

Mangix

“Comics/Manga Journalism: Reportage Traditions and Illustration Praxes in Graphic Literary Journalism”

Project Managers

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The *Mangix* Project: Aims, Research Questions, and Literature Review

Literary journalism, or reportage literature, is a branch of nonfiction that conjoins novelistic writing techniques with objective news reporting. Often referred to as the first draft of history, literary journalism serves as a chronological and epistemological bridge between the ephemeral newspaper story of uncontextualized facts, names and numbers and the longitudinal recording(s) of (presumed or accepted) objective historical data. For nearly two centuries at least, literary journalism has provided extensive subjective insight and sociopolitical commentary on many of the world’s most complex news stories that were objectively encapsulated in the daily press and later shoehorned into the overcrowded timeline of human history. Though complementary in goals and even methodologies, the disciplines of journalism, literary journalism, and history are nonetheless competitive in terms of how each presents and *represents* the events that shape our lives. Truth, subjective and objective alike, is often found not at the core of academic disciplines but rather at their contested borders, where scholars are forced to abandon disciplinary blinders and confront their mitigating biases and methods and approach the truth from the perspective of another. Since literary journalism itself aspires to such paradigmatic heights, should we not also demand the same interdisciplinary rigor from Literary Journalism Studies?

Comics/manga journalism, an emerging subgenre of literary journalism that has gained influence around the world both as a practice and an object of scientific inquiry, fuses traditional textual reportage with visual narrativity, all the while adhering to literary journalism’s mantra of subjective facticity. As Josh Neufeld writes in *Creating Comics as Journalism, Memoir and Nonfiction* (2016), “Unlike other more traditional forms of journalism [...], comics speak in an intimate voice [...]. So I often turn to novelistic techniques to craft a dramatic story – while of course adhering to the facts” (Neufeld, 2016: xi). That “intimate voice” aligns comics/manga journalism with literary journalism’s commitment to entice readers’ emotions while awakening them to a truth about a given topic; but unlike traditional text-driven reportage, graphic literary journalism also captures that emotion through the writer’s reimagined visual recollection of a textually recorded event. And therein lies its promise ... and potential for problems.

Because reality in comics/manga journalism is first acquired via an eyewitness account, and only later reconstructed, narrated, interpreted, and graphically rendered by the artist–journalist, the role, assessment, and representation of memory is of paramount concern – as much for the journalist as for the eyewitness. Apprehensions surrounding such recollections,

both in the comics and in their scientific study, are further augmented when trauma is involved and memory risks becoming colored or even blocked (Massé, 2011: 78-79, 180-81; Matloff, 2004: 19-21). Comics and literary journalism, for instance, frequently cover topics ranging from the under-represented human costs of war and socio-political and financial crises to the collective or individual response to natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunami, droughts, deforestation, etc., and in both genres the conscientious artist-journalist acknowledges this potential hazard of reporting.

Comics/manga journalism thus requires a stronger artist-reader implied contract to journalistic integrity than textual literary journalism does simply because the text and the image, which often work in concert to capture and disseminate a truth, can also be at odds with that truth's representation. Consciously or not, comics/manga journalism operates on multiple semiotic levels not present in the textual version alone. *Saying* one thing and then *showing* it makes the experience more immediate for comics readers, who are not allowed to imagine for themselves the picture painted by verbal text, contrary to text-driven readers of literary journalism. That image, Kai Mikkonen explains in *The Narratology of Comic Art* (2017), captured in memory and funneled through the journalist's own prejudices, thus becomes more subjective than even the comics' written language, rendering the assessment of comics journalism for students and scholars of the genre more complex and its decoding more crucial (Mikkonen, 2017: 109-11). For Ken Irwin in "Graphic Nonfiction: A Survey of Nonfiction Comics" (2014), the "illustrator's art and voice can be found in what she or he chooses to reveal and emphasize, as surely as the writer focuses attention through the narration" (Irwin, 2014: 107). Amy Kiste Nyberg agrees, writing of celebrated comics journalist Joe Sacco in "Comics Journalism: Drawing on Words to Picture the Past in *Safe Area Goražde*" (2011): "What separates comics journalism from other forms – the essential character of the comics medium – is the integration of text and image. Comics are written *and* drawn" (Nyberg, 2011: 117).

