

# *Cartoons and the representation of massacre. Hypotheses derived from the use of animal suffering metaphors*

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## ABSTRACT



This article studies eight comics produced in different circumstances. Some of them are works of fiction, others refer to real events. It attempts to discover relationships between the representation of massacre and genocide and the use of metaphors of animal and human suffering.

*Keywords: Massacre. Genocide. Representation. Suffering. Animalization. History of culture. Genocide studies.*

The allusion to devastating suffering of men by reference to the suffering of animals is very old. Our intention is to explore how serious cartoons made space to this network of comparisons and metaphors. Specifically, the authors are interested in studying such uses in connection with the massacres of modernity and the genocides of the contemporary world. Already in the Mesopotamia of the early second millennium BC, Gilgamesh's poem echoes on the animals subject to hunting - bears, hyenas, tigers, panthers, leopards, lions, deer and bulls - the crying or pain caused by Enkidu's death in the mind of the protagonist of the story. (Sandars, 1977) The image of the wounded lioness in the bas-reliefs of Nineveh, from the sixth century B.C., seems to multiply the effect of identifying the suffering. If one compares this figure with that of other animals attacked in the same set, there is no doubt that the feline, which has lost mobility

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in its lower body due to the arrows of the hunters passing through the bone, is the radical state of helplessness and pain. (Picture 1)<sup>3</sup>

The Christian religion put an explicit identification between the sufferings of those who speak in the center of the memorial and sacrificial act par excellence, since the Mass culminates in the invocation of *Agnus Dei*, the mystic lamb who takes over the ills of humanity to save it through its own sacrifice.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, in the legend of the vision of St. Eustatius, a deer, an animal victim of hunting, merges with Christ on the Cross that comes between its horns and Jesus speaks through the brute, as stated in the legend of that saint in the work of Jacopo da Varagine. (DE VORAGINE, 1967, v. 2, p.306-309) A painting by Pisanello and an etching by Dürer illustrate the episode.(Picture 2) Moreover, across several texts by William Shakespeare appealing to the resource, in the comedy *As You Like It*, one of the nobles from the duke's entourage tells the agony of "a poor stray deer, victim of a hunter's aim [...]Such groans the poor creature threw that his leather coat swelled almost to bursting and the tears ran round one by one down his innocent nose, in pious hunting. " (Shakespeare, 1951, p.1208). Also in the world of fable, in order to represent a religious experience, the early modern Judaism used the figure of the hare, an innocent animal hunted by the hunter eagle as a symbol of the people of Israel and its misfortunes, in the pictorial decoration of the roof in the synagogue of Hodorov, in Ukraine (1714). (HOROWITZ, 2001).( Picture 3)

In October 1838, Alfred de Vigny wrote the famous poem *The death of the wolf*. The noble author had killed a wolf that looked at him in the very moment of its death. His thoughts were explained as follows:

Alas, I thought, despite the pride and name  
Of Man we are but feeble, fit for shame.  
The way to quit this life and all its ill  
You know the secret, sublime animal!  
See what of earthly life you can retain,  
Silence alone is noble - weakness remains "

De Vigny imagines the wolf speaking to him, saying:

"Weeping or praying - all this is in vain.  
Shoulder your long and energetic task  
The way that Destiny sees fit to ask  
Then suffer and so die without complaint."  
(VIGNY, 1864).

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<sup>3</sup> - The picture are in the end

<sup>4</sup> John 1.29. "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Undoubted echoes of that death can be found in Estival, Rubén Darío, published in 1888:

“The tiger runs away,  
and the female is left behind, its belly thorn.  
Oh, it will die!... But before, fragile, still,  
pouring blood through the open wound,  
with pitiful eyes  
looked at that hunter, and groan  
like a moan from a woman... and dropped dead”.

Already in the twentieth century, the cinema took hold of metaphors. For example, the film *The Ascent*, by Larisa Shepitko (*Voskhozhdeniye*, 1977) recreates the experience of the partisans who fought against the Nazis in the occupied Belarus during the winter of 1942. Two of the patriots undertake a quick mission in search of food. They manage to get a cow and fled towards the woods where their peers hide, but are surprised by a German patrol which fires at close range. The camera shows first the dying animal, preparing us for the next scene with the wounded men. Meanwhile, in *Missing* from Costa-Gavras which was released in 1982, Beth Horman, the wife of the missing character, is unwittingly caught in the streets of Santiago during the curfew and cannot return home. She takes refuge in a doorway from where she watches a splendid white horse galloping along the Boulevard, pursued by a group of soldiers firing into the air. The panic of the animal represents the fear the human victims experienced with the Chilean coup. Two decades later, the ghost autobiography of Guy Maddin, *My Winnipeg* (2007), appealed twice to our way of unifying images and meanings. First, when the filmmaker's sister returns from a night out and reports that a deer hit her car, the mother immediately associates the innocence of the dead animal with the loss of her daughter's virginity, and deduces that she has had her first sexual experience that evening. Second, Maddin included in his own shooting of an alleged documentary in 1926, the record of a herd of horses which had fallen into an icy river in an attempt to escape from the fire in the Whittier Park Racecourse and frozen to death. The animal pain and symbol of the distress of Maddin who cannot escape his city, is doubled by the indifference of men, who go as far as turning the place where the drama happened in a recreational area. The youngsters from Winnipeg flirt among the transfigured horse heads, incredible foreshadowing (if the documentary were true, quotes, better if it were not) of the racked horse of *Guernica* and the frozen horses in the Finnish war described by Curzio Malaparte on a hallucinated page of his book *Kaputt*, 1943. Moreover, the story of the death of the horses in Maddin's film is told through a cartoon: it is also a serious cartoon.( Picture 4)

We believe this approach to the representation of human-animal pain can introduce a new variable in our long record of formulas intended to describe massacres and genocides, particularly in relation to the genres of cartoons, where we have already analyzed the case of *Maus* from this perspective. (BURUCÚA, 2006, 2010). It is time we examine this and other

cartoons in the light of the analogy presented above. Our order of exposure will take into account the difference between fiction and representations of facts which have actually occurred. Within each of these categories, the series are arranged by degree of scope and intensity, from lowest to highest, reaching the overlapping of the suffering.

### *a. Works of fiction*

#### *The Book of Genesis*

In 2009, R. Crumb published *The Book of Genesis Illustrated*, a systematic cartoon depicting the full text of the first book of the Torah, an exasperated iconographic version of the divine and human action since the creation of the world to the installation of Joseph's brothers in Egypt. (CRUMB, 2009). The image of a rigorous, demanding, often ruthless Yahweh, far from the loving God of the prophets, the *Song of Songs*, and furthermore, of the Gospels, is the one which is dominant throughout the vignette. From the point of view of the subject investigated, we are interested in pictures dedicated to the Flood, a history of punishment and redemption of men and animals, the work of an awful god, largely arbitrary and ultimately compassionate. However, how can we justify the destruction of animals from purely human fault and responsibility? The Fathers of the Church had already asked themselves this question we see here in the picture of the storm where men and animals howl and suffer alike. Those great theologians responded with the notion of *cura vitae*, i.e., the idea that God decided to send the flood after a previous care of all living species, a preservation acted inside the ark. (BURUCÚA, 2011). The righteous Noah was the main actor of similar drama savior, but it also took a further divine intervention, perhaps in the form of a "drive of the angels" to introduce the pairs of animals into the ark, and take them out later and spread their seeds throughout the Earth. In the respective pictures drawn by Crumb, we can see the grief that affects the brute at the time of entrance and the joyous freedom they show during the rapid abandonment of the ark after the Flood. The face of God, great, severe if not terrible, opens and closes the sequences of chapters 7 and 8 narrating the episode. Animal and human suffering has had the aim of establishing an agricultural and civilization order under the responsibility of Noah and his descendants on Earth, who shall respect the anathema launched by Yahweh against the murder among fellows and ensure the reign of concordance. (Pictures 5 and 6)

## *The Eternauta*

The most famous comic book in Argentina, whose history has been explained in detail in the latest book by Laura Vazquez (2010), contains passages where it is possible to recognize aspects of our *moles* which, if well embedded in a visual epic derived from a war film, introduce some remarkable nuances in the matter. (OESTERHED, 1998). For example, the dead draft horse with which Juan Salvo comes across in his first trip outside the house, doubles Polsky's body, the first victim of the fatal snowstorm among the friends of the protagonist. (Picture 7) But not only death and pain are common to man and animals, but the resilience and purpose remain the last embers of life, as can be seen in the unexpected appearance of three chicks in the kitchen where the death of the first "hand" takes place. (Picture 8) A few pages later, this character, who had been fierce enemy of humans until that moment, reached a new level of suffering when, at death, intones an "incomprehensible song with a strange rhythm" Franco assumes is a lullaby. Also the "hand" that stands the flight of our adventurers on the underground ends stunned by the discovery of Favalli on the gland of terror, and its death allows the heroic charity of Franco to manifest, who takes his dying enemy outside to die at will, "facing the sky" and watching the stars. "Right before this [Salvo] had admired Favalli's supreme intelligence. What he now felt by the great spirit of Franco the turner was not admiration. It was much more than that. It was emotion." (Picture 9) Likewise, we learn that human robots and *gurbos* are manipulated by the contraption of the tele-director with which "they" lead the will of men and monsters. It would not be fanciful to say that the story has raised a common destiny of the species in the universe under the aegis of the suffering to which human endurance is opposed.

