2

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From Comics to the Graphic Novel

William Hogarth to Will Eisner

In this chapter, we will discuss the nature of the graphic novel and how it developed from the comics. The graphic novel has little in common with traditional comic books which in the 1950s in America, for instance, largely consisted of the adventures of Superman and Batman, *Tales from the Crypt*, and *Archie*. For one thing, graphic novels are as thick as regular prose books, and they are printed on better paper and with better ink than usual comic books. Also, even though they are called graphic "novels," implying that they deal only with fiction, the term graphic novel includes not only fiction, but also serious non-fictional historical and political issues, and graphic novels are often autobiographical or biographical. If they do feature superheroes, it is a new kind of superhero – like Frank Miller's portrayal of Batman as the Dark Knight – psychologically complex, often neurotic, and self-questioning. Clearly, something significant has happened to comic books, which in the form of the graphic novel have become something much more like full-length prose novels or non-fictional prose works. In contrast to the popular mass-market comics, which have usually been severely restricted in both form and content by commercial constraints, the graphic novel is an extended comic book freed of all restrictions on form and content and capable of tackling all of the issues that writing and art for adults have always dealt with, using all of the literary and artistic resources available to any writer or artist. But it is a form that is clearly based on the techniques of comics, and readers have to read both words and pictures to make sense of it. Moreover, as Scott McCloud has written, comics, because they are composed not only of individual panels, but of empty spaces, or gutters, between the panels, force the reader to fill in those empty spaces with his or her imagination.[1] So this is both a traditional, highly interactive form that relies on techniques developed over the last two-and-a-half centuries in order to entertain and amuse, and a new form that is capable of using those techniques and newer, more sophisticated ones, in the service of the intellect.

26

The comics medium as we know it – and here I exclude hieroglyphics and cave drawings, which are sometimes cited as the origins of comics – began not in America, but in England in the eighteenth century. There William Hogarth, James Gillray, and Thomas Rowlandson were creating very interesting artworks containing some elements of what would become the comics: Hogarth, for instance, often shows the decline of a respectable member of society into a social outcast in a series of engravings – as in his "A Harlot's Progress" and "A Rake's Progress" – which are sequential panels. Similarly, Gillray, in his "John Bull's Progress," showed in four panels the journey of a citizen representing England itself – John Bull – from a life as a healthy and happy man to a soldier returning home with many wounds because of foreign wars. And Gillray in other features actually used word balloons within the panels. Rowlandson, in his illustrations to William Combe's *Tour of Dr. Syntax*, was the first to use the same character in several narratives with panels.

In addition to these three wonderful eighteenth-century proto-comics artists, we should not overlook Laurence Sterne's great eighteenth-century novel, *Tristram Shandy*. Unlike most illustrated books – such as Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, which has been illustrated numerous times – the visual elements in *Tristram Shandy* are not added on or extraneous interpretations of aspects of the book by people other than the book's creator. Rather, in *Tristram Shandy* the visuals (for instance, a completely black page and a completely blank page, as well as a group of asterisks and other typographical aberrations) are included by the author himself, are intrinsic to the pages on which they appear, and are absolutely essential to an understanding of the book. If the reader skips the illustrations in *Treasure Island* he or she will not miss any part of the story or its characters. If, however, the reader skips the visuals in *Tristram Shandy*, he or she is definitely missing parts of its story and its meaning. In other words, there is a case to be made that at least in its visual parts, featuring unusual typography, *Tristram Shandy* is not simply an illustrated book, but rather a proto-graphic novel. William Blake, the eighteenth-century poet, must also be mentioned in this context, because his poems, such as "The Sick Rose" (1794), were often accompanied by his own illustrations, and these illustrations and the texts modify one another, and neither would be as powerful if printed alone.

