A STUDY ON NARRATION OF MEMORIES THROUGH GRAPHIC STORYTELLING METHODS: TALES FROM ÇARŞAMBA

by

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ABSTRACT

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Keywords: memoir, comics, graphic narration, graphic novel, storytelling

Comic books have been a substantial part of the pop-culture, and since 1980s non-fictional stories are becoming more and more the subject of the comic artists. The medium itself has a distinctive way of storytelling. It is the harmony between all of the components including illustrations, script, speech balloons and captions, panels, colors and this mixture makes this genre a unique way of narrating. In this thesis, the distinctive narrating methods of the medium have been investigated via production of a non-fictive graphic memoir novel, named as Tales From Çarşamba. This experimentation has showed that the graphic choices affect the reader directly by both manipulating one's perception and conveying the information to the reader in a considerably rapid way. Additionally, the paneling choices made by the author may control the readers' actions such as the reading speed or directing their attention. One last thing that needs to be pointed out is tendency of the author/illustrator to mix their interpretations and emotions with the plot. However, these interpretations do not affect the non-fictionality of the narrative but enriches the story by improving the components of the content. In consequence, sequential art could be a good alternative for narrating non-fiction, specifically memoirs, in this case. It's interior qualities opens up new possibilities for storytelling and opportunities to enrich the story. Therefore, comic art should be given credit for narrating the non-fiction, especially genres like memoir, which are not only narrating historical incidents but human lives and emotions.

ÖZET

GRAFİK ANLATIM METOTLARIYLA ANI AKTARIMI ÜZERİNE BİR ÇALIŞMA:

ÇARŞAMBA MASALLARI

EDANUR KUNTMAN

Yüksek Lisans Tez Savunması, Ağustos 2016

Doç. Dr. Wieslaw Zaremba

Anahtar Kelimeler: anı, çizgi roman, grafik anlatı, grafik roman, hikayeleştirme

Çizgi romanlar bir süredir popular kültürün ana damarlarından birini oluşturmakla birlikte, 1980 yıllarından itibaren kurgusal olmayan anlatıları da konu edinmeye başladılar. Bu türün kendine has bir hikayecilik anlayışı olduğu söylenebilir. Çizgi roman türü, kendini oluşturan çizim, metin, konuşma balonları ve paneller gibi parçalarının birbirleri ile uyum içinde çalışması sayesinde özgün bir anlatı türü olmaktadır. Bu tezde çizgi romanın kendine has anlatım tekniklerinin etkinliği, anı türünde üretilmiş bir grafik roman olan Çarşamba Masalları üzerinden incelenmiştir. Bu incelemenin sonucunda ulaşılan bulgulardan ilki yazarın anlatı için yaptığı görsel seçimlerin okuyucunun algısını şekillendirebildiği ve okuyucu ile hızlı bir şekilde iletişim kurabildiği olmuştur. İkincisi ise panel kurgusunun da anlatıyı şekillendirmede oldukça önemli bir yeri olduğu ve okuyucu davranışını yönlendirebildiği yönünde olmuştur. Bununla beraber değinilmesi gereken başka bir nokta ise çizgi romanın doğası gereği yazarın okuyucuya duygu aktarması gerektiğinden kurgusal olmayan anlatıya bir katman ekleyerek kendi duygusal yorumunu katabileceği gözlemlenmiştir. Fakat bu durum hikayenin gerçekle olan bağını etkilememektedir, hatta hikayenin zenginleşmesine yönelik katkıda bulunmaktadır. Bütün bu bulgular üzerine çizgi roman türünün kurgusal olmayan anlatıyı aktarmak adına iyi bir alternatif olabileceği sonucuna varılmıştır. Türün kendine has özellikleri hikaye anlatımı için yeni ufuklar açmaktadır ve anlatıyı zenginleştirme olanakları sunmaktadır. Bu sebeple çizgi romanların kurgusal olmayan anlatıların aktarımında, özellikle de anı türü gibi insan duyguları ve yaşamlarıyla iç içe geçmiş türlerin aktarımı için elverişli ve uygun bir anlatı türü olduğu söylenebilir.

<<>>Dedicated to my grandmother,

Who, gave me the courage. <<>>

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1. INTRODUCTION

Comic books are a substantial part of the pop-culture in an increasing fashion since 1940s onwards. The interesting fact is, today, the popularity of the genre is continuing to rise both in physical and digital platforms. Nowadays, not only big publishers but considerably tiny, independent publishing houses dedicated to comics' publishing and artists who make use of the benefits of the Internet increase the variety of the genre and contribute to further development of the form by publishing more experimental stories in terms of both form and narration.

Up until 1980s, Superhero comics were the dominant type among the comics. However, with the rise of graphic novels almost every subject has become a possible theme for the comic books. A good deal of classic literature such as Crime and Punishment by Fyodor Dostoyevsky[1] or The Trial by Franz Kafka[2] has been translated into sequential art format alongside with original graphic narratives. Leaving the quality of the narratives out of investigation, even Das Kapital by Karl Marx[3] is available in comic book format. Hence, sequential art is not only dealing with fictional narratives anymore; non-fictional storylines are becoming more and more the subject of the comic artists

The two legendary books of the graphic novel genre are non-fictional narratives, dealing with quite tough subjects. The books in question are Maus by Art Spiegelman and Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi. The former is a biographical work on the memories of the Jewish holocaust survivor and the latter is an autobiography dealing with the Iranian

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[1] http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/6034810-crime-and-punishment
[2] http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/4146586-the-trial

[3] http://www.yordamkitap.com/book.php?bookId=102

revolution from the perspective of a young girl. These works are not translated into graphic narratives from literary works. These books are written as graphic narratives. The designs of these books are a crucial part of the narration.

The medium has its own language affecting the storytelling. Comics are an intersection between textual and visual narration, and therefore, the medium itself has a distinctive effect on the storytelling. In this thesis, it is aimed to investigate the influences of the form on the non-fictional narrative caused by the peculiarities of the medium. This non-fictional narrative in question is a graphic book called Tales from Çarşamba, created by myself, based upon the memoirs of my late grandmother.

Before analyzing the book, a brief history of the comics form will be reported; followed by analyzing of the continuing debates on the definition of the form. Then, qualities peculiar to the medium will be covered. To understand the essence of the plot of Tales from Çarşamba, the case of marriage will be examined in the following chapter. Auto/biographic graphic works such as Maus and Persepolis and their specific approach to their subjects will be inspected in the next chapter. And in the final part, the thesis project book, Tales From Çarşamba, will be examined in detail including the methods used in building the story, all the graphic choices and techniques used during production and the graphic and paneling choices effecting and contributing to storytelling.

The next chapter will cover the history of comics and its upgrading from a lesser respected pop-culture variety into a legitimate art practice.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF COMICS AS AN ART FROM: A BRIEF HISTORY

It would be appropriate to claim that there is no consensus on the historical moment that gave birth to the sequential art form, or comics, as commonly referred to. Thierry Smolderen points out to William Hoggarth, the English painter, as one of the first people among narrating stories via juxtaposing images (3). In his book "Origins of Comics," he claims that in 1732 Hogarth produced a primitive version of graphic narrative called "A Harlot's Progress" (Figure 1) consisting of 6 engravings, conveying a story altogether (3). Afterwards, he mentions another important contribution of Hoggarth to the development of the comic art: introducing the mode of reading for the readers, which is the classical zigzagging circulation, generally used to navigate comics (5). He concludes that his work may be considered as a form of comic art if we stick with the "most generic definitions,"[4] since these images are not as easy to read as people read the comic strips today (8). The underlying reason for such a difference between this primitive example and today's sequential art form is the different "conception of readability," according to Smolderen, which belongs to a visual culture that does not apply to today's terms (8).

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[4] On the same page, Smolderen mentiones the essential elements of comics as the images forming a temporal and causal sequence and narrating the story of a fictional character in clearly articulated stages (8). This must be "the most generic definition" he mentiones afterwards.

Figure 1. A Harlot's Progress by William Hoggarth, 1732

Another milestone in building up this new art form was the Swedish artist, Rodolphe Töpffler, created "picture stories" in David Kunzle's terms, under the influence of the sociopolitical conditions of the era (9). It is important to note at this point that some scholars like Scott McCloud consider several productions before eighteenth century, such as Egyptian tomb paintings from 13th century, as pioneers of the comic art (13), but his claim is criticized by several other scholars by labeling his definition as an useless effort to legitimize the importance of sequential art by making unnatural

connections with the ancient past (Meskin & Cook xxi). Other examples of "proto-comics" following Töpffler's tradition were created by artists such as William Bush, George Cruikshank, Leonce Petit, and Adolphe Willette (Meskin & Cook xxi).

A solid early example to comic art form showed up in the late nineteenth century paving the way to the development of modern comics, was started with R.F. Outcault's modern newspaper strip "The Yellow Kid" (Figure 2), first published in 1895 (Meskin & Cook xxi). However, though the newspaper strip was considered as an American invention, the strip form was first used in Britain, according to Meskin and Cook (xxii). The strip form was adopted by a number of artists and developed in a serious manner thanks to still recognized works such as Krazy Kat by George Herriman or Kin-der-Kids by Lionel Feininger (Meskin & Cook xxii).

Figure 2. A Yellow Kid Strip published in 1897

In time, comic strip form evolved into the booklet format, which may be labeled as one of the most important stages in the evolution of the modern comic book (Meskin & Cook xxii). There are different claims on the first comic book published in U.S. According to historian Ian Gordon, the earliest examples of comic books were promotional giveaways for businesses (Hatfield 9). Jean-Paul Gabilliet notes that the first comic book published in U.S. was a story Rodolphe Töpffer, back in 1842 (3),

whereas Meskin and Cook states that the first comic book ever was "Famous Funnies: Carnival of Comics" published in 1934 by Eastern Color (xxii). However both these books were a compilation of newspaper strips. The first comic book published with original content, meaning that the content was created for the book format rather than a compilation, was "New Fun: The Big Comic Magazine #1" (Figure 3), published in 1935 by DC Comics, formerly known as National Allied Publications (Meskin & Cook xxii).

Figure 3. New Fun, Issue #1, 1935

Comics developed in a different way in U.S. in terms of the content, compared to Europe or Japan. Superhero comics became the dominant genre in the first half of the twentieth century, fed by the atmosphere created by the first and second world wars.

"Superman" was the first superhero comics ever published, opening the way for this genre to develop in U.S. (Gabiliet 14). Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster introduced the first Superman in 1938 via "Action Comics #1" (Figure 4) followed by Batman and other superhero comic books (Meskin & Cook xxii).
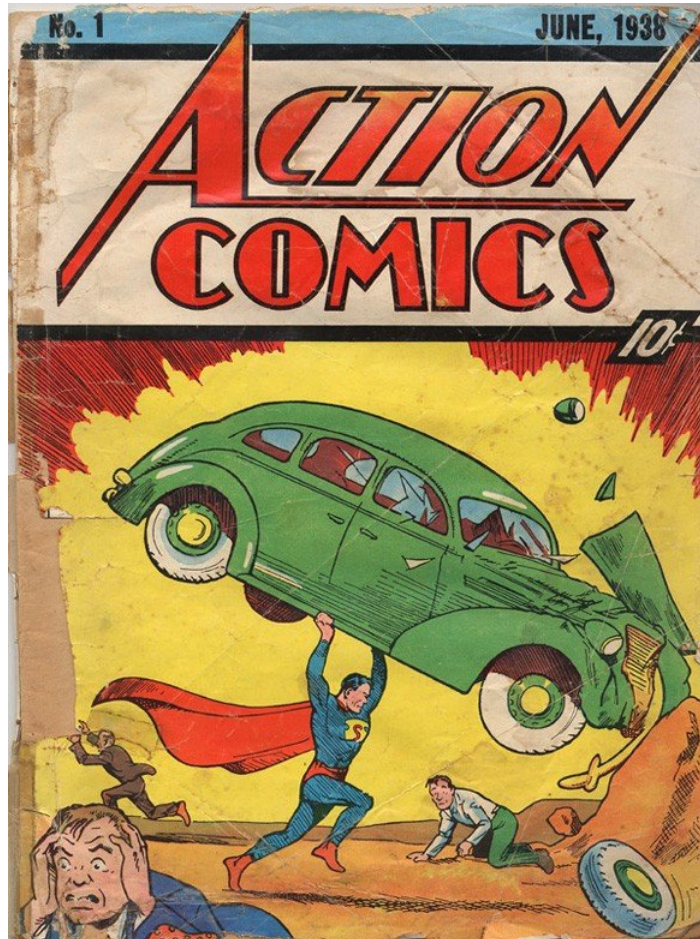
Figure 4. Action Comics, Issue #1, 1938

After the emergence of superhero genre, the comics industry in U.S. have developed drastically and its development have been divided in a number of historical periods. The *golden age*, starting from the year the first Superman comic was published in 1938, lasted until 1945 and was portrayed as the building up of the superhero genre (Meskin & Cook xxiii).

The following era was named as the *atomic age* and lasted from 1945 to 1956 and was depicted by the shift to other genres such as romance, science fiction and horror (Meskin & Cook xxiii) which led to the flourishing of underground comics, written and drawn by young artists and focusing more on social and political issues (Weiner 12).

This search for alternative publications are very much related to the "comics code authority" (CCA) in U.S. created in 1954 (Nyberg vii). The code was consisting of "regulatory guidelines primarily concerned with sex, violence, and language drawn up by publishers and enforced by the 'code authority,' a euphemism for the censor employed by the publishers" (Nyberg vii). With the constraints imposed by CCA, adult readership of comics had decreased drastically (Williams and Lyons 5).

