



## THE HIDDEN ARCHITECTURE OF COMICS: ESTABLISHING FLOW AS THE META-STRUCTURE OF NARRATIVE MEANING

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### Abstract

Recent research in graphic adaptations has focused on the issue of panel transitions, visual composition and multimodal interaction in the process of constructing narrative. Nevertheless, not much has been paid to the principle, which puts these elements in a systematic or meaning-making system. To fill this gap, this paper redefines choice of flow as a meta-structural principle in graphic narratives. Based on the framework of the Five Choices presented by Scott McCloud and under the influence of the multimodal and comics theory, the article provides the analysis of the graphic versions of 1984, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *The Giver*. It analyzes the flow in the panel sequencing, transition patterns, spatial arrangement and word image interaction using qualitative multimodal analysis. The results indicate that flow is not just a compositional aspect but the main organizing force which controls the pace of the narrative, its coherence and interpretive focus. It interacts and regulates the functionality of moment, frame, image and words thus defining both structural and affective aspects of meaning. In this regard, the work builds on the relational model of Thierry Groensteen by pre-empting flow as a coordinating process at both spatial and temporal scales, and interacts with the notion of distributed meaning by Gunther Kress, as well as the visual grammar proposed by Neil Cohn, by showing the flexible modulation of sequencing. Also, it upholds the adaptation as transformation discussed by Linda Hutcheon by demonstrating that flow is a mediation between the condensation and reconfiguration of language on the graphic form. The paper finds that flow is a meta-organizing structure of graphic adaptations, a process whereby multimodal resources are coordinated to produce meaningful narrative meaning. This reconceptualization is part of current debates in multimodality, comics studies, and adaptation theory as it suggests a more holistic model of the organization of graphic narrative.

**Keywords:** Graphic Adaptation, Multimodality, Choice of Flow, Narrative Structure, Word-Image Interaction, Comics Theory

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## 1. Introduction

Texts based on graphics of canonical works of literature have become an important locus of interest in the study of how the meaning of narratives is restructured in alternative semiotic modes. Introducing prose into visual-verbal representation, these adaptations, however, do not simply reproduce the existing narratives, they restructure them, reorganize by combining images, words, and spatial arrangement. As a result, multimodal and comics theory has been used more in the study of graphic narratives as a way to comprehend the construction of meaning that goes beyond the confines of language.

In comics studies, a systematic description of the design and interpretation of graphic narrative is provided by the framework of the Five Choices, which is provided by Scott McCloud: moment, frame, image, words, and flow. Although much has been said about panel-to-panel transitions (choice of moment), framing, and word-image interaction, flow has been a secondary consideration, both as an aspect of layout or reading direction and not as a primary organizing principle. This tendency underrates the amount to which flow arranges the associations between pacing, controls, panels and manages the interplay between verbal and visual elements.

Meanwhile, the wider theoretical approaches support the necessity of the reconsideration of the organizing logic of graphic narratives. In a multimodal perspective, Gunther Kress is able to think of meaning as dispersed between modes, with every semiotic resource playing its part based on its affordances. Thierry Groensteen highlighted the relational quality of panels as part of a spatial network in comics theory and Neil Cohn suggested the visual grammar of sequential reading. Linda Hutcheon in her works on adaptation views adaptation as a change, where the same narrative is re-told in different media. Nevertheless, in spite of these convergent findings, the exact process through which multimodal resources are incorporated into a continuous narrative experience is not sufficiently theorized.

This gap is addressed in this article by arguing that choice of flow is the meta-structural principle by which graphic narratives are organized. Flow does not act as one of the design choices among others, but it determines the relationship of moment, frame, image, and words by controlling sequencing, pacing and space arrangement. It makes

possible the coherence underlying to multimodal elements in order to achieve the continuity of the narrative and the depth of interpretation.

To build this argument, the paper analyses the graphic adaptation of *1984*, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *The Giver*. They are chosen as canonical and because of the difficulty they have in rendering compact narrative, ideological, and emotional material in graphic form. The article explores using qualitative multimodal analysis how flow structures panel transitions, organize visual-Verbal distribution, and mediate how language is transformed in the graphic medium.

There are two primary claims made by the article. Primarily, it shows that flow is a governing mechanism which unites the actions of the other options of McCloud thus forming the narrative meaning at both structural and affective level. Second, it demonstrates that flow in graphic adaptations is an important factor in the reconfiguration of language, so that flow regulates its condensation, position and relation to images. The study, in this way, can add value to the multimodality, comics studies, and adaptation theory by suggesting a revised conceptualization of the organization of meaning in a multimodal graphic narrative where the development of meaning is seen to be the result of a dynamic orchestration of multimodal resources under the logic of flow.