So the eighteenth century in England is crucial to the development of the comics. But the next major and indeed defining step takes place not in England but in Switzerland in the early nineteenth century, at the hands of Rodolphe Töpffer, a schoolteacher and later professor of literature at the University of Geneva. In his *Histoire de Monsieur Jabot* and other stories created in the 1820s and 1830s, for the first time we see a narrative

rendered in dynamic and sketchy rather than full-bodied drawings, and which uses panels of different sizes. Because of this, Töpffer's stories look much like many of the comics we know today. The use of a series of pictures, word balloons, the continuous focus on a single character, differing panel sizes, and sketchy drawings, and indeed the use of caricature – as pioneered by Hogarth, Gillray, Rowlandson, and Töpffer – all become part of the form of the comics. That form is further developed in the nineteenth century by the magazines *Le Charivari* in France, *Punch* (which displayed the cartoons of John Tenniel, known for his illustrations to *Alice in Wonderland*, among other brilliant artists) and *Judy* (in which, as Alan and Laurel Clark point out, Charles Ross' character Ally Sloper began, and which, according to Roger Sabin, had a circulation of 350,000 per week at its peak) in England, and by a creator like Wilhelm Busch in Germany, whose very popular comic *Max und Moritz*, about two naughty boys, is largely responsible for the connection between comics and children.[2] This association was followed up in American comics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by such pioneer creators as R. F. Outcault in his *Hogan's Alley* (about a slum child) and *Buster Brown* (about a rich kid), Lyonel Feininger in his *Wee Willie Winkie's World*, and Rudolph Dirks in his *Katzenjammer Kids* (see Judith O'Sullivan for a full discussion of these and other American comics artists).[3] While amusing, this connection between children and comics has also helped keep comics from being thought of as a serious genre of literature and art. The work of Outcault, Feininger, and Dirks is all part of the first period of American comics, which lasts from approximately 1890 to 1930, and which was started by newspaper barons Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst in New York City to boost circulation among an immigrant audience which did not yet know English well. Because they were considered entertainment for immigrants and children, and because they began in the newspapers, comics in America, as elsewhere, have too often been ephemeral throwaway productions, whose content has usually been restricted to the innocuous treatment of a limited range of socially acceptable subjects. Despite these commercial restrictions, there always were some truly extraordinary creators even in this early period of American comics. Feininger, for instance, was to become an important Cubist painter as well as a noted comics artist. Winsor McCay, with his *Little Nemo in Slumberland*, created a wonderful surrealistic journey into the dream world, while George Herriman's *Krazy Kat*, detailing an impossible love triangle between a cat, a dog, and a mouse, is rendered in very poetic language and pictures. It is important to note that despite their association with children and restrictions on their content, the comics have often treated important matters, albeit usually mildly and light-heartedly. For instance, in this early period of the

28

American comics, which was a time of massive immigration into the US, the difficulties of new immigrants when trying to fit into American society was a major topic. George McManus' *Bringing Up Father* showed humorously what happened when a simple Irish immigrant workman and his wife became nouveau-riche socialites, while Milt Gross' *Nize Baby* gently satirized his characters' Yiddish-inflected accents.

After the early period from around 1890 to 1930, there comes the second period of the American comics, from 1930 to 1950, during which superheroes were invented and flourished. Again, serious topics were sometimes treated, but this time literally in a masked manner. The development of superheroes in particular was perhaps to be expected in an era of the Great Depression, Al Capone, and then the Second World War. Big and unavoidable social and political issues demanded big characters like Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman and Captain America to handle them, and so the gods were born; and these gods dealt with the problems of crime and conflict and evil – especially Hitler – in a reassuringly straightforward and decisive way, as Christopher Knowles points out in his investigation of superheroes, *Our Gods Wear Spandex*.[4] Undoubtedly there was something very American about these secular gods, who reflected America's conception of itself as a superpower, even or especially in the midst of these troubles.

After the Second World War, attention turned from war to more usual topics such as romance, crime, horror, and sci-fi, with such titles as *Young Romance*, *Crime Does Not Pay*, *Tales from the Crypt*, and *Weird Fantasy* coming into prominence. Because some of this new material was thought to be deleterious to youth, especially by a congressional committee egged on by notorious anti-comics psychologist Fredric Wertham, author of *Seduction of the Innocent*, the Comics Code Authority, a self-regulatory censoring body established by the comic book industry itself in 1954, came into being. No longer could comics show sweat, depict scenes of bloodshed, or even use the words horror or terror in their titles.

Seen in retrospect, this was a fortunate development in the long march of the popular comics toward the graphic novel, because the usual result of censorship – a counter-reaction – occurred during the third period of the comics, which runs from around 1945 through 1975. The magazine *Mad* was born in 1952 as a wacky satirical look at the media and other American institutions. Because he called it a magazine, indicating that it was presumably for adults rather than children, William Gaines, its publisher – whose father Max had invented the comic book in 1933 – had fortunately placed it beyond the scope of the Comics Code Authority. As reading matter for grown-ups (although often read by teenagers and even children too), *Mad* was free of the restrictions on the other comics. Under the editorship of

the great Harvey Kurtzman, *Mad* produced unrestrained satire on American society; everything, including the anti-Communist Joseph McCarthy congressional hearings – which often degenerated into a witch hunt – advertising, and popular films, was fair game for it. And as a result, although *Mad* always stayed more or less within the bounds of good taste, it is one of the important instigators of the 1960s and 1970s cultural revolution.

