

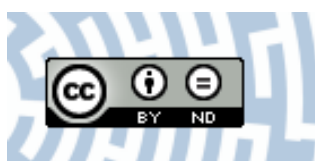


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Title: Two Moominvalleys? About the Different Creations of the Moomin World in Selected Comic Strips and Magazines on the Polish Publishing Market

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Citation style: Tomas Iwona. (2017). Two Moominvalleys? About the Different Creations of the Moomin World in Selected Comic Strips and Magazines on the Polish Publishing Market. "Edukacja Elementarna w Teorii i Praktyce" (2017, nr 4, s. 55-69), doi 10.14632/eetp.2017.12.46.55



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Two Moominvalleys? About the Different Creations of the Moomin World in Selected Comic Strips and Magazines on the Polish Publishing Market

Dwie Doliny Muminków? O różnicach w kreowaniu muminkowego świata w wybranych komiksach i czasopismach na polskim rynku wydawniczym

KEYWORDS ABSTRACT

comic strips,
Moomins, magazine,
Tove Jansson,
literature for
children

The presented considerations refer directly to two different, and not necessarily consistent, creations of Moominvalley, presented in the *Moomins* magazine and in comic albums, in the form of a collection of illustration strips by Tove Jansson which were published regularly in the *Evening News*. This article is an attempt at analysing and comparing the Moomin worlds presented in selected Polish magazines and comic books.

To systematize these considerations and carry out an efficient and clear analysis of particular interpretative layers and planes, this text is divided into sections, devoted among others to the theoretical sphere, being a collection of information on the Moomin comic strips in Polish magazines and albums, and the methodological sphere, comprising a description of the way of structuring the ponderations and analysing the study material. They are crowned with conclusions which attempt to define and identify the age of the prospective readers of the analysed illustration sequences and promise to start interpretative endeavours related to the remarkable comic strips by the Finnish writer and illustrator, also known as the Moomin Mum.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE ABSTRAKT

komiks, Muminki, czasopismo, Tove Jansson, literatura dla dzieci

Prezentowane rozważania, dotyczą w sposób bezpośredni dwóch odmiennych i niekoniecznie spójnych kreacji Doliny Muminków, zwizualizowanych na łamach czasopisma „Muminki” oraz w albumach komiksowych, powstałych jako koherentny zbiór rysunkowych pasków, autorstwa Tove Jansson, publikowanych systematycznie w „Evening News”. Niniejszy artykuł stanowi zatem próbę zanalizowania i porównania dostępnych światów muminkowych, ukazanych w wybranych polskich czasopismach i komiksach.

W celu usystematyzowania rozważań oraz dokonania sprawnej i przejrzystej analizy poszczególnych warstw i płaszczyzn interpretacyjnych niniejszy tekst został podzielony na części, dotyczące między innymi sfery teoretycznej, stanowiącej zbiór informacji na temat muminkowych komiksów w polskich czasopismach i albumach oraz sfery metodologicznej, obejmującej opis sposobu porządkowania rozważań i dokonywania analizy materiału badawczego. Rozważania zwieńczone zostały podsumowaniem, stanowiącym niejako próbę zdefiniowania i określenia wieku potencjalnego odbiorcy analizowanych sekwencji obrazkowych oraz obietnicę podjęcia interpretacyjnych przedsięwzięć w przypadku nietuzinkowych komiksów, autorstwa pisarki i ilustratorki fińskiej, nazywanej Mamą Muminków.

„Nikt się na mnie nie poznał, ani nawet ja sam”.

Tove Jansson, *Pamiętniki Tatusia Muminka*

“Nobody knows me, not even myself”.

Tove Jansson, *The Exploits of Moominpappa*

Introduction

Round Moomins, pragmatic Mymbles, exploring Hemulens, electrifying Hat-tifatteners, pedantic Fillyjonks and other creatures designed by the Swedish speaking writer and illustrator from Finland, Tove Jansson, have not lost their popularity and attractiveness for researchers. What is more, the Moomin creatures have become a unique cultural good today, penetrating various areas of everyday life, diversifying it and accelerating the *moomin-boom*¹ phenomenon, so popular in Finland. Despite the ominous saying of Moominpappa, which opens these considerations (i.e. *Nobody*

