

---

## MIMESIS'S ASTUTENESS IN *OS 300 DE ESPARTA*<sup>1</sup> -

The aesthetical dimension in the *GN* and in the film's display.

Denise Azevedo Duarte Guimarães<sup>2</sup>

### Introduction

While, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the public consensus, the entertainment, and the consumption were considered negative signals in relation to the aesthetic character of a production, the post-modernity comes to turn relative the opposition between massive products and works of art. It is acceptable, and even desirable, that a current product aggregates the purpose to entertain and, at the same time, to give an aesthetical experience. Supposing that by one side, resulting from the opposition between art and masses' culture were well defined; by the other side, a post-modern conception admits the possibility of been created artistic productions and, simultaneously, faced to new concepts of the understandable and of the pleasing. Deriving from the re-extension of the artistic productions, and the knowledge, therefore can be noted, the ascension of the more acceptable works of art, instead of that vanguard productions or from the radical experimentalism, which brought each self the hermetical as a constructing principle.

Therefore, the fusion of the experimental with the entertainment, can be linked to a rediscovering of the aesthetic pleasure as something not necessarily entailed to the enigmatical, obscure or shocking, expected by historical vanguards; but as a perceptive experience from the

---

<sup>1</sup> This essay was presented to the Group "Estéticas da Comunicação" (or: "*Aesthetics of the Communication*"), in the 17<sup>th</sup> Compos Meeting, at UNIP, Sao Paulo, SP, in June, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Retire Professor (UFPR). Doctor in Literary Studies by UFPR, and Master in Literary Theory by PUC/PR. Currently, acts as Professor, Guidance Councillor, Researcher, and Vice-coordinator of the Communications and Languages Master Courses, at UTP. Teaching at the Post-graduation Course on Cinema, at UTP, since 1997. Also expert in the academic editorship, and in the publishing of books, chapters, works on annals, and several essays on periodicals.  
e-mail [denise.guimaraes@utp.br](mailto:denise.guimaraes@utp.br)

“presenting communication” – a term proposed by Martin Seel, in his concept of the aesthetical rationality. (SEEL, 2005)

I distinguish that as perception, and not of a logically explainable living; therefore, even in the presence of the sign’s multiplicity, and the hybridizing, inherent to the contemporary aesthetical productions, art continues linked to a kind of a supra-rational living, and impossible to be verbalized. In this perceptive experience, the suspension of practical experience occurs – usually utilitarian and of matter contained –, in favor for a direct apprehension, and not mediated of the object, experienced in the “right here” and “right now”. From this kind of enclave, in the daily objectivity, results what I classify as the “presentational” character of the aesthetical experience, and what I associate to the “quality of feeling” as understood in Charles Sanders Peirce (1990)<sup>3</sup> Semiotics.

The considerations expressed above, synthesize the main concepts of the present essay, in what I take as the focus on the study of Frank Miller’s<sup>4</sup> *Graphic Novel Os 300 de Esparta*<sup>5</sup>, and the publishing material of the Zach Snyder’s movie *300*; aiming not to loose the focus of the need of the surpassing of the stagnant vision about the artistic languages procedures, in the present scene. Therefore, using the aesthetical theories’ support, and Peirce’s Semiotics, I investigate how products known as massive or of pure entertainment can aggregate aesthetical dimensions considered in its morphogenesis.

## 2. The *Graphic Novel’s* aesthetical dimension

The acclaimed work of Miller narrates the confrontation between the 300 Spartan warriors from the title, commanded by king Leonid, and the thousands of Persians, under the rules of the monarch Xerxes, in the mythological battle of Thermopiles’ defile, in 480 B.C.

---

3. To Peirce, we have three categories of thought, *Triadism*: the *Firstness* – related to the sensible or qualitative –, and the *Secondness* – related to the experience or event –, in opposition to the *Thirdness* – related to reason. (PEIRCE, 1990)

<sup>4</sup> Frank Miller has created the *GN* that originated the movie “*300*” from a motion picture classic – “*Os 300 Espartanos*”, 1962, by Rudolph Maté.

<sup>5</sup> The North-American originals were published between May and October, 1998, in five volumes, with a less informative title: “*300*” – what is a distinction in terms of mass productions of redundant titles.

From the Antiquity, the “spectacle rising”, with what the return of the legions from the battle fields were celebrated, still revealed some of the aesthetical meaning of what the war brought itself. With the rising of the concept of “war beauty”, the fixation of the aesthetical standards turn to have been enrooted in what it deserves: brave spirit, ability, strength and power; and the totality of all virtues results from its conquest. This makes the victory of an affirmative and magnifying meaning, which the concept of beauty is added. It is undeniable that, in our imaginary, the first impulses that guide to the war – not like destruction, but like action –, have a plastic dimension of undeniable aesthetic possibilities.