One aspect of that revolution, inspired in part by *Mad* and the comics censorship code was the advent of counter-culture comix – deliberately spelled with an x as a sign of rebellion against standard social conventions. Sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll formed the basis of many of these revolutionary comix, whose major intention was simply to break as many taboos as possible, as Dez Skinn points out in his *Comix: The Underground Revolution*.[5] Anti-social characters, outrageous satire, overt political pronouncements, and formerly out of bounds topics characterized these comics. Gilbert Shelton's "Little Annie Amphetamine," based on Little Orphan Annie; and Dan O'Neill's *Air Pirates Funnies*, which showed Minnie and Mickey Mouse having sex, are just two of the more famous (or infamous) of these wild productions. O'Neill was sued by Disney and after a long legal battle settled with them, but as Skinn notes, "Unbelievably," after the case was settled, "O'Neill was hired by New York's Disney merchandising art department"; this was perhaps a recognition that a new age had come to the comics.[6] By breaking the ban on the unrestrained treatment of controversial issues that had governed the American popular comics since their inception, these works were freeing the comics from their decades of commercial restrictions as well as the decade of censorship imposed by the Comics Code Authority.

So it had taken the comics over half a century to truly free themselves from commercial and other restrictions, and to open the door for the ascendance of the graphic novel. But we should remember that already in the early twentieth century, in Belgium, Frans Masereel had published many wordless, extended comics narratives in book form. His most famous, *Passionate Journey* (1919), shows the tumultuous pilgrimage through life of an individual man – most likely himself, since the book begins with the engraving of an artist at work – with all of his triumphs and tragedies.[7] The man arrives in a large city by train, walks around it, viewing its various aspects, goes to bed with a prostitute, helps an old lady cross the street, tells stories to children, finds a girl he likes but experiences her death, goes to the beach, drives a car, runs from the rain, goes to a dance, drinks, gets into a fight, goes to church, saves a drowning person, declines an award for that, urinates on the city from a high rooftop, visits Africa, returns to Europe and insults a crowd which then chases him, and finds refuge in a house and then in a forest, where he finally dies and becomes a dancing skeleton. The novel closes

30

with the words of Belgian author Hendrik Conscience, "They shall not tame him." As Thomas Mann writes in his introduction to this book, the protagonist is following his heart beyond all claims of class and other allegiance; he is a free artist. Masereel tells this story in black-and-white wood engravings that are nearly, but not quite, iconic, in that we can recognize the protagonist's face, but it is iconic enough for us to be able to identify with him. Mann calls Masereel's work a film in book form, but in fact, despite its lack of panels on each page, it is what we can now recognize as completely in comics form, in which each page can be seen as a panel in itself. Moreover, because it has no words and there is a large gutter between pages, it draws upon the reader's interactive imagination even more than the comics with text and pictures and several panels on each page do. How the reader interprets a given incident is more wide open than an interpretation of a prose novel or a usual comic.

Masereel's work was taken up by Americans Lynd Ward, who in the 1920s and 1930s drew six complex wordless woodcut novels, sometimes in several colors, and Milt Gross, the author of the comic strip *Nize Baby*, who in 1930 published the humorous, slapstick, and wordless woodcut novel *He Done Her Wrong* (which was subtitled *The Great American Novel*). This could be said to be the silent film era of the graphic novel.

