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Depiction of the Holocaust in American Literature

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Závěrečná diplomová práce se bude věnovat problematice zobrazení Holocaustu ve vybraných dílech americké literatury.

V úvodní části diplomant stručně nastíní historický kontext tématu, vysvětlí základní pojmy, s nimiž bude pracovat, představí vybraná díla, zařadí je do širšího literárního kontextu (vč. žánrového zařazení) a svůj výběr zdůvodní. Dále přiblíží přístupy tzv. trauma studies a zdůvodní svoji volbu tohoto teoretického rámce.

Jádrem práce pak bude analýza zvolených děl především s ohledem na témata jako trauma, mezigenerační přenos traumatu, rodinné vztahy, paměť, apod. Pojedná rovněž o použitých literárních prostředcích a o vizuální stránce zvoleného grafického románu. Diplomant bude k dílům přistupovat z hlediska teorie traumatu. Závěrem své analýzy shrne a obecněji posoudí, jak díla žánrově odlišná přistupují k problematice vyobrazení Holocaustu.

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Vojtěch Bauer

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## **TITLE**

Depiction of the Holocaust in American Literature

## **ANNOTATION**

This master thesis discusses the depiction of the Holocaust in Art Spiegelman's *Maus* and in Cynthia Ozick's *The Shawl*. The theoretical part of this thesis explores the origins of the Holocaust and introduces the Holocaust literature and the Second-Generation Holocaust literature. It also explores the trauma theory that is later used in the analysis of the books. The analytical part is focused on the manifestation of trauma and its transmission onto the second generation. Moreover, it determines the genre of *Maus* and explores the symbolism and the use of metaphors in both pieces of work.

## **KEYWORDS**

Holocaust, Art Spiegelman, Cynthia Ozick, *Maus*, *The Shawl*, trauma, second generation

## **NÁZEV PRÁCE**

Vyobrazení holocaustu v americké literatuře

## **ANOTACE**

Tato diplomová práce se zaměřuje na vyobrazení holocaustu v grafickém románu *Maus* autora Arta Spiegelmana a v knize *The Shawl* autorky Cynthia Ozick. Teoretická část je věnována holocaustu, literatuře o holocaustu a literatuře o druhé generaci. Dále se zabývá teorií traumatu, která je v pozdějších částech práce využita k analýze jednotlivých děl. Analytická část práce se věnuje projevům traumatu a jeho přenosu na druhou generaci. Zároveň také vysvětluje žánr grafického románu *Maus* a zabývá se taktéž symbolismem a použitím metafor v obou dílech.

## **KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA**

Holocaust, Art Spiegelman, Cynthia Ozick, *Maus*, *The Shawl*, trauma, druhá generace

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## Introduction

“Human suffering anywhere concerns men and women everywhere,”<sup>1</sup> said Elie Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor, in his book *Night*. The Holocaust, or *Shoah* as the Jews themselves call it, was undoubtedly an event of massive suffering of people during which the genocide of approximately 6 million European Jews took place.

This master thesis focuses on the depiction of the Holocaust in American literature. Particularly, it examines the graphic novel *Maus* by Art Spiegelman and *The Shawl* by Cynthia Ozick. The main points of analyses are trauma, its transmission onto the second generation, symbolism, and language.

The initial part of the first chapter explores the historical context of this thesis. It will attempt to define the Holocaust and explain its origins and the reasons why it happened. The middle section of this chapter examines the first part of the literary context, focusing on the Holocaust literature. It explores the origins of it, its function, and it also examines three important genres within it. The last part deals with the Second-Generation Holocaust literature, explaining what the second generation is, who the authors are, and what they wrote about in their books.

The second chapter is dedicated to Trauma theory and its criticism. The first section dealing with Trauma theory defines the term trauma from several points of view, mentions the most important personnel and their theories within the studies as well as the terminology connected to it, including the most important term PTSD. The second part introduces several critics of some concepts of Trauma theory and offers different points of view.

With the historical and literary context established, it is possible to proceed to the analysis of the books. The third chapter deals with the graphic novel *Maus* written by Art Spiegelman. The initial part explores the genre of *Maus*, as it is rather a complex book that blends several genres together. The following section looks at the symbolism Spiegelman uses in *Maus*, particularly the use of animal imagery, while the next part summarizes the story of Vladek, as it is crucial for the next two subchapters. The next section explores Vladek’s trauma, its consequences, and the way the trauma manifests itself. This section is closely connected to the last part of this chapter, which examines the transmission of trauma on Artie, Vladek’s son, who did not experience the Holocaust himself.

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<sup>1</sup> Elie Wiesel, *Night*, trans. Marion Wiesel, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), 119.



The next chapter analyses the short story *The Shawl* and its sequel *Rosa* by Cynthia Ozick. The initial part explores the reasons why Ozick wrote *The Shawl*, and then proceeds to analyse the eponymous central metaphor of the short story which is important not only in the original short story, but also in its sequel *Rosa*. The next part explores the origins of Rosa's trauma as well and its manifestation in the novella, while the last part focuses on Ozick's style and numerous metaphors she employs in her writing.

The last chapter belongs to the conclusion of the main points of this master thesis and its findings.

# 1 Historical and Literary Context

## 1.1 Holocaust

Even though the Holocaust took place during the 1940s, the term was not used until the late 1950s as a reference to the mass killing of the Jews during the Second World War. To explore the origins of the word, Walter Laqueur explains that the word “Holocaust” is rather unfortunate, as it is derived from the Greek word *holokauston*, which means “burnt whole” if translated into English, suggesting that the Holocaust means a religious sacrifice made by burning.<sup>2</sup> It is pointed out as unfortunate because it was not a sacrifice, but a genocide, a thought out process that was designed to exterminate all the Jewish people in Europe, and possibly beyond the Old World.

The Jews themselves do not like this term at all from the abovementioned reasons and instead, they use the Hebrew word *shoah* or the Yiddish *hurban*. According to Steffi de Jong:

The Hebrew “Shoah” and the Yiddish “Hurban” take up religious interpretation of the mass murder of the European Jews as part of a longer history of persecution and divine punishment. “Shoah” means destruction. Before it came to describe the mass murder of the European Jews, the word “Shoah” had been used to denominate divine punishment. “Hurban” used to describe the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem by the Babylonians and by the Romans. Especially in orthodox Jewish circles, the murder of the European Jews is interpreted as a third Hurban.<sup>3</sup>

Generally, the words *shoah* and *hurban* are used among the Jewish community to refer to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust, while the word *holocaust* is used to designate all of the victims of the Nazi genocide in general.

To speak about the characterization of the Holocaust, Zygmunt Bauman in his book *Modernity and the Holocaust* suggests two possible explanations of what the Holocaust is. Firstly, he claims that the Holocaust is an event of the Jewish history, something that happened to the Jews, which makes the Holocaust unique and sociologically inconsequential. Furthermore, it is a culmination point of the European-Christian antisemitism, a unique phenomenon incomparable to anything else with large and dense inventory of ethnic or religious prejudices and aggressions.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Walter Laqueur and Judith T. Baumel, *The Holocaust Encyclopaedia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 13.

<sup>3</sup> Steffi de Jong, *The Witness as Object: Video Testimony in Memorial Museums* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2018), 44.

<sup>4</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989), 2.

The second way, as Bauman suggests, is to present the Holocaust as an extreme case of wide and familiar category of social phenomena, which is not at all unique in the history of civilization, as there were other instances of a genocide in the history such as the Turkish decimation of Armenians or for instance the slaughter of Albigensian heretics.<sup>5</sup>

The first Bauman's way of explaining the Holocaust is the more appealing one, as antisemitism is a phenomenon traceable hundreds, or perhaps thousands of years back in the history. Christian Europe has been persecuting the Jews since forever, starting with the Crusades, ghettos, legal discrimination or for instance East-European pogroms. Therefore, the Holocaust can be seen as a logical consequence, a conclusion of the long lasting ethnic and religious hatred.

The genocide of millions of the Jewish people mocks our optimism about the progress of mankind, and it raises doubts and questions about our ability to live on this planet with people of other cultures and persuasions. The question many people seldom ask is how the Holocaust could have possibly happened in such a civilized society. Some of the answers to this crucial yet terrifying question provides Henry Feingold in his article "Determining the Uniqueness of the Holocaust: The Factor of Historical Valence," in which he suggests that the Holocaust happened from several intertwined reasons.

Firstly, 1930s and 1940s was a time of unprecedented technological progress which enabled the mankind to do tremendous things. As Henry Feingold stated:

The Final Solution marked the juncture where the European industrial system went awry; instead of enhancing life, which was the original hope of the Enlightenment, it began to consume itself. It was by dint of that industrial system and the ethos attached to it that Europe was able to dominate the world.<sup>6</sup>

With that in mind, instead of putting these tremendous things into something meaningful and useful, the Nazi Germany decided to use it against the mankind itself. According to Feingold the most important areas that enabled to effectively launch The Final Solution (the Nazi final plan for murdering all the Jews within reach) were the chemical industry, the railway industry, and the evolved bureaucratic system.<sup>7</sup>

He claims that Auschwitz was a mundane extension to an already existing modern factory system. However, instead of producing regular goods as in any other factory, the raw material in them were human beings and the end-product was horrifying death. Instead of a

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<sup>5</sup> Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 2.

<sup>6</sup> Henry Feingold, "Determining the Uniqueness of the Holocaust: The Factor of Historical Valence," *Shoah* 2 (Spring 1981): 3-11.

<sup>7</sup> Feingold, "Determining the Uniqueness," 3-11.

regular factory-made smoke, the chimneys poured forth acrid smoke produced by the burning of human flesh.<sup>8</sup>

The railroad system of the modern Europe was brilliantly organized, and it carried a new kind of material to the factories – human beings. The advanced chemical industry in Germany then produced noxious gas generated by prussic acid pellets which the victims in the gas chambers inhaled until they passed out and consequently died. The crematoria were designed by top-level engineers and the bureaucratic system was created by the best managers, with both of them working efficiently and overall perfectly. Feingold concludes this with saying that: “what we witnessed was nothing less than a massive scheme of social engineering.”<sup>9</sup>

The Feingold’s claim is also supported by Raul Hilberg who agrees with the abovementioned paragraph by saying that “the machinery of destruction, then, was structurally no different from organized German society as a whole. The machinery of destruction *was* the organized community in one of its special roles.<sup>10</sup> This is also reflected in one of the analysed books, *Maus* by Art Spiegelman, where it is said that “this [bureaucracy] the Germans did very good...always they did everything very systematic.”<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, there is one important thing without which the Holocaust probably could not have happened – the dehumanization of the Jews, or as Zygmunt Bauman puts it, the “dehumanization of the objects of bureaucratic operation.”<sup>12</sup> The dehumanization itself starts when the objects the bureaucrats are dealing with are reduced to a set of quantitative measures.

As Bauman explains, the only thing that matters to the railway workers is the cargo, as they are not dealing with human beings or the barbed wire at all. What is in the wagon is then unimportant, as they never see it. The object of bureaucrats is nothing but money, because it appears on both input and output ends, and similarly to the railway workers, they never actually see the people, let alone work with them.<sup>13</sup>

People usually associate dehumanization with the pictures of inmates or of people in concentration camps who are lowered to the most basic level or primitive survival. As Bauman explains, this is done by preventing them from doing anything cultural and by depriving them of human likeness.<sup>14</sup> Or as Peter Marsh in *Aggro: The Illusions of Violence* puts it, “standing

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<sup>8</sup> Feingold, “Determining the Uniqueness,” 3-11.

<sup>9</sup> Feingold, “Determining the Uniqueness,” 3-11.

<sup>10</sup> Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishing, Inc., 1985), 274.

<sup>11</sup> Art Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus* (London: Penguin Group, 2003), 61.

<sup>12</sup> Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 102.

<sup>13</sup> Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 103.

<sup>14</sup> Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 103.

by the fence of Auschwitz, looking at these emaciated skeletons with shrunken skin and hollowed eyes – who could believe that these were really people?”<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, Bauman claims that the dehumanization is not exclusive to mass genocides, and basically happens in all bureaucratic areas, and even outside of them. He explains that “soldiers are told to shoot *targets*, which *fall* when they are *hit*. Employees of big companies are encouraged to destroy *competition*.”<sup>16</sup> Therefore, it is also the language that dehumanizes people, because when one sees all this terminology in place, human beings start to disappear from the image. Moreover, for the bureaucratic goals, it is best if people are not perceived and not remembered at all.

Bauman moreover claims that once people are dehumanized, they are seen with ethical indifference and are thus unsuitable for “human” moral demands. The stronger the dehumanization, the more confident become the functionaries who “may faithfully serve any goal while their moral conscience remains unpaired.”<sup>17</sup>

What can one conclude is that events like the Holocaust and the civilization are not antithetical, for they both can and will coexist with one another. Moreover, as Richard L. Rubenstein said, “[The Holocaust] bears witness to *advance of civilization*.”<sup>18</sup> Back in the day, the industries and the technology themselves were unprecedentedly advanced, but this advance was twofold. The Final Solution was enabled by exactly that – the technological progress and the potential of industries not only helped propel several industries, but also created new ones and further developed the existing ones. Without that, The Final Solution would not have happened, at least not in such magnitude. The mankind tremendously underestimated the potential of this technological progress, and it revealed a second, darker, side of our civilization.

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<sup>15</sup> Peter Marsh, *Aggro: The Illusion of Violence* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1978), 120.

<sup>16</sup> Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 103.

<sup>17</sup> Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, 103-104.

<sup>18</sup> Richard L. Rubenstein, *The Cunning of History* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1975), 91.

## 1.2 Holocaust Literature

In Spiegelman's *Maus*, there is a character called Pavel who is a Czechoslovakian Holocaust survivor and a psychologist. He says that "the victims [of the Holocaust] who died can never tell their side of the story, so maybe it's better not to have any more stories,"<sup>19</sup> suggesting that people should stop writing about the Holocaust altogether.

However, John K. Roth in his book *Holocaust Literature* strongly disagrees with this statement, because:

as the last survivors of the Holocaust grow into old age and pass on, the rich literary legacy of their experiences will remain to remind the world not only of the atrocities perpetrated by the Nazi state but also of the banality and efficiency of the evil that gives rise to such inhuman acts. [...] The literature of the Holocaust reminds us never to forget – what happened in Hitler's Germany, and also what can happen, is happening, now.<sup>20</sup>

The writers of Holocaust literature were afraid of being forgotten and that the world would forget the Holocaust ever took place. That, fortunately, never happened and Holocaust literature became a topic scholars and people in general started to be very interested in the 1980s and 1990s. As Stanislav Kolář in *Seven Responses to the Holocaust in American Fiction* points out, "the American public's new interest in the Holocaust was kindled by NBC's broadcasting of a miniseries called simply *Holocaust* in 1978, which is generally regarded as the turning point in the change of American's attitude to this traumatic event."<sup>21</sup>

Kolář moreover explains that the America's interest in the Holocaust culminated in the 1990s with the opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. in 1993, and with the Spielberg's film *Schindler's List* which was released in 1993 as well. Moreover, he claims that this trend continued with a massive increase of courses on the Holocaust at American universities and that this steady growth of interest resulted "in the birth of a new separate discipline, Holocaust studies."<sup>22</sup>

According to Alvin H. Rosenfeld, the function of Holocaust literature is "to register and record the enormity of human loss. It is an attempt to express a new order of consciousness, a recognizable shift in being."<sup>23</sup> Another point of view provides Kolář, who suggests that the American Holocaust writers tended to depict all the horrors from the victim's perspective and

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<sup>19</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 205.

<sup>20</sup> Philip K. Roth, *Holocaust Literature* (Pasadena: Salem Press, Inc., 2008), 9.

<sup>21</sup> Stanislav Kolář, *Seven Responses to the Holocaust in American Fiction* (Ostrava: Nakladatelství Tilia, 2004), 14-15.

<sup>22</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 15.

<sup>23</sup> Alvin H. Rosenfeld, *A Double Dying: Reflections on Holocaust Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 26.

in doing so, they managed to effectively depict the immeasurable and incomprehensible suffering of victimized people during the Second World War, together with making the reader sympathize with their extreme situation.<sup>24</sup>

Holocaust literature is written not only by the survivors of this genocide, but also by those writers who did not experience it at all. The work of the survivors, however, was rarely intended to be published and usually, if it was published, it happened after the end of the Second World War. A great example is Anne Frank, who will be mentioned later in this chapter.

James E. Young points out that Holocaust literature developed several different types of writing and various genres. He says that in the broadest possible definition of Holocaust literature, it includes:

Diaries of victims and memoirs of survivors; chronicles and documents compiled collectively by community groups and assembled in the forms of archives and “memorial books”; novel and short stories on Holocaust-related themes by those who witnessed the destruction as well as those removed from it; poetry and drama from the concentration camps.<sup>25</sup>

To talk about some of the abovementioned genres, three of them have been chosen for a brief analysis. One of the very first authors of Holocaust literature was Anne Frank who started writing her letter diaries at the age of fourteen. She wrote about her daily life as a person who was hiding in a secret room in the Netherlands. Eventually, she was transported to Bergen Belsen where she allegedly died of typhus. Her letters, which were found later by her father, offer a rather unique experience in terms of Holocaust literature, as they were not written by a concentration camp survivor, but a talented young girl who experienced the German occupation of her motherland.

Diaries and memoirs are a very common way of recording one’s experience. The former are considered unique, as they offer a different perspective on the events of the Holocaust. As Sara R. Horowitz claims, diaries “convey the chaos and confusion of the time, the lack of information and the hope that the writer and their families would survive the war.”<sup>26</sup> Moreover, according to Linda S. Raphael, diaries record the movement of history instead of later analysis of history. They are written in the ignorance of the next moment and “they directly represent or enact the contingency of historical time.”<sup>27</sup> She also states that diaries do not include revision,

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<sup>24</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 180.

