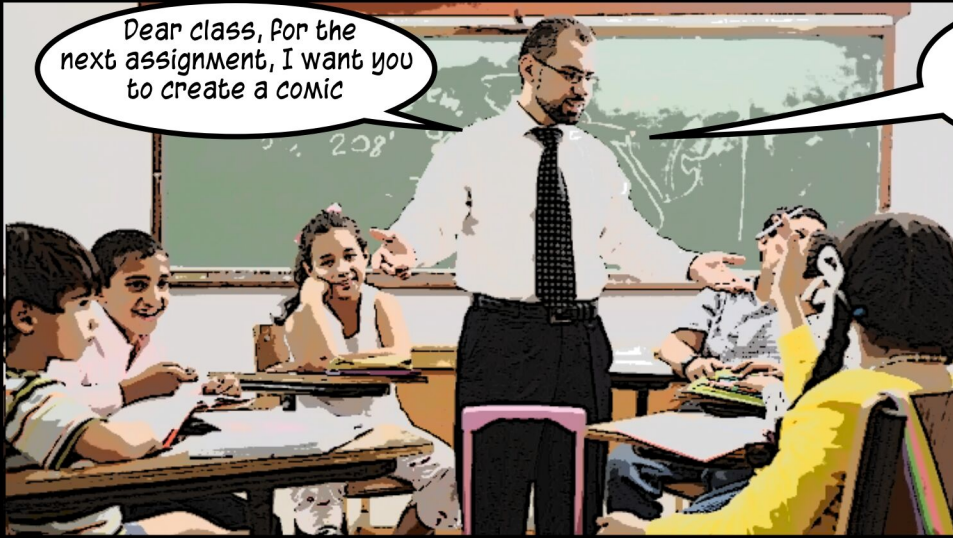
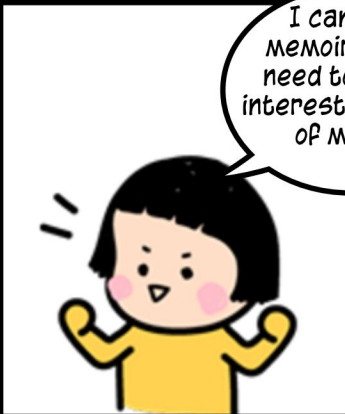
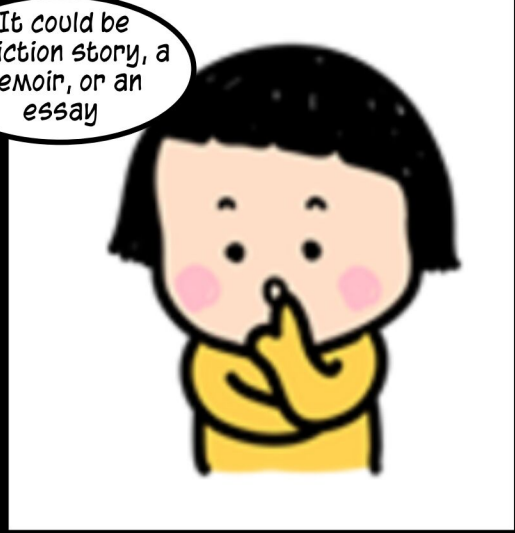


INTRODUCTION

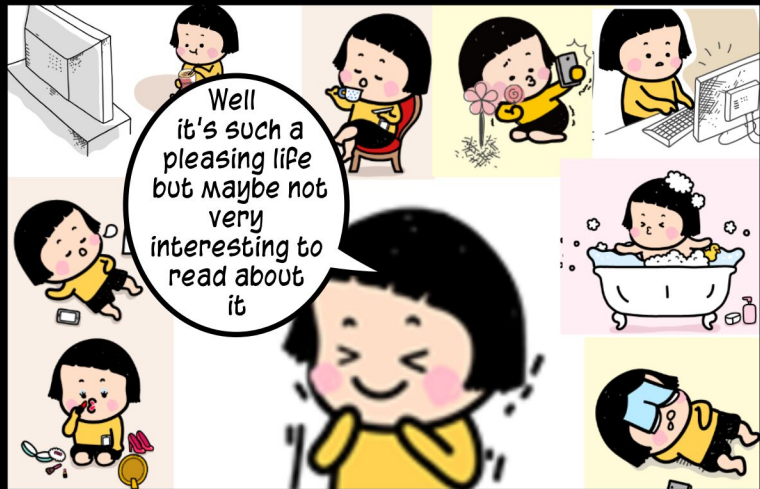


Dear class, for the next assignment, I want you to create a comic

It could be a Fiction story, a memoir, or an essay



I can do a memoir. I just need to tell an interesting story of my life



Well it's such a pleasing life but maybe not very interesting to read about it



Or I can write Fiction!!!

