermione Lee: 'Whether we think of biography as more like history or more like fiction, what we want from it is a vivid sense of the person' [Lee 2005: 1-2]. Manga use multiple pictorial and textual techniques that can be applied to increase an emotive and empathic sentiment. They are, I argue, an ideal medium to create this 'vivid sense of a person' – to create an image of a person and the historical setting in which the person lived. In this sense, they are an extension or expansion of a purely textual biography.

Biography in general constitutes a hybrid genre, one that unfolds its effects and its power in the space between fiction and non-fiction. A biography tells a life story by applying literary techniques, i.e. by creating a narrative, (pre)structuring and – retrospectively – giving meaning to life in and for a preconceived context. Historians as well as sociologists have therefore questioned the value of biographies for understanding the past, criticizing the genre for its 'artificial creation of meaning' [Bourdieu 1986/2004: 300].

With biographies becoming a success in popular culture (e.g. in films, TV series, manga, etc.), the genre finally seems to have comfortably settled in the category of fiction. Yet, fiction and history share common characteristics, and postmodern literary theory has focused on their proximity vis-à-vis verisimilitude, linguistic constructs, and intertextuality [Hutcheon 1988: 105]. Though important to acknowledge, I will go no further in this direction of how to define or demarcate fictional and non-fictional texts; rather, for this article, I will explore questions of whether the text is intended to be factual. This question is closely connected to the issue of functionality: In what ways and how far is the text used to construct and contribute to a collective identity,⁴ be it on the level of an institution or the nation? Furthermore, we have to look at the narrative techniques (the signals) that are used on the textual and pictorial levels, designed to make the recipient read the text as fictional or factual, plausible or implausible. In this regard, the cultural and historical contexts in which certain conventions signal facticity or fictionality must also be considered.

By focusing on the biographical manga 'Judo no rekishi – Kano Jigoro no shogai' [1987], I will show how this manga-biography is

functionalized in order to contribute to an institutional identity by creating a grand narrative. I will do so by analysing the strategies applied on the textual as well as pictorial levels to create plausibility, authenticity, and facticity.

FUNCTIONALIZING BIOGRAPHY AND INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY

'Judo no rekishi – Kano Jigoro no shogai' is designed as an all-ages manga aimed at a broad (male) readership. The 'word from the publisher' (*kanko kotoba*) on the inside of the wrapper attests: 'These authentic volumes have a high educational value and we hope that they will be widely read by primary school children as well as grownups'.⁵ The aesthetics of the drawings in general conform to those in the popular genre of boys' manga (*shonen manga*) and especially sport manga. However, a characteristic of Japanese manga is that, although they may be aimed at a certain age group, they are also read by older readers. As the educational level of the intended readership is extremely diverse, reading aids (*furigana*) are attached to basically all *kanji* appearing in the text in order to make the text comprehensible both for a younger readership and for readers not acquainted with specialist language within judo circles.

As the title 'Judo no rekishi – Kano Jigoro no shogai' already suggests, the manga is more than a biography of the founder of judo. It equally transmits an official history of the Kodokan – its philosophy, its ideology, and its technical repertoire. In this sense, it is what social historians often see in biographies: a manifestation of collective entities [Depkat 2014: 42]. It is, to rephrase, a form of social communication through which the Kodokan educates and transmits knowledge, as well as an official version of what the essence of their organization is in a specific historical situation. However, as Foucault argued, knowledge is established through control and exclusion. So, the manga discussed in this article also mirror and (re)produce mechanisms of power [Foucault 1969/1981: 74].

For a life to be remembered, there must be a reason for remembering; it must be significant to a group, a community, a nation, etc. In this sense, biography is not only an instrument for observing the world but also an instrument for or act of social self-description through which knowledge and identity are constructed [Depkat 2014: 47]. Furthermore, manifestations of identities are expressed at special

4 On collective identity, narrator and experience, see Benjamin [1977: 438-465].

5 The wrapper also mentions a readership not familiar with the biography of Kano Jigoro and the history of judo: 'nowadays, especially young people – unexpectedly – probably don't know this judo history'.

moments in institutional histories, whether episodes of crisis and transition or commemoration. Commemorations are moments in which a group's identity is reconfirmed, strengthened, and publicly communicated through ceremonies, speeches, and publications. The biographical Kano manga was put on the market by the publisher Hon no tomosha in 1987, just one year before the 50th anniversary of the death of Kano Jigoro.⁶ In 1988, the Kodokan also made Kano Jigoro's writings accessible to a broader readership with the 14-volume *Kano Jigoro Taiki*, a collection of his writings published by the same publisher.⁷ The Kodokan used this commemorative moment to readjust its own image as guardian of a legacy and to actively (re)write its own history via several other publications, thus communicating with the public as well as with itself.