The "written *and* drawn" medium of comics journalism has had, of course, a long tradition, one that dates back to the satirical cartooning of Rodolphe Töpffer in the early 19th century. The roots of comics journalism can thus be located within early French newspapers, such as the weekly *L'Illustration*, published in Paris from 1843 to 1944, as well as its competitor, *Le Journal Illustré*, which ceased production in 1899 (England's *London Illustrated News* began just one year earlier, in 1842, and the U.S. followed in 1855 with *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*.) Illustrated satirical French periodicals, such as *Le Charivari* (1832-1937), *Le Philosophe* (1867-68) or *Les Guêpes* (1839-49, founded by *Le Figaro* editor Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr), were so widely popular in their lampooning of celebrities that it was not long before political illustrated papers appeared, such as *Psst...!* and *Le Sifflet*, both short-lived dailies (1898-99) that defended opposing sides in the Dreyfus affair. This 19th-century French tradition of comics journalism continued in the *journaux des tranchées* produced by troops during the Great War (Bak, 2016) and eventually gave birth to *Le Canard enchaîné* (1915-), a weekly satirical publication that inspired contemporary magazines like *Hara-Kiri* or *Charlie Hebdo*. In short, there has been an uninterrupted history in France of nonfiction comics, one rivaling that of Japan.

That popularity of the satirical French newspaper quickly spread, first around Europe, and then worldwide, riding the crest of French republicanism and British imperialism. For instance, *Les Guêpes* was imported and adapted for Portuguese readers as the controversial periodical *As Farpas* [The Barbs] (Soares, 2011), and a similar magazine, *Kladderadatsch* [Scratch Pad], appeared in Germany in 1848. But it was *Le Charivari* that would prove most influential – and imitated. Finding success on London's Fleet Street as the enormously popular and influential *Punch* magazine (1841-1992/2002), this "*The London Charivari*"

magazine would soon spawn its own imitators across the British Empire, from Cairo to Istanbul and throughout Asia, a vivid example of transnational literary journalism (Bak, forthcoming 2025). The *Asian Punch* imitators were many, including *The Japan Punch*, started in 1862 by English artist and cartoonist Charles Wirgman (Brenner, 2007: 3; Duus, 2013: 316-19). A more direct connection between political cartooning in Japan and France can be found in the satirical magazine *Tobae* (1887–89), a collaborative project between George Bigot and Chōmin Nakae (Mikhailova 2008: 157; Schodt, 1983: 38-42). Though many credit the beginnings of sequential art in Japan with Buddhist monk scrolls from the 12th century (Brenner, 2007: 1-2) or, later, with the advent of the *kawaraban*, “clay-tile” broadsides from the late 16th century that reported newsworthy events in writings and illustrations (Strecher, 2009: 493), manga nonetheless shares a certain amount of DNA with the French and British illustrated presses of the 19th century, a research question needing further exploration (Ito, 2008: 30).

While manga is essentially Japanese in origin, its textual equivalent, Japanese literary journalism, has had a much more convoluted past. As Miki Tanikawa confirms in his article “Literary Journalism in Japan” (2010), an “ample supply” of Japanese literary journalism “can be found in dailies such as *Asahi*, *Yomiuri* and *Mainichi*, where “[n]arrative techniques are often used to vividly describe scenes of civil wars in Africa or social dilemmas faced by *haken shain* or temporary workers who lost their jobs due to recession” (Tanikawa, 2010: 4). Tanikawa attributes this current trend in contemporary Japanese literary journalism to the influence of American New Journalism of the 1950s and 60s, as evinced by Ryūzō Saki’s *Fukushu suruwa ware ni ari* (1979) and Kotaro Sawaki’s *Teroru no kessan* (2008), a report on the assassination of Socialist Party president by a right-wing youth. Matthew Strecher agrees in part in his article “From *Kawaraban* to *Reportage*: Toward a Theory for Japanese Literary Journalism” (2009), writing that in Japan “the close relationship that would develop between fiction writers and the world of journalism” occurred around the time of the Second World War, when “it is remarkable to note how many of Japan’s most important writers also doubled as newspaper men [...], a trend that continues, though on a smaller scale, to the present day” (Strecher, 2009: 494).

