



Who doesn't know him? Asterix the Gaul who rebelled against the Romans and in his adventures travelled all over Europe. He brought the tea across the Channel, relished Belgian Waterzooi and enjoyed Greek wine.

A true European avant la lettre!

Other comic strip heroes aren't much impressed by barriers, be they geographical or mental, either.

Europe has an eventful past – What does its future look like? Do we even need a European super hero to rescue the Union? The Friedrich Naumann Foundation organised the International Comics Competition "Animate Europe" to find out.

The Belgian Comic Strip Center is very happy to support Animate Europe. This competition proves that the world of comic strips is a free universe without borders to the imagination, encouraging creativity all over the world. It's our sincere wish that this may be a metaphor for the future of Europe.

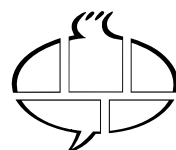
Willem De Graeve

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Belgian Comic Strip Center

Friedrich Naumann
STIFTUNG

FÜR DIE FREIHEIT

Animate Europe

Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit



© Emily Victoria Solichin

Animate Europe

Animate Europe
International
Comics Competition 2013



Europe can mean a lot to artists. It can be, like in this competition, the inspiration for their stories, but it also can give them an international platform. There is a massive cross-over of talent and editors/artists with potential all over Europe. International festivals are important, because they make the community, the possibilities and bounds stronger.

Artists can also mean a lot to Europe, for the continuation of the tradition of the graphic novel, the storytelling. Starting up a creative process involves a lot of people, the creation itself is maybe a very individual moment, but the economic, financial and cultural results are not to be underestimated. The governments, city councils and cultural organizations who have high appreciation of comics and graphic art see an important increase of visitors in their museums, galleries, shops and events.

Linda Torfs

Animate Europe is transforming the idea and the vision of Europe into the popular language of comics - to make people think about the essentials of our European community and to give comprehensible links for those who are not interested in bureaucracy and detached politics.

Thorsten Ernst

This initiative of Naumann Foundation created a great opportunity for people of different cultural background to show their talents and to share also their vision of Europe. Once again, this proves that comics can transport serious ideas. I'm very happy to discover the variety of artistic approach of each participant.

Marzena Sowa

In my perspective the entries of the Animate Europe contest show how comics can tell about a complex topic in a (seemingly) easy and often humorous way.

Lilli Gärtner

I was hugely impressed by the quality and diversity of voices and themes from the entrants to this competition. Their storytelling in words and pictures reaffirms the power of the comics medium to bring to life the many different personal and political perspectives on Europe.

Paul Gravett

Comics come into being thanks to the clever and harmonious combination of various elements - drawings, words, symbols, colour ... - like Europe is the interplay of cultures, traditions, languages, needs and minds ...

Andreas C. Knigge

The year is A.D. 2013.
Europe is in a deep, deep crisis.
Well, not entirely ...

That's what the famous first lines of "Asterix and the European Union" could sound like. Indeed, many European member states are faced with severe financial and socio-economic problems. EU citizens are more and more losing faith in the European institutions. A new narrative is called for that is appealing and redefines the European project. Politicians, scientists and journalists are desperately trying to give answers.

We were looking for a different perspective, not a Brussels or ivory tower one. We asked artists from all over the world to tell and draw their story. On Europe's past, present or future. On European myths, dreams or reality. We asked them to ANIMATE EUROPE.

And here they are: the five best comics. As diverse in approach, topic and style as the European Union and its 28 member states. But what all artists have in common: They ANIMATE EUROPE!

Enjoy the read!



Hans H. Stein
Regional Director
European Institutions and North America

Foreword



Andreas C. Knigge

Andreas C. Knigge is a publicist, lector, translator and literary agent. He was co-founder and editor of the magazine Comixene and later editor-in-chief at Carlsen's. He published several books on comics, lastly the biographies of Charles M. Schulz and Hansrudi Wäscher.



Lilli Gärtner

Lilli Gärtner works as an illustrator in Leipzig. She studied drawing and illustration at the University of Fine Arts (HFBK) in Hamburg and the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in Baltimore.



Linda Torfs

Linda Torfs is the owner of the international comic bookshop and gallery MEKANIK STRIP. Furthermore, she is the organiser of LAMBERMONTMARTRE, an annual open air exhibition for painters, sketch-artists and photographers. Linda was the president of the commission of comic books and illustrators of the Flemish Fund of Literature and is the initiator of the comic wall project in Antwerp.



Marzena Sowa

Marzena Sowa is a graphic novelist. She holds a degree in French and Italian literature. In collaboration with Sylvain Savoia, she has been publishing the comic book series "Marzi" which tells the story of her childhood in communist Poland and got her a nomination for the Eisner Awards.



Paul Gravett

Paul Gravett is a London-based freelance journalist, curator, lecturer, writer and broadcaster, who has worked in comics publishing and promotion since 1981. He is the founder of Escape Magazine, and writes a monthly article on comics appearing in the UK magazine Comics International, together with a monthly column for ArtReview. He has written for various periodicals and is the author of several books on the subject of comics, including Manga: Sixty Years of Japanese Comics (2004), and Graphic Novels: Stories to Change Your Life (2005), as well as most recently Comics Art (2013).



Thorsten Ernst

Thorsten Ernst is a freelance TV author. After his degree in political studies and philosophy, he explored the radio and TV world and shaped the magazine Tracks (Arte) as an author. He worked for a TV production company for several years, but decided to venture into self-employment and has been roaming the world of pop culture ever since.

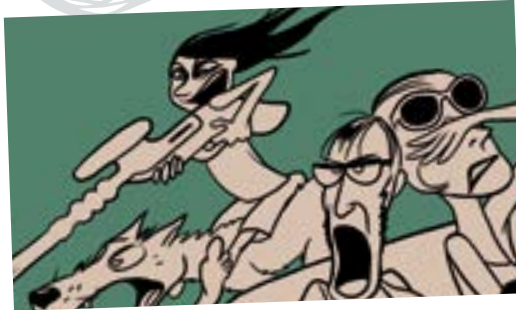


Willem De Graeve

Willem De Graeve is the director and communications manager of the Belgian Comic Strip Center in Brussels. He has written several articles about comics, including a literary analysis of an album by Jacques Martin. He also regularly gives lectures on the history of Belgian comic strips at home and abroad.

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A seal gives Erasmus of
Rotterdam food for thought
on the unification of Europe



André Slob

works as comics artist and illustrator.

Wanting to become an art teacher he studied in Delft and graphic design in Rotterdam, he deliberately cut the ties with the past and plunged for years in a world of traveling, career switches, yoga and buddhism. He worked in cafes, restaurants and movie theatres, prepared in Norway to volunteer in Angola during the civil war. He designed websites, stayed in ashrams, lived in buddhist monasteries in France and Nepal, and finally thought it might be a good idea to return to what had always remained close to his heart: drawing and comics.



Emily Victoria Solichin

specializes in comic style art, illustration, and paintings.

She is currently studying at the The Art Institute of Chicago. She received a distinguished scholar merit scholarship from Pasadena City College and an award for superior achievement in art history from Bina Bangsa School in Kebon Jeruk, Jakarta, Indonesia. She illustrated Dr. Ritsuko Hirai's first year Japanese study book and worked together with Dr. Debashish Banerji on the "Ajanta Project", turning ancient Indian cave carvings into a graphic novel. She was the youngest exhibitor at the International New York Art Expo 2012 and had several solo exhibitions: at the University of California Los Angeles, CA 2012, Century Books Pasadena, CA 2012 and The Grove Los Angeles, CA 2011 ("Discover Wonderful Indonesia").



Kilian Wilde

works as freelance illustrator, graphic designer and (unpaid) comics artist.

A media designer by training, he enjoys all means of visual expression, be it digital art, pencil scribbles or painting on canvas. He has published several comics, illustrated books and edits the two-weekly web comic "Tale of Fiction".

The



Lukas Wilde

is a postgraduate and research assistant at the Institute of Media Studies at the University of Tübingen focussing on narrative visuality and operational graphics.