In this way, Paul Virilio, on asserting that the war must not be apart from the magic of entertainment, therefore its main subject is exactly to produce this entertainment, and increases:

[...] The history of battles is, above all, the history of the metamorphosis of its fields of perception. The war consists less in obtaining (territory-economical, ...) “material” victories than getting the “immateriality” of the fields of perception. (VIRILIO, 2005, p. 27)

The words of the French philosopher show that the war has much of the cinema, and is just this magical character, which cannot be apart of the images’ amazement, and their representation that I try to apprehend in the luxurious<sup>6</sup> album, which theme is the battle of Thermopiles. *Os 300 de Esparta* is composed by 92 pages in blended colors, and artistically arranged in paper, and hard-cover; its horizontal format provokes a *wide screen* effect, especially those with panoramic scenes and battles, besides the reinforcement of the narrative’s epical tone.

In the registration entrance form it can be read: genre – Cartoon. The back-cover, the Devir Editor’s seal warns: “Recommended for adults”. However, it is not the case of a forbidden pornographic genre, horror or even similar editions found in the market. It is important to make clear that it is no also a Cartoon, commonly created to kids or teen public, but for sure a Graphic Novel (that had its precursors by the late 1960s<sup>7</sup>, and increased largely

---

<sup>6</sup> What counts is not the luxury itself, but the fact that the album shows a complete story, under the romanced visual narrative form, which characterizes the GN genre.

<sup>7</sup> It was Richard Kile who first used the *Graphic Novel* term, in some publications between 1960 e 1970. It is imposed the use of the English term *Graphic Novel*, in the original language, therefore other forms are not used in Brazil. Besides, there are controversial vocabulary meanings of *novel* and *romance*, in Portuguese.

from the year 1978<sup>8</sup>). This genre is from an uncommon aesthetical level, when talking about mass products, however being part of the world of entertainment.

Being such a peculiar kind of art, this sort of album – luxurious, and from a higher cost, as commonly seen in books of art – which demand a more sophisticated compilation than from the cartoon’s standards. In other words, there is another kind of target-audience. Therefore, intrinsically, a Graphic Novel brings itself the mark of difference in relation to conventional cartoons, and this gives an expressive poetical dimension, in a wide meaning. It is a kind of work inspired in an erudite tradition, but which uses the mass media typical resources, not in a sense of turning the erudite production into a “massive” one, and not also to turn into “erudite” the mass media. However, on getting another way to expression, in search of another new deviant order, which is aesthetical in its essence. It is precisely Miller’s GN artistic-poetical tenor that I intend to investigate here.

From the beginning, I would like to emphasize the recent publication *Comunicação e Experiência Estética*, a book that came to confirm numeral main aspects of my research, as well to add new perspectives to my considerations. Denilson Lopes talks exactly about the question from diversity of the senses, given in our days, to the proper aesthetical communication term. According to the author,

In the perspective of an aesthetical communication it is fundamental to dilute more and more the boundaries between erudite art, popular, and mass, in a way of de-constructing the experimental and commercial dualism, and to make dialogue the objects of aesthetical value with cultural products [...] (LOPES, *apud* GUIMARÃES *et al.* 2006, p. 119)

I remember what Horatio said, in his *Ars poetica*: “*Ut pictura poesis erit*”, linking poetry and painting, when he refers to the classical sense of beauty entailed to the perfection of forms. Besides, even Camoes, when treating the relation between “ability and art”, has considered painting a silent poetry, as well as poetry a spoken painting. However, as Lopes explains,

It is necessary to not leave this field just to a conservative thought, which situates remotely art from life, and from the contemporary debates; not even on persisting in the mere art culture, impetrated by the practice of narrow identities’ politics. (*id.*, p. 117-118)

---

<sup>8</sup> In 1978, Will Eisner created *A Contract With God*, considered the genre’s first production. The “Graphic Novel” seal was used with the intention to distinguish from the traditional cartoons.

It is relevant to increase that from Antiquity until the beginning of the press, the specificities, and the aesthetical tenor of sequenced images, always were listed, from the temple's portals and cathedrals to the new pictorial genres. In the transition of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> one, the cartoons appeared as a genre that begins to be a reference in the contemporary art production, and had established an intense inter-media's dialogue. In the process of a research, the creation and the production, artists treat Cartoons by the most different forms, since their use as the language of cultural market, linked to entertainment, until the search of a potentially aesthetical dialogue. In my opinion, it is the exploration of a richly imagery universe, which originated by the mass media sometimes connects the erudite art to the large public. I believe that the Graphic Novel genre, which is still less studied by the academy, offers the appropriation of the massive communication components in order to create, as such the Pop Art's emblematical proposals, in order to approximate art to life, and making the "museum" to dialogue with the popular publication pages'.

