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## **Autor\_in**

Camilla Murgia (Genf)

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## **Herausgeber\_innen**

Cord-Christian Casper, Chris Ullrich Cochanski, Yanine Esquivel, Kerstin Howaldt, Julia Ingold, Gerrit Lungershausen, Susanne Schwertfeger, Simone Vrckovski, Rosa Wohlers

## **Redaktion & Layout**

Victoria Allen, Cord-Christian Casper, Chris Ullrich Cochanski, Sandro Esquivel, Yanine Esquivel, Constanze Groth, Jana Hanekamp, Kerstin Howaldt, Julia Ingold, Gerrit Lungershausen, Marie-Luise Meier, Susanne Schwertfeger, Simone Vrckovski, Dennis Wegner, Rosa Wohlers

## **Technische Gestaltung**

Sandro Esquivel, Simone Vrckovski

## **Kontakt**

Homepage: <http://www.closure.uni-kiel.de> – Email: [closure@comicforschung.uni-kiel.de](mailto:closure@comicforschung.uni-kiel.de)

# *Speech Balloons, Bubbles and Captions*

## The Rise of Narrative in 18th-Century British Comics

Camilla Murgia (Geneva, Switzerland)

The *Long Minuet danced in Bath* (fig.1) has been considered as the first attempt to produce a comic strip (Kunzle 1973, 360). Henry Bunbury (1750–1811), the artist who produced the work, intended to represent a series of dancers performing the minuet, a dance which was seen as particularly complicated and frightening, especially for beginners (Kunzle 1973, 360). Bunbury's idea consisted of a mockery of society's fashionable activities such as balls, as the arrangement of figures, their exaggerated postures and clothes well illustrate. Particularly known for its entertainments during the Georgian era, the city of Bath (England) promoted a series of social events. The minuet was a particularly popular dance. This print, published in June 1787, is evidently different

from modern comics and comic strips which will appear later in the 1830s with the works of the Swiss artist Rodolphe Töpffer (Kunzle 2007). However, because of the combination of text and images, the *Long Minuet* can be considered as an early form of comics.

Thomas Inge points out that »early« or »proto-comics« are difficult to define and that »there can be no single satisfactory definition beyond the simple fact that they largely display a visual / verbal balance of some kind« (10). The purpose of my article is precisely to investigate this relationship between the textual and the visual in order to analyse the modalities according to which narrative evolved in 18th-century comics in Great Britain. My aim is to show, in the first instance, how the text



Fig. 1: Henry Bunbury, *The Long Minuet danced in Bath*. 1787.

changed and how this development responded to the rising print industry. Secondly, I will discuss the role of narrative, focussing on its definition, function and the way it questioned the relationship text / image.

## Historical Context

In an essay analysing early comics, Inge insists on the fact that these documents are difficult to define because of the diversity and the versatility of written and visual elements (Inge, 10). Inge further mentions European broadsheets used to depict illustrated stories, pointing out that these sheets are thought to date back to the 15th and 16th centuries. He refers to the works of David Kunzle who stipulated that the depiction of the story consists of a series of sequential panels (Kunzle 1973, 1–8, Inge 10, Murray).<sup>1</sup> These early images usually dealt with political or religious themes and constituted an effective way to disseminate and promote ideas. In particular, biblical subjects represented an extraordinary narrative source to which artists frequently referred. Already in these early times, text and images were combined according to different forms and functions: sometimes, the text occupied more space on the sheet than the images and sometimes the other way round, as the image took precedence. Alternatively it was arranged as a caption underneath the image or inserted in a speech bubble in the image. For instance, captions were sometimes used in the image as a how-to guideline for a specific purpose, such as instructions for household goods, as in the case of Hans Paur's print *Articles nec-*

*essary to a well-run household*, produced around 1470 (cf. Kunzle 1973, 24). At other times, the text existed both in speech bubbles and as a caption describing the scene, especially in the case of religious subjects.

The contents of the speech bubble as well as their design and their position within the image further developed in the 17th century. Speech bubbles were progressively employed to express the character's direct opinion or even to reproduce dialogues. They therefore became an essential tool for the support of the text, allowing the artists to both isolate and highlight it, but the relationship between text and visual elements had inevitably to be adjusted to this new role. This rearrangement also corresponded to an increasing interest in and development of the printing and book industry in the 17th century. A number of prints containing sequential images, such as biblical subjects, were much indebted to a book-related tradition and conceived as book illustrations (Kunzle 1973, 11–39). Towards the end of the 17th century, the book industry dramatically evolved and authors and publishers became increasingly aware of the need for a law regulating the production of books. A crucial step was achieved in 1709 with the »Statute of Anne«, referring to Queen Anne and also known as the first copyright act ever instituted in the United Kingdom (Deazley, 13). This law insisted on the intellectual property of the authors in order to avoid illegal reproductions,<sup>2</sup> and concerned books of all kinds, including illustrated books such as religious works.