The censorship on content has led to the *silver age* of comics, roughly between 1956 and 1969, where mature content was excluded and the focus was shifted on artistic and storytelling skills as a natural consequence (Meskin & Cook xxiii).

Superhero comics dominated the field in U.S. for a really long time, up until 1980s when the restrictions imposed by CCA (Meskin & Cook xxiv) was weakened and publishers and artists showed interests in addressing more mainstream or adult topics (O'English, Matthews & Lindsay 173). With the publishing of the famous "Watchmen" by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbon's together with Frank Miller's "Batman" (Figure 5), the modern age of comics has begun (Meskin & Cook xxiv). Both these stories were "characterized by darker, more psychologically driven stories" and were creating a grey zone between the villain and hero figure (Meskin & Cook xxiv).
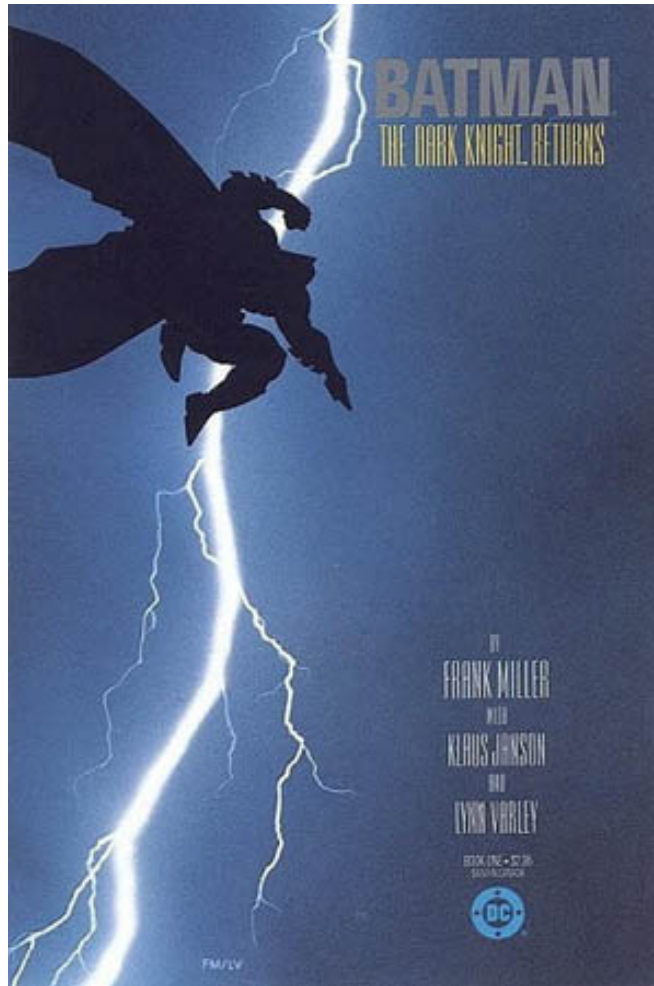
Figure 5. Batman: The Dark Knight Returns No.1 Cover, 1986

Emergence of the graphic novels may be considered as a milestone in changing the status of comics and the public opinion that belittled the sequential art form (Frey & Noys 255). Charles Hatfield defines graphic novels as "any book-length comics narrative or compendium of such narratives" (4). Graphic novel artists have fought against the prejudices against comics and tried to increase the status of the medium. Hugo Frey and Benjamin Noys indicate the publishing of Art Spiegelman's "Maus" as a turning point in history of the graphic novels in terms of transforming the status of the comics (255). Spiegelman won the Pulitzer Prize in 1992 with Maus and proved that comics is a serious art form that is worth of study (Meskin & Cook xxiv). Together with Maus, many other signature works played a huge role in improving the status of comic books in the eyes of the adult reader. For instance, Will Eisner's "A Contract with God" was sold in bookstores rather than comic book stores (Williams and Lyons 6). Maus and A Contract With God were self-contained stories, however one should not necessarily conclude that this is a must condition for all the graphic novels. As mentioned above,

Watchmen is considered as one among the greatest graphic novels and it was first published in twelve issues, and later in 1987 published in book format (Williams and Lyons 6). Watchmen was a successor of the superhero tradition, whereas Maus was an outcome of underground commix tradition (Williams and Lyons 7), which will be discussed separately in this section.

The underground comix flourished in San Francisco during the late 1960s and mid 1970s as an outcome of the counterculture developed in this neighborhood (Meskin & Cook xxiv). These alternative comics or "comix," emphasizing the idea of comic books for adult readers (Hatfield 7), were avoiding the market genres such as the dominant superhero genre (Hatfield 3). Charles Hatfield underlines the difference between adults who were buying comic books as a commodity just like a novel as opposed to the ones who were purchasing comics in the context of magazines or newspapers, and he points out that underground comix changed the status of comic books and altered them into an adult medium (7). Robert Crumb was one of the pioneers of this trend with his "Zap Comix" magazine (Figure 6); some call him the "reinventor of the comic book" (Hatfield 8). According to Hatfield, underground comix shaped the modern comics in four ways: first, they proved that it was possible to produce booklets outside of the dominant publishing market which was under the influence of the CCA (16). Staying outside of the main market, creators had the chance to actually own their comic books (Hatfield 16). Secondly, they were produced irregularly and they were valued not because of the name of the series they publish such as Superman, but because of the magazine itself and the reputation of creators (Hatfield 16). Third, alternative comix valued lone production, meaning each stage of production is done by the creator only, as opposed to the assembly line production methods in the dominant market, and by this stand, individual artistic expression was promoted (Hatfield 16). And finally, these comix were attacking the popular culture by using the pop-icons and redefining them in an ironical way (Hatfield 17).
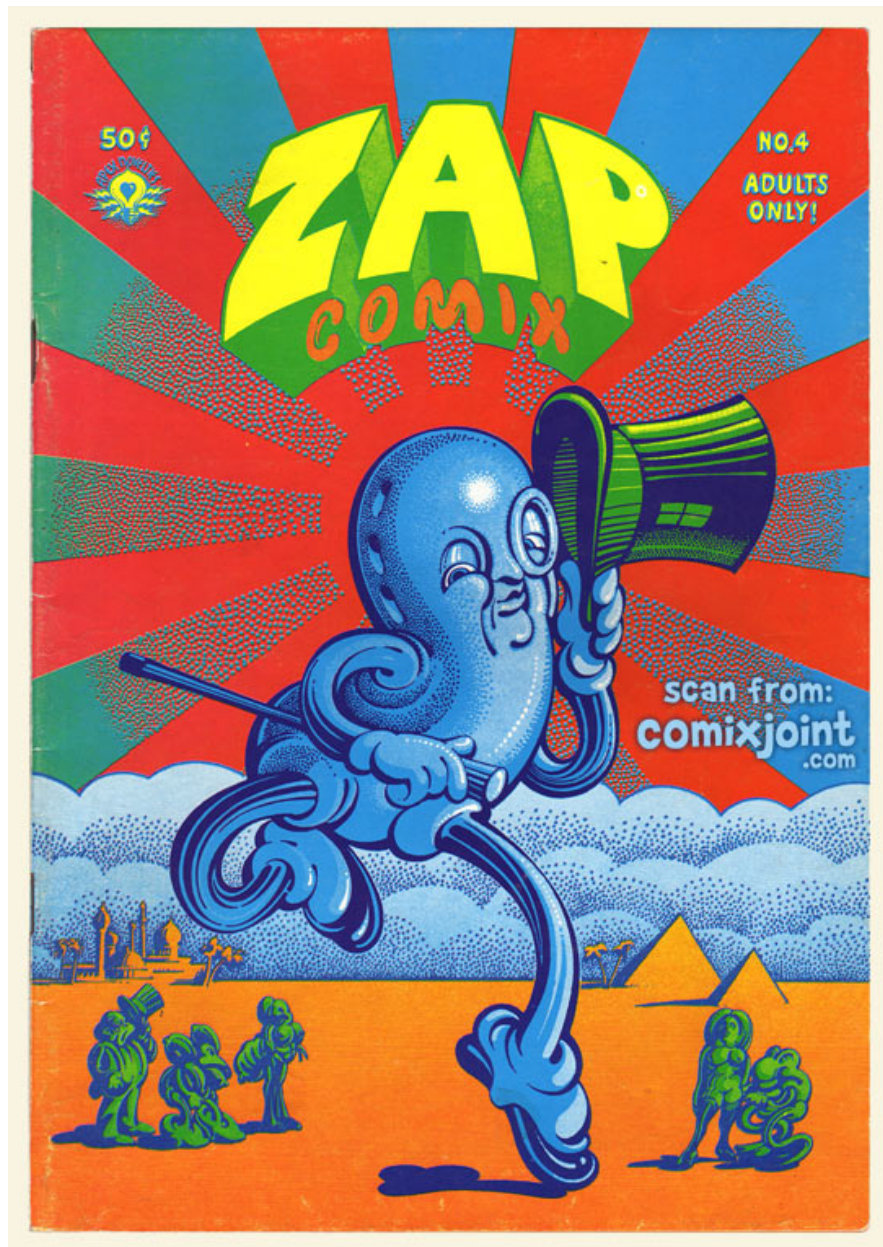
Figure 6. Zapcomix #4, 1975

Today, the underground comix tradition still continues together with several different forms of comics that may be considered as a blend of traditional comics with technological innovations. One field becoming more and more popular nowadays is webcomics. It allows anyone who has access to internet to publish his or her own comic story and gives a good chance of accessing as many readers as possible. Moreover, webcomics created a set of new tools for the artists by allowing them to link up panels in non-two dimensional patterns (Meskin & Cook xxvi) or changing the classical z-pattern of reading to the "scrolling down" reading mode. Another new trend is motion or animated comics emerged as a new side-product during this decade. The term refers

to comics that are combining comic panels with non-comic but mostly cinematic elements such as sound effects, voice acting and motion. Sarah McBride from the Wall Street Journal, examining the animated shorts of Batman and Joker, underlines the difference between animation and motion comics by stating that motion comics aren't "nearly as rich as a fully animated cartoon, with only limited motion that comes in the form of wisps of smoke, darting eyeballs and the like" but "the story is advanced with music and voiceovers that speak the characters' parts."[5] One of the first examples of this kind is claimed to be the "Broken Saints," a flash-animated film series by Ian Kirby and Andrew West, first released in the year 2003.[6] In 2008, DC Comics, one of the most famous comics publisher companies, decided to utilize motion comics, which was " an new kind of Web entertainment."[7] Since then, motion comics are developed and owned a sound place in the field of comics.

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[5] http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB121634908179464605?mg=reno64-wsj&url=http%3A%2F%2Fonline.wsj.com%2Farticle%2FSB121634908179464605.html

[6] http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0451002/

[7] http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/imr/2011/08/04/outrageous-origins-motion-comic

3. COMICS: DEFINITION AND PECULIARITY OF ITS NATURE

3.1. Defining Comics: A Continuing Debate

There have been various attempts to define what the term *comics* refers to, starting from seventies onwards, as a natural consequence of the ongoing legitimization process of this unique practice as an artistic form (Hatfield 4). It was a respectable art practice in the eyes of the committed artists, but what was comics exactly? What differentiated this unique practice from the other artistic creations? Will Eisner, who is considered to be among the masters of graphic novel and the pioneers in the academic field, has defined comics as "sequential art" (Scott 5); a form of reading that emphasized visual aspects of their textual elements (Meskin xxix). Not surprisingly, his definition is often considered to be "too thin" (Meskin 370).

Scott McCloud has carried Eisner's definition further in his famous book "Understanding Comics" and states that comics are: "juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer" (9). In developing his definition, first of all, he concludes that visuals are side-by-side but not necessarily indicating a sequence (7). However, all these images together constitute a sequence. This sequence is deliberate in the sense that the number of frames used determines the narration in terms of its speed, and it depends solely on artistic choices. Though the excitement his book caused, McCloud's definition of comics has been criticized by a number of scholars for various reasons. Aaron Meskin criticizes McCloud's definition by being "ahistorical" in the sense that too many things goes into this definition, pointing to the examples McCloud emphasizes as prior forms of comics such as ancient wall paintings of Egypt (370). John Holbo has criticized McCloud's attempt with a similar approach by underlining the lack of intention of artists who crafted these examples of 'so-called' comics (4). Moreover,

by defining a mission of 'conveying information' or 'producing an aesthetic response,' McCloud puts constraints on the creators (Meskin 370). Eddie Campbell brings out a deeper problem in McCloud's definition: dividing the world into two, comics and non-comics, and no gray zones in between (Hatfield 6).

David Carrier, a contemporary philosopher who has been studying on the comic art, proposes three essential features of comics as a must or defining condition and these are the usage of the speech balloon, the closely linked narrative and the book-sized scale (74). Aaron Meskin criticizes Carrier's reliance on speech balloons as the essential element of comics and he pointed out to the wide range of comics that do not include any speech balloons (370). An attempt to define comics is made by David Kunzle, who proposes that the essential elements of a comic strip are "a sequence of separate images" with "a preponderance of image over text" and furthermore, the product is essentially "a mass medium" which tells "a story which is both moral and topical" (2). Kunzle's defining elements exclude many examples of comics outside, such as the comics fanzines which won't ever reach a 'mass' audience or comic book adaptations of literature classics, which naturally involves a dependency on the text (Meskin 369).