The dialogue between the concrete poets with Cartoons was fertile, in the Brazilian scene, as far as in 1956 the **Theory of the Concrete Poetry** brings Cartoons' characters in its front-cover.



Fig. 1 – CAMPOS *et al.* 1975 (front-cover)

Also in Brazil, for about 1960, the manifesto for the “*Poema Processo*” (or: “Process Poem”), and also a group of artists came to produce works of art, which brought in their composition some elements of Cartoon. As such many pictorial works from Carlos Vergara are sketched as Cartoon pages. This composition in charts (or: scenes) can be found in a fragment of Antonio Dias’ works, which uses onomatopoeia and balloons.

It is relevant to consider that according to the 20<sup>th</sup> century aesthetical theories’, the poetry is conceived as a formal and conceptual interaction that is depended on the deviance, and the equivalences, having as a consequence the effect of uniqueness from the object, which derives from strangeness – an artistic category connected to the creation of inaugural and singular images. Several definitions of the aesthetical text, can be seen as an artistic result that uses a semiotic peculiar organization. Consequently, it is based on the concepts of the breaking of traditional standards – as happened with Miller’s *GN* –, which permits the recognition of an aesthetical organization project, in its morphogenesis.

Particularly, to my research interests Fernando Andacht’s way of study, in his semiotic approach of the aesthetical experience in the contemporary media. In the association to Peirce’s semiotics to aesthetics, the author marks a gap in the usual analysis of the signifying media process, to include her an aesthetical phenomenon as a relevant alternative to the critical studies. After explaining the epistemological reason of the Greek term *kalos*, in Peirce’s tracks, the author increases for the analyzing media process:

Based on a platonic tradition, what Peirce identify as *kalos* is an abstraction. Besides, the analytical result of considering a complex material and metaphysical experience, in our lives, on getting a quality of feeling. ( ANDACHT, *apud* GUIMARÃES *et al.* 2006, p. 158)

Here is revealed the *qualis* of the process, what Peirce classify “quality of feeling”, and what Andacht emphasizes as the core of “an aesthetical approach that freed us from the question of what is an what is not beauty [...]”. (ANDACHT, *apud* GUIMARÃES *et al.* 2006, p. 158)

Although that is not the focus of this essay, it is important to exalt the various theoretical approaches that interpret the poetical text as a specific configuration of the sign, not necessarily “beauty” in the classical sense, which is defined by a particular way of language operation, and which message is centered in itself, thus capable to formally stress its singularity. In this way of thought, it is of a particular interest to the development of this study

the concept of semiotic distinction of the aesthetical text, classified by Umberto Eco as it is bellow:

(...) a particular work of the expression manipulation, which provokes a content readjustment that produces an original function for sign, which provokes a code mutation that produces a new type of *world vision*, which stimulates an interpretive complex work in the receiver, and that requires original answers. (ECO, 1980, p. 222)

In other words, the Italian semiotic expert explains, in an ulterior work, that the abduction logic, in a signed space of an artistic work's interpretation, permits a discriminated inferential procedure that "represents the drawing, the audacious trial, of a ruled signification system, to the lights of what a sign will gain its proper significance". (ECO, 1991, p. 50) Considering inventions as extreme cases of *ratio difficilis*, in which the expression is invented simultaneously to the contents definition, Eco reaffirms that the abduction or the hypothesis, largely discussed in Charles Sanders Peirce's Semiotics, connects to the code invention, thus,

In these cases, the abduction procedure helps the interpreter to recognize the codification rules invented by the emitter. (...) Sometimes, the invention stays for many times non-signifying, or means, as much his refusal or impossibility of signify. However, in this case, reaffirms that **the sign's fundamental characteristic is exactly its capacity to stimulate interpretation**. (my emphasis – *id.*, p. 59)

Precisely it is what I find in inter-semiotics "physiognomy" of each page of *Os 300 de Esparta*: the visual registration, the verbal information, and the graphic composition, beyond the increase of several interpretation, creatively complement each ones. Thus the interpretive reading permits the recognition of expressive aesthetical signs, either in the use of forms and colors, or in the impeccable diagrammatic heterogeneity, in this multi-sign universe of the visual narrative. In the expressive dialogue connected among inter-changing signs, and between verbal and iconic ones, the sequenced images support words, reduced in a minimum necessary to the narrative understanding. The spatial disposition of the vignettes, the balloons, and the lettering, not only indicates the reader's sight direction, but also the way several text's registers ought to be read – either by themselves (connotations and denotations) or among them (inter-semiotic relations').