Both scholars, however, suggest an even earlier influence, one that was encountered throughout the world press as the commercial press usurped the political press and literacy levels rose globally, though never simultaneously nor at the same rate. For instance, literary tendencies in Japanese news writing, Tanikawa posits, could be traced back to the so-called Taishō Democracy period of the 1910s and the 1920s at a time when newspaper journalism reached its pre-war pinnacle in terms of readership and enjoyed relative freedom from political meddling, something that took place several decades earlier in France: “[Japanese] journalists and editors then often talked about *bibun kisha*, or “stylistic writer,” whose artistic writing styles were both revered and regarded as marketable” (Tanikawa, 2010: 5). Strecher concurs and even pinpoints the rise of literary journalism in Japan as coinciding with – and even resulting from – the epistemological schism between objective and subjective reporting, evident in the coverage of the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877, or of the *dokufu*, sensational true crime stories committed by desperate women between the 1870s and 1880s and documented by former *gesaku* writers (Strecher, 2009: 494).

In the West, a similar schism between objectivism and subjectivism was palpable at the fin de siècle, especially in France (Thérenty, 2007; Thérenty, 2013) and in the U.S. (Hartsock, 2001; Sims, 2007). And in both cases, the result was the birth of a literary *reportage* or an investigative, muckraking journalism. In England and throughout its Empire, the dawn of literary journalism coincided with the birth of the Special Correspondent in the 19th century (Griffiths, 2015) – for instance, Williams Howard Russell’s coverage of the Crimean War

(1853-56), including the Siege of Sevastopol that Leo Tolstoy also wrote about in his *Севастополь* series on Sevastopol from May to December 1854, or Winston Churchill's "Letters" to London's *Morning Post* during the Fashoda incident (1898) and the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) (Griffiths, 2013). In short, while the documentary arts are as old as humanity itself, literary journalism around the world found its start in the decades closing the 19th century or opening the 20th.

A similar rise in *graphic* literary journalism occurred not long after. "Along with Special Correspondents..." Randy Duncan, Michael Ray Taylor, David Stoddard write in *Creating Comics as Journalism, Memoir and Nonfiction* (2015), "newspapers sent Special Artists into the field to make sketches that would capture the drama and suffering of the war" (Duncan et al., 2015: n.p.). But widespread use of the camera in the field and the omnipresence of photojournalism in the press (Morgan, 2002: 9-10) soon quashed the need for newspapers to continue using illustrations to accompany news stories. Consequently, news illustrations that once adorned the front page were relocated to the editorial page as political cartoons (such as those done by Thomas Nast) or to the sports pages as daily comic strips or the Sunday funnies (such as "The Yellow Kid," first published in the *New York Journal* in 1896).

Although comics, whether as cartoons, panels, or strips, never again left the pages of newspapers and magazines worldwide, comics journalism would not reappear for nearly a century, and even then not in the press but in graphic nonfiction novels of journalist-artists such as (to name only a few) Art Spiegelman, Chris Butzer, Patrick Chappatte, Étienne Davodeau, Josh Neufeld, Katoh Tadashi, Jean-Philippe Stassen, Cordt Schnibben – and, of course, Joe Sacco, often seen as the pioneer of comics journalism with his graphic books *Palestine* (1993) and *Safe Area Goražde* (2000). Given that research into literary journalism over the past two decades has debunked the accepted myth that the genre was brought to life in the 19th-century, fell dormant in the first half of the 20th century when objective journalism became the news standard, and awoke amid the post-war turbulence of the counter-culture and Cold War, could we not also call into question this presumed birth of comics journalism during the 1990s? For instance, *Brought to Light* (1989), a collection of two deep-dive, documentary-style comics that "fuses the intrigue of investigative reporting and the sophistication of the graphic novel package and invents a new form – the graphic docudrama" (1989: n.p.) and exposes the CIA's nearly "30 years of drug smuggling, arms deals and covert operations that robbed America and betrayed the Constitution," surely qualifies as comics journalism, as do, perhaps, some of the issues from the *True Comics* series produced by mainstream American publishers during the Second World War, which, albeit relatively short in length, are nonetheless the graphic renderings of immersive reporting and literary journalism.

