

SPECIFICS OF MODERN COMICS: TRADITIONS AND INNOVATIONS

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Based on the analysis of comics, the history of comics, and their perception by the mass audience as a modern media text, the characteristics of individual elements of comics have been systematized. The regularities inherent in comics as visual narratives of various sociocultural parts of the world, as well as the aspects that form modern Ukrainian comics, have been considered. The characteristics of the comic as an object of graphic design have been determined: the features of artistic and compositional design solutions in different world regions have been systematized; leading trends in the development of specific types of comics in the USA, Europe, Asia, and Ukraine have been identified.

Keywords: design solutions, graphics, comic, narrative, information society.

Introduction.

The need for rapid information exchange in the 21st-century society has maximally popularized comics as a form of mass graphic art through large circulation in various spheres of life. Comics (from the English comic – funny, amusing, comic), drawn stories, and graphic narrative novels, combine an important volume of information and the maximum simplicity of its transmission using pictures.

One can find their motifs everywhere: from works of art to interior design and outdoor advertising. In the cultures of countries where cartoon stories are a common form of art, such as Japan and France, they have their national names. Thus, in French-speaking countries, comics are called *bande dessinée* (from French, drawn strip), and Japanese comics are called *manga* [9; 12].

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However, the perception of comics as independent graphic art still causes discussions both among the target audience and among specialists.

In Ukraine, this type of art, despite the prevalence and multifunctionality of the comic, is perceived as belonging to the comic and to some extent purely children's genre and has a simplified level of aestheticism.

Setting objectives.

Taking into account the massive popularity of comics, the demand for them in the world, and the rapidly growing interest in Ukraine, as well as the insufficient number of scientific studies devoted to this topic, it is appropriate to analyze the development of this phenomenon, consider the origin of comics, their first authors and the reasons for their emergence. It is worth analyzing the regularities of comics, their structure, and determining what functions and content each stylistic and compositional solution carries.

In scientific research, the comic is a relatively new field. Recently, such foreign and domestic researchers as R. Brenner [12], N. Kohn [13], T. Gronstin [14], J.-B. Renard [16], C. McCloud [7], A. I. Denisova [4], G.V. Onkovich [8], and others have researched this topic. The first thorough and comprehensive study of the comic phenomenon appeared in "Comics and Sequential Art" (1985) by W. Eisner, where the comprehensive theory of the comic was revealed [17]. It should be noted that we are inclined to define a comic not as a chronologically lined up illustration, but as an artistically constructed sequence, as the art of storytelling.

We should also note the book "Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art" (2019) by S. McCloud, successor and ideological follower of W. Eisner [7]. It contains theoretical information about the creation of comics and, at the same time, is supported by examples from the history of their creation. S. McCloud notes that comics should be perceived as a specific system that combines a maximum of visual means and is based on the direct participation of the reader in its understanding.

The presence of characters in the plot of comics is also related to traditional literature: protagonists, their companions, antagonists, secondary characters, etc., which create the story and dynamics. Sometimes, due to the appearance and nature of the characters, the authors try to convey a particular plot-driven narrative, and often place the reader's emphasis on certain characters that way. Therefore, it can be observed that in many

comics the main characters are written in great detail, with all their thoughts, preferences, weaknesses, etc., and the secondary characters represent a simple personification of certain qualities in general.

At the same time, as a form of graphic art, comics have the following features:

- use of visual means of expression;
- stylization;
- typography;
- archetypal characters.

First of all, comics are images, so form and color play a primary role there. Detective, mystical, superhero, and other genres use colors that create a certain mood. The form also carries meaning in comics. In particular, to emphasize the aggressiveness of heroes or villains, artists endow them with pointed elements, and the use of rounded shapes prevails in the design of calm and benevolent characters.

The graphic part of comics is far from realistic; the stylization of the image is often quite schematic and exaggerated, often up to grotesque forms, allowing authors to expand the scope of expressing their ideas. At the same time, this forms a unique graphic style of each comic, distinguishing them from each other and from ordinary illustrated books, magazines, and other literature. As mentioned earlier, the specificity of comics consists not only of features characteristic of the original forms – graphics and literature – but also of characteristics inherent in comics as a unique form of art. Word and image in comics are closely intertwined, creating a coherent narrative; graphic and textual parts are inseparable – the absence of at least one of them destroys the meaning and sequence of the story, while in a literary work, illustrations can be removed, and this will not disrupt the plot.