<sup>25</sup> James E. Young, *Reference Guide to Holocaust Literature* (Farmington Hills: St. James Press, 2002), 31.

<sup>26</sup> “Holocaust literature,” Jewish Women’s Archive, last modified February 27, 2009, <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/holocaust-literature>.

<sup>27</sup> Linda S. Raphael, “Representing the Holocaust in Literature: Diaries, Memoirs, ‘Fateless’, and Other Fiction,” *Colloquia Germanica* 36, no. 3/4 (2003): 228, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23982009>.

second thoughts, and afterthoughts and because of that, they “come as close as representation can to performing the events they cite rather than to describing them.”<sup>28</sup>

Raphael provides an overview of memoirs as well. She claims that they are, by definition, written in the future, after the events have already taken place. Furthermore, she says that:

When a survivor looks back, he or she remembers in the context of the present, knowing the outcome of the Holocaust and knowing as well the responses to the Holocaust of many others, including their intimate connections, other writers, historians, filmmakers, and so on. On the one hand, memoirs cannot tell us the experience of the moment in the way the diaries do, but they do tell us what a person remembers, which is part of what survivor means, and they go a long way toward creating a social memory of those things for which there was no context at the time of their occurrence.<sup>29</sup>

Therefore, it can be concluded that memoirs are not as accurate as diaries, as they are not written momentarily, but rather in the future when a person looks back to what they had experienced in the past, leaving out certain details that look irrelevant or are altogether forgotten.

This thesis works with the Holocaust novel, which did not start to be a distinct genre until the late 1970s and early 1980s. This genre often blends autobiography and fiction, memoir and fantasy and/or historical document and realistic novel. Sicher explains that the Holocaust novels are trying to make us rethink our assumptions and beliefs by retelling the past in order to help us understand the present.<sup>30</sup>

Apart from Anne Frank and her *Diary of a Young Girl*, there are other authors to mention. One of the most famous ones is the Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel, who wrote a memoir trilogy starting with a book *Night*, followed by *Dawn*, and ending with *Day*. In 1965, Jerzy Kosinski published a book called *The Painted Bird* which is, according to Jerzy Jarniewicz, “a hybrid, a bipolar novel, in which history is interlocked with imagination, fact with fiction, autobiography with myth.”<sup>31</sup> What book cannot remain unmentioned is *Sophie’s Choice* by William Styron, whose title has entered the English lexicon as an idiom to express an impossible choice. The Holocaust fiction is represented by Cynthia Ozick, whose short story *The Shawl* and its sequel *Rosa* will be analysed in further chapters.

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<sup>28</sup> Raphael, “Representing the Holocaust,” 228.

<sup>29</sup> Raphael, “Representing the Holocaust,” 231.

<sup>30</sup> Efraim Sicher, *The Holocaust Novel* (Oxon: Routledge, 2005), 19.

<sup>31</sup> Jerzy Jarniewicz, “The Terror of Normality in Jerzy Kosinski’s ‘The Painted Bird,’” *The Polish Review* 49, no. 1 (2004): 642, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25779450>.



### 1.3 Second-Generation Holocaust Literature

The Holocaust was such an enormous event that it strongly influenced not only the writers who experienced it first-hand, but also their children who are since the 1980s called the second generation. The function of their stories is not only to inform others about their experience as the children of the survivors, but more importantly to pass the memory to other generations which need to be very well acquainted with the Holocaust as well.

According to Erin McGlothlin, the works of the second generation are “either written by the children of the Holocaust perpetrators or survivors, or that they are written from the perspective of these children.”<sup>32</sup> She then distinguishes the children of survivors and perpetrators, claiming that the survivors transfer the importance of loss to the second generation, resulting in the inscription of the legacy of the Holocaust survival into the back of the child. This inscription is then perceived to remain unknown and inaccessible, as the survivors transmitted only the suffering, but not the memory itself which had been refused and became “a void of the unspeakable.”<sup>33</sup>

McGlothlin then explains that the children of perpetrators are also inscribed with the Nazi past into the present “as a trace that cannot be assimilated into postwar German normality, a force that disrupts the drive toward the amnesic displacement of the perpetration of the Holocaust.”<sup>34</sup> She concludes the second generation with saying that the writers have been marked by the history they did not themselves experience, which creates a feeling that distinguishes them from their contemporaries.<sup>35</sup>

The children of survivors all witnessed their parents’ ongoing survivor and became very intimately familiar with the Holocaust’s continuing effect. With that in mind, Second-Generation Holocaust writing is not only about the recapitulation of the parents’ experience, but more importantly about telling how the Holocaust is perceived by the children of the survivors.

Their parents could not cope with what they been through very well, which resulted in their children growing up in dysfunctional families. Moreover, they had to deal with the past they did not experience, which made them not understand their parents and often have a significantly distant relationship, as have Artie and Vladek in *Maus*. The parents often tried to hide their past, so that the children would not have to grow up with the difficult and burdensome

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<sup>32</sup> Erin McGlothlin, *Second-Generation Holocaust Literature* (Rochester: Camden House, 2006), 8.

<sup>33</sup> McGlothlin, *Second-Generation*, 8.

<sup>34</sup> McGlothlin, *Second-Generation*, 9.

<sup>35</sup> McGlothlin, *Second-Generation*, 9.

past in their mind. What they did not realize was that the past cannot be forgotten and will always be a part of their family, even if they tried their best to prevent it.

To explore the origins of the term Second-Generation Holocaust Literature, it was not used until the 1980s. The first people who started using it were literary critics Alan Berger and Efraim Sicher who, while coining this term, were inspired by psychological and journalistic studies of the children of Holocaust survivors. Efraim Sicher describes the second generation as:

a term used by clinical psychologists and therapists for the children of Holocaust survivors who have in various ways been affected by the area-effect of their parents' experience of deportation, forced labour, imprisonment in a concentration camp, or other forms of persecution by the Nazis."<sup>36</sup>

These works are strongly influenced by the transmission of trauma, and as Kolář explains, "they examine the plight of 'children (and even the grandchildren) of survivors' who have 'contracted' psychological trauma from the previous generation(s)."<sup>37</sup>

The difference between the writers who experienced the Holocaust and the second-generation authors is that those who experienced it wrote about their own personal experience, while the second-generation authors were generally born after the end of the Second World War and therefore did not experience the massacres of the Holocaust at all. However, it does not mean that they wrote only about their experience as the children of the survivors, and Art Spiegelman's *Maus* is a great example of that, as it captures not only the story of a child, but also a story of his father, who experienced the Holocaust first-hand.

To provide a more profound definition and understanding of the second generation, Alan L. Berger claims that "as the drama of Holocaust literature unfolds, an international second generation has begun to transmit *Shoah's* memory with compelling moral, existential, and religious urgency."<sup>38</sup> Moreover, he says that unlike the generation that witnessed the Holocaust, the second generation lacks direct access to it, as they did not experience it personally. With that said, their writing weaves their own imagination with their parents' memories. The result of such writing then depicts the Holocaust's deep effect on questions of post-Auschwitz Jewish Identity and their authenticity.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Sicher, *The Holocaust Novel*, 155.

<sup>37</sup> Stanislav Kolář, Zuzana Buráková and Katarína Šandorová, *Reflections of Trauma in Selected Works of Postwar American and British Literature* (Košice: Pavol Josef Safarik University, 2010), 21.

<sup>38</sup> Alan L. Berger, "Bearing Witness: Second Generation Literature of the 'Shoah,'" *Modern Judaism* 10, no. 1 (Feb 1990): 43, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1396049>.

<sup>39</sup> Berger, "Bearing Witness," 43.

A different point of view has a theologian Arthur A. Cohen, who does not necessarily agree with Berger. He believes that the second generation is firmly rooted in Jewish history and liturgy, very much as the Judaism itself:

The Passover Haggadah commands that every Jew considers himself as though he has gone forth in exodus from Egypt. The grammatical authenticity of the Haggadah makes clear that this is no metaphor, whatever our wish to make apodictic language metaphoric. The authority is clear: I was really, even if not literally, present in Sinai. God contemplated my virtual presence then, thirty-odd centuries ago. No less is the case that the death camps account my presence really, even if not literally: hence my obligation to hear the witnesses as though I were a witness. It is mandatory that this real presence of all Israel in the death camps, experiencing *tremendum* (Shoah), enter the liturgy as surely as it entered the narration of Exodus.<sup>40</sup>

With this paragraph, Cohen established a philosophical basis for writing by non-witnesses, because, according to him, every Jew has experienced the Holocaust. This claim is further supported by a Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel who said that “No Jew can be fully Jewish today, can be a fully man today, without being part of the Holocaust. All Jews are survivors. They have all been inside the whirlwind of the Holocaust, even those born afterwards, even those who heard its echoes in distant lands.”<sup>41</sup>

Witness bearing is, according to Berger, a normative element of the Jewish people that has become essential to living as a Jew. Furthermore, this act of witnessing is throughout time becoming a moral and theological obligation, because almost all of the original survivors have passed away. The task of the second generation is therefore to convey and preserve their legacy for the future generations.<sup>42</sup>

There are dozens of authors who are regarded as members of the Second-Generation Holocaust Literature. To mention some of them, Robert Schindel, an Austrian author, wrote a novel *Gebürtig* which is focused on the effects of the Holocaust on the relationships between Non-Jewish Austrians and Jewish Austrians. Another author worth mentioning is Jean Patrick Modano, a Nobel-Prize winner from 2014, who wrote a detective novel *Dora Bruder* about a Jewish girl who went missing during the Nazi occupation of Paris. The last author is Art Spiegelman, whose graphic novel *Maus* is part of the analytical part of this paper.

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<sup>40</sup> Arthur A. Cohen, *The Tremendum: A Theological Interpretation of the Holocaust* (New York, Continuum Intl Pub Group, 1993), 23.

<sup>41</sup> Irving Abrahamson, *Against Silence: The Voice and Vision of Elie Wiesel* (London: Holocaust Library, 1995), 44.

<sup>42</sup> Berger, “Bearing Witness,” 45.

## 2 Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Trauma Theory

As explained in the previous chapters, the Holocaust was a traumatic event not only for the people who experienced it first-hand, but also for their children or grandchildren who were, most often, born after the Second World War ended. A great example is Art Spiegelman's graphic novel *Maus*, which tells a story of Vladek and his son Artie. This book depicts how the trauma, among other themes, is transferred from Vladek on Artie.

The second piece of work analysed in this paper is Cynthia Ozick's *The Shawl*. This book explores a story of Rosa Lublin, a Holocaust survivor, who is unable to come to terms with her horrible past. It consists of two pieces – a short story *The Shawl* and its sequel, a novella *Rosa*. The first one is focused on a female protagonist in a death camp and the choices she must make, while the second one depicts her future around forty years after the Holocaust.

Since trauma is one of the major points of analyses of this thesis, it is important to explore what the term trauma means. Kolář explains that human beings learnt to accept that suffering is a natural part of humanity, but if the extent of it becomes extreme and unbearable, our response may have pathological features.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, he adds that “in immense stressful situation, our psyche is unable to cope with the distress and our experience becomes that which psychologists term traumatic.”<sup>44</sup>

Furthermore, Kolář states that the term trauma is an ambiguous concept with no strict definition. For instance, Cambridge Dictionary defines it as “(a) severe emotional shock and pain caused by an extremely upsetting experience.”<sup>45</sup> Similar definition provides Collins Dictionary, which states that trauma is “a severe shock or very upsetting experience, which may cause psychological damage.”<sup>46</sup>

More precise and accurate definition can be found if one looks up the medical definition of trauma. International Society of Traumatic Studies describes it as “a set of psychological and

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<sup>43</sup> Kolář et al., *Reflections of Trauma*, 5.

<sup>44</sup> Kolář et al., *Reflections of Trauma*, 5.

<sup>45</sup> Cambridge Dictionary, s.v. “trauma,” accessed April 5, 2021, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/trauma>.

<sup>46</sup> Collins Dictionary, s.v. “trauma,” accessed April 5, 2021, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/trauma>.

physiological responses to pain, injury, serious illness, medical procedures, and frightening treatment experiences.”<sup>47</sup>

To talk about the origins of the word trauma, Beata Piatek in her book *History, Memory, Trauma in Contemporary British and Irish Fiction* claims that the term itself was firstly used to describe symptoms of victims of railway accidents during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Those passengers complained about having internal pains despite not having any physical injury. The term trauma was then used to in the medical evidence present in legal cases when the affected passengers tried to sue the railway company.<sup>48</sup>

According to Piatek, the very first medical professional who used this term was Jean-Martin Charcot whose student was Sigmund Freud. Freud together with Joseph Breuer, a Viennese physician, in 1895 published their own study called *Studies in Hysteria* in which they introduced the German word *Nachträglichkeit* (often translated as deferred action, belatedness, or afterwardness). The aim of this study was to describe the future effects of the traumatic events on human beings. Moreover, they also observed that hysteria very often originated from psychological trauma and its memories which are stored in the unconscious and recalled later when the patient is experiencing a similar situation.<sup>49</sup>

Freud in one of his case studies, particularly about Miss Lucy R., introduced the so-called talking cure, which is a potential solution for those who are experiencing trauma. Simply put, the symptoms of it vanishes once a patient starts talking about the traumatic event. In Freud’s own words “setting them [traumatic events] out in words could operate as a form of relief”<sup>50</sup> and therefore help the patient reach closure.

As Piatek points out, one of Freud’s early theories is called seduction theory because at first, he believed that his subjects were very frequently exposed to seduction by an adult during an early age. Since the children did not understand the sexual act, the memory came back as a deferred action later in puberty.<sup>51</sup> She adds that in 1899, Freud revisited this theory and rejected the fact that “childhood memories of sexual acts with adults are memories of actual events, but rather that they are memories of forbidden sexual desires.”<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> “Medical Trauma,” International Society for Traumatic Studies, accessed April 5, 2021, <https://istss.org/public-resources/friday-fast-facts/fast-facts-medical-trauma>.

<sup>48</sup> Beata Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma in Contemporary British and Irish Fiction* (Kraków: Jagiellonian University Press, 2015), 34.

<sup>49</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 34.

<sup>50</sup> Sigmund Freud and Joseph Breuer, *Studies in Hysteria*, trans. Nicola Luckhurst, (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 3.

<sup>51</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 35.

<sup>52</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 35.

Freud once again revisited his theories of trauma during the First World War. He studied the symptoms of shell-shocked soldiers which proved to be very much similar to those suffering from hysteria. As Lincoln Riddle suggests, many victims of shell shock were seen as cowards and hundreds of them were accused of desertion and put on trial.<sup>53</sup> On the other hand, according to Ann E. Kaplan, Freud believed that only a very small number of shell-shocked soldiers were lying about their mental state. He even decided to testify in their favour in an investigation of neglect of military duty so that those charges would be dropped.<sup>54</sup>

After the First World War, Freud wrote a famous essay *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* in which he introduced sex drive – pleasure and excitement, and death drive – the opposite of the former. Moreover, this work extends, and to some degree changes, his earlier theories on the defence mechanism on the ego and the origin of effects of trauma on the human’s psyche. According to Freud, traumatic events are responsible for creating conflict in one’s ego which “splits off” from the unity of it and is later projected in one’s dreams.<sup>55</sup> This conflict then causes the so-called traumatic neurosis which Freud explains as “a consequence of an extensive breach being made in protective shield against stimuli.”<sup>56</sup>

Those stimuli are then taken care of by the abovementioned protective shield, which is a part of outer layer of our mind. Neurosis itself is then caused by an event in which people fear for their life. This event enters our protective shield and gets into inner layer of our mind without any defence. After explaining the notion of protective shield, Freud claims that:

We describe as “traumatic” any excitations from outside which are powerful enough to break through the protective shield. [...] Such an event as an external trauma is bound to provoke a disturbance on a large scale in functioning of the organism’s energy and to set in motion every possible defensive measure. [...] There is no longer any possibility of preventing the mental apparatus from being flooded with large amounts of stimulus, and another problem arises instead – the problem of mastering the amounts of stimulus which have broken in and of binding them, in the physical sense, so that they can be disposed of.<sup>57</sup>

Therefore, Freud suggests that trauma is both an external agent that shocks the unprepared system of our mind, and also an internal action of defence against overstimulation.

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<sup>53</sup> “Shell Shock: A Horrifying Side-Effect of the First World War,” War History Online, last modified July 26, 2017, <https://www.warhistoryonline.com/instant-articles/shell-shock-sad-side-effect-wwi-m.html>.

<sup>54</sup> Ann E. Kaplan, *Trauma Culture: The Politics of Terror and Loss in Media and Literature* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 30.

<sup>55</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1990), 5.

<sup>56</sup> Freud, *Beyond*, 25.

<sup>57</sup> Freud, *Beyond*, 23-24.

In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud also describes a game his grandson used to play, which turned out to be a milestone in the trauma studies. Fort-da, as Freud calls it, is about exploring the repetitiveness of human behaviour when it comes to dealing with the traumatic experience of loss. In this game, his grandson was playing with a wooden reel tied to a piece of string which he kept throwing over the edge of his cot very enthusiastically. After it disappeared from his sight, he said *fort* (gone), and after he pulled the string back, he said *da* (there).<sup>58</sup>

As Freud suggests, the boy compensated himself for letting his mother leave without any protest by “staging the disappearance and return of the objects within his reach.”<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, the boy essentially turned an unpleasant experience into a game and took an active part in it, which put him in control of the outcome. The Austrian neurologist calls this repetition-compulsion. Piatek claims that this mechanism was later confirmed by psychiatrist practise focused on dealing with trauma victims, especially violent abuse. Those victims tend to repeat their actions and very often victimise others in their life, which is known as intergenerational transmission of abuse.<sup>60</sup>

Nasrullah Mambrol in his article “Trauma Studies” claims that “Freud’s theories that traumatic experiences are repeated compulsively, divide the psyche, influence memory differently than other experiences, and are unable to be experienced initially but only in a narrative reproduction of the past,”<sup>61</sup> are crucial for the initial development of trauma studies. Moreover, they greatly influenced the scholars who looked into the theory of trauma and the ways trauma affects one’s memory and identity.