Ward was the creator of *Gods' Man* in 1929, the first woodcut novel by an American, and the first of six that he would draw. *Wild Pilgrimage* (1932), the third, is one of the best. It tells the story of a factory worker who aspires to a less confined life. He wanders, witnesses a lynching, sexually attacks a farmer's wife, runs away and meets and learns from a hermit, and finally undertakes an unsuccessful revolt at his factory, during which he is badly beaten and killed by the police. In the second drawing in the book, a worker holds a hammer and sickle sign as the workers file into the factory, and the revolt seems to be the ultimate and unsuccessful outcome of communist ideology. The protagonist's dreams appear in orange coloring as opposed to the black and white of the other engravings. Essentially, he is trying to reconcile these dreams and his reality, without success. His pilgrimage is wild because it involves violence, some of it caused by him, and because it has no specific direction. No one in the novel, including the protagonist who is outright ugly, appears handsome or pretty, nor do the settings, which are usually dark and menacing or drawn in orange, as if consumed in fire. Often, the protagonist's face is tortured and nowhere does he appear at ease except perhaps when he is tilling the soil. For Ward, life is not a pleasant, pretty, or easy journey, and often does not end in happiness or success. From the first, unlike the popular comics, the graphic novel dealt with serious issues, including the meaning of life itself.
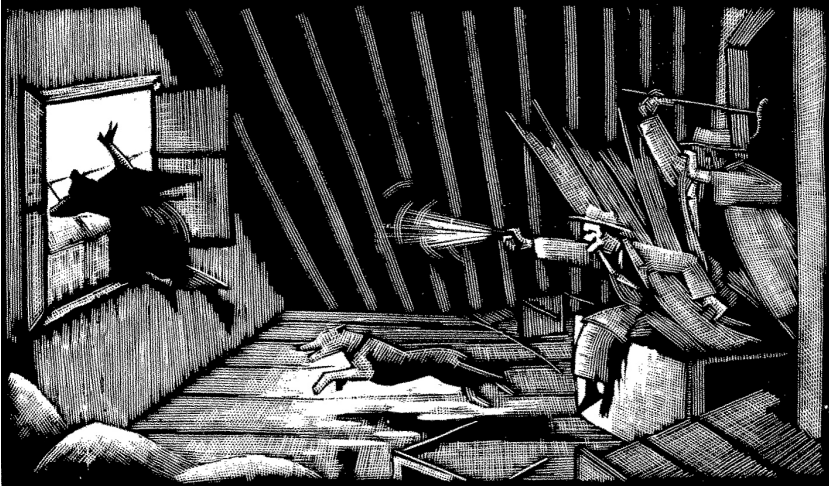
31

Fig. 2.1 The protagonist in Otto Nückel's *Destiny* jumps out of a window to her death as a policeman shoots at her. Eisner has stated that Nückel as well as Frans Masereel and Lynd Ward, other creators of graphic novels without words, were major inspirations for his own work. By permission of Dover Publishing.

Milt Gross' *He Done Her Wrong* (1930) tells the story of love between a frontiersman and a saloon singer, which is interrupted by an unscrupulous robber baron from the city who tells her that the frontiersman is dead and proceeds to marry her. After their marriage falls apart, she seeks work without great success, while the frontiersman finds his way to the city. After missing each other on several occasions, they are reunited, while the rich man is held accountable for his crookedness and exiled to a Middle Eastern land where he serves as a slave for all intents and purposes. The frontiersman, it turns out, rather than the rich man, is the father of the singer's children and they enjoy an idyllic existence together, along with her father. Gross' style is like that of a Sunday comic, very open, iconic, and unrealistic. In his introduction to the volume, Craig Yoe compares Gross' characters to Chaplin and Keaton, and his graphic novel as a whole to "the exaggerated villain-twist-his-mustache melodrama so popular in movies at the time" but "with a sardonic twist that propels the story like a rushing freight train."[8] These two American graphic novels can be seen as the predecessors of the word-and-picture graphic novels that would follow.

Also important is the German Otto Nückel's 1930 wordless woodcut novel *Destiny* (in English translation), showing the sad journey through life of an orphan girl who becomes a prostitute, then a single mother, then a criminal, and finally a suicide while being shot at by the police, experiencing love only once along the way (fig. 2.1).[9] Nückel's work almost does not have a

single smile in it, and the always dark figures and backgrounds underline the sadness of the tale. The protagonist cannot extricate herself from a sea of troubles, which are not her fault. As in Lynd Ward's work, the silence makes the illustrations, drawn in an expressionistic style, even more powerful, and the reader's imagination is even freer than in comics with texts. These wonderful works were percolating below the surface and helped finally produce the graphic novel in word and picture.

