Probably, discuss briefly the theme of superheroes

Probably, when the writer Alan Moore together with his artist Dave Gibbons and a colorist John Higgins were creating Watchmen, they did not know it would be a bestseller one day or would be adapted in a movie. What is the secret of their success? I will try to answer this question in my paper. Watchmen is a graphic novel, in which verbal and visual elements are perfectly combined.

A verbal element that includes the main heroes, central themes, and author's main messages plays a more important role, while a visual element makes a story more vivid and involving.

Watchmen: A Verbal Aspect

To understand the importance of a verbal aspect in the novel, let me first discuss briefly the theme of superheroes and their extreme popularity. Superheroes have always been the main characters of almost all or, at least, the most famous comic books. They possess abilities, and very often personal traits that normal people do not. For both kids and adults, superheroes turn into champions always ready to fight for justice – this is what Jamie A. Hughes writes in The Journal of Popular Culture (39: 546-547).

However, what do we see in Watchmen? Authors of this graphic novel make a unique attempt to " deconstruct the very idea of the hero" by " shattering this idealized reflection of humanity" (McLaughlin 101). They do it by mean of the character of Adrian Veidt or Ozymandias who becomes the main villain of the novel. One of the author's main purposes was to show that by such medium as comics it is possible to show and make emphasis on some real world problems that exist in society.

The main themes covered in the novel perfectly reflect some major 1980s issues that bothered Alan Moore. He saw " superheroes" of his times, Ronald Reagan or Margaret Thatcher who were supposed to be watchmen, who had to control the world, and rescue it if necessary (Wright 273). Obviously, Moore was disappointed by those " superheroes".

Watchmen: A Visual Aspect

It is said that the artist Dave Gibbons deviated from some widely accepted rules of drawing comic books. He used a so-called nine-panel grid system for making Watchmen, which he believed gave Alan Moore more control over the plot and storyline (Salisbury 80). Although somebody may find this style of creating comic books unique or special, I cannot fully agree that it contributes to the overall success of this novel greatly.

Yes, all the characters are depicted in a simple and rather realistic way, which definitely makes reading the novel more captivating. However, from my point of view, Gibbon's style does not differ significantly from other comics. I can agree with the role of the colorist John Higgins who I think managed to make this novel more lively and moody by using colors. Watchmen is done in so-called European style colors, secondary colors, which are not too bright, but still convey the mood of the main characters, their feelings, etc, perfectly (Duin, Richardson 460).

What can be said in the conclusion? I am sure that millions of people will agree that Watchmen is not just a graphic novel. A brilliant combination of visual and verbal aspects can turn it into motion pictures in someone's mind, and perhaps this is why the novel was successfully adapted into a movie.

Yet, it is a novel that cannot be understood fully after the first reading. It is a work that should be re-read several times, and each time a reader will discover new meanings and themes in Watchmen.

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