He holds a Master's degree in Theatre and Media Studies, initiated several performance groups, worked as comics author for the art's sake, as copywriter and is essentially a man of the theatre.



Luke Ellison

works as freelance photographer, illustrator, and conceptual designer.

He holds a Master of Fine Arts in Illustration and Comic Arts from Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Minneapolis, as well as a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts from Lourdes College, Sylvania, OH and an Associate of Science Degree in Applied Digital Media from Owens Community College, Toledo, OH. He also studied photography at the New York Institute of Photography.



Marco Tabilio

works as illustrator, comic author and video maker.

He received a Bachelor's degree in "Comics and Illustration" from the Accademia di Belle Arti Bologna. During his studies he moved to Hamburg where he focused on Media Information. In 2013 he completed his Master's degree in "Media illustration" at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Bologna. His work has been exhibited near Bologna, in Venice and Hamburg. He recently contributed to the 3rd issue of the Hamburg based independent comic magazine "Bohtoggs". As a video maker he regularly shows his work online and produced an animation music video for the Italian band Father Murphy.

ne Artists

Let me take you back to a period of turmoil that threatened my beloved family and that turned out to be a real testcase...

THE POOL

I WAS MARRIED YOUNG.



MAYBE TOO YOUNG.



WHAT TO DO . . .



YOU MEET SOMEONE
AND YOU FALL IN LOVE.



YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE WAITING.

YOU ACT.



MANY, MANY NIGHTS MY WIFE AND I
DISCUSSED OUR SITUATION.



HOW DO WE BRING THIS BUNCH TOGETHER?



HOW TO STOP THEM CHASING EACHOTHER
AND LIVE PEACEFULLY?



?



IS THERE A WAY TO GET THEM
WORKING TOGETHER?



THEN, ONE NIGHT DURING A VERY HOT SUMMER, I UNFOLDED THE PLAN TO BUILD A SWIMMINGPOOL IN THE BACKYARD.



NO NEED TO SAY THAT THIS WAS WELCOMED WITH SHEER ENTHOUSIASME.



WE COULDN'T WAIT TO GET STARTED!



AND TRUE, IN OUR EAGERNESS TO TAKE A DIP,

WE SKIPPED SOME DETAILS THAT WOULD BE TAKEN CARE OF LATER.





WHAT CAN I SAY. . .



WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES.



WHAT COUNTS IS THE RESULT.

WE WERE CONNECTED.



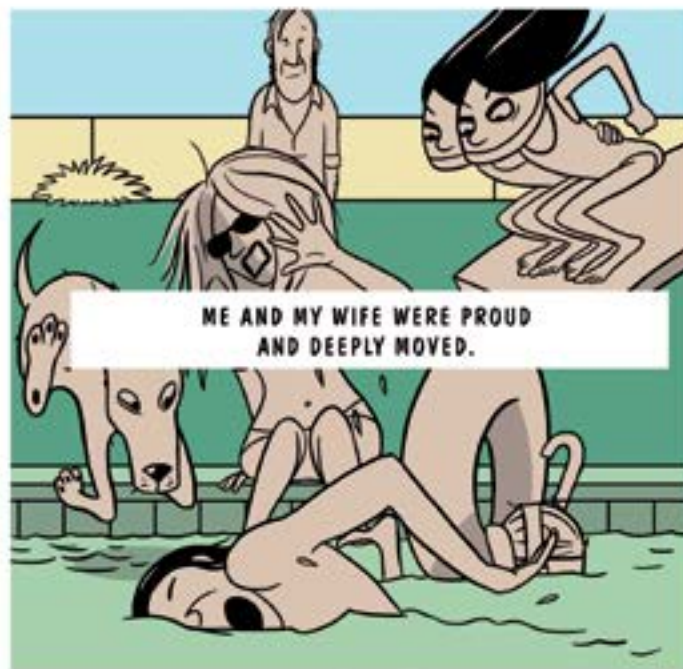
THERE WAS A FOCUS.

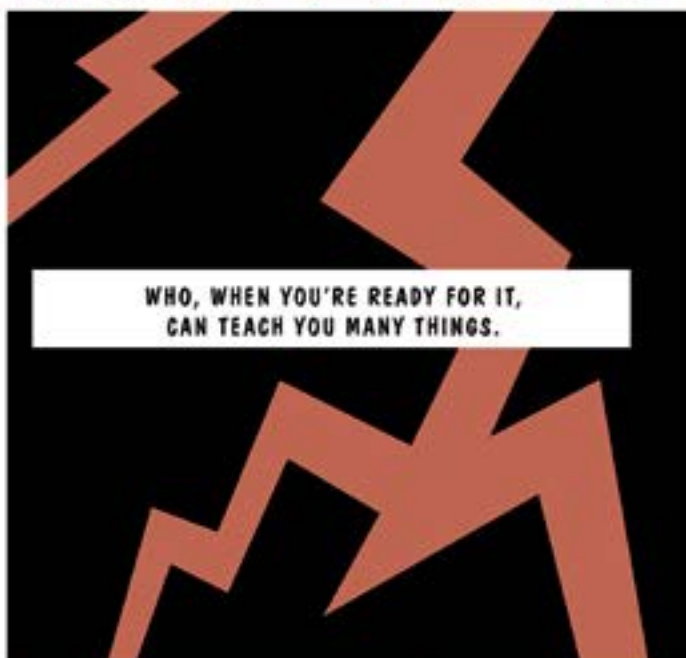


ALSO ENVY, FROM NEIGHBOURS.



THEY FANCED A DIP IN THE POOL TOO OF COURSE.



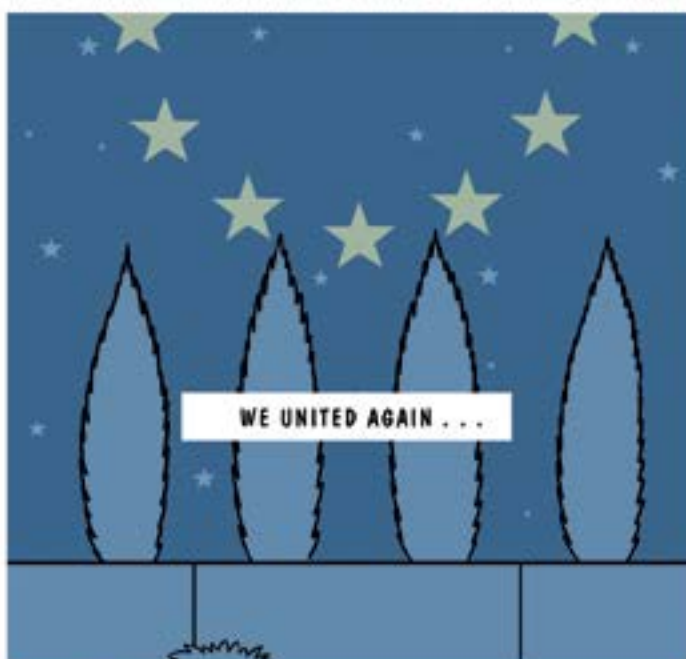




EVEN AFTER A FIERCE ARGUMENT WE
ALWAYS TALKED THINGS OVER.



FORGETTING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED,



WE UNITED AGAIN . . .



AND RENEWED OUR FOCUS ON THE
REWARD WAITING AT THE END . . .



SIPPING LONGDRINKS AT OUR
VERY OWN POOL!



WHO WOULDN'T WANT THAT!





SILENCE!

LISTEN CAREFULLY...



IN THE FUTURE WHERE
YOU NO LONGER EXIST...

DESTRUCTION AND CHAOS OCCURS.

BUT I SEEK CHANGE, TO
ALTER THE COURSE OF HISTORY,



BY CHANGING THE ULTIMATE MYTH...

DO YOU UNDERSTAND?



YOUR MISSION IS TO ...

SAVE EUROPA

B-BUT I-ISNT IT JUST A MYTH?

STOP WASTING
MY TIME!

A DAMSEL IN DISTRESS!
WE MUST SAVE HER~♪

ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE WITH
MY MAGIC, LIKE SUMMONING
YOU ALL TO THIS PLACE...

