

One Thousand Years of Manga

Brigitte Koyama-Richard

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In recent years, Manga has seen phenomenal success, not only in Japan, where it dominates the publishing industry, but also in the West, where it is steadily growing in popularity and influence. As swift and sudden as the popularity of this graphic art form may seem, Manga has, in fact, deep roots in Japanese culture, drawing on centuries-old artistic traditions. As early as the twelfth century, Emakimono scrolls existed, a narrative form in which stories of all kinds—romantic, fantastic, even comic—were told through the combined use of text and illustration. Japanese art continued to change as profound political, social, and economic transformations remade the country in the centuries to follow. Today there is little doubt as to the meaning of the term Manga—nor to the astonishing popularity of the form—but few in the West understand the long artistic history that gave birth to this phenomenon and the social factors that continue to shape it today. One Thousand Years of Manga is both an informative account of the genesis of the form and a visual delight. Through its captivating illustrations and enlightening text, the book situates Manga in its proper context, appreciating it for what it truly is: an integral part of Japanese art and culture that is as rich and revealing as it is popular.



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