### **1.1. Statement of problem**

Although the concept of graphic narratives has gained more academic interest in recent years, the principle according to which multimodal meaning-making in comics is organized has not been properly theorized. Although the literature, especially works based on the Five Choices formulated by Scott McCloud, has concentrated on panel transitions, framing and word image interaction, choice of flow is frequently minimized as a secondary characteristic of layout and reading direction. This imbalance causes a serious gap in the explanation of how individual elements are combined in a coherent narrative system, and the regulation of sequencing, pacing, and multimodal coordination has not been sufficiently studied. The problem is more acute in the graphic interpretations of the canonical texts, when the complicated linguistic and ideological constructions have to be restructured in intermedia. Even though Linda Hutcheon develops the notion of adaptation as change and Gunther Kress elaborates on the distribution of meaning among the modes, these two authors fail to explain the structural mechanism that arranges this change in comics. In this paper, this gap is addressed by the proposed choice of flow as the meta-organizing principle, which combines moment, frame, image, and words and thus controls multimodal meaning-making and narrative coherence.

### **1.2. Research Objectives**

- To explore the effect of narrative organization of flow structures in graphic adaptations.

- To examine the interaction between moment, frame, image and words as regulated by flow to create multimodal meaning-making.
- To determine the mediation of flow in conversion of language to multimodal form.

### 1.3. Research Questions

- How does choice of flow play in the structuring of narrative meaning in graphic adaptation of canonical novels?
- How does flow organize the moment, frame, image and words of graphic narratives?
- How flow affects transformation and redistribution of language in graphic adaptations?

### 1.4. Significance of the study

The study is important because it contributes to the theoretical knowledge of graphic narratives by reinstating the position of choice of flow as a meta-organizing principle in multimodal meaning-making. Whereas the current literature has widely studied such elements as panel transitions, framing, and word-image relationships, the current study deviates the focus to the integrative mechanism that organizes these parts into a coherent narrative form.

Theoretically, the research advances the comics studies by expanding the Five Choices paradigm by Scott McCloud, showing that flow is not only a design component but also a governing system, that organizes the interaction of moment, frame, image, and words. By so doing, it perfects the models of visual organization of narrative which already exist and provides a more comprehensive picture of the way meaning is created in the graphic form. It also compliments both the relational approach of Thierry Groensteen in that it foregrounds the temporal and rhythmic aspect of narrative coherence and also the theory of distributed meaning by Gunther Kress in that it determines the structural principle that structures multimodal resources. Moreover, it builds upon the idea of adaptation as transformation presented by Linda Hutcheon in order to describe how transformation is structurally controlled in the comic medium.

In practice, the research offers a practical analytical model to scholars and educators interested in the work with graphic adaptations and multimodal texts, which offers a more precise model of the role of narrative pacing, sequencing, and visual-verbal coordination in meaning construction. The study allows reorganizing the analysis of the reconfiguration of canonical literary texts into graphic form in a more organized manner by focusing on the flow as the main organizing mechanism.

Comprehensively, this study adds to multimodality, comics theory, and adaptation studies, by providing a redefined hermeneutical perspective, according to which the

coherence of narrative can be perceived as the product of the dynamic coordination of multimodal resources through the logic of flow.

## 2.Literature Review

The graphic narrative studies have developed as a result of intersecting theoretical frames like comics theory, multimodality, adaptation studies, and visual semiotics. Despite the fact that these frameworks have contributed immensely to the analysis of the process of constructing meaning within comics, they have a predisposition to consider the constituent elements of structure such as panel transitions, framing and word-image relations, and fail to consider the integrative process that binds these constituent elements to form a coherent system of narrative.

Among the first works to be developed on comics theory is the theory of comics formulated by Scott McCloud (1993) through his Five Choices (moment, frame, image, words and flow). His typology has had a following in the analysis of narrative construction, particularly panel and transition sequence. However, the framework by McCloud has been discussed in academic literature in a disproportionate manner, with the primary focus being on choice of moment, which is especially panel-to-panel transition, and closure mechanism (McCloud, 1993; Postema, 2013). Consequently, the choice of flow is very often considered a peripheral or procedural aspect instead of a structural principle of narrative coherence.