Greg Hayman and Henry John Pratt have made another proposition. They adopted this definition for comics: "x is a comic if x is a sequence of discrete, juxtaposed pictures that comprise a narrative, either in their own right or when combined with text" (Meskin 370). However, such a definition is not sufficient to distinguish comics from movies. Therefore, they included the term "juxtaposed" in the definition to emphasize two essential features of comics: *spatiality*, meaning that comics invade space with every existing panel unlike the moving images since two frames cannot coexist in a given moment and *the gutter*, which is the space between two pictorial images. (Meskin 371). Aaron Meskin opposes this definition by claiming that film reels from the silent movie era fulfills this definition (371). He goes further by saying that even if they exclude photographic pictures from the realm of comics, reels of certain animated films will still fulfill the terms of this definition (371).

In sum, none of the existing definitions are sufficient to distinguish comics from the similar art forms. Aaron Meskin, in his article called "Defining Comics?" criticizes the elements used to define the term just because they are assumed to be essential for the medium (371). All these definitions underline the essentiality of the narrative quality of comics. Aaron Meskin, while questioning this tendency common among scholars, points out to two obvious reasons: first, because the narrative quality existed in each

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example so far (371), and second, it may be a useful quality that is designated to comics which helps one to distinguish the form easily from other examples of juxtaposed images, such as in a gallery (372). However, Meskin states that comics are not necessarily or essentially narrative as an art form as most of these scholars assumed and he underlines examples of non-narrative examples of comics such as Robert Crumb's works, which include occasionally related panels to reject the assumption that panels in comics are related. So, Meskin considers Crumbs's some works (Figure 7) as a non-narrative comic (372). The existence of abstract comics might be also a counterexample to the narrative assumption of narrative essence in comics.
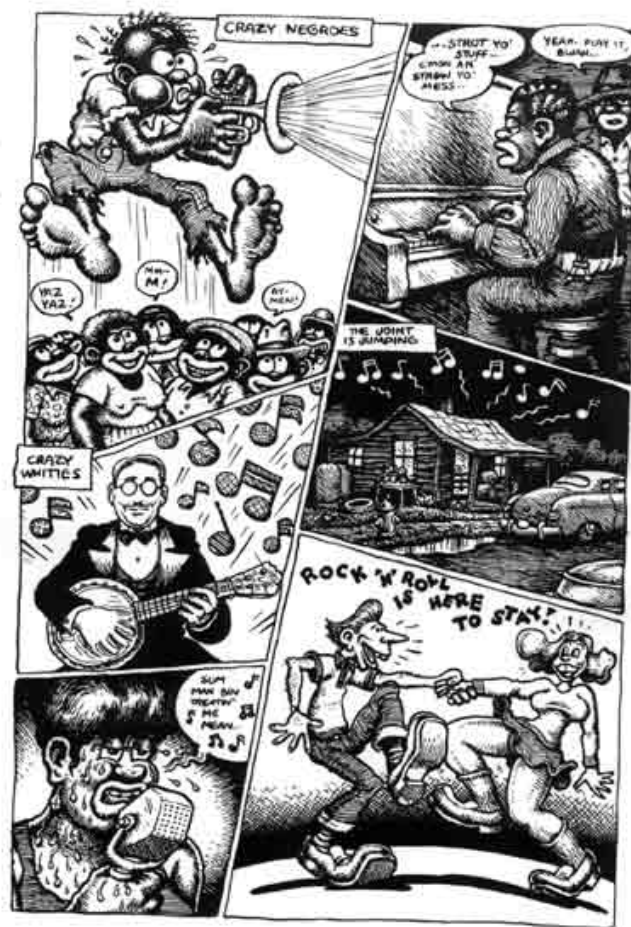
Figure 7. An Example From Robert Crumb's Cubist Be-bop Comics

Another common assumption in comics studies is the pictorial thesis, meaning that comics must include pictorial images. Could there be non-pictorial comics, Meskin wonders, and points out to a possible initiator comic strip, "Ghost Newspapers" created

by Gary Larson (Figure 8), in which the newspapers are presented in the comic book format but contain nothing more than speech balloons or captions (374).

Figure 8. A panel from Ghost Newspapers by Gary Larson

3.2. Comics As An Unique Art Form: Peculiarities Of The Medium

Comics is not only a narrative genre but it is a medium by itself that have its own narrative components differentiating itself from other media such as illustration or film.

Thierry Groensteen explains comics as a system of networked images and states that the system of comics is built on the panels[8] which are "the first significant unit of meaning" and the relation between them or "the linking of panels" (Fischer & Hatfield 81): "'Every panel exists, potentially if not actually, in relation with each of the others,'

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[8] The term refers to the single frame as used in comics to show a segment of the story.

and also potentially in relation to the tier[9], the page, the sequence, and the whole text" (Fischer & Hatfield 82). He explains the system through the examples of Russian *Matryoshka* dolls. The individual panel is the smallest element of the system, or the tiniest doll found inside (Fischer & Hatfield 81). The next "doll" in his system is what he calls *syntagm* consisting of triad of the individual panel being read at that particular moment with the panels before and after (Groensteen 111). *Syntagm* is followed by the page, and then the spread and finally the sequence, which is "a unity of action and/or space" referring to the piece as a whole starting from the first panel on the first page up until to the last panel on the last page (Groensteen 111).

Panels have an important role in Groensteen's system of comics, as they are considered as a key element in narrativity. Still, there are other several medium specific elements such as speech bubbles, speed lines, gutters[10] or captions[11] and all these features contribute to the communication between the narrative and the reader. Karin Kukkonen, based on Ruth Page's description of comics as "a system of choices to communicate meaning," applies the multimodal discourse of Gunther Kress and Theo ban Leuwen on comics (35). Kukkonen states that these modes (medium specific elements, in other words) interact with each other to create the meaning through stimulating the reader to use clues for filling the gaps and formulating hypotheses, which she calls as "projecting a storyworld" (40). These modes used by the artist to narrate the story and it might be expressed that the decisions on usage of these elements given by the creator defines the boundaries of this storyworld, such as speeding up/slowing down the story through using more panels for a scene or moment; the choice of typeface; or the montage of the frames.

The reader is an active agent in making sense of the storyworld, according to Pascal Lefevre. He points out to the drawing style proposing a "visual ontology" as the unique interpretation of the world by the artist and the reader makes sense of that particular storyworld created by the artist through using his or her prior knowledge (16). Reader's activity in this process of reading comics is not limited to "making sense" but also filling in the gaps between panels (Dittmer 226). This is a crucial practice, which in turn emphasizes the importance of montage in producing the meaning (Dittmer 228).

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[9] Tier is a term referring to a single row of panels
[10] Gutter is a term referring to the space between framed panels.

[11] Caption is a term referring to the boxes containing a variety of text elements.

Another medium-specific quality of comics may be stated as "spatiality" of time. The frames define the timeline in a comic story. Still, there is "no objective way to determine the time period encapsulated by a handmade picture" (Lefevre 24). In comics, multi-tracking of time such as mixing time periods or sudden jumps on the timeline, does not break the narration as it would do in a movie, thanks to the spatiality of the medium which enables the reader to go through the whole story whenever he or she needs to (Lefevre 24). The rhythm of the sequence is dependent on the number of frames showing an event, which is of course a choice by the creator.

4. READING LIFE THROUGH MEMOIR: AUTO- /BIOGRAPHIC GRAPHIC NARRATIVES

Rise of graphic novels cannot be separated from the rise of auto/biographic graphic novels, since the two most important examples of this genre were Maus by Art Spiegelman and Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi, both of which considered being among the major works of graphic novels.

Maus is considered to be a biography created in graphic narrative form. Art Spiegelman, an American Jewish writer and cartoonist, decides to interview his father who happens to be a survivor of the Jewish Holocaust. Maus is a book representing Zeev Spiegelman's memories from wartime (Figure 9). Though essentially being subjective and personal, Zeev's memories puts a light to the history, maybe even to the deepest points, where the official history telling may fail to reach. And Art Spiegelman's role was to recreate his memories by mixing them with historical events as he creates the Maus (Wagner-Pacifici 312). This is the form which some call historical biography; a space in between public and private; "a narrative that contains historical, fictional, and personal/autobiographical elements," and among them, the third element dominates the whole (Penaz 93).
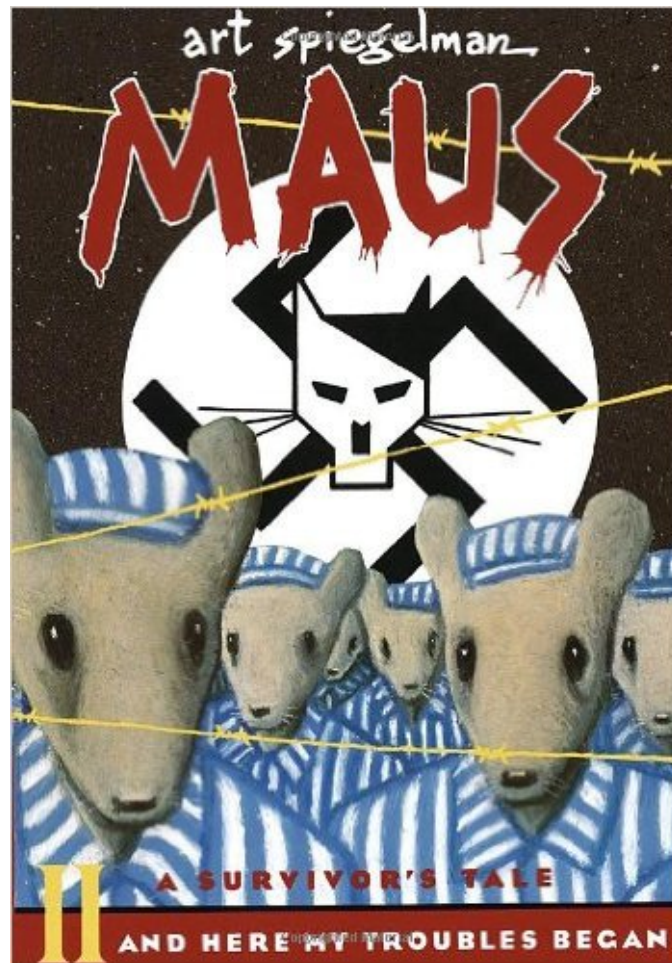
Figure 9. Cover art of Art Spiegelman's Maus

Persepolis, on the other hand, is consisting of Marjane Satrapi's own memories. An interesting point to note here is that she started with Persepolis after given a copy of Maus by a friend (Satrapi 1). It is an autobiography, witnessing the Iranian Revolution from the author's own point of view and then, she was just a child (Figure 10). Nancy K. Miller considers Persepolis to be an "overtly political autobiography" since the life story of Satrapi told in the book is inseperable from the "specific slice of historical time" (16). For Hillary Chute, what Satrapi did was the act of "not forgetting" by witnessing the history both visually and verbally (136). The book happens to be a "visual-verbal narrativization of history" rather than just autobiography because it keeps visualizing publics "aside from herself" and by doing that, it successfully moves the attention of the story to a wider angle (Chute 139). Moreover, Satrapi herself defines her book as a "text of witness"; that is why she ended the series when she left Iran for good and once, she expressed that she wouldn't write a third volume based on "second hand information" (Chute 141).
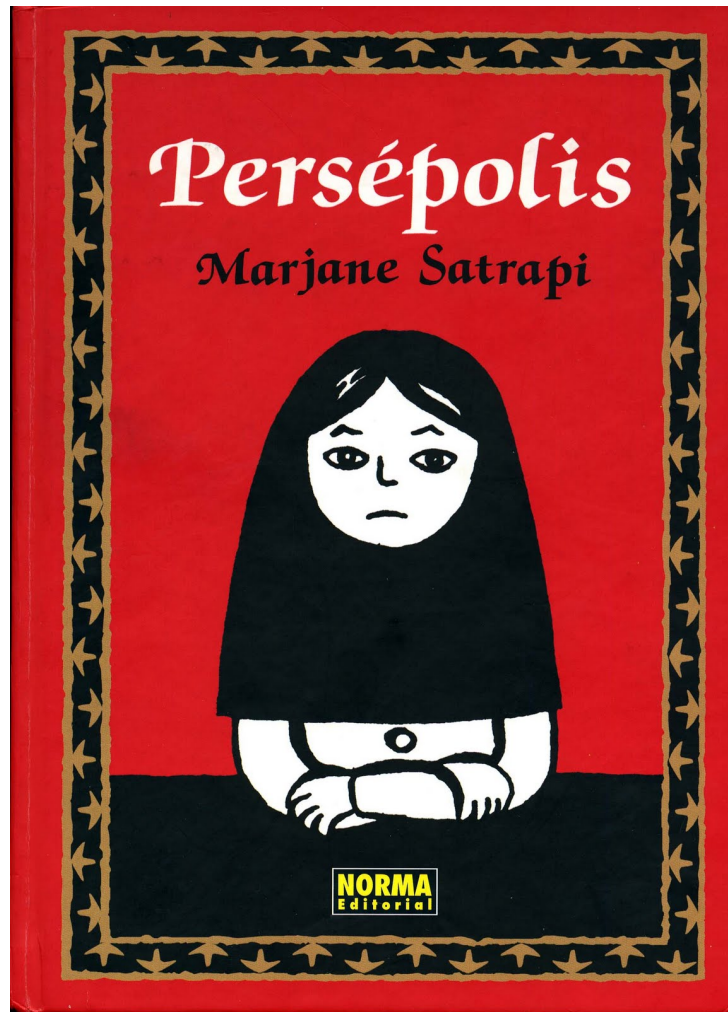
Figure 10. Persepolis Cover Art by Marjane Satrapi

Maus and Persepolis are not the only examples in graphic life narratives. This genre has gained importance with the rising value of graphic novels. Marjane Satrapi states:

"Graphic novels are not traditional literature but that does not mean they are second-rate. Images are a way of writing" (Satrapi 1).

