Beyond vision: myth, catharsis and the narration of absence in Art Spiegelman's *Maus* and W.G. Sebald's *Austerlitz*

ERICA WICKERSON

Abstract

Art Spiegelman's *Maus* and W.G. Sebald's *Austerlitz* are unusual as second-generation Holocaust narratives not only for their combination of text and image, but also for their subtle allusions to myth. This article considers the confluence of literary and visual narrative, and mythology and the Holocaust. It proposes an extension to Claude Lévi-Strauss's structuralist approach to myth, suggesting the distinction between *semantic* and *syntactic* 'bundles of relations'. In the context of *Maus* and *Austerlitz*, this distinction unveils a tension between theme and form in the echoes of well-known mythological tales. It indicates the multiple narrative levels at work and the disparity that often exists between them. Although both works allude to myths, they subvert the traditional endings, denying the possibility of cathartic release or narrative predictability. These echoes and subversions form part of a wider project that also operates in the combination of text and image. Spiegelman and Sebald draw attention to attempts to visualise and to represent subjectivities and memories, before then indicating the fallibility of literal and metaphorical sight. Bringing together word and image, and myth and the Holocaust in both works highlights the limits of mimetic representation as well the significance of attempting it.

The horrors of the Holocaust have posed massive challenges to representation. As Saul Friedländer suggests: 'there are limits to representation *which should not be but can easily be transgressed. What the characteristics of such a transgression are, however, is far more intractable than our definitions have so far been able to encompass.'[1] This article compares two texts that represent ways of approaching the Holocaust through multiple removes: Art Spiegelman's *Maus* (1980-91); and W. G. Sebald's novel *Austerlitz* (2001). The comparison explores the ways in which narratives about the Holocaust employ mythology as an attempt to impose order on the senselessness of the past, precisely while denying the very possibility of sense-making or resolution.

Maus and *Austerlitz* are different in numerous respects. *Maus* is what Spiegelman called a 'commix' – 'a co-mix, or blend, of image and words'.[2] It is both memoir and biography, exploring Spiegelman's relationship with his father Vladek in the present, and their joint attempts to piece together the family's past. Vladek is a Polish-Jewish immigrant in America, who tells the story of his survival of the Holocaust. Art Spiegelman was born after the war and grew up in America, working as part of the countercultural comix movement. He transcribes his father's tale in an unprecedented way, not only in comic strip form, but with humans depicted as animals, echoing and subverting Nazi stereotypes. Sebald's *Austerlitz* by contrast is fiction. Where the animal imagery of *Maus* might spuriously undermine its basis in fact – indeed, Spiegelman even had to demand that *Maus II* was moved from the *New York Times* fiction bestseller list[3] –, the use of photographs in *Austerlitz* lend an apparent sense of authenticity. Sebald's father served in the Wehrmacht under the Nazis, while the eponymous protagonist of *Austerlitz* is the son of Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Because of the evident differences, however, the similarities between *Maus* and *Austerlitz* are all the more significant.

Maus and *Austerlitz* both present a second-generation attempt at *Durcharbeitung* or 'working through', showing sons seeking to discover what happened to their parents during the Holocaust. These books are as much about dialogues in the present as they are about memories of the past. Both are also unusual in form, blending word and image. But there is a further and less obvious similarity: their allusions to mythological stories. There are other notable mythopoeic works about the Nazi past, such as Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* (*Doctor Faustus*) and Günter Grass's *Die Blechtrommel* (*The Tin Drum*). But in *Maus* and *Austerlitz*, the references are more oblique; the stories are not subsidiary to the mythic parallels, rather they recur subtly and intermittently. In terms of thematic references, they borrow both from Jewish and classical mythology. In terms of form, they also create patterns of repetition that follow the structural elements of myth in new guises. The notion of

storytelling is complicated in *Maus* and *Austerlitz* because they have distinct narrators, protagonists, agents of experience and memory, with intertwined quests in the present to reconstruct or understand the past. Here, I build on Claude Lévi-Strauss's theory of 'bundles of relations' to suggest the distinction between *semantic* and *syntactic* 'bundles of relations'.[4] This provides a key to understanding not only the much-discussed difficulties of representing the ultimately incomprehensible, but also an appreciation of the subtle narratological ways in which Spiegelman and Sebald succeed in conveying the complexities of the overlapping, interrelated subjectivities involved.

In a radio interview given shortly before his death, Sebald said that 'to write about concentration camps in my view is practically impossible […]. So the only way in which one can approach these things […] is obliquely, tangentially, by reference rather than by direct confrontation.'[5] It is telling that literary critics frequently employ similes and metaphors when discussing the inaccessibility of experience represented in *Austerlitz*, perhaps unconsciously repeating the book's own character. Deane Blackler, for example, draws on Kermode's notion of looking 'awry', saying that *Austerlitz* looks 'at what cannot, like the Medusa, be looked at directly' and is a 'labyrinth of mystery';[6] Dora Osborne discusses the work's 'blind spots', which 'mark the traumatic traces of the protagonist's experience of loss and separation' while screening 'the traumatic realization that his individual experience is linked to the fate of millions';[7] Carolin Duttlinger says that 'the interaction between text and photography […] has the effect of a riddle'.[8] *Austerlitz* as a novel presents for readers an inescapable labyrinth, an unsolvable riddle, an unseeable sight, just as Austerlitz the character fails to decipher the traces of the past.

Maus is somewhat different because it is not simply fictional. But here too dialogue in the present acts as both gateway and mediator to the experience of the Holocaust, simultaneously allowing and disavowing access. Now the interlocutor is Artie, the child of Holocaust survivors, personally heavily invested in the story he hears and re-tells. It is not a

chance encounter in a railway station that provides the prompt for this telling, but Artie's desire to know about his parents' experience. While Artie has an inescapable personal connection with the Holocaust, the narrator in *Austerlitz* actively chooses to identify and empathize with those who suffered. These different relationships with the past pose different challenges in narration. As the son of survivors, Artie meets with a double bind. As Arlene Fish Wilner writes:

> The competing pressures – to make meaning and to resist imposing meaning where none can ever reside – are portrayed exquisitely in Vladek's human – and humane – insistence on both pride and humility and in his son's tortured struggle both to commemorate and to de-mythologize his father's heroic stature.[9]

This double bind occurs too in a subtler form in *Austerlitz*, but the eponymous protagonist posits himself as a kind of failed – rather than de-mythologized – mythical figure. The references to myth both emphasise and complicate the distinction between these narrative levels, working in symbiosis with the visual and textual combination that at once attempts and undermines access, while also reflecting on modes of retrospective comprehension in the present.

