People's Democratic Republic of Algeria Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research University of Tlemcen



#### Faculty of Letters and Languages Department of English Section of English

### EXPLORING LITERARY TECHNIQUES IN ART SPIEGELMAN'S THE COMPLETE MAUS : A SURVIVOR'S TALE 1980-1991.

Dissertation submitted to the department of English as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for Master's degree in Literature and Civilisation of Foreign Languages.

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2021 - 2022



To my precious family;

To my father Ben Younes, may he rest in peace.

To my beautiful mother Aicha for her endless Love, Support and Encouragement.

To my lovely sister Fatima Zahraa and to my brothers Abdellah, Mouloud and Yahya, thank you for always

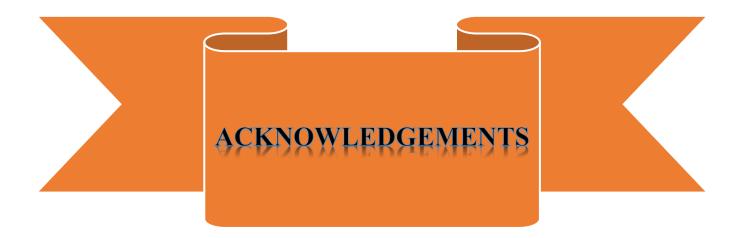
having my back.

To my little angel, my nephew Mohamed Younes Baraa, you bring happiness my world.

To my second family KHEFIF,

Thank you Amel, Sidi Mohamed and their beautiful mother, for your support and love.

And to me.



I would like to thank my dear teacher and supervisor

Prof. Faiza SENOUCI

for her constant guidance and support.

My deepest thanks also go to the board of examiners namely:

Dr. Mohammed KHELADI

and

Mrs. Bedra MENOUAR;

for taking the time to read and evaluate my work.



This dissertation explores, within its folds the issues surrounding the recognition of graphic novels as a literary genre. This research paper, therefore, brings in new understandings of graphic novels, displaying its importance as literary pieces. It is an attempt to uncover the literary merit of graphic novels through a literary analysis of *The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale 1980 -1991*, a popular graphic novel that introduced the theme of the Holocaust in a very controversial way, shedding the light on the author's background and how it was an important factor in creating this graphic novel. This investigation will reveal and depict the literary and artistry techniques used in Art Spiegelman's representation of the Holocaust through text and comic strips.

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# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Graphic storytelling have been used as a way of communication; portraying everyday life, actions and behaviors of societies since the dawn of ages. Graphic narrations have existed for thousands of years. Examples of graphic narrations have been found in cave paintings, Egyptian hieroglyphs, Aztec tablets and in all parts of the world (McCloud, 1993).

Graphic storytelling started to flourish in Europe through cartoons and caricatures published in Newspapers. They were a huge influence because they used themed art such as politics, social life, satire of everyday life (Martin, 2012). *Histoire de M. Vieux Bois or The Adventures of Mr. Obadiah Oldbuck* drawn by *Rodolph Topffer, 1828* is regarded as the first graphic novel to be distinguished from the comic books; but, it was not until *Will Eisner* published his graphic novel *A Contract With God 1978* that the term graphic novel started to be used and people started to make a difference between graphic novels and comic books. Graphic novels were seen by scholars and critics as a way of entertaining younger generation only, since they usually contained stories of heroes and villains and were published first periodically in newspapers (Peppas and Ebrahim, 2012).

Upon the controversies and debates among scholars; questioning the merit of graphic novels, this research attempts to explore and uncover the literary techniques in graphic novels, by further investigating its merit in Art Spiegelman's *The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale 1981-1991*, depicting, analyzing and uncovering the literary techniques and devices as well as the aspects of the novel used in *Spiegelman's Maus*.

Spiegelman's The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale 1980-1991 is one of the famous graphic novels. The graphic novel narration shifts between the past and present. Maus revolves around two primary narratives: Vladek's experiences as a Jew in World War II Poland, and Art's relationship with his aging father. This second narrative follows a period of time in Art's life beginning around 1978 and ending sometime shortly before Vladek's death in 1982. Maus was the first graphic novel to win a Pulitzer Prize in 1992 under the non-fiction category. *Maus* is a Holocaust memoir, a postmodern biography and a personal autobiography (Ewert, 2000).

The following questions are to be raised:

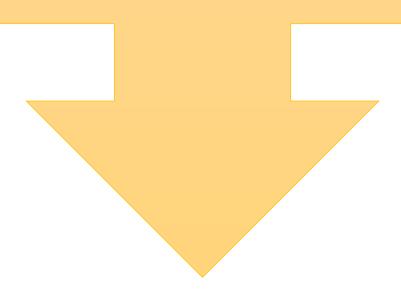
- > Do graphic novels have a literary merit?
- > What are the main literary techniques and devices found in *Art Spiegelman's The Complete Maus*?

This investigation is going to be divided into two chapters. The first chapter is an overview, it will introduce the historical background of graphic novels, the development of graphic novels as well as the graphic novel's format and literary merit in the literary canon.

The second chapter is basically, an extended examination of the literary merit of graphic novels, through analyzing *Art Spiegelman's Maus*. It will be the displaying and uncovering of the major themes, characters and literary devices and techniques used in the graphic novel.

## **CHAPTER ONE :**

## From Cave Paintings to Best Sellers: An Introduction to Graphic Novels



#### **1.1. Introduction** :

This chapter is an introductory chapter. It is an overview of the topic. It provides a braod definition of graphic novels. This chapter also sheds the light on the origins and the historical background of graphic novels. It introduces the first famous graphic novel *A Contract With God and Other Tenement Stories 1978* by the infamous *Will Eisner*; going through a brief biography of the author, as well as a brief summary of the graphic novel itself. This chapter uncovers the different types of graphic novels, highlighting its different characteristics, mentioning the different elements that form it. The first chapter provides a brief guide on how to read a graphic novel, through explaining its different components. Last but not least, this chapter, also deals with the graphic novel narratives and the use of textual and visual narrative to tell a story. This chapter contains also some examples of famous movie adaptations.

#### **1.2.** Defining Graphic Novels :

The term graphic novel has been a subject of debate and interpretation for many years. Most scholars, literary critics and comic artists defined graphic novels in terms of attributes relative to *comic books*.

A graphic novel is defined by *Oxford English Dictionary* as "a full-length (esp. science fiction or fantasy) story published as a book in comic-strip format including graphic novels and comics .

Bonser, 2017 defined graphic novels as "Images are sequential and tell a story" (P. 4).

In his book, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (1993, P. 9), McCloud states that graphic novels are "... Juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence."

Whereas Baetens and Frey (2015) defined the graphic novel as a storytelling medium.

In Faster Than A Bullet: The Rise Of The Graphic Novel (2012), Weiner and Eisner gave a broad meaning to it, they state that the graphic novel as book-length texts that combines words and images that are read as one story.

Other critics prefer to label graphic novels simply as sequential arts; which is term introduced by Will Eisner

to describe art forms that use images and texts to convey meaning (buffalolib, n.d.).

A graphic novel is basically a comic book in a form of an actual novel. It is a long version of a comic book that actually looks like a typical chapter book. The format uses sequences of art and texts to tell stories which are chronologically ordered, well structured.

Graphic novels were subject to confusion since their emergence as distinct format. So, wether graphic novels are simply comics or sequences of images and texts; one thing is for sure, unlike other sequential arts, graphic novels are stories with a plot (buffalolib, n.d.).

#### **1.3.** The Origin and History of Graphic Novels:

Graphic storytelling went through many changes and developed to become what we know today as modern graphic novels. Graphic storytelling started around the 1800's, but many forget that the idea of using pictures to tell a story has existed for thousands of years (McCloud, 1993).

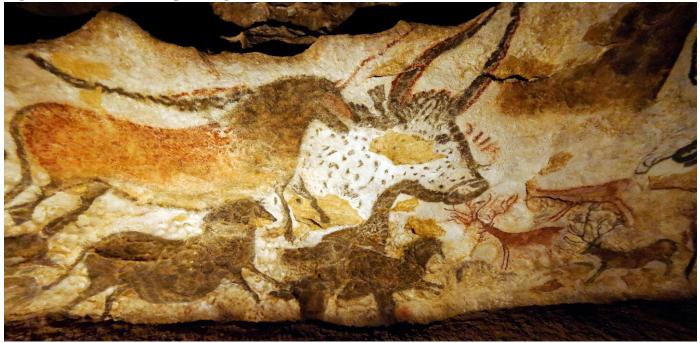
Although the term graphic novel has been a subject for debate among scholars and critics but, they all share the same idea about its origins. Sequences of images and texts, have been found in many places around the world.

Since ages, people used graphic storytelling to tell their stories and to portray their everyday life, lifestyle, developement, religion, historical events, tribe's way of life and other stories. Ancients civilizations used graphic storytelling to communicate and portray these events to the other generations. They used to carve or draw on stones And other ancient civilizations (Martin, 2011).

As civilisation evolved and developed so did the art. Early surviving examples of graphic storytelling or the use of art and sequential arts to tell a story, proved to be methodical and organised. These sequential arts were labeled as comics by McCloud and others (Bonser, 2017).

Examples of sequential arts were found in cave paintings across the world for example, the figure below is a photograph of the famous cave paintings which is located in France (see, fig, 1):

Figure 01: Lascaux cave paintings in France.



History.com Editors.(2009). Lascaux cave paintings [Photograph]. HISTORY.<u>https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/lascaux-cave-paintings-discovered</u>. Accessed 08th May, 2022. 11 :35.

Egyptian hieroglyphs for example are one of the ancient forms of graphic storytelling and sequential arts, the figure below is a photograph of an Egyptian hieroglyphs tablet (see, fig, 2):



Figure 02: Part of a panel from a version of the Book of the Dead.

Alberge.D. (2016). Part of a panel from a version of the Book of the Dead [Photograph]. Egyptianstreets. <u>https://egyptianstreets.com/2016/08/25/ancient-egyptian-hieroglyphic-texts-translated-into-english-for-the-first-time-in-a-book/</u>. Accessed 08<sup>th</sup> May, 2022. 11:53.

Aztec Woodcarving Tablets are another famous forms of graphic storytelling, the figure below is an example of it (see, fig, 3):

#### Figure 03: Aztec Woodcarving Tablets.



Savchenko.A. (2014). Aztec Woodcarving Tablets is a photograph [Photograph].Pixels <u>https://pixels.com/featured/aztec-woodcarving-tablets-viktor-savchenko.html</u>. Accessed 08th May, 2022. 12:07.