BESIDES, AREN'T YOU
CURIOUS TO CHANGE HISTORY?

HOW ANNOYING...

WHAT'S IN IT FOR US!?

... WHAT A ...
PROBLEMATIC BUNCH!

AHA!
A WISH!!!

IF YOU CAN SAVE HER, I
WILL GRANT YOU ONE WISH.

if you can,
that is!!!

18

AREN'T WE
SUPPOSED TO
GET THREE!?

AAANYTHING YOU DESIRE~~

NOW THAT YOU'RE
FINALLY INTERESTED...

BE PREPARED





Juan's turn

NOW LOOK HOW
IT'S DONE !!!

DON'T WORRY
LITTLE MISSY!

DASH

I'M USED TO DOING
MUCH WORSE THINGS THAN
KIDNAPPING YOU.

WHY... DO YOU HAVE TO
HURT OTHERS? ...AREN'T YOU
HURTING TOO, INSIDE?

WHAT DO
YOU MEAN!?

DEEP DOWN, YOU'RE A GOOD PERSON.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS...

DARN IT !!!

ZOOM

GRRR
GRRR

Moranda's turn

HUH! HOW USELESS!!!
NOW'S MY TURN.

EXCUSE ME, YOU! THE
PRINCESS OVER THERE!

YES...?

HOW 'BOUT WE MAKE A DEAL!?
RETURN HOME, AND YOU WILL BE
PAID A GENEROUS AMOUNT.

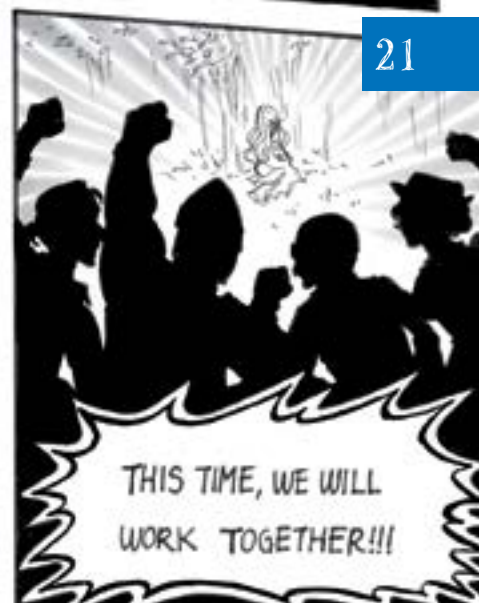
YOU COULD STAY HERE AND
ESTABLISH A GOOD CAREER TO MAKE
LOTS OF PROFIT LIKE I DO !!!

YOU CAN HAVE ALL THE RICHES
IN THE WORLD, BUT DOES THAT
MAKE YOU HAPPY?

LIKE LOVE, MAYBE...?

AREN'T THERE MORE
IMPORTANT THINGS THAN WEALTH?

...
HMPH!!
I'M LEAVING!



CONSIDER YOUR FUTURE!
IS IT WHAT YOU REALLY
WANT TO DO!?

HE'S DEFINITELY A
SWINDLER! THAT BULL
MAY FOOL AND
KIDNAP YOU!!!

MILADY, THOU WILT
MAKE THEE PARENTS
WORRIED SICK!

ACCORDING TO HOW MYTHS
DEVELOP, BEING IN A
RELATIONSHIP WITH A DIVINE
BEING MIGHT END BADLY!

I GUESS WHAT YOU
ALL SAID IS TRUE...

22



NOW DISAPPEAR!
RETURN BACK TO YOUR
OWN TIMELINES!!!



SO THAT'S HOW IT IS, HUH ...
THE PAST CANNOT BE ALTERED.

THESE WISHES...
COULD HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED
BY THEIR OWN EFFORTS.

"Happiness"
ALL OF YOU MAY TAKE
A BREAK AND GO HOME
TO YOUR FAMILIES!

"Wisdom"
PEACE!
NO WAR!
MY PEOPLE, METHINKS
WE PERCHANCE NEED TO
RE STRATEGIZE!

"Faith"
THIS TIME, I'LL NEVER
GIVE UP TILL IT WORKS!

"Success"
I'M CHANGING MY WAYS
TO PURSUE MY DREAMS!

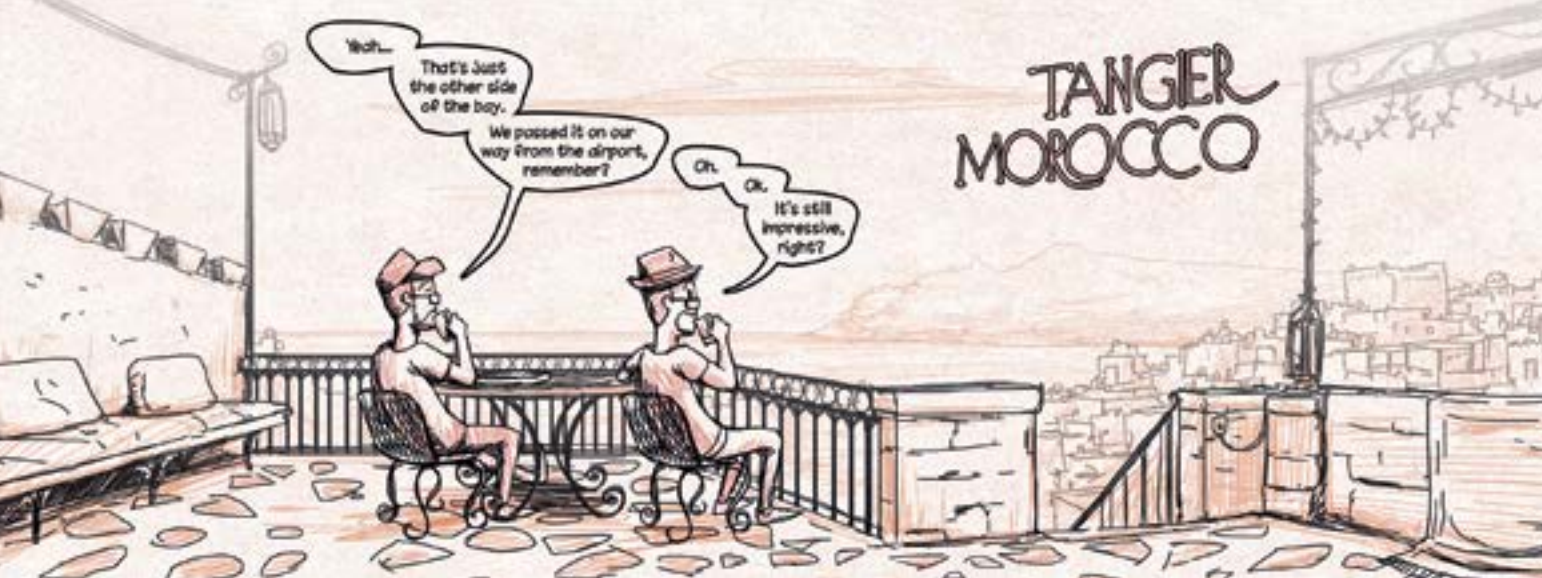
23

AFTER ALL, IT IS NOT HISTORY
THAT NEEDS TO BE CHANGED,

BUT THE HEARTS
OF THE PEOPLE.

Let's see who should
we summon next!

it could be you!



TANGER
MOROCCO

Well, we're here to do a project about Europe. But where to get started? Europe is pretty much all we know...

Kill did a nice artwork:
Our Europe, seen from
Tübingen

Aschaffenburg!

- but that wasn't
interesting at all

So we decided to travel to one specific border
where Europe ends - or begins, depending on
which side of the border you're on...

CEUTA

TANGIER

To a frontier, where thousands of
people head to, year after year,
legally and illegally, in order to find
their specific vision of some 'Europe'.

25





*Diederich, Hannes: "Melliz Transit oder Exilestation", Brandes 6 April, Frankfurt a.M. 2009, p. 96 ff.