It improved as a method to face the personal and collective history. However, one may ask: Why graphic narratives? What is the contribution of the graphic part to the life narratives?

Comic art is a medium that combines both visual and verbal elements. Graphic narrative has a distinctive kind of storytelling than traditional literature, because of its

medium-specific qualities.[12] First of all, because of its mixed nature, it forces the reader to use "both visual and verbal interpretive skills," as the master Will Eisner states (Davis 267). Interpreting all the existing elements and comprehending the story out of the given material is up to the reader. Hence, the interactive nature of the comics is an added value to the life narratives. It is a story prepared for the reader to digest. One has to take an active part to fully grasp the narrative. To be more precise, gestures and body postures may define or alter the meaning of the words and by creating a resemblance to readers' past experiences; they have the power to evoke a nuance of emotion in the audience (Rocio 271).

Moreover, graphic stories include more gaps than a traditional life narrative, because of the nature of the medium and therefore, as one reads, one needs to read "the design and intention behind the textual destabilizations and the cultural implications of such fragmentation" (Davis 270). Persepolis, for instance, is consisting of chapters, as most comics do, that are fragmented parts of Satrapi's memoir. These narrative structuring invites the reader to find the full meaning and structure the complete story, according to Rocio Davis (270).

It is also the responsibility of the reader to interpret visuals to grasp the story. The famous graphic novel "The Arrival" created by Shaun Tan consists only of visuals. To fully read the story, one must interpret the images and the relation in between. In Arrival, the main character migrates to a foreign country by a ship, and there is a whole spread spared for panels showing different shapes of clouds (Figure 11). Each cloud represents a different day and the whole spread represents all those days passed as he was on board. Graphic narratives present a spatial experience to their readers and as a result, they represent time – subjectively, in terms of the intensity of the time flow – on physical space, just as Shaun Tan did in his book (Chute 145). It is up to the reader to take the meaning out of the visual representation and complete the story.

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[12] See the previous chapter: Comics As An Unique Art Form: Pecularities Of The Medium
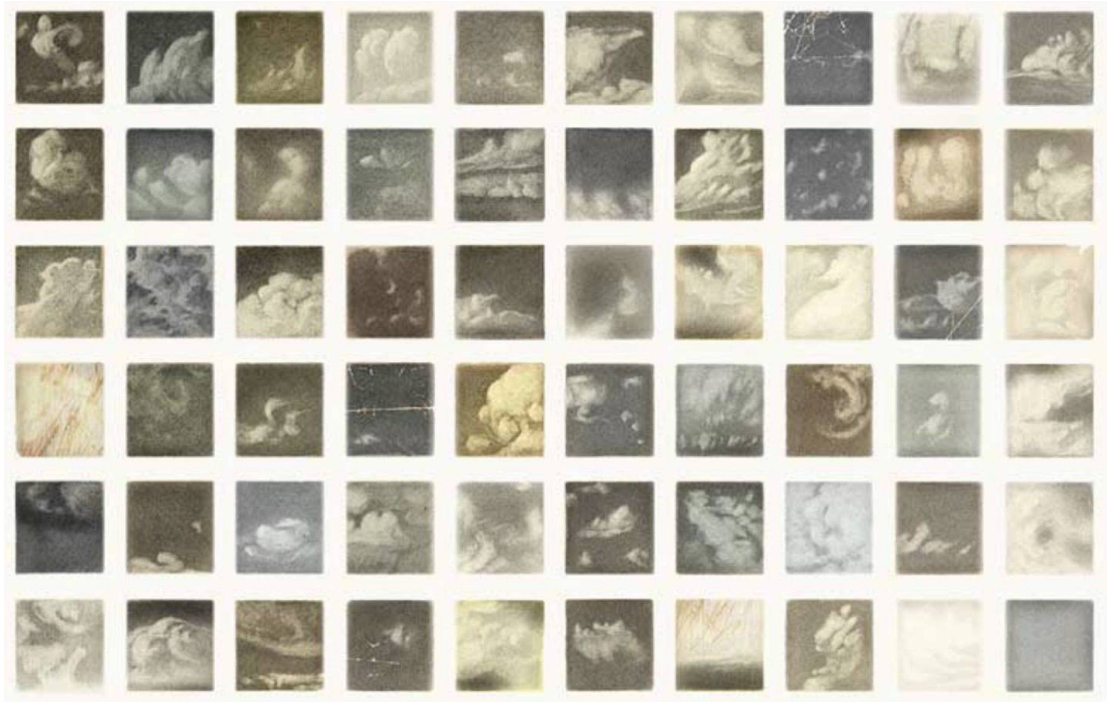
Figure 11. A spread from Shaun Tan's The Arrival

Another upside of using graphic storytelling methods for auto/biography may be facing with extremis or inhumane experience more easily, as a noteworthy body of contemporary comics does nowadays (Chute 135). This relatively new trend in comics connects aesthetics and politics (Chute 137). Maus has such a sub-cover art that is hitting the simple truth on to the reader's face with just a simple image: the mousetrap (Figure 12). In a story where the Jews are represented as mice, such a cover conveys its message very quickly to the audience. "Amplification through simplification" as Scott McCloud states, is what works well on this cover art by Art Spiegelman. Robin Wagner-Pacifi interprets this specific choice as an attempt to domesticate the holocaust, by simply using a domestic device on the cover (314).

Figure 12. Art Spiegelman's Maus, chapter 6: Mouse Trap

Before analyzing the storytelling decisions of Tales From Çarşamba, it would be appropriate to briefly explore the practice of marriage and how it is handled in literature, in order to capture the essence of the plot. The following chapter will cover a brief analyze on the practice of marriage.

5. GENDER: A BRIEF ANALYZE ON THE CONCEPT OF MARRIAGE

Çarşamba Masalları / Tales from Çarşamba, doesn't claim to be an analytical work on gender. However, the whole project is grew on stories of three women from rural Turkey who suffered from patriarchal practices. Therefore, it seemed necessary to write a brief chapter on the concept of gender, and the gendered practices in Turkey. Marriage is one of the problematic concepts that feminists deal with. In this section, a brief analyze on the practice of marriage will be covered since the core of the three stories covered in Tales From Çarşamba is about the practice of marriage and how it is handled in Turkish context.

"Gender is a social category system based upon biological differences," could be treated as a very basic definition (Fagot, 1). Underneath the base of gender differences lays biological determinism, which led the society to categorize people as male and female. Men and women are essentially bound to live according to their nature. To provide a concrete example; some jobs are classified as 'male' jobs such as metal workers or car mechanic whereas some are 'female' such as secretary positions.[13]

Gender is today considered as a concept developed as a natural outcome of the patriarchal system dominating the world we born into rather than a biological fact. Today it is a generally accepted fact thanks to the many scholars dwelling on the notion and our perception. The famous French philosopher Simon de Beauvior notes that 'the female' is the second sex, as her famous book title, and is defined by men and labeled as non-male (Shukla 36). Beauvoir was assuming that the male was the "norm," and this fact is the base of the patriarchal system.

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[13] http://www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/arbeid-sociale-zekerheid/publicaties/artikelen/archief/2005/2005-1825-wm.htm

As we are all born into the existing system, we internalize its rules and limits. This is the key to the hegemonic power dominating individuals, "who internalize dominant ideologies and end up thinking that their own position in society is justified" (Monro, 19). This internalization secretly forces people to think in a box created by this system and neglect the possible other options they have.

Marriage is both as a social practice and a political institution, which is subjected to a continuing debate among feminists scholars. Simon de Beauvoir states "marriage is the destiny traditionally offered to women by society" (479). It is a destiny, not a choice; and therefore it is neither a contract between equals nor a reciprocal relationship (Simons 94). And moreover, there is a deeper problem with women's situation; they fail to claim their status as a subject, since they lack resources, and because they regard the bond with the husbands as necessary without the existence of any reciprocity, and sadly, because they are often please with the wife role attached, which labels the women as the 'Other' (Simons 93).

In a traditional marital relationship, men become guardians of their wifes and in return, they have the right to appropriate the productive and reproductive labor of women (Simons 94). This guardian-deprived perception is the reason some women are encouraged/forced to do arranged marriages. In Tales From Çarşamba, the main character Süreyya is forced by his older brother to marry a man she barely knows. She desperately objects his request. However, in the end her beloved mother convince her in this marriage. She tells Süreyya: "When I am gone, will you be left out by yourself? Who will take care of you?"[14] and then, tells a story about how her husband's being made her safe, even after his death.

Simon de Beauvoir underlines the concept of duty as the key to perversity of marriage; it is the duty a man and a woman to satisfy each other throughout their lives even if it was not their choice to marry each other (479). She states the duties women are expected to fulfill: first, women shall provide children for the society and second, women must satisfy sexual needs of her husband and take care of the household. Consequently, to fulfill their duties, women shall marry (Yenor 180). Married women are treated as property of their husbands rather than individuals and they are positioned as subject to their husbands (Simons 92).

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[14] Originally: Ben ölünce sen açıkta mı kalacaksın kızım?

Marriages of love were not as common as it is today and it is deeply related to the women's economic liberalization. Traditionally, the ruler of the family, which usually happens to be the father, was the one to give such a decision. These marriages of alliance were arranged for the sake of family, such as in return for money or to create political bonds as they did in Europe. In Tales from Çarşamba, Sureyya is obliged to the rule of her brother since she has lost her father years ago. She is forced by her older brother to marry to her husband, and her brother will receive money from the family of the groom in return.

The next chapter will discuss history reading on graphic memoirs and examine a number of cases in this field.

6. TALES FROM ÇARŞAMBA

Before starting with the analysis of the book "Tales From Çarşamba", which has been created as a part of the study covered in this thesis, it is necessary to explain the language that will be used from this chapter onwards. Tales From Çarşamba is a project, which has a very personal essence. The plot is a real life story of the grandmother of the creator of the book, which happens to be me. Moreover, the whole process to complete the project, such as writing of the script, drawing, coloring and publishing, was done by myself again. Therefore, instead of using the general academic language, which would lead to alienation of the creator, me in this case, from the creation, it has been decided to use a moderate but formal language that allows the usage of the first person singular "I."

In this chapter, the production steps of the graphic memoir Tales from Çarşamba will be examined and the methods used will be explained. The sequence of the production process is stated below and each step will be explained further:

- Writing The Script
- Character design process
- Layout and sequence design
- Production:
  1. Drawing
  2. Coloring
  3. Speech Balloons and Captions
  4. Typography

6.1. Writing The Script

The idea to create a graphic novel based upon memories of my grandmother has came to my mind in 2014. The plot is based on a short story I wrote as an assignment for a creative writing class I took back in 2012. The assignment was to write a story built upon interviews conducted with a single person. Back then, I decided to speak to my grandmother since she was an excellent storyteller according to me in terms of the metaphors she likes using and her gestures while telling the story. I conducted an interview with her and wrote a story about her marriage with my grandfather. Two years later I decided to transform this short story into a script for a graphic novel as a part of my thesis.

I returned to my notes I took back then, while interviewing her in 2012, however, there were gaps in the story. I conducted two more interviews with her, asked her questions about both the missing parts and about the missing details of some incidents. She gave me considerably honest answers because first of all, we have a good relationship and she trusts me as a person. And second, I made sure that we were alone during the whole conversation and no one would interrupt as we talk. It was not easy for her to talk about all these private memories, therefore, it was a good idea to interview her where she feels secure. I took more notes and recorded the whole conversation this time. Witek underlines the importance of selecting the effective moments and putting them together around a theme in making a creating graphic narration (Penaz 100). Therefore, I selectively used some of her memoirs related to the theme of traditional marriage and eliminated several interesting but unrelated stories. Using her answers, I finalized my scenario and created a graphic novel script and named it as "Tales from Çarşamba."

Tales from Çarşamba is a graphic novel project based on my grandmother's memories, however I reorganized her memories for the sake of the script. Therefore, I call this project as *bifictionalography*, a modified term I borrowed from Lynda Barry who refers to her own work based on her childhood memories as *autobifictionalography* (Davis 268).

As I mentioned above, I didn't use any additional detail that wasn't told me during the interviews. On the contrary, I tried to convey all the stories without changing in order to create a testimony to her past. I turned all her narration into a meaningful whole

with just little touches. Therefore, Tales from Çarşamba claims to be a testimonial graphic work.

The memories used in the book are of course "selected," to constitute a meaningful whole in the end. This selection and elimination of the unnecessary parts are representing my vision of storytelling. There is a second step where I illustrate my vision once again and that is the pictorial depiction of the story, of which the details will be examined further in the next chapter. But before that one, it is crucial to look at the design of the characters and the important aspects of the process.