In her article, *Graphic Novels or Novel Graphics? The Evolution of an Iconoclastic Genre<sup>1</sup>* (2012) Martin quoted Fingeroth's brief history of sequential arts:

The paintings in ancient Egyptian tombs record events through a combination of sequential drawings and hieroglyohic lettering... A monumental example of sequencial art from the roman perid is Trajan's column, completed in AD 113... Similar narrative friezes are found on ancient Greek and Roman temples, as well as early Church buildings. Sequential art can be seen in medieval tapestries, the most famous of which is the Bayeux Tapestry, recording the Norman invasion of Britain in 1066. (P. 170)

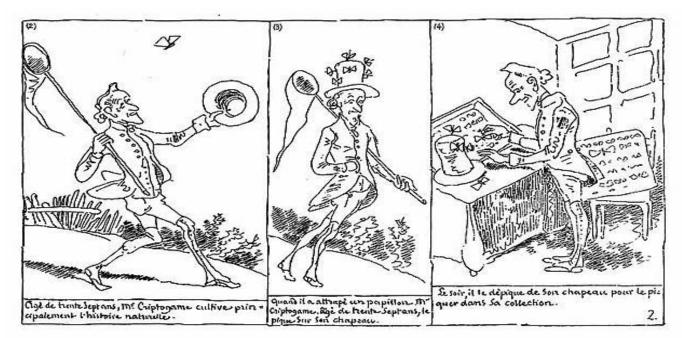
Peppas and Ebrahim (2016) claim that "... From the cave paintings of the Cro-Magnon Men to the

<sup>1</sup> An article written by Elaine Martin regarding the recognition of Graphic Novels as literary pieces.

hieroglyphics of the Ancient Egyptians, graphic storytelling has been used as a popular means for communicating thoughts and ideas." (P. ix)

Graphic storytelling started to flourish in Europe through cartoons and caricatures published in Newspapers. They were a huge influence because they used themed art such as politics, social life, satire of everyday (Martin, 2012). The first pioneer of the graphic novel is believed to be *Histoire de M. Vieux Bois*<sup>2</sup> drawn by Swiss artist and writer Rodolphe Topffer in 1828. Topffer used sequential art accompanied by text to tell the story of the titula monsieur Vieux Bois's comic misadventures. By 1841, English translations of Topffer's work had made their way to the united states under the title *The Adventures of Obadiah Old Buck*. The famous comic theorist Scott McCloud has called Topffer "The father of modern comic". McCloud also recognized Topffer's novel as the first wave of graphic novels. McCloud added "Cartooning and panel borders along with the first interdependent combination of words and pictures seen in Europe." Topffer used the same format and the same technical elements used in modern comics (Peppas and Ebrahim 2012, P. ix).

Figure 04: A panel from Histoire de M. Vieux Bois graphic novel.



Toppfer. R. (1828). A panel from Histoire de M. Vieux Bois graphic novel [Drawing]. Comicsalliance. https://comicsalliance.com/tribute-rodolphe-topffer/ . Accessed 08<sup>th</sup> May, 2022. 12 :16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Translated to English as The Adventures of Mr. Obadiah Oldbuck.

Broadly speaking, a graphic novel is a collection of related comic strips that form a story and are all published together as one book. In the past, what really distinguished comics from graphic novels was the higher quality and format of the book. German *Max Ernst* is credited with creating the first graphic novel. *Ernst* took images from other publications and linked them together as one book . American cartoonist, *Milt Gross* published *He Done Her Wrong: the great American novel and not a word in it - no music, too, 1930.* A wordless novel that many consider another pioneer of the graphic novel. While not super popular, it was impactful in the industry and a huge influence on *Osamu Tezuka* " The greatest Mangaka" (Goldsmith, 2010).

These wordless novels gave birth to the artistic idea that became later "The graphic novel". The term graphic novel was originally coined in 1964 comic fanzine called *Capa-Alpha* by The famous critic *Richard Kyle*. The term has flourished in 1978 after *Eisner* published his graphic novel *A Contract with God. Eisner* used the term to distinguish his works from 'comic books and other Sequential Arts (Peppas and Ebrahim, 2012). *Eisner*'s novel was not actually the first one, many cite *Jack Katz*'s *The first kingdom1927* which came out few years before it. what *Eisner*'s did was to elevate the term graphic novel and made it more popular, raising its value in the eyes of adult readers (wwnorton, n.d.). Following contract, we have titles like *Saber 1978* by *Don McGregor* and *Paul Gulacy*. This is when reader's began to see the difference between serious graphic novels and comics, titles like *Batman: year one 1987, The Nam1985, Sandman 1989-1996*, all serve to elevate the way readers saw the medium (cbr, 2008). The most important moment for graphic novels came in 1992 when *Art Spiegelman's Maus* became the first and still till now the only graphic novels to win a Pulitzer. *Maus* is now used in schools as an educational tool and a literary piece along with graphic novels like *Persepolis* by *Marjane Satrapi* because they are regarded as poscolonial texts (Turkel, 2022).

Looking back at the history of graphic novels, it is clear that graphic narrations were established as a form of communication, which involve a didactic quality. Graphic narrations since the early ages conveye *ي* actions, behaviours and showed everydays life (Peterson, 2011).

#### 1.4. Will Eisner's A Contract With God and Other Tenement Stories 1978

*Will Eisner's* work has influenced the worldwide art movement. Born on March 6, 1917, in Brooklyn, New York, *Eisner's* artistic career spanned 70 years, during which he contributed strongly to the recognition of comics not only as art, but also as an independent literary genre. The American artist, who left in 2005, influenced the development of comedy by looking at new ways of thinking to do this kind of work, as well as by promoting the style of action in the form of sequences, and by creating visual narratives that are still in use today (Inge, 2011).

A Contract With God and Other Tenement Stories 1978 is a 224 pages graphic novel, which brings together several stories whose common point is to present the life of Jewish families living in the Bronx of the 1930 (Despres, 2017).

The first edition was published in 1978, without pre-publication. It is written, drawn and inked by Will Eisner, and considered the first graphic novel in the United States (wwnorton, n.d.).

The graphic novel contains four complete and independent stories which are as follows:

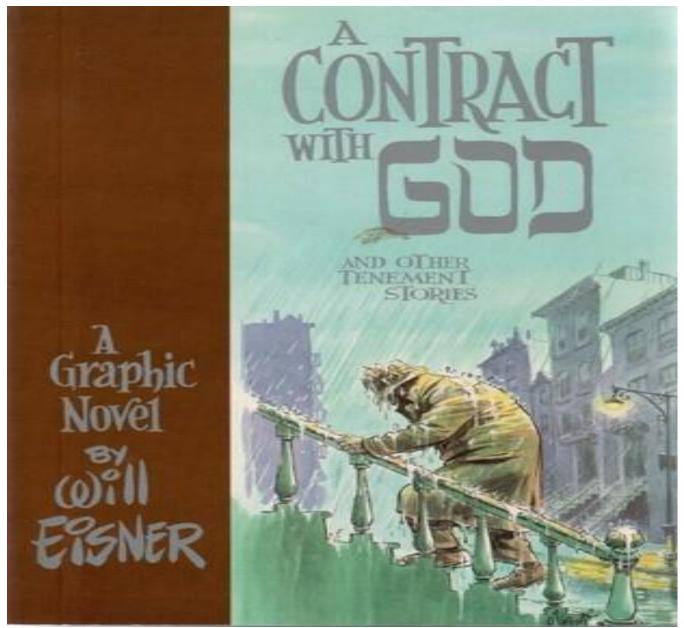
**1. A contract with God**: The story narrates the life of Frimme Hersh a Jewish man who lives in the Bronx in a building at 55 Dropsie Avenue. Hersh is a religious man who had carved on a stone the terms of a contract with God. Hersh's adopted daughter Rachele dies from an illness, which leads him to question his faith (Eisner, 2000).

2. The Street Singer: Marta Maria was a promising soprano who chose to leave singing behind after getting married. Maria offers to help Eddie, the unemployed penniless man with a golden voice; to make a career under the name of Ronald Barry (Eisner, 2000).

**3. The Super:** Mr.Scuggs is the concierge at 55 Dropsie Avenue. He is an anti-Semitic German man. Everyone at Dropsie Avenue hates Mr. Scuggs because of his violent and perverted nature. He later commits suicide as he is publicly embarrassed from his interaction with a twelve-year-old (Eisner, 2000).

4. Cookalein: Summer is coming to Dropsie Avenue, and several tenants are going on holiday in the nearby mountains. A man named Sam sends his wife Fannie and his two kids in a vacation, in order to stay with his mistress. The operator Goldie also goes there to try to get hold of a rich bachelor. Benny, a young salesman, goes there in the hope of getting hold of a young woman from a rich family to enter his father's business (Eisner, 2000). Below is a picture of the cover page of the graphic novel (see, fig, 5):

Figre 05:A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories.



Eisner.W.(1978). A contract with God cover page [Photograph].Goodreads. <u>https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/861023.A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories</u> .Accessed 08<sup>th</sup> May, 2022. 12:41.

Each story ends in tragedy. They are independent from one another but share the same street address. Will Eisner pictured the true humanity in all his characters, and also highlighted their flaws, doubts and hope.

#### 1.5. Types of Graphic Novels

After the emergence of the term graphic novels, the format became popular among audiences. Cartoonists started to explore and create new different ideas and themes. This development led to the emergence of five popular types which are:

1. Manga : Manga art, although beginning in the 12th century, appeared strongly in the Japanese Edo period. From 1603 to 1867, it was known for its economic development and general prosperity. The term "manga" was later used for all cartoons telling stories within Japan. It has a certain reading style from the right to the left and from the top to the bottom. (Berndt and Kümmerling, 2013) Mangas like *One Piece, Naruto and* became very famous, and were turns later on into Anime shows, seen by people across the world.

2. Superhero Stories : Which is the most common and famous genre across the world. Comic books about Superheroes emerged in the 1930's and 1940's. They feature stories about heroes with super powers who fight evil and save the world. Superhero stories such as *Batman, Superman* have become very famous and were turned into cartoons and blockbuster movies (King, 2016).

**3. Personal Narratives:** Known as Perzines which are autobiographical stories. They narrates Historical events, life experiences. Personal opinions and observations and personal diaries such as *Fun Home, Blankets, Lucky, The Quitter* (King, 2016).

**4.** Non-fiction: They are comic books similar to Perzines. The writer uses his personal experiences and opinions to talk about a life issue or a taboo such as *Maus and Persepolis* (King, 2016).