So... I guess...

I will write an essay then!



PERSEPOLIS

vs.

WATCHMEN



Nowadays many of you read comics, maybe tons of them, varying in styles and contents.



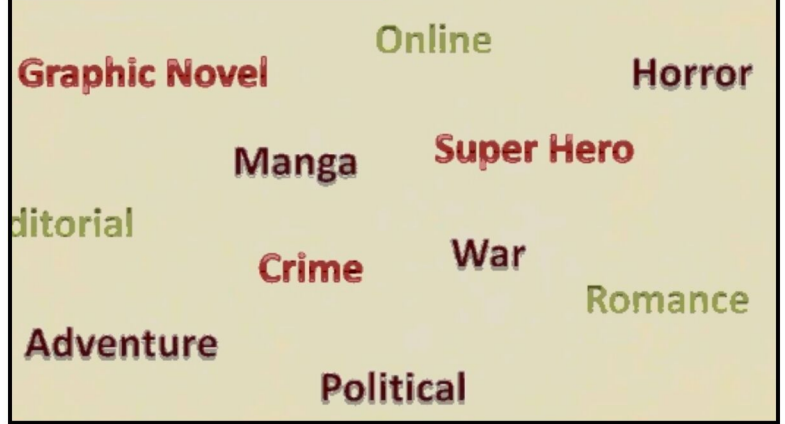
But have you ever think about the difference of techniques in each genre that authors use to convey their ideas?

In this comic I will compare different techniques used in Watchmen and Persepolis and their effects based on categories in Understanding comic by Scott McCloud

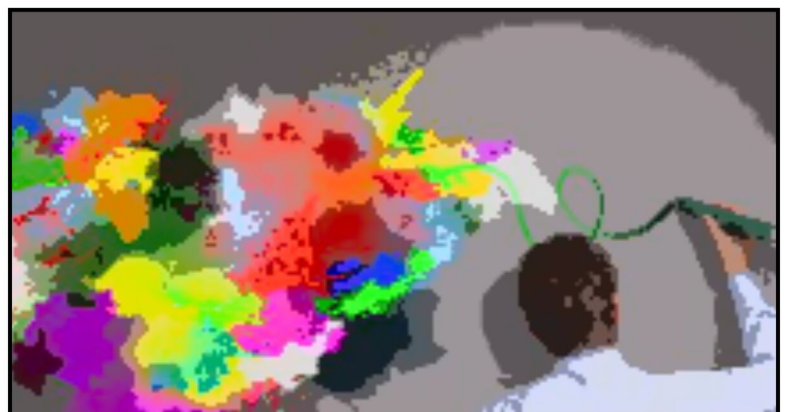
The comic world is now becoming very popular...



...with many different genres: non-fiction, Fiction, Memoir, ...



As a combination of words and pictures, comic is an effective medium



It gives a chance for authors to fully express their creativeness without any limit regarding budget, technology. The authors thus have more power to shape readers' imagination through specific images



And it allows readers to enjoy the beauty of words, the pleasure of reading, and to immerse in a world shaped by the images.

In short, comics are movies transformed into paper.



And that is why comics nowadays are popular among both children and adults



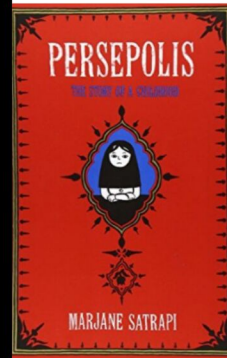
The difference in genre is the key thing that forms the difference in the style of authors in making their stories.

Memoir

vs.