In any discussion of the wordless graphic novel, Max Ernst's *Une Semaine de Bonté* (*A Week of Kindness*) must be mentioned. Published in 1934, this surrealistic collage novel captures the psychological undercurrents of sexuality by juxtaposing women and men who have animal heads, women with bat wings with men or other women, water on which some people walk while others drown, and male lions who dominate women, among many other images (fig. 2.2). While none of the major comics artists between 1934 and 1978, when Will Eisner's *A Contract with God* was published, seem to openly acknowledge Ernst's influence on their work, this famous masterpiece is always there in the background, demonstrating how the unconscious can be visibly portrayed and how men and monsters can be combined to form a meaningful character. In Alan Moore's 1987 graphic novel *Watchmen*, the character Dreiberg's essay, "Blood from the Shoulder of Pallas," references Ernst's graphic novel in order to point to the world's mysteries, writing that "When we stare into the catatonic black bead of a Parakeet's eye we must teach ourselves to glimpse the cold, alien madness that Max Ernst perceived when he chose to robe his naked brides in confections of scarlet feather and the transplanted monstrous heads of exotic birds."[10] And in *Epileptic* (2005), David Beauchard is influenced by Ernst's collages to create his own "men with animal heads."[11]

In addition to these well-known wordless graphic novels, the American Giacomo Patri's *White Collar* (1938) and the Canadian Laurence Hyde's *Southern Cross* (1951) also deserve mention. Along with Masereel's and Ward's novels discussed above, they are available in *Graphic Witness: Four Wordless Graphic Novels*, edited by George A. Walker. But there are many more such novels, including works by Werner Gothein, Carl Meffert (also known as Clément Moreau), and James Reid, and they must all be seen as predecessors, albeit often unacknowledged, of the graphic novel. In 1941–43, Charlotte Salomon, while hiding from the Nazis in southern France, created her autobiography from 769 of her paintings with transparent word overlays, and this work, *Life? or Theatre?*, can also be seen as an important precursor of the graphic novel as we know it today.

Although no technical obstacles prevented it from happening earlier, perhaps surprisingly the combination of words and pictures in an extended
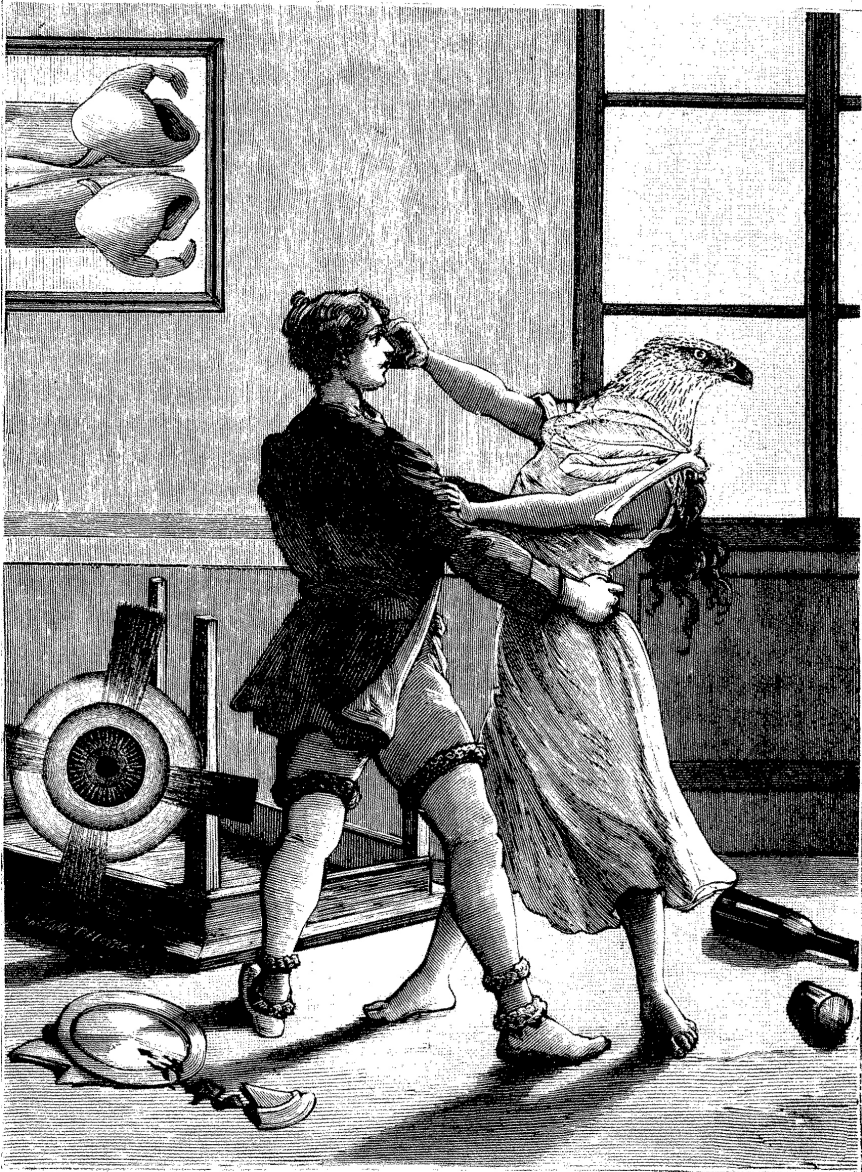
Fig. 2.2 Painter Max Ernst's wordless *Une Semaine de Bonté*, a "surrealistic novel in collage," is also an important precursor of the graphic novel with words. By permission of Dover Publishing.