The trauma studies in literature, according to Mambrol, employs psychoanalytical theories which analyse emotional suffering in the text, the language of loss, disruption, and fragmentation.<sup>62</sup> With these notions in mind, this theory then examines an individual’s psyche and explores one’s experience of a collective traumatic event (such as the Holocaust) in a text. This consequently produces a connection between the experience of the group and the experience of an individual. As Mumbrol suggests, the Freudian trauma model is about experiencing an unimaginable situation that radically fragments one’s psyche. What is moreover analysed is the concept of latency, pathology, and dissociation.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Freud, *Beyond*, 8-10.

<sup>59</sup> Freud, *Beyond*, 9.

<sup>60</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 36.

<sup>61</sup> “Trauma Studies,” *Literary Criticism, Literariness*, last modified December 19, 2018, <https://literariness.org/2018/12/19/trauma-studies/>.

<sup>62</sup> *Literariness*, “Trauma Studies.”

<sup>63</sup> *Literariness*, “Trauma Studies.”

Perhaps the most important decade for trauma studies in literature was the 1990s during which the scholars, such as Cathy Caruth, took interest in examining trauma and its role in various texts. Mumbrial explains that Caruth's view on trauma is very similar to the one of Freud's, stating that trauma is caused by an event that fragments our consciousness into pieces, and also prevents us from talking about it. What causes trauma is then dissociation and fragmentation which eradicates one's ability to understand the event, and moreover to speak about it – because patients cannot linguistically code it and find the words that would correctly and accurately represent what has happened to them.<sup>64</sup>

Furthermore, as one cannot comprehend the event, it behaves like a tumour in our consciousness and damages our mind. Caruth's understanding of trauma suggests that the traumatic event internally changes one's mind and irreversibly changes people's identity. She puts significant emphasis on the fact that the event is unspeakable, undefinable, and incomprehensible for people and that such extreme experience greatly influences not only our consciousness, but also our ability to speak and to use language in general.<sup>65</sup> Mumbrial then explains that after the event has been experienced and is in the past, people can no longer store it in their consciousness. They preserve it somewhere beyond the limits of our understanding, in a wordless state, and it keeps inflicting pain on our psyche.<sup>66</sup>

In *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, History*, Cathy Caruth claims that Freud's most important discussion of trauma occurs in his last book *Moses and Monotheism*, which was published in 1939.<sup>67</sup> In this novel, Freud depicts the seemingly fictional history of the Jews and is regarded as one of the first works of trauma in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The core of Caruth's analysis is based on the interpretation of Freud's trauma theories and sets the basis of further significance on trauma in literature and the relation between cultural trauma and individual trauma. In this novel, Freud depicts Moses as an Egyptian, not as a Hebrew like in the *Bible*. Moses leads the Hebrews out of Egypt to Canaan in order to preserve the monotheistic religion – Judaism. After that, Moses is murdered by the Hebrews. However, they repressed this violent act and only after two generations incorporated it back to their world by saying it was someone else who had done it – particularly a man that also happened to be called Moses (a priest of Yahweh).

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<sup>64</sup> Literariness, "Trauma Studies."

<sup>65</sup> Literariness, "Trauma Studies."

<sup>66</sup> Literariness, "Trauma Studies."

<sup>67</sup> Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, History* (London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996), 11.



What Freud claims is that the Jews intentionally forgot what happened and reinstalled it two generations after that. As Caruth suggests, the main question of Freud's novel, regarding history and political outcome, is: "What does it mean, precisely, for history to be the history of a trauma?"<sup>68</sup> For that question, she also provides an answer: "For history to be a history of trauma means that it is referential precisely to the extent that is not fully perceived as it occurs; or to put it somewhat differently, that a history can be grasped only in the very inaccessibility of its occurrence."<sup>69</sup>

Furthermore, she states that "history, like trauma, is never simply one's own, that history is precisely the way we were implicated in each other's traumas."<sup>70</sup> With that in mind, the Holocaust is therefore not an event of those Jews who experienced it first-hand, but also a memory of all the other Jews that were born after, or those who lived through the Holocaust but did not experience it. According to Piatek, Caruth's analysis of *Moses and Monotheism* sets the basis for modern trauma theories and the ways scholars perceive the relationship between history and trauma.<sup>71</sup>

Another very important ideas in trauma studies are narrative memory and traumatic memory, and more importantly, its distinction. To explain both terms, Pierre Janet, a pioneering French psychologist and a classmate of Sigmund Freud, demonstrated them on his patient Iréne. As Van der Kolk and Van der Hart state, this case was about a young woman Iréne in her early twenties who was traumatized by the death of her ill mother.<sup>72</sup>

For several month, Iréne cared for her mother suffering from tuberculosis. At the same time, she was working very hard to also provide for her whole family, as her dad was a drunk incapable of helping in any way. Naturally, Iréne was exhausted all the time and when her mother finally died, she did not comprehend it at all. She still cared for her dead body, trying to speak to it and even continued giving medication to it. One day, she decided to get help from her aunt who agreed to come and finally took charge of things, took care of the dead body, and prepared the funeral.

Even at the funeral, which Iréne was hesitant to attend at first, she was not aware of what had happened. After several weeks of her mother's death, her aunt took her to the hospital

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<sup>68</sup> Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 15.

<sup>69</sup> Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 18.

<sup>70</sup> Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 24.

<sup>71</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 36-37.

<sup>72</sup> B. A. Van Der Kolk and O. Van der Hart, "The Intrusive Past: The Flexibility of Memory and the Engraving of Trauma," *American Imago* 48, no. 4 (1991): 425-54, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26303922>.

where she described her symptoms out of which one was very peculiar – Iréne did not remember her mother passing away whatsoever.

As Piated states, Pierre Janet “have cured her by applying hypnosis and then rediscovering the dissociated traumatic memories, which he later helped her translate into narrative memories.<sup>73</sup> Here the talking cure method of one of Freud’s patients is mentioned – Iréne was completely cured after she was able to tell the story of her mother out of her memory in a coherent way, which ridded her of the compulsion to redo her traumatic experience.

With the abovementioned story in mind, one can finally understand the difference between traumatic memory and narrative (or as some experts say – ordinary memory) memory. About traumatic memory, Van der Kolk says that it takes too long to tell a story – in Iréne’s case – it took her several hours. However, narrative memory works much faster. Once Iréne was cured from her traumatic experience, she was able to retell the story in thirty seconds, which is, as Van der Kolk argues, precisely the way an ordinary memory should function.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, traumatic memory is described as having no social component as it is not addressed for anybody, whereas the narrative memory serves as an essential social function.<sup>75</sup>

Since the 1990s, we have observed a significant increase of publications regarding trauma and its representation. As Piatek states, these works were mainly concerned about “the difficulties of representation of trauma, the need to work through the experience through narration, the therapeutic potential of telling of the story and the need to witness to this act of testimony.”<sup>76</sup>

Today’s perception of trauma studies is derived from the works of literary scholars such as Cathy Caruth, Dori Laub or Shoshana Felman who were all, coincidentally, former students of Paul de Man, a Belgian literary critic. Moreover, as this thesis is also concerned with the Holocaust survivors, it is crucial to mention that the beginnings of poststructuralist theory of trauma, as Piatek suggests, are very closely connected to the Holocaust studies.<sup>77</sup>

The very first theoretical analyses were of the witnesses and survivors of the Holocaust, with a special focus on witnessing, testimony, and ethics of representation. Cathy Caruth’s *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* published in 1995 is one of the foundational theoretical books in trauma studies. It is a book consisting of twelve essays, out of which five are concerned with

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<sup>73</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 37

<sup>74</sup> Van der Kolk, “The Intrusive Past,” 425-54.

<sup>75</sup> Van der Kolk, “The Intrusive Past,” 425-54.

<sup>76</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 40.

<sup>77</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 40.

Holocaust testimonies of various Holocaust survivors. Those twelve essays are not only about literature, but because of its interdisciplinarity, they also focus on film studies or pedagogy.

What set the basis for the critical discussions about trauma's importance in literature was Caruth's another piece of work, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, History*, cited multiple times throughout this thesis, that was published a year later in 1996. Mumbrial in his article claims that Caruth interprets Freud's trauma theories in her own way, forwarding a significant post-structural concern with the referential links of language and history.<sup>78</sup> She puts emphasis on the irrepresentability of trauma which makes it very disruptive, or, as the title of the book suggests, unclaimed experience.

Caruth makes an observation that one cannot witness the traumatic experience from within. She also claims that what a person, or a group of people, experiences is not known directly, but only through indirect and interrupted references, referring them back to the past via reproduction or performance.<sup>79</sup> In other words, Caruth claims that the referentiality in trauma is not only indirect, but also delayed.

With that in mind, literature, as Piatek suggests, functions as a "belated enactment and witnessing of what can be referred to as an unclaimed moment of trauma."<sup>80</sup> Caruth argues that the language of trauma is intrinsically literary. Her reasoning for this is that Freud himself used literature such as William Shakespeare to develop his trauma theories. She also claims that:

If Freud turns to literature to describe traumatic experience, it is because literature, like psychoanalysis, is interested in the complex relation between knowing and not knowing. And it is indeed at specific point at which knowing and not knowing intersects that the language of literature and the psychoanalytic theory of traumatic experience precisely meet.<sup>81</sup>

Another important claim raised Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub in their book *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History*, in which they state that the consequences of trauma of the Second World War and the Holocaust are still active, and what is more, they are still evolving to this day.<sup>82</sup> In fact, as mentioned in the chapter dedicated to the Second\_Generation Holocaust Literature, the Holocaust has been, and always

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<sup>78</sup> Literariness, "Trauma Studies."

<sup>79</sup> Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 11.

<sup>80</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 41.

<sup>81</sup> Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 3.

<sup>82</sup> Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, "Foreword," in *Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History* (Routledge, Chapman & Hall, Inc.: New York, 1992).

will be, active and evolving because there will never cease to exist people with ties to the survivors of this horrifying event.

Felman's and Laub's primary focus in this series of essays is on literature and ethics. Particularly, they are trying to answer questions such as: "What is the relation between literature and testimony, between the writer and the witness? What is the relation between the act of witnessing and testifying, and the acts of writing and reading, particularly in our era?"<sup>83</sup>

Piatek argues that those questions are vital for understanding why critics such as Caruth or Felman adopts the approach to trauma literature similar to the one of therapists in relation to their patients.<sup>84</sup> In the text, she claims that the critiques look for any signs of silence which would function as a "vehicle for muteness." What they are basically claiming is that once a reader starts to read the book, he becomes a co-witness of the traumatic event.<sup>85</sup>

As was previously mentioned, further developments in trauma studies are always connected, directly or indirectly, with the treatment of shell-shocked soldiers who were affected by military experience or with the survivors of the Holocaust. Therefore, everything that has been said so far leads to the term Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD further in this chapter, was according to Marc-Antoine Crocq firstly used in the early 1980s and is connected to the Vietnam War which was fought from 1955 to 1975.<sup>86</sup> This war produced a huge number of veterans who displayed various psychological symptoms which led to clinical studies and as Beata Piatek suggests, PTSD was included in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* of the American Psychological Association.<sup>87</sup> This manual does not include PTSD only, but also other mental disorders. What is interesting is that only PTSD is further elaborated with its causes. The other mental issues are only listed with the criteria that need to be met for diagnosing them.

In the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder*, it is claimed that PTSD has three major types of symptoms. The first type are symptoms that make the patients re-experience the traumatic event. Those include flashbacks and reliving the trauma as if it were happening in the present. The second type are numbing symptoms which consist of blunted emotions and feelings of estrangement from other people. The last ones are listed as

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<sup>83</sup> Felman, "Foreword," in *Testimony*.

<sup>84</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 41.

<sup>85</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 42.

<sup>86</sup> Marc-Antoine Crocq, "From shell shock and war neurosis to posttraumatic stress disorder: a history of psychotraumatology," *Dialogues in clinical neuroscience* 2, no. 1 (2000): 47-55 [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/51751154\\_From\\_shell\\_shock\\_and\\_war\\_neurosis\\_to\\_posttraumatic\\_stress\\_disorder\\_a\\_history\\_of\\_Psychotraumatology](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/51751154_From_shell_shock_and_war_neurosis_to_posttraumatic_stress_disorder_a_history_of_Psychotraumatology).

<sup>87</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 38.

miscellaneous symptoms and include hypervigilance for threat, sleep disturbance, memory impairment and guilt about having survived when others did not, which is very typical for the Holocaust survivors.<sup>88</sup>

With those symptoms in mind, it is clear that the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is first and foremost a disorder of one's memory. According to Piatek, thanks to the PTSD recognition, it began to be further researched, and in the late 1980s, additional symptoms to the manual had been added with the most important one being the inability to recall an important aspect of trauma. Moreover, another cause of PTSD had been added – sexually inappropriate experience without threatened or actual violence or injury.<sup>89</sup> This would make Freud especially content, as he claimed that trauma is based on early childhood sexual abuse.

Furthermore, the recent years of development suggest that symptoms of PTSD may additionally include the feeling of sadness, fear, or anger. Those who suffer from this mental disorder also avoid situations or people that remind them of the cause of their trauma and their negative experience can be triggered by something as mundane as a loud noise or even the use of a particular word or a multi-word expression.

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<sup>88</sup> American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder* (American Psychiatric Publishing, Washington, 1980), 236-238.

<sup>89</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 39.

## 2.2 Criticism of Trauma Theory and Other Points of View

Even the most respectable theory has its critics, and the trauma theory, despite being an established critical field of literary studies for several years, is no exception. The trauma theory itself came up to life in the 1990s at the Yale University and as Kaplan claims, it had become very abstract under the influence of poststructuralism. At that time, many critics paid attention not to fall back into an insufficiently defined Marxism, and into an insufficiently theorized concept of the body and the subject.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, after the 1990s, interviews of the Holocaust victims started being conducted in an environment in which an interest in the Second World War and its sociological meanings and consequences, as well as personal sufferings, were on the rise. Kaplan also claims that trauma became a way for critics to start linking theory with particular material events that were not only personal, but also they implicated history.<sup>91</sup>

Quite the criticism brought a book called *Hystories: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Media* written by Elaine Showalter in 1997, in which she presents rather hostile opinions about trauma studies. According to Beata Piatek, this book argues that trauma studies helped legitimize the disturbing tendency in psychotherapy, which resulted in epidemics of various types of trauma such as sex abuse in childhood or, weirdly enough, being abducted by aliens or followed by a religious cult.<sup>92</sup> Moreover, Showalter mentions the so-called victim culture which started to rise shortly after in the United States, undermining the true meaning of trauma, as it sought cause and cure for even such simple matters as disappointments or unhappiness.<sup>93</sup>

Another critic of trauma theory is Susannah Radstone. She claims that for Freud's psychoanalysis, "memory is the outcome of complex processes of revision shaped by prompting from the present, whereas trauma theory posits the linear registration of events as they happen, albeit such registrations may be secreted away through dissociation."<sup>94</sup> Furthermore, she points out the limits of the theory, saying that one should not focus exclusively on dissociation in trauma and on its emphasis on the unassimilable external event which causes trauma.<sup>95</sup>

Piatek suggests that Radstone's proposal is to focus on the "emphasis of the role of unconscious processes in memory formation and in consequence the relationship between memory and fantasy."<sup>96</sup> According to Radstone, trauma theory leads to the rejection of

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<sup>90</sup> Kaplan, *Trauma Culture*, 35.

<sup>91</sup> Kaplan, *Trauma Culture*, 35.

<sup>92</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 36.

<sup>93</sup> Elaine Showalter, *Hystories: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Media* (New York: Columbia University Press 1997), 8.

<sup>94</sup> Susannah Radstone, *Memory and Methodology* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2000), 89.

<sup>95</sup> Radstone, *Memory and Methodology*, 87.

<sup>96</sup> Piatek, *History, Memory, Trauma*, 46.

unconscious agency and its “broader vision of a Manichean universe peopled by good, passive, innocent victims and bad, active, guilty perpetrators.”<sup>97</sup>

Radstone, similarly to Showalter, also argues that trauma studies are linked with the so-called victim culture that came into prominence in the last decades. She states that “the linking problems with external causes can substitute conspiracy fantasies for acknowledgment of the mind’s own agency in their production – fantasies which together constitute what Elaine Showalter termed ‘hysterical plague,’”<sup>98</sup>

Trauma theories are an important part within the humanities. With respect to that, Showalter’s *Hystories: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Media* might suggest that trauma studies are not a form of analysis, but rather an aspect of a contemporary cultural malaise. Ian Craib, the author of *The Importance of Disappointment*, argues that this “cultural malaise” encourages people to adopt the so called “false selves,”<sup>99</sup>

This concept of false self is associated with the fragmentation of external reality and its incomprehensiveness. Craib later suggests his own alternative to what we call trauma or suffering: “There is no simple world of villains and victims; there are no such things as undifferentiated and pure traumas; and there is no easy or straightforward way of dealing with what has become known.”<sup>100</sup>

According to Radstone, Craib states that the “impact of the external world will always be met by the determining agency of the inner world and that memory, therefore, cannot be conclusively differentiated from fantasy.”<sup>101</sup> Both Craib and Showalter then suggest that trauma studies within the victim culture can be interpreted as a “defensive fragmented psycho-social culture that lacks adequate containment and within authority, responsibility and agency have become increasingly complex and diffuse.”<sup>102</sup>

From the knowledge of Freud, one knows that trauma studies, within the field of humanities, focus on external events and their linear narrative structure. The main point of trauma studies in the victim culture and in the humanities, though, is different. As Radstone claims, it testifies to the “suffusion of contemporary ‘common sense’, including ‘academic’ common sense, by those theories’ underlying fantasies.”<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Radstone, *Memory and Methodology*, 89.