Writing text in comics is a means of conveying character expression. This powerful means of influencing the reader has many aspects: the shape and color of the font, the size of the letters and the spacing between them, the position of the text concerning other elements of the image, etc. To emphasize the emotionality of a scene, the authors of comics often highlight individual lines of characters in enlarged font, different writing, or bright color. In the scenes with a neutral expression, the font is monotonous and unexpressive, emphatically restrained so as not to distract the reader from the content.

The archetypal nature of characters in comics is often manifested in the fact that heroes are not just actors – in many works, they embody certain collective abstract ideas. It can be often found in American comics, where the same Superman with his muscular body, proud posture, firm principles, and tendency to solve everything is a characteristic image of a warrior, and Wonder Woman, who rarely uses force, is gentle, often not so punishing, who educates, and is the embodiment of femininity and motherhood. It was in comics that a new archetype was born – a superhero, a modern analog of ancient or barbaric demigods and heroes with similar supernatural qualities.

Research results and discussion.

Revealing the topic of our research, we note that since the early times of human history, illustrations have been used to create a coherent narrative. The appearance of the first works resembling modern comics was closely related to the political and social life of society. These were caricatures by William Hogarth dating back to the 18th century. They represented a series of drawings united by a common thought, a common story, for example, “Career prostitutes”, “The Rake’s Progress” and “Marriage A-la-Mode” (Figure 1, Figure 2).

With the spread of newspapers and magazines, as well as due to the ease of information transmission, the comic of that time began to be used in newspapers as propaganda to attract immigrants who did not know English well. According to publishers, such illustrations were also a visual way of commenting on the surrounding reality; as a result, large publishing houses increasingly began to publish graphically designed visual accompaniment to texts.

In this regard, artists began to work on formats and create whole cycles of illustrations united by a common plot, and from the second half of the 19th century, in similar cycles, their heroes and minor characters appeared in publications on a regular basis [8].

The next important stage in the development of comic art was the work of Rodolphe Töpffer, who became famous for his “The Adventures of Mr. Obadiah Oldbuck” published in 1833 and later translated into various languages of the world (Figure 3). Rodolphe Töpffer created short stories from several panels and placed the text below them. He chose this format because of his love for both literature and drawing [7].



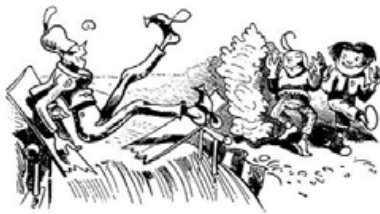
Figure 1, 2 – Some images from the series “Career prostitutes” by William Hogarth



Figure 3 – The Adventures of Mr. Obadiah Oldbuck by Rodolphe Töpffer

The works of Wilhelm Busch, whose popular series “Max and Moritz” brought him world fame, where black and white illustrations were supported by a poetic description (Figure 4) [9], also had a great contribution.

Another significant stage in comic development is the wide use of “clouds” to display the words and thoughts of the characters. An American, Richard F. Outcault, was the first who introduced that at the end of the 19th century. Because of this, his series “Hogan’s Alley”, “The Yellow Kid” and “Buster Brown” are considered the first traditional comics [13].



Und schon ist er auf der Brücke,
Kradst die Brücke bricht in Stücke;



Grad als dieses vorgekommen,
Kommt ein Gänsepaar geschwommen,
Welches Bock in Todeshast
Kramphaft bei den Beinen faßt.



Wieder stößt er: „Meck, meck, meck!“
Plumps! da ist der Schneider weg!



Beide Gänse in der Hand,
Flattert er auf trocken Land. —

"Max und Moritz" by Wilhelm Busch.

Figure 4 – Max and Moritz by Wilhelm Busch

Speaking of the history of comics, the Asian comic is also worth consideration. The first Japanese comic was four humorous stories from the 12th century, written by the Buddhist monk Toba, about animals impersonating people and monks violating the statute. Manga (Japanese comics) as it exists today combines the long tradition of Japanese graphic art, the publication of illustrated novels in earlier times, and the influence of modern American and European comics. Manga began to form as a separate art form during the Second World War when it was used for propaganda purposes and published on fine paper at the expense of government funding. Osamu Tezuka's work "Shin Takarajima" (1947) was the first to use graphic techniques that are used in the creation of manga and in the creation of modern comics (Figure 5, 6) [12].

Manga is recognized both as a form of fine art and a literary phenomenon, and its popularity covers almost all age groups of modern Japanese society. In addition to professional manga, there is amateur manga – dojinshi, published in small editions at the authors' expense.

In the USA, comics have now evolved into a cult phenomenon; in France and Japan, they are considered a separate full-fledged art genre. At the same time, in many countries, comics are one of the not fully recognized genres, however, this does not prevent this new type of mass culture from being popular among the target audience and increasingly attracting the attention of specialists in various fields of scientific activity.