¹ W.K. Pessel, “Gdy kulturoznawca zamienia się w Paszczaka. Problemy katastrofy w Dolinie Muminków”, in: *Powodzie, plagi, życie i inne katastrofy*, ed. K. Konarska, (Colloquia Anthropologica et Communicativa seria 5) Wrocław 2012, p. 473.

knows me, not even myself), which seems closely correlated to the Socratean *Oida ouden eidos*, I will attempt to analyse the nature of Moomin comic strips found in selected *Moomin* albums and magazines published by Egmont. They are exciting research material because the nature and atmosphere of the comic strip sequences found in the albums, and illustrations in the magazines, as well as the manner of creating particular characters or the narrative layer of the stories presented, make as if two, absolutely different, Moomin worlds. Identifying, exploring and interpreting differences between the album comic strips and illustration sequences published in the *Moomins* magazine, and also presenting the characteristic properties of the analysed comic stories, enables us to initiate a discussion concerning the addressees of the illustration works by Tove Jansson. This discussion concerning the Moomin stories, consciously deprived of any moralizing traits by the author, depicting the idyllic atmosphere of the Valley, and also its mysteriousness and the catastrophic nature of particular events, undeniably related to the everyday life of the author, is long overdue. Tove Jansson, having received the Hans Christian Andersen Award in 1966, acknowledged the dislocation of her texts, identified as addressed to children although deeply rooted in the adult world, referring to it and derived from, which complicated the creative effort:

“Muminki znajdują się na ziemi niczyjej. Niełatwo jest zacząć, kiedy ulokowało się swoją „rodzinę” na odludnej wyspie w niezwykle dorosłym kontekście, stwierdziła w liście do swojego szwedzkiego wydawnictwa wiosną 1967 roku. Co się z nimi teraz stanie, „i co zacząć z trollem w okresie dojrzewania?”²

Translation from Polish:

“The Moomins live in a no-man’s land. It is not easy to start when you placed your *family* on a desert island in a highly adult context – the author wrote in a letter to the Swedish publishing house in spring 1967. What will happen to them now and *what shall we do with an adolescent troll?*”.

This peculiar no-man’s land proves to be a space accessible to everyone, opening up also (or perhaps primarily?) to adult readers, attempting at analysing the converted life experiences of the author. The ability to carry out this analysis is directly conditional on the recipient’s maturity as a reader and also the familiarity of various contexts (including historical, social or biographical ones). This text is an attempt to find and identify the no man’s land (popularly available and multi-layered) in the selected comic strips devoted to these troll-like creatures.

² B. Westin, Tove Jansson. *Mama Muminków. Biografia*, Warszawa 2012, p. 226.

Moomin comic strips in Polish albums and magazines

The illustrations by Tove Jansson are invaluable as the author signed them first as an illustrator and then as a writer:

“Długo przedstawiała się jako malarka i pisarka, w tej właśnie kolejności, i mimo wszystkich sukcesów i niepohamowanego rozprzestrzeniania się świata Muminków pozostała przy malowaniu, choć zajmowała się nim już nie tak regularnie. Pogodzenie malarstwa z Muminkami z czasem stało się trudne i przeistoczyło się w bolesne przeciąganie liny między wymaganiami, oczekiwaniami a własnymi pragnieniami. Ta sprzeczność towarzyszyła jej przez całe życie.”³

Translation from Polish:

“For a long time, she presented herself as a painter and writer, in the said order, and despite all her successes and unrestrained spreading of the Moomin world, she stuck to painting although she did not do that regularly any more. Over time, it became difficult to reconcile painting and Moomins which turned into the tug-of-war between the requirements and expectations, and her own desires. This conflict accompanied her all her life.”

Although all of the Moomin stories by Tove Jansson have her own illustrations, it should be stressed the pictures are not solely background for particular events described in the book, but come to complement the narrative layer, creating a coherent and inseparable whole with it. The author complemented her text with black-and-white drawings, showing her outstanding abilities to use the chiaroscuro technique in a highly conscious way. She decided whether it was proper, necessary and supplementary to enrich the text with illustrations and if not, she made prospective readers feel an insatiable hunger for drawings by conscious understatements and indetermination (or under-drawing). Drawing played a highly important role in the works by Tove Jansson. The same is true also (or perhaps especially) for the Moomin comic strips published regularly in the form of short strips, composed of just a few images, in *The Evening News* paper since 1954. Her clear lines, clarity of individual frames and fabulous particularity when creating the protagonists and other characters became the defining features of the Moomin adventures which, immortalized in the comic illustrations, presented funny and not necessarily equivocal situations, emotional dilemmas of characters, their weaknesses, emotional instability and non-standard solutions to the emerging problems. After many years of creating comic strips on the Moomins, Tove Jansson decided to quit her role as an