### 3. Interpretive-analytical reading proposal

From the album's cover, and from the opening page of each chapter, all details of visual communication are significant. For example, the colors red and black are iconic used. Through out the chapters, the colors are intense and *fauves* when it is necessary to cause emotional scenes impact, however non-aggressive. In opposition, can be discerned the emphasis on nuances and grades from sepia color, even among the scenes of violence, when the colors are blended. The following example shows how are the peculiarities of the visual narrative.

a) The album's front-cover

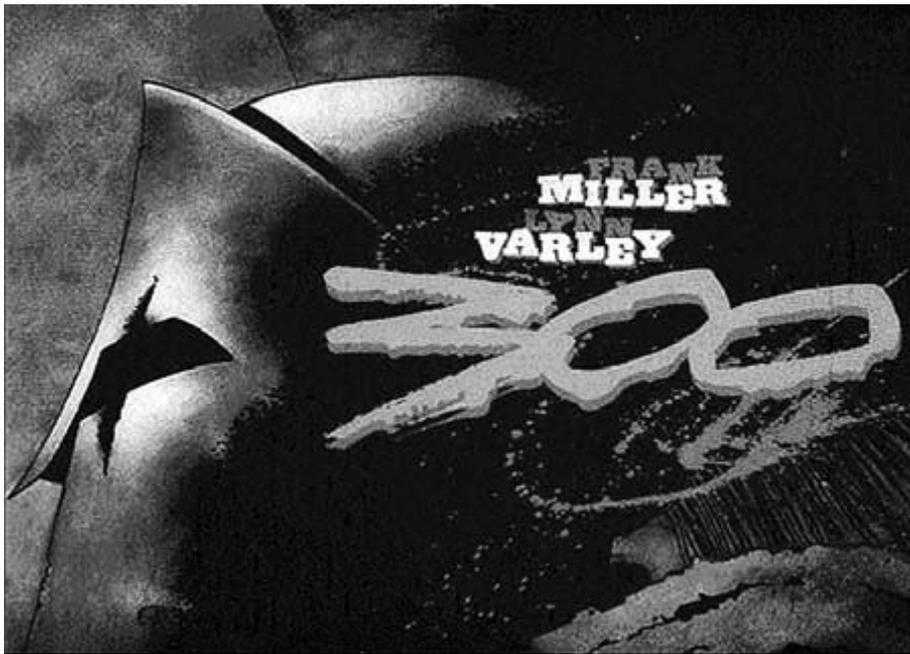


Fig. 2 – MILLER, 2006 – Album's front-cover

The album's front-cover shows the predominance of hot colors: the mask's bronze-brown, and the words' emphatic red, at right. All composed from a metonymic cut in the metallic mask's profile, which detaches from the blue background, at left. Besides the color, the verbal signs gain mass and action, by the size and the graphical type chosen, which permit the aesthetical exploration of verbal messages' iconic components, and in a very similar way to that of the contemporary marketing style. This is the way that the verbal material organization force provokes the transposition of the linear reading, incorporating plastic arts' expressive principles.

b) The opening pages

Each chapter opens itself with non-subdivided pages, and meticulously arranged, to the printings and charts (or: scenes).

Example Number 1 – The **chapter one** – HONOR – shows its title centered in red, capital letters, with the letters arranged in a dynamical form, as such, as action's icons. All the page's inferior half part is constituted by an image that would be sub-divided in two parts, being considered the semiotic elements of its composition: showing the front part with shields (the group protection indicatives), and showing the back part with lances (as indicatives of attack).



Fig. 3 – MILLER, 2006 – Chapter I, opening page

It is important to notice the parallelism of forms, in both parts of the image: the knees' straight angles from the shields' circles; transversal traces (in red), and vertical traces (the lances). In consequence, can be noted the proper dynamic of action, which is captured from the transversal position. The phalanx goes ahead through the frame, in a *crescendo*, from left to right.

With the same components, though having diverse visual information, the image bellow has in its superior part a mass of warriors that forms a semicircle, a symbolic geometrical figure, and visually reinforced by the shields. Straight vertical lines emerge, from the top, which serve – differently from the last described image – to suggest or symbolize the absence

of action. The date (480 B.C.) appears on the superior part, at right, in big brilliant letters, though without main visual appeals.



Fig. 4 – MILLER, 2006

I call the attention to the absence of frame, which gives more lightness and suggests freedom. In this image the red color does not appear, but we can see pastel shades in opposition to black, an image which gives new semantic irradiations and connotations. Both images are opposed, either formally or chromatically.