Therefore, while comics journalism was officially recognized by the 1990s, and the post-Second World War period was indeed a watershed mark for literary journalism around the world, the accepted narratives behind both genre's genesis and transnational diffusion simply needs revisiting. And while it is true that contemporary graphic and textual literary journalism in Japan and in France (and, arguably, Europe) were influenced by the successful exportation of American New Journalists during heightened East-West tensions, and the fin de siècle provided the definitive split between literature and journalism that left their bastard child literary journalism to fend for itself, the chronology and even the codification of both of these genres in Japan and France cannot be so easily rendered. With the presumed rise of literary journalism not entirely coinciding with the decline of graphic or comics journalism, various unanswered scientific questions remain:

- What drives the narrative journalism present in the Japanese and the European press today?
- Are there epistemological ties between Japanese literary journalism and manga (specifically, history, memoir and political manga, and not the many self-help, how-to, educational manga or the like)? If so, which came first, or did they develop independently?
- And depending on that parent source, how much could be said to have been derived from Amero-European (particularly French or francophone) literary and comics journalistic traditions, and how much was homegrown in Japan? How much have manga influenced European comics journalism, especially France's in the reportage magazine *XXI*?
- What are the connections and influences, if any, between the Anglo-American underground comix movement of the 1960s and 70s and the New Journalism from the same era (e.g., Hunter S. Thompson's drug-induced and counter-culture driven gonzo journalism, Michael Herr's anti-Vietnam War dispatches, *Rolling Stone* magazine's music journalism, etc.)? Did these comix influence European reportage or Japanese manga in any noticeable way, whether in graphic or narrative design or readerly strategies?
- What are the connections and influences, if any, between more traditional American comic books (e.g., Marvel, DC and Dell comics) and the comics journalism of the 1990s and later, be they textual or graphic for the journalist–artist, or even narratological for the audience who grew up reading these traditional comics?
- Could the biographical comics in the U.S. from the 1980s point to an earlier (i.e., pre-Joe Sacco) period for the “accepted” start of comics journalism? Could an even earlier case be identified (e.g., the *True Comics* series produced by mainstream American publishers during the Second World War)? Was there even a time when literary journalism and comics journalism were *not* concomitant?
- Could social networking service (SNS) manga provide cases of reportage and commentary removed from both commercial publishing and official news outlets? What is the potential of such grass-roots comics journalism in the contemporary digital environment?
- As newspapers and magazines around the world cut staff or shutter their doors definitively, can comics journalism (or literary journalism in general) keep the press from spiraling definitively into the hands of politicized media echo chambers and fake news fomenters?

To seek answers to these timely questions facing news media and print cultures today, “Comics/Manga Journalism: Reportage Traditions and Illustration Praxes in Graphic Literary Journalism” will explore the history of and current trends in the illustrated literary journalism of various countries, from the rise of illustrated newspapers and satirical periodicals in the 19th century to investigative and immersive comics journalism and manga of the 20th and 21st centuries. One of the many goals of this *Mangix* research project – a blend of the terms *manga*, *comics* and *comix*, with a nod to the ubiquitous French linguistic puns in *Asterix* – is thus to identify the strands of a transnational migration of literary journalistic techniques, visual and textual alike, from France (and the U.S. and Europe in general) to and back from Japan over the years.

The *Mangix* Project Research Team: Principal Investigators and Associate Members

In the summer of 2006, Université de Lorraine professor John Bak (UR 2338, I.D.E.A.) organized the first-ever conference on world literary journalism in Nancy, which resulted in the founding of the [International Association for Literary Journalism Studies](#) (IALJS). Since then, IALJS's international membership has grown to over 150 members on six continents. Among the four dozen or so nations represented within this far-reaching network, "Asia," especially Japan, "remains largely underrepresented," as Bak noted in his introduction to [The Routledge Companion to World Literary Journalism](#) (2023: 18).¹ Particularly curious is the relative paucity of scholarship on Japanese literary journalism (textual and graphic), at least in English, despite the country's active journalism research association, Japan Society for Studies in Journalism and Mass Communication (日本メデア学会), which regularly addresses literary journalism during its annual meetings and publishes research in its *Journal of Mass Communication Studies*. But what is discussed there rarely enters a global conversation about the genre, despite Japan's rich heritage in the documentary arts.