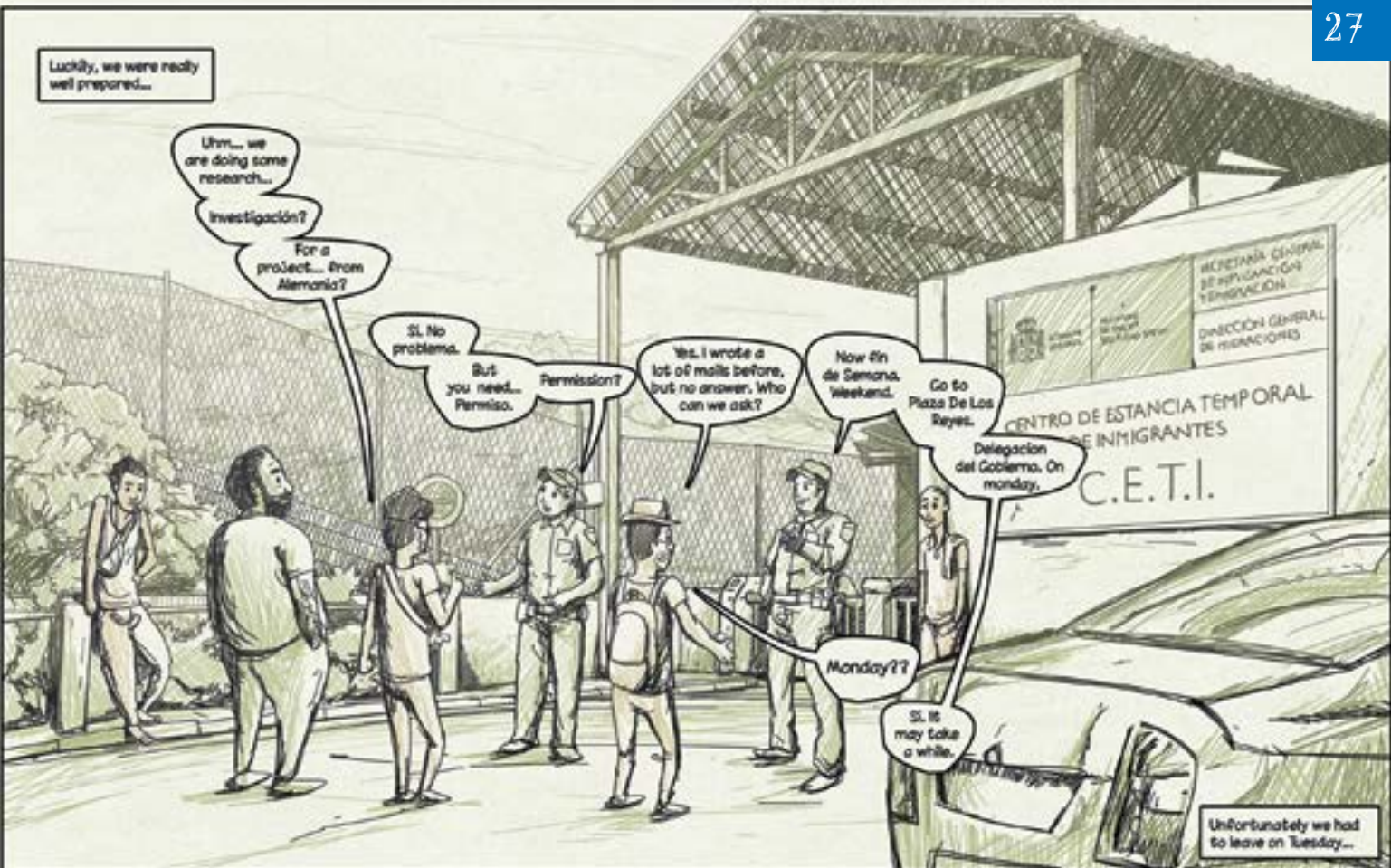


But we were here for a specific reason, after all...



27

Luckily, we were really well prepared...



Since even all the illicit employment in Ceuta is covered by Moroccans for a few Euro per hour, C.E.T.L.-inhabitants can basically just wait, day after day.



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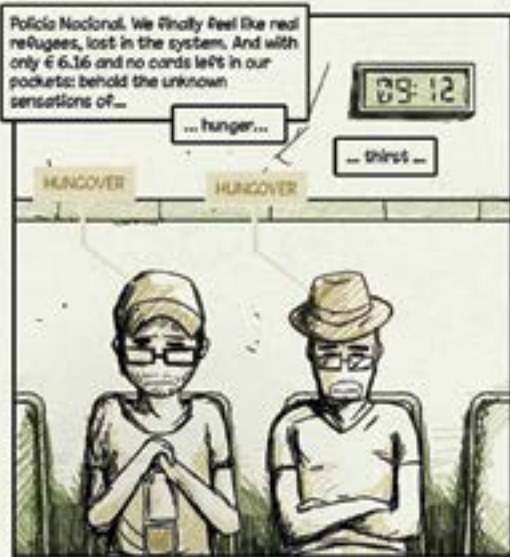


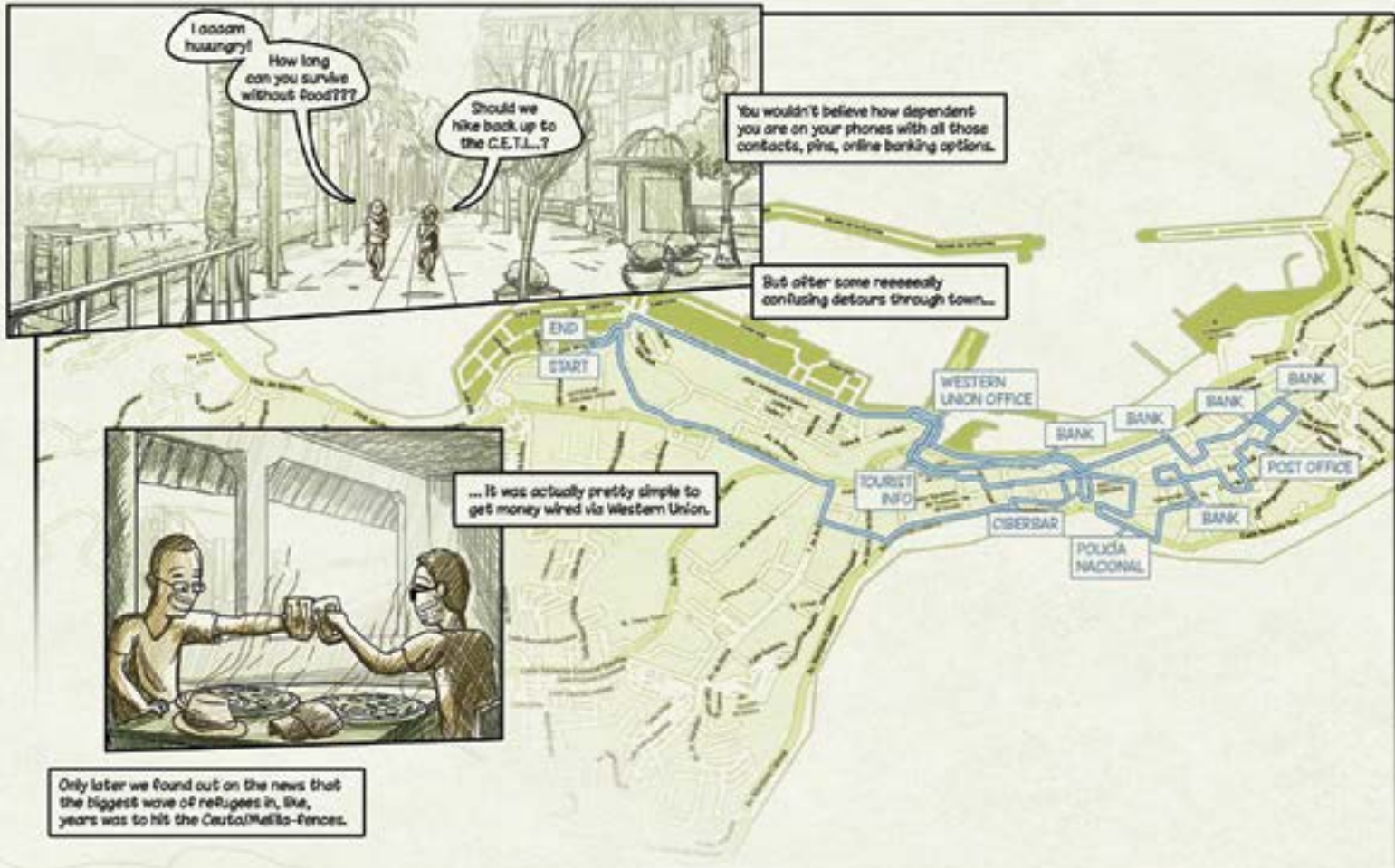
The book goes on:



*Bercel, José Luis Gómez et al. (Ed.) "Ceuta", Lunwerg Editores, Barcelona/Madrid, 1998, p. 200.