### c) The cartooning

The name Cartoon itself suggests sequenced images, in sub-divided pages, thankfulness to a particular iconographic code. The graphic arrangement of the album's pages does not correspond to a commonly seen form of a Cartoon, but aims to attend to the dramatic demands of each scene. Thus being established a dialectic game between the signs' meaningful possibilities, which iconic motivated and indicative components are incorporated to the symbolic (arbitrary) character of the iconographic codes, common to conventional cartooning.

Moreover, the commonly onomatopoeia – visually detached, and even more exaggerated and redundant, used to “emphasize” Cartoon's emotions, are rare and subtle in this production. The balloons, letterings, and other iconographic resources, although codified, are been highly detached.



Fig. 5 and 6 – MILLER, 2006

In both of the pages reproduced above, we can note that the original cartooning explores the baroque effect of *trompe l'oeil*, with its anamorphic and vertiginous' effects, which are provoked by the action suggest, as the horse figure. I also increase about the important adoption of the cinematographic resources, like the use of the camera, with some angles from takes linked by convention to certain meanings, as such: the *contra-plongée* gives the impression of the characters' enlargement, and the *plongée* that suggests the characters' smashing effects. In Miller's vignettes, as in the cinema, elements like the plane, the composition, the

framing, the takes, and the perspective, are components of the Cartoon's discursive arrangement, close to the use of colors, lights and shadows, and original textures.

On the other hand, although, several other pages do not show subdivisions, in contrast to the pages studied above. Besides, some of these pages do not use verbal signs. Thus, I consider that these pages can be considered as pictures or printings, having a visual information of a higher aesthetical tenor. By the fact that the visual signs get a complete page, without the little squares, each page passes to act in another space-temporal dimension. Thus the frenetic rhythm that the pages' subdivision into vignettes impose to a visual narrative, is replaced by a pause, which could give the reader "time to breath", letting in suspension the instant sight's trial that the sequenced images require. A kind of pause that would make possible even some considerations about the plot, which happens under the more experienced eyes to images' dynamism that the meaning details.

In this case, I would say that the less turns into more, because an image that occupies all the page, obviously, gets a lower number of information, and coming to show itself as a space to be studied more closely, in a similar way to what we do when analyzing a pictorial art-piece. Being a visual information, different from those explained above, it is thus strange in Cartoon's fragmented context. As an example, I would like to increase:



Fig. 7 – MILLER, 2006

In the image above, the fight theme is reinforced by the moment static illusion, under an imminent attack. The muscled and masked human figure, with war artifacts, embodies aggressive arrangement's icons, proper to the battles' "aesthetics". We could increase chromatic suggestions connected to metallic elements (iron and bronze), with all their force, hardness, and eternal connotations. Besides, a certain reading condition is created, which takes the whole page, that changes the duration of the perception, calling the attention to the composition, and its images' peculiarities, in themselves. Thus, I consider that the new rhythm perceived offers to the reader's look to concentrate more about the image, as a whole, as a totalizing characters' visual arrangement, and connected to the aesthetical perception concept.

Nevertheless, images like that can be considered "symbol-images" (GIACOMANTONIO, 1981) as they have an emblematic character, and their elements are studied and programmed based on specific iconographical codes, as well as by models and stereotypes' diffusion. Theoretically, they are still called iconic codified messages' (ECO, 1989) because they join – in the same significant – elements that are commanded by particular laws (like the case of the Spartan phalanx), which has to be with meanings connected to a shared and pre-conceived knowledge.

Besides the semiotic alternative, by the absence of verbal registry, on avoiding the inter-codes repetition, the focused page opposes itself to the sequenced images' multiplicity among the previous and ulterior pages, which iconize action, in terms of a new rhythm. Thus an aesthetical dimension, more linked to the contemplation than to the action, in this specific moment of the graphical narrative.

#### **4. Aesthetical dialogues**

As it happens in several aesthetical texts – precisely to those of experimental character, when the form becomes to be part of the subject matter –, the power of Miller's vignettes, largely, derives from the *chiaroscuro* extremely contrast, from the extraordinary geometry, and several pictorial references. Besides, it cannot be denied that the visual representation of the Spartan dialogues with the painting and the sculpture. The example bellow permits to verify this connection with the visual arts.



Fig. 8 – *Leonid in the Thermopyles*, by [Jacques-Louis David, 1814](#).  
Oil on canvas, 395 × 531 cm. Louvre Museum, Paris.

