



Dororo, Vol. 1

Osamu Tezuka

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Dororo is Tezuka's classic thriller manga featuring a youth who has been robbed of 48 body parts by devils, and his epic struggle against a host of demons to get them back.

Daigo Kagemitsu, who works for a samurai general in Japan's Warring States period, promises to offer body parts of his unborn baby to 48 devils in exchange for complete domination of the country. Knowing the child to be deficient, Kagemitsu orders the newborn thrown into the river.

The baby survives. Calling himself Hyakkimaru, he searches the world for the 48 demons. Each time he eliminates one, he retrieves one of his missing parts. Hyakkimaru meets a boy thief named Dororo, and together they travel the countryside, confronting monsters and ghosts again and again. This is the first in a 3 - volume series.

Tezuka's manga and animated films had a tremendous impact on the shaping of the psychology of Japan's postwar youth. His work changed the concept of Japanese comics, transforming it into an art form and incorporating a variety of new styles in creating "story comics."

Dororo, Vol. 1 Details

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Author : Osamu Tezuka

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From Reader Review Dororo, Vol. 1 for online ebook

Noemi Rodriguez says

I love this classic manga. Osamu Tezuka started the whole manga creation and his books have wonderful illustrations (as would be expected of the "God of Manga"). They are very classic and animated. It was the way anime was originally like and the storyline is also very wonderful. The story is about a young man who has to fight 48 different demons to regain 48 different body parts. This is all due to his father sacrificing these body parts of his unborn child to these demons for strength to defeat anyone who stands in his way. Despite the missing body parts, the child is born and left to drift off in a river. A man finds him and manages to help him survive and the story goes on from there and leads to many battles against demons and human soldiers as well. There is lots of action and humor mixed in with a tinge of sadness for the main characters at times. The great thing about the emotion in the book is that it connects the reader to the main characters so the reader can warm up to them and begin to care for them more and more as the story goes along. This connection to the main characters helps you build opinions on all the other characters in the book. By the end of this book you will want to read the next one as soon as possible to find out what happens next.

Leila Anani says

Classic old skool manga from the 1960's and one of my all time favourites, Dororo combines scares, action and drama seamlessly with traditional folklore elements.

Hyakkimaru was born without 48 bodyparts - because his father sacrificed them to 48 demons in exchange for ultimate power. Our hero is born malformed, limbless and without facial features or internal organs and abandoned in the river where he is found by a doctor who makes him prosthetic body parts many of them weapons. Once old enough to fight he must combat the 48 demons, kill them and regain his body parts - the downside? the demons get progressively stronger the higher up the food-chain whilst our hero gets progressively weaker as he becomes more human. Child thief Dororo tags along and the pair travel across feudal Japan hunting demons.

I love the story. I love the artwork, I know its simple, but its really cute. I love the metaphors this plays about with "nobody's born whole" Ticks all the boxes for me, an absolute classic.

The 3 book English language edition published by Vertical is something special to. The cover is wonderful and its a marvellous volume to grace any manga collection.

Nicole *{Lady Aribeth}* says

While I don't consider this the best manga of all time, I will say that I enjoyed it on a purely subjective level. Tezuka is considered to be the father of Japanese manga, and for that I want to read all 3 volumes of Dororo. First published in the 60's, the art in this manga is reminiscent of that era. The bubbly shapes and unrealistic body proportions add humor to the often dark themes of the story. The plight of Hyakkimaru to fight 48 demons to regain 48 organs of his body is intriguing and emotional. Even though nothing about the first volume made me excited enough to rush out for the second, I will finish the very short series because the

first volume contained just enough fun to keep my attention.

Emilia P says

Just fine, Tezuka. Great mythical monsters, very traditional setting, non-robot bionic dudes, wacky tiny sidekick. Nothing really new but nicely done and not quite as manic as usual.