This was an important step for the book trade as it drew attention to the authorship of printed material. It also initiated the debate

on copyright in another field, namely the question of images. Indeed, a similar act did not yet exist for printed images. Only in 1735 the first copyright act for printed images would be established and this evidently corresponded to a remarkable rise of the print industry.<sup>3</sup> The demand for printed images grew significantly from the first decades of the 18th century onwards and this growth contributed to changes in the relationship text / image and represented a new beginning of this relationship.

The 1735 copyright is also known as the »Hogarth Act«, referring to William Hogarth, one of the most prominent British artists of this time, who was much interested in sequential images. As a painter and engraver of his own designs, Hogarth's intent to protect his own prints led to the copyright act of 1735 (Paulson 1992, 37). This law aimed at strengthening the position of authors and coping with the power of editors and book-sellers.<sup>4</sup>

### William Hogarth and His Pioneering Approach to Narrative

With regard to the combination of text and images, Hogarth strenuously attempted to produce images in which the role of the text was not only a corollary one, but functioned



Fig. 2: Hogarth, *Cunicularii, or the wise men of Godliman in consultation*. 1726.

as an essential part of the visual. Hogarth's representation of the fraudulent story of Mary Toft (fig.2) is possibly the most striking and early example of this attempt. The print, produced about nine years before the Hogarth Act of 1735, stages a popular story, that of Mary Toft, a woman who appeared to be able to give birth to rabbits instead of humans (Paulson 1991, vol.1, 167–168; Todd, 92–94). Such an ability was of course a masquerade and Mary Toft's dishonest behaviour was finally discovered.<sup>5</sup> Contemporaries widely discussed this event and a number of newspapers, prints and satires debated this subject. In his print, which satirises the situation, Hogarth used text according to three distinct functions: referential, satirical and moralising. Hogarth realised the first one by adding letters to the characters. This allows us to identify the protagonists of the story depicted. The letters explicitly refer to their

names and roles which are listed below the image. In such a way the artist attempts the creation of a visual element in its own right, separating the explanation of the men from the narrative. This unity is nevertheless interrupted by the number of speech bubbles within the image, which are used to report conversations of the three men, the doctors, coming from London to verify Mary Toft's claims.

Furthermore, the satirical character of the texts in the speech bubbles helps to express a moralising message, which will later be characteristic of Hogarth's satires. This message is here expressed by a motto added in the middle part of the caption below the image to insist on the absurdity of the whole episode: »They held their Talents most Adroit. / For any Mystical Exploit«.

By employing different verbal forms such as letters or captions and providing, therefore, a multiple approach to contemporary matters, Hogarth crucially contributed to combine texts and verbal references with images. Moreover, the satirical view of the story and the mockery of the situation highlights the absurdity of the narrative, including the woman in labour. This arrangement between the satirical dimension and the depiction of visual elements is characteristic for a great number of early comics in 18th-century Britain. Indeed, the mockery itself somehow functions as a substitute of the narrative level because it anticipates the absurd end of the story. In other words, due to the satirical elements of the depiction the reader understands immediately that the whole episode ends up in a masquerade.



Fig. 3: Paul Sandby, *Burlesque sur le burlesque*. 1753.



Fig. 4: Paul Sandby, *The Burlesquer burlesqued, the second edition*. 1753

This visual strategy originated throughout the 18th century and further pushed the boundaries of the narrative. Lettered figures, speech bubbles and a wide range of texts were regularly part of images intended as one entity, indicating a diversity of approaches which rapidly became an essential characteristic of early comics.

Although Hogarth is probably the most representative of these attempts to combine text and image, his contemporaries show an extraordinary degree of experimentation in staging narrative. For instance, Paul Sandby's *The Burlesquer burlesqued* refers precisely to this multiple use and combination of text and images. The first state of the print (fig.3) was produced to criticise Hogarth's publication *The Analysis of Beauty* and his commitment to the creation of an unconventional art school.<sup>6</sup> Contrary to other European countries such as France, England did not have an official institution for teaching art until 1769, but a number of small didactic structures which relied upon a corporative system. A debate arose between those who advocated the creation of an academy based on the French system and those who, like Hogarth, promoted a more unconventional model not based on an academy (Bindman 1997, 174–175). Sandby's print attempts notably a mockery of Hogarth's beliefs and shows the painter, depicted as a pug, working on a biblical subject, namely the *Sacrifice of Isaac* (Bindman 1997, 174–175). Here the text dramatically changed between