### *b. Real stories*

#### *Safe Area Gorazde. The War in Eastern Bosnia 1992-95*

Between 1992 and 1995, the Bosnian war brought back to Europe scenes which were thought to be buried in the history of World War II. The conflict over the disintegration of Yugoslavia caused tens of thousands deaths, more than one million displaced and a massacre in the enclave of Srebrenica, which was judged as a genocide by an international criminal court. Joe Sacco traveled in late 1995 to the place of those facts and published, five years later, an impressive *cartoon-story* bearing the title of this section. (SACCO, 2000). In reality, the whole story has its sequences in the model of a documentary filmmaking, while at the same time it tends to emphasize the relationship of photography in the individual frames. From the formulas we have identified in the long history of representation of massacres - the hunting, the hell and the

martyrdom. Sacco has taken up and extended the infernal metaphor when chronicling the attacks of the Serb offensive in 1994.(Picture10) To hell, he clearly adds a reference of martyrdom, which emphasizes the innocence of the victims in the facial expressions of the wounded, but that formula reaches its climax in the scene of mass executions of Muslims at the Srebrenica mass graves. (Pictures 11-12)The only note of convergence and resonance between animals and men suffering occurs in the representation of the forced movement of Bosnian refugees with their herds.( Picture 13)

## *Palestine*

The Goldstone Report was the final report of a committee, chaired by Richard Goldstone and created by the United Nations Human Rights Committee (UNHRC) in order to investigate the abuses in the Gaza Strip during the 2008-2009 Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The best way to briefly summarize the conclusions of the document is that, for the committee, both Hamas and the state of Israel have been guilty of violations of human rights and children's rights as well as war crimes and crimes against humanity. Included among them, the intentional attack of civilian populations, the use of human shields by both sides, the deprivation of political and basic rights (such as water or food), the concealment of such violations, and so on. The report was approved by the committee on October 16, 2009. (HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL, 2009). It is noteworthy that a report of that nature contains such a vivid description of the mutual alienation and reciprocal dehumanization experience affecting both parties at war. It mentions, for example, the declaration of the Palestinian psychiatrist Iyad Sarraj, who argued that "the Palestinians, in the eyes of Israeli soldiers, are not human beings like them. Sometimes [...] they even become demons. [...] This culture of demonization and dehumanization leads to a state of paranoia." The same witness insisted that, as Palestinians, "we believe the Israelis are demons in general, which enables us to hate, so what we do is a reaction, and we also say that the Israelis can only understand the language of power. We say of Israelis the same thing they say about us."<sup>5</sup> On his behalf, the Israeli professor Ofer Shinar expressed similar ideas: "the problem of the Israeli society is that as a result of conflict, the Israeli society sees itself as a victim and to a large extent, this justifies its activity and it becomes very difficult for the society to move and feel it can see that on the other side there are also victims. I think this is the greatest tragedy of the conflict and

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<sup>5</sup> "The Palestinian in the eyes of the Israeli soldier is not an equal human being. Sometimes [] even becomes a demon []" This "culture of demonization and dehumanization" adds to a state of paranoia." "As Palestinians, 'we look in general to the Israelis as demons and that we can hate them, that what we do is a reaction, and we say that the Israelis can only understand the language of power. The same thing that we say about the Israelis they say about us" Human Rights Council (2009, p. 528-529).

it is extremely difficult to overcome. [...] The feeling of being a victim is something that characterizes both sides." <sup>6</sup>

To be fair, in 2001 a cartoon by Joe Sacco (2007), expressing sympathy with the Palestinian cause echoed the sufferings of the people and sought to explain the intifada on these bases. It provided an answer, albeit partial, to the background perplexity expressed by the testimonies included in the Goldstone report. Even though Sacco tried to narrate the vicissitudes of the conflict in the Palestinian territory and, therefore, the pain is represented only in the crowds and Arab characters, the common humanity of competing nations is clear in the portraits of anger that affects both. For more ruthless the Israelis have been depicted in the vignette *Palestine* at no time they are similar to animals or robots. In any case, the page dedicated to "A Palestinian Joke" animalizes the Palestinian people through their identification with a helpless donkey suffering the constraints of a Shin Bet secret agent, who tries to make him confess that it is actually a rabbit and not a donkey. (Pictures 14, 15)

While on the scene just described, the animal suffering is a metaphor for human suffering, this is not the predominant formula in the comic book. Rather, suffering is polymorphic and only human, especially intense when they express women of all ages and conditions. They are victims themselves or are torn by the pain of losing their children and husbands. Their expressions, gestures and body postures convey all conceivable variations of emotion between the externalized anxiety in a cry and melancholy. The close up, the zenithal view or the solitary figure placed on the bottom of a perspective are projected resources of the corpus of procedures used to build the emotional world of the cartoon, a pathetic horizon in warburguanos terms. The views of variegated crowds in open spaces are, however, the vehicle of toughness, strength and peaceful or violent resistance to pressure and abuse. ( Pictures 17, 18, 19)

In 2008, *Rupay*, a cartoon by Luis Rossell, Alfredo Villar and Jesus Cossio, used some aesthetic resources similar to those in *Palestine* to describe the political violence in Peru between 1980 and 1984. (ROSSELL, 2008). Zenithal views, *close ups*, expressive intensity, including the formula of martyrdom are part of the repertoire in the Latin American book. At the core of the story, our *moles* reappear. The Peruvian military terrorizes the poor farmers Chungui, an Andean village. A captain shows what the army plans to do to the members of the guerrillas. It compares the Communists to dogs and farmers were urged to kill animals as a practice prior to the murder of rebels. A soldier exemplifies the procedure, while the captain shouts, "To betray one's country is like not having a mother! Whoever does that is a criminal! Open these animals!" Later, the squad leader requires a farmer to repeat the murderous operation. The poor man, who fears for

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<sup>6</sup> "Israeli society's problem is that because of the conflict, Israeli society feels itself to be a victim and to a large extent that's justified and it's very difficult for Israeli society to move and to feel that it can also see the other side and to understand that the other side is also a victim. This I think is the greatest tragedy of the conflict and it's terribly difficult to overcome it. [ ] you should be able to see that the feeling of being a victim is something that characterizes both sides." Human Rights Council (2009, p. 529).

his life, kills the beast, but in doing so he asks, "Why kill the poor creature?". After announcing that "here pity is forbidden," the military forces the peasant to eat the entrails of the dog. (Picture 20)

## *Maus*

The famous *comic* that Art Spiegelman presented in two parts between 1973 and 1986 has been placed in the center of its history and style the metaphor of the human experience in animal terms. (SPIEGELMAN, 1994). *Maus* reissued the ancient genre of the fable to tell the horror of *Shoah*. That is, animals became the collective actors of the Jewish genocide in Europe during the Second World War - victims, perpetrators, witnesses, by-standers. The Jews were transformed into mice, the Germans and Nazis in cats, the Poles in pigs, the Americans in dogs and so on. The choice had to rely on the traditions of satire in images dating back at least to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when Germany's social upheavals of the Reformation and the vicissitudes of the 30 Years' War found a form of representation in the perennial enmity of mice and cats. (Picture 21) At that time, the role of mice used to be the victims but also the recipients of an investment that would punish the proud and claimed the weak (Protestants and peasants against lords in the sixteenth century, French against Spanish and imperial members in the seventeenth century). (BURUCÚA, 2007, p.66-67). Anyway, Spiegelman's cartoons took the *moles* of the conflict between cats and mice but not the variant of its historic inversion, which the catastrophe of the genocide rendered unthinkable. However, there were probably two other factors that made our *cartoonist* adopt the resource of animalization of the fable. We refer, first, to use of the same procedure in the illustrations of Jewish manuscripts in the Bible and the commentaries in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, with which, apparently, was intended to circumvent the prohibition against making images of the second commandment (it was assumed that such a veto reached only the human figures). (HOROWITZ, 2001, p.665-684). Second, it is possible that the classical art of the psycho-physiognomy in the likes of Giambattista Della Porta, who discovered psychological affinities between animals and men from their physical similarities, have also had some weight in the decision made by Spiegelman. (Picture 22) The vulpine, canine, bovine and aquiline faces of some men loaded with ambivalence the symbolic animalization when extended to entire towns and communities in the nineteenth century. (GALTON, 1883; GINZBURG, 2004). *Maus* has evoked the practice of popular culture with irony and even paradoxical tenderness toward Jews-mice, as demonstrated by the episode in which Art's parents put pig masks and pretend to be Polish to escape the Nazis, but Anja, the mother, cannot help to let out the mouse tail below the coat. (SPIEGELMAN, 1994, p.136). It is clear, of course, that the use of the fable has led to a maximum identification of the emotional world of men and animals. The suffering of the former is the suffering of the latter, and vice versa. (Picture 23) The identification spreads out and spills into a sort of arabesque (animal-human-animal) until it reaches paradoxical accents when the Jewish-mouse-man dies "strangely", "like that dog." (SPIEGELMAN,



1994, p.82). (Picture 24) Note that in the animal metaphor of man, the highest point of pain is associated with a foreshortened view, from below, from the mouths of mice throwing a whimper or a cry. Perhaps it is permissible to think that behind the labels, there is a remote antecedent of the gesture of *Laocoön* as the epitome of classic human suffering, moved by Spiegelman to the animal expression. (Picture 25) One could also extrapolate the gesture of individual despair in the painting *Scream* by Munch to a collective radical anguish.