Fiction

Watchmen and Persepolis are both popular comics that talk about problems in wartime



Persepolis is a memoir of Marjane Satrapi based on her true story of growing up in war,

HOWEVER



while Watchmen is a fictional comic by Alan Moore, Dave Gibbons and John Huggins, telling the story of disguised heroes trying to solve social problems, preventing the war.

Different characteristics in these two genres, memoir and fiction

Require authors to use completely different techniques and styles to fully convey the story.



Memoir is based on true stories in the real world.

- Characteristics of Memoirs:**
- A memory; a description of a *true* past event
 - Written in the 1st person
 - Reveals the *feelings* of the writer
 - Has meaning; shows what the author *learned* from the experience
 - About the author's *experience* more than about the event itself

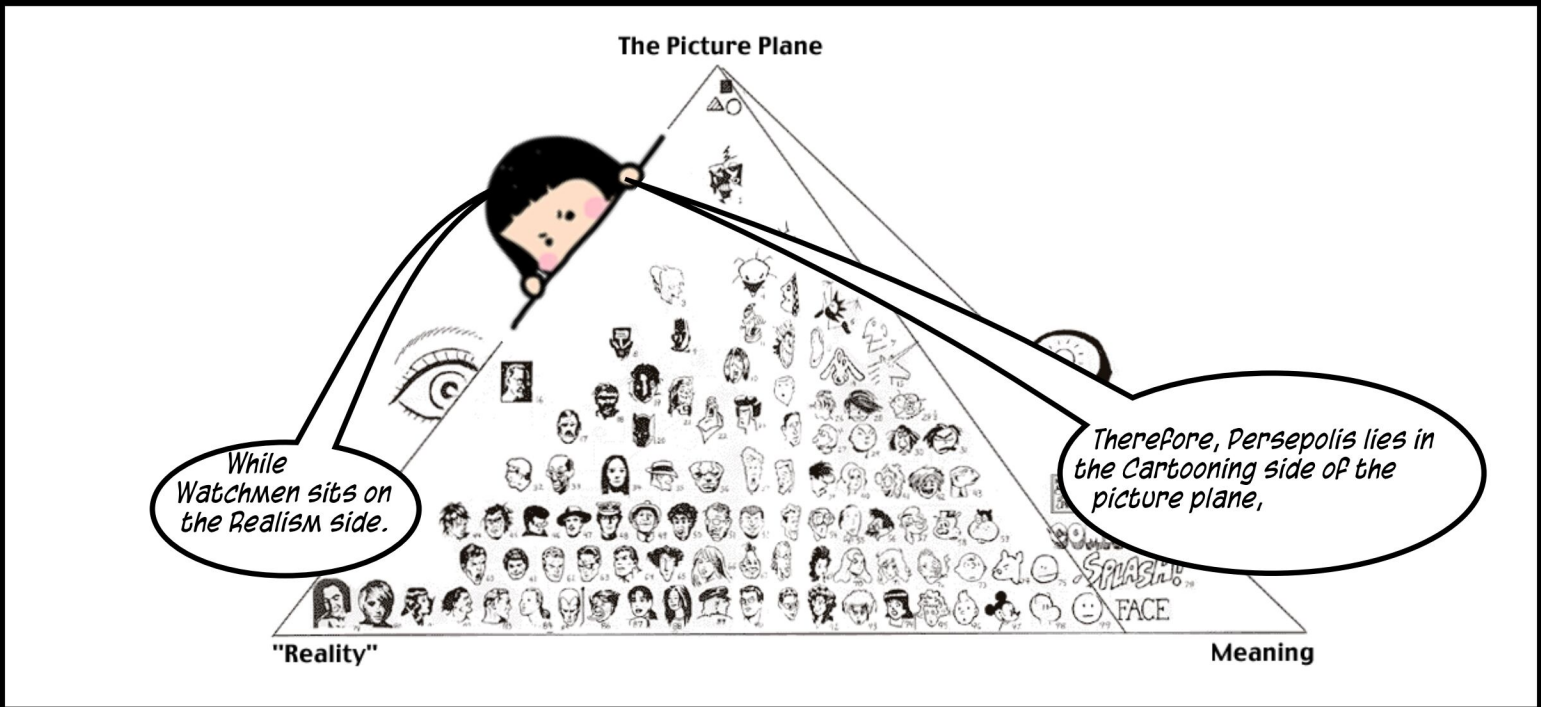


Therefore Satrapi doesn't need to create a realistic world in her story to assist readers to better imagine the setting.