The 1980s also mark a period in which Japanese Kodokan judo was increasingly criticized for its sportification and for overemphasizing competition, i.e. for allegedly losing its link to Japanese history and tradition. Competition as well as the conflict between the West and Japan, perceived as 'modernity' vs. 'tradition', are crucial narratives in the volumes of 'Judo no rekishi - Kano Jigoro no shogai'. Competition is placed firmly within the educational orientation of Kano's judo and established as a tool and a means for the development of the individual, of society, and of nation. This link is already established in the initial narrative on the steamer: The European bystanders, watching Kano's victory, shout in admiration: 'This is Japanese judo'. And one traveller remarks: 'I heard about it. It is the spirit of the way of the samurai!' [Kodokan 1987, vol. 1: 11; see also vol. 3: 167]. Judo is here, first of all, linked to 'the spirit of the way of the samurai' (*bushido no seishin*) and therefore to the ideals of the premodern Japanese warrior class, which in the modern discourse – inside and outside Japan – serves as discursive point of reference for understanding the characteristics of the Japanese nation as well as reference to ideas of a pure and 'original' Japaneseness.⁸

Secondly, however, judo as 'traditional' martial art proves also to be of value for modern times. A Japanese reader with a basic knowledge of their own history will also make a link to the forced opening of Japanese harbours and the unequal treaties with foreign nations during the second half of the 19th century, all of which was experienced as national humiliation and resulted in national 'inferiority' trauma. The

fact that Kano's opponent was a Russian officer even strengthens the narrative, as all of this can be linked also to the Japanese-Russo War of 1904/05, which was won by the Japanese Navy.

This episode is also a core narrative in other Kano biographies and appears in the autobiographical writings of Kano himself. In his autobiographical text, published in the journal *Sakk(y)o* [8.7] in 1927, Kano also plays with the East-West dichotomy. He stresses that he earned the respect and admiration of his Western fellow travellers not only because of his superior technique but because he protected his opponent, thereby displaying his virtue and superior morality, all of which is – as he also underlines – the result of his judo training. Judo, in autobiography, biography, and manga, is thus presented as a way to not only strengthen the individual but also the body and the spirit of the nation. The last panel in the initial steamer episode places Kano in front of his followers with sun rays to their back (thereby making links to the Japanese wartime flag), moving towards the reader with determination and a mission – very much in the (super) hero style of the Power Rangers or Kamen Riders – ready to spread judo throughout the world and strengthen the Japanese nation [see Figure 2].

The blueprint of Kano's life is thus narratively functionalized to offer a way to regain pride and respect on a national level through the 'Japanese art of judo'. This mission to serve the development of the nation is already implanted into the young Kano Jigoro by Katsu Kaishu (1823-1899), a well-known statesman of the Meiji period (1868-1912) and representative of modern Japan. He is introduced in the manga on page 20 with explanatory notes concerning his life and achievements. It is Katsu who not only recognizes the young Kano as special but who implants a mission into the child: 'Boy, in the future world learning will be important. Study hard. Become an outstanding person, that is useful for the nation (*kokka yuyo*)'⁹ [Kodokan 1987, vol. 1: 29].

This episode is actually the first time Kano is introduced into the main storyline. He is still a small child, named Shinosuke, and he is drawn *kodomomuke*-style (intended for children). The scene is situated in the private residence of the Kano family. The child is standing outside in the garden facing Kano's father and his guest Katsu Kaishu sitting on the inside with open sliding doors. The reader/viewer thus takes the perspective of the two grownups and an aureole places the child in the centre of attention. The round egg-like shape of the child's head, in

6 The series is, since 2013, also available as Kindle edition and downloadable files.

7 The Kodokan to this day controls access to Kano Jigoro's diaries, and researchers are often denied access. Kodokan thus has the power to control the discourse.