However, there are two moments in the story, Anja's suicide (SPIEGELMAN, 1994, p. 100-103) and Art's *spleen* accompanying the success of the first part of his book, in which the animal fable is interrupted to include two episodes with human characters. On both occasions, the infernal formula has come to dominate the representation. The first time, Spiegelman recounts the suicide of his mother in counterpoint with psychoanalytic elements, that is, something close to the present but more disturbing or pressing for Artie which until then, that the misfortunes of both parents in *Lager*. The title of this *cartoon* within the *cartoon* is: *Prisoner in Hell Planet. A true story.*<sup>7</sup> (Picture 26) So its environment is felt by our author-protagonist as a Barathrum, fully human. The subsequent development of the Holocaust story in the past will transform the time of destruction into a more devastating hell even when, he further explains and includes the other hell, of Artie's guilt for Anja's death. At the beginning of chapter two in the second part, when an adult Art, with a mouse mask, sits in front of his sketching board and tells the circumstances surrounding the making of the cartoon and the success of the first part, there are flies (insects associated with the underworld and the devil) flying around Art's head and then, in two consecutive frames, at the foot of the artist and of television operators, there is an image of dead and tangled mouse piles in the pits of Auschwitz, which we can refer to the photographs from the moment of the camp's liberation by the Soviets and some apocalyptic sets of European and Christian iconographic culture (Bosch; Bruegel; Rubens; German painters and engravers of the sixteenth century). (Picture 27)

The infernal scene, explicit in the narrative content of dozens of paintings, finds a permanent echo and implicit enhanced in the broken forms invading everything, from the top, with the hypertrophy of the swastika, through the juxtaposition of transversal tables, oblique optical networks representing prison frames and architectures, to small details in the figures as the zigzag of the wrinkling in clothes. On the one hand, it is likely that such angular structures result from a plastic development of the swastika itself which dominates titles, landscapes and interiors, or the characteristic "S" from the Nazi logo of *Schutzstaffel*. Moreover, the jagged form refers to an idea of breakage, destabilization and violence, and we could then consider an aesthetic construction and a symbol of the devastating disruption of life that Nazism brought along with it. Perhaps a trace of conscious use of such line can be found in the author's signature, on the features of the "t" and "s" from his name, which was subsequently modified in such a way

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<sup>7</sup> See the enlightening discussion by Dominick Lacapra (1998, p. 157-159).

that the acute angle of the "t" has disappeared, while the "s" became more curvaceous and sinuous. (Pictures 28, 29, 30)

### *In the Shadow of No Towers*

In 2004, under the effect of terror provoked in his mind by the attacks of September 11, 2001 against the Twin Towers and the far-reaching dire political consequences unleashed by the preventive war launched by President Bush, Art Spiegelman produced a large-format comic book, *In the Shadow of No Towers*, a prodigy of inventiveness and experimentation in the art of comic books. (SPIEGELMAN, 2004). Note, for example, the breakdown of the frontality of the picture that shows more and more its thickness in the third dimension until completing its transformation in the perspective of the smoldering towers, whose shadows still exist and are extended to the entire page below rest of the strip. (Picture 31) Right on big page 2 of the new comic book, a naturalistic portrait of Artie gives way to his representation as that rat from *Maus* reappearing tenaciously. We witness his metamorphosis in four grisaille paintings flanking the Art-mouse, asleep on his sketching board and threatened equally by "Al-Qaeda and his own government". (Picture 32) The smoke and dust from the day of the attack reactivate Spiegelman's memory of his father "when trying to describe how the smoke of Auschwitz smelled" and is re-transformed into a mouse. (SPIEGELMAN (2004, p.3). (Picture 33) However, it is not the old animal from *Maus* that suffers, because so does the eagle which is a symbol of the attacked American empire suffering from strangulation in the act of accompanying the poor author in the first moments of panic, (SPIEGELMAN, 2004, p .2) and is slaughtered by Bush and Cheney, who ride it, while the bird asks itself, between desperation and ridiculous cynicism, "Why do they hate us?" (SPIEGELMAN (2004, p.4) (Picture 34) Later, in the passage "Weapons of mass displacement," Spiegelman's distress is put into action through a series of absurd exchanges of human and animal natures between Artie and his kitten, until Art again turns into the usual mouse and throws the cat into the air with the following "disclaimer": "No creature but the artist has been injured during the creation of this strip." (SPIEGELMAN, 2004, p.9) (Picture 35) In the development of his personal history from 9-11, our author often parody comics from the past but in the second part of the book, he traces a historical anthology of New York comics that allows him, as a compensation against so many anxieties and tragic follies of the present, to evoke the joy, his own and from the readers of comics throughout the twentieth century, which has raised this art thanks to the happiness and crazy comic strips such as *Kinder Kids*, *Happy Hooligan*, *Little Lady Lovekins* and *Old Man Muffaroo* and *Bringing Up Father*. Perhaps to avert the hell unleashed by Bin Laden and Bush, Spiegelman's *Mnemosyne* ends its journey in an apotheosis of fraternity and music starring the characters in *Crazy Cat*. (Pictures 36, 37)

## *Waltz with Bashir: A Lebanon War Story*

A singular and very recent case is the animated film *Waltz with Bashir*, from Ari Folman and David Polonsky, awarded at Cannes in 2008 and transformed into comics in 2009.<sup>8</sup> In September 1982, Lebanon was plunged at the same time in a civil war and a military confrontation with Israel, whose army had come to control Beirut and guarded the entrances to the city and the Palestinian refugee camps in the inside, including Sabra and Shatila. On September 15, following the assassination of Lebanese president-elect, Bashir Gemayel, the Israeli army managed to surround Sabra and Shatila, established observation points in tall buildings around it and restricting the entrance and exit to the camps. Kataeb leaders, Gemayel's Catholic party Maronite, who also controlled a large body of militia, negotiated directly with Ariel Sharon its admission to the camps with Israeli logistical assistance.<sup>9</sup> Between September 16 and 18, 1982, 1500 militia, commanded by Elie Hobeika, went to Sabra and Shatila, where they entered with blood and fire. Hundreds of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians in these allegedly protected areas were massacred: according to sources, the figures vary between four and thirty-five hundred men, women and children being killed.<sup>10</sup>

*Waltz with Bashir* recounts the author's attempt to regain his memories of the 1982 war, when he was a 19-year old soldier, especially the memories of his possible involvement in the massacre at Sabra and Shatila. This transforms the work in a unique attempt, since the participants in the group of those responsible for the massacre show the fierce act they committed, without concealing it. Both the film and the comic book begin with a series of frames that are particularly interesting for us. In what we later discover to be a nightmare experienced by another veteran of the Lebanon war, Boaz Rein Buskila, a rampant pack of dogs is released in the streets of a town and destroys everything in its path, causing terror to the passer-by. Twenty-six Maroons stop at the building where Boaz lives, barking, growling and howling, threatening him. We soon learn that one of the tasks performed by the troubled co-star during the war had been to put down, in the middle of the night and using bullets, the dogs in the cities as the army approached them, in order to prevent them from barking, thus betraying the presence of troops to the unaware inhabitants. Boaz killed 26 animals, the same number of dogs in the nightmare.

<sup>8</sup> The film was also nominated to the Academy Awards as the best foreign film and it received the Golden Globe in the same category.

<sup>9</sup> In 1982, an independent committee, whose report was published in the following year, arrived at the conclusion that the Israeli army had "direct or indirect participation in the massacre". Macbride (1983, p. 191-192). The Kahan Commission itself, from the Israeli government, found Israel directly responsible for the massacre and that the then Ministry of War Ariel Sharon was personally responsible, which made him step down. Israel (1983)

<sup>10</sup> The Kahan Commission estimated 460 dead from reports by the "Lebanese Red Cross, International Red Cross, Lebanese Civil Defense and the doctors from the Lebanese army". The intelligence from the Israeli army elevated that figure to 700-800, a number the Kahan Commission considered as "possibly more adjusted to the reality" and it was reiterated by BBC: "Analysis: 'War crimes' on West Bank", April 17, 2002, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle\\_east/1935198.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/1935198.stm) The Israeli journalist Amnon Kapeliouk, from *Le Monde diplomatique*, said that after the massacre, the Red Cross must have dumped two thousand bodies and that the Phalangists other 1500, which raises the total number to three thousand, or three thousand, five hundred victims. Kapeliouk (1982).

The representation of the animals reflects in this case two distinct roles of humans in the war in Lebanon. The ferocity of the dogs that chase after the character, thirsty for revenge, recalls that of the Israelis themselves, responsible for the deaths of the dogs during the invasion. At the same time, the suffering of the animals, receiving bullets only for barking in the presence of strangers, takes us immediately back to the torments experienced by the innocent civilian victims of the conflict. (Pictures 38, 39)

The metaphor of human desolation embodied in the beasts reappears once more in *Waltz with Bashir*. At one point, Folman's character consults a psychologist, who explains that the dissociation is a human resources to deal with traumatic situations that otherwise would become unbearable. As an example, she tells the story of an Israeli soldier, a photographer by profession, who had managed to endure much of the war after convincing himself that he saw the horrors he witnessed through the lens of the camera. However, in a moment his contraption collapses, as the young soldier becomes aware of the looming horror when he sees the Arabian horses needlessly torn at the Beirut racetrack. The horses had been killed by members of the Phalangist militias, Israeli allies, on their way toward Sabra and Shatila. The absolute innocence of the beast lying on the ground, in whose eye reflected the figure of the soldier, prefigures a comparable innocence with the victims of the impending massacre of refugees. (Picture 40)

In both passages, color is a key element for the construction of meaning. Dogs and aggressive men, both in terms of his dream and in the memory of what had really happened, are dyed a bluish gray and lead. The dog that is the victim of Boaz' shot is, however, a shade of yellow, from the night lighting of the village, contrasting with the black cooling it. On the other hand, the horses slaughtered in the racetrack present earthy and cold brown, which only becomes clear in the reflection on the eye of the dying beast. (Picture 41) The same dye reappears in the drawings of the human killings at Sabra and Shatila. It expands over dozens of frames and develops all its shades, from dark ocher, similar to the ones from the horses, to a golden yellow, but it remains cold. Even the picture that is the last frame of the comic book reproduces the emotional chromatism we have described. A yellow light reveals the desperation of the surviving woman who witnessed the massacre. The formal oppositions also stand out in the tension between the views from above and *close ups*, between drawing and imitation of photography. The first covers the range that goes from the climax of the aerial view of the militants entering the camps, on pages 99 and 114, to the closest approach of the dead boy after the massacre on page 115, mirroring the *close up* on the horse's eye on page 65. (Pictures 42, 43) The second tension is based on the coexistence of a representation from the *cartoon* itself and an imitation of an intervened photography, which progresses *in a crescendo* in the long sequence of the killing itself, culminating in five frames where the art of the cartoonist gives way to the testimony of the camera. In the original film, this same development is obtained in the oscillation between cartoon and video. (Picture 44)

A similar formal combination of aesthetic resources appears in the cartoon by Rossell, Villar and Cossio, *Rupay*. First, the fusion of drawing, photography and imitation of printmaking as a reference to the *comic book* evokes a similar practice in *Waltz with Bashir*. Above all, the deployment of color in *Rupay*, even though it is full of meaning as in Folman's work, is less complex. In addition to the shades of black, gray and white, the only color present is a fiery and strong red, which applies to both the red and white flag of Peru and the communist teachings and constant bloodshed to which both sides are responsible. (Picture 45)

In the preceding development, we used the terms formula and representation without defining them explicitly. We refer to "representation" in its double meaning: first, the notion refers to a material sense, that is, texts, images and other cultural objects that, according to Louis Marin, have a transitive dimension by which they refer to something that is outside them, but also have a reflective dimension by pointing towards themselves.<sup>11</sup> Second, representation has a more general meaning, that is, a set of collective cultural practices that are part of the social universe and help to shape it, while exposing or disguising it at the same time. Thus, the search for representations and appropriations also explores their social origins and therefore includes the analysis of the relationship between culture and social life material.<sup>12</sup> If we understand "representations" in this way, it is obvious that they can strengthen the bonds of domination, but they can also undermine them. Consequently, the study of the representations is both an analysis of the relationship between social and political powers. (GINZBURG, 2000).