The comics scholarship has also brought out spatial organization and relational structure. Comics According to Thierry Groensteen (2007), comics are theorized as a spatio-topical system and the creation of meaning through interdependence relations between panels (arthrology). This model is a good explanation of spatial connectivity, but does not theorize comprehensively of temporal control of reading movement or rhythmic timing of narrative movement. Similarly, the notion of closure in McCloud (1993) elicits the mental participation in the filling of the gaps of the narrative yet fails to specify the way of sequential flow structures in explaining the speed of interpretation in larger units of the narrative.

Neil Cohn (2013, 2014) proposes a visual narrative grammar, in both cognitive and linguistic terms, a form of describing the sequence of images based on the rules of organization of thought. This line of empirical experiments demonstrates that the brain has a syntactic-like structure in the visual stories (Cohn et al., 2014). However, the approach characterizes the patterns of structural sequencing, though it does not give much attention to the narrative flow as an organizing principle that directly engages with pacing and multimodal coordination.

The multimodality theory is based on the assumption that the meaning is shared across the semiotic modes and each mode plays its role depending on the affordances it offers (Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, 2006). Their social semiotic methodology

gives them a good basis to examine the interaction of words and images in visual texts (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). However, the multimodal theory is a more distributional meaning than the sequential and structural processes that connect multimodal resources over period in narrative representations.

Similarly, Charles Forceville (2009) builds up on multimodal theory by carrying out a study on metaphor in comics and advertising to demonstrate the accretion of meaning in verbal and visual modalities. This work is strong, but it is rather the semantic interaction than the structural organization in the flow of the narration. In the same way, Bateman (2014) recommends multimodal discourse paradigms of complex semiotic artefacts but these paradigms explain more modal interaction than narrative integration.

In her works, Linda Hutcheon (2006) conceptualizes the concept of adaptation as a process and a product of reinterpretation, which takes place in the media. Her theory has been widely applied to the graphic adaptation of literary texts with a focus on transformation, intertextuality and specificity as a medium (Hutcheon, 2006; Leitch, 2008). However, the adaptation theory does not succeed in its explanation of the structural arrangement of multimodal aspects of comics medium in the transformation.

Formal theories that are specific to comics also help in the comprehension of narrative structure. Will Eisner (1985) emphasizes timing, framing and visual economy on sequential storytelling as compared to his emphasis on the expressive function of layout and pacing. Despite the fact that Eisner predicts rhythm and visual timing, he does not organize such aspects into one structural principle that is comparable to flow. Subsequent contributions to comics semiotics (Cohn, 2013; Bateman and Wildfeuer, 2014) also comment on the significance of multimodal coordination but do not go to the extent of defining flow as a theory.

Recent experiments regarding visual narrative comprehension also contribute to the cognitive complexity of sequencing processing of pictures. It has been found that narrative expectations such as linguistic syntax are relied upon by the readers in decoding comics (Cohn et al., 2014; Cohn, 2019). However, these models are rather interested in the processes of comprehension yet not in the macro level narrative organization.

Taken together, the existing literature is very useful in explaining the individual qualities of the graphic narrative structure, such as spatial layout (Groensteen, 2007), visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006), narrative cognition (Cohn, 2013), and adaptation processes (Hutcheon, 2006), but fails to give any general principle that would explain how the multimodal elements are structurally organized within the comics medium during the process of transformation.

The proposed paper will fill this gap by proposing that choice of flow is a meta-structural principle governing the interaction of moment, frame, image, and words. Through this it repositions flow not as a secondary attribute of design but as the key

structuring principal based on which the meaning of narrative is created in graphic adaptation.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical basis of the study lies in an integrative theoretical approach, which synthesizes the comics theory, the multimodality, and the study of adaptation, and specifically the reconstruction of choice of flow as a meta-structural principle. The main structure is based on the Five Choices introduced by Scott McCloud that conceptualizes the construction of comics in terms of moment, frame, image, words, and flow (McCloud, 1993). Although this model gives us a vocabulary on which to base the analysis of graphic narratives, this research has gone a step further by redefining flow as the defining factor that structures the relationship of all the other decisions.

This extension is informed by multimodal social semiotics and especially by Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, who suggest that meaning is shared among semiotic modes and that these modes are influenced by the affordances (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). Their paradigm allows to see how the visual and verbal resources can work simultaneously, but fails to provide a complete explanation of how these resources can be sequentially and structurally incorporated into the narrative development. This void leads to emphasis on flow as a principle of organization.