There are different types of graphic novels just like there are novels with different genres. Graphic novels brought something different and new, it gave adults the opportunity to enjoy comic books written specifically for them.

#### 1.6. A Guide to Reading A Graphic Novel:

Reading a graphic novel or a comic book is different than reading a novel or any normal book. Since they contain sequential arts and texts, the readers may get confused on how and from where they start reading.

Graphic novels are read from left to right, top to bottom, page by page. On each page of the graphic novels, there are a number of panels with all shapes and sizes, which contain the texts and arts. The panels are separated by gutters which are the white spaces between panels. Conversations, texts and sound effects displayed by the characters are written in balloons (Goldsmith, 2010). It maybe a little confusing when you first start reading graphic novels, especially for people who have never seen one, but infact it is very easy. On every page the reader finds a set of illustrations within panels, the whole page is read left to right , top to bottom and that includes the illustrations within one panel too. The conversations are written in bubbles, so the reader may find different shapes of bubbles for example a speech bubble and a thought bubble; the first contains the character's words and the second contains the character's unspeakable thoughts (Behler, 2006). The figure below is an explanation (see, fig, 6):

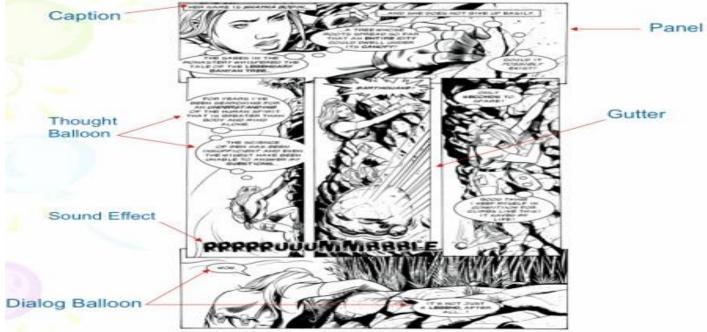


Figure 06: How to read a graphic novel. A page taken from American Born Chinese graphic novel.

Yang.G.L. (2006). A page from American born Chinese graphic novel [Photograph]. Teachingamericanbornchinese. <u>http://teachingamericanbornchinese.weebly.com/about-graphic-novels.html</u>. Accessed 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2022. 12:58.

When holding a graphic novel for the first time; the readers may get confused because they are not familiar with the format yet. The readers of graphic novels have to stick with the basics and the rest will be fathomable through out the reading.

#### **1.7.** Graphic narrative :

In his book *Comics, Manga And Graphic Novels: A History Of Graphic Narratives* (2011), Peterson defined narration as the arrangement of sequences of events which occurs according to Before and After, Then and Now, Cause and Result, Crime and Punishement.

Graphic narratives are two stories in one: a textual narrative and a visual narrative. These two narratives are combined and placed together in juxtaposition to one another (Goldsmith, 2010). Although graphic novels share many characteristics with other sequential arts such as the use of text and art to convey the message, but they are way different than them, as they are more extended and do not need volumes to complete the story. Graphic novels are bounded narratives that contain a perfect beginning, middle, and end with a central narrative that conveys a thematic messaging, through the character's development and personal journeys (Goldsmith, 2010). According to Peterson(2011): "Graphic narratives express ideas by transforming them into a story where the actions of characters become a way of describing experiences and sensations beyond one's own lived experience." (P. xvi)

When reading a graphic novel, the readers are able to form a connection with the story, to the point of which they relate what is happening in the story to their own lives and experiences and to the real world. Readers of graphic narratives are able to depict the order of sequences, without being helped or guided by the author, the readers are easily guided through their eyes from one panel to another; which gives the opportunity to the readers to be creative in forming all sort of ways, to tell the same story (Peterson, 2011).

Graphic novels are a narrative medium, a set of sequences that tell a story through words and art. They combine both textual and visual narratives; which are placed together in a chronological and rational order (Goldsmith, 2010)

#### 1.8. The Difference Between Comic Books and Graphic Novels:

A beginner reader will not be able to differentiate between a graphic novel and a comic book. Graphic novels and comic books come from the same origin, they both tell stories through sequential arts, but at the same time they are quite different from each other and its a mistake to mix them as one (Masterclass, 2011)

Graphic novels are different than comic books in terms of length which make them more fulfilling. They contain various sub-genres and types, they can be history, non-fiction, fantasy and they come as one story with a more complex plot. They are books that tell a complete story, whereas comic books tell the story through sequences and are published weekly or monthly. Graphic novels come in every size unlike comic books that should be in a a standard  $6.5'' \times 10''$  size. They are also sold in libraries and comic shops unlike comic books which are sold only in comic shops. Graphic novels contain content and themes destined for adults only, as they discuss many topics and taboos such as racism, violence, sexuality and other contents, whereas comic books contain themes destined for kids such as superheroes, fighting for justice and other themes (Askanydifference, n.d.).

Graphic novels are not the same as Comic strips; they are just like the books you read, they have characters, they have a setting, plot and conflict (Askanydifference, n.d.).

#### **1.9.** The Literary Merit of Graphic Novels:

This was always a subject of charp debates among scholars and critics on the literary merit of graphic novels . Graphic novels are an emerging literary genre. In all respects, the new concepts and ideas introduced are always subject to questions concerning their validity (Bartleby, n.d.).

Graphic novels are sequential art mixed with writing, so they are a fusion of art and literature. They tell stories through words and pictures whereas novels use words only to convey the meaning (Baetens, 2008). They are categorized as just a format in the literary canon. First, they were seen only as books made for children, until graphic novels like Maus and Persepolis came out and said the opposite. Nowadays, graphic tools novels are in libraries and used teaching in schools. They seen as

proved valuable as a source for vocabulary. Graphic novels are used to teach history such as *Maus*, *Persepolis*, Mathematics such as *The cartoon guide to statistics*, Social and cultural issues such as racism in *American born Chinese*. They are also used as an example to explore literary devices such as themes, allusions, mood and tones as well as symbolism (Dallacqua, 2012). Graphic novels also helped in solving literacy as it is used as a teaching tool to sharpen reading skills in classes.

Graphic novels should be given a chance in classrooms and other academic places. They contain many different literary elements and since they contain pictures and dialogues, students are able to interpret and understand the plot (Dallacqua, 2012).

#### **1.10.** Movie adaptations:

Graphic novels are a great raw material for movie adaptations. Unlike regular novels, graphic novels are easy to handle since they already contain the visual aids required (Rhodes, 2019). Many graphic novels were adapted into movies, and were considered as blockbusters, huge hits such as: *V for Vendetta* the famous masterpiece directed by directed by *James McTeigue* in 2005. The movie is basically a famous graphic novel written by *Alan Moore*. It tells the story of V portrayed by Hugo Weaving, an anarchist who tries to start a revolution through terrorist acts, and Evey Hammond portrayed by Natalie Portman, a young woman caught up in V's mission. V's masked is used as a sign of freedom by a group of hackers called Anonymous, which shows the impact of this great move and graphic novel (Rhodes, 2019). *Edge of Tomorrow* which is famous movie based on a graphic Novel by *Hiroshi Sakurazaka* called *All you need is kill*. The sci-fie movie starred the movie star Tom Cruise and was directed by *Doug Liman* in 2004. It takes place in the future were an alien race is ruling the earth. The movie was also a major hit (Khal & Page & Flynn & Sheffield & Cadenas & Owolabi & Hartman, 2017). *Scott Pilgrim Vs. The World* which is based on the graphic novel written by *Bryan Lee O'Malley*. The movie was adapted and directed by *Edgar Wright* in 2010. The movie was a huge hit since it combined comedy with action and romance, starring Michael Cera as Scott Pilgrim, a bassist with a music band that tries to win a competition, and runs through many obstacles (Parade, 2020).

Watching these beautiful masterpieces come to life through adaptaions is the second best thing after reading one. These movie adaptations made a huge hit across the whole world. People wether fans of graphic novels or not were fascinated by these amazing adaptations (Rhodes, 2019).

#### 1.11. Conclusion

This chapter explored the way scholars and people view graphic novels since it has been a subject to debate over since its emergence. Graphic novels have been mistaken for comic books, they did not get the credit they deserve. It started first, by defining graphic novels from different perspectives, most commonly the scholars who view it as comic books which are nothing but pictures and texts used to entertain kids, and the others who have agreed upon the idea that graphic novels are not comic books but rather a new medium, format and why not a literary genre. The chapter's main focus was on the origin and history that led to the emergence of graphic novels, they do start from comic strips and evolved to become a format on its own. The chapter introduced the first graphic novel done by *Will Eisner* 1978 and brought to light many other famous graphic novels. Last but not least, the chapter discussed the types and characteristics of graphic novel, and also a guide for reading a graphic novel. The chapter also tackled the graphic novel narratives and the way graphic novels use textual and visual narrative to tell the story.

CHAPTER TWO : Literary And Linguistic Analysis Of Art Spiegelman's *The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale 1980-1991* 

#### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter in hand, based on what has been throughly discussed in the previous chapter, explores the literary techniques used in *Art Spiegelman's Maus*. The chapter opens up with a biographical sketch of the author. It is followed by an introduction to the graphic novel as well as a summary of the same selected graphic novel. In this chapter, we depict the major themes involved and discussed in the selected graphic novel. Within the same graphic novel, aspects of the novel are to be revealed, along with the polyphonic references used by the author, including Dialogism, Heteroglossia and Intertextualiy. Finally, this segment is concluded by the analysis of other literary elements found in the given graphic novel such as Methapor and Irony.

#### 2.2. A Biography of Art Spiegelman

Art Spiegelman is a famous American author and illustrator. Spiegelman is known for his many works. Spiegelman was born on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 1948 in Stockholm, Sweden. Spiegelman is famous for his graphic novels Maus: A survivor's tale: My father bleeds history which was published in 1986, and Maus: A survivor's tale: Here my troubles began which was published in 1991. Spiegelman's family immigrated to the United States in 1951 and settled in Queens, New York. Spiegelman studied Art and Design at Manhattan's High School, where he started a career as an artist and an illustrator. From 1965 to 1968, Spiegelman studied at State University of New York at Binghamton to obtain his college degree, which he did not get as he left college after his mother's death in 1968. In 1972, Spiegelman published his famous graphic novel Maus, as well as another graphic novel called Prisoner on the Hell Planet. In 1980, Speigelman and his wife Françoise Mouly founded Raw magazine (see, fig, 7). Their aim was to introduce graphic novels as a literary medium written for mature audiences. Spiegelman published his work Maus in the magazine. Spiegelman became very famous and started working as an illustrator in New York Times, Cartoonist in Playboy and staff artist and writer for The New Yorker.