In the universe of representations corresponding to a certain historical horizon, it is possible to find patterns to which we return again and again with the objective of developing tensions and conflicts within a society. Therefore, we can define a "representation formula" as the set of cultural devices that have been historically constituted and, at the same time, have a relative stability, so they are easily recognizable by the reader or the observer. However, these formulas are also subject to change, in the sense that they can be modified to represent new or different phenomena and be vectors of new meanings, even though in general they are related to the old ones. Indeed, when the bonds between new facts and previous formulas are difficult to draw or become problematic, we are perhaps at the limits of representation. (FRIEDLANDER, 2007).

We believe we were able to show that, in the case of massacres and genocide, the subject of our research program for years, the art of cartoons has produced a broadening in the meaning of the stories in words. This expansion characterizes and enriches the traditional expansion of meaning already fulfilled by the fine arts and printmaking since the beginning of modernity.

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<sup>11</sup> In that sense, representing is, at the same time, grant presence to an absent object or phenomenon, which is out of the representation act, but also personally be present in the performance of the act of making these objects present. This means presenting something, but also presenting oneself representing.

<sup>12</sup> For the concept of representation, see Chartier (1996, 2006, p. 74-99).

The cartoon ties images and writing with a strength and a coherence that is closest to the immediate energy of our emotions in life.

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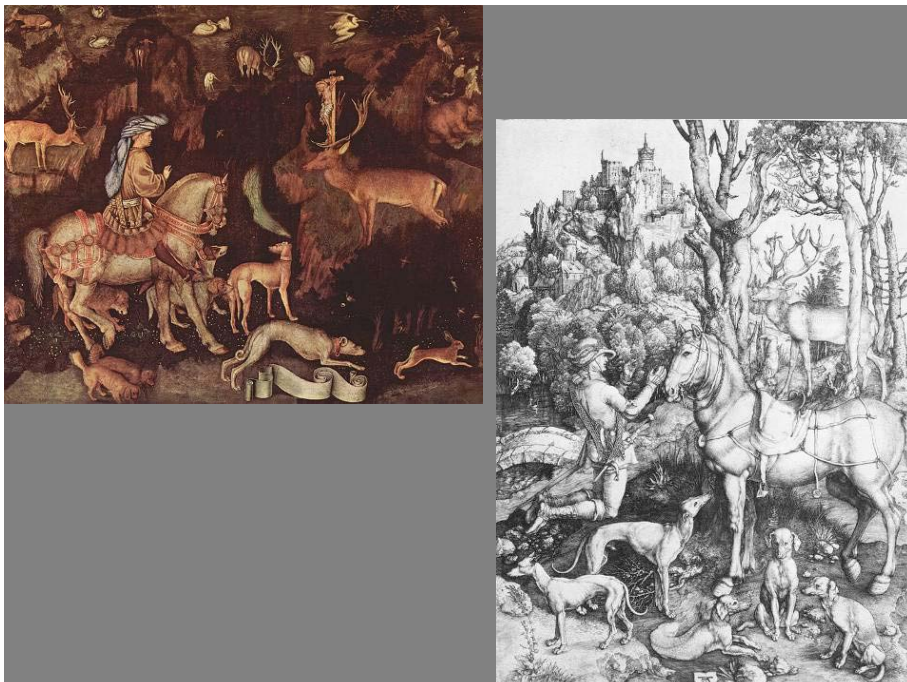
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## Imágenes

### 1. Leona herida, siglo VI a. de C.



### 2. Pisanello (1450) y Durero (1502), La visión de San Eustaquio.





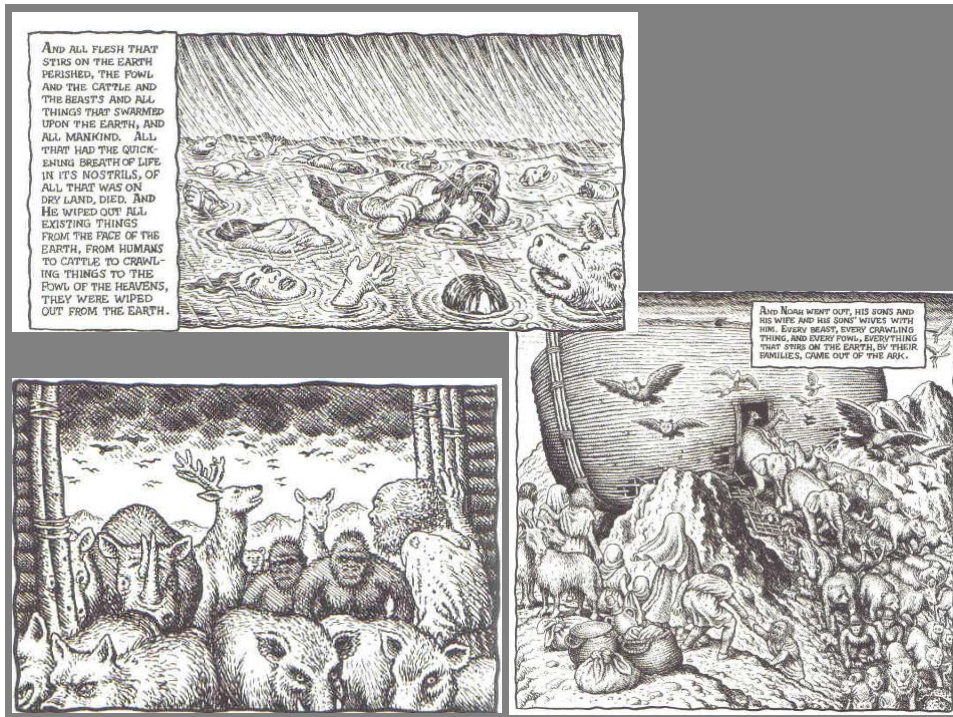
3. Sinagoga de Hodorov, Ucrania, 1714.



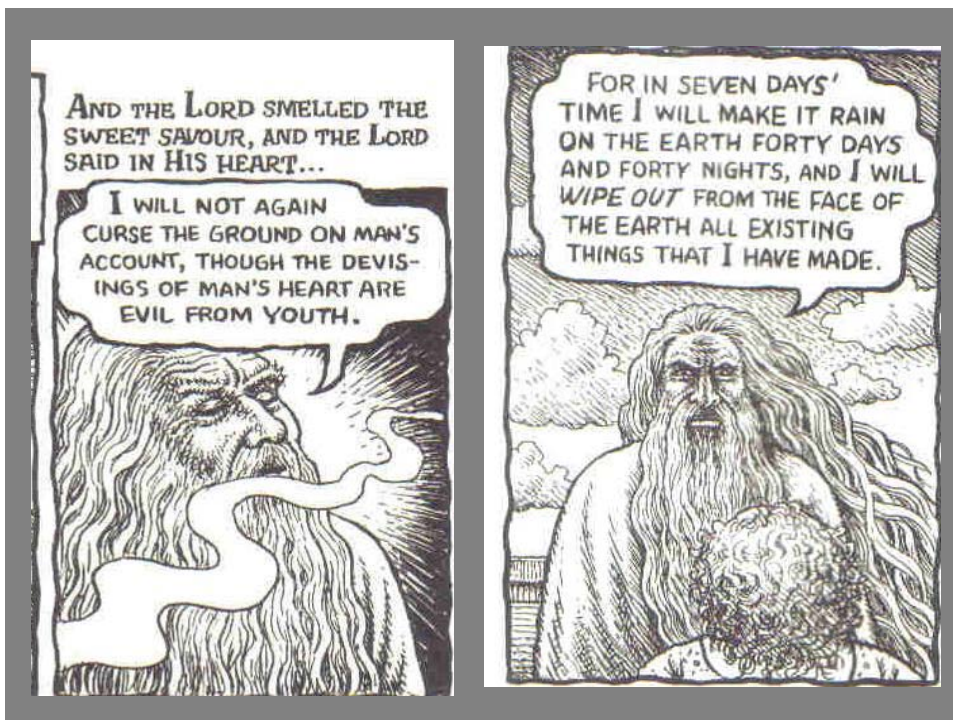
4. My Winnipeg.