The study also relies on the conception of the comics system by Thierry Groensteen especially arthrology and spatio-topia that focuses on the meaning of relations between panels (Groensteen, 2007). Nonetheless, the model by Groensteen focuses more on space rather than time. As a way of overcoming this shortcoming flow is conceptualized here as the process that organizes spatial relations and temporal reading progression.

The framework is also informed by cognitive approaches to visual narrative, in particular, the work of Neil Cohn. The visual narrative grammar by Cohn proves that sequential images are organized according to structured cognition (Cohn, 2013). Although this reinforces the concept of systematized structuring of comics, this study goes a notch further by proposing that flow works at a macro structural level, not only in the direction of cognition but also narrative structure.

Lastly, the approach to the analysis of the graphic adaptations of canonical novels is the adaptation theory, specifically, the conceptualization of adaptation as repetition rather than replication, as developed by Linda Hutcheon. This research paper incorporates these theoretical threads to a coherent system whereby flow is placed as the meta-organizing concept that incorporates multimodal, spatial as well as narrative levels.

#### **3.2. Primary Data**

The main data of this research are the selected sequences of the graphic versions of *1984*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *The Giver*. These readings are chosen because of their

canon status as literary works and the multimodal complexity of their plots, which make them highly reconfigurable in the adaptation. The chosen sequences entail some of the most important narrative moments where the perspective, emotional intensity, and ideological focus are changed. The excerpts are selected intentionally to enable the close analysis of the functioning of flow through panel transitions, spatial setups and interaction of words and images in structurally and thematically meaningful settings.

### **3.3. Comic Architecture and Layout**

Comic architecture is the structural arrangement of visual and verbal elements on the page, such as panel arrangement, page space, sequence and hierarchy of space. In graphic narrative the page serves both as a spatial and temporal unit, in which the meaning is built by interaction between discrete and continuous elements. The panels are bounded visual units, although their meaning is produced in a relationship with their location on the page and sequencing.

The design of the layout predetermines the movement of readers through narrative space. Traditional grid patterns lead to linear reading patterns whereas non-traditional or moving layouts break the linearity to create focus, tension or thematic contrast. Spatial arrangement, in this case, is not only aesthetic but also profoundly semantic over the prioritization and interpretation of narrative information.

In the system of Scott McCloud, layout relates with choice of moment and choice of frame, but flow decides how these components of architecture are perceived as a continuous motion. Although McCloud refers to closure as a cognitive act that holds panels together, the present research claims that flow is what operationalizes closure as it structures the direction, rhythm and continuity of reading.

Moreover, the idea of spatio-topia by Thierry Groensteen underlines the spatial interdependence of the panels on the page. Following on this, the current paper expands spatial analysis by adding temporal movement that, according to the argument, architecture in comics is spatially relational as well as dynamically sequential.

In such a way, comic architecture can be perceived as a composite system in which the space organization and time flow meet. Flow exists at this point, so that visual architecture is not fixed, but traversed dynamically to give unity to fragmented visual units. Therefore, layout a contributor to meaning making which is organized by flow. It is not a mere vessel of meaning.

### **3.4. Multimodal interaction in narrative construction**

Multimodal interaction Multimodal interaction in graphic narratives means the simultaneous and mutually depending role of visual and verbal modes in meaning construction. In comics, words and images do not work separately but constitute a semiotic whole where meaning is produced when there is interaction between them. This is in line

with the modes as meaning-makers of Gunther Kress who believes that modes have different roles to play in communication but they are complementary.

Multimodal interaction is especially complicated in graphics adaptations since the translation of densely narrated literary works into visual representations is required. Verbal content is frequently summarized, reallocated or reorganized into panels, whereas the visual content increases narrative space by the use of representation, framing and symbolic detail. The process involves constant exchange between the economy of text and the enlargement of the visual.

In this exchange, the types of image and word used by Scott McCloud are helpful in determining how meaning is shared. The current research however contends that this interaction is not just additive but a structurally regulated process. Flow dictates the way and time of appearance of images and words in relation to other images and words, which creates a focus of interpretation and directs narrative understanding.

In addition, the interaction of multimodality does not occur only in the intra-panel relationship but also in the panel sequences. The meaning development relies on the development of visual and verbal elements over time, which can be continuous or interrupted. In this regard, flow functions as the process that coordinates multimodal changes in sequential structures in order to provide coherence in the movement of the narratives.

Therefore, the concept of multimodal interaction in graphic narratives is not merely a co-presence issue but a coordination issue. Flow acts as the organizing principle that incorporates the semiotic resources in a single narrative path.