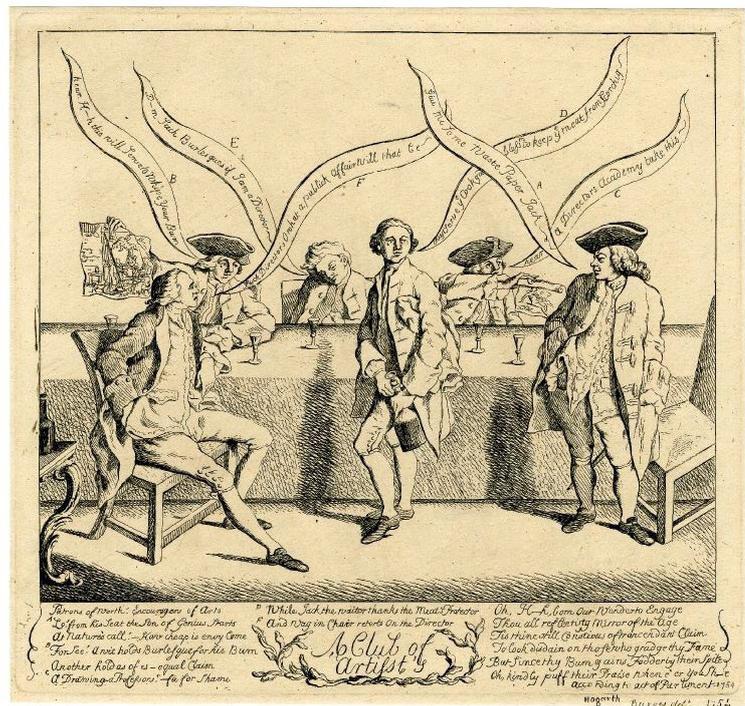


Fig. 5: Thomas Burgess, *A Club of Artist's*. 1754.

this first state, which included an explanatory text in French, possibly as a reference to the much debated and popular French academy, and the second and final state (fig.4) where the title appears on top of the image. Within the image, a series of numbers refers to a text placed outside the image in the lower part of the composition, which consists of either one word only, or a sentence. A few years later, in 1754, Thomas Burgess, artist and pupil of the Academy of St Martin's Lane founded by Hogarth himself, replied to Sandby's print by producing a satire (fig.5) which employed a variety of texts in order to put forward Hogarth's approach.<sup>7</sup> *A Club of artist's* derides Sandby's print, which is depicted on the left of the composition and is held by one of the members of an unmentioned academy. The print is offered to Hogarth and his colleagues as toilet paper. The content of the speech-

bubble is explicit: »Dear H-h, this will serve to whipe your bum«. This time, in an innovative way, the balloons, and not the figures, are lettered. The text below the figures, arranged into three columns, is not a mere explanation of the characters but stages a story, structured according to the letters. This combination of dialogues inscribed in the speech balloons and an explanatory text provides a wealth of information to the reader who is given both a clear sequence of the storytelling and a mocking appreciation of the whole scene.

### Defining Narrative

Adding letters to the speech bubbles and a referential function – such as the mention of »burlesque« or »academy« – to the text seems to have been a systematic approach to the

relationship textual/ visual around the 1750s. The text, appearing usually below the image, works as a kind of supplementary comment. Editors and engravers even framed it in what recalls a balloon, possibly to insist on the importance of the text itself. An example of this practice is provided by a political satire on the administration of the city of Newcastle (fig.6) published in 1757. Here the sequential images are arranged into two separate groups. The first one, on the left of the composition, is represented by a group of two men and one women and refers to the difficulties of the administration of the city of Newcastle. A second group of figures contrasts with the first group to reinforce the incompetence of the administration and is represented by key figures of the reign of Elizabeth I: Sir Francis Drake, Sir Francis Walsingham and William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley. The division is