6.2. Character Design

In Çarşamba Masalları, the protagonist of the story is Sureyya, which happens to be my grandmother. The book is consisting of three parts; the story of Sureyya; the story of her mother Gulhanım; and the story of her childhood friend Done.   Therefore, Gulhanım and Done have a great visual part in the book, which signals that the characters representing them should be designed carefully as well. And there is one more character named Latife, who appears in he book only together with Sureyya. Latife has as significant part in the story as well. Those were the main characters of the book, together with the two male characters, which are important for the story but have only little part in the book.

As I started to design the characters, I had a problem in my mind, which I ran into many comic books that I read before. For the sake of the style consistency and creation of a convincing world, many artists are using characters that look so much a like. With those books, I had to put too much effort to recognize the characters and follow the plot. In the end, the book loses its taste since I cannot fully concentrate on the story itself. Therefore, my first concern was to design characters that are easily distinguishable from each other.

According to Marcos Mateu-Mestre (96-105) the key to creating easily recognizable characters lies underneath the silhouette of the designs. As long as the silhouettes of the characters are different than each other, the eye may identify them effortlessly. I used this principle in my designs to solve the problem I mentioned above.

I started with sketches and searched visually whom these characters might be. I worked on a notebook I keep just for this project. When I reached a satisfactory point with my studies and decided on several looks, I switched to computer to develop the characters I drew in my sketchbook, since I was planning to create the whole book digitally. I have created preliminary characters sheets both to see the characters from several angles and to make sure that they can act (Figure 13).
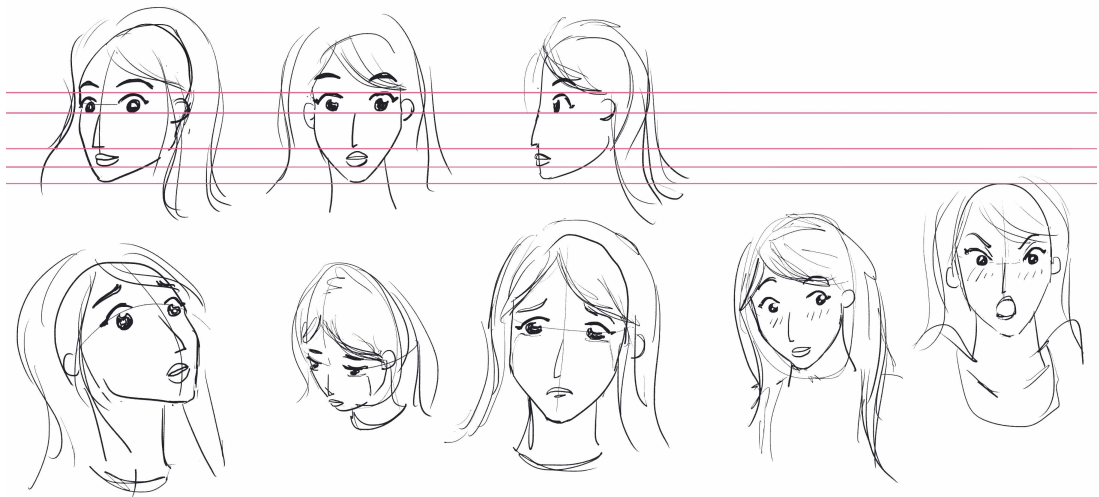
Figure 13. Preliminary Sketches of Sureyya

I call these studies preliminary since the looks of the characters have changed in the process while maintaining the key elements such the shape of the eyes or the length of the hair. It may be suitable to claim after my experience that as the artist draw more of the characters, the characters are matured and gets closer to their final look. This is the final look of Sureyya (Figure 14), my main character in the book:
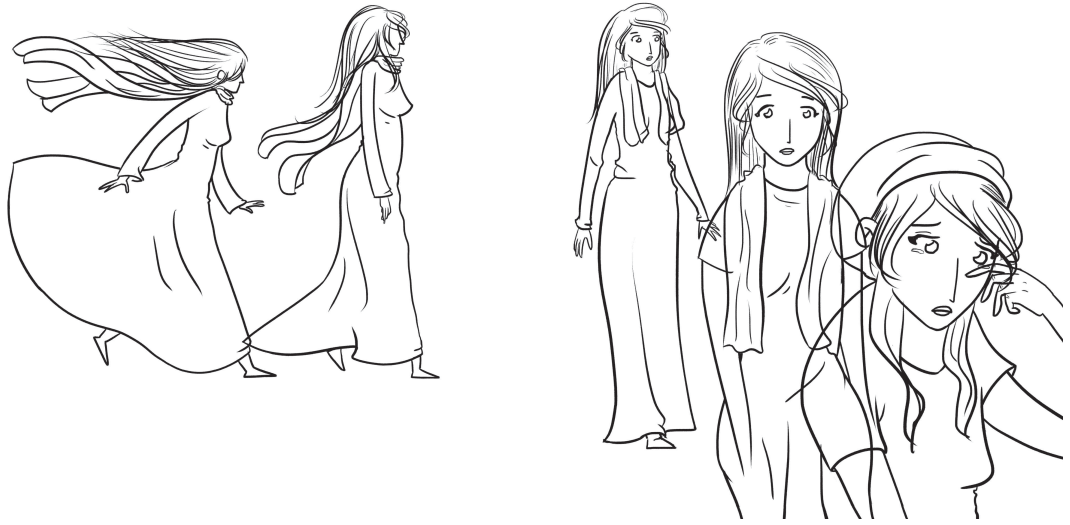
Figure 14. Sureyya, as presented in the book

Using clear silhouettes for characters have another advantage: it makes the character recognizable at any size (Figure 15 & Figure 16). As the drawing gets smaller, I tend to add lesser details but just keep the key elements that define the physical shape of the character. Here is an example below:

Latife hep çok konuşurdu zaten. Gene anlatıyordu.
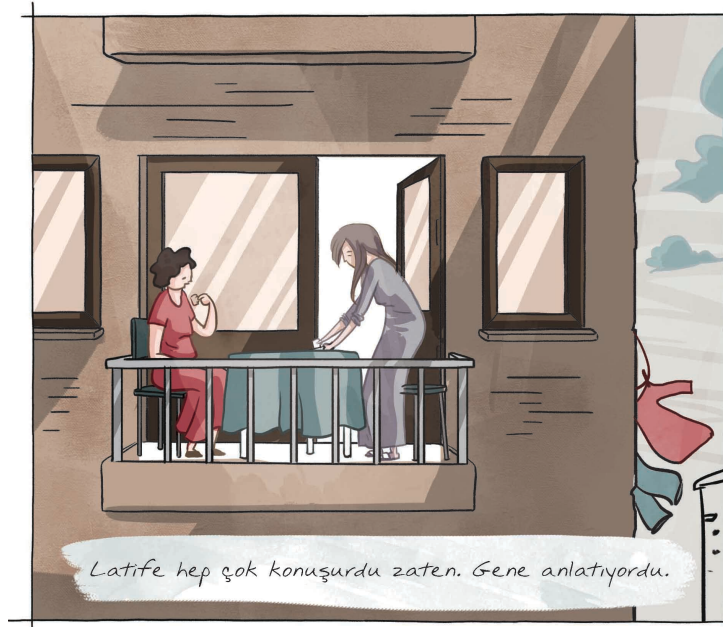
Figure 15. Sureyya and Latife shown together

The characters don't have faces, but one gets who they are just by one look and it is not a matter of the use of colors. Here are the silhouettes of the characters:

Figure 16. Sureyya and Latife shown as silhouettes

In this picture, the main key element that distinguishes the two characters is their hair, and that is no coincidence. I put a special emphasis on the hair since almost all of my main characters were females and hair is the easiest way to distinguish the characters because people recognize each other from top to down. Another reason is that it is quite easy to draw different hair, especially for females.

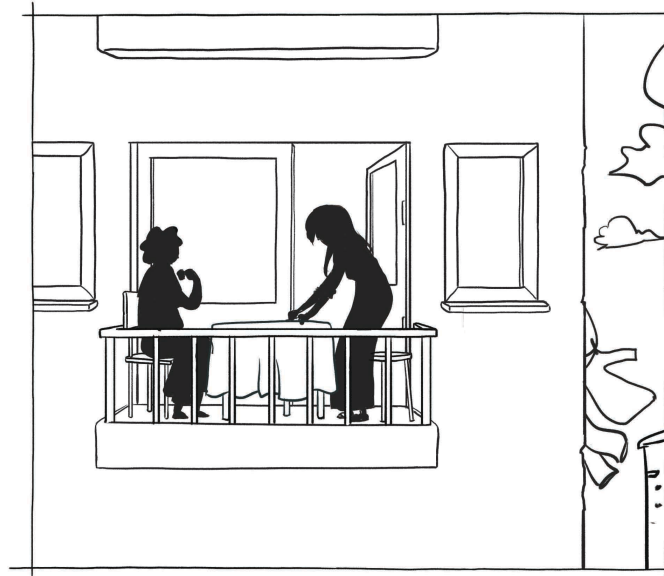The other figures taking part in the book mostly have no faces or just lack the eyes on their face. I decided to draw only the leading or key roles in this story, to underline the importance of the main individuals and distinguish them from the rest. Drawing each one of them would be to force the readers to interpret unnecessary information, according to my point of view.

I started with deciding on Sureyya since she is the main character in the book. After I concluded that she has a tall figure with long hair and big eyes, it was easier for me to decide on Latife, who appears in the story together with Sureyya. I designed her as a slightly shorter but wider figure with small eyes and short curly hair. I wanted the two characters to be in contrast so that the audience may identify each of them immediately.

The characters look in harmony with their roles in the story. For instance, in the story Sureyya is facing disturbing truths several times and in those moments she chooses to stay by herself and digest the heavy knowledge she just found out. Therefore, I had several scenes and visions in my mind before I start with developing the characters. I wanted to have dramatic scenes with Sureyya where her hair was waving with the wind (Figure 17). Therefore, I decided to draw her with long hair.

Figure 17. Sureyya shown in a dramatic scene

Sureyya's older brother Huseyin, who forces to marry Sureyya with a man she barely knows in return of money, is the father figure in the story. He symbolizes the authority, his words are rule and unquestionable. Therefore he has a sharp face and moustache as his characters is. On the other hand Selami, the second male figure in the story who happens to become Sureyya's husband, is a more moderate and not such a manly figure. Thus, he has a rounder face and a rounder moustache (Figure 18).

Figure 18. The two male characters: Huseyin vs. Selami

After developing the characters up to a certain level, I started to develop my layout and sequence of the story, which will be explained in detail in the next section.

6.3. Layout and Sequence Design

Sequence of the story is a crucial element in such projects since it is the point when the author/artist decides on how to tell the story. As mentioned before, due to its nature, comics has a peculiar way of storytelling in which visuals have an equal or maybe greater part in the storytelling together with the text (Groensteen 8). In my point of view, it is utmost important to finish the layout design all at once in order to create a meaningful sequence of the story and achieve the harmony among the panels.

Additionally, it is smart to see the big picture before one starts with the production. In order to prepare a production plan, and estimate one's needs during the process and the necessary time to complete the task.

My layout sketches were created in Photoshop just as the rest of the project. These sketches have no meaning than anyone other than me since they look dirty, undetailed and unfinished. However, they serve to their purpose of existence, which is to keep track of both the narration and workload.

Following (Figure 19) is a finished spread from the book and the layout sketch of the same pages (Figure 20):

Figure 19. A finished spread example from the book
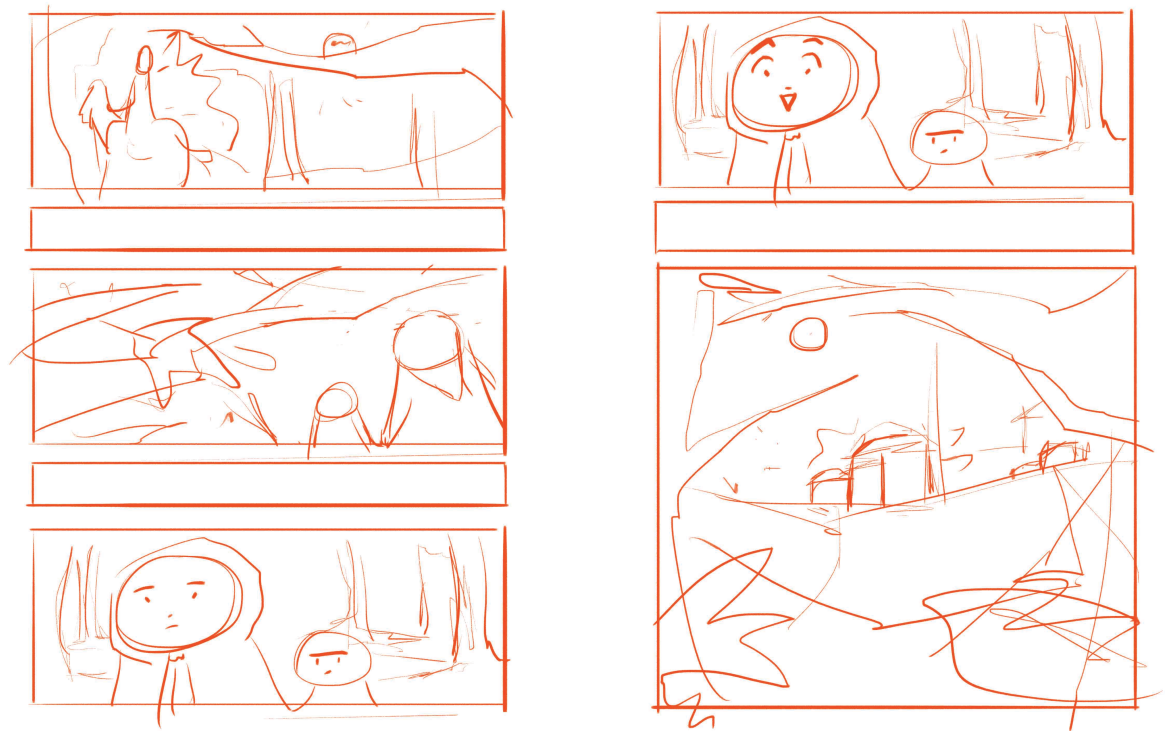
Figure 20. The preliminary sketch of the spread shown in Figure 19

Contrary to their appearance, it took a good amount of time to finish the layout design. It is the process where the main decisions about the narration are taken. Therefore, these little sketches mean much more to the artist as one expects to be.