It has to be noted in the picture above – as Miller’s vignettes – as the physical presence as the gesture and facial semiotics, besides of the action index and of the attack, become icons of heroism and the physical strength. In this way, I remember Etienne Souriau, when comparing art connections:

It is worthless to argue that the painting belongs to the eyes, and the music to the audition. However, are all these senses involved in the arts’ scene? Could not be some place, such as to **these kinetic or muscular sense, with so much strength in dance, in sculpture, and in architecture itself** (in which the sense could perform such an important role to the perception of the space in perspective) – and why not, even in poetry where the articulation of the emitted voice is served by it? (my emphasis – SOURIAU, 1983, p.87)

Several critics that were made to the movie’s wardrobe increased the “exhibition of semi-nude bodies”<sup>9</sup> of the Spartan warrior as a historical untruthfulness; although I would like to point out the clear similarity with the image above, among others which treat of war themes; besides, the production dos not aim to propose itself as truth, but as fiction – it is a fictional narrative based on a historical fact. In this way, I would like to warn that “fiction” has the same radical of “*fingere*” – a simulation of the truth. Every single work of art is illusory, fake – not

---

<sup>9</sup> The media has notified that the movie’s actors have to follow a rigid training and dieting system, for six weeks, in order to be in the proper physical shape, like that in the GN.

*factum*, but *fictum*. Other similarities in the warriors' figures can be noted, from the Antiquity's statuary until nowadays' epical movies.

As much Miller's Graphic Novel as the **300** movie's sequences show a semiotic distinction aesthetically recognizable as it is, being this my focus on the comparison of the peculiarities of both productions. However, being restricted in time and space by this brief study, I will be limited to the confrontation between the album and the movie's marketing material, which is considered very faithful, one to another. The comparative way of study reveals itself operational, for what I intend to demonstrate, once it preserves what Tania Carvalhal explains as "nature's intermediate mediator", proper to a critical procedure that moves itself "between two or among various elements, exploring nexus and relations", at the same time that "fixes its inter-disciplinary character". (CARVALHAL, 1991, p.10).

In the displays of the film **300**,<sup>10</sup> as well as in the GN, the emphasis in the words' concreteness, with graphic design's and calligraphy's resources, closed to what I could name "type-ideography", permit to observe the formal communicative possibilities of the written word, such as the letters' traces, the colors and the intra-textual relations.

In the three images bellow, I distinguish the choice of typical protagonists of the epical narrative: the "heroine" (Queen Gorgo), the hero (Leonid), and the antagonist (Xerxes); being these three characters in an aggressive and dynamic situation. Besides, in the GN, Leonid's wife is a secondary character, although in the cinematographic version she gains a higher importance. The use of her image in the movie's publishing material connect, unequivocally, to the feminine seduction's appeal, which could not have necessarily the importance in a war narrative.

---

<sup>10</sup> **300**. EUA, 2006. An adaptation from Frank Miller's GN, about the episode that was narrated by Herodotus.

Direction: Zack Snyder. Cast: Gerard Butler, Rodrigo Santoro, David Wenham, Lena Headey. Duration: 117 minutes. In full color. Warner.



Fig. 9, 10 and 11 – Film’s display – publishing

I have to distinguish that the director Zack Snyder, of the movie *300*, came from the publicity market, and from the video-clips, where these persuasive communicational strategies are efficiently explored from decades.

In a similar way to the album’s cover, the letters in red color could be icons of blood (war), and also of the passion and heroism, emphasizing a gesture’s semiotics. The human figure is expressively clipped. They are favored configurations that enrich the persuasive resources inherent to the analyzed products, as bellow:



Fig. 12 and 13 – film’s displays – publishing

The two images show opposing appeal, although they still preserve martial connotations. In the first one, the feminine beauty serves to the sensual appeal for a message's configuration, with the body parts subtly revealed and framed by the aggressiveness of the words in red color, and by the verbal icon of the movie's title. Meanwhile, the second poster works with the plastic appeal of the "shocking beauty", in the masked figure, which attacks dangerously with its weapons, in the direction to the reader.

