

THE VAMPIRES

Translator's Notes

Volume 1

By Recca Phoenix, Little Phoenix Translations

- HOW TO READ THIS COMIC
Japanese manga are read right-to-left. I have scanned The Vampires in two-page spreads, so starting from the upper-right corner, read across from right to left down the first page, then move to the upper right corner of the second page.
- ON USAGE OF THE WORD "VAMPIRE" AND "BLOODSUCKER"
In the Japanese, the English word "vampire" (バンパイア, BANPAIYA) is used to describe Toppei, Chippei, and the whole spectrum of "transforming humans." This usage of "vampire" does NOT refer to what the word normally encompasses (blood-sucking bat-like creatures). The Japanese text refers to the traditional western vampire as "kyuuketsuki" (吸血鬼, lit. "blood-sucking creature"), which I am translating as "bloodsucker" to avoid confusion. I am retaining the usage of the English word "vampire" in the text.
- ON USAGE OF THE WORD "WEREWOLF" AND "WERE-"
Toppei and Chippei are sometimes called "ookami otoko" (オオカミ男, lit. "wolf man"). I am translating this term as "werewolf." I use "were-<animal>" for other usages of "<animal> otoko" (--- man) or "<animal> onna" (--- woman). The general term used in the text to describe these were-animals is "transforming humans" (if "vampires" isn't used). I am retaining the use of both these terms in the translation.
- TEZUKA'S "STAR SYSTEM"
Osamu Tezuka used a "Star System" of recurring characters to "play" roles in his various works. He even once drew up a payroll to compensate his "actors" for their performances! You can find details on all of Tezuka's characters and lists of their "roles" at <http://en-f.tezuka.co.jp/studio/character/a.html> (The website is in English).

Here is a list of the recurring Tezuka characters appearing in The Vampires' first volume:

➤ ROCK



First appeared: 1949, "Detective Boy Rock Holmes"
Other well-known appearances: Phoenix: Future,
Adventure of Rock, the movie adaptation of
Metropolis.

Rock was originally a less innocent "boy hero" character reminiscent of Ken'ichi, but his character became darker and darker as time went by. He was a stock Tezuka villain by the 1960s when Vampires was written. He reaches the height of villainy here in Vampires as Rokuro Makubé, and as FBI in Alabaster.

➤ OSAMU TEZUKA



First appeared: 1949, "Miracle Wood Story"

Tezuka often inserted himself into his manga, sometimes as a commentator, sometimes with an altered name, but always with his trademark beret and glasses. In The Vampires, he is not only a major character, but virtually the same person as he was in real life: the head of his animation studio Mushi Productions (Mushi Pro).

A further note – Tezuka wrote his first name, Osamu, like this 治虫. The second character means "insect" (also read "mushi"). Tezuka loved insects when he was a boy and gave himself the nickname "osamushi." He named his studio "Mushi Pro" and signed his art with the mushi character, shaped like a little bug.