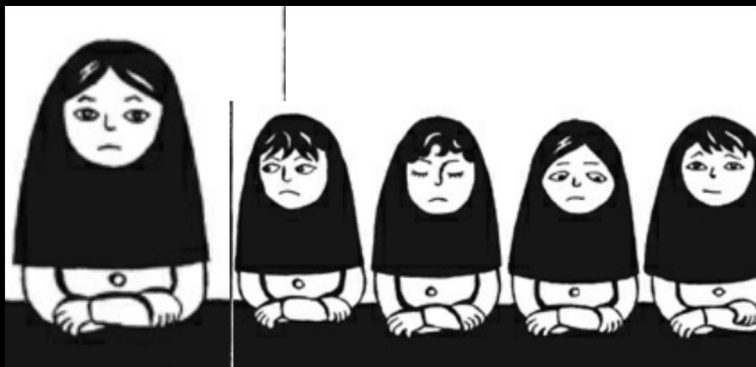
Fiction, on the other hand, is the untrue story



Thus, it is necessary for the authors to depict the world as realistic as possible, to help them truly immerse in and explore the new world.



Satrapa adroitly uses expressionism with cartooning to show the characters' emotions throughout many events



Moreover, by simplifying the image of herself, she implicitly tells readers that this is the common childhood of her generation.

Expressionism is used subtly yet powerfully, not with extreme lines of anger or sorrow but often with just a drop of tear or small changes the eyes and the mouth

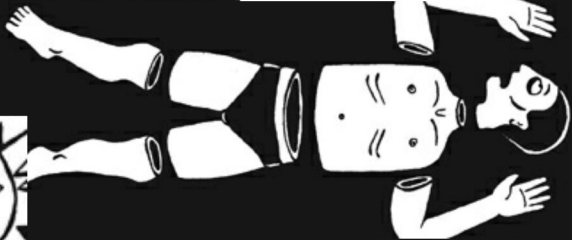
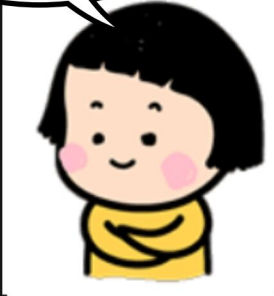




In this case, this technique helps show Satrapi's feelings and imaginations as a child: Her ideas about war are still ambiguous and innocent, mostly based on what she has been told instead of direct experience

According to Scott McCloud, it affects our "reading" of characters' inner states

Abstraction is widely used in Persepolis.



My grandpa was a prince



AND SO WENT THE REVOLUTION IN MY COUNTRY.



This works well for a memoir, as it shifts the focus into the narrations, or the ideas conveyed, not the pictures or characters' appearances.



MEANINGS



Many children all over the world also have to suffer from war



Keeping the background similar, Satrapi prevents from implying that only children in her countries have to bear those pains



Children all over the world need peace.



We can also notice that Satrapi only uses black and white.



As it is a memoir, it creates a nostalgic environment.



And it is suitable for depicting war, instead of using colors that create a vivid, lively ambience

What I found impressive about *Persepolis* is that it tells the story through the perspective of a child who is growing up, shaping her personalities.



Like a curious and carefree kid who always actively learns about her surrounding world, readers can learn about the historical affairs in her country naturally and effectively



Without the feeling of being overwhelmed by too much information being told in few pages.

Showing a child's typical thoughts also adds some humor to alleviate the tension of conveyed stories about war and social problems regarding discrimination and religious belief.



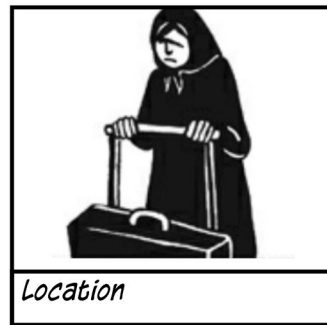
Satrapa's reactions at the end of each chapter are really unexpected, innocent and cute. These could not happen if she chose to narrate through an adult's view instead.