Spiegelman was awarded *The Pulitzer Prize*<sup>3</sup> in 1992 for his graphic novel *Maus. Maus* became due to that a best seller, and was translated into more than 20 languages. *Spiegelman* was made a *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*<sup>4</sup> *in 2005.* In 2000, Spiegelman and his wife founded another magazine called *Little Lit* for children, where they collected comic strips of different illustrators such as *Chris Ware, Neil Gaiman, and Daniel Clowes.* Spiegelman published many other works such as: *Open Me...I'm a Dog! In 1997, In the Shadow of No Towers in 2004, Breakdowns: Portrait of the Artist as a Young* %@&\*! *in 2008, Maus. Co-Mix: A Retrospective of Comics, Graphics, and Scraps in 2011* (Ray, n,d.).

#### 2.3. Introduction to The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale 1981-1991

Art Spiegelman published Maus: A survivor's tale: My father bleeds history in 1986, followed by Maus: A survivor's tale: Here my troubles began in 1991. Both volumes were combined in one The complete Maus: A survivor's Tale graphic novel. The graphic novel won a Pulitzer Prize in 1992 for non-fiction, and gained a widely recognition. People started to give graphic novels some credit, and they were no more just comic books. In Introduction: American Comic Books and Graphic Novels (2011), Stein, Meyer and Edlich claimed that:

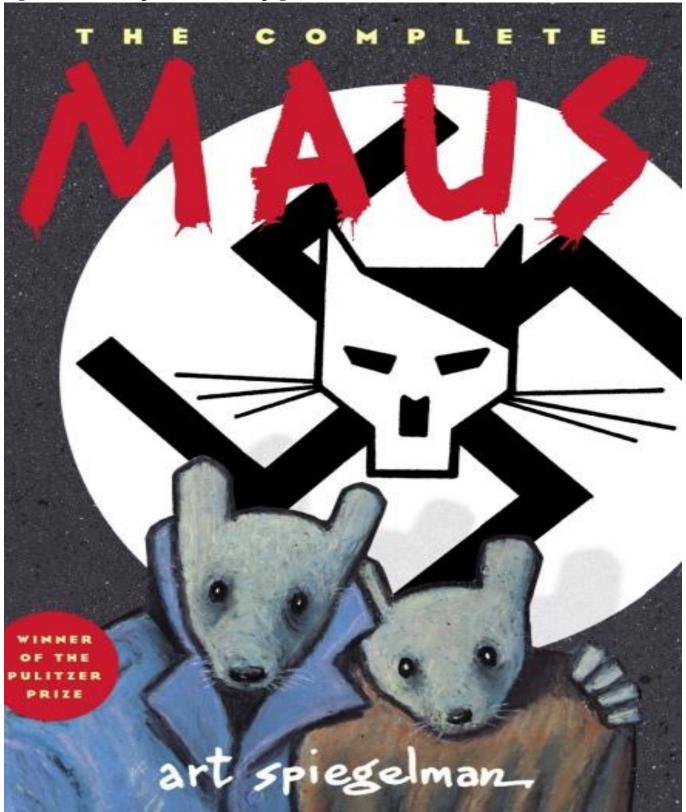
....This massive academic interest in comics may be explained to a significant degree by Art Spiegelman's Maus: A Survivor's Tale (1986/1991), the two part graphic life narrative about a son's conversations with his father, a survivor of Auschwitz and the Holocaust. This comic book almost single-handedly changed the perception of comics among insiders and outsiders alike. (P. 503).

*Maus* is a graphic novel unlike any other, it is a graphic memoir based on a true story. It is a story within a story or known as frame narratives. The theme of the graphic novel is what made it popular. (Kincade, 2013). The figure below is a picture of the graphic novel's cover page (see, fig, 8):

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The *Pulitzer Prize* is an award for achievements in newspaper, magazine, online journalism, literature and musical composition within the United States (businessstandard, n.d.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> An award within France which the equivelant of Pulitzer prize

Figure 08: The complete Maus cover page.



Art Spiegelman's Maus cover page. Culture.pl. <u>www.culture.pl/en/gallery/maus-by-art-spiegelman-image-gallery</u>. Accessed 12th March, 2022. 18 :28.

Spiegelman's graphic novel narrates both his father's and mother's experience during the Holocaust that took place between 1941 and 1945. During World War II, The German regime led by  $Adolf Hitler^5$ . The German killed nearly six million Jews. The Jews lives were deemed unimportant, *Hitler* claimed in one of his speeches that [The Jews are undoubtedly a race but they are not human.] (Spiegelman, 1993). Vladek's encounters are illustrated as flashbacks, in which he described the genocide led by the German, the struggles he had with his wife Anja in attempting to escape the Auschwitz death camp<sup>6</sup> as well as the struggles to adapt to life in The United States. *Maus* is used till this day as a teaching material, it is used to teach history regarding genocides, as well as a literary text since it contains literary elements and devices. *Maus* is subject to many criticism regarding the categorization. Some literary critics categorized *Maus* as a non-fiction, a memoir, a biography, an autobiography and an ethnography (Penguinrandomhouse, n.d.).

#### 2.4. An Overview of The complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale 1980 -1991

The graphic novel narration shifts between the present and the past. *Maus* revolves around two primary narratives: Vladek's experiences as a Jew in World War II Poland, and Art's relationship with his aging father. This second narrative follows a period of time in Art's life beginning around 1978 and ending sometime shortly before Vladek's death in 1982. The story begins with Artie visiting his father Vladek in Rego Park, New York, after some time due to the troubled relationship with him. Artie is interested in writing a comic book based on his father's encounters during the war in Poland. Spiegelman wanted to know more about his mother Anja, who committed suicide in 1968 while he was young. Vladek is now married to Mala another Shoah<sup>7</sup> survivor, yet his relationship with her is not that great. As a survivor from a trauma such as the Holocaust, Vladek grew apart from his son Artie, which made him question his worth and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> (20 April 1889 – 30 April 1945), an Austrian-born German politician and the leader of Nazi Party from 1933 until his death in 1945 (Lukacs, 2022).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> It was a complex of over 40 concentration and extermination camps operated by Nazi Germany in occupied Poland. It is consisted of Auschwitz I, the main camp in Oświęcim; Auschwitz II in Birkenau, a concentration and extermination camp with gas chambers; Auschwitz III in Monowitz, a labor camp for the chemical conglomerate IG Farben; and dozens of subcamps (Berenbaum, n.d.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The Hebrew word for Holocaust which took place in 1941–1945.

compare himself with his dead brother Richieu, his personality drastically changed and became bitter, giving Mala the only solution which is leaving him. Vladek begins his story with his marriage to Anja in 1973 and the birth of his first son and Art's brother Rishieu. In 1939, under the Nazis rule, the Jewish population as well as other ethnicities and minorities were oppressed by the Nazis. Vladek joined the Polish Army and battled along side with them. Poland lost and Vladek was captured. After a while Vladek was released . while he was in prison, the laws against the Jews became so strict and the penalties so severe, they were tortured and killed. In 1943, Vladek and his family were caught and moved to the Srodula ghettos, Richieu is sent with his aunt to Zawiercie for his safety. However, the German Nazis eventually invaded the place on September the 4<sup>th</sup>, 1939, the aunt poisoned her self, her children as well as Richieu, in order to escape the Gestapo and not die in the gas chamber in Auschwitz death camp. Vladek and Anja got caught and sent out to a building in Srodula which Vladek described as a ghetto inside a ghetto. Vladek and Anja attempted escape but they were caught and sent to Auschwitz death camp. Vladek and Anja were separated and assigned different jobs at the death camps. They were both tortured, subjects to hard labours which grew difficult by the minute. Vladek and Anja exchanged letters as a sign of their never ending love, they both supported each other morally. The war has ended, Vladek and Anja lost contact with each other which made them think that the cause is death. Later on, they reunite and they lived happily everafter. The story end with Vladek asking Artie to let him get some rest while mistakenly calling him Richieu (Spiegelman, 1991).

#### 2.5. Major Themes in The Complete Maus: A survivor's Tale 1980 -1991

Themes are the main ideas discussed by the author, or in other words the messages that the author is trying to convey to the reader (Glatch, 2020). There are many themes in *Art Spiegelman's Maus* the most important of which are:

1. **Responsibility and Identity:** Although Artie has never witnessed the Holocaust nor did he meet the survivors except for his parents, his step mother Mala and a few neighbours whom he never associate with, but the trauma and consequences regarding the Holocaust were still present around him. Artie

has always felt distant from the Jewish community, because no matter how many times he tried, he could never understand what they went through. The Jewish struggle during the war, their kinship and love towards each other, stories about helping each other to survive which he heard from his father, made him envious and at the same time a stranger. Artie thought that he is not Jewish unless he endured the same hardships and struggles, the same way his people did. The figure below shows Artie's struggle with identity (see, fig, 9):

Figure 09: A drawing shows Artie's struggle with identity. Artie is wearing a mouse's mask while his human ears are still showing.

Time flies...



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Artie's struggle with identity [Drawing]. Zipcomic. <u>www.zipcomic.com/maus-a-</u> <u>survivors-tale-issue-tpb-2/</u>. Accessed 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2022. 21:41.

When Artie decided to write about his father's experience and the Jewish people struggles and the genocide that took the lives of over six million jewish, he felt enormous responsibility, since he did not know much about it. Artie drew Jewish people as mice, and as a way and an attempt for him to fit in with his Jewish identity, he put on a mouse mask though his human ears were showing (Litcharts, n.d. ).

2. Survival is also one of the major themes in *Maus*, which is a key theme that is explored during Vladek's experience in the concentration camps, and his Post-Holocaust life. Vladek learnt how to be

resourceful in order to survive, this resourcefulness is depicted through the physical labours that Vladek endured, during his days in the camps. Vladek's perseverance and luck made him survive. Vladek's ability to speak many languages gave him the chance to work as a translator, he worked also as a shoemaker and other jobs and inside the death camp just to secure clothes, food and a warm place. his skills gave him access to many places, through that he managed to help many Jewish people inside the camp as well as his wife Anja. The figure below shows how Vladek befriended the guards to make his life easier inside the prison (see, Fig, 10):

Figure 10: A panel from The Complete Maus, which shows Vladek's struggles and resourcefulness to survive. Vladek was able to befriend the Kapos.