<sup>98</sup> Radstone, *Memory and Methodology*, 90.

<sup>99</sup> Ian Craib, *The Importance of Disappointment* (London: Routledge, 1994), 207.

<sup>100</sup> Craib, *The Importance*, 188.

<sup>101</sup> Radstone, *Memory and Methodology*, 91.

<sup>102</sup> Radstone, *Memory and Methodology*, 91.

<sup>103</sup> Radstone, *Memory and Methodology*, 91.

Another point of view on trauma studies brings Dominick LaCapra in his book *Writing History, Writing Trauma* in which he presents a counterpoint to Freud's and Caruth's theories. He suggests a basic, yet very interesting and important distinction between the notion of loss and absence.

He states that absence and loss are not binary because they interact with one another. Generally, losses may entail absence, but it does not work vice versa. He also explains that absence is of transhistorical level, whereas loss is on a historical level.<sup>104</sup> He goes on by saying that in this sense, absence is not an event implied by tenses such as present simple or past perfect, and that loss is projected by the historical past that may be narrated in the present or in the future. Furthermore, losses are very specific, as they involve a very strong events such as the death of a loved one for an individual, or events on the level of the Holocaust for affected groups of people like the Jews. He concludes that unlike absence, loss can be narrated.<sup>105</sup>

Absence and loss are not to be connected, as they are two different things, as LaCapra clearly suggests. He thinks that if one connects those two notions, absence and loss are prone to be generalized of the importance of a particular historical loss or producing very debatable ideas that everyone can be a victim (or a survivor), that all history is in a way trauma, or that we are all a part of the so-called victim culture.<sup>106</sup>

LaCapra's different point of view on absence and loss also derives two very important terms – structural and historical trauma, which he also perceives differently than his colleagues. He claims that structural trauma is experienced by everyone. However, he points out that we need to distinguish between victims and perpetrators. Victim, contrary to the popular belief, is not a psychological term, but a social, political, and ethic category. Traumatic events are very likely to make one a victim, yet not everyone who experiences trauma is one.<sup>107</sup>

Perpetrator trauma is very often connected with people who are trying to distance themselves from practices and deadly ideologies such as Nazism. LaCapra very strongly states that these perpetrators can under no circumstances be identified as victims. He provides an example of Heinrich Himmler who suffered from chronic stomach cramps who cannot and must not be qualified as a Holocaust victim.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore, Maryland: John Hopkins University Press, 2001), 48.

<sup>105</sup> LaCapra, *Writing History*, 48-49.

<sup>106</sup> LaCapra, *Writing History*, 61.

<sup>107</sup> LaCapra, *Writing History*, 79.

<sup>108</sup> LaCapra, *Writing History*, 79.



Historical trauma is, on the other hand, not experienced by everyone, but rather by those who experienced certain events, such as the Holocaust. Events like that can become what LaCapra calls the founding trauma, which can become the basic ground for collective and/or personal identity. For instance, the effects of the atom bomb in Nagasaki or Hiroshima can be a founding traumatic event for Japanese, or slavery for the African Americans.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> LaCapra, *Writing History*, 81.

### 3 Art Spiegelman' *Maus*

#### 3.1 Genre of *Maus*

After one opens *Maus*, it is clear that it is written in the form of a comic book. At the time of the publishing, that came with certain stereotypes which Spiegelman had to deal with. Those include for example the idea that a comic book cannot possibly depict a serious issue, or in Kolář words “a horrifying experience as the mass extermination of European Jewry during World War II.”<sup>110</sup> Moreover, when one heard the word comics, it automatically brought the notion of low art, and certainly not an image of high literature, which Spiegelman's *Maus* definitely is, as nowadays, it is considered a canonical piece of work.

Kolář raises several questions regarding the genre of *Maus*: “Does *Maus* belong to fiction or non-fiction? Is it biography or autobiography? A mere comic book, or a novel? Stefan Gunther answers the first question in his essay *Maus-A Survivor's Tale*, which can be found in a book *Reference Guide to Holocaust Literature*. He points out that at first, *Maus* was considered a work of fiction by the *New York Times*. However, Spiegelman protested against such decision and wrote a letter which made them reconsider it and place it under the non-fiction category.”<sup>111</sup>

Therefore, Spiegelman himself considers *Maus* to be a work of non-fiction, which is also supported by Efraim Sicher's book *The Holocaust Novel*. Sicher says that *Maus* “should not be on the bestseller fiction list because it was based on his father's memoirs and therefore it was factual, an objection that would not arise if the distinction was between literature and non-literature.”<sup>112</sup> Moreover, Kolář also agrees with this claim, as he states that “in its strong testimonial character, *Maus* approaches non-fiction.”<sup>113</sup>

Regarding the genre of *Maus*, it is important to say that both volumes of this graphic novel have two narrators. Artie tells his own story mostly in the present time in Rego Park in New York, while Vladek recalls his past during the Holocaust in Poland, Auschwitz, and other locations. Because of that, *Maus* can be considered both an autobiography of Art Spiegelman, and a biography of his father.

To explore whether *Maus* is a graphic novel or not, Gretchen Schwartz defines this type of a novel as “a medium that combines the visual and verbal as do the films, TV, an even pop-

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<sup>110</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 150.

<sup>111</sup> Young, *Reference Guide*, 301.

<sup>112</sup> Efraim Sicher, *The Holocaust Novel*, 12.

<sup>113</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 151.

up ads. The graphic novel, however, holds still and allows special attention to be given to its unique visual and word arrangement.<sup>114</sup> She also states that the readers must consider numerous things to fully understand the graphic novel. Those things include literary elements of the character, plot and dialogue, and visual elements such as colour, shading, panel layout, perspective, and the style of letters.<sup>115</sup>

With the definition established, to write and draw *Maus*, Spiegelman indeed used several of the abovementioned characteristics. Throughout the graphic novel, there are dozens of instances of words written in bold to give them special emphasis and to make the readers pay special attention to them. Furthermore, it is of high importance to look at the panels and the drawings inside them while reading. It can reveal mood of a person or whether he or she is angry or sad (see Appendix A).

Another significance of the drawings is linked to Artie's trauma. At the very beginning of the third chapter of the first volume (see Appendix B) Vladek just came from a prisoner of a war camp and is hearing about the rationing of food from his family. As the conversation flows, Richieu, Vladek's and Anja's first son, starts crying. He is comforted by Anja. However, Vladek never seems to notice, even though Richieu is trying his best to attract his attention. Without the drawings, the readers would never know about this, seemingly, unimportant matter.

As it turns out though, this is rather crucial in the grand scheme of things. One of the main topics of *Maus* is Art Spiegelman's representation of his anger towards his father, which is caused by the idolizing of his dead brother Richieu. One can argue that this panel is depicting his own feelings of him being neglected by his parents, as Richieu was by his father's lack of interest. This is, though, a matter for further chapters.

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<sup>114</sup> Gretchen Schwartz, "Expanding Literacies through Graphic Novels," *The English Journal* 95, no. 6 (July 2006): 59, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30046629>.

<sup>115</sup> Schwartz, "Expanding Literacies," 59.

### 3.2 Symbolism in *Maus*

Art Spiegelman's *Maus* is not only a graphic novel, but it could also be considered a fable which uses different kinds of anthropomorphic animals to represent various nationalities and ethnic groups. The Jews are depicted as mice, which corresponds with the title of the novel *Maus*, cats denote the Germans, pigs represent the Poles, the dogs then the Americans, and frogs the French. None of them, though, take the full body of an animal, but rather a human body with an animal head. Moreover, they are dressed as humans, speak as humans, and act like humans.

With Germans being cats and the Jews being mice, the so-called cat-and-mice metaphor emerged. It represents the basic antagonism of these two animal species, more particularly the prey and the predator roles in the Holocaust. The following excerpt is a great example of this metaphor: "In September the German Soldiers grabbed many Jews in the street. They made us sing prayers while they laughed and beat us... and before letting us go, they cut off our beards."<sup>116</sup> This could be seen as an analogy to a real-life cat and mouse "game", in which a cat catches a mouse, plays with her while the mouse is screaming, and eventually the cat either leaves the injured mouse alone, or eats it.

As Kolář claims, Spiegelman uses cats and mice "to express the nature of predatory perpetrators, victims, and bystanders."<sup>117</sup> Clearly, mice (some may even call them rats, as they look very similar in *Maus*) are an obvious reference to rodents during the Second World War, and in life in general – ugly and annoying creatures that must be exterminated to the full extent. Spiegelman, at the very beginning of *Maus*, quotes Hitler: "The Jews are undoubtedly a race, but they are not human."<sup>118</sup> According to Kolář, Spiegelman took Hitler's words literally and graphically depicted the Jews as mice to reveal its absurdity.<sup>119</sup>

Moreover, the following quote also refers to the depiction of mice, particularly Mickey Mouse in a newspaper which denounces the Walt Disney's character:

Mickey Mouse is the most miserable ideal ever revealed. ... Healthy emotions tell every independent young man and very honorable youth that the dirty and filth-covered vermin, the greatest bacteria carrier in the animal kingdom, cannot be the ideal type of animal. ... Away with the Jewish brutalization of the people! Down with Mickey Mouse! Wear the Swastika Cross.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 67.

<sup>117</sup> Stanislav Kolář, "Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma in Spiegelman's *Maus*," *Brno Studies in English* 39, no. 1 (2013): 229, <http://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/129161>.

<sup>118</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 10.

<sup>119</sup> Kolář, "Intergenerational Transmission," 153.

<sup>120</sup> Art Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 164.

There is a clear connection between the Jews and Mickey Mouse in this quote, as they are both similar to mice. One would think that if Spiegelman used animals to represent people, he would not use real animals in this novel. That is not the case, though, as he seems to like to play with different levels of representation. The back cover of *Maus* (see Appendix C) is a fantastic proof of that, as in the foreground, Spiegelman depicted Artie, one of the main characters of the novel, as he is holding a mouse in his hand, while in the background, there is a picture of Mickey Mouse.

Another reason Spiegelman decided to use animal faces to represent nationalities and ethnic groups is that had he not done it, he would have had to distinguish those people in a different way, which could have, and probably would have, been challenging for this type of novel. However, the depiction of certain nationalities might prove to be controversial. Cats could be seen as unfaithful creatures, while for instance pigs could evoke the thought of laziness or dirtiness. According to Kolář, the Poles in particular felt insulted by Spiegelman's depiction of their nationality, even though it was clear that he did not intend to imply that all the Poles were acting like pigs.<sup>121</sup> Moreover, he claims that Spiegelman could not ignore that anti-Semitism was a huge problem in Poland and that some Poles were indifferent to the Jewish suffering.<sup>122</sup>

As Kolář points out, Spiegelman was aware of the problems that would arise because of the depiction of humans as animals.<sup>123</sup> In chapter one of the second volume, Artie is wondering how to depict his wife Françoise – a French person. In his notebook, he suggests drawing her as a frog,<sup>124</sup> which is a traditional stereotype and a slang expression for the French people. Even though Françoise converted to Judaism, Artie is quite hesitant to portray her simply as a mouse. Eventually, he decides to “convert” her from a French person to a Jew by using a mouse rabbi who “says a few magic words and ZAP!”<sup>125</sup>

The animal masks are not only used to depict a certain nationality, but also to change it in certain situations. As it was very hard for the Jews to get food, they wore pig masks to “become” Polish and to blend with the crowd. However, in *Maus*, some of the Poles know the Spiegelman family, and what happens multiple times is that their neighbours or old acquaintances call them out for being Jewish, so the masks are not always enough. During the

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<sup>121</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 154.

<sup>122</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 154.

<sup>123</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 154.

<sup>124</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 171.

<sup>125</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 172.

Holocaust, many Jews tried to disguise their Jewishness and become Christians. As Kolář explains, the masks defended them against persecution.<sup>126</sup>

The persecution of the Spiegelman family can be observed at the beginning of the sixth chapter of the first volume, where Vladek and Anja are trying to find a hiding place so that the Germans would not find them. Unfortunately, “an old witch recognized Anja from her window”<sup>127</sup> and starts screaming: “There’s a Jewess in the courtyard! Police!”<sup>128</sup> Clearly, this “old witch” is one of the Polish people who do not care about the Jews at all, and rather than helping them, she tries to reveal their true identity and with her scream summon the Gestapo.

Another example can be found towards the end of the first volume when Vladek, wearing a pig mask, is planning to leave for Hungary, as he is said that Hungary is a better place to live for the Jews. However, as he is walking down the street, kids notice him, recognize him as a Jewish person, and start screaming: “Look! A Jew! A Jew! Help! Mommy! A Jew!”<sup>129</sup> Vladek keeps his calm, approaches the parents of the children, and says: “Heil Hitler”<sup>130</sup> in order for them to believe he is not Jewish, but in fact a Pole. Moreover, Vladek, switching back to present, explains Artie that mothers taught kids to “Be careful! A Jew will catch you to a bag and eat you!”<sup>131</sup>

Interestingly enough, Spiegelman uses the masks even several decades after the Second World War. At the very beginning of chapter two of the second volume, Artie is thinking about all the people he lost and about the success of the first part of *Maus*. Even though his work was a critical and commercial success, Artie is deeply depressed and does not care about the money he earned at all, which will be a matter for the following chapters.

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<sup>126</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 155.

<sup>127</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 139.

<sup>128</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 139.

<sup>129</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 151.

<sup>130</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 151.

<sup>131</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 151.

### 3.3 Vladek's Story

To understand what Vladek came through during the Holocaust, it is important to summarize his part of the story within *Maus*. In 1937, before the Holocaust itself took place, Vladek marries Anja and moves to Sosnowiec to become a manufacturer, running his own factory. Around this time, Anja gives birth to his first son, Richieu, which causes her to develop postnatal depression. The doctors recommend her to seek treatment in a Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakian sanatorium and tells Vladek that it would be much easier if he accompanied her, to which he agrees.

After they arrive back home, it is clear that the anti-Semitic tensions are growing inside Poland, and Vladek is recruited to the army shortly before the Nazi invasion of Poland. He is sent to the front, captured after a few days by the Germans, and forced to work as a prisoner of the war. After his release, on his way home, he finds out that Germany annexed Sosnowiec, and instead of going back home, he gets off the train on the other side of the border in the German protectorate. With many difficulties and thorough planning, he gets across the border, and reunites with his family in Sosnowiec.

As the Jewish persecution increases, the Nazis take away Vladek's factory and he together with his is forced to move out of their luxurious big house to a much smaller apartment. The food is now rationed and because Vladek is a very skilled person, he joins a black market to trade various things for additional food. In 1943, every Jew left in Sosnowiec is ordered to move to a ghetto in Srodula. Here the family splits up again, as the parents send Richieu to Zawiercie to his aunt for alleged safety. However, the Jews in Zawiercie are being sent to Auschwitz shortly after Richieu's arrival and since the aunt does not want to risk anyone being taken away, she decides to poison her kids along with Richieu.

The ghetto in Srodula is then closed because the Allies are approaching the borders. Vladek together with Anja's family and other Jews, though, decided to build a bunker to hide from the Nazis, which is later discovered, and they are all sent to prison inside the ghetto. Because the members of Anja's family are too old, they are sent to Auschwitz to the gas chambers right away. Vladek makes a deal with his nephew who is working for the Germans and gets him and Anja a spot in yet another bunker, which is fortunately not discovered. After the Nazis leave Srodula, they are free to go.

They go back to Sosnowiec where they hide wherever than can. One day, they make another deal to get them to Hungary, which is supposed to be safe for the Jews. However, the people who offered help sell them out to the Gestapo and both Vladek and Anja are sent to

Auschwitz to a death camp, where they are separated until the end of the war. In the death camp, Vladek is doing his absolute best to survive and to avoid the so called *selektionen* – a process which determined whether he is still able to work, or is too weak to do so, which would result in him being sent to the gas chamber.

After a few days, Vladek finds out that Anja is still alive, and decides to contact her with the help of another woman. The Allies meanwhile are getting closer to the German front, so the Nazis decide to move the Jews from Auschwitz to the Reich, particularly to Gross-Rossen and then to Dachau. In Dachau, Vladek catches typhus and is on the brink of life and death for several days. Fortunately, he gets better and because the Allies are getting even closer, the war soon ends, and the death camps are freed. Vladek and Anja both survive and finally reunite. However, Anja's mental health is deteriorating, and in 1968, she commits suicide. That will, naturally, prove to be of paramount importance both for Vladek and Artie.



### 3.4 Trauma in *Maus*

With Vladek's story established, it is now easier to understand the origins of his trauma as well as the magnitude of it. The first volume of *Maus* is called *My Father Bleeds History*, and as Alison Mandaville points out, Vladek's bleeding is twofold. He bleeds himself by telling his story to Artie, which he can control to some extent. At the same time though, he bleeds his history involuntarily, as it "exceeds him, escapes him in all his actions and words, staining his world beyond the tale he tells to contain it."<sup>132</sup>

Since the very beginning of *Maus*, Vladek is doing his best to forget his past and to never intentionally remind himself of his traumatic memory. However, as Artie asks questions about the Holocaust, it all comes back to Vladek and he starts to remember. Towards the end of the book, Vladek says: "All such things of the war, I tried to put out from my mind once for all... Until you rebuild me all this from your questions."<sup>133</sup>

Most of the time, Vladek's narration of his story is sooner or later stopped by some unrelated thought. This is a kind of coping mechanism of his, as once he feels that the trauma is coming back to him too much, he decides to stop telling the story and instead, he starts to focus on something unrelated and unimportant. For instance, at the end of the second chapter of the second volume, Vladek is talking about being recruited to Polish army, when suddenly he says: "Ach, it's my eyes. Ever since I got in my left eye the hemorrhaging and the glaucoma, it had to be taken out from me. And now I don't see so well."<sup>134</sup> He continues telling Artie about his eye and after a while he says: "Well, it's enough for today, yes? I'm tired..."<sup>135</sup>

Approximately in the middle of *Maus*, it is revealed that Anja was writing her own diary in which she wrote about her struggles and experiences during the Holocaust. When Artie asks Vladek whether he could read them, Vladek answers: "No. You'll not find it. Because I remind to myself what happened... These notebooks, and other really nice things of mother... One time I had a very bad day... and all of these things I destroyed."<sup>136</sup> As expected, Artie is not very happy with this response, and as he is very surprised, he just asks: "You what?"<sup>137</sup> To which Vladek replies: "After Anja died I had to make an order with everything... These papers had

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<sup>132</sup> Alison Mandaville, "Tailing Violence: Comics Narrative, Gender, and the Father-Tale in Art Spiegelman's *Maus*," *Pacific Coast Philology* 44, no. 2 (2009): 234, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25699568>.