After the sequence is settled, the production process comes in to the scene. The details will be covered in the following sections.

6.4. Production

The complete layout design suggested that I had an amount of 140 pages to create in order to complete the narration – not the book, since the cover, info and separator pages are not included. There were four elements to be decided to finish the production and these were inking, coloring, design of the speech balloons and choice of typography. All the decisions made on each of these components will be covered in this chapter.

a. Inking

In my former graphic story projects, I used to draw them traditionally using pencil and ink; and color them in Photoshop. However, for this project, I decided to do all the drawings in Photoshop because it is a huge project compared to my previous experience. I started to look for brushes that may have a more natural look for inking. I was looking for a similar taste as the inked pieces created traditionally. I ran into a brush pack called "Kyle's Ultimate Brush Pack," offering a wide range of natural brushes including a variety of inking tools. After several experiments, I decided to go with the "pocket ink" coming with the pack and inked the whole pages using this brush.

As finalizing the parts that took place on the outside, I had use several reference pictures showing Çarşamba and Samsun back in 1940s and 1950s. I didn't have a rich source, so I tried to combine the buildings seen the photographs or use the exact same place in the photograph (Figure 21).

Figure 21. A panel showing Çarşamba, below is the reference photograph

b. Coloring

This choosing of the inking brush process were affect by the coloring technique that I plan to use in the book, as one may guess. To make sure that the feel of the ink goes well with the coloring techniques I plan to use, I did a couple of sample pages fully inked and colored. Below are the two experiments (Figure 22 & Figure 23):
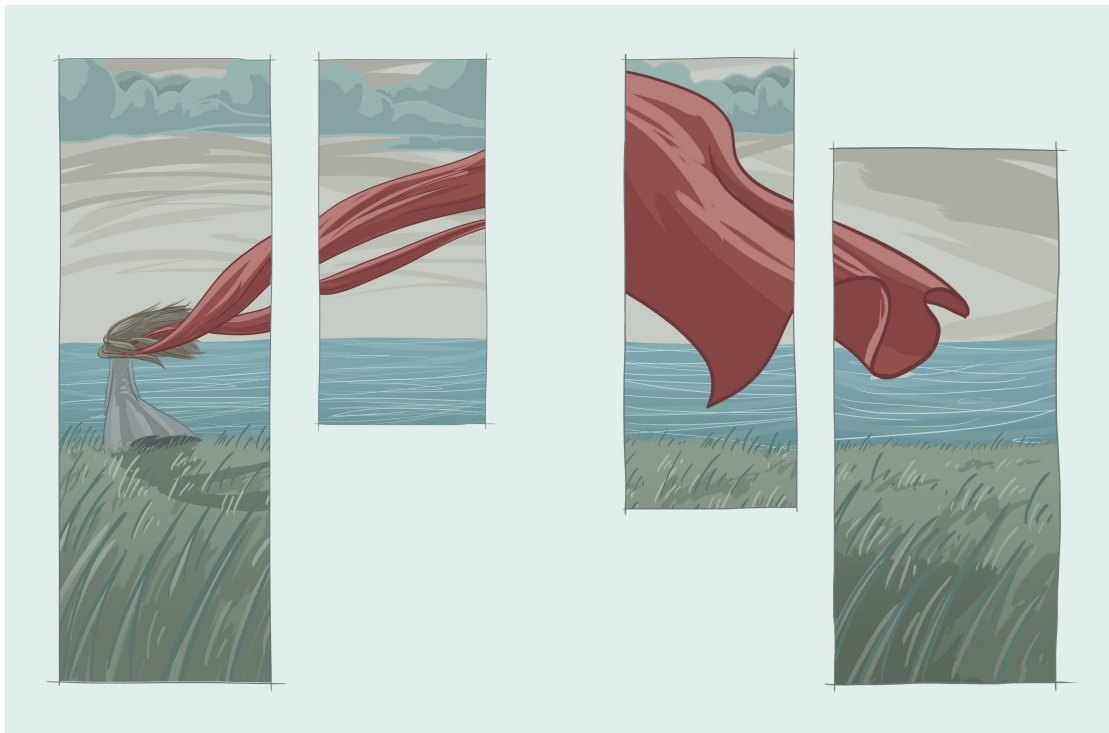
Figure 22. A colored spread example from the book

Figure 23. A colored spread example from the book

I paused the coloring process until I finish with the inking of the pages. It took a considerable amount of time since the decision-making process was still continuing in details.

As one may see in the successful example shown in Figure 22, I preferred a more natural looking setting and avoid using the color black. Therefore, my inked pages lack the black and white balance. I decided to balance the page with colors, with reduced usage of the black, limited to night scenes or darker settings.

Before starting with coloring the pages, once again I experimented with key pages in the sequence and decide on the coloring I will use on those spreads. For instance, the night scene was a problem that needed to be solved. My choices of colors for the previous pages were mostly desaturated colors, however that particular scene called the story of Gulhanim, was a mystical story. I needed to create that magical atmosphere through colors to support the particular story in that scene; to make the readers believe in what they read. Therefore, I worked on

a spread from that scene and experimented with colors until the choices I have made satisfied me.

c. Speech Balloons and Captions

During this experimenting process, the speech balloons and captions also been experimented and decided. I decided to paint the speech balloons loosely, to match them with my painting style.

d. Typography

For typography, I was looking for a natural looking but readable handwritten typeface. The typeface "KG Mullally" designed by Kimberly Geswein[15] was the choice for this story. It had a similar loose feeling just as I was trying to achieve with the speech balloons.

In the end, I had a proper hardcopy of the book. The book was designed as a hardcover book from the start.

With this chapter, I have summed up the creation process of Tales From Çarşamba. So far, only the technical details have been explained. In the next chapter, the decisions that specifically affect the narrative and storytelling will be examined and explained in detail.

[15] http://www.kimberlygeswein.com/

7. NARRATING THE MEMOIR

7.1. Graphic Choices

Çarşamba Masalları is a graphic novel based on the memoir of a woman named Sureyya born around 1930s in Çarşamba, Samsun from Turkey. This book covers pre- and post-marriage era from her lifetime and conveys two more marriage stories of two other women, from Sureyya's point of view.

These three stories dwell around the practice of marriage and the traditional approach to the role of women in this custom. As mentioned in previous section, writing the script, I conducted interviews with Sureyya, who happens to be my grandmother and I collected her memoirs on several occasions. Her marriage with her husband was a huge hole in her soul since she found out later that her brother took money from her husband's family to give her away. She was feeling betrayed and couldn't forgive her brother whom she has always seen as a father.

When I decided building the script on these marriage stories, I tried to imagine her life there, how she had spent her time. I asked her to describe her daily life. She told me that she would sit in front of the window and look away. That answer was no surprise. She had always been a housewife. I had known her in her late ages, and she was spending her time in the same way. In those times when she is not dealing with the household, she was sitting in front of the window, looking outside of the window, watching other people, observing their lives. She was watching TV as well, and preferred reality shows. Again, observing the live outside her. She would only go out to do grocery shopping. She lived a simple life, and admired her children's lives and works and successes.

In Tales From Çarşamba, this observational life of Sureyya is replicated. On pages 30 – 31 (Figure 24) we see her looking out of the window. She looks bored, it is raining and there is nothing else to do. And it is possible that there is no one outside that she could observe because it is raining. Then suddenly her brother Huseyin arrives at home and her mood changes drastically with his arrival. She is filled with joy, watching him walking to the house.
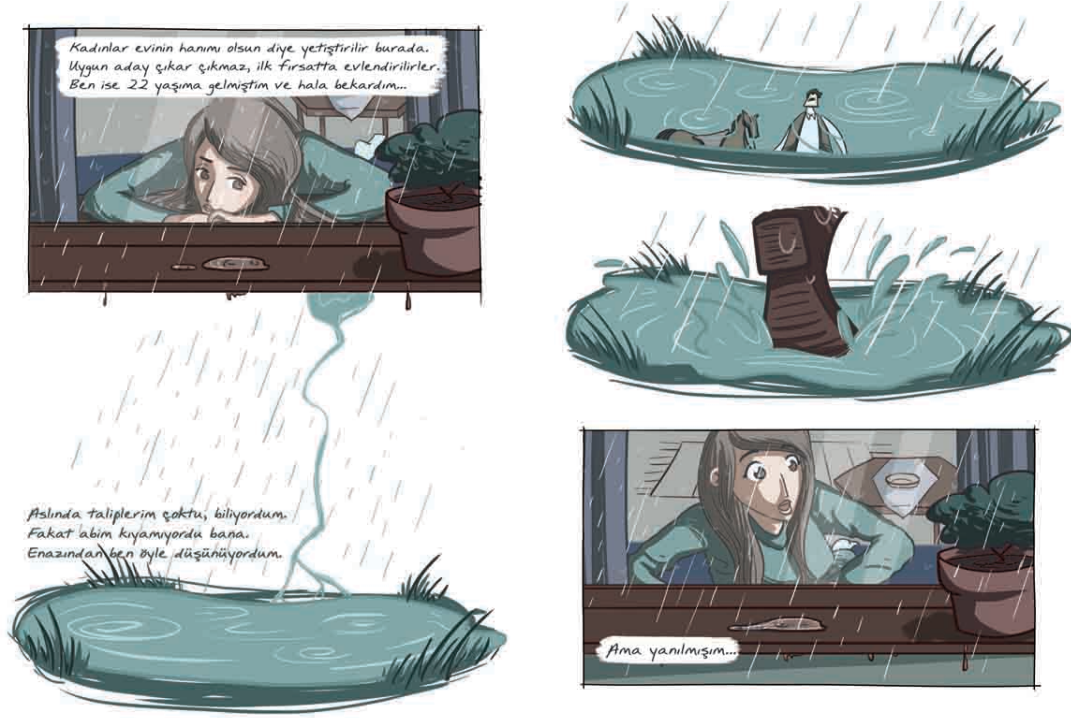
Figure 24. Sureyya waiting for her brother's arrival

There are two reasons why she gets so happy after seeing Huseyin coming: the first reason is that she truly loves her brother. She thinks he is fond of her as well and she gives him the role of her passed away father. However, there is a second reason according to my point of view. She is an observer in life. She lives in the house, she doesn't go out unless it is necessary, meaning she is not taking any action. She is bored from her living but she is not complaining about her lifestyle. For her, that is the life she should be living. However, she is aware of the fact that there are other possibilities that

may be more exciting. These options are on the outside, however, she stays inside the house.

In those particular pages, there are no traditional box panels but she is framed with the window from which she is looking out. On the other side, the arriving of her brother, we read it from the puddle of water outside of the house. These framing choices underline the difference between the two siblings. One belongs to inside, appointed to the observing position whereas the other has an expanded life outside which is an unknown to the ones staying inside. Therefore, he is more than a just brother to Sureyya. He is representing the outer world. He is the realm that she may never reach. So, his arrival may be considered as a spark against her boredom or a cue from the external world that is unavailable for women. To sum up, it is possible to read her happiness after his brother's appearance from two points of views. One is that she really loves her brother and happy to see her; and the other reason is she is happy to have an indirect contact with the external world.

If this book were to be a direct expression of her memoirs in a narrative book format, her life were to be conveyed to the reader with the sentence "we were sitting at home, looking out of the window, watching outside." These were her own expressions. This is a direct way to communicate with the reader. However, this graphic novel format interacts with the audience in an indirect way and asks the reader to fill in the gaps and to combine all the information given to fully grasp the story. In Tales From Çarşamba, these expressions of hers do exist, but not as she stated, not in text form. The essence of her description exists in visual narrative form.

In Tales From Çarşamba, we see Sureyya outside only two times: the first time, she is coming back from grocery shopping, which we guess from the bag she is carrying, and the second time, when she visits her ill mother who lives in another neighborhood. When she is outside, she is only a passenger, she is not taking an active part in life. It is because the outside is the realm of men. There is a scene where Çarşamba is introduced to the reader. In this page, two panels are introduced to the reader, showing men on the outside of their homes, interacting with each other (Figure 25).

Figure 25. A coffee house in Çarşamba is shown in the first two panels.

Throughout the book, she is looking out of the window on three occasions. The first two takes place in her own house, whereas the third one is the house of her father-in-law, where she had moved after marrying her husband. These environments and reoccurring action of Sureyya gives a clue to the reader to interpret and understand the life she has been living there. Moreover, on these occasions, her gestures and mimics convey a message to the reader as well. A transfer of her feelings to the reader is aimed throughout the book, such as boredom, confusion, sadness etc. Not only her gestures but the color scheme of the panels also support the feeling transferred to the audience. Therefore, it may be proper to claim that the graphic storytelling methods add an emotional layer upon the memoir itself. However, in this case, it is not the emotion described by the owner the memoir, but the interpretation of the author, me in this particular case, based upon both the empathetical bond between me and my grandmother and her emotional reactions I observed during my interviews.