1. SEMANTIC AND SYNTACTIC BUNDLES OF RELATIONS

What is meant by 'myth' is notoriously difficult to define; indeed, Leon Burnett et al. call attempts to do so 'a futile enterprise' and 'as vain an endeavour as trying to pin down what time, love, or consciousness means to any one individual'.[10] In comparing *Maus* and *Austerlitz*, I use 'myth' to refer to recognisable echoes of characters, scenes, actions, or narrative techniques taken from the Judeo-Christian or Greco-Roman traditions of storytelling about otherworldly feats and deified heroes. This meaning often intertwines with the psychoanalytical use of myth, popularised by Freud, or the significance of ritual, which is another favoured definition. I also draw on structuralist approaches that emphasise the

significance of patterns in plots, objects, and relationships to create a relational structure across a work. This links more generally to the notion of myth as storytelling, although, as Robert A. Segal observes, while 'any myth is a story', not 'any story is myth'.[11] According to Lévi-Strauss 'myth, like the rest of language, is made up of constituent units,' but 'the true constituent units of a myth are not the isolated relations but *bundles of such relations* and it is only as bundles that these relations can be put to use and combined so as to produce a meaning'.[12] By considering the constituents of myth in terms of thematic relations, the formation of patterns across a story, Lévi-Strauss suggests that this 'not only has the advantage of bringing some kind of order to what was previously chaos; it also enables us to perceive some basic logical processes which are at the root of mythical thought.'[13] 'The function of repetition is', according to Lévi-Strauss, 'to render the structure of the myth apparent'.[14] As an example, Lévi-Strauss breaks down the constituents of the Oedipus myth in chronological order, reading from left to right and top to bottom. He also sorts these constituents into 'bundles of relations' according to the thematic patterns they form.

 Maus and *Austerlitz* form patterns of repetition, but in both cases there is a distinction between what occurs and the way in which it is narrated. In other words, the repetition of thematic constituents creates *semantic* patterns that relate to the *story* of the works, that which occurs in the events; but in the particular *manner* of narration, the repetition of narratological or meta concerns create *syntactic* bundles of relations. The latter are often in some tension with the former, undermining the attempted construction of myths and emphasising the incomprehensibility and unpredictability of the events narrated.

 Maus tells two tales: that of Vladek's survival of the past and that of his relationship with his son Artie in the present. Artie's drawings give these two stories a unifying form. But because Artie bases his drawings on recorded interviews with Vladek, the stories effectively have two narrators: Artie in the present and Vladek in the past. The character of Vladek is presented, therefore, as two different selves and part of the distinction lies in the use of

mythological allusion. In Vladek's memories, he appears not merely as heroic but mythologically so. Vladek repeatedly mentions his strength, ingenuity, good looks and multifarious skills. There are also numerous explicit nods to myth. Yet Artie's representations serve to subvert these allusions.

Maus references myths both from the Hebraic and Hellenic traditions, although these have not yet been fully observed or interpreted by critics. These traditions have had different significance in the modern treatment of mythology, particularly since Freud's theories based on Classical-Greek myths.[15] Vladek's self-identification with mythic figures tends towards Classical heroes with God-like powers. Some of these allusions occur in the words Vladek uses, while some are visible in the form of Artie's drawing. Vladek echoes mythological heroes when he successfully completes the Herculean task of cleaning a stable incredibly quickly (54); he succeeds in obtaining a belt with his almost mythical powers of ingenuity, which recalls another of the twelve labours of Hercules, where the hero obtains the girdle of Hippolyta (194); when Vladek kills a German, Artie's depiction of the corpse as a ferocious looking cat makes it look lion-like, furthering the allusion to Hercules who slayed the Nemean Lion (52); against the counsel of other prisoners, Vladek maintains his strength by bathing in a river, echoing Achilles (55); like Hercules' Roman counterpart Heracles, Vladek describes one task of levelling out ground as 'we had to move mountains' (58); he presents himself not only as an archetype of male beauty but also lays claim to the power of prophecy, both of which recall the god Apollo (59); like many mythological gods, Vladek also successfully assumes the form of other animals in order to pass unseen on multiple occasions (66, 138-143, 146-148, 151), and also professes great prowess with foreign languages that appears to save his life in Auschwitz (191).[16]

It is possible to distinguish between these 'semantic bundles of relations', which include events that echo mythological stories, and the 'syntactic bundles of relations', which create patterns of methodological concerns. For example, throughout Maus, Artie draws

attention to attempts to see, both metaphorically and literally. His father mentions his 'glaucoma' and glass eye (41), a kind of intradiegetic issue with sight, but Artie also reflects on the artistic difficulty of figuring out 'how to draw' the characters (171), as well as the impossibility of visualising his father's memories (206). In a similar vein, he repeatedly questions his own authority as narrator. Such self-doubt becomes particularly acute in Volume II, after the success of the first volume and his father's death. In effect, he begins to suffer from a compounded form of survivor guilt. Both issues of sight and storytelling are meta concerns that Artie discusses self-consciously as the work's creator. They are more akin to aspects of artistic style, where particular drawing patterns emerge, for example with visual differences between memories and the present, and most pertinently in those panels that reference mythological tales (discussed further below).

The distinction between semantic and syntactic bundles of relations raises several points. First, it suggests that *Maus*'s engagement with myth occurs beyond its explicit echoes of mythological stories but is also found structurally in patterns that concern the meta-level of narration. Second, it demonstrates the distinction between Vladek's version of his life and Artie's telling of it: Vladek is the one who draws implicit or explicit parallels between himself and mythic heroes with often godly powers, while Artie's meta-level of engagement inflects the story with a greater nuance, balancing the tensions of what Wilner calls his 'tortured struggle both to commemorate and to de-mythologize his father's heroic stature'.[17] Third, there is a recognisable shift from semantic concerns to syntactic dissection that occurs across the two volumes of *Maus*, and this becomes particularly obvious with a synchro-diachronic reading that considers these allusions and themes both in chronological order from left to right as well as according to their bundles of relations from top to bottom. Lévi-Strauss argues that myth should be read like an orchestral score, synchronically as well as diachronically, as is necessary for the '*harmony*' to become clear.[18] The synchro-diachronic reading uncovers the myth's 'double structure': 'on the one hand, a myth always refers to

events alleged to have taken place long ago. But what gives the myth an operational value is that the specific pattern described is timeless; it explains the present and the past as well as the future.'[19] When we apply this approach to *Maus,* it reveals the way in which the first volume deals more heavily with Vladek's semi-God-like claims to skill and ingenuity that helped him survive the Holocaust. *Maus II* tempers this with Artie's struggles to find equilibrium between authenticity and scepticism; in other words, an awareness, as he puts it, that survival also involved 'a lot of luck' (203).