8 For the samurai and bushido as a modern 'invented tradition', see Friday [1994].

9 This quote very much resembles the famous line by William S. Clark, an American educator in Meiji Japan: 'Boys be ambitious'. Also, in later episodes, Katsu Kaishu will be shown as a mentor who is following the development of Kano and judo closely. For example, in volume 4, 87, Katsu attends the opening ceremony for the new Kodokan and Kano juku buildings in the district Koishikawa Shimotomisaka-cho in January 1893. The same episode also mentions a calligraphy by Katsu given to Kano as present [Kodokan 1987, vol. 4: 89].

contrast to the other characters, is like a plain surface onto which life still has to be written. Stressing his closeness to, or encounters with, important historical figures (including US president Ulysses Grant; Shibusawa Eiichi, an influential Japanese industrialist; Togo Heihachiro, the admiral who defeated the Russian fleet in 1905; and then-prime minister Wakatsuki Reijiro) has the effect of giving authority and meaning both to Kano as an individual and also to his institution.

BIOGRAPHY AS HISTORICAL WRITING?

Biography unfolds its effects and power on the thin border between fiction and non-fiction. Yet, like Michael Benton, I argue that: 'Neither history nor literature [offer] a ready-made foundational theory even though biography's "literariness" – what Hayden White calls the "consciously fashioned verbal performance" of historical discourse – is self-evident in every "Life" one reads' [Benton 2005: 2]. As mentioned, a biography tells a 'life story' by applying literary techniques; this is why historians as well as sociologists have questioned the value of biographies for understanding the past and have even 'reduced' the biographer to the category of a purely fiction writer. This is exemplified by Paul Ricoeur, who states: 'By narrating a life of which I am not the author as to existence, I make myself its coauthor as to its meaning' [Ricoeur 1995: 162].

But the question of how far 'structural models from literature are responsible for the interpretations' [Benton 2005: 119] nevertheless remains. Moreover, is it always the case that the interpretations made and the narratives told by biographers do not – *cannot* – correspond to the real and actually lived lives of their subjects? Are they *only* the fictional constructions of biographers in the interest of what White would refer to as 'emplotment'?

For the sake of better understanding the nature of biography, it is necessary to understand the central concept of 'narrative'.¹⁰ Analysing narratives as both cultural techniques of memory and the presentation of identity before addressing questions of a biography's functionality

10 As Hayden White has argued: 'We might say, then, that a narrative is any literary form in which the voice of the narrator rises against a background of ignorance, incomprehension, or forgetfulness to direct our attention, purposefully, to a segment of experience organized in a particular way. In realistic narrative representation – as against mythic or legendary representations – the narrator is both present and absent: present as a means of communication, absent as a means of communication that is transparent and does not block access to the segment of experience whose organization it is his purpose to reveal to us. It is the presence of an identifiable narrative voice that permits us to credit such "realistic" representations as a history and a certain kind of novel as "objective" accounts' [White 2010 [1972]: 119-120].

in memory and identity politics will enable a better understanding of collective ideas and norms within a specific historical and cultural context. I will argue that narratives in biographies are not simply about true or false and in that they are actually like historiography, which 'asks us to consider questions of knowledge, ethics and power' [Gelenn 2010].

In order to make a life story plausible, and also to justify the institution, there has to be a 'narrative unity of human life' [MacIntyre 1985: 186-187]. This must be realized on ontological, normative, and historical social dimensions; choices must be made as to which episodes in a life to tell of and of how to structure a life to create a coherent narrative. The biographer thus selects what might be called mini-narratives – or 'the cells that give evidence of the subject's lived existence' [Benton 2005: 17]; to become a life-story, 'they need to be fashioned into the "whole body", to become parts of a coherently organised narrative imposed upon them' [Benton 2005: 17].

Biography, therefore, is not 'unearthing': it is constructing, based on the known facts of a life and according to historical context. Biography is, furthermore, establishing plausibility with regard to the pursued narratives and discourses as well as the intended functionalization and on the basis of the structural, formal, and aesthetic means of narration. The following sections will exemplify which narrative techniques are used in our case study to reach this level of plausibility.