Satrapa choose stories that have big influences on her life only children living in war would have those experience.



These events show changes in her life in every aspect



To belief



In watchmen the authors also use expressionism



But it is used in a much more detailed and complicated way, combining with realism



In Watchmen, characters are depicted in colors with full details: wrinkles, hair, outfit

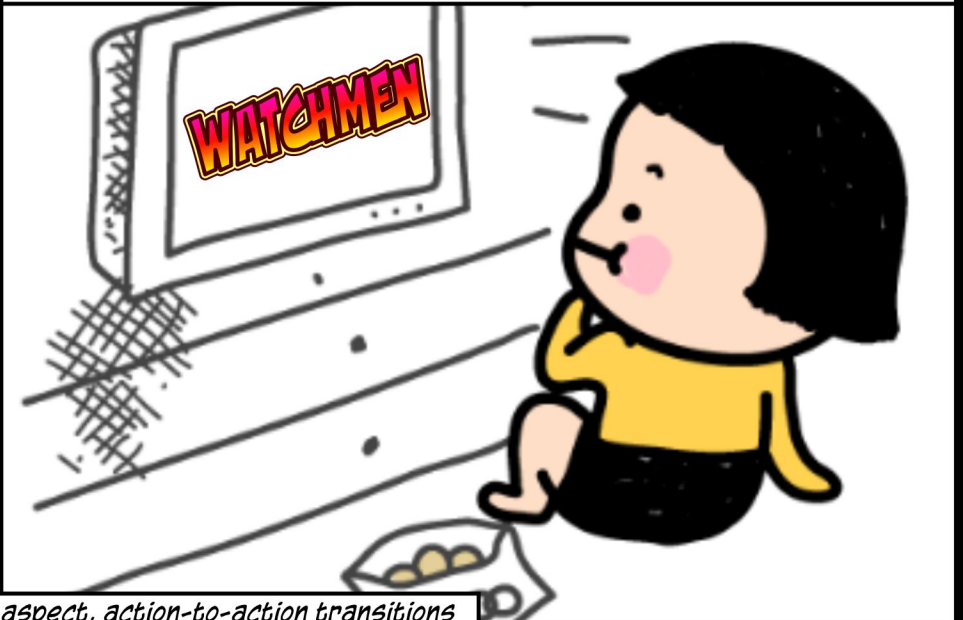
And also with skillful use of shadows and contrasts



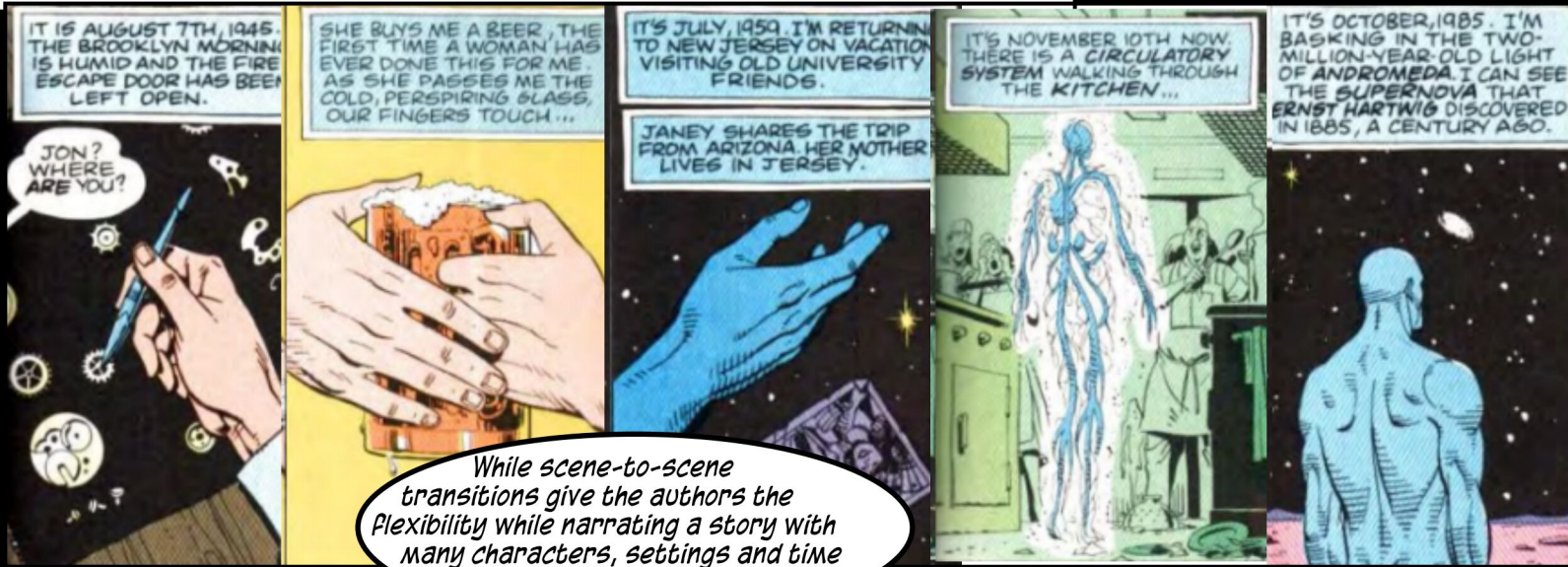
Backgrounds in Watchmen are full of details of even the smallest ones such as strains on the wall, trash on the streets, or passers-by.