comic book did not happen until around the 1970s. Although they were not called by that term, which was coined by writer Richard Kyle in 1964, Gil Kane and Archie Goodwin's *Blackmark* (1971), Richard Corben's *Bloodstar* (1976), and Jim Steranko's *Red Tide: A Chandler Novel* (1976), were what we would today call graphic novels.[12] But it was in 1978 that Will Eisner, who had drawn the comic strip *The Spirit* about a masked vigilante crime-fighter (which lasted from 1940 to 1952), and who had said as early as 1941 that the comics could produce a full-scale novel comparable to those written in text alone, came out with the first important graphic novel, *A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories* (1978), using both words and pictures. In his preface to *The Contract with God Trilogy* (2006), Eisner writes that "In 1978, encouraged by the work of the experimental graphic artists Otto Nückel, Frans Masereel and Lynd Ward, who in the 1930s published serious novels told in art without text, I attempted a major work in similar form…I called it a 'graphic novel'."[13] As Mazur and Danner point out, while Eisner's works were not the first works about which the term term graphic novel was used, his "literary ambition and drive to bring serious comics – outside the conventional genres of superhero, science fiction or fantasy – into the broader mainstream did much to popularize the term and to jump-start the re-branding of comics as an art form for grown-ups."[14] Here, in the career of one creator, we see the leap from a popular, cartoony private eye to something far more serious. And something more serious than Dirks' *Katzenjammer Kids* and McManus' *Bringing Up Father*, which treated the American immigrant experience lightly and humorously. His trilogy details the struggles of European immigrants to survive in 1930s New York City. It is serious, it is honest, it is not always pleasant, and it convincingly portrays real people and their day-to-day struggles. Eisner not only drew very expressively but wrote well. Interestingly, he comments about the first novel in the trilogy, *A Contract with God*, that although "no major publisher would touch it at the time, this novel has remained in print for twenty-seven years, and has been published in eleven different languages."[15] This shows the difficulty the graphic novel faced in terms of recognition, and is a tribute to Eisner's persistence and the progress of the graphic novel genre itself.

A Life Force, the second of the novels, like the other two novels in the trilogy reveals the difference between Eisner's approach and that of the traditional comics. Eisner focuses on one Jacob Shtarkah (whose last name means "strong" in Yiddish), who after being commissioned to add a room to a synagogue is unemployed and suffers a heart attack. He also suffers love difficulties when he helps bring an old girlfriend from Germany to New York who soon leaves for Palestine to be with her daughter. He is then reunited with his wife, whom he wanted to divorce. His daughter is in love with a

35

Protestant stockbroker who has fallen on hard times, and Jacob's business with the Italian immigrant Angelo is threatened by their unknowing acceptance of stolen goods. At one point in the story, Jacob sees eye to eye with a cockroach, and although everything works out well for Jacob in the end, he learns that only the "life force," like that of the cockroach, will enable people to survive. As the story ends, he saves a cockroach from extermination. We are clearly out of the realm of the Sunday comics, which were largely confined to the exploits of straightforward, handsome superheroes, light humor, and children's characters. Eisner's very solid, black-and-white drawing style, which is realistic rather than iconic, complements his serious story.