Among the characteristics of the comic, it should be noted the combination of visual and verbal components, the emphasis on action rather than description, and the presence of gaps or omissions in the story structure, which the reader independently fills with meaning during reading.

Looking at comics from different parts of the world, some patterns can be deduced. A comic book in the USA is characterized by multi-genre; it can have fantastic, dramatic, detective, comedic, satirical, or other plots, along with combining them in different proportions. In most American comics, universes are well thought-out, the plots deal with such complex psychological topics as transhumanism, the justification of violence in the fight against evil, etc. The heroes of American comics act not so much as independent individuals, but as the embodiment of unconscious archetypes (Figure 7, Figure 8, Figure 9, Figure 10). Most often, the development of their characters is schematic and aimed at expressing some specific type,



Figure 5, 6 – The first editions of Osamu Tezuka’s Mighty Atom comics and Sazae-san by Matiko Hasegawa respectively



Figure 7 – Superheroes in primary colors

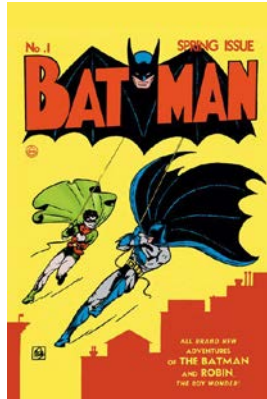


Figure 8, 9 – First editions of Superman and Batman comics

for example, a warrior, a trickster (in a certain sense, he is a comically ambivalent analog of a cultural hero) [14].

European comics are designed for a specialized and more mature audience, look more solid, and are called graphic novels; they are published in the form of thick hardcover books and have a complete plot. Unlike the American ones, European comics did not adopt the images and conflicts of the superhero and the supervillain due to cultural peculiarities, they remained mainly entertaining. The general pathos of the characters' behavior, in contrast to their American counterparts, is also noticeably reduced, caricature images of certain characters are often used to express comic moments (Figure 11).

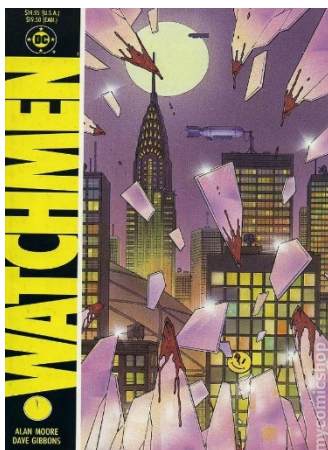


Figure 10 – Cover version of Alan Moore’s Watchmen comic



Figure 11 – Pilote magazine (1966), comic book series “Asterix” by R. Goscinny and A. Uderzo

Japanese comics differ the most from their Western counterparts. First of all, they are characterized by the recognition of the general public, because Japanese manga is one of the main types of popular art in its country, along with cinema and literature (Figure 12).

Manga is multi-genre (psychological thrillers, adventures, horrors, detectives, school dramas, etc.), much more than Western comics. At the same time, censorship in Japan practically does not apply to this type of art,

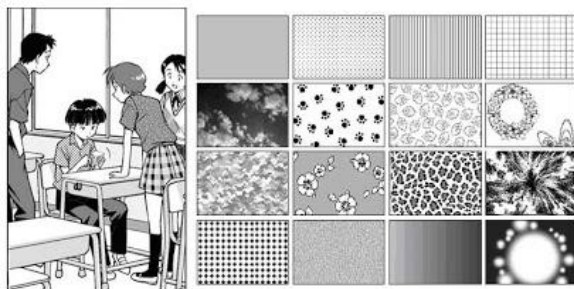


Figure 12 – Examples of screentones and their use in manga

which gives complete freedom in choosing topics and plots to its authors [15]. It is in great demand, many works are aimed at a wide variety of audiences – from small children to the elderly.

The domestic comics market is currently experiencing tremendous growth, with more and more publishing houses turning their attention to comics and new purely comic publications appearing at the same time. The target audience of the Ukrainian comics market, which is interested and follows new products, is people from 23 to 35 years old [6]. Among the works currently published in Ukraine, the vast majority are adult literature. Often, the plots of Ukrainian comics are patriotic, although now superheroes and fantasy are gaining popularity due to the influence of the American media space. The number of humorous and children’s comics is also increasing (Figure 13, Figure 14).