Figure 3

NARRATIVES OF VIRTUE AND HEROISM

The initial episodes we have already discussed established the central narrative: Kano Jigoro, through his training in jujutsu, has become a superior individual in terms body, spirit, and intellect, and his life is ultimately spent in service to the Japanese nation. This creates a semantic field in which Kano, Kodokan judo, and nation become one.

Stories of the virtue and heroism of founding figures and their followers are crucial for underlining the validity of a school's ideology, as well as its body techniques, as they help to strengthen institutional identity. Kano's physical as well as intellectual and moral virtues (as embodiments of his educational conception of judo) are established through our opening story: Kano protects his opponent's head, even during the fight. This is then continued in the first chapter. Yet, despite (or maybe *because of*) this narrative of excellence, the main character has to struggle in order to become what he is meant to be. He has to go on a journey or a quest. There can be no heroism without hardship.

Kano's struggle is embedded in a *yowamushi*-narrative (weaking-narrative), expressed in the first volume of the manga series by the young Kano being repeatedly bullied at school. This bullying creates Kano's wish to learn martial arts. This special episode is, in the story, presented by a personified narrator: the journalist and critic Miyake Setsurei. He is introduced as a journalist, both in the text and in a more detailed explanatory footnote, who went to the Kaisei Gakko (Kaisei Academy, founded 1871 in Tokyo) together with Kano [Kodokan 1987, vol. 1: 42].

Miyake tells the story of Kano being bullied at school, the setting of which is an interview. The reader takes part in an interview in which a contemporary eye-witness (with a high level of credibility), dressed formally and seated in a chair, retrospectively remembers the young Kano. On the double-page in which a new storyline is introduced, only the face of the young Kano is drawn. The face and body of the interviewing journalist is black, as are the faces and bodies of the bullies [see Figure 3]. Blacking out faces in manga is a common technique, and is applied to serve different aims, such as creating anonymity, censorship, or the effect of flashback. The blacking out of Miyake can be categorized as a visual voice-over, in order to emphasize the documentary style and historical authenticity of this passage.¹¹ The Miyake narrator comes back about 15 pages later, concluding Chapter One. By then, Kano is no longer drawn as a young boy, without distinct physicality, but rather as a boy with an athletic and muscular body. This

11 The same technique is applied in Volume 5, when the well-known journalist Sugimura Sojinkan (1872-1945) is 'reporting' on his impression concerning Kano's kata [Kodokan (ed.) 1987, vol. 5: 149-152].

transformation from a weak and bullied boy to a strong, determined, and self-confident young man, is ascribed by Miyake solely to his training of jujutsu. The body of Kano becomes a metaphor for the Japanese nation.

This narrative of the weak becoming strong is typical of martial arts biographies and – via the example of a founder or prominent members – serves to underline the authority of a school and its teachings. It also functions as a promise to potential disciples. The basic argument or logic is similar to that of modern health gurus, who aim to prove the effectiveness of their recipes or body techniques by reference to their own bodies. But the Kano manga-biography actually goes a step further and links the individual *yowamushi*-narrative to the grand narrative of the weak Japanese nation that finally becomes able to overcome its trauma and become a strong nation.

As the manga deals with a life lived in the service of a martial art, it comes as no surprise that fighting scenes in the narrative are established as key moments in which life, or concepts of life, are repeatedly put to the test. Fights on the narrative level serve to validate or falsify a person's life as well as to trigger change and development. The fights in Kano's biography are, however, competitive: training situations on the mat, with no life threatening or 'real fight' situations. (This is different from such biographical manga as that of Ueshiba Morihei.)¹²

The manga uses blank backgrounds, speed lines, zooming in on faces and body parts, as well as onomatopoeia, to underline and increase the sense of the speed, vigour, and realism of the scene. It succeeds, in sport manga style, in creating 'directness' and an almost palpable physicality, which makes it easy to imagine the dojo and hard training, but also the fun that the fighters have in testing their skills.