### **3.5. Conceptual framework**

The theoretical framework of the present research places choice of flow as the meta-structural principle according to which the interaction of the Five Choices of McCloud in graphic narratives is arranged. Where moment, frame, image and words are discrete categories of analysis, flow deals at a higher structural level and acts as a coordinator of their interplay and narrative unity. This re-conceptualization changes flow not as a procedural characteristic of reading direction but as a mechanism of organizing the narrative.

This definition of flow perceived flow as working in three interdependent levels such as spatial, sequential, and interpretive. On the spatial level, it determines the structure of the panel arrangement on the page. At sequential level, it controls pacing and change of panels. At the interpretive level, it helps in guiding the reader cognition by organizing the development of meaning through the multimodal factors. The three levels are not independent or functional, but operate in a dynamic way, where flow is the principle of integration to form a coherent system.

The framework proposes a revised model of the graphic narrative structure with meaning not residing in its separate elements but in the coordinated movement of these elements. The model enables a deeper insight into the way in which graphic adaptations are used to convert canonical texts into multimodal stories, with the point that coherence is generated by a premeditated flow as opposed to individualized semiotics.

#### **4.Data Analysis**

In this section adaptations of three canonical novels— *1984*, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *The Giver*— are analyzed in terms of how the meaning of the narrative is made by combining McCloud Five Choices choice of moment (C-M), frame (C-M), image (C-I), words (C-W) and flow (C-Fw). The novels are analyzed as unique yet theoretically inter-related locations of visual-verbal narration, in which meaning is created not by single elements of composition but by their inter-relationship within the structural framework of the comics. In accordance with the concept of systemic relations of Groensteen and grammar of visual narrative of Cohn, analysis continues by foregrounding how panel sequencing, spatial arrangement and time pacing are all used to create interpretive coherence.

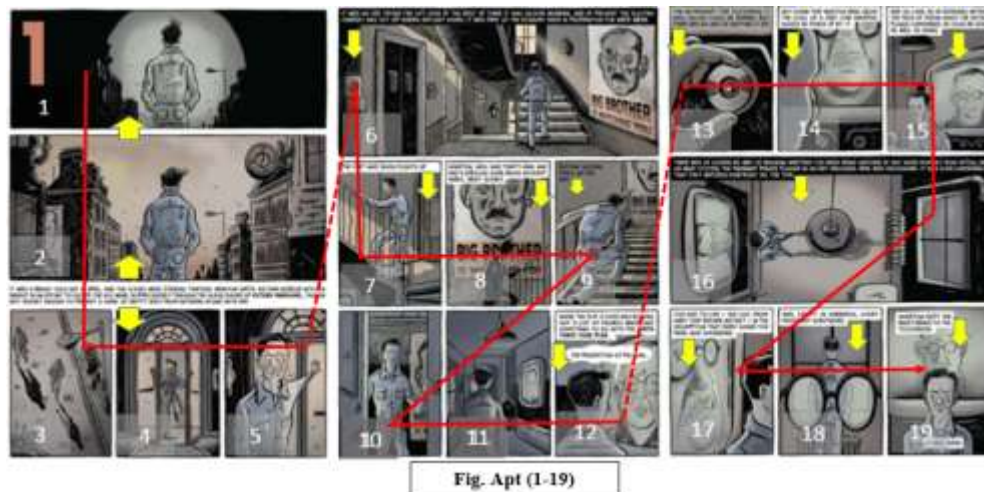
In this context, special focus is put on the role of adaptation as a transformative process, thought through by Hutcheon, in which canonical literary narratives are re-structured as multimodal. Nevertheless, instead of referring to adaptation as translational, the analysis will highlight the inner workings by which meaning is restructured in the comics medium. Throughout the three works, the analysis gradually shows that even though moment, frame, image as well as words play crucial narrative roles, it is the structuring power of flow that gathers these components into a continuous experience. The subsections that follow will discuss three panel sequences from each graphic adaptation separately, starting with *1984*, then *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and finally *The Giver*, to trace the way this dynamic of integration is played out in different narrative and ideological settings.

#### **4.1. 1984: The Graphic Novel**

##### **4.1.1.Fig. Apt (1–19): Flow as Meta-Organizing Structure**

C-Fw is a meta-structural principle that organizes and regulates the interactions between C-M, C-Fr, C-I and C-W into a whole narrative system in Fig. Apt-19. This space rule is not only directional but ideologically discursive as the panel order is established by a traditional left-to-right and top-to-bottom reading pattern, which creates the temporally disciplined narrative flow, which also replicates the restrictive and surveilled world of *1984*. This is a strictly circumscribed network of relations in which meaning is produced not in individual panels but in their disciplined interdependence, which is its systemic terms. Flow is therefore not merely a way of connecting panels, it determines the way time, perception and meaning are experienced across a panel.

At the choice of moment (C-M) level of flow, the narrational temporality is regulated by assigning the minimal number of actions to a few fragmented panels. Instead of focusing on the eventfulness of climax, the sequence prolongs the micro-action and this causes a deceleration of narrative pace, which matches the stagnation of Winston Smith and stagnation of the surrounding. This fragmentation of time is not arbitrary but



predetermined by flow which ensures that meaning is created through duration and repetition and no longer dramatic development. In that sense, flow makes the experience of time to be the manifestation of the themes: the stasis is changed to the narrative content.

Similarly frame choice (C-Fr) is subject to the logic of flow. This repetitive horizontal nature of the panels and their spatial restraint restricts the visual field trip and provides a definite direction of seeing of the reader. This regulated framing system eliminates disruption of space dislocation, and empowers the enclosure as an ideological and visual condition. The page, according to Groensteen, is a limited spatio-topical system where framing decisions can acquire meaning only as they are a part of a bigger sequential order. Framing therefore does not just generate meaning, it is brought to a rest and guided by flow that gives visual continuity and interpretive containment.

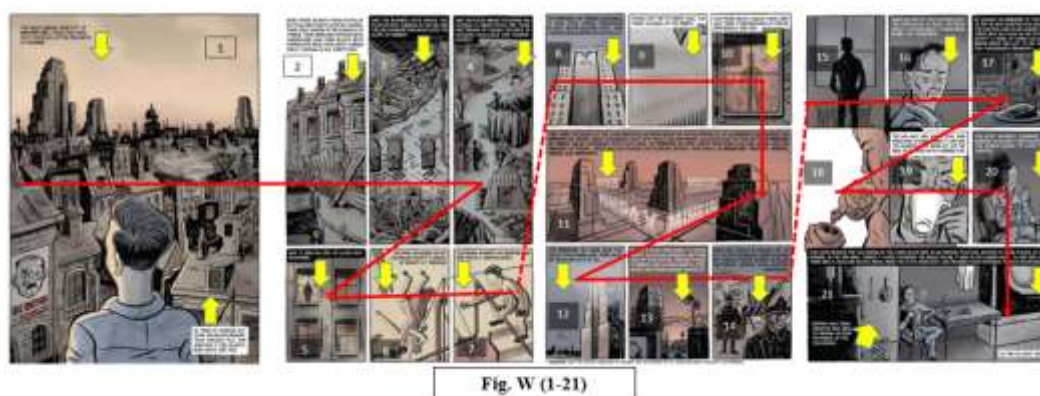
Choice of image (C-I) is also incorporated in this flow driven system by the preponderance of subdued environments, regulated location of character and repetitive architectural inflexibility. The imagery, such as the solitary figure of Winston, the grim landscape of the city, surveillance images (e.g. the banners of Big Brother) do not demand a special attention, but, rather, are distributed in the sequence in such a way that it produces an accumulative meaning. Flow is what causes these images to align together forming one continuous chain of perception, meaning is made by accumulating and not by the intensity of focus. Even the more emotive signals such as the tonal mood which is attenuated are manipulated so that the visual reading is not lost in the development of the sequence as compared to the visual disintegration.

There is also structural alignment between choice of words (C-W) and flow as captions and declarative phrases are anchoring mechanisms which stabilize an interpretation between panels. The contrasting positioning of the verbal elements to an image or in an image is done to ensure a coherent flow of textual and visual information to enable the storyline flow. Rather than being a distinct layer of narration, language is a line of direction within the flow structure, and time, space and emotional tonality is located in each stage of development. By doing so words do not break the flow of the visual; they are absorbed into it.

The interaction of C-M, C-Fr, C-I and C-W imperatively demonstrates that the meaning-making process by flow is the architecture that rules in the order C-M C-Fr C-I C-W. It regulates pacing, spatial containment, visual hierarchy, and verbal anchoring using a complex system which transforms narrative experience into a controlled perceptual continuum. This depiction of the transport of Winston to his apartment is therefore not only spatial but a flow-constructed ideological experience where temporal delay, visual confinement and narrative suppression are all used to affirm the thematic explanation of surveillance, control and psychological suppression.

**4.1.2. Fig. W (1-21): Flow as Rhythmic and Multimodal Organizer of Narrative Meaning**

Fig. W (121) choice of flow (C-Fw) is an example of a governing meta-structural mechanism, which controls the narrative tempo, spatial perception, and multi-modal coordination over the sequence. In contrast to linear progression, flow in this case is a rhythmic system of decelerating and accelerating, which builds up the thoughtful and emotionally-laden experience of being surveilled by Winston Smith. It is shown that meaning is not created by each panel but rather by the modulation of movement across panels through pattern, which is consistent with the concept of systemic interdependence as developed by Groensteen and the concept of structured visual sequencing developed by Cohn.



On the plane of narrative temporality, C-Fw executes a dynamic shift between Asp moves and Asp, Sc moves and Sc, and Act moves and Act, and generates a wavering rhythm that is an expression of psychological stagnation as well as ideological pressure. The initial large panel (W-1) creates a long perceptual pause, forcing the reader to remain in the subjective gaze of Winston, as he looks at the presence of the visual surveillance apparatus of Big Brother. This stretch of time is of narrative time flow and presupposes action mood. Conversely, the slim vertical paneling (W-2W-4) distorts the sense of space, making people feel imprisoned and isolated. These shifts, through the flow, actively regulate the experience of time as opposed to its representation.

The middle sequence (W-5-W-10) adds a controlled acceleration in the rhythm of the panel, making possible the narrative development with the help of more traditional Act-Act transitions. This movement is however not constant, it is strategically broken by deceleration in W-11 and once more it is expanded across W-12W-20, showing flow to be a non-linear organizing force which constantly recalibrates reader engagement. The last panel (W-21) sees a re-entry into a slowed perceptual frame, extending spatial cognizance of the room Winston is in, and the telescreen, bringing the sequence to a close in a form of controlled narrative suspension. Such modulation of pacing cycle shows that flow controls the sequence and experience intensity.

C-Fr is entirely consumed by the rhythmic logic of flow in this construction. The alternating dominant full page full page, slender vertical compositions and the usual rectangular format arrangement of the panel are not accidental but are operationally coded to guide visual scanning patterns. The panel full-page (W-1) creates the effect of prolonged immersion, whereas the panels that are vertically elongated inhibit the horizontal movement, which forces the upward-downward scanning, which strengthens the spatial constraint. Periodic panels bring a balance to the flow and even out the narrative rhythm. These frames are relational units in the systemic framework of Groensteen, the meaning of which is created only due to their positional and sequential dependence, a dependence organized according to flow.

Image choice (C-I) is also subservient to the pacing system of flow. Surveillance images, including posters of Big Brother, surveillance cables and telescreens, are spread throughout the sequence in such a way that they achieve cumulative ideological saturation and not visual impact. The flow incorporates the images in a constant sequence of perception where change and repetition combine thematic prevalence, thus they are not isolated. Visual field then emerges as a controlled perception and not episodic representation environment.

Choice of words (C-W) is in close synchronization with this flow-controlled system. The placement of captions is appropriate therefore it does not disrupt visual continuity. An example of this is W-1, where dual captions are used, placing the city and

at the same time feeling the introspection of Winston, creating a layer of interpreting frames. The sequence of W-21 ends in several captions, which are used to describe space positioning at the same time and strengthen thematic closure. Verbals do not compete with the visuals but become part of the flow structure and become interpretive stabilizers, defining the direction of the reading and what kind of emotion it should have.

Also, color modulation is a temporal and emotional flow extension. Early panel pastel pink colors slow perceptual interaction and are equivalent to reflective Asp-Asp and Sc-Sc transitions, which produce a memory-like time effect. On the other hand, the tonal contrasts of the institutional spaces, being darker, disrupt the continuity and amplify the ideological discontinuity, supporting Sc-Sc transitions that suggest emotional numbing and control of the system. By this the chromatic difference is transformed into a second regulator of narrative rhythm, and it functions in agreement with flow to structure the affective time.

Altogether, Fig. W (1-21) indicates that C-Fw is a rhythmic and integrative meta-structure that coordinates moment selection, framing design, visual composition, verbal anchoring and chromatic modulation into a single narrative system. The sequence generates meaning by a deliberate variation in pacing in which acceleration, suspension and compression combine to create an experience in the reader. This way, flow is not an enabling aspect of layout, but rather the main organizing logic that creates multimodal narrative coherence.