**Bil., p. 190.





SALUTE!

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY LUKE ELLISON







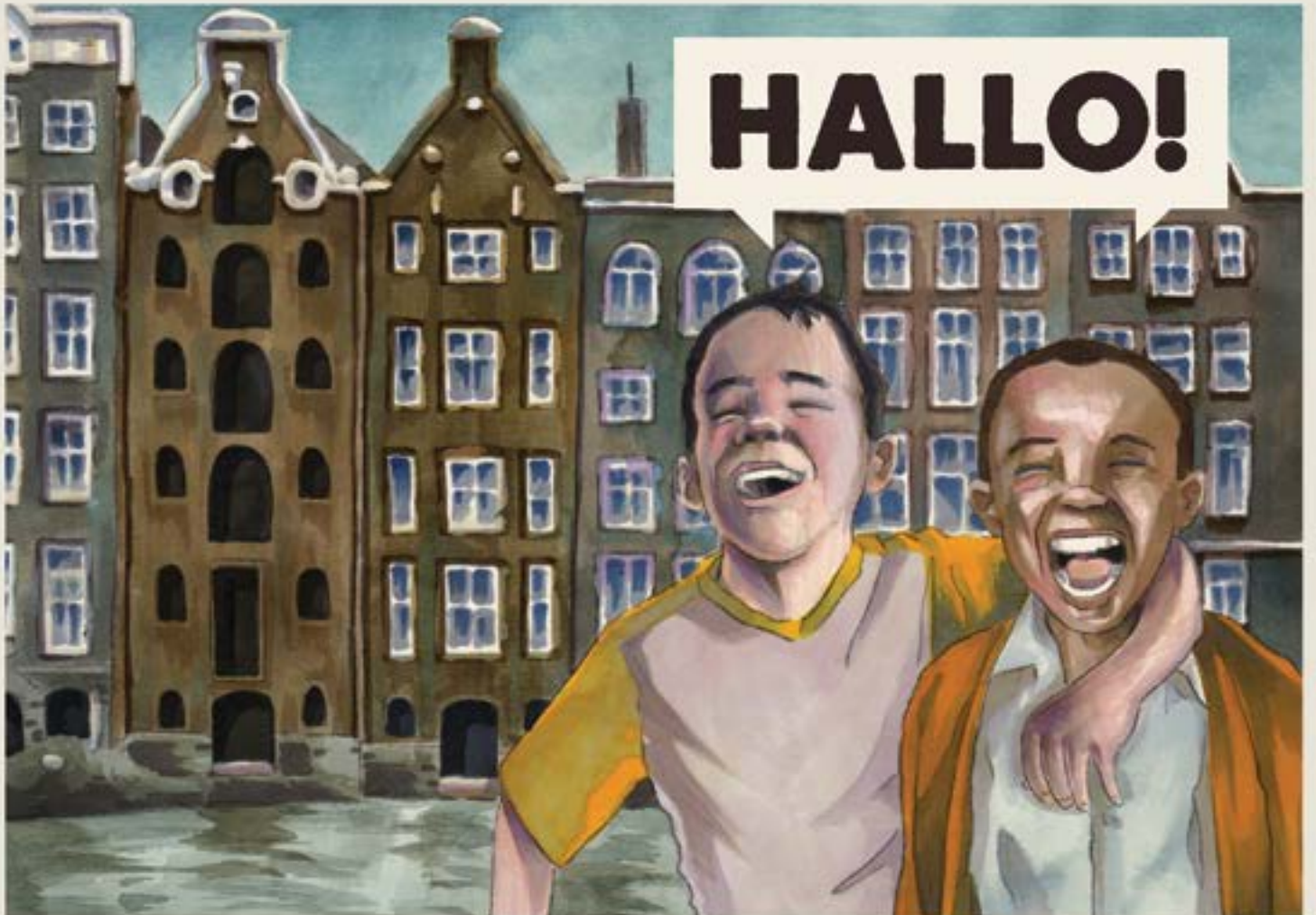


¡HOLA!



36

HALLO!







HALO!

HALO!

HALO!

BONJOUR!

BONJOUR!

BONJOUR!

¡HOLA!

¡HOLA!

¡HOLA!

OLA!

OLA!

OLA!

HEJ!

HEJ!

HEJ!

AHOJ!

AHOJ!

AHOJ!

HALLO!

HELLO!

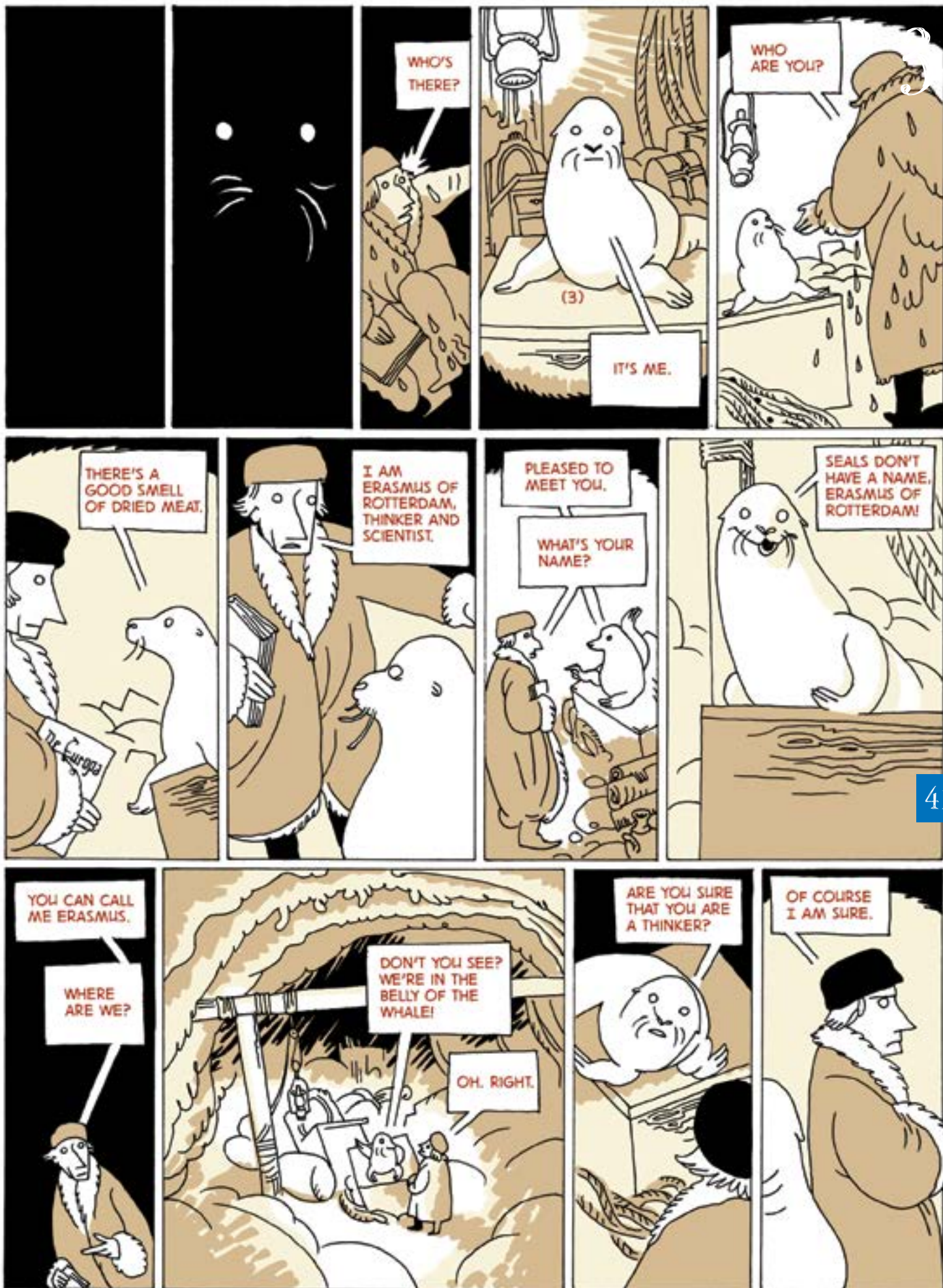
HELO!