³ Ibidem, p. 17.

illustrator and appointed her brother, Lars Jansson, to continue the comic adventures, reaching the total number of 21 stories:

“W sumie Tove wykonała trzynaście części komiksu o Muminkach, razem z bratem osiem, co daje łącznie dwadzieścia jeden historii. Złożyły się na nie tysiące okienek obrazkowych. W pewnym momencie Tove zaczęła odliczać pozostały czas pracy nad paskami, potrafiła datować listy aktualnym numerem wydania. Przykładowo korespondencję z Tooti latem 1956 roku, gdzie rysuje ostatnio wymyśloną, jeszcze nieochrzczonego postać, datuje na numer 10 242. Kiedy paski znajdowały się u szczytu sławy, wydawano je w blisko stu dwudziestu gazetach, szybko ukazały się też w postaci książkowej.”⁴

Translation from Polish:

“Altogether, Tove prepared thirteen parts of the Moomin comic strip, eight together with her brother, which adds up to twenty one stories. They contain thousands of illustration frames. One day, Tove started to count the outstanding time left to complete the strips; she would date her letters with a current issue number. For example, her letter to Tooti in the summer of 1956, where she draws a character created recently, not given a name yet, is dated issue 10,242. In the heyday, the strips were published in close to one hundred twenty newspapers, and they soon became also a book”.

Those three- of four-frame comic strips, characterised by spare lines and uncommon clarity as well as artistic transparency, were obviously also collected in black-and-white albums (the first of them, *Mumintroll 1*, was published in spring 1957⁵). The above-mentioned series of comic strips by the Janssons attracted the interest of the Polish publishing house Egmont which decided to publish them in small albums (in a specific horizontal orientation) only in 2005. In 3 years, the publishing house published eight albums about one hundred pages each, reflecting directly the comic strips which were first published in newspapers and then collected and prepared:

1. *Nowy dom Muminka* (Egmont, 2005),
2. *Muminki i morze* (Egmont 2005),
3. *Wyspa Muminków* (Egmont 2006),
4. *Muminki i Marsjanie* (Egmont 2006),
5. *Tata Muminka i szpiedzy* (Egmont 2006),
6. *Muminki na Riwierze* (Egmont 2006),
7. *Zabawa w udawanie* (Egmont 2006),
8. *Lampa Muminka* (Egmont 2007).⁶

⁴ Ibidem, p. 268.

⁵ Ibidem, p. 269.

⁶ Wikipedia: <https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muminki>

A similar project was carried out also by EneDueRabe publishing house which in 2015 published a beautiful comic strip volume, containing four comic stories (*Muminek i zbójcy* [English name: *Moomin and the Brigands*], *Muminek i życie rodzinne* [English name: *Moomin and Family Life*], *Muminki na Riwierze* [English name: *Moomins on the Riviera*], *Muminki na bezludnej wyspie* [English name: *Moomin's Desert Island*]), referring to the album by Drawn&Quarterly publishing house called *The Complete Tove Jansson Comic Strip. Book One*.

Here it is worth emphasizing that the Moomin books were introduced to the Polish market in the 1960s by Wojciech Żukrowski, who visited Finland and became enchanted with the small trolls at that time.⁷ After he brought English versions of those books to Poland and recommended them to *Nasza Księgarnia* publishing house, the first Moomin volume, *W Dolinie Muminków* [English name: *Finn Family Moomintroll*] was published in 1964. The first comic-related project was undertaken by the TN Semic publishing house which published illustrated monthly volumes inspired by the Moomin stories, integrated with brain teasers for the youngest in 1994–1999.⁸ A similar initiative was taken by Egmont publishing house which in 1990s started to publish the *Moomins* periodical containing comic strips, short stories and brain teasers for the youngest readers.

In connection with the above outline concerning the history of Moomin comic strips in Poland, it seems necessary to stress that this analysis will be devoted to two issues of the *Moomins* magazine (No. 2/2000 and 3/2000 by Egmont) and two issues of the comic albums (*Nowy dom Muminka* 2005 and *Wyspa Muminków* 2006 by Egmont). They present two Moomin worlds, created in an entirely different, fascinating way and, in a sense, generate the selection of prospective readers.