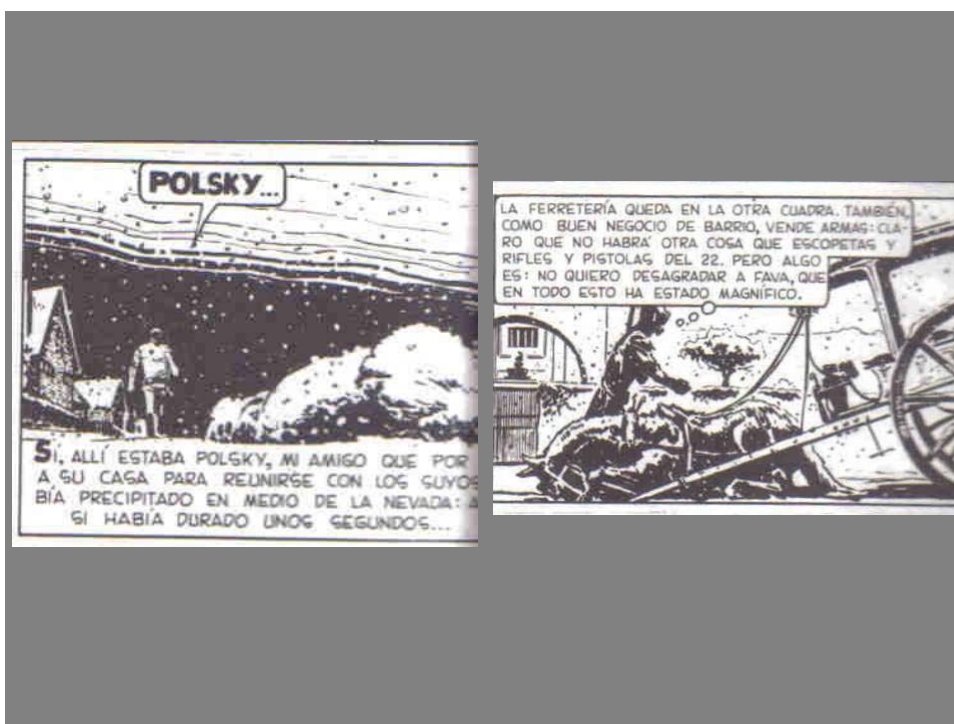
5. R. Crumb, Book of Genesis, 2009, diluvio.



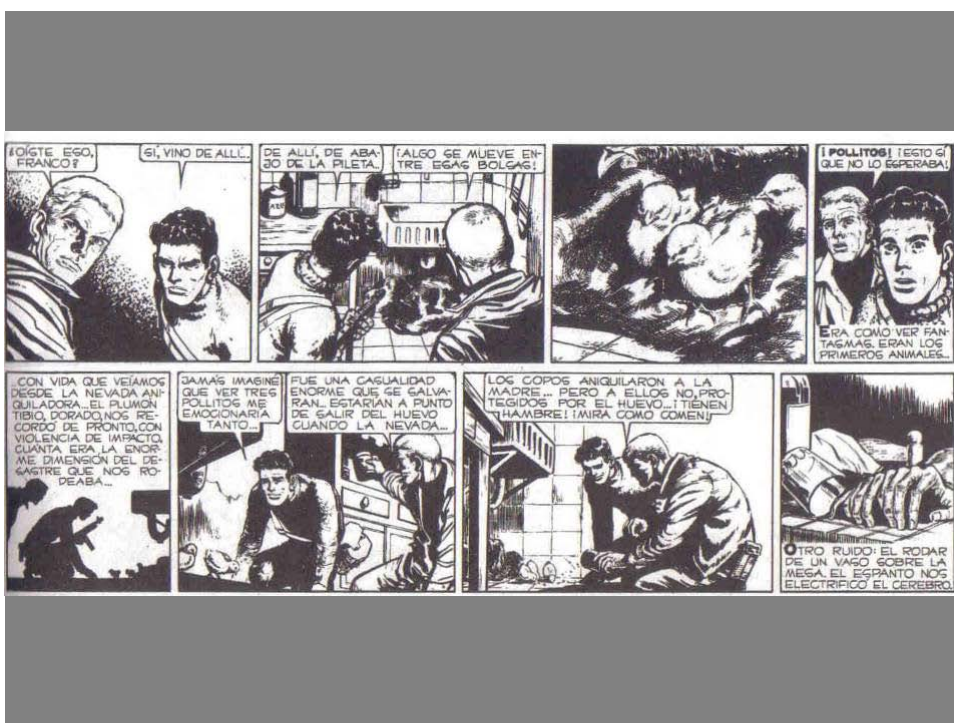
6. R. Crumb, Book of Genesis, 2009, Dios malo.



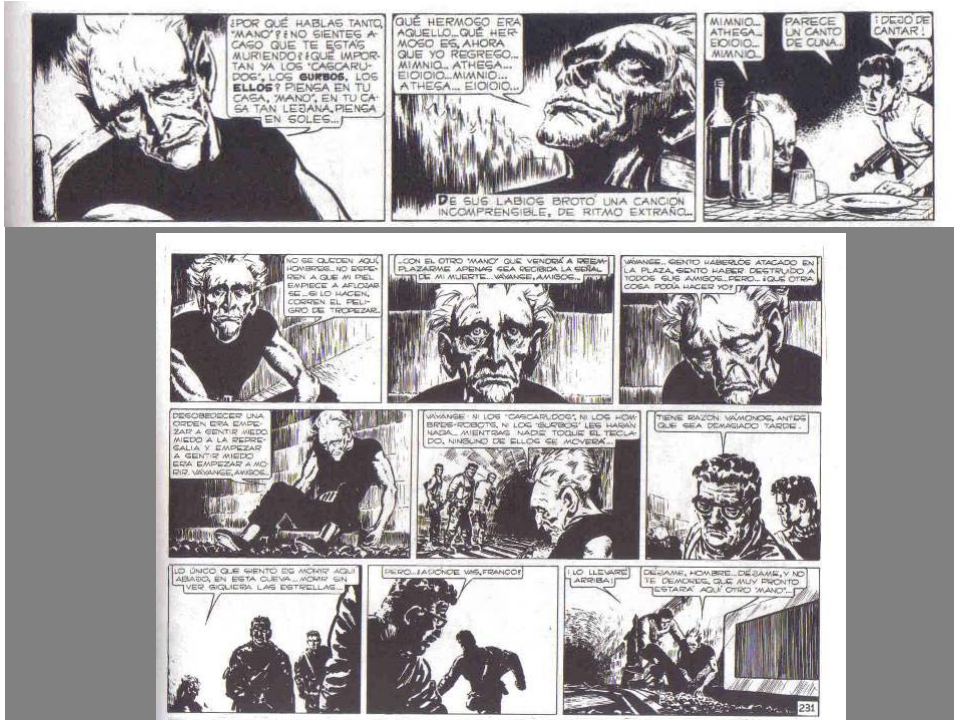
7. Oesterheld y Solano López, *El Eternauta*, 1958, Polsky y caballo muertos.



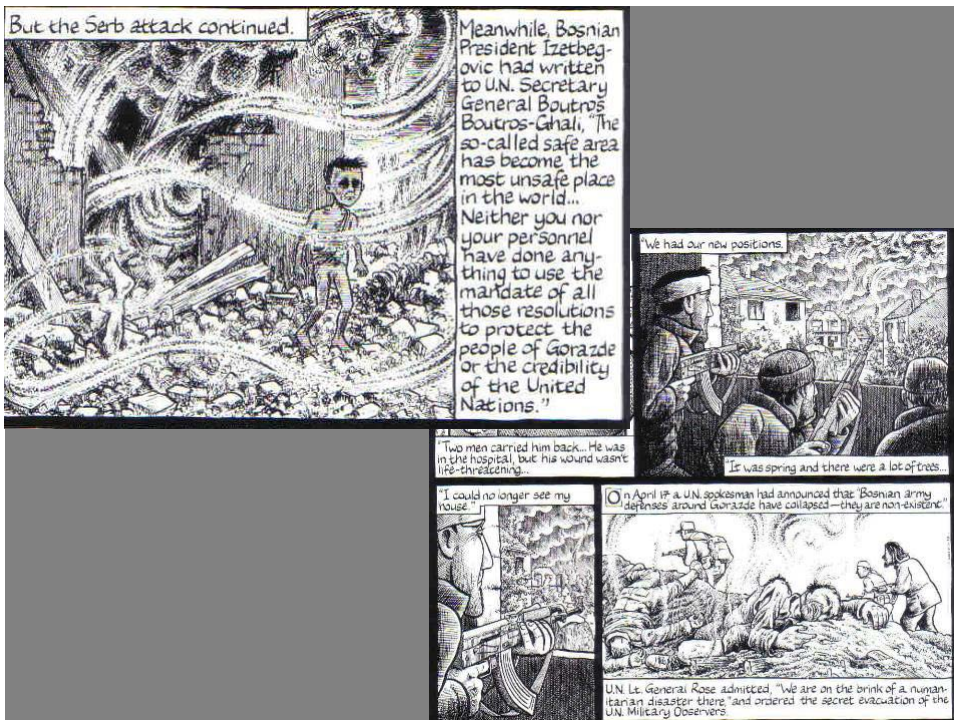
8. Oesterheld y Solano López, *El Eternauta*, 1958, pollitos.



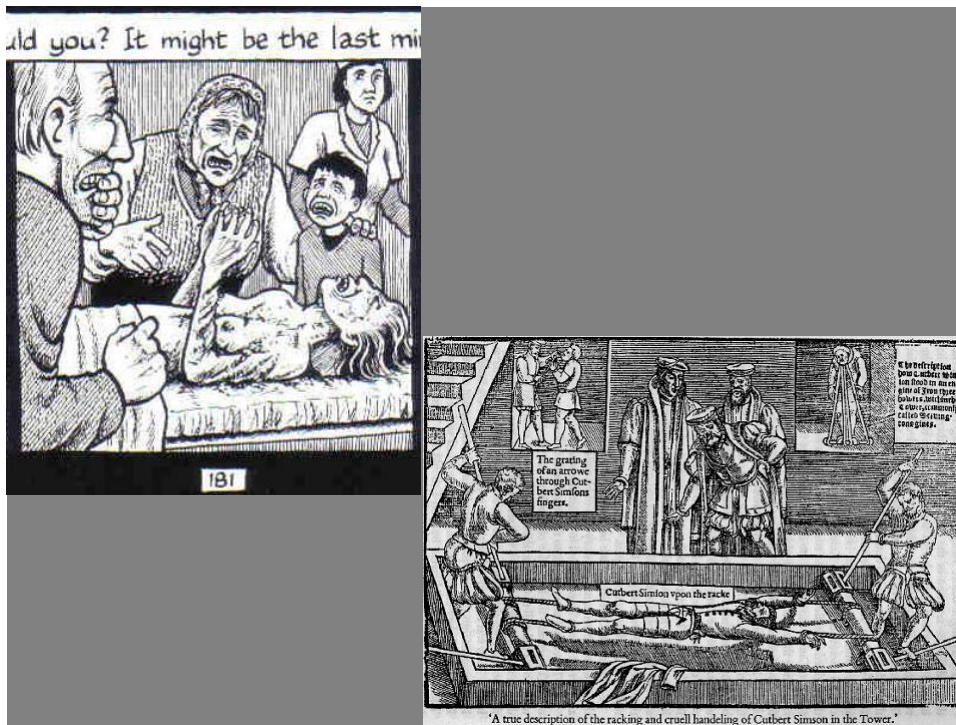
9. Oesterheld y Solano López, *El Eternauta*, 1958, mano muere.