These techniques gives the readers a sense that they are being told hidden stories about abnormal people somewhere else in this real world, not just an imaginative work of some people.

Reading Watchmen is like seeing screen shots from real movie sequences on paper because of the way authors use transitions, and types of frame.



There is a majority of scene-to-scene, aspect-to-aspect, action-to-action transitions



While scene-to-scene transitions give the authors the flexibility while narrating a story with many characters, settings and time period



Aspect-to-aspect ones make it possible for comic authors to become the directors of their scene, switching between different types of shots: close shot, establishing shot, medium shot... to fully show character's emotions.

These two types are often combined together, or with action-to-action transitions. They create unique mise-en-scene effects in this comic.

Since there are many parallel events, flashbacks, and locations, there is a strong, interdependent relationship between words and images throughout the story to help readers follow the plot



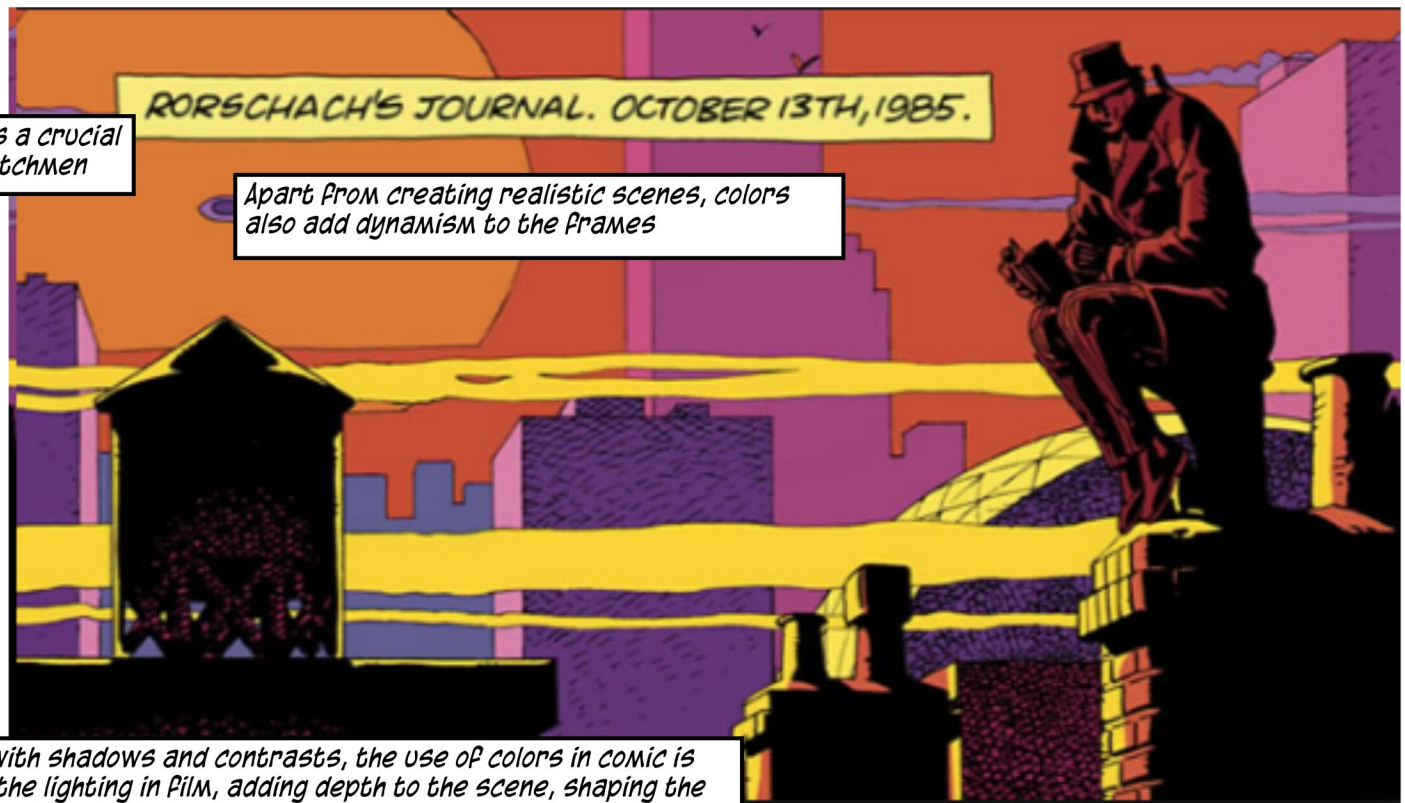
The use of realism already requires using many lines therefore, using this technique prevents the chaos that may occur when using action lines.