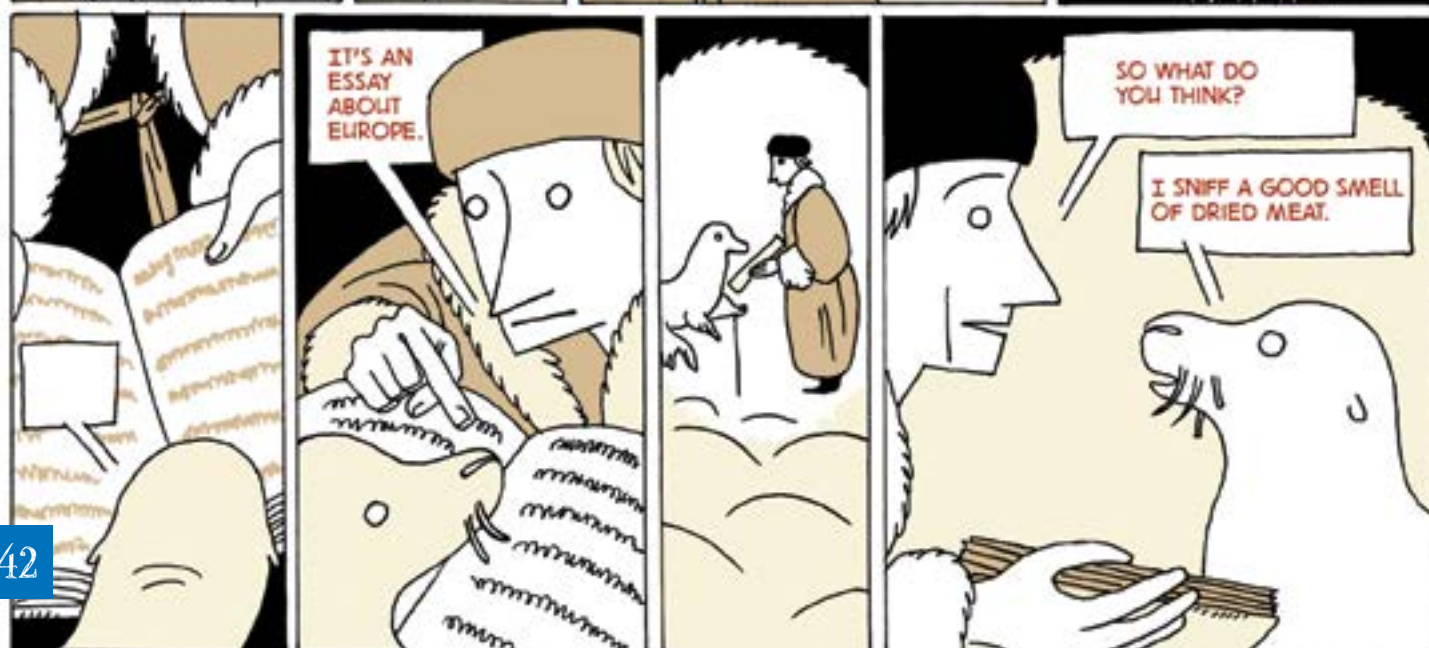


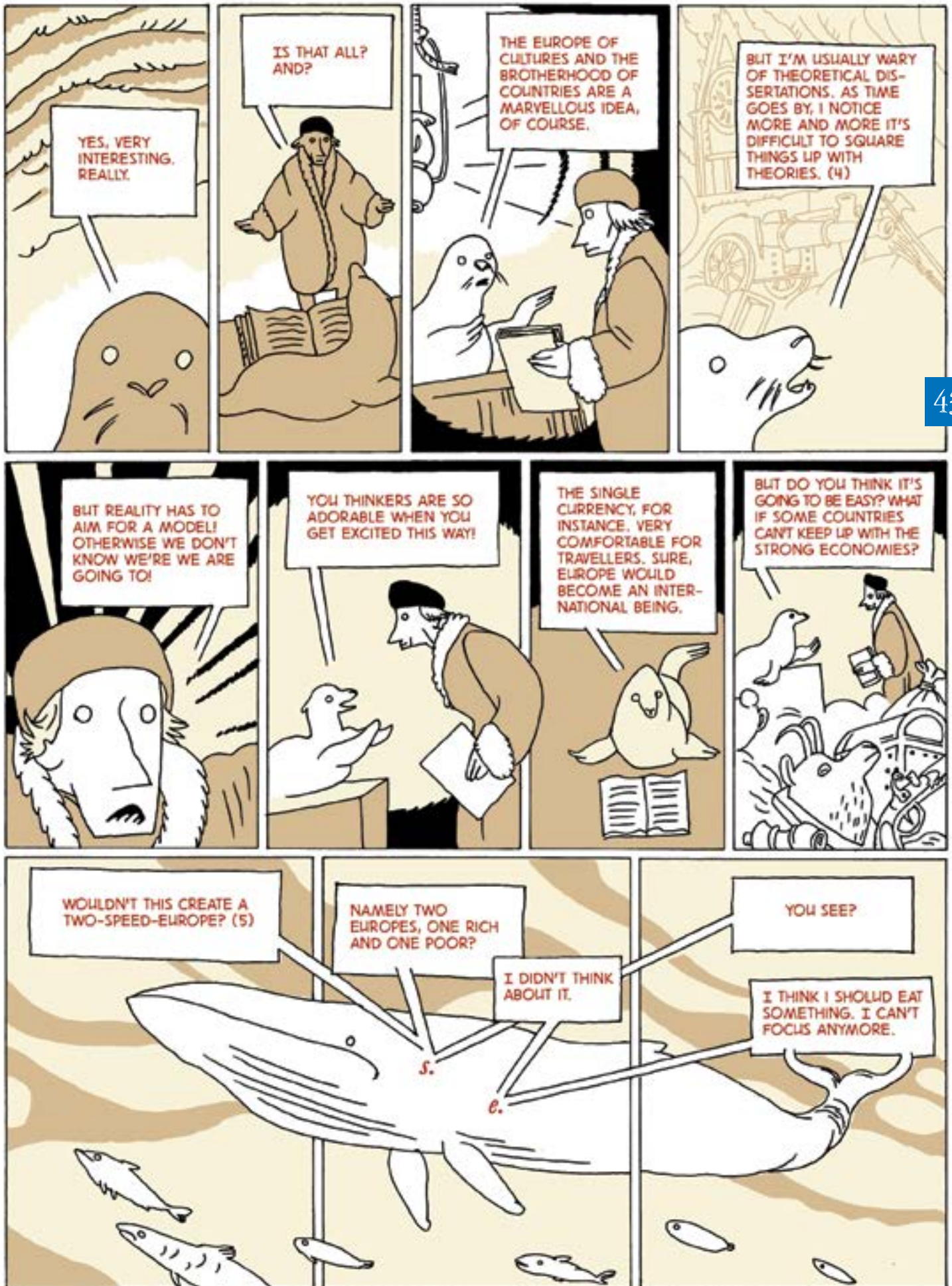
1) The only traces we have of the *De Europa*, written by Erasmus in 1511 and meant to be the final chapter of *The Praise of Folly*, have reached us thanks to the typographer Markus Tabloewen of Antwerp (1530). He claims that the other editions make a mistake excluding it, because "since it's about madness, the anecdote is in the right place."