Kate says

Hyakkimaru's father promised him to 48 demons before he was even born. Each demon took a body part, eyes, ears, legs, spine, and when Hyakkimaru was born he was a disfigured freak. His father convinced his wife to abandon the baby who was adopted and raised by a kindly doctor who fashioned all sorts of artificial limbs for Hyakkimaru. However, as Hyakkimaru grew older, demons came looking for him and finally to save his adopted father, Hyakkimaru decides to leave home and hunt for the 48 demons and reclaim his body parts. Along the journey he picks up the petty thief Dororo as a side kick.

I must admit, it was hard to get into this series. The action is great, but the character development is a little lacking, with Hyakkimaru falling in love with just about every girl he sees (once he gets his eyes back) in approx. 5 seconds. It is also without resolution, the series ends with Hyakkimaru going off in search of more demons, as he still has several dozen left. Nice for historical quality, but not something I would pick up again and again.

Alex Watkins says

I feel like Tezuka's name can't be written without manga legend or some such coming before it, because apparently he invented the genre out of whole cloth or something. I haven't read any of his other books beyond casual leafing. He definitely has an interesting style of characters that all look like Astro Boy with some really stunning background/action. This is probably the first manga I managed to read all the way through, usually the whole backwards pages plus read the boxes the other way really throws me off. I still struggled occasionally. I decided to go with this because I thought Buddha might be boring (does that make me lame?) and this one promised to be full of action and blood. Living up to my expectations but also surpassing them in the realm of batshit weird things going on.

Trane says

Osamu Tezuka's *Dororo* is great. First published in the late 60s, the story involves a wandering swordsman, Hyakkimaru, who is missing 48 body parts because his father gave him up to 48 demons before he was born in order to gain personal power. Born without arms, legs, ears, eyes, etc., Hyakkimaru is set adrift on a river to die, but is instead found by a kindly doctor who takes the infant in, trains his psychic senses so that he can 'see' the world, and makes prosthetic body parts for him (including arms that come off to reveal hidden swords inside!). Whenever Hyakkimaru kills a demon he regains one of his body parts in a painful exchange where the old prosthetic limb comes off and a new limb grows in its place.

Hyakkimaru ends up running into, saving, and befriending a child thief called Dororo and the two of them travel through Japan together, encountering and defeating demons. Dororo, which is a childlike pronunciation of *dorobo*, the Japanese word for 'thief,' is tiny, doesn't like to bathe, has a violent temper, throws tantrums, and gets into a lot of scraps that Hyakkimaru needs to save him from. One of the things that's most appealing about *Dororo* is Tezuka's *yokai* (Japanese monsters) illustration work. In this first volume Hyakkimaru and Dororo encounter a monkey demon, a froggish lizard demon that grows a beautiful woman's body from its tail like a wart, a money spirit that has a head straight from Jack Kirby's *New Gods*, and a demon sword that craves blood (kind of like Stormbringer). What's not to like?

Vertical, who did a fantastic job with Tezuka's *Buddha series*, have also done a great job with *Dororo*. The cover is beautifully designed, the paper is a thick cream-colored paper, and the ink has been laid down really nicely. The only minor downside of the Vertical publication is that some of the translation already seems dated to me. Dororo likes to refer to Hyakkimaru as his "bro" (as in, "I didn't want you to know, bro!"), which makes me think of a couple of wannabe California surfer dudes that I used to know who already sounded dated way back in the 80s when they were using 'hip lingo' like this. I realize that the translators wanted to convey the casual sense of Dororo's language, but I think there are better ways to do this. On the plus side, the translators include excellent notes on some of the puns involved in the text, and they do a good job of including footnotes about important cultural information when it's necessary.

Mia says

Liking this a LOT better than *Ayako*, which is the only other thing I've read by Osamu Tezuka. I still don't like his signature cartoon style though. I get it but I don't like it.

Otto Lehto says

Tezuka is not only the most important manga artist who ever lived, but also a great humanitarian.

Dororo is a good example of this. The story, while covered in action and fun, is a heartwrenching tale of tragedy. The themes of this juvenile/adult manga include dealing with personal loss, overcoming obstacles and finding a place in a society of prejudice and malice. It's a growing-up tale at heart.