RORSCHACH'S JOURNAL. OCTOBER 13TH, 1985.

Color plays a crucial part in Watchmen

Apart from creating realistic scenes, colors also add dynamism to the frames



Together with shadows and contrasts, the use of colors in comic is similar to the lighting in film, adding depth to the scene, shaping the ambience, enhancing the motions.

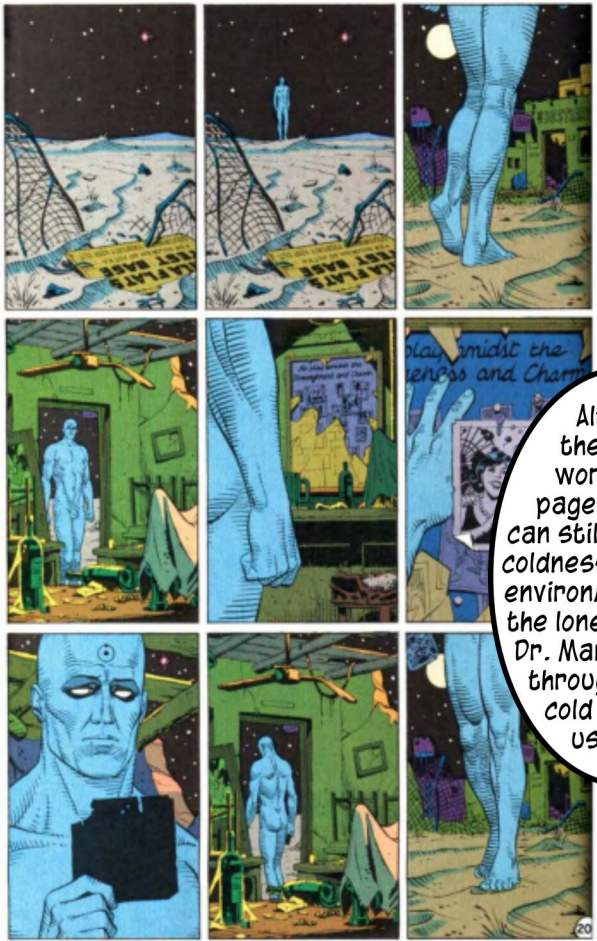




There is no word or motion lines in this page; however, colors sharpen the details: splash of bloods and water, smoke from the gun and changes in Veidt's expressions

Colors gives the panels liveliness and realism that monotone comics cannot

For example, in this page the red theme create a sense of pressure, anger, mystery and death



Although there is no word in this page, readers can still feel the coldness of the environment and the loneliness of Dr. Manhattan through the cold tones used.

