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KOREAN MANHWAS: THEIR HISTORY, DEVELOPMENT, AND GLOBALIZATION.

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Abstract: *Nowadays Korean culture has gained public attention, introducing its music, movies and books. This article represents the roots of the term “KOREAN MANHWA”, the rise of global interest and its digital advancements such as WEBTOON. The cultural role of manhwa in worldwide media space will be explored in this research.*

Keywords: *Korean culture, Hallyu, manhwa, webt*

Introduction:

The term ”manhwa” refers to Korean comics or novels with graphics and pictures. In Chinese and Japanese the words “MANHUA” or “MANGA” is used instead. The plot is usually represented through pictures and monologic texts. Its genres include romance, fantasy, action, school life and drama. Its digital versions are also available in a platform called Webtoon.

However, it is now popular only among Koreans, but also it can be found in platforms such as KakaoPage and Lezhin Comics.

In early 20th, Korea was influenced by Japanese and Western Cartoons. As a result, the word manhwa started to appear.

Manhwas became popular in 1920 in newspapers with their satirical drawings and graphics. The plot of the first manhwas created in period of 1920 and 1940 was mainly about politics and social life. Yet, there were many struggles and restrictions by Japanese on publishing manhwa. The main reason why most of the manhwas were suppressed is strong restrictions of Japanese colonial rules. Later in 1945 manhwa publishing reached its peak. In 1950s, after the Korean War people used them as an entertainment tool as they were emotional and imaginative. In the late 1990s online platforms made it available to read manhwas online. Then digital comics went global being regarded as expressive and creative visual storytellers. Today it is one of the unbreakable parts of a KOREAN WAVE called HALLYU.

The first manhwa “NONSENSE” was written by Lee Do-Yeong in 1909. Later on, after creation of platform Webtoon, it attracted a large number of fans worldwide. Step by step, more people became interested in the manhwa world and enjoyed famous manhwas such as “Tower of God”, “Solo Levelling”. Along with these comics, K-pop and K-dramas also gained fame and curiosity. This phenomenon has also caused globalization of manhwas beyond its range. As time passed, webtoon has faced multiple adaptations including dramas, animations and even Hollywood series, making it more easy to





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spread the customs of South Korea .This trend has been one of the main factors behind the worldwide fame of Korean culture

Conclusion:

From the beginning to the present,what was once a local comics has transformed into a powerful cultural wave-global influence that attracts people of all ages in media world.Today,manhwa is not only viewed as a cultural product but a fusion of art, technology and and vivid imagination.

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