Along with Kano Jigoro, the heroism, virtue, and moral superiority of other judo practitioners is given attention. Figures include the famous 'Four Heavenly Kings' (*shi tenno*): Saigo Shiro, Tomita Tsunejiro, Yamashita Yoshiaki, and Yokoyama Sakujiro. This, too, contributes to the central narrative. Most prominently featured in the manga is Hirose Takeo (1868-1904), a deified 'war hero' (*gunshin, gunjin*), who died during the Russo-Japanese War in the battle of Port Arthur. Hirose is first introduced in Volume 4 on page 14, within the context of the Kodokan, as a strong and devoted judo fighter.

When Hirose is sent to Russia, where he stayed as military attaché, the manga adapts a drawing style inspired by *Berusaiyu no bara* ('Rose of

12 See Ueshiba [2000]. The episode on the steamer is always portrayed as a 'real' fight. Yet, it is questionable whether an officer on a commercial cruise ship could actually harm a paying customer.

Versailles', *shojo* manga series of 10 volumes, published from 1972-1973 [Kodokan, vol. 4: 50-51]). This is used to enhance the description of the romantic involvement of Hirose with a young Russian woman. This passage uses the technique of quoting from a letter to increase historical authenticity. The letter was taken from Shimada Kinji's 'Roshia ni okeru Hirose Takeo' (published by Asahi Shinbunsha), which the bibliography lists as a source in Volume 6. Yet, contrasting the romanticized setting, the 'scrim diffuser'-style drawings, and the farewell due to an official military order, the next page surprises with a stylistic break by the inclusion of contemporary war-photographs [see Figure 4]. The explosion in the first photo is then, on a textual level, accompanied by the onomatopoeic expression 'Zudodo...n', which together with the photo create a strong empathic effect, as if throwing the reader into the reality of war. The Hirose character (drawn in manga style) is placed onto the representation of the sound of an explosion (depicted in a photo-realistic style).



Figure 4

CREATING HISTORICAL REALISM AND AUTHENTICITY

Choosing a graphic novel as medium for the representation of institutional history and of a historical personality offers opportunities that extend traditional means of historiography as well as literary narration. This is because narration in manga also takes place at the level of the images. Thus, narratives and narration cannot properly be understood without the visual or formal elements, and certainly not without a dissection of the visual aspects of the *mise en scène*, which heavily borrow from cinematic narratology.¹³

Including photographs and pasted pictures is a technique of 'intervisuality', which increases a sense of 'actuality' and creates a sense of an actual real-life character as a historical fact. As Susan Sontag put it, photographs have the 'extraordinary power to determine our demands upon reality' [Sontag 1978: 153] – 'they enlarge a reality that is felt to be shrunk, hollowed out, perishable, remote' [163]. The reality that has to be brought back in the manga is, on the one hand, the historical and social context, and, on the other hand, the character him- or herself. A person that must be brought back to life has to be imagined as a historical fact/reality.

13 Pascal Lefèvre defines this aspect with reference to the film scholar David Bordwell by saying that 'the form of a comic consists of materials – subject matter, themes – shaped and transformed by the overall composition (plot structure) and stylistic patterning. The same *fabula*/story (the chronological sequence of events as they are supposed to have occurred in the time-space universe of the narrative being interpreted) or even the same *sjuzet*/plot (the actual composition or emplotment of events in the work) can attain a completely different atmosphere and look by a particular use of stylistic elements such as graphic style, *mise en scène*, and framing. It is via the *sjuzet* the reader/spectator constructs the *fabula* or story' [Lefèvre 2012: 71].

When the main story starts in Volume 1, it first introduces the geographical and familial context in which Kano grew up, zooming in from the present-day harbour of Kobe to the location of the former sake brewery of the Kano family. A map locates the places visited. It is then followed by a map of the Hanshin train line to the station of Uozaki, along the Sumiyoshi river to the Nada High School. Here the reader is guided through the main gate onto an artificial hill, where the reader finds a commemorative sign conveying that this site is related to the life of Kano Jigoro, the founder of judo. The pictures in this introduction are drawn in a realistic style and the first panel that shows Kano as a young boy is in fact based on a photograph [see Figures 5a and 5b]. The accompanying text is in voice-over style: neutral in tone and purely informative. The accuracy of the information and the given map could even serve as a guide for readers who wish to visit the actual location.