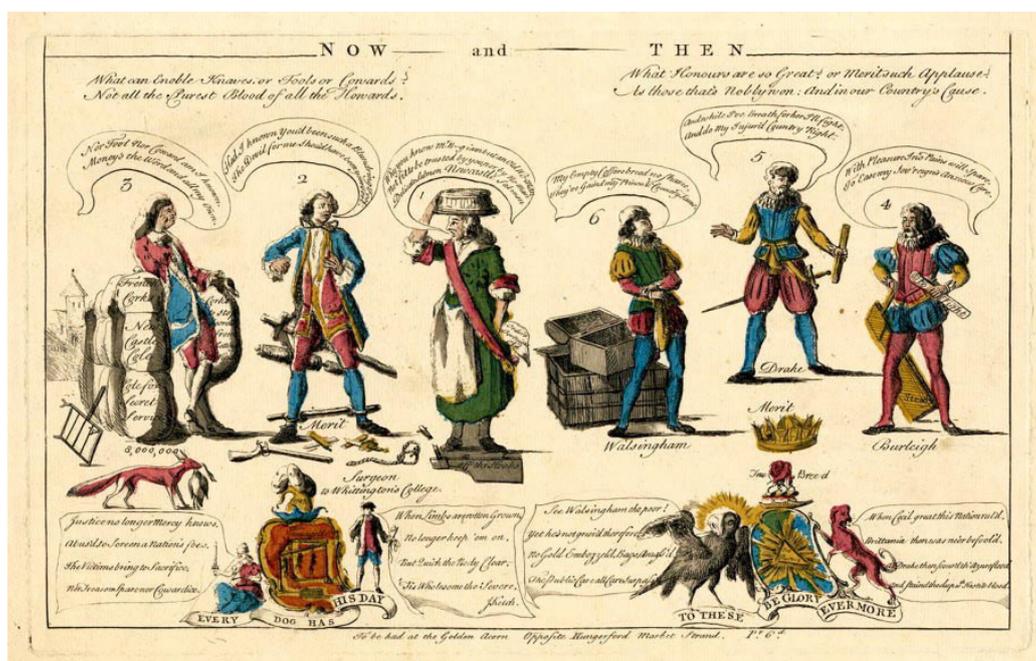


Fig. 6: Published by Matthew Darly, *Now and Then*. c.1757.

clearly given by the titles »Now« and »Then«. Texts function here within a narrative – as they tell a story – providing a referential and moralising scope. The title »Now« and »Then« is followed by a kind of subtitle for each scene which is both a summary of what the images show and a moralising consideration of the situation. To avoid any confusion, each figure is inscribed with a name and a profusion of details is added. Speech bubbles are used to express – or emphasise – a direct opinion of a particular character through satirical dialogues and sentences. Such speech bubbles are also inserted below the main characters and are part of the two fake coats of arms.

Matthew Darly, who issued the print, was among the most prominent publishers in London and assuredly affected the growing demand for prints and printed images by establishing connections with draughtsmen, engravers and printers. Together with his wife Mary, Matthew Darly considerably contributed to the spread of the taste for caricatures and satirical prints in 18th-century England.<sup>8</sup> The Darlys became extremely popular for their prints on fashion and their Italianate caricatures. Matthew, who was also a printmaker in his own right, played an important role in the development of the relationship between text and image. He continued to explore the display and the design of the speech balloon and did not hesitate to use it almost as a mirror of the text it contained, such as in the caricature of George Lyttelton (1709–1773) (fig.7), statesman and secretary to the Prince of Wales.<sup>9</sup> The image is almost symmetrical as the speech balloon seems to reproduce the outlines of the character depicted. The contours of the head and the body on the

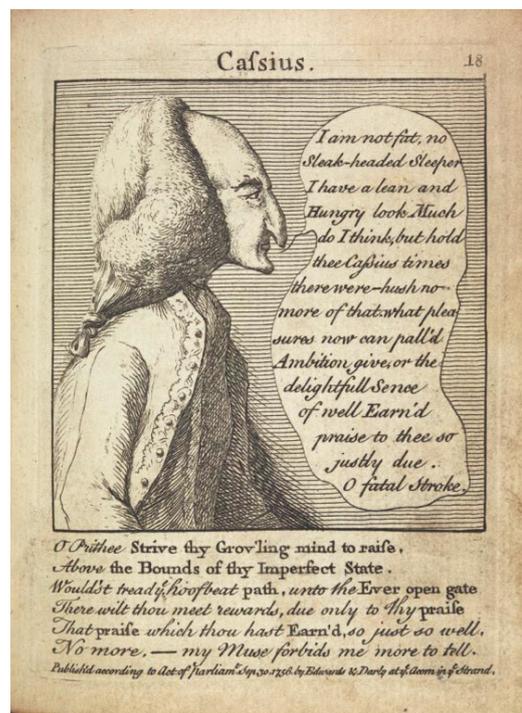


Fig. 7: Published by Matthew Darly and George Edwards, *Cassius*. 1756.

right of the image are filled with text. The structure of the print is characterised by the portrait on the left of the composition and by a »mirror balloon« on the right, consisting of a text reporting the thoughts of Lyttelton. Together with such an innovative approach to the narrative, Darly further used the text in a more conventional way, and inserted a couple of verses on the bottom of the image.

The further analysis of these prints requires a much finer definition of narrative. Pascal Lefèvre has described it as a »formal system« which the average reader perceives as a set of »logically and chronologically related events« (Lefèvre 2000). It becomes a pivotal element in the reader's understanding as it helps to construct the interpretation of the events. Lefèvre has shown to what extent this notion of form is important when discussing comics.



Carrier 2000, 38). Considering the text and the visual elements as a way to achieve storytelling and not as a set of two distinct elements interacting or ›balancing‹ each other, helps to understand the development of early comics.

### Questioning the Function of Text and Image through Narrative

Indeed, the combination textual/visual is possibly the aspect which progressed the most in the study of early British comics. For instance, art historians such as David Bindman discussed the interaction verbal/visual and considered the text as part of the image but also as a pictorial element located within the image and acting as an autonomous element (Bindman 1996, 309–310).<sup>11</sup> In this context, the narrative, intended as a ›formal system‹ using Pascal Lefèvre's definition, is particularly relevant to this development because it helps to question not only the relationship text/image, but also and foremost the function of this interaction, which is extremely versatile and adjustable.