This research project, "Comics/Manga Journalism: Reportage Traditions and Illustration Praxes in Graphic Literary Journalism" (*Mangix*), looks to draw upon the necessary expertise of various scholars at Tohoku and Lorraine universities to examine the history of and current trends in the illustrated literary journalism of both countries, from the rise of illustrated newspapers and satirical periodicals in the 19th century to investigative and immersive comics journalism and manga of the 20th and 21st centuries. Bak's specialty on world reportage literatures, including early French print culture (the *roman-feuilleton*, alongside the *chronique* and *fait divers*, was an early source of literary journalism in the 19th-century French press) situates itself nicely in between Tohoku professor Christopher Craig's historical expertise and recent work in trauma and disaster studies (and passion for American comics) and assistant professor Olga Kopylova's work in Japanese media studies, particularly serialized manga, fan studies, narratology and word/image theory. Though each is an expert in his or her respective field, none is trained in all the disciplines necessary to undertake the proposed research project.

The differences and similarities between each of their disciplines' treatment of memory and eyewitness recollection and representation – for instance, specifically during traumatic events such as the bombing of Hiroshima or the Great East Japan Earthquake and resulting tsunami of 2011 along the coastal areas of the Miyagi Prefecture – would greatly widen the project's research parameters and academic networks. Their pluri-disciplinary approaches to comics journalism and manga would dovetail nicely, and readily fit under the larger umbrella project that could draw in scholars from various other disciplines, including Japanese Studies, translation studies, intermedial studies, memory studies, fan studies, text/image studies, reader-response studies, narratology, to name just a few of the most relevant. Certainly, the *Mangix* project's interest in trauma studies would potentially general close working ties with Tohoku's International Research Institute of Disaster Science [IRIDeS]) in the goal of preserving narrative or oral histories about the 2011 tsunami.

¹ Since its founding, the IALJS has seen its membership increase from 14 to over 150 professors and journalists from around the world. Today, it organizes an annual congress that has been hosted on five continents, publishes a books series with Palgrave Macmillan and an academic journal with Northwestern University, and maintains a global network for the exchange of ideas, for book and article co-authorships, and for teaching partnerships. Literary journalism scholarship, pedagogy and praxis have grown exponentially worldwide over the past decade or more, and IALJS has often been at the center of this renaissance.

The French/Lorraine PI, John S. Bak maintains a vast European network of scholars working in literary journalism studies – hailing from Spain, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Italy, England, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Portugal, Hungary, and Poland – on whom he could draw occasionally as Associate Project Members to help achieve the project’s proposed milestones and complete its specific deliverables. Together, with committed academic partners both in Japan (e.g., Matthew C. Strecher, a specialist in Japanese literary journalism at Sophia University in Tokyo) and in Europe (e.g., Sara Izzo, a specialist in French literary journalism and text/image theory from the Universität Bonn), the *Mangix* research project is well covered in terms of its inter- and pluri-disciplinary needs. Moreover, *Mangix* will fit nicely with his current eleven-year ReportAGES research project on “Literary Journalism and War,” for which four volumes to date have already been published with the University Press of Lorraine (EDUL), with a fifth volume currently in progress.

The Japanese/Tohoku PI, Christopher Craig, is currently Head of the Research and International Development Unit at the newly-founded (October 2023) Center for Integrated Japanese Studies (<https://cijs.oii.tohoku.ac.jp/en/introduction/>). He is ideally situated to attract further participation from scholars within Japan as well as international attention in the global academic community. The Center is a major new initiative at Tohoku University and an integral part of the university’s plan for dramatic change and growth “to further the advancement of new directions in global Japanese Studies founded upon the principles of interdisciplinarity, inter- and transregionality, and creative collaboration,” a mission that is clearly at the heart of the *Mangix* research project. Craig is also in charge of the annual Hasekura International Japanese Studies symposium and the publication of the collected volumes that follow the symposiums. To date, there have been eight symposiums, for which seven volumes have been published in the Hasekura Intercultural Studies series.