2) According to critic R. Tobilic, the *De Europa* is probably nothing else but an allegory; the fictional travel of Erasmus has to be read as a representation of dialectic issues. Another wing of the reviewers, trusts word by word the Erasmian anecdote, included the talking seal.



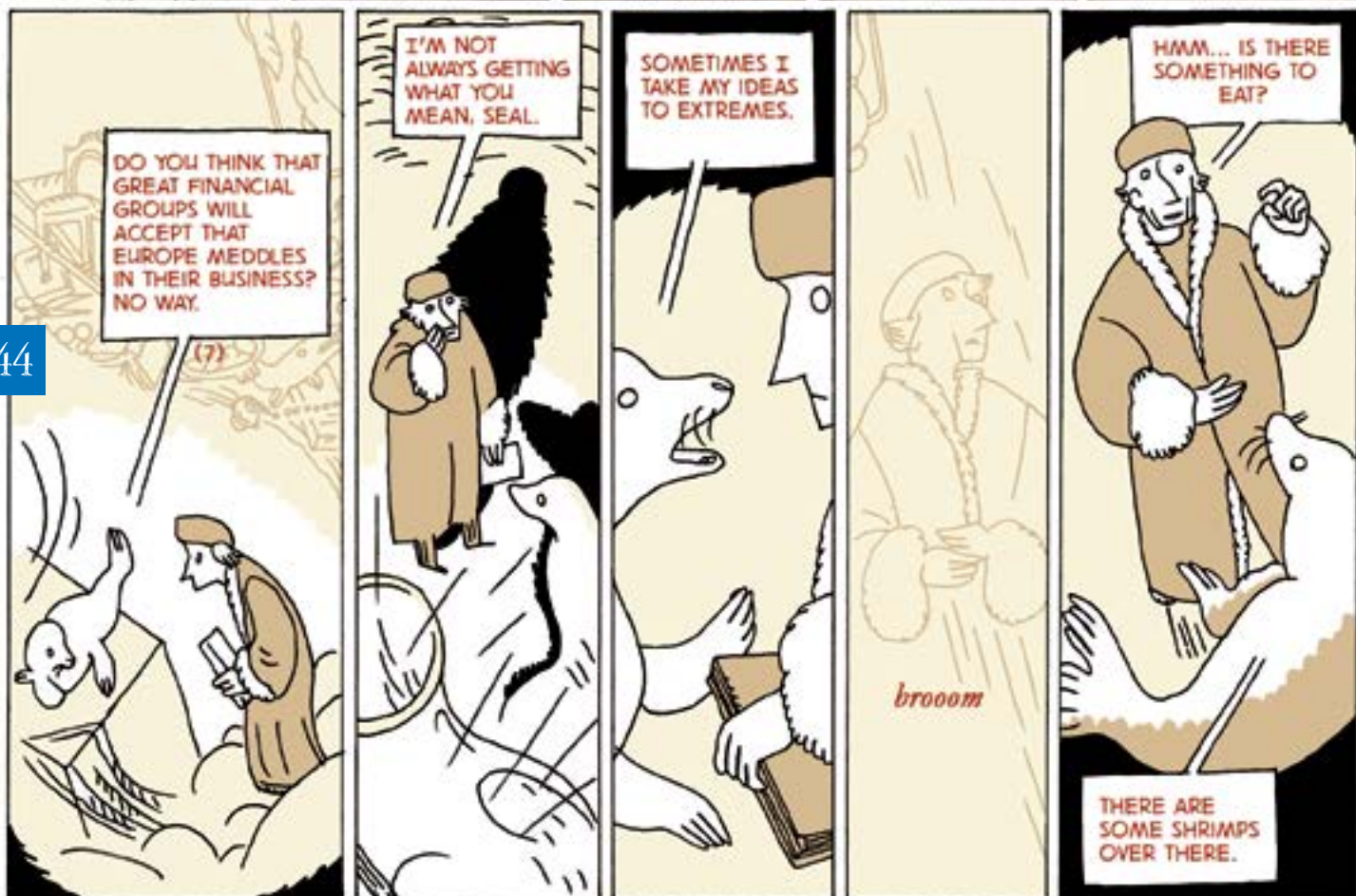
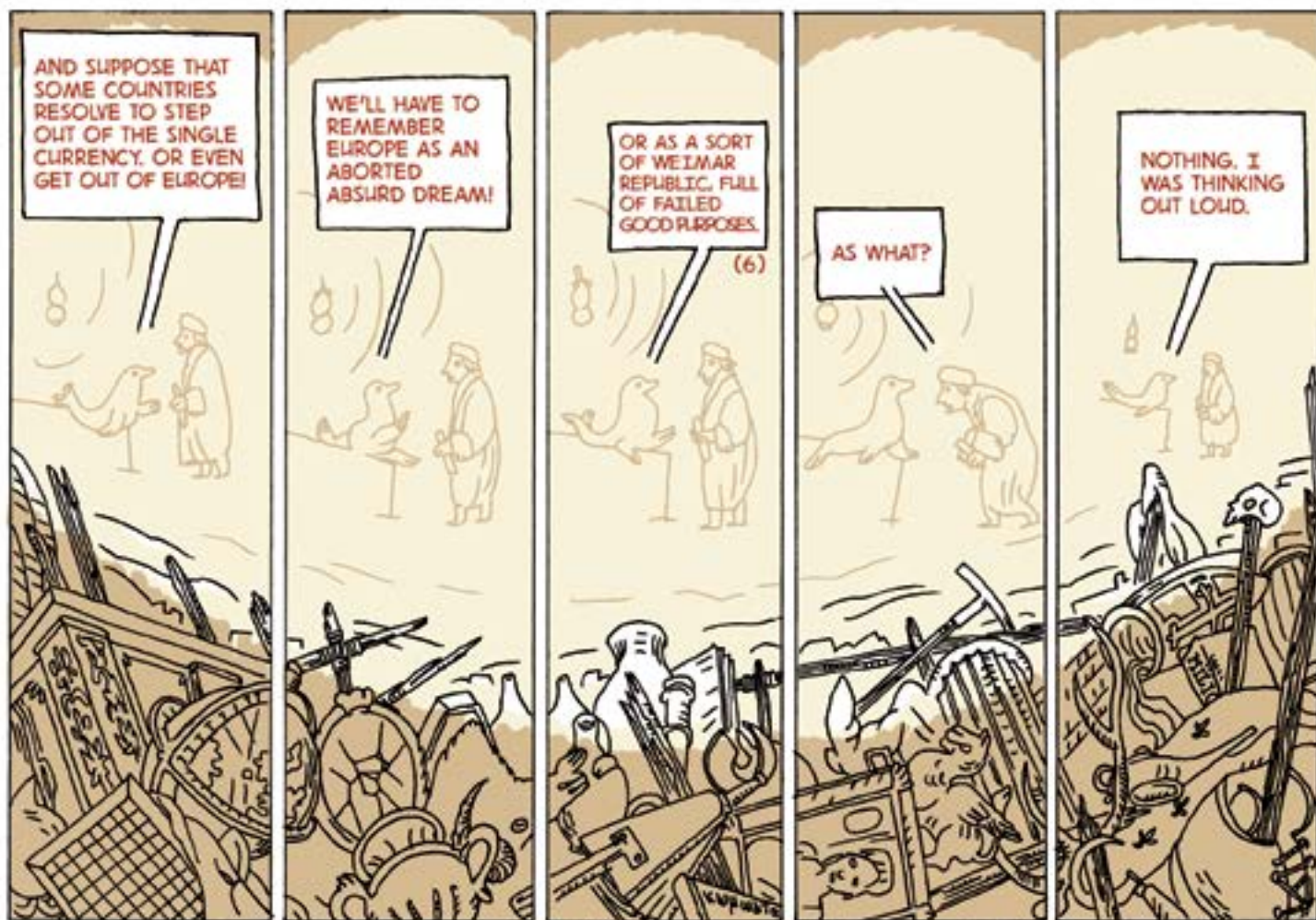
(3) The meaning of the seal has being a disputed theme for a long time. Some say it's a malevolent demon, a counterpoint of the philosophical proposition in an animal form. Other insist on the zoological concreteness of the animal, whose fussiness is well-known by the naturalists.