Sue Vice argues that *Maus* not only embodies Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of the 'chronotope' in general, but also echoes his model of the Greek adventure novel in particular. Indeed, Vice says, 'many works of Holocaust literature bear an oblique and ironized resemblance to Bakhtin's description of the chronotope of the Greek adventure novel, which he further defines as "the adventure novel of *ordeal*"'.[20] But, she continues,

> if we see *Maus* as a latter-day Greek adventure novel, then many of the latter's features are reversed or problematized due to the historical moment at which *Maus* is set. For instance, the aspects of the adventure novel which Bakhtin describes as neutral and ahistorical all acquire malign historical meaning in Spiegelman's text, even if it is true that historical events still 'gain meaning in the novel only thanks to their connection with private life'.[21]

She persuasively maps the events of Vladek and Anja's life onto the lists of salient constituents outlined by Bakhtin.

But Vice's reading partly misses the point of what Hayden White calls 'the content of the form'. By this he refers to 'the recognition that narrative, far from being merely a form of discourse that can be filled with different contents, real or imaginary as the case may be, already possesses a content prior to any given actualization of it in speech or writing'.[22] In other words, the allusions to myth go beyond those of the events and the chronology of Vladek's life and occur also specifically in modes of emplotment. My distinction between

'semantic' and 'syntactic bundles of relations' aims to draw out a different way of reading patterns in *Maus*, one that suggests more than simply the presence of mythological parallels. It indicates the manifold allusions that are made or furthered through the *form* of the narration rather than being inherent in the event itself.

This approach also reveals the very different type of engagement with myth and multiple narrative levels that exists in *Austerlitz*. Austerlitz's seemingly singular tale disguises a mythological shape rather than, as in *Maus*, including sporadic references to specific mythic motifs. Again, these patterns occur both semantically, in terms of events and themes, and syntactically, in terms of the form of the novel. Analysing the distinction furthers modes of reading *Austerlitz*'s complex and overlapping narrative layers. Various critics have observed references to classical mythology in Sebald's novel. But it is also important to distinguish between the echoes in theme and the echoes in form, and in particular to consider linguistic or visual motifs as an extension of the mythopoeic structure. Here I extend Lévi-Strauss's discussion of 'bundles of relations' to consider moments of syntactic repetition, in which Sebald's mode of narration creates a mythic structure without necessarily referring directly to mythic plots.

Several critics have pointed to Austerlitz's similarities with the Greek hero Odysseus and his Roman counterpart Ulysses. Amir Eshel calls the protagonist's quest a 'Ulyssian journey back to his past', saying that 'Austerlitz's "discovery" [of his name] and narrativization of his very own time will bring him to Prague, where, much like Ulysses, he encounters his childhood in the figure of his nursemaid, Věra Rysanová.'[23] Carol Jacobs takes this a step further, analysing the passage in which Austerlitz first hears of the Kindertransport on the radio while in a bookshop, and 'suddenly leaves the British Isles and makes his way directly home'.[24] She continues:

> The irony in this particular passage […] is that Austerlitz is already with his Penelope,
> Penelope Peacefull, and he makes his trip to Prague by leaving her and leaving behind

what little peace he has. […] The return home to Prague has all the ambiguity of

Odysseus's embrace of Telemachus, accompanied as it is by their shrill cries which

are compared in book 16 (216-19) of Homer's text to that of birds whose children

have been stolen away.[25]

Russell J. A. Kilbourn sees an echo of Odysseus in Austerlitz's search to find his mother's

face in photos and in the Nazi propaganda film of Theresienstadt:

where Odysseus […] tries and fails three times to embrace his mother's shade, he

does at least meet her and recognise her there, in the Homeric underworld. Austerlitz,

by contrast, tries in vain to recognise his dead and unknown mother in the face of a

stranger, another young woman interned in the camp and compelled to take part in the

charade of "Theresienbad".[26]

Eschel, Jacobs, and Kilbourn observe different aspects of the allusions to Odysseus/Ulysses.

But there are further references in this vein that have not been previously noticed, and which

link myth specifically to lost identity and lost vision, concepts at the heart of the novel: where

Odysseus escapes the wrathful revenge of the blinded cyclops by telling him his name is

Οὖτις, the Greek word for 'nobody', Austerlitz also becomes effectively nameless when his

teacher tells him his true identity but says that there is no reason anyone need know of his

real name.[27] Ironically, it is the narrator's loss of vision that brings him and Austerlitz

together again rather than signalling their separation, for he has to return to London to see an

eye specialist.

But such observations about thematic references to myth do not go far enough. It is

also worth considering the ways in which Sebald creates a sense of synchronicity through

motivic repetition as opposed to just a 'diachronic structure' of chronologically narrated

action. Such repetition emphasises the work's structure, its meta-concerns, and the departure

of form from content. In *Austerlitz*, the 'double structure' identified by a synchro-diachronic

reading has particular significance. It is a story about loss and chaos and attempts to piece

together ultimately irretrievable shards of the past; the double structure uncovered by a synchronic reading lends the narrative a greater sense of coherence, creating patterns amongst the chaos. Such patterns, however, retroactively occur in second generation attempts at comprehension and are separable from the senselessness of the events of the past. As with *Maus*, this highlights the separation of form from content. In this way, the reference to myth and the 'double structure' it creates is particularly significant in the context of second generation attempts to work through the trauma of the Holocaust.