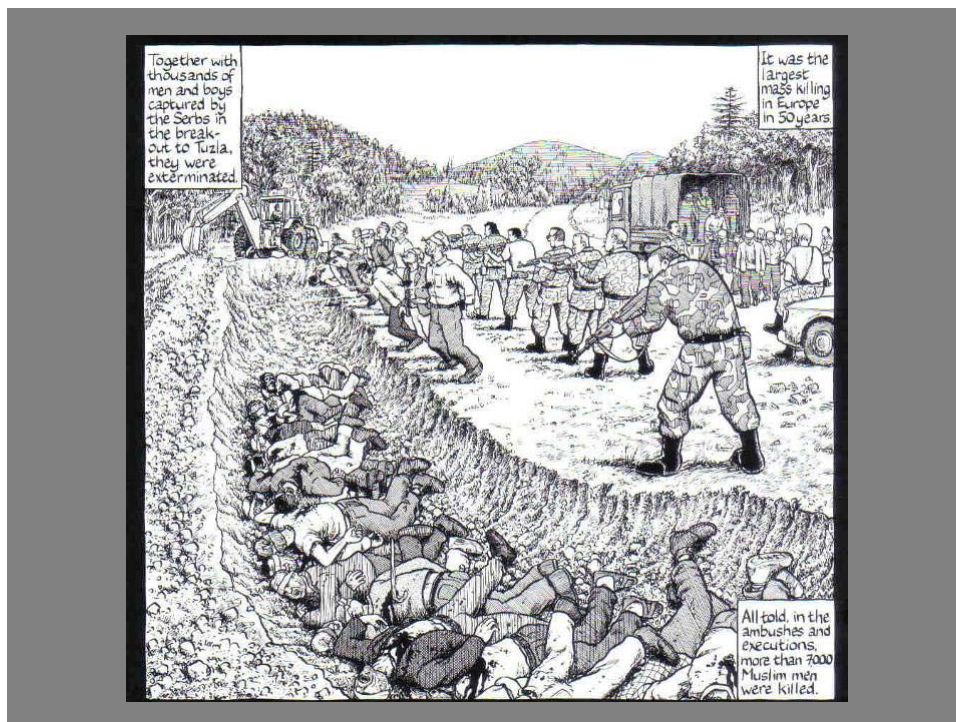
10. Joe Sacco, *Safe Area Gorazde*, 2000, visiones infernales.



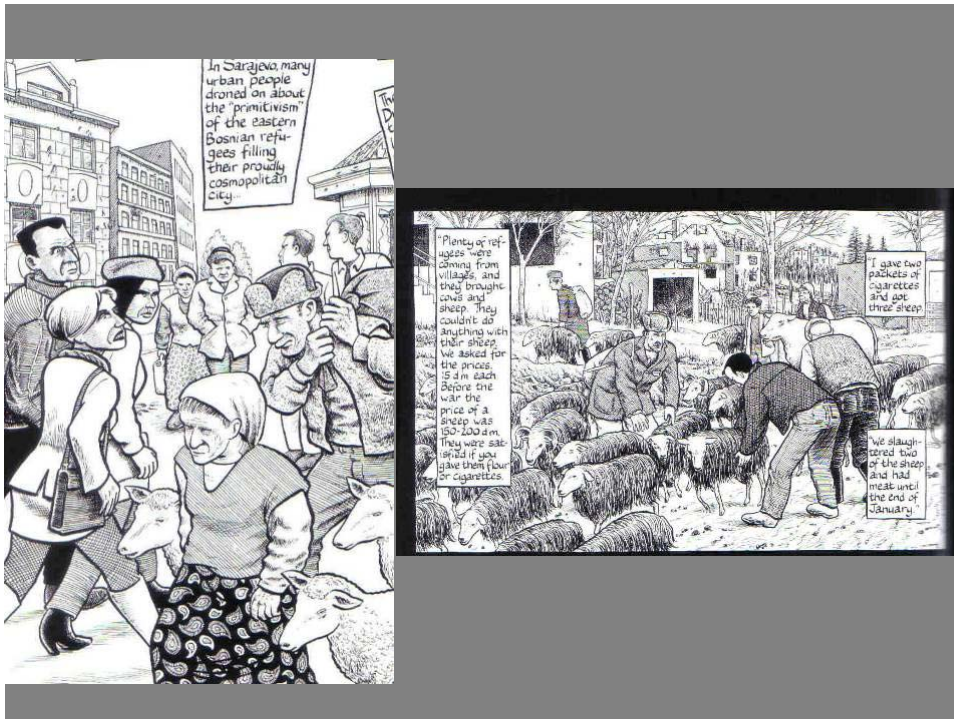
11. Joe Sacco, *Safe Area Gorazde*, 2000, martirio, y John Foxe, *Book of Martyrs*, 1586.



12. Joe Sacco, *Safe Area Gorazde*, 2000, fosa común.



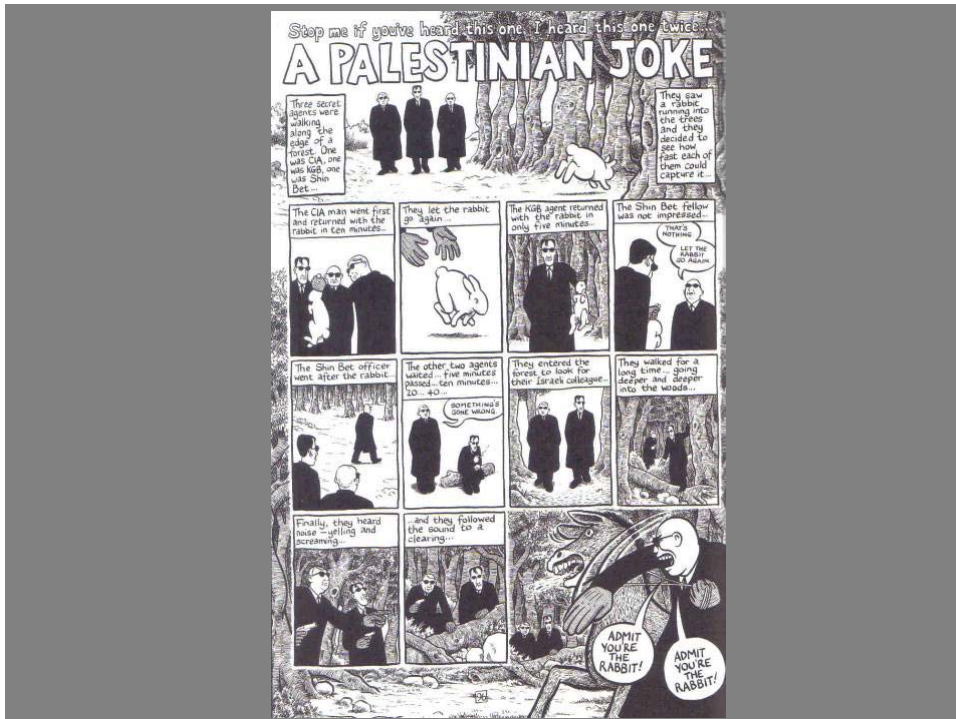
13. Joe Sacco, *Safe Area Gorazde*, 2000, exilios de hombres y animales.



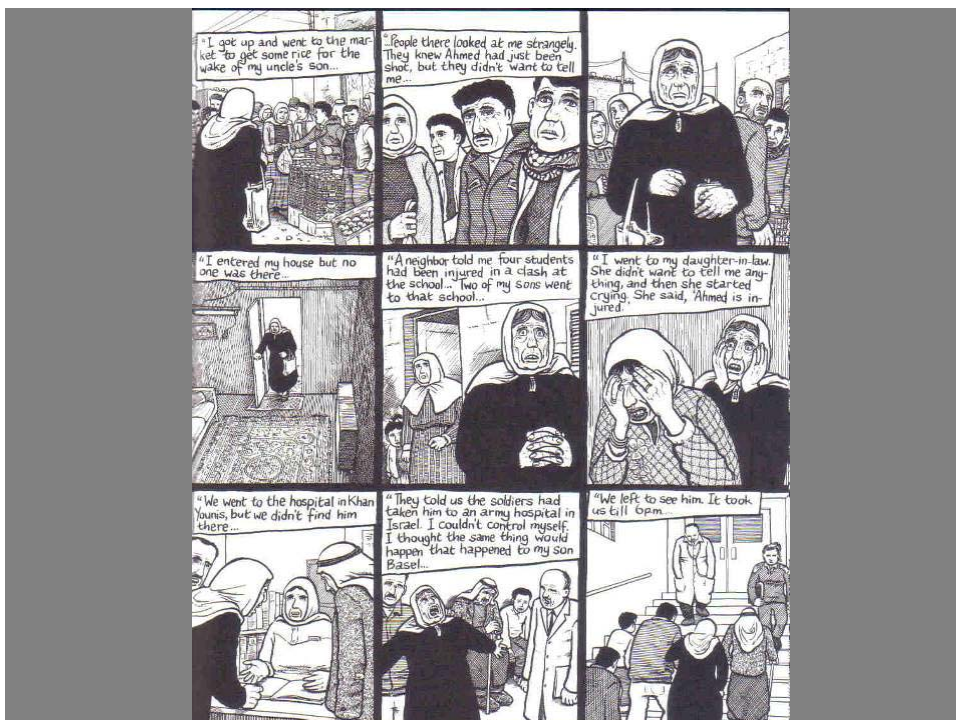
14. Joe Sacco, *Palestine*, 2001, ira.