Interdisciplinary in nature and trans-/pluri-disciplinary in praxis, the *Mangix* project could be greatly expanded in terms of researcher numbers and deliverables to include the history of and current trends in illustrated and graphic literary journalism of other countries as well, particularly the United States, but also Germany, Italy, England and Spain, exploring the rise of illustrated newspapers and satirical periodicals in the 19th century to investigative and immersive comics journalism and manga of the 20th century. The addition of these participants and deliverables would likely sustain the *Mangix* projects for years to come and increase its international visibility and collaborative opportunities for ERC or Horizon funds, ERASMUS+ Staff and Student Mobilities, and PhD *co-tutelles*. For example, the *Mangix* project will benefit from the occasional participation of literary journalism, media and graphic image scholars from around Europe and elsewhere, each of whom will open the project up later beyond the Tohoku–Lorraine initiative: Maria Vanoost, University of Louvain (Belgium); Margarita Navarro Pérez, Universidad de Castilla – La Mancha (Spain); Soenke Zehle, xm:lab – Experimental Media Lab at the Hochschule der Bildenden Künste Saar (Germany); Cecilia Aare, Stockholm University (Sweden); Pasquale Macaluso, University of Cape Town (South Africa); Tobias Eberwein, Austrian Academy of Sciences and the University of Klagenfurt (Austria); Jaqueline Berndt, Stockholm University (Sweden); Andrew Griffiths, Open University (England); Anna Saignes, Université de Lorraine (Nancy); Audrey Alvès, Université de Lorraine (Metz). The potential for future collaborative exchanges and research projects, European and/or Japanese, is therefore extremely high.

The *Mangix* Project: Proposed Milestones and Deliverables

French or francophone reportage *BDs*, American investigative, documentary and political comics, comix and graphic novels, and, of course, Japanese manga are all highly valued and influential worldwide. In their commitment to uphold journalistic standards of truth, even within a subjective perspective, they could potentially serve as a panacea to the fake news epidemic currently holding the world hostage and fueling readers’ and reviewers’ growing distrust in media-mogul owned and run newspapers and media outlets. In terms of its research goals, then, the *Mangix* project will look to preserve and even strengthen the mission of comics journalism worldwide, all the while raising the international visibility of the universities of Lorraine and Tohoku and educating the next generation of literary and media scholars and historians.

In terms of its research strategies, the *Mangix* project will first lay out an initial plan to establish a preliminary corpus and working bibliography, as well as begin defining the logistics of and the securing finances for its stated “deliverables” and “milestones.” Those achievements would include alternating Summer Schools (*École d’été*) and comics journalism/manga workshops for PhD and master’s students interested in researching and/or producing graphic literary journalism and manga studies, as well as international congresses in Nancy and in Sendai. Given their varied professional affiliations, the research teams from Tohoku and Lorraine (and elsewhere) could, over the two or four years of the project’s proposed duration, propose panels at IALJS, as well as at the annual Hasekura International Japanese Studies Symposium (the next of which will be held in Vancouver in the summer of 2025). The fruits of these academic gatherings would be peer-reviewed articles submitted (and ideally published) in respected journals such as *Literary Journalism Studies*, *Journalism, Prose Studies*, *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, *ImageText*, *Journal of Anime and Manga Studies*, *Mechademia*, and the *Journal of Japanese Studies*. The *Mangix* project could also disseminate its work to the general public when partnered with annual events such as the “Festival Le Livre à Metz: Littérature & Journalisme” (in April) and “Le Livre sur La Place à Nancy” (in September), both of which regularly invite manga artists and comics journalists to talk about and present their work. The potential creation of *co-tuelle* doctoral theses dedicated to one or more of the project’s several sub-axes discussed above could also be an outcome of this pluri-disciplinary collaborative research project. And finally, one highly desired impact of the project would be the bilateral exchange of faculty and graduate students (both doctoral and master’s) from both universities for short- or even long-term research stays in France and Japan.