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing]. Culture.pl. www.culture.pl/en/gallery/maus-by-art-spiegelman-image-gallery. Accessed 26 March, 2022. 19:49.

Vladek managed to survive through creating good ties with the Kapos<sup>8</sup>, they rewarded him with many things such as: clean cloths, new shoes and other things that which he shared with the other prisoners (Litcharts, n.d. ).

**3. Guilt** is another theme through which *Maus* explores how the Holocaust survivors struggle with their deep psychological trauma. Many of the Holocaust survivors suffered from depression, and were burdened with survivor's guilt. Art's mother is a representation of a woman who suffered from guilt, depression,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The porison guards of The Concentration Camps.

which eventually led her to suicide. The figure below shows Anja's depression which is shown clearly on

her face (see, fig, 11):



Figure 11: A panel from the graphic novel that shows Anja's depression due to the survivor's guilt.

Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing]. Culture.pl. www.culture.pl/en/gallery/maus-by-art-spiegelman-image-gallery. Accessed 26 March, 2022. 19:44

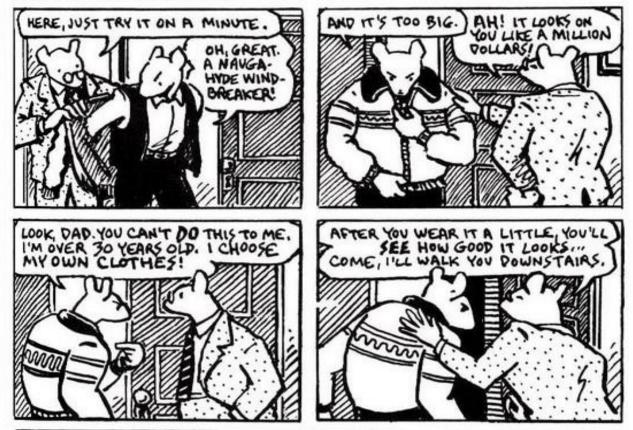
Anja as twenty years after the death camp she commits suicide, after having lost so many of her friends and families. Through out the graphic novel her depression is apparent in one the panals Anja appeared horrored and hopless as it is visible in the figure (Litsharts, n.d.).

4. Intergenerational Gap and the relationship between Artie and his father Vladek are also depicted through the graphic novel. Artie did not experience the death camp and so he does not seem to understand the struggle of his parents. As the son of a two Holacaust survivors, and as someone who do not quite grasp the horror they both seen and endured; Artie grew distant from his parents and it is shown in his relation with Vladek. Vladek is stubborn and it is shown in the way he treated Artie.

For example, in figure 6, we can see the troubled relation between them, Vladek controlled even the way

Artie dressed (see, Fig, 12):

Figure 12: A panel that shows Vladek's control issues, which results in an intergenerational gap between him and his son Artie.



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel[Drawing]. Comics cube. www.comicscube.com/2019/07/the-five-most-horrific-scenes-from-art. 26th March, 2022. 19:57.

Since his childhood, Artie did not seem to get along with his father. Vladek's trauma had an impact on his personality and character which affected his relation with his son Artie (Coursehero, n.d. ).

**5.** Race and Ethnicity is another major theme in *Maus* depicting race, ethnicity and genocide. *Spiegelman* used the animal allegory such as: the use of cat heads to refer to the Germans, Mice heads refer to the Jews; to introduce various ethnic groups that were involved in the war. This allegory is a sort of food chain or a hierarchy of power, the powerful and the weak. He used animals as a way to depict ethnic groups as well as a way to depict racial prejudices. The figure below shows the the use of allegory in the graphic novel (see, Fig,13):

Figure 13: A panel that shows race and ethnincity. Vladek is wearing a pig's mask to fit in with the poles.



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing]. Milkweed Inspired. www.milkweedinspired.weebly.com/maus.html/ . 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2022. 22:51

This allegory was also seen in a form of masks, various characters wore masks as a way to fit in the other ethnic groups, some other to escape their fate. The allegory of masks addresses the issue of racism. Spiegelman used it as a way to infold the hierarchy of power and the issue of race and ethnicity that existed at that time, and as a matter of facts still existing in nowadays (Novalis, 2017).

To make a good story, there has to be a theme. In *Maus*, *Spiegelman* portrayed through these major themes, the struggles and agony of Artie as the son of two Holocaust survivors; as well as the impact of such trauma on his parents Vladek and Anja.

#### 2.6. Aspects of the Novel in The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale 1980 -1991

A novel is a set of sequenced events or incidents that happen within a time frame (Forster, 2005). The novel consists of three important and essential components which are : the plot, characterization and setting (LaCapra, 1982). In *Art Spiegelman's the complete Maus*, we find the three components:

#### 2.6.1. The Plot

According to Freytag's pyramid, the plot goes through five phases: the exposition phase which is the beginning of the story, the raising action or the conflict, the climax or the point of no return, the falling action or denouement or the consequences of the climax, and finally the resolution or the end of the story (Glatch, 2020). Spiegelman's Maus contains all the five phases:

1. The exposition phase: Maus centers around Vladek's story and experience during the war and the Holocaust. The story starts with him as a young man in Poland. Vladek meets Anja and they decide to get married. Anja's father helps Vladek build his own textile factory. Anja gives birth to their first son Richieu.

2. The raising action: Things start to fall apart, the Second World War begins in 1939. Vladek is sent to fight along with the Polish army but he ends up captured and taken to prison. When Vladek is released, he comes back to Poland which is now occupied by the German. Under the Nazis rule, restricted laws are made concerning ethnicities and especially the Jews. The Jews are sent to ghettoes and concentration camps to work as slaves. As Jews, Vladek and Anja attempt to escape their fate but they captured eventually, and Richieu dies with his aunt Tosha.

**3.** The climax: Vladek and Anja are captured by the Nazis. They are sent to Auschwitz to either work at the concentration camps as slaves or die. Vladek and Anja are sent to separate camps. Vladek's skills in languages and other labour work, enabled him to secure food and clothes. Later on, Vladek and Anja are taken to Dachau.

**4.** The falling action: the war has finally ended in 1945. Vladek and Anja are reunited after spending some time searching for each other. They meet at Sosnowiec their home town. Vladek and Anja emigrates to Sweden where Anja gives birth to Artie, then they move to the United States where they spend their last day.

5. Resolution: The story shifts back to the present. Artie is recording his father's last words. Vladek wants to get some rest and calls Artie by his brother's name (Richieu) and the story ends. Vladek finally

released from his trauma and pain.

*Spiegelman's Maus* tells two different stories, that of Vladek and his experience during the Holocaust, and that of Artie and his experience as the son of two Holocaust survivors. Both stories are related with each other by cause and effect.

### 2.6.2. The Major Characters

Another important element in the novel is characterization. Characters are an essential part in in any work. Characters are divided into two types round and flat, they give life to the story, illustrate, personify and push the plot forward. (Foster, 2005). Upon reading *Spiegelman's Maus: A survival's tale* (1991), the reader will be introduced to several major characters:

1. Art Spiegelman: Spiegelman as one of the major characters is both the author and narrator, at the same time. *Art Spiegelman* AKA Artie is the son of two Holocaust survivors Vladek and Anja. Artie did not experience the Holocaust since he was not born yet, but, still he is affected by it. Artie does not have a good relation with his father Vladek, as for his mother Anja, she committed suicide when he was twenty years old. Artie has complex emotions toward his father Vladek as well as a feeling of guilt toward his people since he did not share the same burdens and struggles with them.

2. Vladek Spiegelman: Vladek is Artie's father. A survivor of the Nazi extermination camp at

Auschwitz. A Polish Jew who grew up in pre-war Poland. In 1937, Vladek got married to Artie's mother Anja; the daughter of a wealthy manufacturer. Vladek became the owner of a textile company with the help of Anja's father. Anja gave birth to Richieu who died as a during the Holocaust. After surviving the Holocaust, the couple moved to Sweden where they had their second son Artie. Soon after, they moved to settle in America. After the death of Anja, Vladek got married to Mala in 1978. Due to the Holocaust experience, Vladek's personality became so affected and dominated by the painful experience. Vladek's perseverance and resourcefulness to keep alive lasted with him till the day he died in

1982 (see, fig, 13).

3. Anja Spiegelman: Artie's mother and Vladek's first wife. Anja met Vladek in Poland and they

got married in 1937. After the death of her first son Richieu, Anja suffered from depression and was sent to a sanitarium. Anja committed suicide in 1968 due to the severe depression and trauma left by the Holocaust ( see, fig, 14).

Characters are essential and important in any story (Foster, 2005). In *Maus* we have round characters such as Vladek and we have as well Minor and flat characters whom Vladek, Anja and Artie met during their journey Flat characters such as Froncois, Mala, Richieu and others.

### 2.6.3. The Setting

Setting is another important aspect of the novel. By setting, we mean when and where each event happened. Each novel or literary works must contain a setting, since it is one of the important aspects in any literary work. (Literaryterms, n.d.)

In *Maus*, there are several setting, since the graphic novel contain events in the present as well as the past. The first setting is in the United States exactly in Rego Park, New York, 1958 where Artie remembers when he was still a kid playing with his friends, then the story shifts to another year 1970 where we see Artie visiting his father at the same place. The conversations also happened at their vacation house at Catskill and also in Florida. These conversations happened between 1970 and 1980. Vladek's story takes place from Mid-1930's to Winter 1944. The first setting in Vladek's story is Czestochowa a city near the borders of Germany where he lived and worked in textile, and where he met Lucia his first girlfriend as well. After that, Vladek went to Sosnowiec to visit his family, he meets Anja and gets married in February, 1937. In the same year, on October, Richieu was born . In 1938, Anja was taken to a sanitarium in Czechoslovakia, where she stayed there for three months. On August24th, 1939, Vladek was called to the Polish Army to fight against Germany. In the same year, Vladek was captured by the German and taken to Nuremberg and then to the prisoners of war camp. The German took Vladek and the other prisoners to Poland, they were supposed to be released as prisoners of war but, the German stopped the train in Warsaw and took them to Lublin where they killed 600 people. Vladek is released and comes back to German

occupied Poland. In 1941, the German moved all the Jews to a ghetto in Stara Sosnowiec. The Jews were taken to selection at the Dienst Stadium. After the selection, they were taken to Srodula's ghetto. The next setting is Zawiercie, where Tosha poisoned her self and the kids in order to not be taken to Auschwitz. Vladek was taken to Auschwitz and Anja to Birkenau camp where they worked as slaves. The German moved all the prisoners of Auschwitz to a place called Gross-Rosen, then toDachau in 1945. In the same year, the war ended and the Jews were released. Vladek and Anja meet each other again at Sosnowiec (see, Fig, 15) (Spiegelman, 1991).