In comics, there is a tendency to simplify visual images. Through traditional realism, comic book artists usually depict the outer world, while the inner one is a simpler drawing. This is primarily since the simpler the style, the easier it is for the reader to identify with the image – it is not overloaded with small details, it is easier to perceive and reinterpret it for yourself. The simplicity of the image is also of great importance because



Figure 13 – Covers of the comics “Valor. Savur-Mohyla”



Figure 14 – “Cyborgs. The Legend of the Undefeated. Volume I”

it allows the reader's imagination to "finish" something of his own, further adjusting the character to himself [14].

In case when the author needs to reflect on a certain image already embedded in the plot, the beauty of some object, or vice versa, a more realistic and detailed approach to the image is possible. In many comics, there is a tendency to carefully draw the background in contrast to the rather simplified characters, which allows you to set and shape a certain way of their perception by the target audience. This is due to the need to create an atmosphere of the viewer's complicity with the strong accents of the comic as a narrative by visual means.

An essential component of the comic structure, as we have already noted, is the obligatory space for the individual creativity of the viewer, intentionally determined by the properties of the human psyche and therefore necessary for any target audience. Conjecture is the motivational basis of such an important element of the comics media text and a place for the audience's creativity. The presence of only a single element of an object, a moment of an event, or a part of an image is enough information for a person who perceives the partial elements of the proposed graphics as a complete narrative. This factor of the psyche is almost invisible in everyday life, but for the comic construction, it is the basic tool that helps the reader understand the sequence of frames and fill in the white spaces between them. It is with the help of conjecture that the two illustrations on the comic frames merge into one action for the target audience. Frames divide the time and space of the comic into a series of consecutive moments, while the imagination helps the reader connect these moments and build a certain continuous narrative-interlude [15].

It is appropriate to divide the transitions between frames into six general categories. The first is from moment to moment, so the action takes place almost frame by frame. The second category is from action to action, where there is a certain change in the activity of the subject of the story. The third is the transition from object to object within one scene or idea. The following transitions from place to place are logical transitions that help move the story to the required time or space. The fifth transition is from detail to detail, necessary to "describe" the surrounding environment, to some extent imitating the reader's gaze, considering aspects of a place, idea, or mood. The last category is incoherent transitions, where there is no logical sequence of frames [15].

The moving of actions, objects, and places in various proportions dominates in European and American comics, but with the established greatest use of the move from action to action. This is because such a move makes it possible to easily and clearly tell the story, transferring the “action” to different places and spaces from time to time. In Asian comics, although the same distribution prevails in general, the move from detail to detail also occupies quite a significant share, which is not so popular in Western analogs (Figure 15). The reason for this is the slightly different mentality of the Eastern peoples, who practice meditative, internal contemplation of the environment, supporting this tradition with their culture and art.

The basis of the comic composition is the system of frames or shots. Each image in a sequence of several such images, which create a story in the comic, is considered a frame of the comic. If only one frame contains all the information, then it is actually a narrative and such a comic is called a single frame. Basically, single-frame comics are found in newspapers and are bonus jokes. Frames in full-fledged comics are distributed on the book pages, and through them, the images and the storyline are presented [17].

The frame size depends on the importance of the scene it depicts. Dramatic and intense scenes are usually presented in larger frames than scenes where a character is thinking about something, for example. As mentioned earlier, the fields between frames in comics have a certain meaning, because they cause the effect of guesswork in the reader. Because of this, their role is important in creating the composition of frames [21].

Frame layout affects how images interact with each other by controlling their number, shape, size, and arrangement on the page. This, accordingly, gives the illustrations more meaning than if they were considered individually. Competent composition ensures smooth transitions between frames, which do not confuse the reader in the story and make it easier to perceive (Figure 16).

Composition in comics is usually planned and most often arranged in one of two ways: in rows or columns. According to the first method, the frames are read horizontally: in American and European countries from left to right, in Asian comics it is mostly the opposite, which is connected with their writing, in which the columns of hieroglyphs are written in this way. In the second type, frames are distributed vertically and are perceived by the reader from top to bottom (Figure 17, Figure 18).