There are several motifs that recur throughout *Austerlitz* that both allude to mythological tales and puzzles, and also – through their repetition – form linguistic or syntactic 'bundles of relations'. Sebald spoke of the influence of nineteenth-century writers such as Adalbert Stifter and Gottfried Keller, both of whom employed techniques of symbolism and prefiguration in their novellas.[28] The repeated symbols we see in *Austerlitz* are, however, something else. Sebald said of symbols that 'if they are any good at all they are usually multivalent. They are simply there to give you a sense that there must be something of significance here at that point, but what it is and what the significance is, is entirely a different matter.'[29] The point I want to make here is about their repetitive nature. There are several linguistic patterns that are more akin to the leitmotif structure used by Wagner and beloved of Thomas Mann, both of whom employed it in the telling of myths, than they are of the symbolic and prefigurative order of the nineteenth-century writers who influenced Sebald. Sebald's repetition of certain words and images throughout *Austerlitz* form 'syntactic bundles of relations' through linguistic echoes: the repetition emphasises the narrative structure but does so subtly through words and images rather than characters, events, names, relations, as in Lévi-Strauss's model.

There are three motifs in particular that relate to mythic themes. Many critics have discussed the labyrinthine form and content of Sebald's prose, and the way in which it links to his modernist precursors, such as Kafka and Mann.[30] In these discussions, labyrinths are

seen as metaphors for disorientation, entrapment, or impossible quests. What I want to emphasise is both the specific resonance of the labyrinth in the context of myth and also the way in which it is part of a wider pattern of motifs throughout the novel. Austerlitz repeatedly describes spaces as labyrinths (47, 67, 290, 315, 382, 412; different translations are used throughout the English). Like Daedalus the architect who built the labyrinth housing the mythical minotaur, Austerlitz devotes his life to the study of places and architecture. And like Theseus who must find and fight the minotaur, Austerlitz repeatedly finds himself negotiating labyrinths, but he has no thread with which he may escape. These two mythic references via the labyrinth motif throw a strange light on Austerlitz's agency, positing him both as architect of his own misery, but also as failed hero of a form of 'overcoming the monster' plot.[31] The labyrinth is perhaps less significant as an isolated image than in the context of other related motifs.

The second motif in the mythic trio is that of attempted decipherment ('entziffern', 305, 338, 359, 370), attempts that become associated with death. Austerlitz has a dream in which he attempts to *decipher* the impossibly small print of a newspaper death announcement, he has to *decipher* the unfamiliar German language of H. G. Adler's descriptions of the Theresienstadt ghetto, he tries to *decipher* the impossibly fast digits showing the milliseconds on the Nazi propaganda video of Theresienstadt (almost all of the subjects of which were subsequently murdered, he notes), and he seeks to *decipher* the indistinct words on a gravestone in the Cimetière de Montparnasse in Paris, which read 'morts en déportation'. The associations with death given to all mentions of 'deciphering' suggest the futility of such attempts. Though they might provide a greater degree of understanding – although this too is doubtful in the contexts of dreams, filmic time codes, and gravestones – the 'answer' to such codes remains incapable of being resurrected; even cracking such codes will change nothing.

The third motif in this line is that of puzzles. The notion of 'Rätsel' (puzzle) recurs throughout the novel. Unlike labyrinths and ciphers, puzzles in *Austerlitz* are found in more innocuous locations with more benign associations. The first is a crossword clue, which Austerlitz hears while standing in a bookshop in London: 'One way to live cheaply and without tears […] Oh, it's rent free!' (209) The second refers to the reappearance of two photographs of Agáta and Austerlitz which Věra discovers hidden between the pages of *Colonel Chabert* (264). The third is not a puzzle in the conventional meaning of the word, but Austerlitz reads it as one. As he stands in the town of Theresienstadt, looking in the window of a shop bearing the name 'Antikos Bazar', he observes,

> daß ich mich von ihnen lange nicht losreißen konnte und, die Stirne gegen die kalte Scheibe gepreßt, die hundert verschiedenen Dinge studierte, als müßte aus irgendeinem von ihnen, oder aus ihrem Bezug zueinander, eine eindeutige Antwort sich ableiten lassen auf die vielen, nicht auszudenkenden Fragen, die mich bewegten (282-3).

> (that it was a long time before I could tear myself away from staring at the hundreds of different objects, my forehead pressed against the cold window, as if one of them or their relationship with each other must provide an unequivocal answer to the many questions I found it impossible to ask in my mind (274-5))

The attempt to read meaning into these objects, seeing them as somehow holding a clue to his complex and urgent questions, is connected to the motif of the labyrinth. In Greek mythology, Daedalus was called upon to construct an impossibly intricate labyrinth, from which no one could escape. In Homer's telling of the myth, Daedalus refers, however, not only to the man but also – via the cognate daidala – to finely crafted objects. So it is not merely mazes that need to be unravelled, but also objects that must be decoded.

This constructs a model for the book as a whole, namely that Austerlitz's searches for answers in the reflectivity of shop windows, or the echo of the Kindertransport children he

hears on the radio, or – perhaps especially – in the quests for the face and eyes of his mother, indicate a desire not only to see but also to be seen, a desire to enter into a dialogue, a reciprocal exchange with another subjectivity, another living agent who is still there to participate. Austerlitz's eyes are so focussed on the ghosts of the past that the present remains an impenetrable labyrinth filled with invisible subjects and indecipherable objects. In the narrator's re-telling of Austerlitz's telling of Věra's sense of amputation after the deportation of Austerlitz's parents, the phrase searching 'nach abgerissenen Fäden' appears (296) (to pick up broken threads (288)). In this version of the labyrinth, Ariadne's thread is torn and provides no means of escape.

The structure of repetition that occurs throughout *Maus* and *Austerlitz* operates both at the level of content and at the level of emplotment. The discordance between these layers emphasises the complexity of narrative enmeshment in the second generation attempts to piece together an irretrievable past.

2. SUBVERTING THE MYTH

Representing the incomprehensible horror of the Holocaust in narrative poses a challenge in multiple respects. Dominick LaCapra points out that Nazi crimes were unique in terms of the subjective perspectives of those who experienced them and in terms of their unprecedented extremity, but, he adds, 'they will be compared to other events insofar as comparison is essential for any attempt to understand'.[32] A well-known survivor of the Holocaust, Primo Levi, writes in *The Drowned and the Saved* of the prisoners' dream that they survive to tell their experience but that no one believes them.[33] In the context of narrative, emplotment, as Aristotle told us, is a way of making sense of the senseless happenings of life.[34] One of the possibilities afforded by emplotment, and specifically by the narrativisation of traumatic experience, is that of cathartic release. As Katharina Gerstenberger and Tanja Nusser write: Aristotle's discussion of catharsis 'denotes the purification of the audience through emotional

engagement'.[35] On closer inspection, it becomes apparent that Spiegelman and Sebald do not simply and straightforwardly shape their individual stories into mythic moulds, but instead they subtly undercut and ironise these mythic references. This prevents the possibility of structural predictability or cathartic release.