*Maus* contains multiple settings as it covers the whole experience of Vladek in the past before and after the Holocaust; as well as his life in the present and his encounters with his son Artie. Setting as well as the other two componenets plot and characterization are essential and crucial parts in any novel (LaCapra, 1982).

# 2.7. Art Spiegelman's writing style in *The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale* 1980 - 1991

In the 70s, graphic novels were seen as a form of comic. They were expected to be about heroes and supposed to be funny (Kincade, 2013). *Art Spiegelman's Maus* helped set the graphic storytelling into a literary medium because of the unique writing style and artistry techniques used by *Art Spiegelman*. When *Maus* came out, it was subject to controversy by both readers and scholars. *Spiegelman* used a pop cultural medium to talk about a historical event. *Spiegelman* worked on this masterpiece for more than ten years. *Spiegelman* visited Germany, Poland and the concentration camps, and also recorded his father's speech and testimony. *Maus* was the first graphic novel to win a Pulitzer Prize in 1992 under the non-fiction category. *Maus* is a Holocaust memoir, a postmodern biography and a personal autobiography (Ewert, 2000) The theme of the graphic novel is serious and the story is full of melancholy and anguish, yet there is also some kind of humor and satire. *Spiegelman* used only the black color which he thought suitable for such a theme.

*Spiegelman* used symbols to convey meaning as he portrayed his protagonists as animals, animal heads with human bodies. The Jews were portrayed as mice, Nazis as cats, Pols as pigs, Americans as dogs, Frensh as frogs and Swedish as reindeers (Loman, 2006).

In *Maus*, the past and present interwines. *Spiegelman* narration shifts between the present and the past, which is shown sometimes as flashbacks and flash forwards. Spiegelman did not use thought bubbles, he used only speech bubbles, sound effects and captions. He used framed and unframed captions; framed captions for the past and unframed captions for the present (McGlothlin, 2003). This is shown in the figure below (see, fig, 15):





Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Photograph]. Researchgate. www.researchgate.net/figure/Art-Spiegelman-Maus-I-A-Survivors-Tale-My-Father-Bleeds-History-1991-29-Copyright\_fig2\_348376155/ . Accessed 07th April, 2022.

In *Maus* (1991), the author used the first-person point of view narration style, since it is a graphic memoir as well as an autobiography. *Spiegelman* used two first-person central narrators. As the story goes back and forth between the past where his father Vladek is the narrator and the present where Artie is the narrator as well, since he is the one asking the question and recording his father's words (Spiegelman, 1991). The use of the first-person point of view gives the story credibility, and creates a relationship with the reader *Maus* also gives the reader a sense of closure (Masterclass, 2021).

Closure as explained by McCloud (1993) as "... The phenomenon of observing the parts but perceiving the whole" or as "... but closure allows us to connect these moments and mentally construct a continuous, unified reality" (1993, P. 67) The reader did not experience the Holocaust, he is observing it through the eyes of Vladek, yet he can both feel it and understand it.

*Spiegelman's* use of these various elements, as well as the combination of texts and images, and his unique ability to combine them is what made *Maus* into such a literary masterpiece. *Spiegelman's* unique style captured the eyes of the readers across the world.

# 2.8. Dialogic and Heteroglossic Implications in *The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale* 1980 -1991

Dialogism and Heteroglissia are two concepts that were introduced by Mikhail Bakhtin, the Russian philosopher, literary critic and scholar who worked on literary theory, ethics, and the philosophy of language. Dialogism is the use of multiple voices within a text (Robinson, 2011), whereas Heteroglossia is the use of multiple speech genres. (Ivanov, 1999). Bakhtin states that each novel contain both concepts.

According to Novalis (2017), graphic novels such as *Maus* are home for artistry techniques such as Dialogism and Heteroglossia. The use of texts and images enables the writer to use different sets of points of view and voices. *Spiegelman's Maus* is a story of the Holocaust told by his father Vladek who was a survivor of the Holocaust , written by *Art Spiegelman* and based on historical researches which make *Maus* a Polyphonic and Heteroglossic text.

The Holocaust is represented through three points of views and voices. Nolan (2015) claims that: "...though Vladek's narrative is important, it is not the only narrative of the story. However, Artie's narrative is also not the only narrative of the story either. Rather, there are other narratives informing Maus that are not always explicitly stated." (P. 45)

Novalis (2017) proceeds that *Spiegelman* used Allegory and animal metaphor in *Maus* to show racial stereotypes from the Nazi's point of view; and also to show that no matter how the characters are

represented,	they	are	still	humans	and	above	any	racial	stereotypes.
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The dialogic representation of Auschwitz death camp is in *Maus*. Auschwitz is described through Vladek's memories as well as historical records. *Spiegelman* did not use his father's memories alone, *Spiegelman* made many trips to Poland, Germany and Auschwitz to collect more data. Novalis (2017) concludes that:

voices of history and of memory are allowed to speak into the work individually, free of control from other voices or social forces. However in other key passages, history and memory must dialogically interact with each other simultaneously, creating scenes that are explicitly heteroglossic. (P. 42)

Another dialogic implication is seen in the relationship between Artie and Vladek. *Spiegelman* did not try to represent his father Vladek as a martyr and a hero who survived such trauma, *Spiegelman* represented the true nature of his father. *Spiegelman* gave a dialogic perspective of his father. (Novalis, 2017)

Applying the Bakhtinian Dialogic and Heteroglossic analysis on graphic novels such as *Maus*, helped in proving that graphic novels are not just tools for entertaining kids, they are also literary texts worth to be placed on bookshelves.

### 2.9. Intertextual references in The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale 1980 - 1991

Intertextuality is a literary device used in literary works and especially in novels. It is a process in which texts, authors and genres influence each other (Mouro, 2013). This term was coined by Julia Kristiva, Bulgarian-French philosopher and psychoanalyst in the 1960's (Nordquist, 2020). *Spiegelman* grew up watching American cartoons such as Krazy Kat (1913), Mickey Mouse (1928), and Tom and Jerry (1940). The mouse is both the vermin and the hero. *Spiegelman's* use of animal metaphor was based on his experience as an American-Jew (Nolan, 2015).

Another intertextual reference is in *The Sheik chapter*. The whole chapter was named "the sheik" which is a a reference to a silent movie "guilty of orientalism and stereotypical racial depictions" (Nolan, 2015)

In figure 16, Vladek compares himself to Valntino, the non-Jewish actor playing the role of an Arab man.

(see, fig, 16)



Figure 16: A panel that shows an Intertextual reference to the movie "the sheik".

Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing]. Zipcomic. www.zipcomic.com/maus-a-survivors-tale-issue-tpb-2/. Accessed 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 11:37.

In the panel, we can see the movie's poster behind Vladek showing Valentino with a mouse head. It is also a reference to the similarity between silent movies and graphic novels as they both use speech and bubbles to convey meaning (Nolan, 2015).

Spiegelman's use of intertextuality did not influence his originality when writing Maus. Spiegelman's occasional use of intertextuality was to inhance and deepen the reader's understanding of trauma (Nolan, 2015).

# 2.10. The Use of Symbol, Sign and Animal Allegory in *The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale 1980 - 1991*

Semiotic as defined by Dahl (2017) is "the study of sign processes and meaningful communication". (P.

69). In The Complete Maus Spiegelmen uses symbols and signs to convey some hidden meaning.

According to Ravelo (2013), characters in *Spiegelmen's Maus* are unlike any other. *Spiegelman* portrayes his characters as animals, yet this representation shifts through out the story. The characters arehybrid, they have animal heads with human bodies and treats. Spiegelman kept the human treats as a sign that the story is real, as it is shown in the figure below (see, fig, 17):

Figure 17: A panel that shows animal Allegory, the Jew were drawn as mice with human bodies.

# IN THE SNOW THEY THREW TO US PRISONERS CLOTHINGS.

Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing]. Zipcomic. www.zipcomic.com/maus-a-survivors-tale-issue-tpb-2/. Accessed 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 12:25

Yet there are also times when the character is kept with animal treats such as tails which is a sign of inferiority.

*Spiegelman* used animal heads to identify races and ethnicities. *Spiegelman* portrayed the Nazi as cats and the Jews as mice, mice are always chased by cats. Jews were forced to hide in basements, eat everything they find even if it is rotten. Poles were represented as pigs which have a relation with religion, since pigs are unclean and forbidden in Judaism<sup>9</sup>. Americans were depicted as dogs which represents the American role in the story. The Jews were saved by the Americans at the end of Vladek's story. There are other ethnicities in *Maus* such as frogs to represent Frensh, rabbits, deers to show that the Holocaust was not meant for the Jews only, there were disabled people, prostitutes and everyone seen as an inferior by the Nazi regime. There are times when the characters are wearing masks. Sometimes as a sign of the fear of being captured as it is shown in figure 18 (see, fig, 18):

Figure 18: A panel that shows race and ethnincity. Vladek is wearing a pig's mask to fit in with the poles.

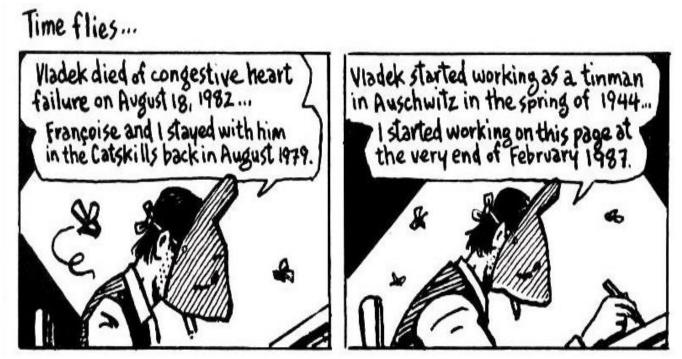


Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing]. Milkweed Inspired. www.milkweedinspired.weebly.com/maus.html/ . 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2022. 22:51.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Judaism is a monotheistic religion that emerged with the Israelites in the Eastern Mediterranean.

And sometimes as a sign to show the struggle of maintaining identity as it is illustrated in figure 3 where Artie is drawn wearing a mouse head with his human ears still showing. Which means that Artie is neither a human, nor a Jew (see, fig, 19):

Figure 19 : A drawing shows Artie's struggle with identity. Artie is wearing a mouse's mask while his human ears are still showing.