<sup>133</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 258.

<sup>134</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 41.

<sup>135</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 41.

<sup>136</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 160.

<sup>137</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 161.

too many memories. So I burned them.”<sup>138</sup> Artie gets very angry and starts yelling at his father, calling him a murderer. It is understandable that Artie is upset, however, he never seems to even consider his father’s past when it comes to the events happening in the present.

Calling Vladek a murderer may seem harsh, but in the bigger picture, he killed Anja’s memory and her future testimony. Kolář explains that “the mother’s version of the Holocaust is silenced.”<sup>139</sup> Vladek did not burn them out of spite, as Alison Mandaville points out, but to try to delete his memories and maybe even undone his past so that he could truly forget about it.<sup>140</sup> However, that is not possible. Furthermore, the deed of burning the diaries itself is paradoxical, as Vladek is hoarding everything he finds on the ground that could be in any way useful.

Every Holocaust survivor was influenced by his or her traumatic memories, and this influence was later projected in their life in various ways. Vladek’s time in the death camps and in the prisoner of war camps makes him aware of everything he possesses and moreover, he is very thrifty to such extent that he never ever throws away any food and picks up everything from the ground that could be even remotely useful. It seems as if he has never gotten out of the Holocaust. According to Kolář, these situations are a Spiegelman’s way of bringing humour to such a serious matter as the Holocaust.<sup>141</sup> Moreover, it is an obvious sign of compulsive repetitive behaviour which is supported by Judith Lewis Herman, who claims that “traumatized people find themselves reenacting some aspects of the trauma scene in disguised form, without realizing what they are doing.”<sup>142</sup>

An example of Vladek’s thriftiness can be found at the end of the fifth chapter of the first volume (see Appendix D), where Vladek picks up telephone wire from the ground and says: “Inside [in the death camps] it’s little wires. It’s good for tying things.”<sup>143</sup> To which Artie answers: “You always pick up trash! Can’t you just buy wire?”<sup>144</sup> Apart from things such as wire, Vladek also collects paper which is another habit he built in the camps. In Auschwitz, while separated from Anja, he is working with a man who is eating cheese that is wrapped in paper. He asks him if he could keep it so that he could write letters to Anja or use it as a toilet

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<sup>138</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 161.

<sup>139</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 172.

<sup>140</sup> Alice Mandaville, “Tailing Violence,” 234.

<sup>141</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 158.

<sup>142</sup> Judith Lewis Herman, *Trauma and Recovery* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 40.

<sup>143</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 118.

<sup>144</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 118.

paper. In the present day, Vladek explains that “even paper was hard to have there. My friends came always to me when they needed.”<sup>145</sup>

In one instance in the present, Vladek is counting crackers so that he precisely knows how many he has left. This is a consequence of experiencing the rationing of food in Sosnowiec when the Nazi’s occupation of Poland started, and in the death camps, where he was always starving. The food in the death camps was so valuable that Vladek could use it to bribe certain people to get Anja out of Birkenau while in Auschwitz, so that they could together escape to a safer place. Furthermore, in the present time, Vladek explains Artie that “ever since Hitler I don’t like to throw out even a crumb.”<sup>146</sup> Artie responds by saying: “Then just save the damn special K. in case Hitler ever comes back!”<sup>147</sup> It is clear that his father’s thriftiness, and his experience of the Holocaust, will never be understood by Artie, because he simply did not experience it himself.

There are more situations that evoke the feeling that Vladek has never come back from Auschwitz. In one instance, when speaking about his experience in the death camps, he points out that “if you want to live, it’s good to be friendly.” This can be explained by van der Kolk and Onno van der Hart who claim that: “They [people suffering from trauma] can tell the story of their traumatization with a mixture of past and present, but their current life is characterized by doubt and humiliation, by feeling of guilt and shame: past meaning schemes determine the interpretation of the present.”<sup>148</sup>

Arguably the worst trauma Vladek is carrying is the survivor’s guilt. He blames himself for the death of Richieu, as he thinks he made a wrong decision to send him away with his aunt. Objectively though, there was not really anything he could have done differently which would have saved Richieu. If Richieu had gone to Auschwitz with them, he would have had been sent to the gas chambers, as he was a little baby unable to work or contribute in any way. Not only Vladek is experiencing the survivor’s guilt, but also Pavel, Artie’s psychologist and a Holocaust survivor, who states that: “Yes. Life always takes the side of life, and somehow the victims are blamed. But it wasn’t the best people who survived, nor did the best ones die. It was random!”<sup>149</sup>

Vladek’s trauma is influencing not only Artie, who will be examined later in this chapter, but also Mala, his second wife. Her life and her relationship with Vladek is influenced by Anja’s suicide. As Kolář suggests, her death proves to be an irretrievable loss which Vladek

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<sup>145</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 223.

<sup>146</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 238.

<sup>147</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 238.

<sup>148</sup> Van der Kolk, “The Intrusive Past,” 425-54.

<sup>149</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 205.

cannot cope with for the rest of his life – the source of mourning and melancholy.<sup>150</sup> Mourning, as Herman states, “is the only way to give due honour to loss; there is no adequate compensation.”<sup>151</sup> One may assume that if Anja had not committed suicide and rather had died in the death camps, it would not have had such a strong impact on Vladek, as it seems like he, together with Artie, blames himself for her death.

As a consequence, Mala is experiencing a sense of inadequacy because she can never be a decent substitute for Anja. One time, Vladek has a conversation with Artie and Mala, and confesses that: (see Appendix E) “I’m always thinking about her [Anja] anyway.”<sup>152</sup> To which Mala responds: “Yes, you keep photos of her all around your desk – like a shrine!”<sup>153</sup> Vladek’s answer does not really help though: “What have I to do, Mala? In the garbage put them? Of you also I have a photo on the desk!”<sup>154</sup> After that, Mala leaves the room, looking sad and angry.

Moreover, Mala and Vladek are constantly arguing over money, even though it is very easily explainable what made him this frugal – The Holocaust. In Mala’s words: “it causes him physical pain to part with even a nickel.”<sup>155</sup> Artie agrees with her because he too experienced similar situations in his childhood: “Whenever I needed school supplies or new clothes mom [Anja] would have to plead and argue for weeks before he’d cough up any dough.”<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Kolář et al, *Reflections of Trauma*, 44.

<sup>151</sup> Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 190.

<sup>152</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 106.

<sup>153</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 106.

<sup>154</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 106.

<sup>155</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 133.

<sup>156</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 132.

### 3.5 Transmission of Trauma in *Maus*

The Holocaust is by no means a source of founding trauma, which has been already established as the basis for personal and collective identity. Victoria A. Elmwood suggests that *Maus* is Art Spiegelman's attempt "to write himself into a family from whose founding trauma he was absent."<sup>157</sup> Throughout the whole graphic novel, Artie is trying to create his own identity with respect to his parents', especially his father's, experience of the Holocaust.

The transmission of trauma is best explained by the relationship between Artie and Vladek. From the very beginning, it is clearly deeply influenced by Vladek's traumatic experience. The first page of *Maus* presents little Artie as he is falling down from his skateboard, making him slow so that his friends skate away without him. He starts crying and Vladek asks him: "Why do you cry, Artie?"<sup>158</sup> He responds: "I-i fell, and my friends skated away w-without me."<sup>159</sup> Vladek stops working, looks at Artie, and says: "Friends? Your friends?... If you lock them together in a room with no food for a week.... Then you could see what it is, friends!"<sup>160</sup>

The previous example is taken before the chapter one of the first volume starts. Artie is depicted as a very little boy, suggesting that Vladek is belittling Artie's problems since his early childhood, which he continues to do in both volumes of *Maus*. Moreover, it shows that any problem lesser than what he has experienced during the Holocaust is of the lowest importance to him and is not even worth mentioning.

Artie visits Vladek irregularly which he explains in the very first panel of the first chapter: "I went out to see my father in Rego Park. I hadn't seen him in a long time – we weren't that close."<sup>161</sup> Their relationship is very complicated. The previous chapter of this thesis revealed that Vladek's thriftiness is part of the problem. However, the fact that Artie did not experience the Holocaust is of much higher significance. Because of that, Artie does not understand why Vladek never wants to throw away food or why he always picks up random stuff from the ground.

Vladek is a man of many skills, a jack of all trades to put simply. Throughout his life, he ran his own factory, sold various things on the black market, or for instance worked in a tin

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<sup>157</sup> Victoria A. Elmwood, "Happy, Happy Ever After': The Transformation of Trauma Between The Generations in Art Spiegelman's *Maus: A Survivor's Tale*," *Biography* 27, no. 4 (2004): 691, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23540686>.

<sup>158</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 6.

<sup>159</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 6.

<sup>160</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 6.

<sup>161</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 13.

shop. All in all, Vladek is able to fix various things and as Artie points out: “He loved showing-off how handy he was...and proving that anything I did was all wrong. He made me completely neurotic about fixing stuff. [...] One reason I became an artist was that he thought it was impractical – just a waste of time...it was an area where I wouldn’t have to compete with him.”<sup>162</sup>

In one situation, Vladek asks Artie and Françoise to help him count something for the bank. They do the math twice, but the final result always comes off by a few cents. When Artie refuses to do it for the third time, Vladek says: “Always you’re so lazy!”<sup>163</sup> to which Artie replies: “Lazy?! Damn it, you’re driving me nuts!”<sup>164</sup> Françoise instantly tries to calm both of them down by saying: “Wait! Why don’t you take a break? I’ll find the mistake”<sup>165</sup> to which Vladek says: “Yes! With Françoise I can do it!”<sup>166</sup> What Vladek is doing is essentially suggesting that he can do it with Françoise, but not with Artie, because he is incapable of doing the work properly.

As Kolář suggests, this competition between Artie and his father continues even after Vladek’s death. He also claims that Artie feels very insecure about his work in comparison with “his father’s miraculous survivor,”<sup>167</sup> which Artie confesses himself in a conversation with his therapist Pavel: “Mainly I remember arguing with him...and being told that I couldn’t do anything as well as he could. No matter what I accomplished, it doesn’t seem like much compared to surviving Auschwitz.”<sup>168</sup>

Pavel makes a very important observation about Vladek, about whom he says: “Maybe your father needed to show that he was always right-that he could always survive-because he felt guilty about surviving. And he took his guilt on you, where it was safe...on the real survivor.”<sup>169</sup>

One thing Artie can never get out of his head is the fact that he is always being compared to his dead brother Richieu, even though no one ever says it explicitly. As Kolář explains: “His [Artie’s] trauma is caused by his feeling that he is merely living in the shadow of his brother Richieu, who perished during the war.”<sup>170</sup> The best example can be found at the beginning of the second volume, where Artie is having a conversation with his wife

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<sup>162</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 99.

<sup>163</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 183.

<sup>164</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 183.

<sup>165</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 183.

<sup>166</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 183.

<sup>167</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 172.

<sup>168</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 204.

<sup>169</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 204.

<sup>170</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 164.

Francoise. He is thinking about whether his childhood would have been any different had Richieu survived the Holocaust. Moreover, he says that he never really thought about Richieu when he was younger because: “He was mainly a large, blurry photograph hanging in my parent’s bedroom.”<sup>171</sup>

Even though he claims that he never really thought about him, his brother clearly influenced his younger self. To Francoise he says:

The photo [Richieu] never threw tantrums or got in any kind of trouble...It was an ideal kid, and I was a pain in the ass. I couldn’t compete. They [Vladek and Anja] never talked about Richieu, but that photo was a kind of reproach. He’d have become a doctor, and married a wealthy Jewish girl... The creep.<sup>172</sup>

According to Elmwood, “Richieu’s photo is a site of great investment for Spiegelman – it blocks the work of forgetting in Art’s interaction with it as an undefeatable adversary.”<sup>173</sup> Artie concludes the conversation with Francoise: “It’s spooky, having sibling rivalry with a snapshot!”<sup>174</sup> According to Elmwood, this sentence is “a vivid illustration of what it means to be deeply affected by postmemory, by the effects of transgenerational distancing from significant events by which loved ones have been intensely influenced.”<sup>175</sup>

Sibling rivalry is a very common everyday issue for many children. However, it is by no means different for Artie, a second-generation Holocaust survivor, who has never had the chance to meet his brother. The fact that Richieu is dead means that Artie cannot liberate himself from the feeling of total estrangement from his parents, as he is now an only child. Moreover, as Elmwood explains, Richieu went through the Holocaust with Vladek and Anja, but Artie did not, which leaves him “at the bottom of the family order.”<sup>176</sup> With that said, Artie will always feel inadequate in comparison with Richieu, or as Efraim Sicher puts it: “Richieu is the absent presence in the home that makes Art feel guilty and inferior.”<sup>177</sup>

The sibling rivalry reaches its climax at the very end of the graphic novel where his father is on the brink of death and is very disoriented. He confuses Artie for Richieu, saying: “Let’s stop, please, your tape recorder... I’m tired from talking, Richieu, and it’s enough stories for now...”<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 175.

<sup>172</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 175.

<sup>173</sup> Elmwood, “Happy, Happy,” 702.

<sup>174</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 175.

<sup>175</sup> Elmwood, “Happy, Happy,” 703.

<sup>176</sup> Elmwood, “Happy, Happy,” 703.

<sup>177</sup> Sicher, *The Holocaust Novel*, 148.

<sup>178</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 296.

What bothers Artie even more than being compared to his brother is his mother's suicide. This event is so influential that Art Spiegelman wrote a comic book called *Prisoner on the Hell Planet* dedicated solely to her death, which is also present in the first volume of *Maus*. Kolář calls her suicide: "his [Artie's] own little private Holocaust,"<sup>179</sup> suggesting the significance of her death in Artie's life.

In this short comic strip, Artie tells the story of his mother's suicide and her funeral, only a few months after he is released from a mental state hospital. He feels an extreme guilt over what has happened because of the last words he told his mother. One time late at night, Anja goes to Artie's room and asks him: "...Artie...You...Still...Love...Me.... Don't you? ...."<sup>180</sup> He turns away from her and without any emotions he replies: "Sure, Ma!"<sup>181</sup> His guilt is moreover reinforced by a family friend who finds Artie at the funeral: "Now you cry! Better you cried when your mother was still alive!"<sup>182</sup> After that, Artie remembers that he "felt nauseous.... The guilt was overwhelming!"<sup>183</sup> According to Michael E. Staub, this family friend implies that "his [Artie's] life in the counterculture and his emotional breakdown killed her."<sup>184</sup>

What makes things worse is that Anja did not leave any suicide note, which makes Artie "struggle with the agony of not knowing her motivations," as Staub points out.<sup>185</sup> One panel shows Artie alone with his own thoughts, in which the possible reasons of Anja's suicide appear: "Menopausal depression," "Hitler did it!" Another swirl through his head also calls his mother "Bitch,"<sup>186</sup> showing his profound despair and sadness.

Anja's tragic story seems to be, as James E. Young claims, the "*Maus*'s negative center of gravity, the invisible planet around which both the father's telling and Spiegelman's recovery of it revolve."<sup>187</sup> In the book, Anja never speaks for herself, she is only given a voice by either Vladek or Artie. Therefore, there is no direct source of her testimony, which to a great degree explains why Artie is so angry at his father for burning her diaries. What is more, Vladek has never read them which leaves Artie with no information about her experience during the Holocaust.

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<sup>179</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 158.

<sup>180</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 105.

<sup>181</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 105.

<sup>182</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 104.

<sup>183</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 105.

<sup>184</sup> Michael E. Staub, "The Shoah Goes on and on: Remembrance and Representation in Art Spiegelman's *Maus*," *MELUS* 20, no.3 (1995): 40, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/467741>.

<sup>185</sup> Staub, "The Shoah," 40.

<sup>186</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 105.

<sup>187</sup> James E. Young, "The Holocaust as Vicarious Past: Art Spiegelman's 'Maus' and the Afterimages of History," *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 3 (Spring 1998): 668, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1344086>.



In *Prisoner on the Hell Planet*, Artie is wearing clothes prisoners wear in the concentration camps (see Appendix F). Staub explains this fact as: “the persistence of the Holocaust’s legacy.”<sup>188</sup> This short comic strip ends with Artie behind the bars, addressing his already dead mother: “Well, mom, if you’re listening...Congratulations!... You’ve committed the perfect crime....You put me here... Shorted all my circuits...Cut my nerve endings...And crossed my wires!...You murdered me. Mommy, and you left me here to take the rap!!!”<sup>189</sup> This scene, as Staub explains, works to undercut any thoughts a potential reader might have about the survivors or their children that they are either saints or heroes.<sup>190</sup>

*Prisoner on the Hell Planet* is very different from the rest of the book in terms of its form and its visual style. Those four pages are the only ones that are depicting humans as humans, and not as humans wearing an animal mask. This is because Spiegelman experienced his mother’s suicide himself, unlike the Holocaust, so he depicted it in a more personal manner, without the need of distancing himself from it by depicting people as animals.