Eisner is not only a pioneer in using the graphic novel medium for fiction, but for autobiography and non-fiction as well. The stories in *A Contract with God* are based on New York neighborhoods that Eisner knew from his youth, and his *To the Heart of the Storm* was described by Eisner himself as "frankly autobiographical."[16] In this work, we see the young Eisner, or Willie, as he heads south as a draftee toward an army base in 1942 during the Second World War, all the while thinking of his parents Sam and Fannie (their real names) and the stories about anti-Semitism which his father told him about his own life in Vienna circa 1910, and which his mother told him about her father arriving in New York in 1880 from Romania. He also remembers his youthful friendship with one Buck, who later revealed himself as an anti-Semite. He also describes other warring national tribes in New York, when Irish and Italian workmen get into a fight, and shows how his mother, while herself Jewish, has prejudices against German Jews. His companion on the train journey, Mahmid, formerly a Turkish Muslim but now an American Christian, understands Willie's problems with prejudice, having suffered it himself. Willie and Mahmid arrive at their base and head off in a line just as a storm, symbolic of the Second World War, is breaking. This autobiography is at once a painful statement about prejudice, and a look at Eisner's own struggle to become a man and an artist. His drawing is realistic and open, with few panels with borders and some large "splash" pages, and this free-flowing style combined with his fluid use of black and white, allows us to witness Willie's frequent transitions from the present to memories of the past, and helps create the convincing honesty of this work.

In *The Plot* (2005), which Eisner completed after twenty years of work just before he died at the age of eighty-seven, he helps develop the non-fictional graphic "novel," in this case by revealing the history of the notoriously anti-Semitic and false *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, a product of the Czarist secret police intended to convince the Czar that the Jews were behind a plot to modernize Russia, and therefore to influence him to cease his own modernizing efforts. In one of the final chapters, titled "1993," Eisner shows

36

himself doing the research for this work, and in a chapter titled "2002," he gives proof of the continued publication of the *Protocols* despite all of the evidence that it was false, including the first unmasking, by British reporter Philip Graves in the London *Times* in 1921, who showed it was a plagiarism of satirist Maurice Joly's attack on Napoleon III of France, as well as a report by Senators Dodd and Keating in 1964 condemning it. He shows Graves comparing actual passages from Joly's work to actual passages from *The Protocols* in order to provide clear proof of the falsity of *The Protocols* and to enable the reader to see that for him or her self. Eisner shows the strong emotions and cunning looks of several of the conspirators against the Czar's modernizing tendency, but when he depicts Mathieu Golovinski, the opportunist who wrote the *Protocols*, and more recent anti-Semites, he refrains from cartoony exaggerations of their faces or an attempt to present them as pure evil. His realistic black-and-white style convinces us that they were simply ill-intentioned people seeking their own good at any price, and that he is telling a true story. Here, as in his earlier work, Eisner deserves praise as the first important graphic novelist, who proved himself capable of creating superb fictional, autobiographical, and historical works, which, as I have pointed out in *The Quest for Jewish Belief and Identity in the Graphic Novel*, were inspired by his own personal experience of growing up in New York City as the son of European Jewish immigrants, as well as by his cognizance of the painful history of the Jews in Europe based at least in part on his parents' testimony.

Following Eisner's example, the graphic novel began to grow in popularity and respect, with Art Spiegelman and Alan Moore, among others, also tackling sophisticated topics, such as Spiegelman's life as the son of Holocaust survivors in his *Maus*, and Moore's science fictional exploration in *Watchmen* of a failed attempt to end war. Whether the subject is neurotic superheroes or adaptations of classic literary works, including Martin Rowson's brilliant parody of T. S. Eliot's poem *The Waste Land*, biographies such as David Mairowitz's and Robert Crumb's life of Franz Kafka, expositions of important non-fictional works such as Sid Jacobson's and Ernie Colón's graphic adaptation of the 9/11 report, or a desperately satirical travel narrative like Guy Delisle's *Pyongyang* (as well as the vast variety of international works discussed by Mazur and Danner in their chapter in this book and in their own book), the graphic novel today has evolved into an exciting literary and artistic genre that is equal to any other genre of literature, art, or film in terms of its range and quality.[17] And like all other genres in these media, it retains its own special characteristics that make it especially compelling to its readers. The graphic novel represents the maturation, after two hundred years, of the work of Hogarth, Gillray, Rowlandson, and Töppfer, as well

as that of Masereel, Ward, Gross, Nückel, and Ernst, and the underground comix artists, and we can only praise all of the wonderful creators who have made this leap possible.

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39

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