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Artie's struggle with identity [Drawing]. Zipcomic. <u>www.zipcomic.com/maus-a-survivors-tale-issue-tpb-2/</u>. Accessed 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2022. 21:41

Spiegelman's Maus represented a historical event such as the Holocaust in a unique way. The use of Allegory captured the reader's attention, since comic books were meant for entertainment and fiction and not for war themes. *Maus* was the stepping stones for such narrations (Kincade, 2013).

### 2.11. Other Literary Devices in The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale 1980 -1991

Literary devices are a set of different techniques used in literary works. They are especially found and used in novels to inhance the meaning (Literarydevices, n.d.). *Maus* is just like any literary works, it contains many literary devices.

1. Allusion: Allusions are literary devices used in literary works, in order to inhance the meaning. It is

a reference to something else, it can be direct or indirect. The references may include places, places, ideas,

literary texts or anything (Literarydevices, n.d.)

An examples of Allusion in Maus is found in the second chapter Auschwitz: Time Flies of the Second Book

And Here My Troubles Began, 1991, P.58. There is a direct Allusion to Dr. Mengele [...In the whole camp

was selektions. I went two times in front of Dr. Mengele.] (see, fig, 20):

Figure 20 : A panel that show Allusion of Dr. Mengele.



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing]. Zipcomic. www.zipcomic.com/maus-a-survivors-tale-issue-tpb-2/. Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 22:15.

Vladek is recounting the process of Selektion<sup>10</sup> which was monitored by Dr. Mengele. Dr. Mengele is Known as "the angel of death" (Seidelman, 1991). Dr. Mengele is known for his deadly and unethical experiments on prisoners of Auschwitz (Seidelman, 1991).

2. Forshadowing: Another literary device used in Maus is Forshadowing. It means hinting at

something that would happen or appear in the future. The writers use this technique to creat suspense to the reader (literarydevices, n.d.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> The Jews who had healthy bodies and were strong were asseigned for labour work whereas the others plus children and elderly were taken to the Gas chambers (Spiegelman,1991)

An examples of forshadowing in *Maus* is found in chapter two *The Honymoon* of the first book *My Father Bleeds History*, *1986*, P. 32 [...It was the beginning of 1938 before the war, hanging high in the center of town, it was a nazi flag.. Here was the first time I saw with my own eyes the Swastika.]<sup>11</sup> (literarydevices, n.d.) (see, fig, 21 ):

Figure 21 : A panel that shows Forshadowing, Anja and Vladek saw the Nazi's flag for the first time.



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing]. Hoodedutilitarian. www.hoodedutilitarian.com/2013/12/maus-and-marketing/. Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> April,2022. 22:55.

When Vladek took Anja to the sanitarium in Czechoslovakia in 1938, they saw the Nazi's flag for the first time and they were very scared. A forshadowing of the future, the war have not started yet, Vladek and Anja had no clue about the future.

3. Imagery: is a technique that uses figurative speech. It allows the reader to create a picture

of the scene in his head, while reading any literary work. It triggers the emotions and feelings of the readers and engage them in the process by invoking their feelings. The readers will have a better understanding of the literary text, they will feel connected to both the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> The Nazi's Flag.

character and the writer (literarydevices, n.d.).

Example of Imagery in *Maus* is in chapter five *Mouse Holes* of the first Book: *My Father Bleeds History*, 1986 P. 123 [...No, it's only wood. But chewing it feels a little like eating food.] (literarydevices, n.d.) (see, fig, 22):

Figure 22 : A panel that shows Imagery, it shows the extents of Vladek and Anja's hunger.



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing]. Zipcomic. www.zipcomic.com/maus-a-survivors-tale-issue-tpb-2/. Accessed 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 12:37.

An Imagery that shows the extent of Vladek and Anja's hunger.

4. Methaphor: is another literary device used in Maus. Metaphor is a figure of speech. It is

used to compare between two separate and non-similar things, by directly relating one thing to the other

without using words such as "like" (literarydevices, n.d.).

An example of a Metaphore in *Maus* is in chapter three *Prisoner Of War* of The First Book: *My Father Bleeds History*, 1986, P. 48 [...I must be seeing things. How can a tree run.] (literarydevices, n.d.) (see, fig, 23):



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing]. Zipcomic.. www.zipcomic.com/maus-a-survivors-tale-issue-tpb-2/. Accessed 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 12:15.

Vladek was starteled upon seeing a moving tree which was actually a German soldier. A tree does

not run running is something human and animals do. Trees do not move nor run.

5. Parallelism: Another figure of speech used in Maus is Parallelism. It is used by writers to

inhance the meaning. It is the repetition of words or phrases for the sake of emphasis and contrast (literarydevices, n.d.).

Example of Parallelism in Maus are in chapter three Prisoner Of War of The First Book My

*Father Bleeds History*, *1986*, P. 58, there is Parallelism [... So we worked day after day. We survived week after week.] (literarydevices, n.d.) (see, fig, 24):

Figure 24 : A panel that shows Prallelism.



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing]. Zipcomic <u>www.zipcomic.com/maus-a-survivors-tale-issue-tpb-2/</u>. Accessed 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 18:47.

A repetition of the words "day" and "week" to show the struggle to survive each day in Auschwitz.

6. Repetition : It is the repetition of a word or a phrase multiple times. It is used as a figure of speech to

bring clarity to the meaning, to add emphasis, stress or power to the word or the phrase repeated (literarydevices, n.d.).

An examples of repetition in *Maus* is in chapter two *The Honymoon* of The First Book: *My Father Bleeds History*, *1986*, P. 35 [...so happy so happy, that she approached each time and kissed me, so happy she was.] (literarydevices, n.d.) (see, fig, 25):

Figure 25 : A panel that shows Repetition.



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing]. Zipcomic <u>www.zipcomic.com/maus-a-survivors-tale-issue-tpb-2/</u>. Accessed 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 18:47

A Repetition of the word "happy" to add clarity to the meaning and to show the extent of Anja's happiness.

7. Simile: Simile is the opposite of Metaphore. It is a figure of speech used in literary works to

inhance the meaning. It is the comparison between two different and non- similar things by directly relating

one to the other, using words such as "like" and "as" (literarydevices, n.d.).

An example of Simile is in chapter three The Prisonor Of War of The First Book My Father Bleeds History,

1986, P. 64, [...You are a Pole like me]. A simile using "like" comparing between two different persons

(see, fig, 26):

Figure 26 : A panel that shows race and ethnincity. Vladek is wearing a pig's mask to fit in with the poles.



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing]. Milkweed Inspired. www.milkweedinspired.weebly.com/maus.html/ . 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2022. 22:51.

Vladek is a Polish Jew wearing the mask of a pig to fit in and the Pole is a non-Jewish man.

8. Hyperbole: Another figure of speech used in Maus. It is used by writers to give a sense of

exaggeration and overstatement in order to give an emphasis and a dramatic effect (literarydevices). An

example of Hyperbole in Maus is in chapter two Auschwitz: Time Flies of The Second Book And Here My

Troubles Began, 1991, P. 67 [... To me they never hit, because I worked all my muscles away] (Dean, 2015)

(see, fig, 27):

Figure 27 : A panel that shows Hperbole.



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing] Zipcomic. www.zipcomic.com/maus-a-survivors-tale-issue-tpb-2/ . Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 20:45.

Vladek was working very hard in the concentration camp in order to not be punished by the Kapos.

9. Irony: it is a literary device used in literary work. It is a contradiction between what is said and what is

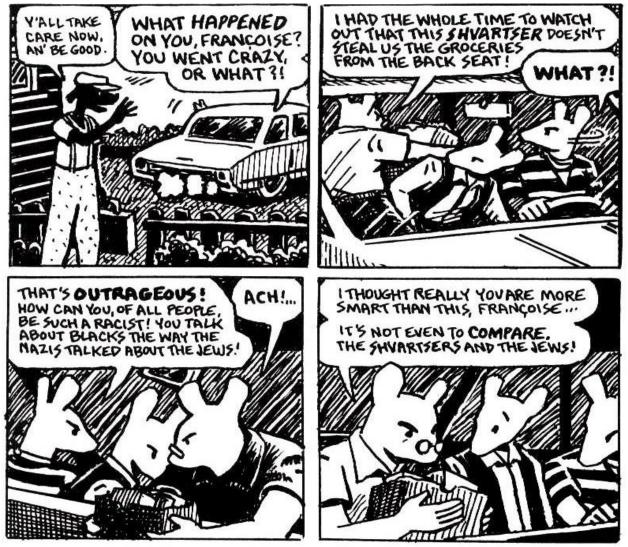
intended, between expectation and reality. It is often humorous used to convey a meaning that is opposite to

the actual meaning (literarydevice).

An example of Irony in *Maus* is in chapter three *And Here My Troubles Began* of the Second Book *And Here My Troubles Began, 1991*, P. 99 [... It's not even to compare. The Shvartsers<sup>12</sup> and the Jews.] (Dean, 2015) (see, fig, 28):

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Jewish word for African people.

Figure 28 : A panel that shows Irony.



Spiegelman. A. (1986-1991). Art Spiegelman's Maus panel [Drawing] Zipcomic. www.zipcomic.com/maus-a-survivors-tale-issue-tpb-2/. Accessed 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 18:15.

Jews were persecuted for their race. In the panel, we see that Vladek scolded Artie and his wife for letting the African hitchhiker in the car. It is ironic how someone like Vladek who suffered half of his life from racism, to commit an act of racism towards Africans.

These literary techniques are used to give deeper meaning and make these literary pieces more beautiful. They inhance the reader's sense of imagination, enjoyment and give them the clarity they need to understand these literary works (literarydevices, n.d.).

The literary devices and artistery techniques used in the *The Complete Mause: A Survivor's Tale by Art Spiegelman 1981-1991*, as well as the writing style of the writer; are the reason this graphic novel is a huge success and is recognized as a literary piece. This success was not only for Spiegelman, this masterpiece gained recognition and respect for the whole comic book stream.

### 2.12. Conclusion

The second chapter has shed light on the literary merit of the graphic novel *Maus*. Exploring its major themes, as well as its literary devices and techniques. *The Complete Maus* is proven to be a literary piece, not just comic book. The selected novel was subject to criticism because it combined the aspects of comic with the aspects of the novel. For that, *The Complete Maus* was categorized as a non-fiction, a memoir, a biography, an autobiography an ethnography and a post-colonial piece of literature, making it the first graphic novel to win a *Pulitzer Prize*. *Art Spiegelman's The Complete Maus*: *A Survivor's Tale (1980-1991)* changed the views of both critics and audiences about graphic novels and comic strips. They are not made for entertainment only, but they can serve a higher purpose and discuss important theme.