The publishing material reproduces the peculiar concept of the movie, based on the fidelity to the GN, including in the alternative of aesthetical dimension. In this kind of visual configuration, classified as image-composition (GIACOMANTONIO, 1981), which is commanded by artistic cannons, the theme becomes a pretension to the gaining of compositional effects. The case of the rhythm becomes obvious with a comparison of the images, highly diffused by the media, which I show in the sequence of this study. On the printed page, the kinetic coordinates (the fall index, by the letters' arrangement) find their parallel the three vignettes, one inside the other, that gradually diminishes in size, in a descendant way. The visual route is analogous in the onomatopoeia, at left, immediately above the two vignettes juxtaposed to the first:

Fig. 15 – The film's publishing material: frame and GN's vignette  
(file reference: [www.universohq.com/quadrinhos/300\\_esparta.cfm](http://www.universohq.com/quadrinhos/300_esparta.cfm))

The GN's pages, like every sequenced work of art, aim to reproduce the illusion of motion. That is what I emphasize, using the example bellow, also highly shown:

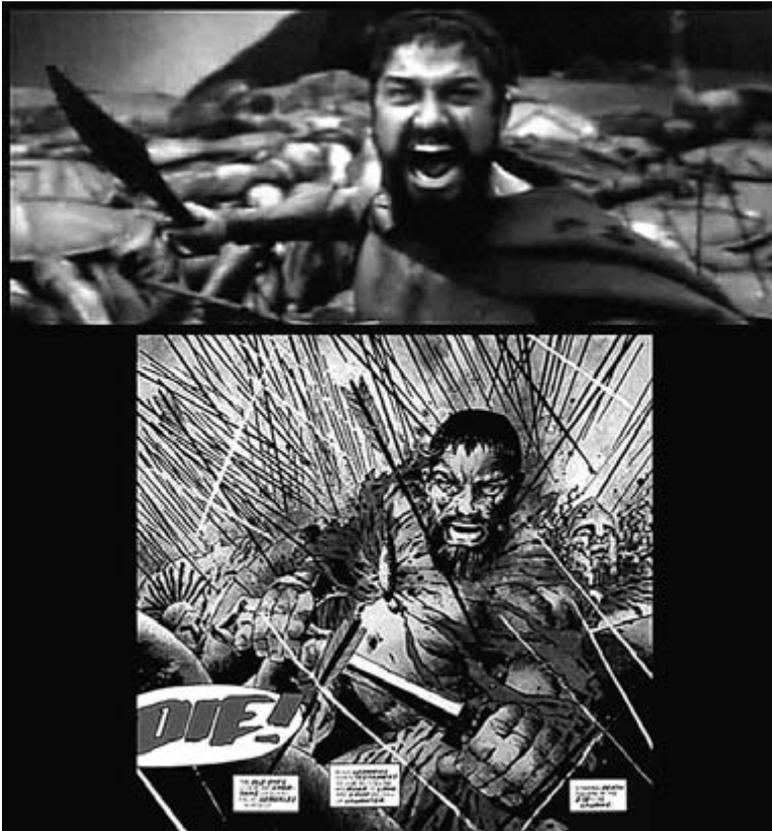


Fig. 16 – The movie’s publishing material: frame and printed vignette  
(file reference: [www.universohq.com/quadrinhos/300\\_esparta.cfm](http://www.universohq.com/quadrinhos/300_esparta.cfm))

Action is speediness, and it is a force that uses a given object, which moves itself in a given space. Meanwhile, the other components are static in the surrounding space, and the perception of a body in action can be distinguished, about a body that is disfigured to the limits, under the kinetic impulse.

I point out that, as on the screen as on the page, the image is clipped, as like the margins of the square interrupt the human figure – which suggest a sequence through out the frames. The visual suggestion from the descending action seems to pull out the conjunct, in the reader’s direction. In consequence, the graphic image highly communicates its form, similar to the fall of arrows that demand to get out from the square. The optical illusion is disturbing, being this a stylistic trace of the graphic artist’s visual narratives.

### **Final appreciation**

The cinematographic potential of each Frank Miller’s works is enormous, as can be seen in the analysis of the graphic material studied in this essay. Besides, Miller’s vignettes reveal a

high aesthetic tenor, understood as “presenting communication”; what I hope to demonstrate by distinguishing poetic elements in the studied production.

From the beginning, I have pointed out that, being part of a perceptive experience, a work of art can de-articulate our perception, on different levels. So, the qualities directly perceived in a poster or in a printed page also can suggest abstract qualities (like refinement, rage, lightness, force, among others). Likewise, from them become the association of ideas, which are iconic suggestions, originated by the comparison of forms, colors, textures, and so on – it is the “quality of feeling” that Peirce talks about.

In a second moment, I have demonstrated that on observing the peculiar presentation of each page, and get their limits of the sign, I also can discriminate their parts and observe how they are related to the whole. It is a second type of an “observing sight”, which aims to examine how can be traced the uniqueness of the sign, how can it be embodied, being distinguished from the context or genre to what it belongs.

In a third moment, my reader-interpreter’s sight went to abstract the general from the particular part, in a way of the representative power of signs, considering its localization in a established class of phenomena. This interpretive phase, of the analyzed material, has included the contextualization of the various effects, which goes from the purely emotional to symbolical and metaphorical elaborations’ – that I consider “mimesis’s astuteness”, in terms of the perceived aesthetic differentiation in the selected material for the present study.