Milestones/Deliverables

In Nancy	In Sendai
<p>Fall, 2024:</p> <p>A “Workshop in Comics/Manga Journalism.” A one- or two-day event that would mix scholarship with practice, in collaboration with the Université de Lorraine’s (UFR ALL Nancy) ARIEL writer-in-residence program. In addition to <i>Mangix</i> members presenting their research-in-progress since the start of the grant, a comics journalist/graphic novelist</p>	<p>Winter, 2024/2025:</p> <p>A two week-long pluri-disciplinary seminar and workshop on Memory and Trauma, and its representation in literary journalism, manga, comics journalism, history, and other disciplines, to be held on the Katahira campus of Tohoku University (and in partnership with the university’s International Research Institute of Disaster Science). The</p>

would be invited on campus to conduct mini-workshops for interested students (undergraduate and graduate alike) in graphic literary journalism. Activities could include the teaching of reporting methods and ethics, of drawing techniques, of textual drafting from field notes, etc.

recording of oral testimonies of traumatic events forms a major artery of literary journalism studies. The *Mangix* research team could put the methodologies of literary journalism and history and graphics arts to use to capture the stories of the tsunami survivors and preserve them as literary journalistic (graphic or otherwise) *testimonios*. Ideally, several survivors' testimonies will be recorded, transcribed, and translated into English for preservation; these will serve as oral histories (e.g., Studs Terkel's *Working*) found in a branch of literary journalism specifically about trauma (e.g., Elena Poniatowska's *Nada, nadie, las voces del temblor*).

April, 2025 and/or September, 2025:

Partner with annual events such as the "Festival Le Livre à Metz: Littérature & Journalisme" (April) and "Le Livre sur La Place à Nancy" (September).

Summer, 2025:

Panel at the 9th annual Hasekura International Japanese Studies Symposium, the next of which will be held in Vancouver.

May, 2025:

Presentation of a panel on "Manga as Graphic Literary Journalism" at the 19th congress of the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies (IALJS) to be held at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York.

Fall, 2025:

Host a week-long teaching exchange of French members of *Mangix* in Tohoku's Graduate School of Arts and Letters or its Center for Integrated Japanese Studies, with the goal of sparking future interests in research on literary journalism, manga, or comics journalism (that could produce master's theses and an eventual *co-tutelle* between Lorraine and Tohoku universities).

Late May/June, 2025:

A five-day *École d'été* will be held on the Nancy Humanities campus of the Université de Lorraine (this would be the fourth *École d'été* on transnational literary journalism held in Nancy since 2021). During the *École d'été*, participants in the *Mangix* project, as well as invited scholars from around Europe, would offer mini-courses (of three hours

April, 2026:

Presentation of a panel on "Manga as Graphic Literary Journalism" at a monthly conference of the Japan Society for Studies in Journalism and Mass Communication in Tokyo, or one sponsored by Tohoku University's Center for Integrated Japanese Studies.

each, spread out over two days) on the research, scholarship and practice of comics journalism and manga. In parallel to these lessons would be extended workshops offered by comics journalists/graphic novelists and, potentially, invited manga artists from Japan. For more on the past *Écoles d'été* on literary journalism (all co-financed by [Lorraine Université d'Excellence's RÉCOLTE grant](#)), see the following: [2021](#), [2022](#), [2023](#).

Winter 2026:

A week-long teaching exchange of Japanese members of *Mangix* in the Masters Mondes Anglophones cursus, with the goal of sparking future student interest in research on literary journalism, manga, or comics journalism (that could ideally produce a *co-tutelle* between Lorraine and Tohoku universities).

2027:

Co-edited special issue of *Literary Journalism Studies* on “Comics Journalism and Manga”

Fall, 2026:

Presentation of a panel on “Manga as Graphic Literary Journalism” at the annual conference for the Association for Asian Studies, to be held in September in North America.

May, 2027:

A concluding two-day congress on “Comics/Manga Journalism” to be held on the Katahira campus of Tohoku University in affiliation with the Center for Integrated Japanese Studies.

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