Although the works both reference mythic stories, neither one quite allows resolution. *Maus*'s allusions to all manner of mythological heroes find them confounded. First, in the relative present that depicts the ongoing relationship between Vladek and Artie, Artie relates a scene that alludes to Judeo-Christian mythology, and in particular to a gesture of ritual importance. On one of his visits to his father, Artie discovers that Vladek has taken away his coat and thrown it in the bin. Vladek then presents Artie with a new, brightly patterned but oversized coat. This subtly echoes the story of Joseph and his coat of many colours, given to him by his father. But Artie's response undermines the scene and subverts any accord with Vladek's gesture: 'Look, dad, you can't do this to me. I'm over 30 years old. I choose my own clothes!' (71) Artie quickly disavows the ritual element of this act and its mythic allusion. Second, in the Greco-Roman mythological tradition, Vladek's emphatic echoes of Herculean feats are disrupted when he manages to avoid Hercules's fate. Hercules finally meets his end by wearing a poisoned shirt. Vladek however has the ingenious idea of bargaining for a second shirt in Auschwitz, which he washes and keeps meticulously clean. When it comes to the lice inspection, he pulls out this clean shirt, demonstrates that it is lice-free, and is thus allowed a ration of food rather than being left to starve to death. He effectively reverses the fate of Hercules. Vladek's closing words in the novel – 'More I don't need to tell you. We were both very happy, and lived happy, happy ever after' (296) – also signal a departure from the tragic form despite the emphatically tragic content with Anja's suicide, thus denying the possibility of cathartic release. Yet almost immediately this too is subverted as Spiegelman highlights Vladek's confusion of names, wrongly referring to Artie

as the son who in fact perished, Richieu, thus undermining Vladek's narrative authority; Vladek has the final word, but it is the final word of an unreliable narrator.

As critics have noted, the allusions to Odysseus in *Austerlitz* also avoid traditional resolution. Austerlitz does not find his home, marry his Penelope, see his mother, and ascend to the throne. Instead, the novel seems to tell the story of Odysseus in reverse. Where *Maus* turns the tragic ending into a spuriously happy resolution, *Austerlitz* does the opposite. In derailing the mythic plots, both avoid the possibility of either catharsis or happy resolution but locate themselves uneasily in between.

But it is also at the level of form that Sebald and Spiegelman add an ironic subversion of their own nods to myth. In the scenes in *Maus* depicting the most palpably mythic allusions – namely the impossibly fast cleaning of the stables (like Hercules) and Vladek's claim that he had to 'move mountains' (like Heracles) – Spiegelman's artistic style subtly changes (54; 58). Vice's observation that the panels depicting the past are typically 'more shadowy' than those in the relative present can be refined.[36] In these two mythic scenes the prisoners of war – the mice – retreat so much into shadow that they merge together as one homogeneous, repetitive black shape, distinguishable from one another only by their outlines. The background becomes a cross hatch pattern of indeterminate shadow. This, I would argue, creates a style strongly reminiscent of ancient Greek painting of the archaic period, which typically depicted mythic scenes in black blocks of patterns, often repetitive in shape, against a terracotta background, such as those prevalently seen on Greek pottery. When Vladek talks of killing the German solider, it is also Artie's artistic *depiction* of the event that elides it strongly with Hercules' slaying of the Nemean lion – it is Artie, not Vladek, who depicts the soldier as a ferocious feline. It is not simply Vladek's self-aggrandisement that contributes to the mythologization of his narrative, but also Artie's creative hand, seemingly supporting Vladek's version of his life. But, by drawing attention to the creative aspect of the narrative construction, and furthermore by doing this specifically with reference to myth, Spiegelman

adds a theatrical angle to Vladek's tale, thus undercutting the mythic parallel. This complicates Vice's suggestion that 'not only […] are time and space inseparable […] but so are form and content' because it is in the ways in which form and content diverge that the subtlest meanings are to be found.[37]

In *Austerlitz* we see a different kind of divergence between form and content, if it is plausible to consider the images as part of the form rather than the content. Where we noted specific linguistic repetitions above, there exist too oblique echoes in the images embedded in *Austerlitz*. Certain patterns are self-evident – repeated images of doorways, railways, etc. But there are other subtler echoes that leave a trace of what has gone before. Jacobs notes the pattern created by the dismantled clock that forms two spheres, one dark, one light, and the snooker balls that resemble an eclipse later in the novel, which create a stark visual echo (148; 158-9).[38] There is a trace too of the childhood photo of Jacques Austerlitz in costume, which forms a white triangular shape with his cape flowing to the side, in the photo of a shop window in Theresienstadt displaying a porcelain horse and riders which form a similar white triangular pattern (266; 284). The shop window reflects Austerlitz's face which forms a ghostly echo of the young Austerlitz in the same part of the photo. But these two photos also demonstrate the complex overlapping narrative layers in the novel. Although the face reflected in the shop window is purportedly that of Austerlitz, it in fact shows Sebald, who visually bears a strong similarity to Austerlitz's description and the various photos of him.[39] They form a visual equivalent of the repeated refrain, 'sagte Věra, sagte Austerlitz', reminding the reader of the multiple removes in transmission and the nebulous boundaries between the narrative levels.

There are also repeated images of star shaped patterns recurring in maps, ceilings, floors, stairs, spanning the ages (26; 66; 221; 336-7 (18; 58; 213; 328-9)). The celestial imagery appears subjugated into these man-made, architectural diagrams and their repetition highlights the sense of enclosure that the combination provokes. Where Lévi-Strauss

proposes that repetition serves to make the structure of a myth apparent, the repetition of images does not add a structural solidity, because each image carries very different associations (unlike the linguistic patterns discussed above).