In conclusion, I believe that the visual alternative of Snider’s film – proved by the publishing images commented have –, on trying to remake the genre in a large scale, could reformulate the concept of the epics, and signalize to the future of the cinema, unless in relation to historical films or action movies’. However, this theme requires another essay, to be published soon, in what I investigate the effects of the choice for the fidelity to the GN in the movie *300*.

### **Selected Bibliography**

- BAKHTIN, Mikhail (Mijaíl M. Bajtín). **Problemas literarios y estéticos**. Ciudad de La Habana: Editorial Arte Y Literatura., 1986.
- BENJAMIN, Walter. **A obra de arte na era de sua reprodutibilidade técnica**. São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1993.
- BENSE, Max. **Estética de la información**. Madrid: Alberto Corazón , 1972.
- CARVALHAL, Tania Franco. *Literatura Comparada: A estratégia Interdisciplinar*. **Revista Brasileira de Literatura Comparada**. Niterói, ano 1, nº. 1, p. 9-21, 1991.
- CIRNE, Moacy. **Quadrinhos, sedução e paixão**. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2000.

- CONNOR, STEVEN. **Cultura pós-moderna**. São Paulo, Ed Loyola, 1996.
- DONDIS, Donis A. **Sintaxe da linguagem visual**. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2003.
- EISNER, Will. **Quadrinhos e Arte Sequencial**. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2005.
- ECO, Umberto. **Tratado geral de semiótica**. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1989.
- \_\_\_\_\_. **Semiótica & Filosofia da Linguagem**. São Paulo: Ática, 1991.
- FEATHERSTONE, Mike. Cultura de Consumo e Pós-Modernismo. São Paulo, Studio Nobel, 1995.**
- GIACOMANTONIO, Marcello. **Os meios audiovisuais**. São Paulo: Martins Fontes. 1981.
- GUIMARÃES, César et al. Org. **Comunicação e experiência estética**. Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG, 2006.
- JAKOBSON, Roman. **Linguística e Comunicação**. São Paulo: Cultrix, 1970.
- JAMESON, Frederic. **Espaço e Imagem**. Rio de Janeiro: Editora UFRJ, 1994.
- MACHADO, Arlindo. **Máquina e imaginário. O desafio das poéticas tecnológicas**. São Paulo: EDUSP, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Arte e Mídia: Aproximações e Distinções*. Revista da COMPÓS. Dezembro 2004 ( disponível em [www.compos.com.br/e-compos](http://www.compos.com.br/e-compos) - acesso em 15/out. 2007)
- Mc CLOUD, Scott. **Desvendando os quadrinhos**. São Paulo: Ed. Makron Books, 2004.
- MILLER, Frank; VARLEY, Lynn. **Os 300 de Esparta**. São Paulo: Devir, 2006.
- PEIRCE, Charles Sanders. **Semiótica**. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1990.
- PLAZA, Júlio. **A tradução intersemiótica**. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1990.
- RUBIN, A.A.C., BENTZ, I.M.G. e PINTO, M.J. (orgs.) **Produção e Recepção dos sentidos midiáticos**. Petrópolis, Vozes, 1998.
- SANTAELLA, Lúcia. **Matrizes da linguagem e pensamento: sonora visual verbal**. São Paulo. Iluminuras, 2001.
- SCHAEFFER, Jean-Marie. **Adieu à l'esthétique**. Paris: PUF, 2000.
- SEEL, Martin. **Aesthetics of appearing**. California: Stanford University Press, 2005.
- SOURIAU, Ettienné. **A correspondência das artes. Elementos de Estética Comparada**. São Paulo: Cultrix/USP, 1983.
- VIRILIO, Paul. **Guerra e Cinema: logística da percepção**. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2005.
- Sites consultados**
- Permanent link* ['300' comic to screen comparison \\*\\*UPDATED\\*\\*](#) acesso em out.. 2007
- [grecoantiga/exp/citacao.asp](#) acesso em jan. 2008
- [www.devir.com.br/hqs/frank\\_miller.php](http://www.devir.com.br/hqs/frank_miller.php) em acesso em jan. 2008
- [www.moebiusgraphics.com](http://www.moebiusgraphics.com) acesso em jan. 2008
- [www.universohq.com/quadrinhos/300\\_esparta.cfm](http://www.universohq.com/quadrinhos/300_esparta.cfm) acesso em jan. 2008
- [www.historianet.com.br](http://www.historianet.com.br) acesso em jan 2008