Graphic novels are a narrative medium that uses textual and visual narrative to convey the meaning, unlike novels (Baetens, 2008). Graphic novels were confused for comic books since they share the same format. Unlike comic books, graphic novels combine texts and images to form a story that is published together as one book. The term graphic novel was first used by *Will Eisner* to distinguish his work *A Contract With God 1978* from other comic books and sequential arts, and since then the graphic narrations and storytelling started to flourish. Cartoonists wanted to draw and write about serious themes for mature audiences. (Peppas and Ebrahim, 2012)

Graphic novels have been subject to controversies among scholars and critics about their literary merites. It was thanks to graphic novels such as: *Eisner's A Contract With God 1987, Spiegelman's Maus* and others; that graphic novels were eventually started to be seen as a new literary genre worth of reading and analyzing. Graphic novels are used now as teaching tools in schools and they are found now in libraries among other literary novels ((Dallacqua, 2012).

Graphic novels brought something new to the literary canon, they combine both comics and novels. Graphic novels discussed new themes addressed for adults such as race, ethnicity, sexuality and other themes that were not discussed by comic books; since comic books were for entertaining children and younger generation (Askanydifference, n.d.). This made reading graphic novels quite an interesting experience for mature audiences. Many graphic novels were adapted into movies, which became huge hits and blockbusters. Unlike normal novels, graphic novels are easy to turn into movies since they already contain the visual aids needed (Rhodes, 2019). Many great movies that we grow up watching, were adapted from graphic novels such as: V for Vendetta, 300, the dark night returns, sin city and other masterpieces.

As the examination of *The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale* by *Art Spiegelman (1980 - 1991)* had the objective of tracking and depicting the literary aspects and techniques used in the graphic novel. *Spiegelman's Maus* is a masterpiece that won a Pulitzer Prize for non-fiction and changed the perception of

### **General Conclusion**

scholars about graphic novels. *Maus* is used till this day as a teaching material, it is used to teach history regarding genocides, as well as a literary text since it contains literary elements and device. *Maus* is categorized *Maus* as a non-fiction, a memoir, a biography, an autobiography and an ethnography.

*Art Spiegelman's Maus* discussed many major themes such as: the Holocaust, race and ethnicity and survivor's guilt. *Maus* also contains the three important aspects of the novel which are: the plot, the characters and the setting. Spiegelman used many literary techniques such as the use of The Two First-Person Point of View narration, Allegory and other literary devices such as: Allusion, Metaphore and Forshadowing. *Maus* is home for other artistry techniques such as: Dialogism, Heteroglossia and Intertextuality. In the light of what have been thoroughly discussed, *The Complete Maus* by *Art Spiegelman* proved to be a graphic novel worth of being classified among the literary canon along with other novels, a reading material worth of examining, analyzing and criticizing.

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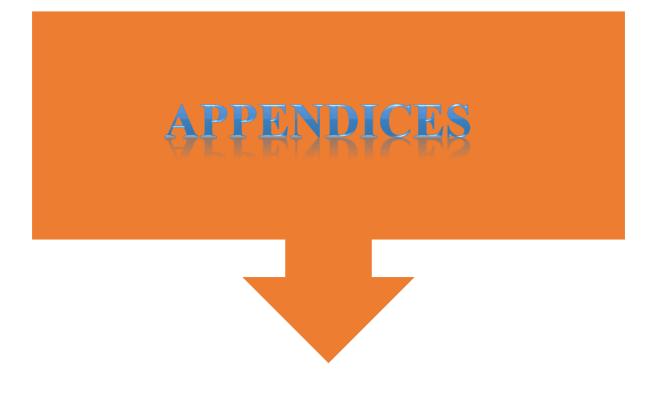
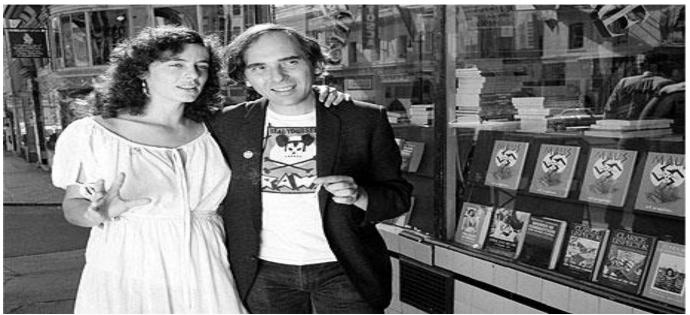


Figure 07: Art Spiegelman and his wife Francoise pass the City Lights Bookstore in San Francisco which displays copies of Spiegelman's book Maus.



Campbell . J. Art Spiegelman and his wife Francoise pass the City Lights Bookstore in San Francisco which displays copies of Spiegelman's book Maus [Photograph]. The guardian. www.theguardian.com/books/2004/aug/28/comics.politics/. Accessed 06<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 12:05

Figure 07: A photograph of Anja, Vladek and Art.

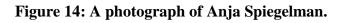


Wen R. Anja, Art and Vladek . Stockholm, 1949 [Photograph]. Timetoast. <u>www.timetoast.com/timelines/vladek-spiegelman-a-husband-a-father-and-a-survivor/</u> . Accessed 06<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 12:24.



Figure 13: A photograph showing Vladek when he was in Auschwitz.

Wen. R. Vladek Spiegelman [Photograph]. Timetoast. <u>www.timetoast.com/timelines/vladek-spiegelman-a-husband-a-father-and-a-survivor/</u>. Accessed 06<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 12:42.

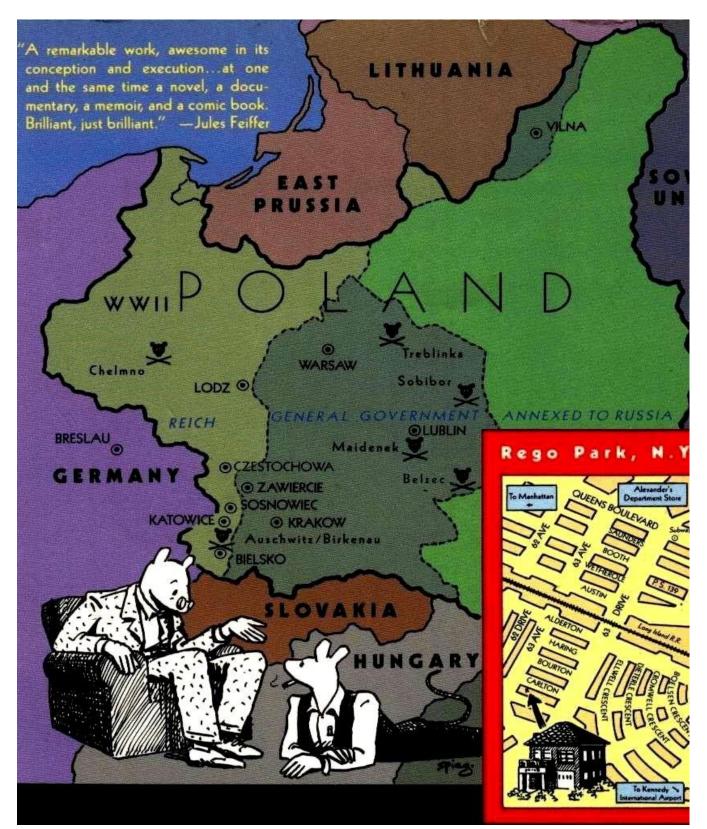




Wen. R. Anja Spiegelman [Photograph]. Timetoast. <u>www.timetoast.com/timelines/vladek-spiegelman-a-husband-a-father-and-a-survivor/</u>. Accessed 06<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 12:53.

# Appendices

Figure 15: Maus cover page that shows a map of the graphic novel's setting.



Maus cover page[photograph]. Zipcomic. <u>www.zipcomic.com/maus-a-survivors-tale-issue-tpb-2/</u>. Accessed 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2022. 10:57.

### **Abstract:**

This dissertation explores, within its folds the issues surrounding the recognition of graphic novels as a literary genre. This research paper, therefore, brings in new understandings of graphic novels, displaying its importance as literary pieces. It is an attempt to uncover the literary merit of graphic novels through a literary analysis of *The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale 1980 -1991*, a popular graphic novel that introduced the theme of the Holocaust in a very controversial way, shedding the light on the author's background and how it was an important factor in creating this graphic novel. This investigation will reveal and depict the literary and artistry techniques used in Art Spiegelman's representation of the Holocaust through text and comic strips.

### **Résume :**

Cette recherche, explore dans ses replis, les questions entourant la reconnaissance des romans graphiques en tant que genre littéraire. Cette thèse apporte donc une nouvelle compréhension des romans graphiques, en montrant son importance en tant que pièces littéraires. Cet essai approfondi examine les techniques et les aspects littéraires utilisés dans *Le Maus complet : Un Conte de Survivant (1986-1991) d'Art Spiegelman,* en faisant la lumière sur le passé de l'auteur et sur son importance dans la création de ce roman graphique. Cette thèse tente de découvrir le mérite littéraire des romans graphiques à travers une analyse littéraire de *Le Maus complet : Un Conte de Survivant,* un roman graphique populaire qui a introduit le thème de l'holocauste d'une manière très controversée. Cette enquête révélera et décrira les techniques artistiques utilisées dans la représentation de l'holocauste par *Art Spiegelma*n à travers des textes et des bandes dessinées.

هذا العمل البحثي يستكشف في ثناياه، القضايا المحيطة بالإعتراف بالروايات المصورة كنوع أدبي. وبالتالي، فإن هذه العمل يجلب فهمًا جديدًا للروايات المصورة ويظهر أهميتها كقطع أدبية. إنه يبحث كذلك في التقنيات والجوانب الأدبية المستخدمة في كتاب آرت شبيجلمان: ماوس الكامل: قصة ناجي (1991–1980)، ويلقي الضوء على خلفية المؤلف وكيف كانت عاملاً مهمًا في إنشاء هذه الرواية المصورة. يحاول هذا العمل الكشف عن الجدارة الأدبية للروايات المصورة من خلال تحليل أدبي لهاته القصة المصورة والتي هي رواية مصورة شهيرة قدمت موضوع الهولوكوست بطريقة مثيرة للجدل للغاية، سيكشف ويصور التقنيات الفنية المستخدمة في تمثيل المحرقة من خلال النصوص والشرائط الهزاية.

### Key Words :

Graphic Novels, Sequantial Arts, Graphic Storytelling, Comic books, Art Spiegelman, Maus.