We thus have a third category beyond that of the 'bundles of relations' of events, and the linguistic motifs with common associations, and here find subtle, often barely palpable echoes of shapes we have seen before. In this instance, it is much harder to discern a common thread. The inverted allusion to the Odysseus myth and the linguistic motifs give a solid sense of structure, and, according to John J. White, such allusions allow a form of 'prefiguration' and 'hence anticipate the plot in a number of ways'.[40] But no such prefiguration is afforded through the pictorial echoes. Instead, the pattern appears faint, erratic, often merely a trace of its precursor. This disrupts the patterns of repetition constructed through linguistic echoes and supports the reversal of the mythic allusion, by leaving us – much like Austerlitz – desperately searching for clues but finding ourselves in an impenetrable maze with no thread to guide us through.

3. THE LIMITS OF VISION

The mythological references and patterns constructed in *Maus* and *Austerlitz* occur on different narrative levels: both works tell stories with multiple temporal layers and multiple narrative perspectives. In *Austerlitz* in particular the perspectives frequently blur together. Both works share an emphasis on vision that is not found in other works that represent the Holocaust through the use of mythology. Indeed, as J. J. Long observes, other texts that use family snaps as 'a starting point for narrative mediations' do not present the actual images but simply describe them.[41] *Maus* and *Austerlitz* focus on the question of how we can 'see' experiences that are not our own; and how attempts to envision these experiences may help us better understand them. Although one is fiction and one is a form of memoir, *Austerlitz* and *Maus* are both stories told by people who were not there, who did not live directly

through the horrors of the Holocaust, but who have lived in its shadow and seek to understand the experience of its victims. What they attempt to show us is that which cannot be seen or imagined. Despite the visual character of these works – indeed in contexts and forms where one might least expect it (a comic book about the Holocaust? A novel about lost lives which mainly shows pictures of buildings?) – both emphasise the limits of vision. The significance of vision as well as the emphasis placed on what cannot be seen or imagined works in complex interplay with the mythological references in these two works. But text and image do not always work in union, and this disunity uncovers the disparity between the different narrative levels particularly in reference to myth.

This emphasis on the limits of vision complicates Marianne Hirsch's concept of 'post-memory', used in relation to 'the child of the survivor whose life is dominated by memories of what preceded his/her birth'.[42] Hirsch discusses this with particular reference to two photographs in *Maus*, that of Artie's older brother Richieu, whom he never knew because he died during the Holocaust, and that of Vladek in a concentration camp uniform, taken, as Vladek says, in 'a photo place what had a *camp* uniform – a new and clean one – to make souvenir photos' (294, emphasis in the original). But as both *Maus* and *Austerlitz* simultaneously emphasise attempts to see and the failure to do so, the notion of 'post-memory' requires the added consideration of the creative act. Hirsch says: 'Like all pictures, the photos in *Maus* represent what no longer is. But they also represent what has been and what has been violently destroyed. And they represent the life that was no longer to be and that, against all odds, nevertheless continues to be.'[43] The emphatically artificial, even sinister nature of Vladek's retroactive 'souvenir' camp photo, particularly in the context of a comic book full of animals depicting the experience of the Holocaust, reminds us yet again of the creative hand of the author. Victoria Elmwood suggests that 'Spiegelman uses the visual terrain of *Maus* to envision the graphic depiction of mediation itself, encouraging a more complete understanding of the phenomenon of postmemory and of the blind areas created by

broad historical narratives.'[44] But unlike the photographs of the family acquaintances discussed by Hirsch, Vladek's photo in camp uniform is not simply a fetishized object standing in for a lack. Indeed, Artie did not seem to be aware of its existence until Vladek brought it up during their recorded dialogues. In both *Austerlitz* and *Maus*, the storytellers create pictures or imbue them with meaning based on memories. The pictures do not create memories (or 'post-memory'), but rather the attempt to construct memory also elicits the pictures. Even as both writers remind us of the limits of vision, the memories are made visible, traces of the past are projected onto solid forms in the present. Yet the narrators themselves are aware of their artifice.

Towards the beginning of *Maus*, Vladek tells Artie: 'Ever since I got in my left eye the haemorrhaging and the glaucoma, it had to be taken out from me. And now I don't see so well. And now I have a cataract inside my one good eye' (41). An echo of this occurs in *Austerlitz*, but it is the narrator rather than the agent of memory who experiences a sudden loss of sight (54-5). In works that present narrators attempting to *envision* the memories of others, while also placing the reader in the position of viewer, the early emphasis in both works on the literal limits of vision holds a clue to the wider metaphorical operations here. Even if we may not solve the semantic puzzles at the heart of the works, we may be able to decode the narratological puzzles. Sight – literally and metaphorically – is shown to be at best fallible and at worst losable. We are thus presented simultaneously with attempts to see and the mechanical failure to do so.

Both works toy with degrees of disguise and revelation. Most of the time Artie does not distinguish between the layers of witnessing: there is little visual difference between the pictures of dialogue in the present and memories of the past. As W.J.T. Mitchell says, moreover, Spiegelman 'often play[s] with the gutter' – the space beyond the comic panel – 'cutting across it, treating it as a window that can be opened to hang out the laundry', thus further blurring temporal boundaries.[45] On several occasions too further scenes are painted

with no consciously recollecting agent; they are instead conjured from multiply removed hearsay accounts. Perhaps the most notable instances of this are the particularly graphic scenes showing the murder of crying children in Auschwitz (110). Hearsay accounts are placed on a visual par with personal memories, which also operate on a shared level with the narrative act in the relative present. This is an example of what Rick Iadonisi calls the 'temporal seepage' of *Maus*.[46] Vice observes that this 'temporal seepage' also 'occurs in reverse': 'The present uncannily intrudes backwards into the past, again sharing with it a cartoon frame, as Artie the narrator tells the reader of his aesthetic dilemmas and choices'.[47] Vice sees this temporal merging on the level of content as reflected obliquely in form, where 'literally greater shading […] characterizes those sections of *Maus* that are set during the war'.[48] In this scene depicting the murder of children, the 'shadowy' effect has particular impact. Not only does it occur mainly in shadow, but the child's head is beyond the frame, so neither the murderous guard nor the murdered child appear at this moment as animals. There is no mitigating visual remove, but instead both perpetrator and victim appear in their physically most human forms.

In *Austerlitz* the use of photographs continually lends the narrative an aura of authenticity. Austerlitz himself follows the photographs as clues to his own past and the lives of his parents. There are five photos that potentially depict either Austerlitz or his mother. These photos help flesh out a past and create a fluid temporality for Austerlitz's own narrative, showing him as a teenager and as a child, as well as imbuing his mother with a kind of lost presence and a sense of agency and subjectivity as she returns the camera's stare. And yet, the most notable shared aspect of these five photos is their artifice. Every single one denotes precisely a *lack* of authenticity and reality. Austerlitz as a teenager poses in a photograph of the school rugby team, wearing the standard sports kit, and yet appears not as himself but as Dafydd Elias – the Welsh name and identity given to him upon his arrival from the Kindertransport (102). Similarly, the photo of him as a child is in costume, where he

accompanied his mother to a masked ball (267). Of Agáta, the three photos are even more emphatically theatrical. The first and only one which undoubtedly shows Agáta captures her in costume and on stage during one of her theatre productions (265). The second and most disturbing is a still from the Nazi propaganda film, made in Theresienstadt to deceive the Red Cross before almost every person shown in it was murdered (358). Austerlitz believes that a woman in the film could be his mother. The third photo is that of the professional headshot of an actress, but again it does not unequivocally show her: he stumbled on 'die unbeschriftete Photographie einer Schauspielerin' who 'mit meiner verdunkelter Erinnerung an die Mutter übereinzustimmen schien' (360-1) (the photograph of an anonymous actress who seemed to resemble my dim memory of my mother (353)). All of these photos present subjectivities that have become objectified, roles that have been imposed, agencies and narratives that have been undermined, subsumed or destroyed. If we as readers attempt to use these photos as narrative clues – echoing Austerlitz's own project – then we might find a mirror held up to our undertaking: we look for lives and meaning but ultimately discover fiction and artifice.

Yet to leave it at that would be to miss the point. Austerlitz's belief that the woman in the still of the propaganda film is his mother is not made less meaningful by the likelihood that it is in fact *not* his mother. It constructs instead a metonymic project that echoes the overall story about quests for meaning. Whether or not she can be matched to this face does not change the fact that his mother was murdered in the fiction of the book or that the woman shown in the film was murdered in the reality of the Holocaust. The link – spurious or not – is what opens up the space for subjectivity, empathy and humanity. In *Maus*, Vladek tells Artie the story of his older brother's death, prefacing it with, 'we only found out much later' (111). Artie's discovery of the details of the compassionate killing of his brother Richieu by the woman looking after him rather than allowing him to be taken to Auschwitz to be gassed also occurs 'much later'. This account and the pictures of the guardian, Tosha, sweating fiercely as she resigns herself to the decision to kill the three children in her care, and the

picture of the children shown as sweet and trusting little mice playing in the background, are not diminished in their impact by the multiple removes in telling or the explicit artifice in representation.

Both Spiegelman and Sebald emphasise the inadequacy and distance of attempted mimicry, but in doing so they highlight both the limits of vision and the urgency of quests for subjective meaning. Both works suggest that our powers of vision may be limited and that the objects of our gaze may be artificial, but that it is in our attempts to see, to envision and to understand that meaning can be found.

SPURIOUS ENDINGS AND CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

In both *Maus* and *Austerlitz*, form and content appear to diverge. Both works nod to mythic stories in terms of narrative content, but then patterns of imagery undermine these allusions. This disruption reminds us of the instability of the creative construction, thereby undercutting the solidity, circularity and universality of the mythic moulds they appear to follow. Where the prefigurative possibilities of mythopoeic structures might afford narrative resolution and emotional catharsis, the subverted endings of the mythic echoes and the disjointed forms of the depictions leave both works unresolved and unresolvable.

It seems almost inappropriate to conclude a discussion of works whose own conclusions leave us hanging. But perhaps this is the point. Both *Maus* and *Austerlitz* in their visual forms appear to foreground the possibility of viewing, thus inviting the chance for interpretation, decipherment and comprehension. But this possibility is spurious and no sooner have they invited us to view with the characters than they remind us of the limits of doing so. Mythological allusions might move these works into a fixed narrative framework with archetypal characters and prefigured endings. But Spiegelman and Sebald do more than this. Their mythological allusions do not allow prefiguration because they subvert traditional endings. The structural solidity afforded by mythic echoes and linguistic repetition is

disrupted with irony when the particular modes of their respective uses of images are at odds with the content. Spiegelman's potential nod to forms of ancient Greek painting in the strongest allusions to myth in *Maus* reminds us of his hand as the creative director of the work; this may be (auto)biography but it is also a creative construct, reflecting multiple subjectivities. The style that recalls Greek myth in painterly form draws ever greater attention to the Greek myth in linguistic content. Heightened awareness of the mythologizing act calls attention to its instability – and this is perhaps more suitable a word than artifice. In *Austerlitz*, the leitmotifs of labyrinths, puzzles and attempts at decipherment support the nods to myth at the level of story. The ghostly echoes of one picture in another scattered throughout the novel at first lend credence to the repetitive structure of myth and motif. But on closer inspection, many of these echoes seem to be at best faint and at worst lacking in logic. *Maus* and *Austerlitz* thus complicate Marianne Hirsch's concept of 'post-memory': both show lack, holes, loss; yet they do not use objects to fill the gaps in memory, but rather memory – often vicarious – constructs the objects that point back to these gaps. They then offer a potential answer to Saul Friedländer's question about whether certain experiences push beyond the limits of representation: a comparative analysis of Spiegelman's *Maus* and Sebald's *Austerlitz* suggests that by employing narrative frameworks while simultaneously highlighting, subverting and challenging these frameworks, the authors succeed in indicating the difficulties of envisioning the incomprehensible. Pointing towards but denying access to this incomprehensibility is perhaps the closest mimetic representation can get.

---

[1] Saul Friedländer, 'Introduction', in *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the 'Final Solution'*, ed. by Saul Friedländer (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 1–21 (p. 3); italics in the original.

[2] Tom De Haven, 'Comics', *The New York Times*, 31 May 1998

<http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/05/31/reviews/980531.31comicst.html> [accessed 25 May 2016].

[3] Art Spiegelman, 'A Problem of Taxonomy', *The New York Times*, 29 December 1991

<http://www.nytimes.com/1991/12/29/books/l-a-problem-of-taxonomy-37092.html> [accessed 25 May 2016].

[4] Claude Lévi-Strauss, 'The Structural Study of Myth', in *Structural Anthropology*, trans. by Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (New York: Basic Books, 1963), pp. 206–31.

[5] Michael Silverblatt, 'A Poem of an Invisible Subject (Interview)', in *The Emergence of Memory: Conversations with W. G. Sebald*, ed. by Lynne Sharon Schwartz (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2007), pp. 77–86 (p. 80).

[6] Deane Blackler, *Reading W. G. Sebald: Adventure and Disobedience* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2007), p. 176.

[7] Dora Osborne, *Traces of Trauma in W. G. Sebald and Christoph Ransmayr* (London: Legenda, 2013), p. 154.

[8] Carolin Duttlinger, 'Traumatic Photographs: Remembrance and the Technical Media in W. G. Sebald's *Austerlitz*', in *W. G. Sebald - A Critical Companion*, ed. by J. J. Long and Anne Whitehead (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), pp. 155–71 (p. 157).

[9] Arlene Fish Wilner, '"Happy, Happy Ever After": Story and History in Art Spiegelman's *Maus*', in *Considering Maus: Approaches to Art Spiegelman's 'Survivor's Tale' of the Holocaust*, ed. by Deborah R. Geis (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2003), pp. 105–21 (pp. 113–14).

[10] Leon Burnett, Sanja Bahun, and Roderick Main, *Myth, Literature, and the Unconscious* (London: Karnac, 2013), p. xii.

[11] Robert A. Segal, 'Myth and Literature', in *Myth and Subversion in the Contemporary Novel*, ed. by José Manuel Losada Goya and Marta Guirao Ochoa (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), pp. 23–37 (p. 31).

[12] Lévi-Strauss, pp. 210–11.

[13] Lévi-Strauss, p. 224.

[14] Lévi-Strauss, p. 229.

[15] Paul Cantz, 'The Slaughter of Isaac: Oedipal Themes in the Akedah Narrative Revisted', in *Myth, Literature, and the Unconscious*, ed. by Leon Burnett, Sanja Bahun, and Roderick Main (London: Karnac, 2013), pp. 59–80.

[16] Art Spiegelman, *Maus* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2003); all citations refer to this edition.

[17] Wilner, pp. 113–14.

[18] Lévi-Strauss, p. 212.

[19] Lévi-Strauss, p. 209.

[20] Sue Vice, '"It's about Time": The Chronotope of the Holocaust in Art Spiegelman's *Maus*', in *The Graphic Novel*, ed. by Jan Baetens (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001), pp. 47–60 (p. 48).

[21] Vice, p. 48.

[22] Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1987), p. xi.

[23] Amir Eshel, 'Against the Power of Time: The Poetics of Suspension in W. G. Sebald's *Austerlitz*', *New German Critique*, 88 (2003), 71–96 (p. 78).

[24] Carol Jacobs, *Sebald's Vision* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), p. 104.

[25] Jacobs, p. 220.

[26] Russell J. A. Kilbourn, 'Architecture and Cinema: The Representation of Memory in W. G. Sebald's Austerlitz', in *W. G. Sebald: A Critical Companion*, ed. by J. J. Long and Anne Whitehead (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), pp. 140–54 (p. 150).

[27] W. G. Sebald, *Austerlitz*, 4th edn (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 2008), p. 102; W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz*, trans. by Anthea Bell (London: Penguin, 2001), p. 94; all citations refer to these editions.

[28] Silverblatt, p. 77.

[29] Eleanor Wachtel, 'Ghost Hunter (Interview)', in *The Emergence of Memory: Conversations with W. G. Sebald*, ed. by Lynne Sharon Schwartz (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2007), pp. 37–62 (p. 53).

[30] See for example: Nina Pelikan Straus, 'Sebald, Wittgenstein, and the Ethics of Memory', *Comparative Literature*, 61.1 (2009), 43–53 (p. 50); John Zilcosky, 'Lost and Found: Disorientation, Nostalgia, and Holocaust Melodrama in Sebald's "Austerlitz"', *MLN*, 121.3 (2006), 679–98 (p. 684); Simona Mitroiu, 'Narrative Identity and Trauma: Sebald's Memory Landscape', *The European Legacy*, 19.7 (2014), 883–900 (p. 892); Laura García-Moreno, 'Strange Edifices, Counter-Monuments: Rethinking Time and Space in W.G. Sebald's *Austerlitz*', *Critique*, 54.4 (2013), 360–79 (p. 373).

[31] Christopher Booker, *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories* (London: Bloomsbury, 2004).

[32] Dominick LaCapra, 'Representing the Holocaust: Reflections on the Historians' Debate', in *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the 'Final Solution'*, ed. by Saul Friedländer (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 108–27 (p. 111).

[33] Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, trans. by Raymond Rosenthal (London: Michael Joseph, 1988), pp. 1–2.

[34] Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. by Malcolm Heath (London: Penguin, 1996).

[35] Katharina Gerstenberger and Tanja Nusser, 'Introduction', in *Catastrophe and Catharsis: Perspectives on Disaster and Redemption in German Culture and Beyond*, ed. by Katharina Gerstenberger and Tanja Nusser (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2015), pp. 1–16 (p. 6).

[36] Vice, p. 54.

[37] Vice, p. 47.

[38] Jacobs, p. 143.

[39] See for example: Emily Miller Budick, 'Mourning and Melancholia in W. G. Sebald's *Austerlitz*', in *The Subject of Holocaust Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), pp. 209–27 (p. 215).

[40] John J. White, *Mythology in the Modern Novel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 11.

[41] J. J. Long, 'History, Narrative, and Photography in W. G. Sebald's "Die Ausgewanderten"', *The Modern Language Review*, 98.1 (2003), 117–37 (p. 117).

[42] Marianne Hirsch, 'Family Pictures: *Maus*, Mourning, and Post-Memory', *Discourse*, 15.2 (1992), 3–29 (p. 8).

[43] Hirsch, p. 9.

[44] Victoria Elmwood, '"Happy, Happy Ever after": The Transformation of Trama between the Generations in Art Spiegelman's "Maus: A Survivor's Tale"', *Biography*, 27.4 (2004), 691–720 (p. 718).

[45] W.J.T. Mitchell, 'Image X Text', in *The Future of Text and Image: Collected Essays on Literary and Visual Conjunctures*, ed. by Ofra Amihay and Lauren Walsh (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), pp. 1–11 (p. 5).

[46] Rick Iadonisi, 'Bleeding History and Owning His [Father's] Story: *Maus* and Collaborative Autobiography', *CEA Critic*, 57.1 (1994), 41–56 (p. 45).

[47] Vice, p. 54.

[48] Vice, pp. 53–54.