In order to underline the validity of the educational message and the significance of the life beyond fiction, the manga creates authenticity and authority by placing markers not only on the pictorial level, but on the textual level, as well, including 'peritextual' signals [Penney 2015: 156]. These signals include a table of contents, bibliography (with 12 references), explanatory footnotes, and off-text explanations of a narrator situated outside the story (very much like a voice-over).

One example of this technique can be found in Volume 1, Chapter 2, which deals with the history of the Tenjin shinyo-ryu and the Kito-ryu – two of the jujutsu-styles that critically influenced Kano Jigoro. The setting for the main story is situated in contemporary Japan and drawn in realistic style. Different time frames exist side-by-side: 'story time' and 'narrative time'. These frames are not meant to separate the two times, but to blur the boundaries between past and present, to bring the



Figures 5a and 5b



Figure 6

past into the present and make it relevant for a better understanding of the present, as well as to offer a way to integrate the past into one's own life and identity as a judoka. In this sense, we might also categorize the manga as what Linda Hutcheon calls 'historiographic metafiction', i.e. works that address the past in order 'to open it up to the present' [Hutcheon 1988: 110].

The chapter introduces three boys from the countryside, dressed in school uniforms, visiting the Kodokan Headquarters during a school trip to Tokyo. The Kodokan and the interior of the building are drawn in a realistic style, based on photographs, contrasting the comic-style figures of the boys. Impressed and intrigued by a chair and a (drawn) photograph (as representation of the real), which shows the founder of judo, whom they identify by a set of postcards they had bought at the Kodokan, the group decides to visit the library in the building and borrow books on the history of judo.¹⁴ The boys function as proxies that answer the questions of the reader, and the audience follows their journey of knowledge acquisition. The female librarian hands over three books and as she also gives the titles, the reader can easily identify the sources: Kodokan (ed.): *Judo hyakunen no rekishi*. 1970; Oimatsu Shinichi: *Judo hyakunen*. 1966; and Kato, Nihei: *Kano Jigoro*. 1980 (see Figure 6). The three boys now take the books to the reading room and begin browsing through the pages and the history of judo. The dive into the history of judo is then based on photos, historical drawings, and paintings taken from these three sources, creating a strong non-fictional field based on academic references.¹⁵ References to an extra-textual reality, to factual knowledge, is evoked by including historical documents, photos, letters, and certificates.

Azuma Hiroki has been very pessimistic when stating that 'a type of simulacrum has replaced the historical past' and that 'consumers lack the context to recognize historical referents' [Penney 2015: 148]. Although this manga is, as already established, conceptualized as an all-age manga

14 The same technique is applied again in Volume 3 [92] and Volume 4, Chapter 3 [116ff]. In the last passage, a foreign judoka visits the Kodokan to see the library and read books on the theory and philosophy of judo. As he is able to speak Japanese, but not read it, a Japanese girl that will read the books accompanies him. This episode is also educative, not only in transmitting historical information, but also in explaining to interested readers where they could find books for further studies. The same is true of the episode in Volume 4 in which three judoka read a book by Ishiguro Keishichi, *Judo Senjojiki* [1952], and the reader actually takes a look in the opened book over the shoulder of the reading character.

15 Yet, when approaching these sources, read by the three boys, as historians, their scholarly objectivity is questionable. The first two of the books mentioned have been published from within the circles of the Kodokan. Oimatsu (1912-1995) was not only a judoka, who had received his 9th dan in 1984, he was also a graduate of the Tokyo Koto Shihan Gakko, a school that Kano headed as director for most of his career. Kato Nihei was a specialist of education and also a graduate of the Koto Shihan Gakko. These sources thus approach the life of Kano Jigoro from the perspective of his disciples (*sensei*-perspective). The Kodokan also possesses the power of defining the discourse on Kano Jigoro by its exclusive access to primary sources (e.g. Kano's diaries), as previously mentioned.

and can thus be perfectly understood without realizing the different layers of intertextual references on the pictorial or textual levels (where fiction and history meet), it can be expected that there has always been a significant number of experienced readers that approach the text with prior knowledge. This group will read the text as an invitation and a challenge to control, to further explore, deepen, or simply to verify their knowledge, adjusting to and/or (re)aligning their own knowledge with an authorized and established discourse, thereby authorizing oneself. On an emotional level, the recognition of historical figures, places, photos, intertextual references, etc., is undoubtedly intended to enhance the joy of the reading process and give a sense of gratification.