Throughout the whole story there isn't even one section where Sureyya is in direct communication with her brother Huseyin. This is not a coincidence; rather this is conscious choice of mine as the storyteller, based upon my interviews again. When I

asked about her brother, she had mixed emotions about him. One thing was sure, she loved him no matter what. But she couldn't bear the fact that Huseyin gave her away to another man in return for money. She always thought that she was precious to him. The hidden truth behind her marriage had been a huge disappointment for her. Yet, she still loved him a lot, though the ugly truth. She spoke about him a lot but never mentioned, not even once, talking to his brother. Not a dialogue, not even a quotation from his words. Even when she was asked whether she has her will to marry Selami, her future husband, the person talking to her was Latife, sister of Selami, appointed to this duty by Huseyin. It was obvious that they had little communication. I needed to reflect this cold and insincere nature of their relationship into the story. Therefore, they are not talking, not even once facing to each other throughout the whole book. We do not get to know the character of Huseyin, he is a mystery to the reader, just as he was to Sureyya. We see his face clearly only once in the book, outside on the street, riding a horse. That is where he belongs to, outside of the house. Sureyya and Huseyin, though being siblings, belong to different territories. Whenever we see Sureyya, we know that we won't meet Huseyin there.

There was another question to answer for me: did Huseyin actually love her sister? That is a question I won't dare to answer. There is one scene where we see the affection of Sureyya towards her brother. On pages 30 – 31, we see Sureyya is sitting in front of the window and watching the rain. The window is hypothetically connected to a puddle of water. On the next panel framed by this puddle of water, reflection of Huseyin is seen and on the next panel, water is crushed by his step. We understand he has reached to the connecting point; he arrived home. On the last panel, we see Sureyya looking outside joyfully. We imagine that it is because she has seen Hüseyin came at home. At that particular panel, the scene ends. The reader won't get the information whether he was happy to see her as well. The decision is handed over to the reader.

The bond between Sureyya and her mother Gulhanım is much warmer and sincere compared to her relationship with Huseyin. Gulhanım had showed Sureyya that she actually cared for her good. During my interviews, Sureyya quoted the dialogues between them. Sureyya loved her mother a lot, but in a different way than she loved her brother. Her affection towards Huseyin was a mix of love and fear; however with her mother, I may say that is was pure love, arising from the awareness that she was loved in return (Figure 26).

Figure 26. Sureyya and Gulhanım are saying goodbye to each other. Sureyya is wearing the red scarf Gulhanım bought for her.

I handled this difference with the mini fiction-story about the red scarf, happened back in her childhood days. In this story, she sees a red scarf while she is wandering around the neighborhood with Huseyin and likes it a lot, but Huseyin doesn't buy her the scarf claiming it to be expensive. After sometime, her mother buys her the scarf, probably after she has told her. This is a fiction story, and it was necessary to both underline the opposite approaches of Gulhanım and Huseyin towards Sureyya, and to bind the beginning and the end of the book. However, this is just a little part of the whole book and the cruel facts on gender inequality remain, as they are the true parts of her memoir.

There are two more parts in the book, where she interacts with Gulhanım. One is before she leaves Çarşamba for good. That passage is a saying goodbye scene, a proper act to end the story. The second part is just after she has been asked for her will to

marry Selami. Sureyya is sitting in front of the window, crying and probably thinking. She is bothered by this fact, because she knows that her brother actually doesn't need her will. His word is the rule. The entrance of her mother into the room interrupts her thoughts. Gulhanım looks worried since she saw Sureyya crying. They talk, Sureyya explains the situation she is in. Gulhanım tries to convince her into this marriage by simply saying: "what will happen to you when I die? What will you do all by yourself?"

Her effort to convince her into this marriage was because of the fact that she knew there was no return back, according to my interpretation. It was already decided by her brother and they couldn't escape from his rule. I believe Sureyya has also understood that something was different with his demand. She mentioned in the interviews that many asked for Huseyin's will to marry Sureyya but he never asked her whether she had any will or not. She always thought that he couldn't give her away because he was very fond of her. And that is why she felt both disappointed and scared when she was asked for her will to marry Selami. Her reaction after being asked about the marriage is described on page, which will be explained in a deeper sense in the next section.

Returning to Gulhanım, she tells a memoir on her marriage, to convince Sureyya that marriage could be a useful practice. In this section, she tells her how she had to work in the plantation of her father, after her husband is passed away. To clarify the situation, there were no male breadwinners left in the family, therefore she needed a job. She had to walk a long way from home to the field everyday. It seemed probably inappropriate a woman to walk alone all that way, so they arrange a lad aged around 10 to company her. One day they stayed at the field for too long and take the road back after the sunset. They lose the way and decide to wait until the morning. Then a supernatural incident taook place, as told by Gulhanım to Sureyya. They see a man riding a horse in light, who lead them to home (Figure 27). Then Gülhanım looks at him one last time before she get into the house and realizes that the man is no one else but her late husband.

Figure 27. Gulhanım sees a man riding a horse and asks for help

It is impossible for me to guess whether Gulhanım was hallucinating or she actually saw a man on horse. However, I decided to add this story to the book for several reasons. First of all, the rest of the story shows women inside household. That is a fact, and many women are stuck with their house life. Yet, another fact was that there were also women who are working just like men, probably the ones who are forced to work due to bad economic conditions as Gulhanım has to in this case. After the only breadwinner in the family was passed away, she had to go outside, work to earn her life. After Huseyin came to a proper age and started to earn money, Gulhanım quitted working and go back to her "natural" place, to inside of the house.

Another reason for including Gulhanım's story is that I like the positive feeling she had concerning her late husband and their marriage. And it was necessary to support her worries on Sureyya staying all by herself in the future. A husband is a guard according to Gulhanım, protecting the wife from external dangers.

The lad that companied Gulhanım is an extreme example to gendered understanding of safety. It is quite interesting that a grown-up woman is entrusted to a child, which seems quite insensible. But still, the fact that the kid is a male means that the woman is not unprotected. I wanted to highlight this lack of sense in the story and added the detail that the kid was crying when they get lost. Gulhanım is the one to calm him and take care of him. In the end, she turns out to be the guard, as one may expect (Figure 28).

Figure 28. Gulhanım and the lad are lost. Gulhanım is calming the boy.

These were several examples of the graphical choices affected and shaped the storytelling process. Another element that has a considerable effect on the narration is the use of panels. Hence, the paneling choices will be examined in the next section.

7.2. Paneling Choices

As covered in the previous chapter, the reader must fill the gaps between the panels while reading the comics in order to fully grasp the story. According to Davis, graphic narratives include more gaps than the traditional life narratives, therefore reading the design and the intentions behind is as much important as reading the texts (270).

Panels are the main elementary unit of meaning in a comic book, according to Thierry Groensteen and the narration is based on the system of networked images (Fischer & Hatfield 81). Considering both these ideas, a special emphasis was given to framing choices.

The book starts with view from a cliff, a long panel invading the half of the first page. I did not use any other panels. This is where the atmosphere of the story as well as the scene is introduced to the reader. There is only one panel on the page, so the reader senses that that one particular panel is important for the story.

The next spread (6 - 7) is consisting of four equal-sized panels. This page is designed to confuse the audience, since the panels may be read either from top to down or from left to right (Figure 29). My intention with creating puzzlement was to leading the reader to spend more time on that particular spread. Something important is about to happen in that particular scene and I wanted to imply that particular feeling to the audience by making them staying on that spread a little bit more.
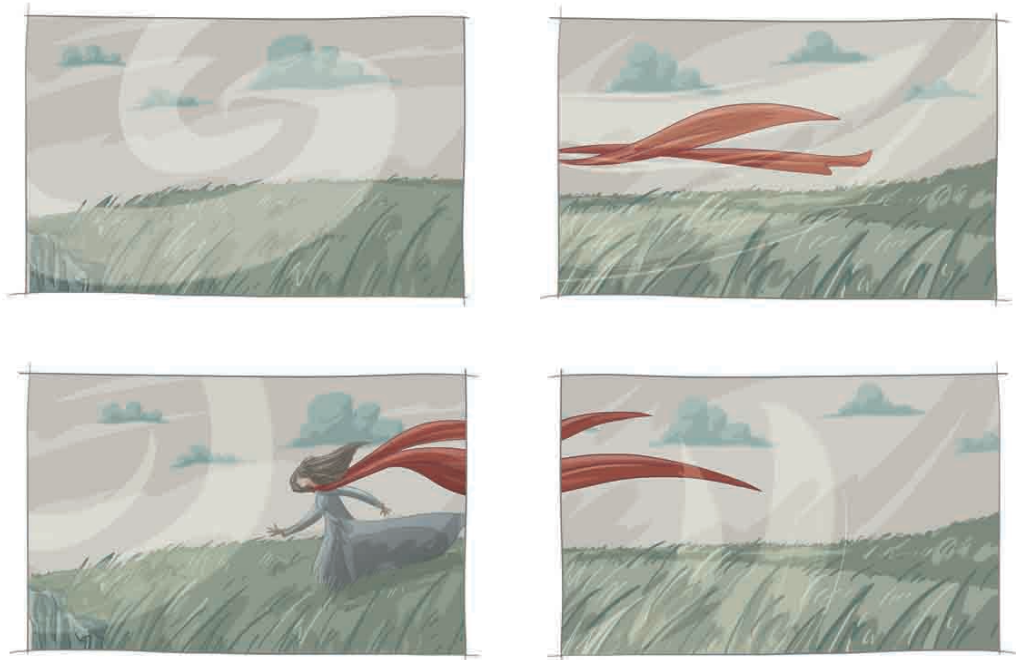
Figure 29. A spread from the opening sequence of Tales From Çarşamba

On the next spread (8 - 9), we see one frame divided into four panels. Here, the intention was again to force the reader to spend more time on the page and particularly on the red scarf she is wearing. The first panel shows Sureyya looking away from the cliff but the rest of the panels frame the red scarf. The scarf is highlighted here since it binds the starting point of the book to its end. Therefore, it needed to be underlined at the start.

Another paneling choice worth mentioning is the "panoramic panel" used between the pages 16 – 19 (Figure 30). It is a continuous panel spread onto four pages. This panoramic panel is showing a scene from the wedding of Sureyya. Up until the last quarter of the panel, the happy guests enjoying the party have been shown. In the last quarter of the panel, we see the bride Sureyya, looking emotionless. With using this long panel, my goal was to give a cinematic taste to the narration and deepen the contrast between the wedding ceremony, which is a celebration of the happiness of the groom and the bride, who didn't want to be in such a position in the first place.

Figure 30. Panaromic panel spreaded pages 10-11 and 12-13, showing the wedding scene

Between the pages 36 – 39, a different way to convey the emotions of the characters has been experimented. After Latife asks Sureyya whether she has the will to marry Selami, her elderly brother, the reactions of Sureyya described to the reader in nine panels. However, the way her body reactions are shown looks just like pieces of a puzzle, because of the framing decisions. One needs to spend some time on each panel to fully grasp what has been shown in each frame. On page 37, Latife, who is just the messenger of Huseyin, looks as much puzzled as the readers may become (Figure 31). Latife couldn't understand her reactions. After turning the page, readers see Sureyya in one piece, looking quite angry. Her body reactions gain a meaning. I designed this sequence again to interact with the audience. It is an effort to surprise the reader as much as Latife is.

Figure 31. Sureyya's reactions after she get her brother's message

After Sureyya has been informed about the marriage offer, she goes back to home, feeling desperate. There, she talks to her beloved mother and tells here that she is not willing for this marriage. Sureyya cries, her mother consoles her, by saying that her brother Huseyin loves her and cares for her well-being. She tries to convince to this marriage because she is aware of the fact that once the decision is given, it is inevitable for Sureyya. On pages 48 and 49, we see the desperate cry for help coming from Sureyya and her mother's caring for her. In this spread, there are only two panels, showing the dialogue between Sureyya and Gulhanım. The way the panels are placed are aimed to support the power relationship between Gulhanım and Sureyya. The panel showing Sureyya is placed at the bottom of the left page, where we see her looking up to her mother, asking for help. On the top of the right page, we see Gulhanım looking down on Sureyya.