While other comics often show action-to-action scenes by pictures of characters at the end of those actions and let readers imagine the process themselves, Watchmen shows characters at the middle of those actions.

This is because actions are very crucial in any story of superheroes. Authors need to specify actions with intensity and emotions rather than letting readers to fill gaps between scenes themselves

This technique is not found in Persepolis, because for memoirs, events are more important than actions

BUILDING CHARACTERS

This part also needs discussing

In Persepolis, every character has a relationship with Satrapi, and their stories of life help shape Satrapi's opinions about her world, as well as her actions



In each chapter, readers are introduced to some new characters and their backgrounds. However, these stories are separated. The characters do not relate to each other

As Satrapi grows up, she knows more people, more aspects of life. The flow of time in Persepolis is straight. Events are observed and told by Satrapi



I fought in the war, my voice deserves to be heard.
Enough repression, I want the chance to pursue my dreams.
The economy is too weak, we want jobs.
True Islam is peaceful.
I want friendly relations with other countries.
We were happier before '79.
I'm a policeman, these are my people.



Therefore, the order of events is clear. Readers grow up with Satrapi, learn about the history of the surrounding world together with her

In Watchmen, there are many different characters with different backgrounds, appearances and beliefs.



To effectively introduce these characters, the authors need to frequently switch between time, space.



Main characters all have relationships with each other; therefore each one's actions have big influences on others'.

Like many other superhero stories, costumed heroes in Watchmen are motivated by childhood events that affect their perspective about humanity.



Rorschach's perspective is deeply influenced by serious crimes around him. This becomes his motivation to save the world. To him, there is a strong line between right and wrong, and no excuses can blur that line.

Dr. Manhattan always thinks about the flow of time, as his father is a watchmaker.



Silk Spectre is deeply influenced by her mother, who was also a disguised hero. She is a typical female role in the story with her sexy appearance. She adds the romance to the story.





Nite Owl is calm and neutral. He follows his hobby and since there is no striking event in his life, so he sometimes lacks motivation



Ozymandius has a big confidence in himself since he was a child. He is a narcissist. He strongly believes that he can solve the world's problem himself and nothing can stop him to achieve that ambition. His actions are triggers of the whole story.

There are different visual techniques in depicting these characters to intensify their role in the plot



Nite Owl is often depicted at home as a normal man, sometimes in nudity. It implies that this man is not strongly affected by social problems. He is often shown with medium shots. He responds to the events instead of causing any.



Dr. Manhattan often appears in close-shots as he recollect his past. Blue indicates his coldness.



Silk Spectre is often shown behind other male characters in sexy costumes.



Low-angle viewpoints are often used to depict Ozymandias to indicate his extreme power. He always appears in his own luxurious place without any real contact to the actual world. He has a humane aim: to stop war; however, his method to achieve such goal is inhumane. As he does not have many contacts to mankind, he tends to be more rational and apathy than be emotional



What he does are out of readers' expectations; therefore, he creates a plot twist, which largely contributes to the success of this comic

In contrast, Rorschach often wanders in streets. He observes things and deeply understands about different people from various backgrounds. He builds his strong sense of justice based on what he had seen.



His mask has two opposite colors: black and white, implying how he sees the world: black represents crimes, white represents justice.

In the first half of the comic, he always wears mask, avoiding anyone to recognize his true identity.

The Comedian is often shown in close-shot to illustrate his reactions. Readers learn about him through other characters' thoughts and flashbacks.



Red tones are used to imply his anger, his ferocity.

Indeed, by using different combinations of techniques that are particularly effective for their comic genre, Satrapi, Alan, Dave and John are able to enjoy big commercial success and to inspire generations of readers.

that enables you to learn, to laugh, to cry, to be motivated, and to fall in love at the same time!

Persepolis is a brilliant coming-of-age story

Wow I look great in realism

And through excellent content and images

Alan, Dave and John give readers a chance to become one member of the Crimebuster and join the adventurous life of the Watchmen.

Thank U