“Dziwna rzecz z tymi rzekami i drogami – rozmyślał Ryjek. – Widzi się je, jak pędzą w nieznaną, i nagle nabiera się strasznej ochoty, żeby samemu też się znaleźć gdzie indziej, żeby pobiec za nimi i zobaczyć, gdzie się kończą...”

“The roads, you know, are strange, Sniff thought. You see them rushing on and then you start to desire to get somewhere else yourself, to run along them and see where they end...”

The above quotation is a starting point for this article as it results in the way of filtering, categorizing and structuring information concerning particular analysis fields of selected comic materials. A notion ordering these considerations will be to enter a road

⁷ W. Żukrowski, “Jak dostały się Muminki do Polski?”, *Płomyk* 1974, No 6, p. 161.

⁸ M. Rogoż, “Muminki Tove Jansson na polskim rynku wydawniczym”, *Toruńskie Studia Bibliologiczne* 2011, vol. 7, no. 2, p. 52.

which “from the anthropological perspective (...) was characterized in the Slavic culture as a substantiation of a broader set of meanings: it provides connection between particular points in one’s own space, mediation between the centre and the outskirts and boundary areas, between *orbis interior* and *orbis exterior*, between a lay world and the “otherworldly” sacrum”⁹. Each of the roads presented below focuses on interpretative fields concerning the structure, visual comic strip creation and the semantic layer of particular visual and text materials. The routes distinguished result from the need to know, the necessity to explore them on many planes and checking “where they end”, thanks to which it becomes possible to identify characteristic features of the created spaces, being Moominvalleys.

The first road, or the structure and the visual context

The design and structure of the Moomin albums and magazines by Egmont are specific and undeniably distinct from one another which is why it is necessary to present their general form and specific artistic and visual sphere. Both the structure of the presented publications and the proposed artistic solutions affect the way in which the analysed works are noticed, received and interpreted by the reader.

The *Moomins* magazine was published as a colourful publication in a vertical orientation, in a format between A5 and A4, containing about thirty pages. The colourful title page included all the information typical of a magazine, i.e. a title, comic subtitles (in differing font), basic information about the magazine (issue number, price) and the publishing house logo. All the above mentioned components are placed on the background image referring directly to the contents of two or three comic strips found inside. The magazine structure in issue 2/2000 is analogous to the structure proposed in issue 3/2000 and its constituents are short comic strips, brain teasers (verbal and picture riddles, labyrinths, mathematic riddles etc.) and short stories at the magazine’s end. The first part is, in both cases, the longest comic strips proposed by the publisher, with 51 and 65 comic frames respectively. Individual comic segments are of different dimensions, making up a well-designed whole, offering a coherent visual structure which is easy to comprehend. It seems highly important that all the comic strips are printed in colour which is not a characteristic property of the illustrations by Tove Jansson who used lines to emphasize expression and chiaroscuro in a black-and-white picture or show the most important aspects in a simple form:

“W listach narzekała często na kłopoty z kolorami – że znikły, że nie potrafi ich odnaleźć itp. Ale nigdy nie wspominała o linii! To kolor nie chciał jej słuchać, ale

⁹ K. Smyk, *Sakralne wymiary drogi*, Prace Komisji Krajobrazu Kulturowego No 17. Komisja Krajobrazu Kulturowego PTG, Sosnowiec 2012, p. 121, accessed online: <file:///C:/Users/User/Documents/studia%20doktoranckie/artyku%C5%82y/o%20muminkach/10.smyk.pdf> (accessed on: 20.08.2017).

linie – zawsze słuchały. To po prostu przychodziło jej całkowicie naturalnie. Może dlatego też miała kłopoty z malowaniem obrazów – ze względu na kolor. Z jednej strony kolor, z drugiej linia – to wielkie pytania dotyczące twórczości Tove Jansson, dla mnie bardzo ważne. Choć ona sama tej kwestii raczej nie zauważała. Była jedną z najlepszych rysowniczek na świecie, jeszcze niewystarczająco zdajemy sobie z tego sprawę. Absolutnie pierwsza liga.”¹⁰

Translation from Polish:

“In her letters, she would often complain about colour-related problems, claiming e.g. the colours disappeared, she was unable to find them etc. But she would not even mention a line! That was the colour which would not obey, the lines were always obedient. That was as natural as breathing for her. Perhaps that was why she had problems painting images, because of the colour. On the one hand the colour, and on the other the line. Those are the grand questions concerning the creative effort of Tove Jansson, of high importance for me. She did not notice that aspect.

She was one of the best cartoonists worldwide although we have not realized that sufficiently so far. The first league, beyond doubt”.



Photo 1. Book illustration (to the right) and the comic magazine illustration (to the left)

¹⁰ Dwutygodnik.com: <http://www.dwutygodnik.com/arttykul/5492-kolor-i-linia.html> (access: 21.08.2017)

Comic frames of particular stories are perfect and full of details. Their form resembles the frames from the iconic cartoon called *The Moomins*, co-produced by the Japanese, Finns, Dutch and French artists.

The comic structures in the *Moomins* magazine are arranged alternately with brain teasers, most probably addressed to children aged 6–7 years. The decision to diversify the comic's structure by separating the individual illustrated stories with brain teasing inclusions seems a well-thought-out endeavour, offering variety and differentiating the activity of a prospective young reader.

The comic strips called *Wyspa Muminków* and *Nowy dom Muminka* were published in a format close to A5, in a rather non-standard horizontal orientation, resulting probably from the necessity to provide a logical structure to the story frames. The collections published by Egmont are more extensive than the volume publications because of the length of the proposed comic stories (they contain about one hundred pages). Every mentioned copy has three independent black-and-white illustrated stories and one of them refers to the title of the entire volume. Those include *Życie rodzinne* [English name: *Moomin and Family Life*], *Wyspa Muminków* [English name: *Moomin's Desert Island*] and *Zakochany Muminek* [English name: *Moomin Falls in Love*] in the volume called *Wyspa Muminków*, and *Niebezpieczna zima* [English name: *Moomin's Winter Follies*], *Nowy dom muminka* [English name: *Moomin Builds a House*] and *Nowe życie Muminków* [English name: *Moomin Begins a New Life*] in the collection called *Nowy dom Muminka*.¹¹ Only the first page of those albums, with the title and illustration related to Moomin life, not being a comic frame, is colourful. Comic frames were structured in two rows, in three- or four-box strips, referring directly to the original version and the way the first comic stories were published.

The drawings filling particular boxes were printed in black and white which emphasizes the exceptional skills of the illustrator in relation to using lines, creating the impression of a sufficient artistic measure which is at times simple, clear, sometimes understated, and somewhere else provides the smallest details of those mini-drawings. A line in the comic strips by Tove Jansson either flickers or sets down, seeming unstable, moving, emphasizing the expression of selected frames. The clarity and simplicity of the illustrations, as well as the description of space and situations by means of varied lines, are the characteristic features of the comic stories by Tove Jansson.

The analysed copies of albums do not contain any inclusions, interludes or above-mentioned divisions used in the *Moomins* magazines. Their form is absolutely simple, making up a well-structured consolidated version of the comic strip published in *The Evening News*.

¹¹ Some volumes include just two stories.



Photo 2. A comic frame layout in comic albums

The first proposed road concerning the structure and the visual aspect of the two albums and two copies of the *Moomins* magazine leads to a short summary of the above information. The album Moomin publications, i.e. *Nowy dom Muminka* and *Wyspa Muminków* refer to the original comic strips and stress the nature of the Moomin stories with their undeniable faithfulness to the black-and-white illustrations and regular layout of frames, set in strips. They are stories created and drawn by Tove Jansson, giving an inimitable atmosphere to her work, resulting from the use of lines, strokes and dots closely related to the text in the boxes. The magazine comic strips are more accessible (especially for a young reader), assuming as if a series form. It should be mentioned that in the 1990s, the series creators, “forcing the *Moomin* characters into their own animated film licence (*anime*), gave the family toy-like image to the inhabitants of the Finnish valley.”¹² The colourful illustrations and the varied form resulting from the variety of components proposed by Egmont to complement the comic strips were aimed at making the thirty-page volumes accessible, clear and undemanding.

¹² W.K. Pessel, *Gdy kulturoznawca zamienia się w Paszczaka. Problemy katastrofy w Dolinie Muminków*, op. cit., p. 459.

The second road, or the contents and presentation

The second road is much longer than the first one as it refers to the contents and manner of presenting the world created in the analysed comic strips in the form of volumes (*Moomins* magazine) and albums. It is also much more complex as, due to the number of threads which must be discussed, its ultimate shape is composed of the paths approaching it. This is why the discussion devoted to this road will refer, among other things, to the plots covered, problems presented, ways of structuring components of the Moomin world and personality and character conflicts in interpersonal and intrapersonal relations.

The first path which needs to be described due to the general atmosphere of the comic stories discussed is the origin of Moomins, proving their personality determinants. Both in one of the *Moomins* magazines analysed and in a selected album, there is a mention of the Moomin ancestors who were undeniably trolls or creatures perceived in two different ways in the Nordic tradition,¹³ situated in either an *orbis exterior* or an *orbis interior*. The first of them, mythic ones, were wild, untamed trolls, inhabiting the woods and mountains, or places inaccessible and menacing. They can be located in the following way in the chain of relationship, as proposed by L. Stomma: “*orbis exterior* — ugly — wild (not useful) — unknown.”¹⁴ The second ones, derived from “folk culture tradition”¹⁵ are milder, as they inhabit an *orbis interior*, located invisibly among people who felt their presence “as a cool breeze on their neck, especially when they are alone.”¹⁶ As Moominmamma said in the book called *Małe trolle i wielka powódź* [English name: *The Moomins and the Great Flood*] the Moomins originated from the trolls which lived behind Swedish stoves (*kakelugn*). This is confirmed in a comic strip called *Wampir (A Vampire)* in the *Moomins* magazine 3/2000, containing a story of a fraudulent, unemployed actor passing himself off as a vampire. The cheat, wishing to take advantage of the Moomins’ hospitality, attempts to rob this nice family at night but makes too much noise. A small, hairy ancestor, irritated by the intruder’s behaviour, jumps out of the tile stove and chases the dishonest visitor away. However, the doubts concerning the Moomins’ ancestors appear after reading the comic strip called *Wyspa Muminków* [English name: *Moomin’s Desert Island*] in which the travelling Moomin family arrive at an island and discover a tomb of their forefathers, not resembling a tiny creature jumping out

¹³ Ibidem, p. 17.

¹⁴ L. Stomma, *Antropologia kultury wsi polskiej XIX wieku*, Warszawa 1986, p. 134.

¹⁵ W.K. Pessel, *Gdy kulturoznawca zamienia się w Paszczaka. Problemy katastrofy w Dolinie Muminków*, op. cit., p. 466.

¹⁶ T. Jansson, *Małe trolle i duża powódź*, Warszawa 1995, p. 17.

of *kakelugn* at all. In this comic strip, the mummified ancestors are tall and robust trolls – pyromaniacs who, in some unexplained way, come to life and show their malicious nature by setting a false navigation fire on the sea shore to attract ships which are then wrecked on the rocky coast. Tove Jansson introduces, as she does consistently in her Moomin literary works, some unrest, also stressing the ambiguity and diversified nature of the Moomins, deprived of any “sugary” image, created later by the bed-time cartoon broadcast of the 1990s.

This discrepancy in the image of the Moomins, later perceived as a character personality creation, as noticed in the albums and magazines, is the second path and needs development. The magazine Moomins are to some extent regular in terms of their personality and character traits, and their creation seems uniformly consistent and analogous to the one known from the Polish TV series. The adventures presented in the comic strip, such as the unheralded visit of the Moominlogist, the unemployed Artist-thief and the attempt at calming down the cheeky plant brought to the Moomin house by the Hattifattener, substantiate the statement that particular characters appearing in the comic boxes are created to display their unique, exceptional nature in a consistent way. Good-natured and hospitable Moominmamma, adventurous Moominpappa (with exceptional self-esteem), sensitive Moomintroll and the Snorkmaiden who loves him (and requires support and care), as well as the mischievous, annoying and brave Little My are the protagonists whose character interpretation seems easy when reading the magazine but becomes complex with the situations and adventures presented in albums which open up a fascinating range of personality traits and the emotions of every protagonist to the reader. In the section called *Niebezpieczna zima* [English name: *Moomin's Winter Follies*], a remarkable person appears, namely Pan Wicherek [Mr. Breeze], who gets Mymbble and the Snorkmaiden to fall in love with him. Consequently, the latter is head over heels in love and neglects all of the requests and grumbles of Moomintroll. The Moomintroll himself also behaves absolutely indecently, wishing to push Mr. Breeze down a slope, saying: “There won't be any peace among our women until I... kill him.”¹⁷ An example of controversial behaviour is also the abandonment of his son and escape of Moominpappa and Moominmamma from their home, resulting from the unrestrained and purely egoistic desires of the eccentric father and husband, wishing to live a life typical of an adventurer.¹⁸ The personality creations of the album and comic magazine characters are connected directly with the situations, events and adventures in which individual protagonists are entwined and involved in. For this reason, the situations presented in the analysed magazines and albums will become the third path, as described below.

¹⁷ T. Jansson, *Nowy dom Muminka*, Warszawa 2005, p. 25.

¹⁸ T. Jansson, *Wyspa Muminków*, Warszawa 2006, p. 19.

Presenting the emotions and experiences of the protagonists (not necessarily welcome ones) in ambiguous and complex situations is typical of the album comic stories, as proven for example by the story called *Nowe życie Muminków* [English name: *Moomin Begins a New Life*] in which a spiritual and emotional revolution in the Moominvalley takes place, caused by two prophets. The teachings of the first of them, an exceptional hedonist, propagating an untrammelled life, make Moominpappa leave home and start a new life in a tree with a bottle of wine and a book by Agatha Christie in his hand, and then begin the production of strong alcoholic drinks with the uncouth Stinky. They also make Snorkmaiden cheat on Moomintroll one more time and leave him, and the milk bar in the Moominvalley is transformed into a pub. The second prophet replaces the former one and tries to repair the rotten Moomin world, introducing and advocating ascetic ideas which also results in disaster. Tove Jansson presents the effects of yielding to the influence of prospective manipulators and their abstract postulates which do not change anything solely for Moominmamma who, being free after all, confesses to the prophets that “your teachings are surely nice but you need to understand they are a bit impractical for ordinary people.”¹⁹ The Moomin author often presents ambiguous and controversial situations, multifaceted in terms of emotions, sometimes catastrophic, dangerous and unpredictable in her comic strips, with the ability to encipher and mask social problems and the specific nature of her everyday experience on the illustrated sheets. That incredible network of multidimensional situations cannot be found in the *Moomins* magazine, which presents stories that are easier to interpret and more of an adventure and travel type.

Summing up the three paths, being the branches of the main road focused on the contents and presentation sphere, it seems necessary to stress that the Moominvalley, as depicted in the *Moomins* magazine and the comic album, has as if two presentations, two spaces, two forms, differing in terms of their situational complexity and interpretative difficulty. The Moominvalley creation in the *Moomins* magazine seems analogous to the TV series, while the comic one offers a set of nonstandard, humorous situations, the protagonists of which are absolutely far from perfect, defective, erring, entering conflicts and living as their readers do.

¹⁹ T. Jansson, *dom Muminka*, op. cit., p. 103.

„Hej! – powiedział Ryjek. – Odkryłem ciekawą ścieżkę. Wygląda niebezpiecznie”

“Hey!, said the Sniff. I discovered an interesting path. It looks dangerous.”

The above roads, identified so as to systematize the discussion, did not enable us to diagnose a place “where they end” but rather to emphasize the fact that they do not end where these considerations finish. It is especially true for the comic albums, being a collection of original comic strips by Tove Jansson. Analyzing the comic strips published in the *Moomins* magazine, based on the Moomin characters licence, it should be stated they do not present the problem of multifaceted complexity which is found in the original illustration sequences by Jansson. The colourful magazine offered by Egmont is easy to read and addressed to children aged 6 –7 years. It can be interesting for them thanks to the colourful pictures, numerous comic interludes, small number of comic frames of differing sizes and the interesting adventures of Moomin characters, whose world and its constituents are consistent with what was offered by the creators of the cartoon which was broadcast for the first time in Telewizja Polska in 1993. The black-and-white version of the comic albums and opposing multicoloured personalities presented by Tove Jansson, as well as the humour and extraordinariness of the situations devised by her, emphasizing the uniqueness and eccentricity of protagonists, permit us to claim that the albums published by Egmont require the advanced interpretative skills of an older, demanding reader. This is why I claim that the multifaceted analysis of the comic albums seems a new, “interesting path”, the discovery of which was initiated and generated by these considerations devoted to the presence of two Moominvalleys. One of them turned out to be a place inhabited by creatures who prevent any one-sided interpretations and hasty assessment, living a life resembling that of their readers in many respects.

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