On several spreads, simultaneous moments have been shown in panels. On pages 76 and 77, scenes from the wedding have been illustrated. On the right side, the panels shows the people having fun at the wedding. On the left side, the reader sees the bride, who happens to look not as happy as the guests. On this particular spread, the aim to

show coinciding moments were to underline the irony that even though the bride being unhappy at her own wedding, people could enjoy the ceremony (Figure 32). The unwillingness of bride is not a disturbing fact for the people since it is not a criterion for a good marriage.
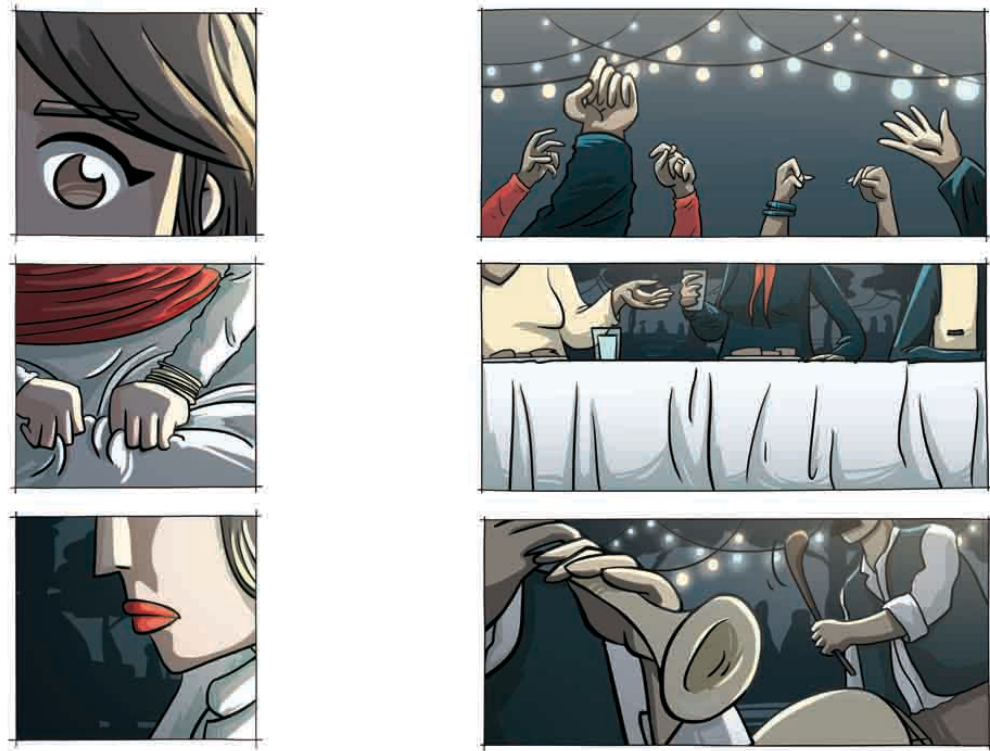
Figure 32. Another scene from the wedding, contrasting simultaneous moments

On pages 88 and 89, simultaneous moments have been illustrated once again. The page shows the moment where Sureyya finds out the real reason underlying her marriage. She was given away to her husband in return for money. She learns this fact from Latife, her sister-in-law. The moment she discovers the truth, is the moment of illumination. As she is exploring the real cause, the clouds cover the sun, so the sunlight is gone (Figure 33). With these opposing images of illumination vs. obscuration, I wanted to show the contrast covering her inner world. As she gets illuminated, her inner world gets darker because the truth is too heavy for her to carry. She needed to carry the unbearable truth all her life. And that was the moment when that burden was settled upon her shoulders.

Figure 33. Sureyya finds out about the truth behind her marriage

After finding out the truth, she walks away, to outside of the city. On her way, she starts to think about the past and remembers the time when her brother Huseyin was appointed to a job by Sureyya's father-in-law. Huseyin was paid to find the runaway cattles of the man and bring them back. She remembers that story and finds a resemblance between her and the cattles. She had a price, just like those animals. Her brother has brought her to their house as well. This resemblance was described once again with simultaneous panels (Figure 34). However, these panels show what she has been thinking on her way. In order to strengthen the resemblance between the two separate stories, Sureyya and Huseyin catching the cattles has been displayed together on the spread.

I find it appropriate to put these two stories because of something happened during the interviews. When I asked my grandmother about her being sold to her husband, she suddenly told me this story about cattles. I believe that she found unconsciously a resemblance between these two stories and therefore tell me this seemingly unrelated runaway cattles story.

Figure 34. Sureyya remembers the story of runaway cattles and how her brother brought them back home

The third story is the story of Done, who was sold by her father in the village bazaar when she was a child. On pages 104 and 105, I have used simultaneous panels once again, showing Done playing with Sureyya on the left page and her father looking desperate in a coffee house and paying for his tee on opposite page. By juxtaposing these two scenes, I tried to build a connection between the little girl and money, since the link is about to reveal in the upcoming pages. Moreover, I have used brighter colors on the scenes where children are playing to underline the innocent soul of these children who have no clue about what is about to happen (Figure 35).

Figure 35. Done and Sureyya playing together, while Done's father is sitting desperately by himself

Done had three daughters and her father sold them all at the bazaar in the end. On pages 104 – 105, I have used another juxtaposition of money and the girls to point out to the direct link. The children have become the commodity with the entrance of money into the scene. As the money enters the scene, one of the girls goes missing.

On several occasions I have used the panels to show that the time has passed in that particular storyworld. In the interviews, my grandmother has told me that in time, the blue eyes of Döne, have turned into gray, because she had become unhappy in time. I translated this memoir into graphic narrative by showing her eyes only and how she has lost the color and spark in her eyes. On pages 114 and 115, we read her change in 12 panels (Figure 36). These panels show the reader that the time has passed. And on the next page 116, the reader finally sees what she has become.
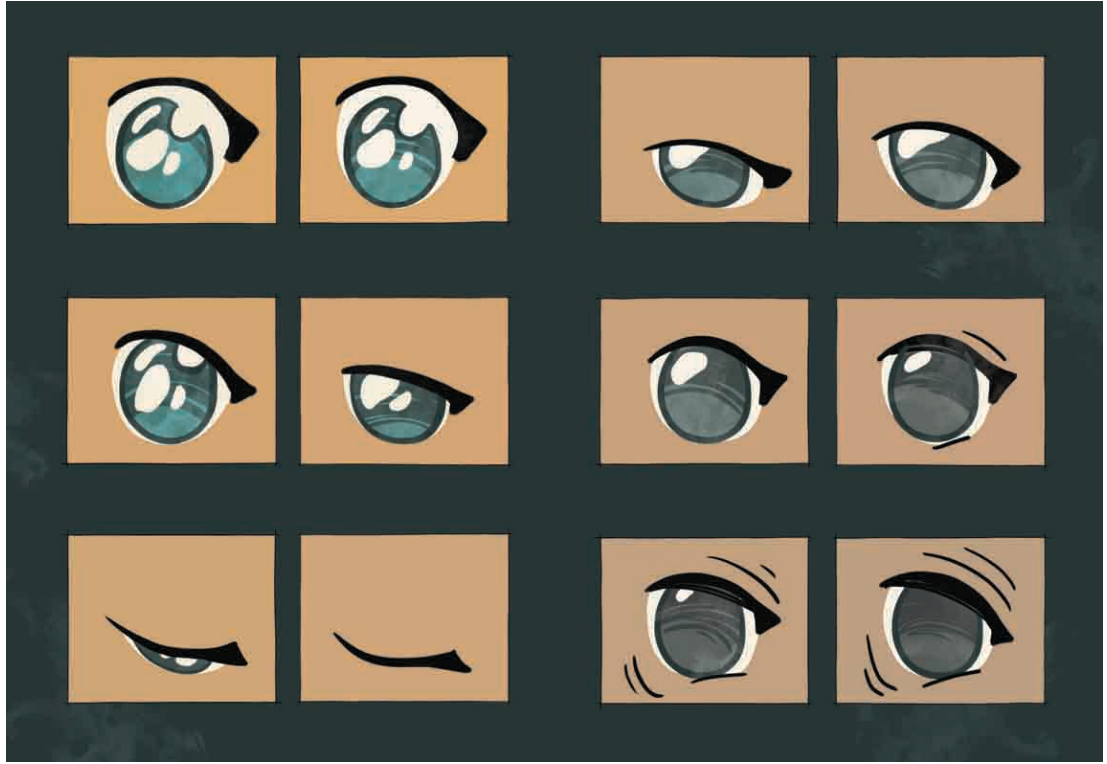
Figure 36. The eyes of Done has changed in time

On pages 80 and 81, I have used a different paneling to show that the time has passed. There are six panels on the spread. The first one is shaped as a little square, showing a section from nighttime. The next panel is a little bit longer towards the bottom of the page, and it shows that the sun is rising slowly. As we read towards the end of the spread, we see a bright weather and a house. This is the new home of Süreyya (Figure). As time passed, she gets used to her new house and this house becomes home. The rising of the sun is a metaphor to support that feeling of being at home.

Her şeye rağmen annem haklıydı.
El evi dediğim yer zamanla bir yuva oldu bana.

Figure 37. Sureyya's new home is revealed as daytime arrives

On pages 120 - 121, I have used a time-lapse inspired design to express the passing of time (Figure 38). On this spread, one sees Sureyya walking towards right and front. As she moves, her outfit changes and it is understood that it is a different time when she stops.
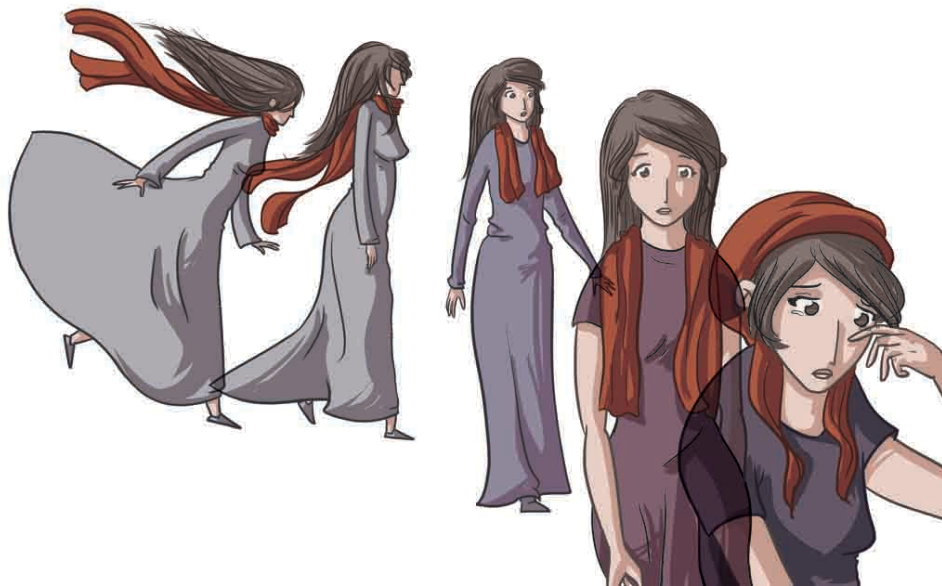
Figure 38. Sureyya gets used to her new home

In this section paneling choices that contribute to the storytelling has been explained on several example pages from Tales From Çarşamba. The graphic and paneling choices together determine how the narrative is to be communicated to the reader.

8. CONCLUSION

Comic art is a medium for storytelling, making use of both visuals and text. It is the harmony between all of the components including illustrations, script, speech balloons, captions, panels, color and this harmony makes this genre a unique way of narrating. As its uniqueness is unveiled via production of new works and thanks to the scholars dedicated to this medium, sequential art has become a preferable method for narrating non-fictional stories as well as fictional ones. In this thesis, the distinctiveness of the medium in narration has been investigated via production of a non-fictional graphic memoir novel, Tales From Çarşamba.

The graphic choices such as the usage of color, how the illustrations framed in panels or the visuals selected to convey a message to the reader affect the reader directly by both manipulating one's perception and making a fast connection between the information and the reader. Looking, seeing and interpreting the image is a daily routine for many people. It is a fast way of communication since humans are naturally used to perform this action of seeing-interpreting in their lifetime. Therefore, it may be concluded that the communication speed of graphic narratives are fast due to their nature.

Another component examined was paneling choices made by the author. It defines how the sequence of the story is designed and in what order the messages will be communicated. Panels may tell the reader where to look or just confuse them by showing too much detail. They may force the reader to spend more time on the page or speed up the reading. The author may control the readers' actions using the panels cleverly. Therefore, panels have equally important role in storytelling together with graphic components according to my point of view.

One last thing that needs to be pointed out is the role of the author/illustrator in creating a non-fictional graphic narrative. This experience of producing a memoir book has taught me that authors may tend to add their own emotions and interpretations inside the story because of two possible reasons. The first is to fill in the emotional gaps in the story, such as reactions of a character upon an incident. If the owner of the memoir does not give any information about his or her feelings to the author, it is the creator's duty to imagine how that character would react to that incident. Since this was a graphic novel, one reads the images, and interpret characters' emotions based upon their gestures. In my case, I considered my previous acquaintance with the narrator, and based my decisions upon our history. The second reason why the creator may add his or her own interpretations might be because the creator unintentionally finds a bond between the character and him-/herself. In some parts, I have imagined myself in such a situation as my grandmother was in, and unintentionally reflected my own reaction to that character. My emotions have become the emotions of the character. The plot of the story has not changed, but an additional layer of emotions has been added. So, these interpretations do not affect the non-fictionality of the narrative but enriches the book by improving the components of the story.

Moreover, this interpreting of the author seems to be an inevitable process because of a simple fact: the one who owns the memoir translates the images in one's head into spoken expressions and these expressions translated into images once again by the comic artist (Wagner-Pacifi 312). In other words, the nature of this genre is based upon third-hand interpretations of the events. Therefore, it should be considered normal and even necessary for the author to fill in the gaps occurred during this translation process.

To conclude, sequential art could be a good alternative for narrating non-fiction, specifically memoir in this case. It's interior qualities opens up new possibilities for storytelling and opportunities to enrich the story. It is a medium looks sympathetic to both children and adults. It is a faster way of communication, however, this doesn't mean that comic books have lesser value. There are many good examples of comics that are produced in a quite sophisticated way, especially in terms of combining the components of the medium with the plot to improve storytelling. Therefore, comic art should be given credit in narrating more complex issues properly as well.

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