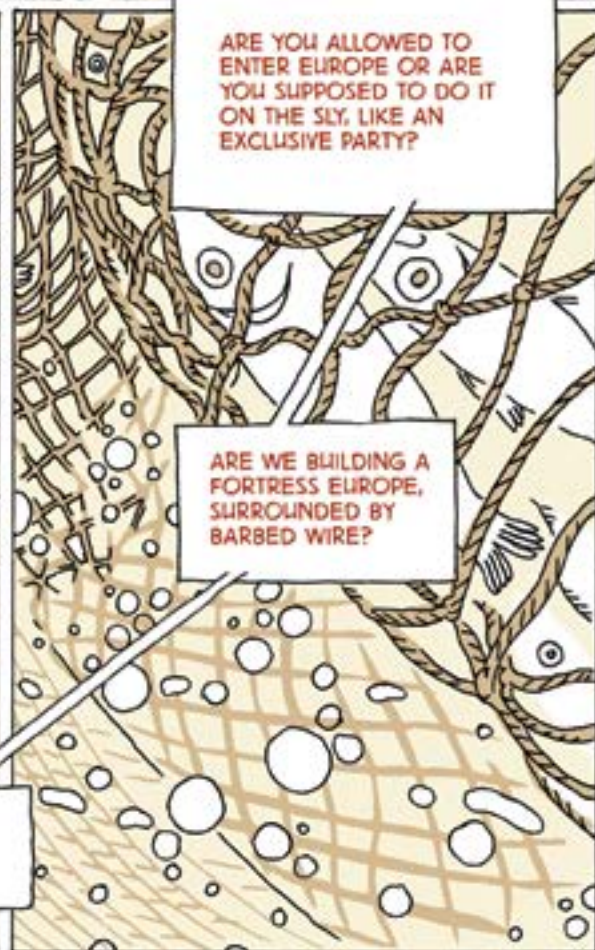
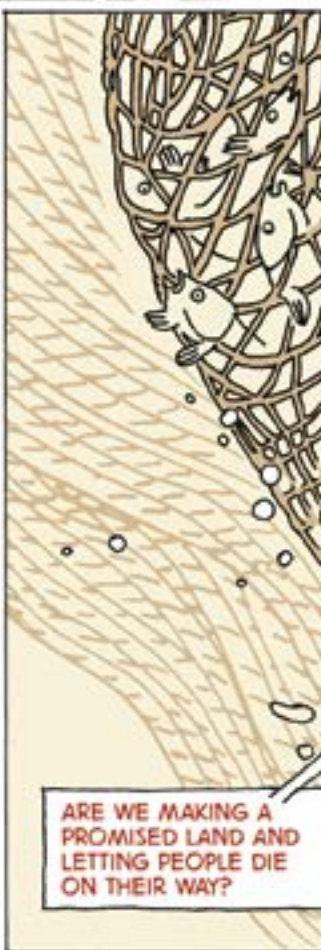
(4) From this disputed point some academics start to cast doubts on the authenticity of the Erasmian anecdote: "It's not probable that a carnivorous marine mammal had an empiricist and realist approach", they say.

(5) And about this passage: "This is a typical concern of a South European – they say – but the seal is a Northern animal! It doesn't make sense!"



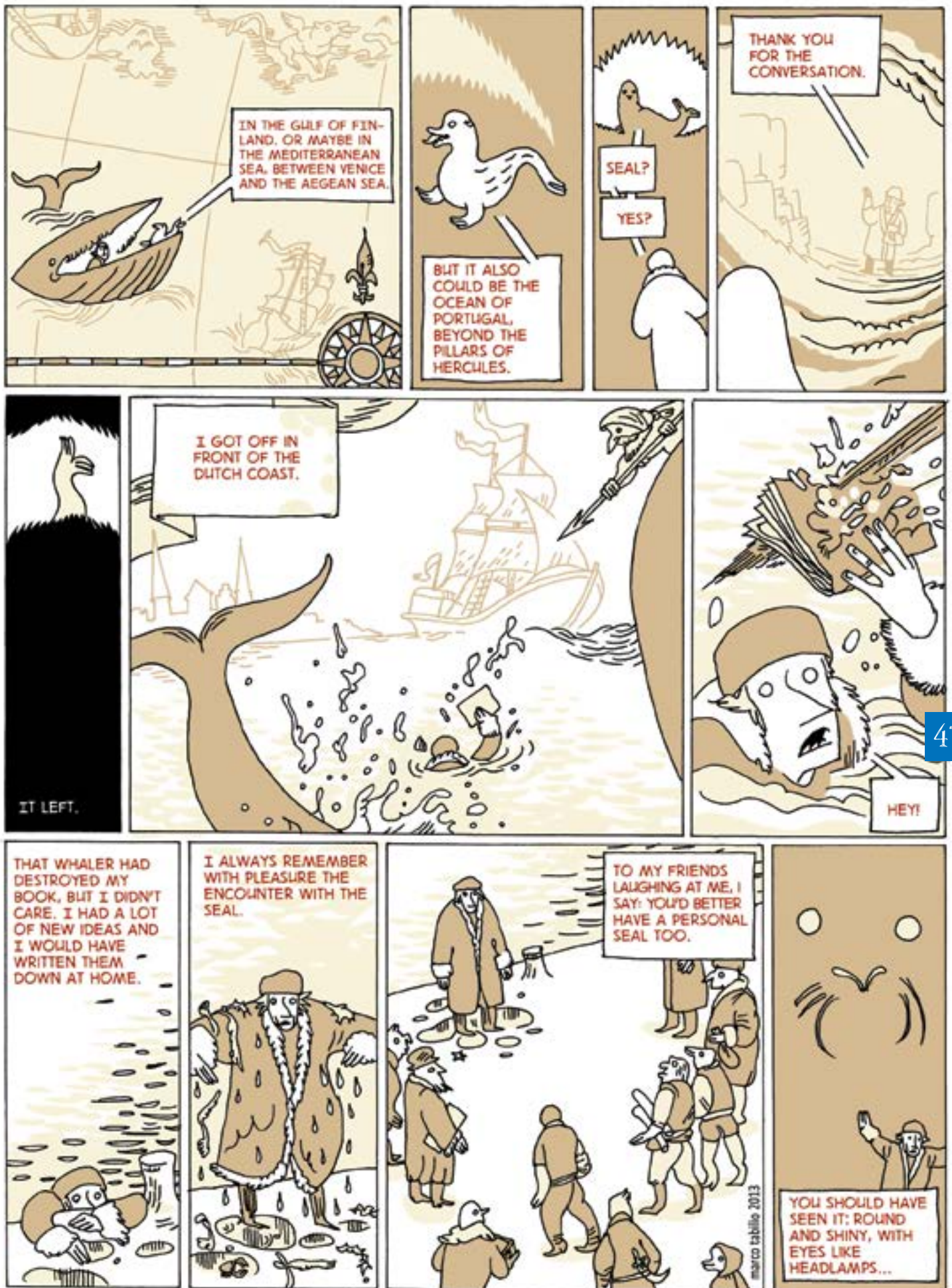
(6) And this allusion to the Weimar Republic is inexplicable. Besides the fact that it comes four centuries in advance (the academic M. Kuntaroba has calculated 408 years), the comparison definitely doesn't fit.

(7) Oh, this part is clearer: a seal wary of (financial) sharks sounds probable.





(8) At this point of the story we don't remember anymore: we were debating about the authenticity of what? Of the disappeared book, the *De Europa*? Or of the anecdote of the whale itself?...



(9) ... or we were talking about the comic about the anecdote? And who made the comic? Erasmus was not a cartoonist... was he?
 (10) And finally: who wrote the footnotes?

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