What is interesting is that everyone in this comic strip has an individualized face. Yet, as Dominick LaCapra suggests, the faces are “ghoulish and rendered in a stark, if not brutal manner. They make less contact with humanity than the explicitly displaced figures of *Maus*.”<sup>191</sup> With that said, the animals in the rest of the book are in fact more human-like than the humans in *Prisoner on the Hell Planet*.

The visual style of this short comic strip, which was written during the Spiegelman’s involvement in the underground cultural movement in the 1960s and 1970s, is vastly different from the one in the rest of *Maus*. Here, Spiegelman uses much more emotional depiction, which could be explained by the way he perceives his mother’s suicide. It is his and only his story, unlike the rest of the book, which is mostly a recollection of Vladek’s memories. Because of that, he can remember the peoples’ faces at the funeral and faithfully draw them.

In contrast with Vladek, who is experiencing survivor’s guilt, Artie is experiencing the guilt of not experiencing the Holocaust at all. At the beginning of the second volume, Artie says to Francoise:

I mean, I can’t even make any sense out of my relationship with my father... How am I supposed to make any sense out of Auschwitz?... Of the Holocaust?... I know this is insane, but I somehow wish I had been in Auschwitz with my parents so I could really know what they lived through!... I guess it’s some kind of guilt about having had an easier life than they did.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Staub, “The Shoah,” 40.

<sup>189</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 105.

<sup>190</sup> Staub, “The Shoah,” 40.

<sup>191</sup> Dominick LaCapra, *History and Memory After Auschwitz* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), 159.

<sup>192</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 176.

The magnitude of his guilt is further escalated when he mentions that one time, he was dreaming about Nazi soldiers storming into his classroom and taking away all the Jewish pupils. Another time, in another conversation with Françoise, he is so obsessed with the Holocaust that: “It’s just that sometimes I’d fantasize Zyklon B coming out of our shower instead of water.”<sup>193</sup> As Kolář concludes, he is well aware that he did not experience the Holocaust which is greatly contributing to his sense of inadequacy. “Put simply, Richieu was there, while he [Artie] was not!”<sup>194</sup>

With everything that has been said so far about Artie, it is no wonder that he seeks professional help to try to come to terms with his trauma. According to Sicher, “it was in the late 1970s that psychologists first began linking disorders among children of survivors with their parents’ experience.”<sup>195</sup> He finds help at the very beginning of chapter two of the second volume, which takes place in 1986, 4 years after Vladek’s death, and around the time Artie publishes the first volume of *Maus*. His therapist is called Pavel, who is a Czech Jew who, similarly to Vladek, has also experienced Auschwitz. He asks Artie how he is doing, and he replies:

completely messed up. I mean, things couldn’t be going better with my ‘carrier’, or at home, but mostly I feel like crying. I can’t work. My time is being sucked up by interviews and business propositions I can’t deal with. But even when I’m left alone I’m totally blocked. Instead of working on my book I just lie on my couch for hours and stare at a small grease spot on the upholstery. Somehow my arguments with my father lost a little of their urgency...and Auschwitz just seems too scary to think about...so I just lie there...<sup>196</sup>

This is the first time Artie himself is admitting he has real psychological problems, and from the abovementioned words, he seems to be suffering from depression which is a logical consequence of his life as a second-generation Holocaust survivor, and as a person who tragically lost his mother at a relatively young age.

Even his career success is not enough for him to feel better. In reality, he feels much worse because of that. He did not write and draw *Maus* to get money, but, first and foremost, to understand what his father came through and to understand what he did not experience. As Artie says, there are “at least fifteen foreign editions coming out. I’ve gotten 4 serious offers to turn my book into a TV special or movie. (I don’t wanna).”<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 176.

<sup>194</sup> Kolář et al, *Reflections of Trauma*, 42.

<sup>195</sup> Sicher, *The Holocaust Novel*, 136.

<sup>196</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 203-204.

<sup>197</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 201.

It is obvious that money will not make Artie happy. Furthermore, he is offered a 50% profit of a licensing deal which he also declines. The person who offers this deal then asks him “So, whaddya want – a bigger percentage? Hey, we can talk.” Artie is now depicted as a little crying baby (see Appendix G) who responds: “I want...absolution. No...No... I want...I want.. my mommy!”<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*, 202.

## 4 Cynthia Ozick's *The Shawl*

### 4.1 The Shawl, an Item of Life and Death

Unlike Art Spiegelman, Cynthia Ozick did not experience the Holocaust. However, in an interview with Elaine M. Kauvar, Cynthia Ozick says about this horrible event that: "I believe with all my soul that it [the Holocaust] ought to remain exclusively attached to document and history. But it won't."<sup>199</sup> Moreover, when she is asked whether only a true witness is supposed to write about the Holocaust, she answers that "insofar as my stringent feelings about this world sanction writing a novel at all, I would say that if a novel must be written, let it be written by a true witness."<sup>200</sup>

When confronted about *The Shawl* being a work of fiction, Ozick says that she did not admire that she wrote it. Moreover, she states:

I did it because I couldn't help it. It wanted to be done. I didn't want to do it, and afterward I've in a way punished myself, I've accused myself for having done it. I wasn't there, and I pretended through imagination that I was. I've also on occasion been punished in angry letters from people who *were* there. But I wasn't there, and the story is not a document; it's an imagining.<sup>201</sup>

In another interview for The Center of Fiction, she is asked whether she is happy to be studied in US college courses on the Holocaust along with Primo Levi and Elie Wiesel. She replies:

I am always grateful to be read at all. But *The Shawl*, the little book in question, is a work of fiction, while Levi and Wiesel write as victims and witnesses. Their work has the power of document. I would be happier if some other novel of mine had attracted the interest of the academy, since I am not entitled to be regarded as "a Holocaust writer."<sup>202</sup>

Cynthia Ozick wrote *The Shawl* in the early 1970s but decided not to publish it for several years. "I kept it in a drawer because I felt it to be anomalous and not quite legitimate. [...] It's my belief that the documents have the greater power of truth-telling."<sup>203</sup> Stanislav Kolář

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<sup>199</sup> Elaine M. Kauvar and Cynthia Ozick, "An Interview with Cynthia Ozick," *Contemporary Literature* 34, no. 3 (Autumn 1993): 390, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1208680>.

<sup>200</sup> Kauvar, "An Interview," 390.

<sup>201</sup> Kauvar, "An Interview," 391.

<sup>202</sup> "Cynthia Ozick Interviewed by Alessandra Farkas," The Center of Fiction, accessed May 25, 2021, <https://centerforfiction.org/interviews/cynthia-ozick-interviewed-by-alessandra-farkas/>.

<sup>203</sup> The Center of Fiction, "Cynthia Ozick."

is very grateful that she eventually decided to publish it, “for her entire book *The Shawl* is an extraordinary strong work and one of the most compelling pieces of prose on the Holocaust.”<sup>204</sup>

Ozick also talked about the origin of *The Shawl* in an interview with Dana Gioia, a former chairman of National Endowment for the Arts, in which she stated that: “*The Shawl* began with a line, one sentence in *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* by William Shirer. This one sentence told of a real event, about a baby being thrown against an electrified fence. And that stayed with me and stayed with me, and that was the very explicit origin of *The Shawl*.”<sup>205</sup>

*The Shawl* is a very short story. However, in the approximately seven pages, Ozick manages to tell much more than many novels consisting of hundreds of pages could not. John K. Roth in his book *Holocaust Literature* points out that “in seven short, poetically terrifying pages, Ozick compresses the unspeakable experience of the Holocaust into a story that is as close to formal perfection as a story can be.”<sup>206</sup> This short story was firstly published in 1980 in *The New Yorker*, followed by its sequel, a novella *Rosa*, which was released three years later in 1983, also in *The New Yorker*. Both of them were then published together under the title *The Shawl* in 1989.

Right at the beginning of the story, the readers are taken to a death march with no additional information about the background of the characters or the destination the prisoners are being taken to. The story revolves around three main characters – Rosa Lublin, her daughter Magda, and another child, a fourteen-year-old Stella, who is in the sequel *Rosa* determined as Rosa’s niece.

On the way to the death camp, presumably Auschwitz, Rosa is facing a decision that could be analogically called Sophie’s choice. Before entering the camp, she is thinking whether she should give Magda to a stranger, or whether she should take her with her to the death camp and try to protect her there. Understandably, Rosa is scared that the stranger would drop her baby or maybe even not accept it at all. Also, she thinks about the possibility that while giving the child away, a Nazi soldier would notice her and kill them both.

Because of that, she decides to take Magda with her. Throughout the first few pages, her daughter is tucked into a shawl which is not only the title of this short story, but also the central metaphor. As it turns out, it is also an object that keeps the person holding it alive and a strong element that connects *The Shawl* and its sequel *Rosa*.

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<sup>204</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 126.

<sup>205</sup> “The Shawl,” National Endowment for the Arts, accessed May 25, 2021, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200916180732/https://www.arts.gov/national-initiatives/nea-big-read/the-shawl>.

<sup>206</sup> John. K. Roth, *Holocaust Literature*, 468.

Billie T. Jones claims that “a shawl, as a long piece of woven cloth, is a richly evocative symbol for feminine, the maternal – and all that should come with maternity: softness, protection, warmth, and comfort. And yet in these stories, the shawl, from its first mention, is permeated with contradictions.”<sup>207</sup> In this story, the shawl represents three main notions – life, death, and a sort of memento of the past.

Magda is always “wound up in the shawl,”<sup>208</sup> as it conceals her from the eyes of the Nazis and from the certain death. If not hidden, she would be killed because the children, from toddlers to 12 years old, were “killed immediately upon arrival at the death camps.”<sup>209</sup> This piece of clothes protected Magda as “no one could reach her inside the little house of the shawl’s windings,”<sup>210</sup> and as long as she is hidden in the shawl, “Magda did not die, she stayed alive, although very quiet.”<sup>211</sup>

Rosa is hiding her daughter not only in the shawl, but also inside her breasts. However, she is aware that that would not be enough and sooner or later Magda would die:

Rosa knew Magda was going to die very soon; she should have been dead already, but she had been buried away inside the magic shawl, mistaken there for the shivering mound of Rosa’s breasts; Rosa clung to the shawl as if it covered only herself. No one took it away from her. Magda was mute. She never cried. Rosa hid her in the barracks, under the shawl, but she knew that one day someone would inform; or one day someone, not even Stella, would steal Magda to eat her.<sup>212</sup>

From the previous excerpt, the shawl can also be perceived as a pacifier, because while sucking to it or being hidden in it, Magda is silent, which prevents her death. However, Jones points out that Magda being quiet is not about her hunger being satisfied, but rather “a sense of resignation” that her mother transferred to her through the shawl as “through the umbilical cord.”<sup>213</sup>

From the nature of the cloth, it is also a source of warmth and comfort. Moreover as Kolář explains, “the narrator lets us know that the shawl transcends its common purpose,”<sup>214</sup> because Ozick describes the shawl as “it was a magic shawl, it could nourish an infant for three days and three nights.”<sup>215</sup> Because Rosa is unable to provide enough milk for her daughter, the

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<sup>207</sup> Billie T. Jones, “The Fabrics of Her Life: Cloth as Symbol in Cynthia Ozick’s ‘The Shawl,’” *Studies in American Jewish Literature* 24 (2002): 73, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41205960>.

<sup>208</sup> Cynthia Ozick, *The Shawl* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 3.

<sup>209</sup> “Children,” *The Holocaust*, accessed May 26, 2021, <https://www.holocaust.com.au/resources/supplementary-material/children/>.

<sup>210</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 4.

<sup>211</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 5.

<sup>212</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 5-6.

<sup>213</sup> Jones, “The Fabrics,” 73.

<sup>214</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 128.

<sup>215</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 5.

shawl also becomes substitute for food, or as Kolář puts it, “the shawl substitutes the mother and turns into a surrogate beast.”<sup>216</sup>

According to Jones, the shawl also provides an emotional comfort<sup>217</sup> to Magda, as she “laughed at her shawl when the wind blew its corners,”<sup>218</sup> despite the fact that she “had never seem to laugh.”<sup>219</sup> Moreover, the shawl was Magda’s “own baby, her pet, her little sister”<sup>220</sup> to which “she tangled herself up in it and sucked on one of the corners when she wanted to be very still.”<sup>221</sup>

As established in the previous paragraphs, having the shawl means life, while not having it, or rather losing it, means death. When Stella takes the shawl away from Magda out of jealousy, the baby is doomed to die very soon. “Then Stella took the shawl away and made Magda die,<sup>222</sup>” writes Ozick many moments before Magda’s actual death, as it is clear to Rosa that she is indeed going to die.

After having lost the shawl, Magda starts looking for it, getting onto the roll-call arena. Rosa tries to catch up with her, but Magda is too far away already. Rosa then must make yet another choice, whether to go after Magda who is crying loudly, or go back for the shawl which would calm her down. She goes back for it, but after she comes back for her daughter, she is already in the arms of a Nazi soldier. “She was high up, elevated, riding someone’s shoulder.”<sup>223</sup>

With the sudden realization of Magda’s upcoming death, Rosa is not experiencing sadness, but rather “a fearful joy,”<sup>224</sup> as she finally hears Magda crying, which she, being hidden in the shawl, has not done in a long time. It does not last long though, because shortly after, Magda is being thrown at the electrified fence, dying immediately. Instead of running after her baby, Rosa stuffs her mouth with the shawl so that she does not scream. “She took Magda’s shawl and filled her own mouth with it, stuffed it in and stuffed it in.”<sup>225</sup>

Up to this moment, the shawl served as a life saver for Magda, but now, as her mother stuffs her mouth with it, it also becomes a life saver for Rosa. As Jones explains, by using the shawl as a kind of pacifier, Rosa supresses “her cries of horror at her failure to protect her daughter.”<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 128.

<sup>217</sup> Jones, “The Fabrics,” 73.

<sup>218</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 6.

<sup>219</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 6.

<sup>220</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 6.

<sup>221</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 6.

<sup>222</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 6.

<sup>223</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 9.

<sup>224</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 7.

<sup>225</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 10.

<sup>226</sup> Jones, “The Fabrics,” 74.

The shawl provides not only protection and comfort for Magda, but also food and nourishment. As Kolář points out, the shawl is a metaphorical mother for Magda that is provided by her real mother Rosa.<sup>227</sup> When Rosa picks up the shawl herself, she learns from her daughter that it is “a means of survivor”<sup>228</sup> because it prevents her from screaming. Moreover, same as for Magda, it becomes a source of nourishment for her as well, because at the very end of the short story, she is “tasting the cinnamon and almond depth of Magda’s saliva; and Rosa drank Magda’s shawl until it dried.”<sup>229</sup>

Jones moreover suggests that the shawl transformed Magda from a baby to a mother, as Magda started showing maternal feelings towards the shawl:<sup>230</sup> “Only Rosa could touch it [the shawl]. Stella was not allowed. The shawl was Magda’s own baby, her pet, her little sister.”<sup>231</sup> Therefore, when Rosa uses the shawl to save herself, it could be argued that the roles of Magda and Rosa become reversed, with Magda becoming the mother and Rosa the baby. As Jones points out, Magda “had been both a child and a mother – Magda dies a completed woman, or at least complete in Rosa’s eyes.”<sup>232</sup>

Around the second half of the sequel *Rosa*, the shawl comes back to the narrative as a memento of the past and, as Kolář points out, a means of acting out trauma.<sup>233</sup> The reader is not aware of the shawl still existing until Rosa asks Stella to send it in a package. It is the only thing that remains of Magda, so when Rosa finds out it was sent in an unregistered package, she gets upset: “Suppose, God forbid, it got lost in the mail, what then?”<sup>234</sup> It suggests the great emotional attachment she has towards the shawl. If she were to lose it, she would lose her daughter altogether, even though she is long dead already.

Arguably though, it would have been better for her if the shawl had been lost, as she relives her traumatic memory of the Holocaust, and more importantly of the murder of her daughter. While observing the package supposedly containing the shawl:

She turned the box round and round – a rectangular box. Magda’s shawl! Magda’s swaddling cloth. Magda’s shroud. The memory of Magda’s smell, the holy fragrance of the lost baby. Murdered. Thrown against the fence, barbed, thorned, electrified; grid and gridle; a furnace, the child on fire! Rosa put the shawl to her nose, to her lips.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 129.

<sup>228</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 129.

<sup>229</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 10.

<sup>230</sup> Jones, “The Fabrics,” 74.

<sup>231</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 6.

<sup>232</sup> Jones, “The Fabrics,” 74.

<sup>233</sup> Kolář et al, *Reflections of Trauma*, 36.

<sup>234</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 30.

<sup>235</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 31.



As it turns out, the package did not contain the shawl and she will be in possession of it later in the story. Despite not having it yet, everything that has happened to her during the Holocaust punches her right into the face. As Kolář points out though, the shawl also “becomes a way for her [Rosa] to reconnect with her lost daughter.”<sup>236</sup> He moreover says that her traumatic experience is not just a memory for her, but rather a matter of the vivid present.<sup>237</sup>

Once the shawl is finally in Rosa’s possession, she starts writing letters to Magda and even starts speaking to the shawl, as if she were speaking to her daughter. After Rosa opens the real package containing the shawl, she reads the attached letter from Stella in which she says:

All right, I’ve done it. Been to the post office and mailed it. Your idol is on its way, separate cover. Go on your knees if you want. You make yourself crazy, everyone thinks you’re a crazy woman. [...] I shouldn’t lecture you, but my God! It’s thirty years, forty, who knows, give it a rest. [...] You’ll open the box and take it out and cry, and you’ll kill it like a crazy person. [...] You’re like those people in the Middle Ages who worshipped a piece of the True Cross. [...] Rosa, by now, believe me, it’s time you have to have a life.<sup>238</sup>

In this letter, Stella accuses Rosa of having the shawl as an idol, which she treats as a ritualistic object. As Kolář suggests, it becomes an obsession and fetish to her, as it constantly evokes memories and emotions in her head.<sup>239</sup> Once Rosa acquires the shawl, she starts talking to it, looking like a genuinely insane person. However, as Marianne M. Friedrich claims, “Rosa’s obsessive, idolatrous worship of her shawl, which finally loses its magic, stands for the gradual healing process in Rosa from her idolatrous worship of the dead Magda.”<sup>240</sup>

While analysing the shawl in Rosa’s life, Kolář proposes a theory of transitional objects and transitional phenomena, which was developed by D. W. Winnicott.<sup>241</sup> In this theory, Winnicott provides an example of a child that substitutes his mother’s breast by the end of a blanket, creating a transitional object.<sup>242</sup> With this theory in mind, one can apply it on the shawl as well. At first, it serves as a substitute for Rosa’s breast for Magda, and once Magda is dead and Rosa is again in possession of the shawl, it becomes an object which in a way imitates Magda, because Rosa very often speaks with the shawl as if it were her daughter.