15. Joe Sacco, *Palestine*, 2001, chiste.



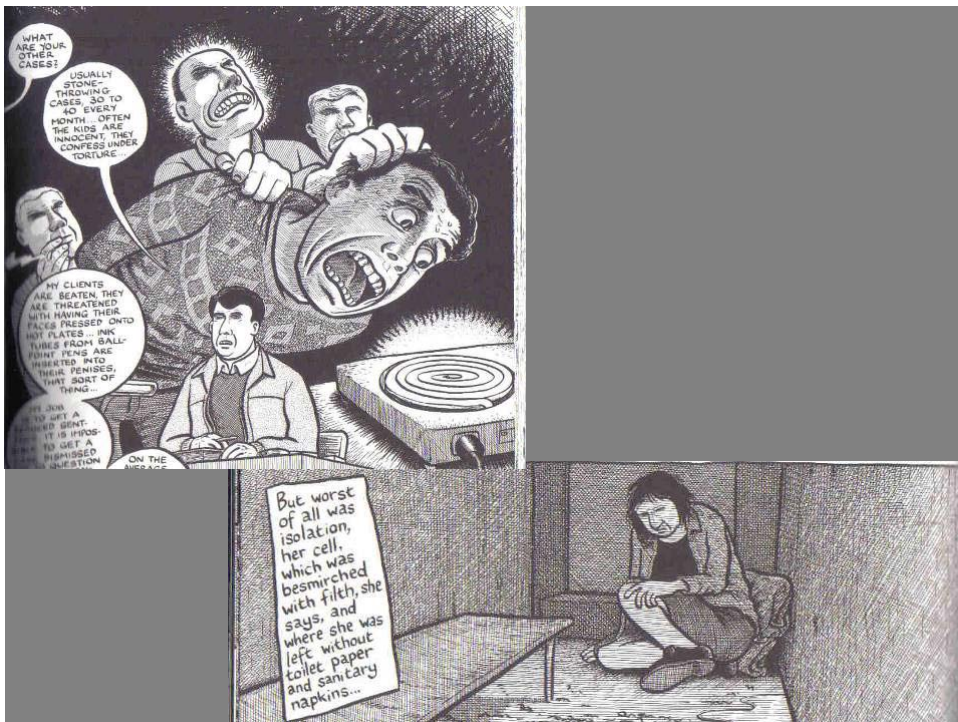
16. Joe Sacco, *Palestine*, 2001, sufrimiento femenino.



17. Joe Sacco, *Palestine*, 2001, tortura, close up, cenital.

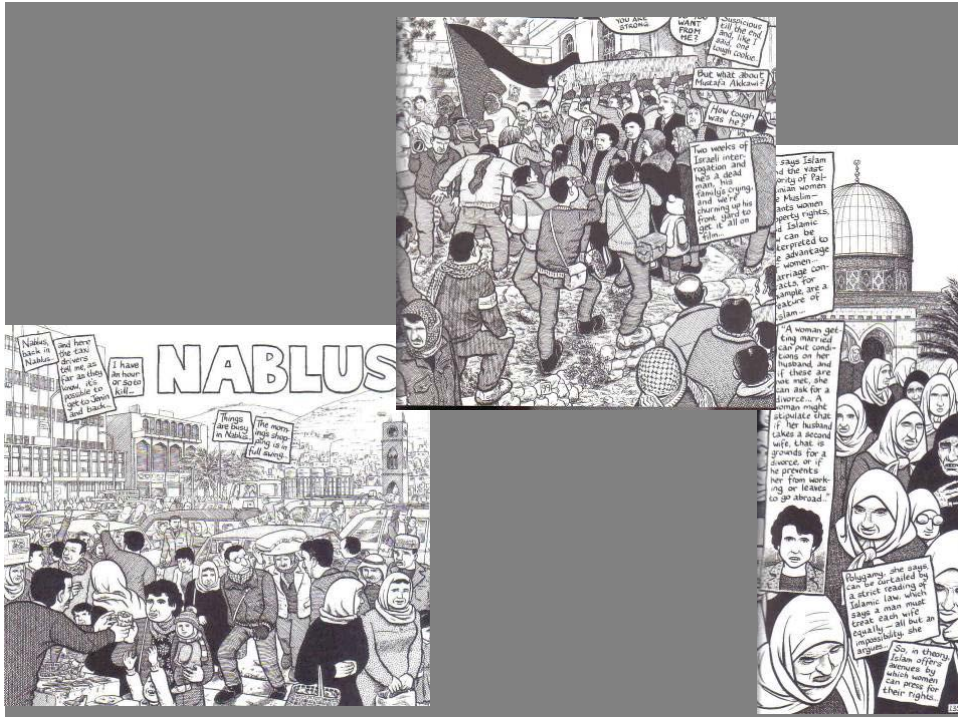


18. Joe Sacco, *Palestine*, 2001, idem.





19. Joe Sacco, *Palestine*, 2001, multitud sufriende.



20. Luis Rossell, Alfredo Villar y Jesús Cossio, *Rupay*, 57-58.

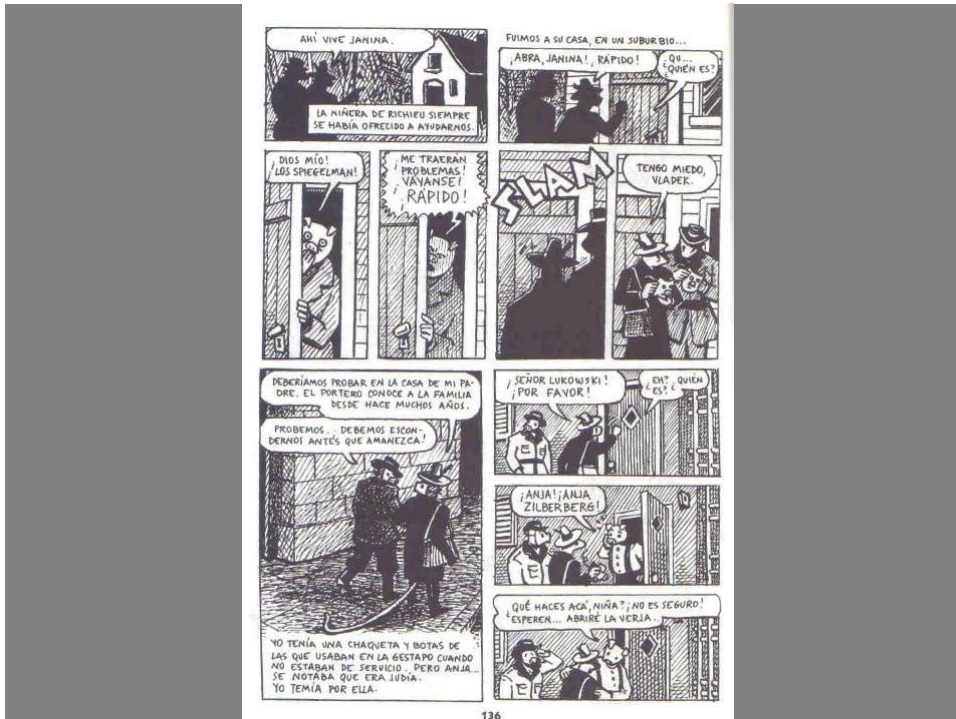


21. Grabados de animales, guerra de los Treinta Años, Callot.



22. Della Porta, *De humana physiognomia*, 1586.



23. A. Spiegelman, *Maus*, 1973-1986, uso de la fábula en *Maus*.24. A. Spiegelman, *Maus*, 1973-1986, ratón-perro.



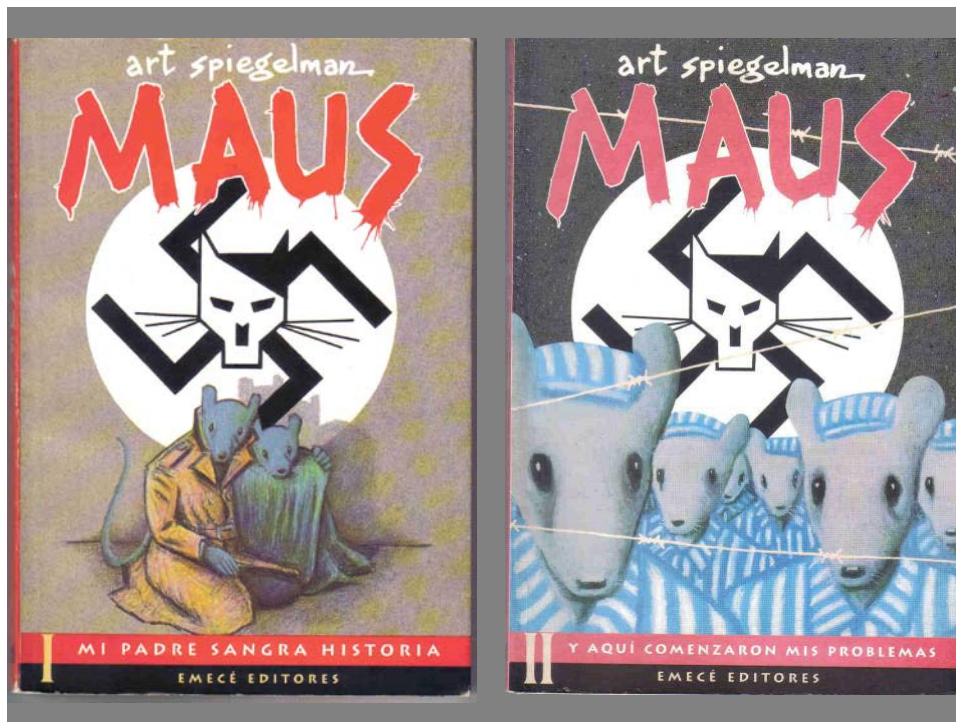
27. A. Spiegelman, *Maus*, 1973-1986, más infierno.



28. A. Spiegelman, *Maus*, 1973-1986, forma esvástica en el camino.



29. A. Spiegelman, *Maus*, 1973-1986, tapas.



30. A. Spiegelman, *Maus*, 1973-1986, Título y firmas.



31. A. Spiegelman, *In the shadow of no towers*, 2004, experimentación formal.32. A. Spiegelman, *In the shadow of no towers*, 2004, Art ratón con Al Qaeda y su gobierno.





35. A. Spiegelman, *In the shadow of no towers*, 2004, juego con el gato.



36. A. Spiegelman, *In the shadow of no towers*, 2004, homenaje a historietas clásicas. Kinder Kids, Happy Hooligan, Little Lady Lovekins, Bringing Up Father.



37. A. Spiegelman, *In the shadow of no towers*, 2004, homenaje a historietas clásicas. Crazy Cat.



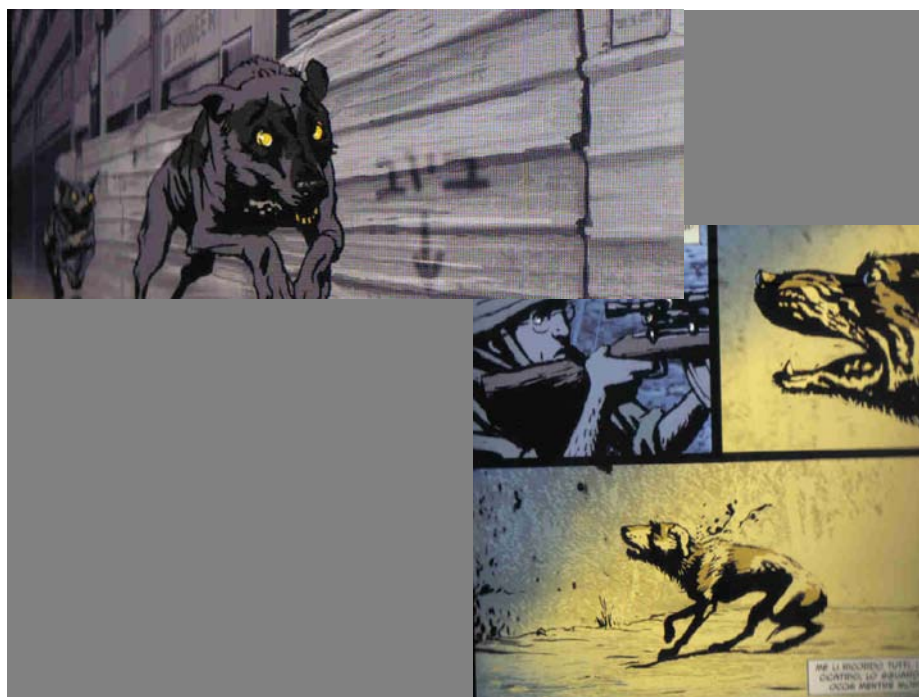
38. Folman y Polonsky, *Vals con Bashir*, 2009. Perros feroces y sufrientes.



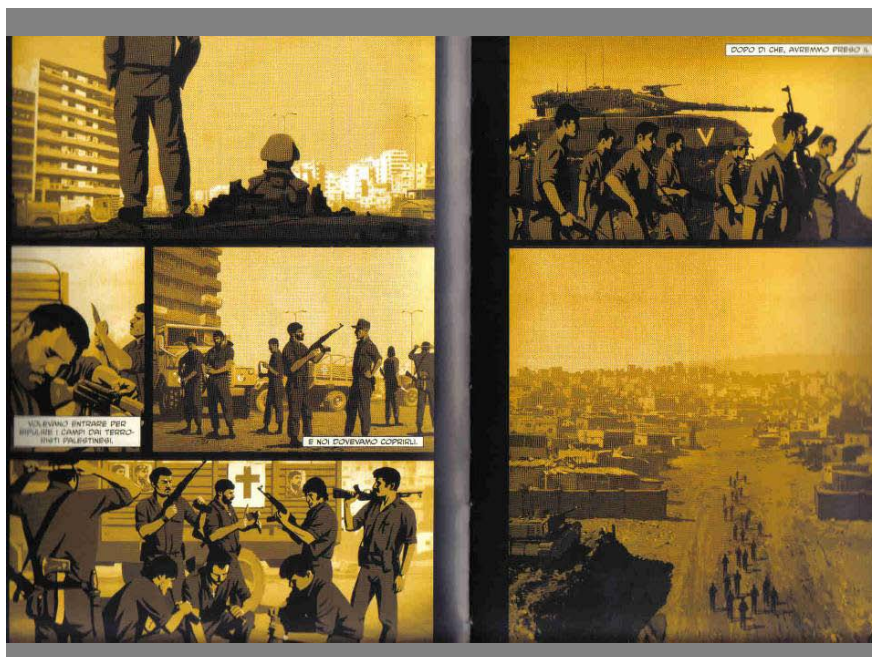
39. Folman y Polonsky, *Vals con Bashir*, 2009. Caballo muerto.



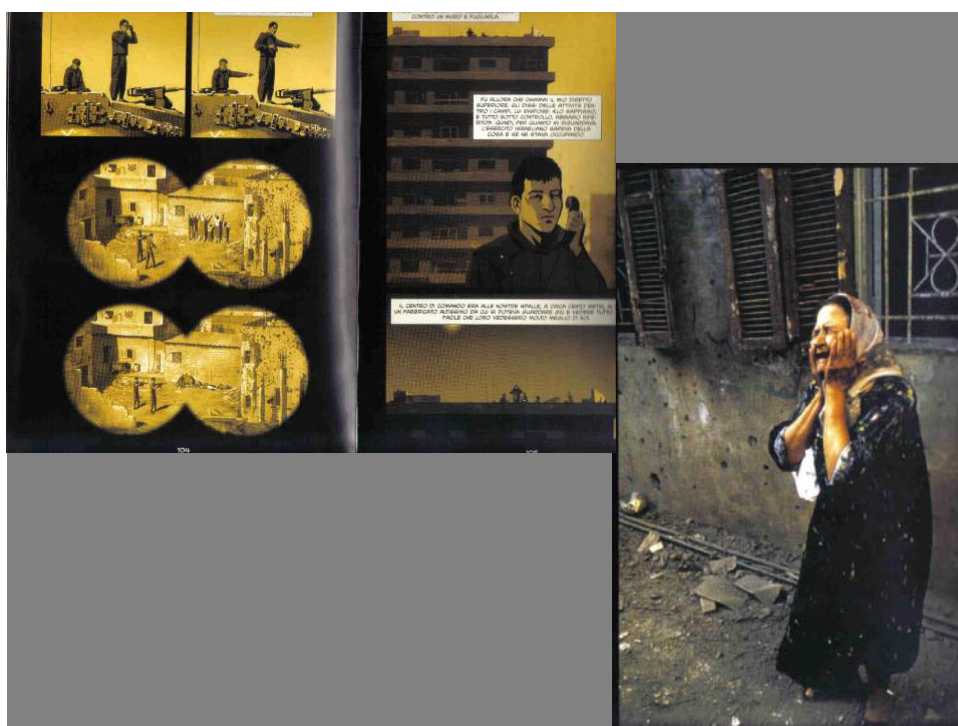
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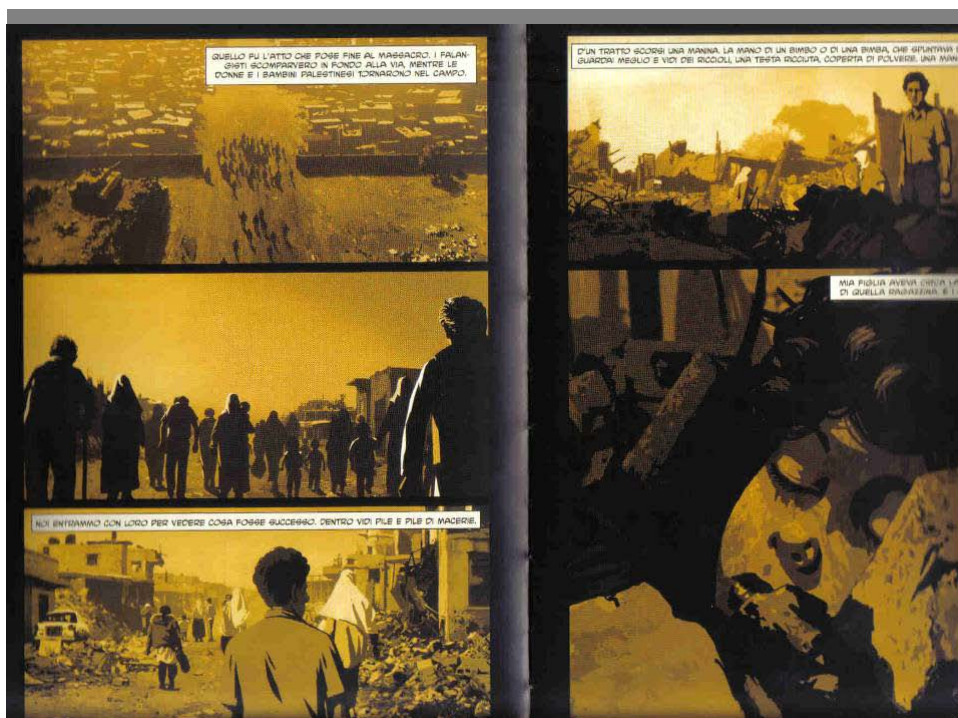
41. Folman y Polonsky, *Vals con Bashir*, 2009. El camino hacia Sabra y Chatila.



42. Folman y Polonsky, *Vals con Bashir*, 2009. Sabra y Chatila y mujer sufriendo.



43. Folman y Polonsky, *Vals con Bashir*, 2009. Niño muerto.



44. Folman y Polonsky, *Vals con Bashir*, 2009. Fotogramas finales.