Mary Darly's satirical representation of Scottish pedlars (fig.8) illustrates this interaction. The print denounces the ›invasive‹ trading strategies of Scottish pedlars, whose activities regularly encountered police restrictions in 18th-century England.<sup>12</sup> Here the narrative is represented by the structure of the image itself, consisting of a series of figures, arranged into two horizontal rows and depicted as marching and looking in the same direction. This is not a matter of one particular event, but of a more general, mocking representation of ped-

lars' activities and goods for sale, the intention being explicitly mentioned in the text below the image by the caption starting with the words ›This Scotch Caricature‹. Marly Darly was particularly astute in producing this plate which constitutes a significant step in the rise of narrative in 18th-century comics. Although no particular event is depicted here, the frieze arrangement implicitly recalls a sequential imagery, especially as the characters are all oriented in the same direction. The fact that the two horizontal rows are not divided by any rule or frame even reinforces this impression of succeeding figures. Moreover, the speech balloons here are used to serve as an explanation of the print itself and appear over each figure. They no longer convey the characters' opinion as in the dialogues employed by earlier artists such as Hogarth, but they indeed construct the storytelling together with the images. Their content refers to the goods carried by the pedlars which the print depicts, or presents advertisements addressed to the spectator, such as ›buy a flesh brush‹. These texts do not work as a separate element but to the contrary need the image to exist.

The images are not sequential, because they do not depict the same characters in different situations, or a series of different situations from a whole narrative, as we would expect of a comic. In his study of early comics, David Kunzle indeed claims (1973, 1–8) that comics must have four main characteristics. In the first instance, they should consist of a sequence of separate images. Secondly, the visual, represented by the images, needs to prevail over the text. Thirdly, they have to deal with a story which is moral, topical or both. Finally, comics

have to be produced within a large-scale distribution network (Wellman, 301–302). Darly shows the succession of images which is a characteristic of comics, thus allowing for an interpretation of the image as a sequence. If we further follow Kunzle's definition of early comics, here the image represented is topical, in the sense that it refers to a particular subject with which contemporaries were familiar. However, it is more difficult to ascribe a precise function to the interaction of the textual and the visual because the first strictly depends on the second and because we are confronted with two different functions and two different texts. The speech bubbles resemble advertisements rather than offering a hint how the viewer is to understand or interpret the scene, and therefore recall the element of propaganda which characterised European 16th-century broadsheets.<sup>13</sup> The text inserted below

the images attempts a storytelling form whilst also clearly mentioning the absurd content.

This formal tradition, to which the Darlys much contributed, coexisted, more or less until the end of the 1780s, with another pictorial convention which is more related to the book industry and where the role and function of sequence is clearly defined by a title. In the *Places of profit* for instance (fig.9), the scenes are arranged in frames and bear, beside the main title, an explanatory sentence. Nevertheless, they also stage the complexity of the use of images. In fact, while the three upper images explicitly refers to a tradition of book illustration, the lower image proposes a series of different personalities, arranged in a horizontal row and staging the sequential character of comics.

The Darlys used this sequential structure regularly in prints produced in the 1780s.

They employ the frames to arrange a number of images, as illustrated by a print denouncing the electoral system in Windsor (fig.10). Almost using the division of images in compartments as a mockery, the print depicts some citizens' demands for participation in the election of the Borough of Windsor,<sup>14</sup> although they were only owners of houses and stables and not residents of that borough of Windsor. As a result, King George III allowed them to vote, this provoking, evidently, a local

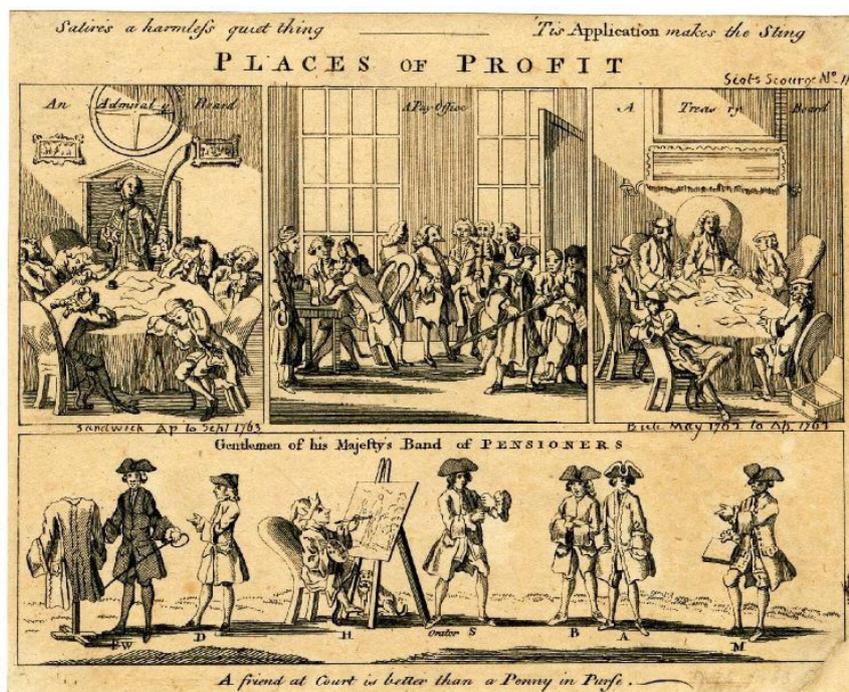


Fig. 9: Anonymous, *Places of profit*, c.1763.