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<sup>236</sup> Kolář et al, *Reflections of Trauma*, 36-37.

<sup>237</sup> Kolář et al, *Reflections of Trauma*, 37.

<sup>238</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 31-32.

<sup>239</sup> Kolář et al, *Reflections of Trauma*, 37.

<sup>240</sup> Marianne M. Friedrich, “The Rendition of Memory in Cynthia Ozick’s ‘The Shawl,’” in *Jewish American and Holocaust Literature*, ed. Alan L. Berger and Gloria L. Cronin (Albany: State University Press, 2004), 95.

<sup>241</sup> Kolář et al, *Reflections of Trauma*, 37.

<sup>242</sup> D. W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (London: Tavistock Publications Ltd, 1971), 10.

Friedrich's claim that Rosa worships the shawl is furthermore supported by Peter Kerry Powers. In the story, Rosa decides to wrap her telephone in the shawl and according to Powers, by doing so, Rosa:

turns the telephone into the image of a living thing and worships that thing, at the expense of relationships with living human beings. In itself, the telephone is a means of communication, but the telephone in the shawl becomes an idol in which Rosa speaks only to herself and things created through her own imagination.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> Peter Kerry Powers, "Disruptive Memories: Cynthia Ozick, Assimilation, and the Invented Past," *MELUS* 20, no. 3 (Autumn 1995): 91, <https://doi.org/10.2307/467744>.

## 4.2 Trauma in *The Shawl*

The tremendous loss that Rosa experienced during the Holocaust inevitably leads to the development of trauma, which can be seen essentially throughout the whole short story *The Shawl*. However, the event that breaks Rosa is when Magda is killed by being thrown at the electric fence by a Nazi officer. Her death starts Rosa's lifelong trauma which she is trying to cope with or perhaps get rid of at the end of the later written novella *Rosa*.

The setting of *Rosa* is entirely different as to the one of *The Shawl*, as it is situated in Miami Beach in the United States of America. Similarly to Vladek in *Maus*, however, America is just the continuation of her suffering, and not a life worth living. She used to live in Brooklyn, but after having a mental breakdown, she destroyed her antique store and moved to Florida. Later in the story, it is revealed that Rosa, while still working in her shop, was trying to tell parts of her story to the customers, but they never listened because "they were in a hurry"<sup>244</sup> and thus never showed any sign of being interested in hearing them.

According to Gustavo Sánchez Canales, anger and violence are common symptoms of the Holocaust survivors, especially towards people who could be blamed for the trauma or towards those who remind them of it.<sup>245</sup> In this case, it is the people who did not listen to her that remind her of the past. Moreover, Canales claims that the anger may be "so intense that the individuals with PTSD externalize it, attacking some person or object,"<sup>246</sup> or in this instance Rosa's antique store.

One of the Rosa's stories is about a tramcar, which the Poles used to travel by during the Holocaust. These trams were going right through the ghetto the Jews were locked in, and the Poles, too, did not care about her. Rosa, therefore, analogically compares her customers to the Poles during the Holocaust, as neither of them showed any concern about her, which makes her angry, resulting in her destroying the antique store.

Back to Rosa's trauma, she is replaying her daughter's death all the time. She is obsessed with her and fixated on her, which is the result of the development of PTSD. She is talking to Magda as if she were alive, she even tries to convince herself that she has hidden her from Stella "to sooth [Stella's] dementia,"<sup>247</sup> as Stella is constantly telling Rosa that she should let the past go and focus on the present.

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<sup>244</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 67.

<sup>245</sup> Gustavo Sánchez Canales, "'Prisoners Gradually Came to Buddhist Position': The Presence of PTSD Symptoms in Rosa in Cynthia Ozick's 'The Shawl,'" *Studies in American Jewish Literature* 30 (2011): 34.

<sup>246</sup> Canales, "'Prisoners Gradually Came,'" 3, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41228660>.

<sup>247</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 42.

The main protagonist is even writing letters to Magda and imagines her becoming “a professor of Greek philosophy at Columbia University in New York City,”<sup>248</sup> or that she has “grown into a lioness.”<sup>249</sup> Writing to a dead person may seem insane, however, as Kolář points out, it is a way to transform trauma into a narrative memory.<sup>250</sup>

Similarly to Vladek, Rosa is incapable of leaving the Auschwitz behind her which is for instance demonstrated when Persky, an older man she meets in the laundromat, asks about her name. She answers “Lublin, Rosa,”<sup>251</sup> as if she were still in the concentration camp where people always stated their name like this.

The cause of her PTSD is no doubt Magda’s brutal death, even though her death camp experience was no paradise either. What triggers her memory is, according to Canales, recalling her daughter’s death through smell, noise, or an object.<sup>252</sup> She carries her trauma to America and the first explicit reference to it, through an object containing her smell, can be found in the following example where Rosa sees a rectangular box supposedly containing Magda’s shawl:

Magda’s shawl! Magda’s swaddling cloth. Magda’s shroud. The memory of Magda’s smell, the holy fragrance of her lost babe. Murdered. Thrown against the fence, barbed, thorned, electrified; grid and gridle; a furnace, the child on fire! Rosa put the shawl to her nose, to her lips.<sup>253</sup>

Another time, Rosa’s traumatic memories are triggered when she takes a stroll, encountering a private hotel beach. The sand there is “littered with bodies”<sup>254</sup> and when she wants to leave the beach, the latch of the gate would not budge. She gazes up and sees barbed wire. Going back to the beach, she asks two men whether they could open the gate for her, but they do not have the key. Moreover, because she admits she is not from the hotel, one of the men says: “Then you’re not allowed here. This is a private beach.”<sup>255</sup> Rosa pleads them to let her out, as this “imprisonment” inside this beach reminds her of the imprisonment in the death camps. The men refuse to do so, laughing and saying that even if they had the key, they would not open it for her.

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<sup>248</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 39.

<sup>249</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 15.

<sup>250</sup> Kolář et al, *Reflections of Trauma*, 38.

<sup>251</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 53.

<sup>252</sup> Canales, “Prisoners Gradually Came,” 32.

<sup>253</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 31.

<sup>254</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 49.

<sup>255</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 49.

The way Rosa understands their refusal to help is “sexual mockery”<sup>256</sup> as the men “hated women”<sup>257</sup> from her point of view. If the men had not been circumcised, she would have thought that they even hated Jews. Before trying to leave again, the narrator says: “No one to help. Persecutors. In the morning they would arrest her,”<sup>258</sup> as if entering a private beach was a serious crime. Then she goes to the hotel, takes the elevator and once it takes her to the main floor, “she emerged, free,”<sup>259</sup> indicating her fear of actually being arrested and locked behind bars again.

What makes her recall the Holocaust is also a birthday present from Stella, who bought her a dress with blue stripes, reminding her of the clothes she, and all the other Jews, had to wear in the death camps:

Rosa tugged, and the dress with the blue stripes slid like a coarse colored worm out of twisted bedsheets. The hole in the armpit was bigger now. Stripes, never again anything on her body with stripes! She swore it, but this, fancy and with a low collar, was Stella’s birthday present, Stella bought it. As if innocent, as if ignorant, as if *not there*.<sup>260</sup>

Canales claims that Rosa’s instinct associates the smell of the shawl in the room, the barbed wire on the beach, and the dress with blue stripes with her concentration camp experience, “which in turn provokes anxiety, fear, and conflict”.<sup>261</sup> Thus, as Kolář points out, it is no wonder that Rosa perceives her life in Miami as “a continuation of the Holocaust.”<sup>262</sup>

During the Holocaust, Rosa suffered an infinite number of traumatic events. Apart from those already mentioned, she was also raped multiple times by the Nazi soldiers and officers. According to Kolář, one of the manifestations of remembering the Holocaust is denial,<sup>263</sup> and that is exactly what Rosa is doing while talking about the real father of her daughter.

Rosa herself claims that “your father [Magda’s] was not a German. I was forced by a German, it’s true, and more than once, but I was too sick to conceive. [...] Never believe this, my lioness, my snowqueen. No lies come out of me to you. You are pure.”<sup>264</sup> However, in the short story *The Shawl*, it is said that Magda’s face looks “Aryan”<sup>265</sup> and that her face “was not Rosa’s bleak complexion, dark like cholera, it was another face altogether, eyes blue as air,

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<sup>256</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 49.

<sup>257</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 49.

<sup>258</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 49.

<sup>259</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 50.

<sup>260</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 33.

<sup>261</sup> Canales, “Prisoners Gradually Came,” 33.

<sup>262</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 134.

<sup>263</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 135.

<sup>264</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 42.

<sup>265</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 5.

smooth feathers of hair nearly as yellow as the Star sewn into Rosa's coat. You could think she was one of *their* babies."<sup>266</sup> As demonstrated by the examples, Magda looks very much differently than Rosa, having strong German features. Furthermore, the last sentence even suggests the fact that Magda might indeed be a product of rape, as it is proposed that she might very well be *their* baby.

Nevertheless, Rosa denies that her father might be a Nazi rapist, and in one "speech" to Magda, she says that:

Magda, your father and I had the most ordinary lives – by "ordinary" I mean respectable, gentle, cultivated. Reliable people of refined reputation. His name was Andrzej. Our families had status. Your father was the son of my mother's closest friend. She was a converted Jew married to a Gentile: you can be a Jew if you like, or a Gentile, it's up to you. You have a legacy of choice, and they say choice is the only true freedom. We were engaged to be married. We would have been married.<sup>267</sup>

From both the short story and the novella, one does not know whether there existed a man called Andrzej or whether she was supposed to be married. Therefore, it is very well possible that Rosa completely invented not only that her daughter is still alive, but also her own past and an imaginative father for Magda. As Canales claims, Rosa's denial is typical for PTSD patients who have not yet overcome their trauma, and that the rape is still "a traumatic experience Rosa has been trying to erase."<sup>268</sup>

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<sup>266</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 4.

<sup>267</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 43.

<sup>268</sup> Canales, "'Prisoners Gradually Came,'" 35.

### 4.3 Ozick's Use of Language in *The Shawl*

*The Shawl* is a short story whose style is, according to John K. Roth, “a combination of short, unembellished descriptive and narrative sentences and nightmarish metaphors of human ugliness and transcendent beauty.”<sup>269</sup> Kolář adds to this statement that the story of *The Shawl* is “extraordinarily impressive”, as Ozick uses highly figurative language.<sup>270</sup>

Ozick uses figurative language, mainly metaphors, to dehumanize her characters. For instance, Magda's face is “very round, a pocket mirror of a face,”<sup>271</sup> while her one tooth sticking up from the bottom gum is “an elfin tombstone of white marble.”<sup>272</sup> Rosa's breasts are depicted as “the duct-crevice extinct, a dead volcano, blind eye, chill hole.” When describing nationalities or groups of people, Ozick does not use words such as “Jews” or “Germans,” instead, she uses words such as “a helmet”<sup>273</sup> or “black boots”<sup>274</sup> that refer to the Nazis, or sentences like “smooth feathers of hair nearly as yellow as the Star sewn into Rosa's coat”<sup>275</sup> to portray the Jews.

To express the dehumanization of the victims in the death camps, Ozick, similarly to Art Spiegelman in *Maus*, also uses animal imagery. While Rosa is hiding her daughter in the shawl, Magda is described as “a squirrel in a nest,”<sup>276</sup> and while she was keeping an eye on her shawl, she “watched like a tiger.”<sup>277</sup> Furthermore, when Magda loses her shawl, she starts crying which is described as “howling.”<sup>278</sup> At the end of the short story, when Rosa faces the dead body of her daughter, she suppresses her “wolf's screech.”<sup>279</sup>

Ozick's metaphors are furthermore used to depersonalize the human body of its human qualities. Rosa is depicted as a “walking cradle” to highlight Magda's total dependence on her mother. Stella's knees are only “tumors on sticks”<sup>280</sup> while her elbows are described as “chicken

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<sup>269</sup> Roth, *Holocaust Literature*, 469.

<sup>270</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 130.

<sup>271</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 4.

<sup>272</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 4.

<sup>273</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 9.

<sup>274</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 9.

<sup>275</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 4.

<sup>276</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 4.

<sup>277</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 6.

<sup>278</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 7.

<sup>279</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 10.

<sup>280</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 1.

bones.”<sup>281</sup> The fifteen-month-old Magda is then a “shawl-bundle”<sup>282</sup> who moves on her “little pencil legs.”<sup>283</sup> After the “helmet”<sup>284</sup> captures her, she becomes a “speck.”<sup>285</sup>

Ozick juxtaposes the life in the death camps with the one outside the fences, which Rosa and other prisoners can observe inside the camp:

The sunheat murmured of another life, of butterflies in summer. The light was placid, mellow. The other side of the steel fence, far away, there were green meadows speckled with dandelions and deep-colored violets; beyond them, even farther, innocent tiger lilies, tall, lifting their orange bonnets.<sup>286</sup>

This beauty of the outside world moreover emphasises their own suffering, as they are fully aware of what the life could be if they were not behind the barbed wire. Ozick then describes the inside world as “excrement, thick turd-braids, and the slow stinking maroon waterfall that slunk down from the upper bunks, the stink mixed with a bitter fatty floating smoke that greased Rosa’s skin.”<sup>287</sup>

Miriam Sivan puts emphasis on butterflies in this short story.<sup>288</sup> When Magda is killed, Rosa sees her as “a butterfly touching a silver vine.”<sup>289</sup> According to Sivan, there is a contrast between the butterfly, “an object of delicate beauty,” and the little body of Magda that is being thrown at the electric fence.<sup>290</sup> Moreover, she says that this contrast “forces a revision of the Nazi association of Jews and vermin,”<sup>291</sup> which could also be seen in Spiegelman’s *Maus* and his depiction of the Jews as mice.

Kolář provides another point of view on the butterflies in the story, as he claims that the “butterfly touching a silver vine” is a magical transformation that produces various possible interpretations. Primarily though, this scene can be perceived as “an act of liberation from the victim’s suffering” and that butterflies, like birds, generally symbolize freedom.<sup>292</sup> Sivan adds that “butterflies can also be seen as an embodiment of freedom.”<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 1.

<sup>282</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 4.

<sup>283</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 7.

<sup>284</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 9.

<sup>285</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 9.

<sup>286</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 8.

<sup>287</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 8.

<sup>288</sup> Miriam Sivan, “Crossing the Abyss: Language and the Holocaust in Cynthia Ozick’s ‘The Shawl,’” *Studies in American Jewish Literature* 24 (2005): 45, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41206026>.

<sup>289</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 9.

<sup>290</sup> Sivan, “Crossing the Abyss,” 45.

<sup>291</sup> Sivan, “Crossing the Abyss,” 45.

<sup>292</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 132.

<sup>293</sup> Sivan, “Crossing the Abyss,” 45.



Arguably, what can be deduced from the butterfly metaphor is that Ozick firstly depicted Magda as a cocoon, as she is always wrapped in the shawl and is protected by it. Once she loses it, she is captured by a Nazi soldier who throws her at the electric fence. At this point, Ozick depicts her as a “butterfly touching a silver vine,” as if she briefly transformed into a butterfly, which is known to have a short lifespan, and immediately died.

The previously mentioned sense of freedom is also connected to the air symbolism throughout the whole short story. Rosa is in many instances depicted as if she was elevated in the air, watching the atrocities from above. Kolář claims that this “mental condition numbs her sensation and enables her to observe the camp’s microcosm from a distant perspective.”<sup>294</sup> Rosa therefore “felt light, not like someone walking but like someone in a faint, in trance, arrested in a fit, someone who is already a floating angel, alert and seeing everything, but in the air, not there, not touching the road.”<sup>295</sup> In another example, while going out of the barracks, she “flew – she could fly, she was only air – into the arena.”<sup>296</sup>

One of many hardships the prisoners in the death camps had to endure was hunger. However, that is, seemingly, not the case for Rosa, as she “did not feel hunger; she felt light.”<sup>297</sup> The consequences of hunger, though, can be seen in another example, in which the narrator says: “The weight of Rosa was becoming less and less; Rosa and Stella were slowly turning into air.”<sup>298</sup> Furthermore, at the very end of the story, when Magda is already flying in the air towards the electric fence, her belly is depicted as “balloonish,”<sup>299</sup> which, as Kolář claims, “indicates not only her starvation, but also anticipates her destiny – the rising of her vanished body into the air from the crematorium chimney.”<sup>300</sup>

Apart from being “elevated in the air,” Rosa is also able to hear various voices. In this respect, Alan L. Berger calls Rosa “clairaudient,”<sup>301</sup> or in other words, able to hear something not in reality present. This phenomenon can be seen while Rosa hears “grainy sad voices”<sup>302</sup> coming from the electric fence. As Berger explains, the death camps were supposed to turn the Jews into simple matter and then to destroy it. He deems this destruction “successful to an awesome and staggering degree” but it was not complete, as they were not able to “achieve

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<sup>294</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 132.

<sup>295</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 3-4.

<sup>296</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 8.

<sup>297</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 1.