CONCLUSION

The manga 'Judo no rekishi – Kano Jigoro no shogai' edited by the Kodokan is biography as well as institutional history. Manga were already mass media in the late 1970s and 1980s, and the assumption on the side of the Kodokan was that a manga biography of the founder would both address a broader audience than the traditional readership of their publications, which was limited mainly to judoka, as well as attract readers who would generally not be interested in reading a book either on the life of Kano Jigoro or on the history of the Kodokan. The manga is accessible not only for different age groups but also for both judoka and the 'uninitiated', for whom reading aids are included to assist with the pronunciation (if not necessarily the understanding) of specialist terms.

Text and pictures hover between fact and fiction. Yet, certain markers that refer to a reality outside the 'textual' or fictional world of the manga give a certain historicity to the text and create authenticity. This is seen, for example, in pasting photographs and paintings, quoting from primary sources, and including autobiographical quotes, newspaper articles, or drawings of places in realistic style, etc. These markers or 'cues' enable the reader to identify real places and connect them to the narrative. Yet, the effects these markers have on readers, whether they will be recognized as such, depends to a large extent on their prior knowledge of, and initiation into, Kodokan teachings. The manga therefore succeeds in creating a feeling of belonging, of being part of an exclusive community with shared bodily experiences and shared (expert) knowledge.

By analysing this biographical manga, it can be seen that the Kodokan wants to educate, to transmit knowledge to a broader public, and thereby to establish (discursive) legitimacy and power. The biographical manga will moreover tell us how the Kodokan defines itself within a

certain historical and cultural context. It constitutes an act of 'self-narration' as it establishes its own identity as institution through narrating the life of its founding *überfather*.

It has not been the intention of this article to analyse the manga in terms of truth and falsity, but to ask how the life of Kano Jigoro is narrated and how far the established narratives give a better understanding about the ideology and self-image of the Kodokan during the 1980s. A recurring topic and point of reference within the narrative of Kano Jigoro's life is the Japanese nation. Kano's life, judo, the deeds of early judoka, as well as the Kodokan, are on the textual as well as pictorial levels linked to the history, fate, and wellbeing of the Japanese nation. Stories of individual heroism, determination, fighting spirit, moral superiority, and personal sacrifice resultant from physical, mental, and intellectual training in judo serve as examples of the potential that judo has for strengthening not only the individual but also the Japanese people and the nation at large.

This link has significance for the identity of the Kodokan in a period in which the institution tried to recover from the blow received during the Tokyo Olympics of 1964. Memory is a funny thing: although Japanese judoka actually only lost in the open category, yet won gold medals in all other categories, what remained in cultural memory (in Japan but also globally) was Kaminaga's loss to the Dutch athlete Anton Geesink. This defeat was discursively linked to a perceived loss of traditional values in Japan in general and in Kodokan judo in particular. The 100-year anniversary of Kano's birth thus posed an opportunity to reframe the Kodokan within 'tradition'.

In this sense, the manga can be seen as an attempt to 're-Japanize' judo and to establish the Kodokan as the heir to a legacy of a Japanese tradition which has proven its effectiveness and usefulness for the nation. It should not be forgotten that the manga (in an environment in which outside-Kodokan research on the history of the institution is scarce and access to primary sources limited) also serves as a means to control the reading of Kodokan history and to strengthen the institution's authority to narrate its own history. With the publication of 'Judo no rekishi – Kano Jigoro no shogai' as a Kindle eBook, and its distribution via the Japanese Amazon online bookshop, the Kodokan works to ensure that its own reading and interpretation of history remains dominant, hegemonic, and unlikely to be challenged.

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Cardiff University Press
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cardiffuniversitypress.org

Journal DOI

10.18573/ISSN.2057-5696

Issue DOI

10.18573/mas.i6

Accepted for publication 30 June 2018

Martial Arts Studies

Journal design by Hugh Griffiths

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