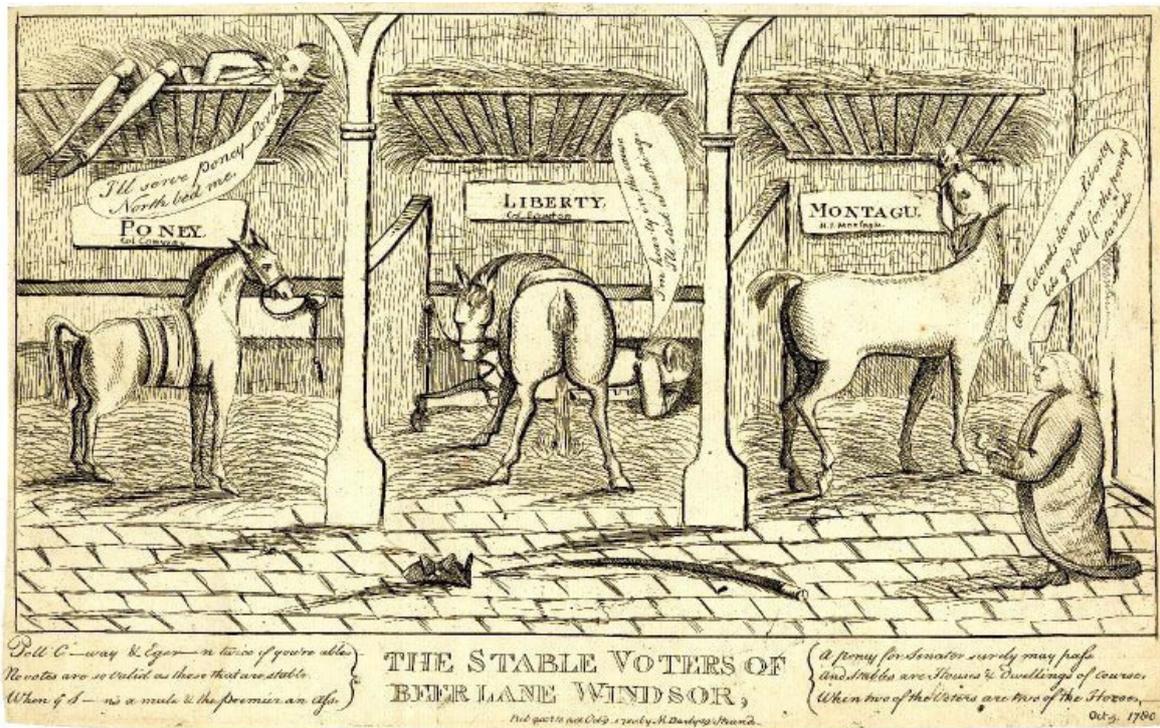


Fig. 10: Published by Matthew Darly, *The stable voters of Beer Lane Windsor*. 1780.

debate. The names inscribed on the top of the horses refer to the candidates, for instance Penniston Poney, (Admiral Keppel) and John Montagu. The speech bubbles here are not devoted to the most prominent elements of print, namely the horses, but to the men behind them. They satirise the political situation but also draw attention to the character's opinions. Once again, the verbal / visual interaction strengthens the role of the text, which is divided into speech balloons representing the voice of the people following a political debate. The text below the images is both topical and narrative because it refers to an existing situation. However, it does not represent the event itself but attempts to describe the scene represented.

The arrangement of images in rectangular framed sequences appears to have been used

increasingly in the last decades of the 18th century. The form of the text further expanded and did no longer regularly employ speech balloons to deal with direct dialogues or particular texts. At the same time, artists and editors seemed to be increasingly concerned with the sequentiality of the narrative, thus preparing the changes which lead to the rise of 19th-century pictorial strips and which generally are identified as the first examples of »modern comics«. From the late 1770s on, sequentiality is often represented through a series of images. This practice is striking in images which aim at showing social, political or cultural matters such as the *State of the nation* (fig.11). Here the speech balloons have disappeared but not the characters' thoughts inserted in a small font below each frame. The rectangular frieze is represented by two rows, consisting of a

series of compartments which further increase the impression of sequentiality of the scene. As in the previous examples, the inscriptions referring to the figures – which are here no longer depicted in speech balloons – are exclamations expressing explicitly the characters' opinions. They strengthen the attitude of the characters, but are independent from the text below the two-row frieze. The interaction between the visual and the verbal is once again explored as this second text bears a moralising message directly appealing to the average reader by calling him by his first name.