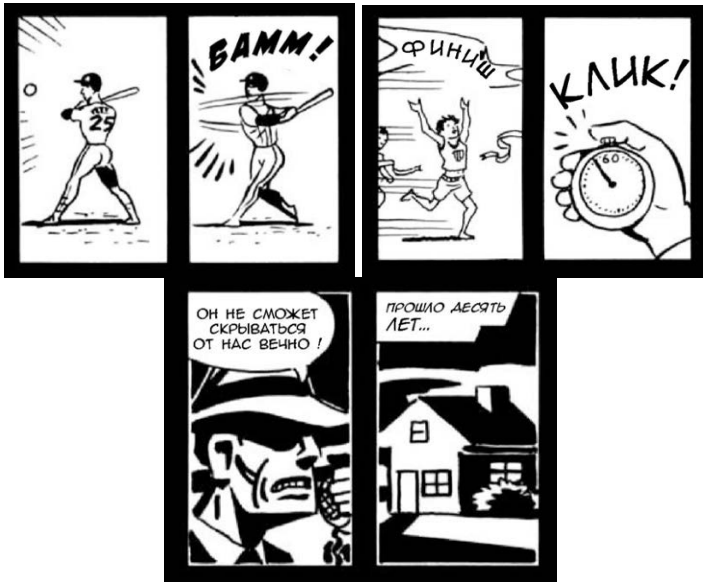


Figure 15 – Examples of the second, third and fourth movings between frames from C. McCloud’s book

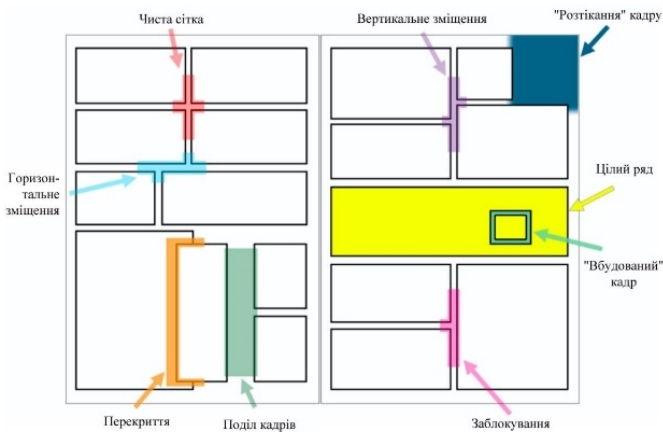


Figure 16 – Examples of aspects of the external compositional structure of the page

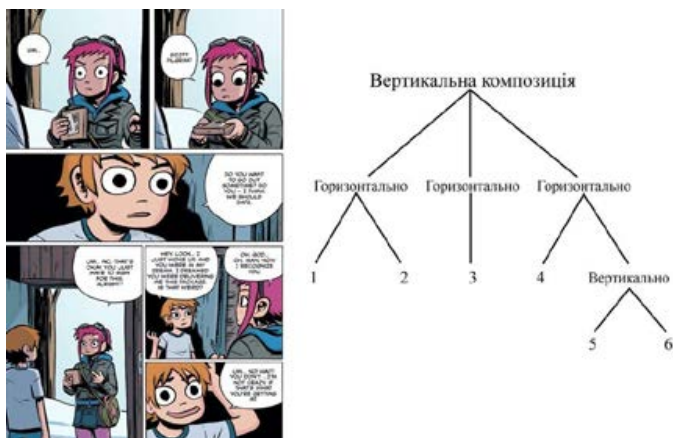


Figure 17 – Page hierarchy in Bryan Lee O’Malley’s comic book “Scott Pilgrim”



Figure 18 – Different types of movement depiction in comics

Since in the Western world it is more common to read horizontally than vertically, this method is more common in Asian comics. A combination of these two methods is also possible, where the frames are placed horizontally and vertically in different proportions. Frames may also not correspond to horizontal or vertical division and be located diagonally on the page. There are also compositional exceptions – for example, a frame can be completely surrounded by another image, the edge of one frame can be placed on top of another without a gap, and some elements of one frame go beyond the



Figure 19 – Examples of Western and Eastern comics, respectively, combined arrangement of frames

frame and can overlap other frames. It is also worth noting the frames for the whole page and the frames occupying an entire spread (Figure 19) [20].

When creating the composition of the page, bubbles or “speech bubbles” play a major role. They are depicted in the form of a cloud coming out of the character’s mouth, or when depicting thoughts – from his head. The author’s words are usually located above or below the action frames. Often, the “bubble” with the character’s words is divided into several smaller ones so that it does not take up much space on the page or indicate a pause in the character’s speech. The bubbles are frequently connected in different frames of the page to show that the character’s speech continues, while the action is taking place (Figure 20). For the reader to easily perceive the conversation, the composition of “bubbles” in Western comics is built from the upper left edge to the lower right. At the same time, the vast majority of Asian comics place the characters’ words from the upper right to the lower left, which, as mentioned earlier, is due to the writing of the peoples of Asia.

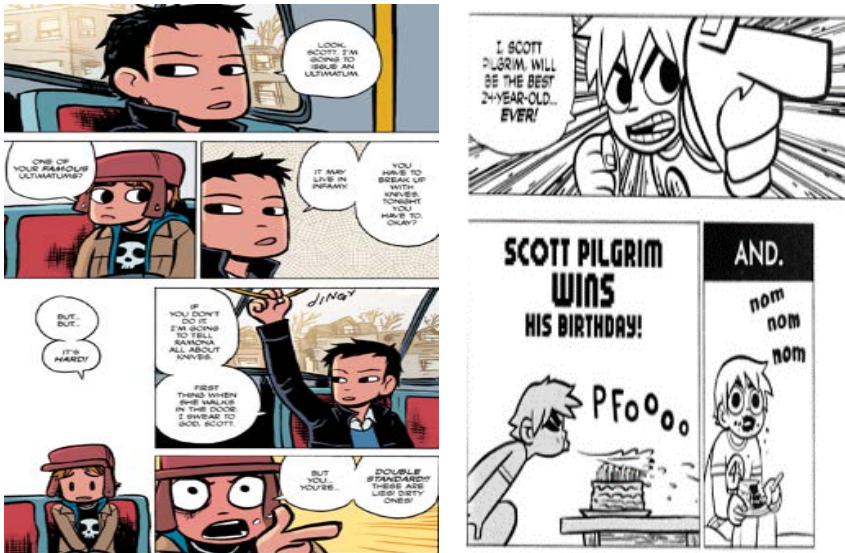


Figure 20 – An example of a split bubble and a bubble without a stroke

A comic is a special way of storytelling, where text is a sequence of frames containing not only a picture but a verbal work that mainly conveys the characters' dialogue, enclosed in a certain frame. At the same time, the picture and the enclosed text form an organic semantic unity. Thus, a comic is a special combination of verbal and non-verbal components, i.e., a combination of text and image, that forms a creolized text.

Scientific classification defines two types of text creolization: partial, where the verbal part is relatively independent, and the pictorial elements of the text are optional, and full, where the text is completely dependent on the graphic series, and the image itself acts as a mandatory element of the text [9]. Thus, the comic is a text with full creolization, since it is characterized by a high degree of affinity of both elements, and they are perceived as a single whole.

The verbal component of the comic includes the written text, which is either the language of the characters or the author's language (including titles, headings, author summary, and comments on the text). The language or thoughts of the characters are in a "speech bubble," which is a bubble (English) or a phylactery (French Phylactère).

The high informativeness of comics is provided by the presence and functioning of three information series: graphics, paragraphics, and literal text.

Graphics (considered in the first part of this chapter and partly in the last) depicts all non-verbal components of the language situation, designed to simulate reality by using a color palette, perspective, change of plans, and angles of view. This allows you to control the audience's perception and cause the reader to be significantly interested in the events of the comic.

The paragraphics is no less important to perceive the message by the information series. This is a certain set of ideograms, which helps it not only form verbo-iconic messages but also convey independent information, often replacing the literal text. The paragraphics includes graphically and phonetically motivated signs. The latter are responsible for the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the sound, which allows you to "voice" the silent text. This effect is achieved by using onomatopoeic words (classic "boom" or "ka-thoom" in superhero comics) (Figure 21). In this way, the category of sound becomes a unique textual category that can function only within the comic framework.

Graphically motivated signs are almost the most important element of a comic and, unlike phonetically motivated signs, are universal, and some of them even go beyond the comic text and function separately, in particular in advertising. Among them are such signs as the frame box, bubbles, and phylacteries, lines of movement, graphic images of an explosion,

an exclamation mark or a question mark, musical notes, and other symbolic images (Figure 22).

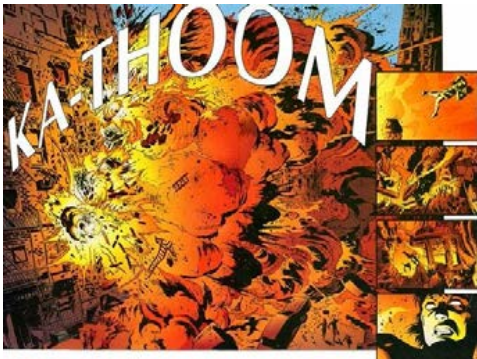


Figure 21 – An example of phonetically motivated signs in modern comics

The literal text in the comic contributes to the expression of the author's position with the help of the author's comments. Discourse transmitted through the literal text can create a linguistic portrait of the characters, showing not only their external but also their internal language.

The vast majority of comics print their texts exclusively in capital letters. Comics inherited this type of writing from its predecessor, the newspaper comic. As mentioned in previous chapters, newspaper comics were very popular and much more common at the time, but also much more compact. They were printed cheaply and were intended more for a literate audience, but the level of literacy, English proficiency, and age of the reader naturally varied. Children often took the newspapers their parents had already read to look at the small comic inserts. The image in such comics could already be torn or crumpled. In such conditions, the text had to maintain its readability, even if the image “suffered,” and uppercase letters coped with this task better than the usual text writing.



Figure 22 – An example of text dynamics on several pages of the comic “Cerebus” by Dave Sim

The most common uses of text in comics are text as speech, text as internal monologue, and text as narrative.

A less common approach is to place the text outside the frame, such as when the text is placed below the image of the speaker. However, such placement somewhat distances the reader from the events of the comic, reminiscent of storyboards for a movie or simply a transcription of a conversation that has already taken place.

Most language texts in comics are done with a fixed style to maintain a uniform appearance. Bold text, as already noted, is used for emphasis, and variations in letter size are usually used as an indicator of increasing tone or for shouting. Sometimes special fonts are used for certain characters, providing their speech in a characteristic style within the overall style of the comic. Dave Sim’s work “Cerebus” (Figure 22) can be an example of perhaps the most dynamic use of language text in comics. Sim treats text as an image, changing the style and layout as required to create vivid narrative effects.

Text is also used as part of an image, a frame detail, such as billboards and signs, text on a character’s t-shirt, a box of cereal, or a soda can. Unlike

direct speech, thought, or story, the reader sees this text as part of the represented space in the frame, even if in some cases the text reads like a story (Figure 23).

Sound effects have a long history of use in comics – they represent non-speech sounds and are among the most common places where letters and words are used to create meaning in comics. Most sound effects are onomatopoeic (as noted above), but the text is often used to describe or denote a sound, not just to reproduce it. For example, instead of trying to reproduce a sound, authors often use words to describe the sound. Similarly, Hope Larson in “Grey Horses” uses words to describe the smell, also using curved lines that convey the “flow” of the smell through the air (Figure 24).

Moving away from the text itself, it is also worth noting the role of the already mentioned bubbles or “speech bubbles”, because they play an important role when creating the composition of a comic page. Bubbles are white voids filled with text. From the graphic point of view, these are large objects in the form of white spots. Since speech bubbles participate in the creation of a composition, they can shape it. In this way, the use of a figurative bubbles outline gives them a special meaning and weight in the frame, and draws attention to itself as the composition object, but the complete absence of an outline with correspondingly transparent or non-existent borders leads to a greater emphasis on the graphics in the frame. Also, for example, the tendency to use bubbles with sharp ends for a phrase with a shout, where they become longer towards the shout, sets and

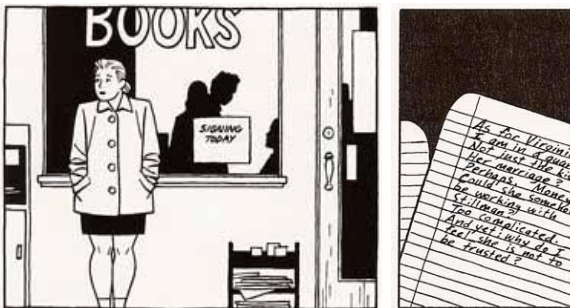


Figure 23 – An example of a signboard and a sign telling about the surrounding events, and a frame with part of a letter that reveals the plot



Figure 24 – Expressing of the taco smell in “Grey Horses” by Hope Larson

emphasizes the direction of this shout; a narrow bubble in a narrow frame supports the compositional decision and emphasizes the shape of the frame, in contrast to a usual-size bubble.

Bubbles usually form an ellipse or a convex polygon as close as possible to the correct figure, so the text inside is readable. The reader also perceives the text better with the fonts that resemble handwritten ones. Straight type and serif fonts look worse on comic pages.

Compositionally, a little more space is usually left around the text in the middle of the speech bubble, so the text does not “fit” into the outline. In this way, it is more easily perceived by the reader, and in a frame with a large graphic load, the bubble and the text in it do not merge with the background.

Difficult, complex phrases of the characters are usually broken down by the authors into several simpler parts and depicted by several connected bubbles. Characters interrupting each other is often shown by overlapping one character’s speech bubble with another character’s speech bubble. Also, often the bubble with the character’s words is just broken into several smaller ones so that it does not take up much space on the page or indicate a pause in the character’s speech.

In order for the reader to easily perceive the conversation, the composition of “bubbles” in Western comics is built from the upper left

edge to the lower right. At the same time, the vast majority of Asian comics place the characters' words from the upper right to the lower left, which, as mentioned earlier, is due to the writing of the peoples of Asia.