The drawing, as you'd expect, is superb across the board. The monsters are varied and fantastic, the characters complex and vivid, the settings epic yet intimate.

The story trods along at a rather slow pace, often stopping to tell a side-story or an extended back-story. This might put off some readers, but I didn't mind that much. The journey is supposed to be about the long and epic journey of the two young protagonists, across many lands - and through 48 demons.

This book is the first part of three. Can't wait to see how the story continues and ends.

Vogisland says

Awesome shonen adventure with the Tezuka blend of light and dark. Arresting & highly kinetic artwork that

stands out even in the Tezuka canon. The demon folklore worked into the story is fantastic.

Angela says

There is a scene where a giant shark possessed by a demon breathes demon poisonous sake-gas-breath on the hero, Hyakkimaru, drunkening him in combat.

Hyakkimaru is missing 48 body parts, bartered away by his Faustian, butthead dad to 48 demons. He now has, and I am not making any of this up, bamboo-prosthetic arms and legs that house shiny swords which he uses to kill evil-doers with. He also has glass eyes, a fake nose, and no voice box: so his 'voice' is his ability to speak telepathically. Oh, I forgot to mention: he's also telepathic.

So basically this manga is amazing. It's also titled after Hyakkimaru's sidekick, Dororo, which is tender and sweet, because their companionship is tender and sweet. In classic Tezuka style, cartoonish people are juxtaposed against hyper-realistic backgrounds and grotesque plot turns. Horror and comedy intermingle, always with a sort of Buddhist, dharma-ish vibe of "life is suffering".

Not as good as Tezuka's Buddha series, but a very fun romp through ghouls, monsters, medieval Japan, and sake-gas-breath demon-sharks.

Helmut says

Auslassbarer Titel eines wichtigen Autors

Man vergebe mir meine Unwissenheit und Häresie, wenn ich das Werk eines so hochgeschätzten Manga-Künstlers hier "verreisse". Ich betrachte für diese Rezension das Buch aus dem Blickwinkel eines Comiclesers, der bisher nicht viel Manga-Erfahrung hat, und die Wichtigkeit des Buchs nicht aus einem zeit- und entwicklungsgeschichtlichen Blickwinkel des Genres beurteilen kann/will.

Ich bin auf das Manga gestoßen, nachdem ich den Film "Dororo" gesehen hatte - übrigens ein toller Film, sehr empfehlenswert für Fans von asiatischen Fantasy-Filmen. "Das Buch ist immer besser als die Verfilmung" heißt es, für mich ist dies ein Beispiel, dass es andersrum auch sein kann. Das Manga hat mich relativ kalt gelassen, die ganze emotionale Spannung, die im Film sichtbar wird, ist hier kaum zu spüren. Die Zeichnungen sind mangatypisch - bisher hat es nur "Bone" geschafft, mich mit kindhaften Zeichnungen in eine ernste, spannende Stimmung zu versetzen, "Dororo" schafft das nicht.

Wahrscheinlich, das gebe ich zu, hat dieser Titel eine große Bedeutung innerhalb des Genres, der Autor wohl sowieso. Manga-Fans werden ihn wohl eh schon gelesen haben, und allen anderen würde ich dann trotzdem eher andere Manga-Titel empfehlen, insbesondere als Einstieg in das Medium; Fans des Films werden auch nicht unbedingt viel Freude haben.

Ich vermute irgendwie, dass das so ist wie mit den frühen Marvel- und DC-Comics. Auch diese haben ihre Bedeutung im amerikanischen Superhelden-Mainstream - allerdings sind sie teilweise heute doch eher zu

Kuriositäten geworden, die man nicht mehr ernsthaft, sondern eher aus nostalgischen Gründen liest, damals aber bahnbrechend waren.

Ich werde mir aber auf jeden Fall noch "Black Jack" desselben Autors gönnen, das wohl eher meiner Erwartungshaltung entsprechen wird.

Felipe Chiaramonte says

Um ronin indo atrás de 48 demônios que ficaram cada um com uma parte de seu corpo devido um sacrifício por terras realizado por seu pai dissidente é uma excelente premissa. Ainda mais quando todos os membros faltantes desse sujeito foram reconstruído com próteses letais, como espadas no lugar de braços falsos e outras artimanhas disfarçadas com explosivos e ácidos. "Nobody is born whole" também é uma boa chamada de contra-capa e permeia alguns dos momentos reflexivos do livro.

Porém, o que poderia ser uma grande história, como qualquer um dos épicos de Tezuka e mesmo com uma arte que não é lá tão magnífica, acaba perdendo força em meros três volumes que parecem não fazer jus à magnitude do mote, principalmente quando se percebe um vício episódico e desvinculado de um propósito maior à trama em cada novo encontro demoníaco do samurai-pinocchio-chuta-traseiros-de-demônios. Os pequenos arcos vão se concluindo, mas a história no geral não se desenvolve, sendo tudo resolvido com um final abrupto.

Quem sabe teríamos um excelente Tezuka se a história houvesse se prolongado por mais alguns volumes ou se os arcos tivessem sido desenvolvidos de forma mais significativa? Tem-se, assim, um primeiro volume muito promissor, mas dois subsequentes que se enfraquecem gradativamente. Reflexo, talvez, de Tezuka ter publicado a história durante três anos em uma Shonei, sendo um trabalho comissionado e sujeito a prazos abruptos - aparentemente a série foi cancelada. Há um final conclusivo na adaptação em anime (não sei se em relação à Dororo, companheiro andrógino do ronin e que seria originalmente desenvolvido em profundidade e sexualidade pelo autor nos mangás, justificando assim o título da série) e também fizeram um filme baseado na obra, recentemente - mas pelo trailer que assisti, parece bem leviano, principalmente nos efeitos. De qualquer forma, a explosão criativa de Tezuka já se firmava neste período de produção e suas obras-primas viriam exatamente nos anos seguintes.

PS: O design de capa desta edição da Vertical é tão linda quanto as de "Black Jack", que eles também estão republicando.

Ron says

The first chapters in the story of Hyakkimaru, whose father made a deal with 48 demons before he was born - in exchange for 48 of the infant child's body parts, the father would gain worldly power. The deformed baby, abandoned, is found by a gentle doctor who crafts a set of prosthetic parts... all of which is backstory. When we first meet Hyakkimaru, it's during his first encounter with a child thief named Dororo, and we basically learn the deal: Every time Hyakkimaru kills a demon, one of his body parts grows back.

The story template is straightforward: Hyakkimaru and Dororo come to a village, which is being tormented by a demon, they kill it, and then the ungrateful villagers kick them out, so they move on to the next village,

where...

The artwork here is gorgeous: Tezuka's compositional mastery shows to full effect, and his ability to move from "establishing shots" and "zoom in" on the characters in the space of a few panels is an object lesson in graphic storytelling. His cartoony style fits the supernatural aspects of this story perfectly.

Akemi G. says

I was surprised to find this old manga series at the local library, originally published in 1960s, when the Japanese were still suffering from the memories of WWII. (Tezuka narrowly escaped death when his city was air-raided; he must have seen many dead and wounded people.)

Frankly, there are a lot of flaws, the biggest being that the plot details contradict one another. This happens in serial writing/manga, in which the continuation of the series is dependent on the readers' feedback (and therefore the author doesn't even know how long he can continue the story, and the emphasis is placed on providing creepy scenes in each episode), but it's quite horrible in Dororo.

However, the novelty of the setting--a boy, who can be considered a cyborg of sort, traveling to slay demons/goblins in order to regain his lost body parts in the (loosely) historical Japan--is quite amazing. Another brilliant point is how this weirdo character Hyakkimaru is balanced with the cute trickster Dororo, his traveling companion. Without Dororo, it's just far too dark.

I don't think I'll read the rest of the series--just not my kind of manga--but if you like SF/fantasy manga, you might like it.