### Narrative as a Unifying Device

This diversified interaction between text and image led to an extraordinary development of the comic strip from the last decades of the 18th century onwards. The Darlys' attention to the diversity of texts, but also the growing demand for caricatures staging narrative helped to foster a need for visual documents questioning current issues and society's habits. This increasing demand for images also represented an unprecedented field for experimentation and the possibility to materialise dif-



Fig. 11: Richard Newton, *The British Servants*. 1795.

ferent approaches to narration. Early comics were evidently part of this process and multiplied from about the 1780s.

Bunbury's *Long Minuet* represents a starting point in this development because it includes a sequence of images, arranged horizontally in a sort of frieze. It also includes a text, both satirical and informative, but not dialogues inserted in speech bubbles. In December 1787, just 6 months after the production of the *Long Minuet*, the artist published another comic strip entitled *The Propagation of a Lie*. This strip depicts the reaction of different characters to a rumour or a lie. Bunbury proposed a wide range of feelings and reactions, and included speeches, inserted as inscriptions above the heads of the figures and not in balloons.

From a formal point of view, the omission of balloon frames freed up the images and increased the proportions that the visual

occupies in the representation. Episodic strips – as they are also called – such as Bunbury’s became fashionable in the last years of the 18th century. Engravers did not hesitate to push the length of these strips further, by producing extremely long foldable prints extending over one meter. Caricaturist and satirical artist Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827) produced a few examples of what were called »panoramic prints«. The prints consist of a number of plates, assembled together to form one long strip which is usually rolled onto a cylinder and kept in a box. The text is simplified and consists of a brief sentence or a couple of words included above each character. However, the text does not disappear, although it is progressively separated from the image. For instance, in Rowlandson’s *School for Scandal*, a scroll-like print referring to a theatre play performed in London in 1777, figures are inscribed with a letter and the explanation is printed on a different sheet sold together with the print (Grego 1880, I: 246).

The omission of speech bubble designs has to be considered in the context of the definition of early comics and of narrative. The

combination of verbal and visual elements strengthens the formal system. Subsequently the narrative evolves, this latter being, according to Pratt, »one of the defining characteristics« of comics, if not always, at least predominantly (Pratt 2009, 107).<sup>15</sup> Pratt claims that comics need a »unifying device« a connection between all their characteristics, as a »formal system of related elements«, narrative indeed works as a connection between them. While speech bubbles progressively disappear from comic strips from the end of the 1780s, the formal integration of text crucially changed together with the narrative these works convey. Sentences became longer and more demanding for the reader. The amount of text and its position in the image intensified, as some of the works of Richard Newton show (fig. 12).<sup>16</sup> Here the title is below the sequence of images which are accompanied by a long text added above the four scenes composing the strip. Each scene consists of a number of figures and of one text only, leading the reader to focus on the text while looking at the image subsequently, in order to understand who is speaking and what event is represented. The vertical division



Fig. 12: Published by William Holland, *The state of the nation*. 1778.



Fig. 13: Richard Newton, *The Progress of a Player*. 1793.

might certainly be a hint, but the image is still very dense. If we analyse the first scene and look at the two figures before the text, we see a seated woman, apparently conversing with another woman, who is standing in front of her and is elegantly dressed. She wears a hat, a refined dress and a big muff. It is only by reading the text that we understand the story and who is speaking: »You mistook my Advertisement entirely; I advertised for an English Governess who could speak French fluently; not a French Governess who would teach my Girls something more than I wish they should learn«. The sequentiality is here broken as the following scene no longer concerns the same characters but refers to the general theme of the servants,

depicted by different characters and in several circumstances.

In the last decades of the 18th century, this structure (i.e. the sequential scenes) was remodelled based on a thematic unity. Progressively they integrate sequential images with repetitive, identifiable characters. The individual images also allowed printmakers to include the text in one fixed box in order to compose storytelling friezes. In such a way the text was also increasingly separated from the image. Developed in a defined space, that is the rectangular frame, the text included a summary title, a moralising or satirical message or even an explicit opinion.

However, while these different registers of narrative corresponded to different parts of

the image, in late 18th-century comics they were progressively integrated. Richard Newton explored this approach in the series of sequential images he produced in this period. *The Progress of a Player* (fig.13) is a sequence consisting of 8 scenes, arranged in horizontal rows, recalling the comic strip structure, and framed individually in a series of rectangular designs. Each scene includes a text box, with several inscriptions. In a few cases, such as the

second scene, this element is added alongside a title and the thoughts of one of the protagonists of the scene. A couple of decades earlier, such text would possibly have been inserted in a speech balloon to illustrate different scenes of the narrative given by the general title. The separation between text and images allows the viewer to focus more exhaustively on the images and / or on the text. It also enables the reader to identify characters which can recur

in most of the scenes. Indeed in the *Progress of a Player* there is one clearly identifiable character, the elegant young man, who appears several times, with a blue or a black jacket.

The same repetition appears evident in more complex series of sequential images. Here the specific form allows the reader to directly reconstruct the sequentiality and the narrative. This is assuredly one of the most important contributions to the comic strip by these late examples, which later also leads to the production of a satirical broadsheet. In some cases, in fact, comic strips were used as decorative borders for drawing rooms or even caricature rooms. The images, arranged in vertical or horizontal rows, were supposed to be cut, and the strips had to be hung on the top of walls to create a decorative frieze. One of the most famous of these works is the



Fig. 14: Thomas Rowlandson and George Moutard Woodward, *Grotesque borders for Halls & Rooms*. 1800.

*Grotesque Borders*, engraved by Thomas Rowlandson in 1799 after the designs by another British artist, George Moutard Woodward (1760–1809). Characters appear several times in the series of sequential images which alternate (fig.14) between ›deformed‹ and more conventional figures. Here the satirical text is back in the image, although the speech balloons have completely disappeared, possibly, as in other cases, to render the images more readable. The disappearance of speech balloons can also be explained by the fact that these strips were supposed to decorate the upper walls of rooms, and therefore needed to be seen from far away. These series of images combine several narrative contexts, which interchange in the strips. The sequence produced by the artist is meant to be changed later by the reader, altering not only the image itself but also the space where these prints are installed, such as door frames or screens. By breaking the sequentiality and assembling the scenes in a different order than the one given by the artist, the reader also creates a new narrative, independent from the context given by the editor.

Caricature and satire have played, since the 18th century, a crucial role in British visual culture. Since William Hogarth, satirical prints have contributed to a deep insight into public and private life and dealt with a number of social issues. Within this context, texts such as captions, titles or speech balloons importantly contributed to enhance the message that comics conveyed. Art historical research has broadly demonstrated that narrative and visual are therefore indissociable and that comics rely on both written and pictorial spheres. The

modalities of this interaction are as wide as the subjects they deal with: social, moral, political and economic topics are much sought-after fields and offer ground to develop a diversity of narrative supports. British visual culture fundamentally contributed to this textual / visual duo because it triggered a need for images and the rise of print culture.

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86–89, who showed how the growth of print shops attempted to fulfil the demand for the printed images.

- 4] Hogarth published his consideration of the role of engravers in pamphlet stating that they were »oppress'd by the Tyranny of the Rich«, referring, as Paulson pointed out, to the leading role of print sellers (1992, 38). On the Hogarth Act, see: Rose 1993, and, more recently, Rose 2005 and Deazley 2006.
- 5] Mary Toft's behaviour has been recently analysed with regard to her fraudulent intention. For this discussion see mainly Shaw 2009 and Harvey 2015.
- 6] Sandby strongly criticised Hogarth's aesthetic treatise advocating graphic solutions which were different from the existing neoclassical tradition and promoted for instance the serpentine line and not the straight line as the »line of beauty«. On Sandby's criticism and on his print, see Bindman 1997, 174–175. On Hogarth's reception of the *Analysis of Beauty* with regard to Sandby, see Paulson 1993, 140–141 and McNamara 1996.
- 7] On Thomas Burgess, see Goodwin 1872.
- 8] On the caricatures edited by the Darlys, see Unkel 2015.
- 9] For a discussion of this print, see Rauser 2008, 47.
- 10] David Carrier (Carrier 2000, 28) quotes Ernest Gombrich who discussed this active role of the reader and pointing out that »we expect every picture element to contribute to the meaning of the image«.
- 11] Bindman studied the form of texts in the works of James Gillray whose satirical prints offer grounds to develop a discourse on the role of the text with regard to its visual function.
- 12] Pedlars' trade, particularly Jewish and Scottish was considered illegal in the 18th century. For a discussion of this print within the contemporary context, see Salman 2013, 131–132.
- 13] The propaganda element of early European broadsheets has been discussed by Murray 2017, 44.

## Endnotes

- 1] Murray further insists on the entertainment and propagandistic purpose of these broadsheets.
- 2] Illegal reproduction of books was a major issue of the rise of the book publishing industry. On the concerns of publishers with regard to piracy and counterfeit, see: Shoji 2012.
- 3] This change has been discussed by Clayton 1997,

14] For a description of this print, see George 1935.

15] Pratt's assumption has been debated notably by Aaron Meskin (2007), who claimed that narrative is not always an essential characteristic of comics. If this is arguable with regard to contempo-

rary and modern comics, we can assert that for 18th-century comics narrative is a constant, crucial element.

16] On Newton see Alexander 1998.