<sup>298</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 6.

<sup>299</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 10.

<sup>300</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 133.

<sup>301</sup> Alan L. Berger, *Crisis and Covenant* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1985), 54.

<sup>302</sup> Ozick, *The Shawl*, 9.

complete domination of the Jewish soul.”<sup>303</sup> Sarah Blacher Cohen interpret these voices as “the voices of innocent Jews profanely sacrificed in the *Churban*,”<sup>304</sup> while Kolář understands them as “a manifestation of the redemptive power of imagination in opposition to destruction,”<sup>305</sup> and moreover claims that by hearing the voices, Rosa “identifies with the millions of victims who have perished.”<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> Berger, *Crisis and Covenant*, 54.

<sup>304</sup> Sarah Blacher Cohen, *Cynthia Ozick's Comic Art* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 153.

<sup>305</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 133.

<sup>306</sup> Kolář, *Seven Responses*, 133.

## 5 Conclusion

This master thesis focused on the depiction of the Holocaust in American literature. The topic was analysed in Art Spiegelman's graphic novel *Maus* and in Cynthia Ozick's *The Shawl*, consisting of a short story *The Shawl* and its sequel *Rosa*. The aim in *Maus* was to explore the genre of the graphic novel and to examine how Spiegelman depicted trauma and its transmission on the second generation. In the analysis of *The Shawl*, the main emphasis was put on the way Ozick depicted trauma and on the symbolism and numerous metaphors she used throughout the story.

Art Spiegelman's *Maus* is not only a graphic novel, but also a Vladek's biography and Artie's autobiography. It is a graphic novel because it combines the visual and the verbal, and to fully understand it, readers must consider several aspects of the book such as shading, panel layout, or the style of letters. Apart from being a graphic novel, *Maus* could also be considered a fable that depicts the nationalities and ethnic groups as animals. The Jews are depicted as mice and the Germans as cats, creating a cat-and-mice metaphor representing the basic antagonism between the Jews and the Nazis. Spiegelman also used the animal masks to change the nationalities of people. In various situations, he drew the Jews with pig masks so that they would blend with the crowd as the Poles.

*Maus* is focused on Vladek, a Polish immigrant living in the United States. Several decades after the Holocaust, he is still stuck in the past and his life in the USA is just an extension of his suffering. In the death camps, he picked up several habits he is unable to get rid of in the present time which also influenced his relationships with his son and his second wife. Vladek is also extremely thrifty to the point that he never throws away food and he very often picks up garbage in the streets in case it ever becomes useful. Because of his Holocaust experience, he never acknowledges other people's problems, seeing them as inferior and not even worth his attention. Furthermore, he is trying to do the impossible – to suppress his memories and thus forget his past. To do so, he burns Anja's diaries so that he would not have the urge to read them or to be asked about its contents.

Artie's father is also experiencing the survivor's guilt, which is a very common problem of the Holocaust survivors. He is experiencing it not only for the sole reason of surviving the Holocaust, but also because he blames himself for his first son's death, although he could not have prevented it. Moreover, Vladek's trauma shapes the lives of Mala and Artie in the present time. With his second wife, he is constantly arguing about money. Furthermore, he has never

recovered from Anja's suicide which is reflected in Vladek keeping photos of her and talking about her all the time. As a consequence, Mala feels inadequate, as she is only an inferior substitute for Anja and a woman Vladek will never truly love.

In the present time, Vladek's trauma is transferred onto Artie who has a rather distant relationship with his father. Similarly to Mala, he is often arguing with his father, as he does not understand his father's past and the consequences of it. As Vladek is a skilled person in many areas, Artie feels very insecure and neurotic about fixing things. Therefore, he decided to become an artist so that he would not need to compete with his father. With whom he competes, though, is his dead brother Richieu. He always feels like he is being compared to him, even though his parents never talked about his brother. This is mainly because Richieu in fact lived during the Holocaust, but Artie did not and his absence together with the absence of the Holocaust experience makes Artie feel guilty and inferior.

His guilt of not experiencing the Holocaust is further escalated by his dreams in which he fantasizes about the Nazi soldiers storming into his class or about the Zyklon B coming out of shower instead of water. He also feels guilty because of his mother's suicide, for which he blames himself. Similarly to Styron's Sophie in *Sophie's Choice*, she killed herself as she could not live with her experience. The loss of his mother influenced him to such degree that he wrote a comic book dedicated solely to her death. This comic strip provides an interesting contrast to the rest of *Maus*, as Spiegelman in it depicted human beings as human beings, and not as animals. This is because Spiegelman in fact experienced his mother's death, unlike the Holocaust to which he was absent.

Unlike Art Spiegelman, Cynthia Ozick is not directly connected to the Holocaust, as she did not experience it and neither did her family. Because of that, *The Shawl* is a work of fiction. However, that does not mean it lacks authenticity or depth, as it is considered one of the best pieces of the Holocaust literature. In *The Shawl*, she uses language, mainly metaphors, to dehumanize her characters. Similarly to Art Spiegelman and Jerzy Kosinski, she uses animal imagery in order to depict the animal instincts in human beings. Metaphors are also used to depersonalize the human body of its qualities so that the humans are even further dehumanized.

The shawl proved to be not only the title of the short story, but also the central metaphor of both *The Shawl* and *Rosa*. It represents life, death, and a memento of the past. When Magda is tucked in the shawl, she is alive and in safety. However, once she is rid of it, she dies after a few moments, as she has lost the protection of the magical shawl. In *Rosa*, the cloth serves as a reminder of Rosa's past and a way to reconnect with her death daughter. Nonetheless, it later becomes an idol Rosa is obsessed with and she even starts speaking to it as if it were her real

daughter. The shawl therefore turns into a transitional object, substituting her daughter with the shawl.

The trauma in *The Shawl* is caused by the horrifying murder of Magda. It is most pronounced in the sequel *Rosa* which takes place several decades after the Holocaust in the United States. Just as Vladek in *Maus*, the life in the United States is only a continuation of Rosa's suffering. Right at the beginning of the novella, Rosa has a mental breakdown, resulting in her destroying her antique store. She does it because the customers were not listening to her stories, thus preventing her of Freud's talking cure which could have helped her overcome her trauma. Moreover, anger and violence are very common symptoms of the Holocaust survivors, which also explains the destruction of her store.

When Rosa gets the shawl back, it triggers her traumatic memories not only because she associates the piece of cloth with Magda, but more importantly because it still smells like her. Moreover, whenever Rosa encounters barbed wire, clothes with strips, or doors that will not open, it instantly reminds her of her death camp experience and consequently triggers her anxiety and fear. Rosa also lives in constant denial. Not only she denies the death of her daughter, but also who her real father is. From the narration of the story, the father is clearly a Nazi soldier, as she was raped multiple times by the Nazis. However, she makes up a Polish person called Andrzej who she perceives as the real father of Magda, giving her the choice of being whoever she wants to be.

## 6 Resumé

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá vyobrazením holocaustu v grafickém románu *Maus* autora Arta Spiegelmana a v knize *The Shawl* autorky Cynthia Ozick, která se stejnojmenné povídky *The Shawl* a jejího sequelu s názvem *Rosa*.

Úvodní kapitola se zabývá historickým a literárním kontextem. Její první část odkrývá původ slova holocaust, které pochází z řeckého slova *holokauston*, jež v překladu znamená spálenou náboženskou obětinu. Toto označení ale samotní Židé odmítají, jelikož holocaust nebyla žádná náboženská oběť, nýbrž jejich genocida, a proto pro označení holocaustu používají hebrejský výraz *šoa* nebo *hurban*. Dále první kapitola vysvětluje, že se holocaust dá vysvětlit dvěma způsoby. Ten první říká, že holocaust je událost židovské historie, která je jedinečná a sociologicky nedůležitá. Zároveň ale holocaust označuje za vyvrcholení evropsko-křesťanského antisemitismu. Nejčastěji se tak holocaust vysvětluje jako jedinečný jev, jež nemá obdoby. Druhý způsob jej interpretuje jako extrémní případ již známé kategorie sociálních jevů, který v historii civilizace není unikátní, protože v minulosti podobné věci již proběhly – jako například turecké masakry Arménů.

Dále tato část kapitoly vysvětluje, že holocaust proběhl z několika důvodů úzce spojených s technologickým pokrokem lidstva. Ten umožnil efektivní spojení chemického a železničního průmyslu, které za využití účinného byrokratického systému dokázalo oběti efektivně dehumanizovat. Byrokratický systém byl navíc navržen tak, že se v podstatě žádný z úředníků nemusel s oběti transportovanými do koncentračních táborů setkat, takže pro ně nebylo nijak morálně složité vyřídit potřebné papírování k jejich přepravě.

Druhá část první kapitoly se zabývá literaturou o holocaustu, o kterou začal být v Americe zájem začátkem 90. let minulého století. Její funkce je zaznamenat hrůzostrašné zážitky z pohledu obětí a tím vyobrazit nezměrné a slovy nepopsatelné utrpení, kterým si přeživší holocaustu prošli. Do tohoto typu literatury řadíme velké množství různých žánrů, v jejichž popředí stojí memoáry, diáře a romány, které psali nejenom přeživší holocaustu, ale také ti, kteří si holocaustem vůbec neprošli. Mezi významné autory patří například Anna Franková, Jerzy Kosiński, William Styron nebo Cynthia Ozick, která jako jediná z těchto čtyř autorů druhou světovou válku nijak nezažila.

Poslední část první kapitoly se věnuje literatuře o druhé generaci přeživších holocaustu, jejíž autoři jsou jak potomci přeživších, tak i také samotných pachatelů, kteří hrůzné činy za druhé světové války prováděli. Samotný výraz druhá generace se začal používat během 80. let

minulého století, přičemž prvními lidmi, kteří jej použili, byli literární kritici Alan Berger a Efraim Sicher. Potomci přeživších začali psát o tom, jak oni sami vnímali holocaust, protože jejich život byl touto událostí taktéž velmi zasažen. Ovlivnila je především skutečnost, že oni sami holocaust nikdy nezažili, díky čemuž nerozuměli tomu, čím vším si jejich rodiče museli projít. Z autorů této literatury stojí za zmínku například Robert Schindel, Art Spiegelman nebo vítěz Nobelovy ceny Jean Patrick Modano.

Následující kapitola se zabývá teorií traumatu. Úvod kapitoly vysvětluje, že slovo trauma bylo prvně použito v polovině 19. století v souvislosti s oběťmi železničních nehod. Dále definuje slovo trauma, které vysvětluje jako závažný emoční šok způsobený extrémně znepokojivou zkušeností. První člověk, který tento výraz použil, byl učitel Sigmunda Freuda Jean-Martin Charcot. Freudovy teorie se pro vývoj teorie traumatu ukázaly jako stěžejní. Pravděpodobně tím nejdůležitějším je jeho pochopení hysterie způsobující neurózu, o které poprvé napsal v roce 1895. K té se následně vrátil během první světové války, protože vojáci trpící tzv. shell shockem měli symptomy velmi podobné právě těm lidem, kteří trpěli hysterií. Jeho teorie jsou pak velmi důležité i ve vývoji teorie traumatu v literatuře, která zažila největší rozkvět v 90. letech, kdy se o ni začali zajímat kritici jako je Cathy Caruth. Ta tvrdí, že vůbec prvním dílem 20. století pojednávajícím o traumatu je Freudův román *Moses and Monotheism*.

Tato kapitola dále vysvětluje řadu důležitých pojmů jako je například Freudův „talking cure,“ (léčba slovem) traumatická paměť nebo narativní paměť. První ze zmíněných je potencionální způsob léčby pro ty, kteří si z minulosti nesou traumatický zážitek. Freud totiž říká, že pokud se obětem podaří o svém traumatu promluvit, mohlo by je to vyléčit. Traumatická paměť způsobuje nemožnost o svém problému mluvit koherentně, díky čemuž buď nejsme schopni náš zážitek vůbec artikulovat, nebo jsme, ale jen v omezené podobě. Narativní paměť je pak, jednoduše řečeno, normálně fungující paměť, díky které jsme schopni naše zážitky artikulovat koherentně a bez přerušování.

Druhá část druhé kapitoly přináší kritiku teorie traumatu. Ta nejdůležitější dává této teorii za vinu vznik tzv. victim culture (kultura viktimizace), která říká, že díky teorii traumatu se může jako oběť cítit naprosto každý, a to i z těch nejobyčejnějších důvodů jako je prosté zklamání nebo smutek.

Následující kapitola přináší analýzu grafického románu *Maus* spisovatele Arta Spiegelmana, jejíž první část určuje její žánr. Vzhledem k tomu, že je kniha napsána na základě vyprávění otce autora Vladka, se *Maus* považuje za literaturu faktu. Zároveň se také jedná o biografii Vladka, jehož příběh je vyprávěn od počátku holocaustu až po jeho smrt. Aby toho nebylo málo, *Maus* je také autobiografií Artieho, který, především v druhé části knihy, vypráví

o svém vlastním životě. Druhá část této kapitoly říká, že se taktéž dá hovořit o tom, že je *Maus* svým způsobem bajka, protože vyobrazuje národnosti a etnické skupiny jako zvířata za pomoci zvířecích masek. Nejdůležitější je pak vyobrazení Židů jako myší a Němců jako koček, čímž vznikla metafora, na jejímž základě Spiegelman ukazuje nevraživost mezi těmito dvěma druhy savců. Masky ovšem nejsou použity jen k rozlišení národností, ale také k jejich změně, kterou zde využívají Židé k přeměně na Poláky, aby se vyhnuli perzekuci a možné smrti.

Další část třetí kapitoly se zabývá minulostí Vladka, která je důležitá k rozklíčování jeho osoby. Na jejím základě se pak další podkapitola věnuje jeho traumatu, které se projevuje mnoha způsoby. Kvůli tomu, že v koncentračních táborech a v ghettech nebylo téměř co jíst, Vladek nikdy nevyhazuje jídlo a vždycky nutí každého všechno dojíst. S tím souvisí i jeho šetrivost, která se ukazuje zejména ve chvílích, kdy na ulici najde kus drátu nebo papíru. Ty sebere a vezme si je domů, protože je má nejen zařazované jako nedostatkové zboží, ale také v tom vidí možnost, jak ušetřit peníze. Zároveň se ale Vladek snaží na svoji minulost zapomenout, v čemž mu ale Artie vůbec nepomáhá, protože se na ni vptává.

Závěr třetí kapitoly se věnuje přenosu traumatu na Artieho, jehož život byl taktéž velmi ovlivněn holocaustem. Jeho trauma je způsobeno například tím, že nezažil holocaust, takže nedokáže pochopit ohavnosti, které musel zažít jeho otec. Kvůli tomu tedy neakceptuje otcovu šetrivost, kvůli které se s ním v mnoha situacích pohádá. Dále se na něm projeví dvě smrti jeho blízkých – jeho bratra a matky. Svého bratra, jenž zemřel během druhé světové války, nikdy nepoznal. Mezi nimi probíhá jakási sourozenecká rivalita, kterou Artie nedokáže vytěsnit z hlavy. Je pro něj totiž nemožné soupeřit s někým, koho nikdy nepotkal a kdo je již mrtvý. Smrt jeho matky jej pak ovlivňuje hlavně kvůli tomu, že si ji dává za vinu a ovlivnila jej natolik, že její smrt vyobrazil i ve speciálním komiksu. Ten se oproti zbytku knihy liší tím, že lidi zobrazuje jako opravdové lidi, a ne jako lidi se zvířecí maskou. Je tomu tak z toho důvodu, že na rozdíl od holocaustu smrt svojí matky zažil na vlastní kůži a nemusel se tedy od ní distancovat.

Předposlední kapitola se zabývá analýzou díla *The Shawl* autorky Cynthia Ozick, která na rozdíl od Arta Spiegelmana holocaust nijak nezažila. „The shawl“ (šátek) není jen název této knihy, ale také metafora, která v obou dílech *The Shawl* a *Rosa* převládá. Tato metafora představuje život, smrt a vzpomínku na minulost. Když je totiž dcera hlavní hrdinky Rosy zabalená do této šály, je skryta před Nacisty, kteří by ji v případě odhalení zabili. Zároveň představuje bezpečí a teplo, díky čemuž Magda nikdy nebrečí a je v klidu. Když ji ale šátek sebere Stella, neteř Rosy, zemře. Tento kus oblečení sehraje svoji roli i v sequelu *Rosa*, když jej Stella Rose pošle poštou. Ve chvíli, kdy balíček se šálou dorazí, probudí v Rose vzpomínky



na Magdu. Po této události začne Rosa ještě více odmítat fakt, že je její dcera mrtvá a začne k šátku mluvit a dokonce jej i svým způsobem uctívat.

Další část čtvrté kapitoly se věnuje traumatu Rosy, které je způsobeno především smrtí její dcery, ale také životem v koncentračním táboře. Když tedy potká ostnatý drát nebo dostane jako dárek pruhované šaty, ihned se jí vybaví její život za druhé světové války. Poslední část této kapitoly se zabývá metaforami, které Cynthia Ozick používá k dehumanizaci a depersonalizaci svých postav. Jednou z dalších metafor je i metafora motýla, která představuje Magdu. Šátek, ve kterém se Magda schovává, se totiž dá chápat jako kokon, ze kterého vyletí jako motýl ve chvíli, kdy je hozena na elektrický plot a následně umírá. Motýl pak symbolizuje svobodu, kterou Magda svou smrtí získá.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A:





Appendix B:





Appendix C:

**A**rt Spiegelman is a contributing editor and artist for the *New Yorker*, and co-founder/editor of *Raw*, the acclaimed magazine of avant-garde comics and graphics. His drawings and prints have been exhibited in museums and galleries here and abroad. Honours he has received for *Maus* include the Pulitzer Prize, a Guggenheim fellowship, and nominations for the National Book Critics Circle Award. He lives in New York City.



Appendix D:









Appendix F:





