

## EDITORIAL

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There have been several reasons to exclude comic from high culture and academic studies. Among them, and apart from its popular character, these being its relationship with the child or youth reader and, consequently, its conception as a mere entertainment that is addressed to this kind of audience. Moreover, since its beginnings, comic has been released from this identification, being considered as a restrictive label through examples where adult serves as the model reader. Let us think, for example, about those satires that can be found in Hogarth's and Töpffer's works or even in Richard F. Outcoul't s famous *Yellow Kid*.

As the same as child and youth literature, comic has always been linked to children's audiences as a determining element for its referred exclusion, having been considered as a minor art form, until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Therefore, from the sixties there has been an increasing interest in comic as an object of study by means of awaking its cultural conscience. This is reflected from the academic perspective in its positive increase in different areas works and disciplines, as well as in the number of congresses, conferences, forums or seminars. Nowadays different University Chairs have been founded to design and implement different Master's and Postgraduate studies on this academic line.

Otherwise, apart from a marked openness to non-fiction, the recognition of comic's communicative function and ability to lead complex issues and question to an adult reader, means a way of exploring new themes, formats and genres. These being, first, from pioneering works in defense of sexual affective freedom, such as those that are signed by Alison Bechdel, Howard Cruse, Nazario or Ralf König; second, going through foundational titles that are linked to the so-called social stream through the works of Justin Green's, David B's, or Paco Roca's, regarding the pathologies figuration and functional diversity; and third, even those contributions such as the emblematic *Persepolis* or *Maus*, as oft cited milestones.

Specifically, this monograph takes the complex relationship between comics and diversity as a social identity discursive space. This means an interrelation with *the Other* and the representation of otherness through eight works. These essays have been elaborated by several researchers from different backgrounds, fields of knowledge, methods and research perspectives, with the common factor of interpretative and academic rigour in approaching the object of study.

First of all, Diana Castilleja explores the comic possibilities to make those forgotten voices and geographic spaces of Latin American migration to the United States visible,



being based on a corpus of five significant titles. Beyond entertainment, on the one hand, this researcher claims for her role in the configuration of a socially committed discourse. On the other, she delves into gender hybridity as an intrinsic feature of comic that challenges the hegemonic discourse from discursive diversity, conferring legitimacy on the migratory experience.

From the strategies range study that are displayed by comic in its search for a language to allow trauma being expressed, José Manuel Trabado focuses on Emil Ferris's work, *My Favourite Thing is Monsters* and on Una's *Una entre muchas*. Trabado reveals the mechanisms that are implemented in the construction of two differentiated iconographic models, but with a common axis, this being, the overcoming of the traditional forms of comic representation towards the creation of two singular repertoires.

Sheila López-Prados and Francisco Sáez de Adana enquire the use of comic as a tool to raise awareness and attention to diversity, being based on a study that was carried out in Primary Education. Their work reveals how the creation of comics by students can promote empathy, while showing the need to influence visual literacy and the development of multimodal skills among students in this educational stage.

Within the framework of literary education, Jerónimo Méndez-Cabrera and Francesc Rodrigo-Segura explore the potential of manga as an outstanding possibility for reading promotion from an intercultural perspective. According to this purpose, they select the work *Tomoji*, by Jiro Taniguchi, as a representative case, in terms of the interrelation of thematic links between Western culture and Japanese culture, where to base the study of identity and cultural diversity. Likewise, they make a proposal for reading motivation from certain methodological keys of the didactic sequences. Its ultimate purpose is to generate a replicable model for reading promotion with manga, as a prominent axis from which to promote discussion around cultural aspects, such as the social role of women, the notion of nature or family.

Under Prehistory as scene, Margarita Savchenkova approaches the representation of diversity from *Sapiens: A Graphic History*, *The Birth of Humankind*, a graphic version of the essay *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*. From the basis on a translation and semiological analysis model, she reads both works in order to understand the place that expressions of diversity occupy in them and discovers an ideological message: the creation of parallels between the prehistoric era and the contemporary world, in terms of ethnic-cultural, affective-sexual and gender diversity.

Enric Falguera-García and Moisés Selfa-Sastre look into the historical comic as a tool with great potential for the transmission of an ideology through certain referents and the configuration of identity. In particular, they focus on the Catalan-language comic about the medieval history of Catalonia and select a corpus of ten titles to analyse the ideological intention behind the choice of events and characters. At the same time, these authors propose an analysis model of the comic that merges different perspectives.

Finally, Gino Frezza offers a documented, reflective analysis of the comic diversity from different study variables. These are including, on the one hand, drawings, and on the other, characters, stories, and journey. He also points out the existence of a stream of agreement, overlap, and inextricable path between both.

Through these eight differentiated voices, from different perspectives and disciplines, we have explored some of the possibilities regarding the triad that has been proposed in this issue, this being *comic, reading, and diversity*. Therefore, we stay in front of an

interesting range of studies. These are offering us a suggestive approach to the editorial line that is marked from the monograph under the same diversity of their views, without exhausting the complexity of the proposed topic in any way. There are still different focuses left to explore, from different methodologies, perspectives and areas of knowledge. From this monograph, we have the chance to invite all researchers to immerse themselves in the different lines of this outlined work. We hope that this monograph could become a reference for all those who are interested in this matter and its forthcoming researching approach.