Summing up, we can say that Ukrainian comics are characterized by their approach to European analogs in terms of composition and subject matter. Due to the low prevalence of Ukrainian comics, authors are not so willing to dare to experiment and therefore rely on the experience of the West. Also, due to the rise of superhero cinema, which is popular with the mass audience, Ukrainian comics from time to time try to adopt the superhero theme characteristic of American comics, transforming it against the background of national culture.

The national specificity of Ukrainian graphic prose involves an appeal to Ukrainian themes and images, the source of which is the age of the Cossacks. The Cossacks in the Ukrainian worldview are the prototype of the national superhero. In this regard, it is appropriate to talk about the comic as a mythological narrative that provides society with a role model, accumulates patriotism, and actualizes national pride.

The creation of a cycle of comics about Ukrainian Superheroes is currently extremely relevant. Among the currently famous and popular Ukrainian comics, we can single out the Ukrainian steam-punk comic "Volya," which has as many as 6 screenwriters, 5 artists, 3 colorists and 2 historical consultants; the anti-corruption "Chronicles of Uptown" authored and founded by Mykhailo Pimenov; a graphic adaptation of Ivan Franko's historical novel – "Unwilling Hero", which was worked on by the text editor Kyryll Horyshnii and the artist Mykhailo Tymoshenko; the blockbuster novel "Daohopak" (Figure 28) from the Nebeskey publishing house; comics about the war in the east: "Valor. Savur-Mohyla" by Denys Fadeev and "Cyborgs" from the organization "True to Traditions"; "War of the Gods" and the collection "Sarcophagus" by Andrii Dankovych; the graphic novel "Maksym Osa" (Figure 25) by Ihor Baranko; the graphic novel "Chub: The Star Tale of the Cossack Chubenko" (Figure 26, Figure 27), created by illustrator Oleksandr Komiakhov; "Among the Sheep" and "Silence" by Oleksandr Koreshkov; "Three against evil" by Yaroslav Fudjack and Taras Yarmus; "Hennadiy the Pigeon" by the artist under the nickname Koro and many others, which brought a lot of new things to the domestic comics industry and contribute to its further development and popularization.

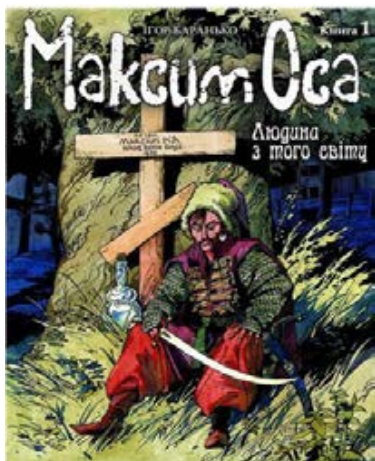


Figure 25 – Covers of the comics “Maksym Osa”



Figure 26 – “A Man from the Other World” and “Chub: Star Tale of the Cossack Chubenko”



Figure 27 – “Chub: The Star Tale of the Cossack Chubenko”



Figure 28 – “Daohopak”

Thus, “Chub: The Star Tale of the Cossack Chubenko” is a graphic novel by Oleksandr Komiakhov about the Cossack Chubenko. The comic combines the Ukrainian past, the present, and an alternative fantasy world. “Daohopak” is a blockbuster comic about the adventures of charakternyk Cossacks from the knightly order of magicians and martial arts masters of Zaporizhzhia Sich.

Conclusion.

Comics, uniquely combining graphics and narrative, became a real cultural phenomenon and went beyond purely humorous and satirical magazines. In the era of super-speed technologies of the 21st century comic appears as a universal genre, which, spreading in its application to various spheres of social life, acts as a set of motivating signs, images, and symbols that generate meaning, creating informational patterns that the viewers interpret according to their own worldview guidelines.

Recently, there has been an incredible rethinking of comics in the media space as a way of communication in the information society. Today, in addition to humorous literature in the form of comics, there are also works on various topics (medicine, history, education, politics, etc.). Today, the importance of comics as art in Western culture, as well as in Japan, is hardly questioned. More and more scientists and practitioners are trying to understand their phenomenon and realize the design potential of this type of graphic art. At the same time, comics continue to be one of the favorite forms of modern mass entertainment culture of various age groups.

Based on this study, significant factors inherent in comics from different parts of the world and aspects that form purely American, European, or Asian comics have been systematized. The international elements peculiar to comic book graphics of all regions have been highlighted. The conducted analysis made it possible to determine the main world trends and aspects in this field of design, which can be used by Ukrainian authors in the process of creating domestic comics.

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