#### ***4.1.3. Fig. D (1-94): Flow as Grid-Based Meta-Structure and Systemic Organizer of Narrative Meaning***

Choice of flow (C-Fw) is a comprehensive meta-structural principle that incorporates choice of moment (C-M), frame (C-Fr), image (C-I) and words (C-W) into a highly regulated but dynamically varied system of narrative construction in Fig. D (1-94). In comparison with the sequences discussed above, this character brings a nine-grid compositional structure that creates a basic rhythmic regularity throughout the story. Flow here does not simply determine the direction in which we read, but it regulates the logic of production of the meaning space by a system of repetition and variation.

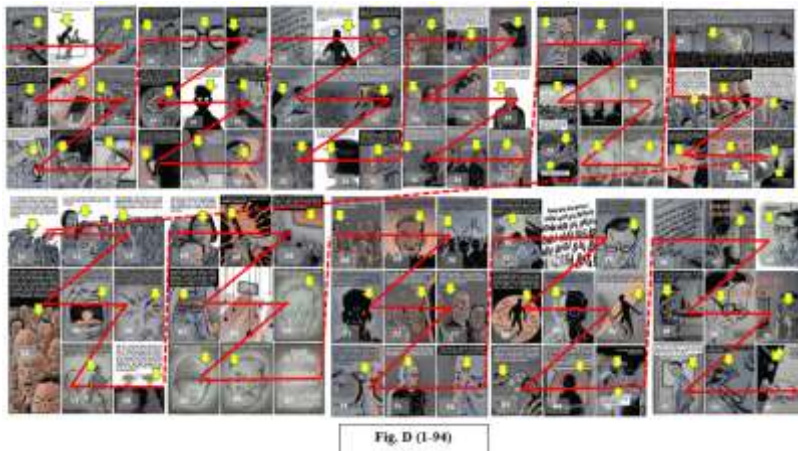


Fig. D (I-94)

The order is arranged in a predominantly Z-path reading pattern of the panels and therefore is consistent with traditional Western reading direction but this linearity is complicated by internal variations of caption placement and panel layout. Although captions are located mostly in the upper part of the pictures, there are exceptions in the form of panels D-39, D-49, D-50, and D-85, in which textual components are placed either in the central or lower areas of the image. These disruptions are not chance accidents, but flow based re-tunings that bring some momentary shift in the interpretive focus. The systemic terms of Groensteen recognize such deviation as a controlled tension in a restricted spatio-topical system with coherence not being ensured by uniformity but by necessary variation.

Structurally, the sequence composition is dominated by the nine-grid system, so the pages segmented into  $3 \times 3$  modular design. Such grid-like organization sets a rhythmical background, making the narrative attention evenly spread over the moments. Flow is a stabilizing process that under this system coordinates time with space. But the system does not create monotony, but includes strategically exceptions, like two establishing panels (D-23, D-44), two panels that are twice the height (D-39, D-54), and various borderless, standard panels (e.g., D-2, D-14, D-20, D-25, D-32, D-58, D-63). Such variations purposefully agitate the grid and avoids visual stagnation by sustaining structural coherence as a whole.

The moment of choice (C-M) is intertwined with this grid-regulated flow system, where every panel is a fragmented part of the diary-writing process of Winston Smith, which is discretized. The use of similar panel structures underlines the iterative thinking processes instead of the linear one and aligns the narrative time with the cognitive repetition. This flow modifies the choice of moment into a patterned form of repetition, i.e. meaning is made by accretion, not by intensification of events.

Selection of frame (C-Fr) is directly predetermined by the nine-grid structure, standardization of the spatial boundaries, and free deviation by borderless or elongated

panels. These regulated interruptions are sources of focal intensifiers in a uniform visual space. The repetition of the bordered and borderless panels creates a rhythm of enclosure and disengagement, which strengthens the idea of Groensteen on the articulation of space by means of the relations between the panels. Flow then moves the framing like a variation of space that is rhythmic.

Image selection (C-I) is also arranged in repetition and modular distribution. The metaphorical image of the diary writing, with an introspective sitting position, involvement in the text and closed space is replicated in a way that highlights psychological continuity and not the narrative development between the panels. Flow makes sure that such images are not isolated expressive units but rather that they are elements of a cumulative interpretative framework. Patterned repetition thus creates a meaning, and visual resemblance is turned into a form of structural reinforcement of the theme.

The choice of words (C-W) works in this system as a very controlled anchoring system. The use of captions at the top of the panels prevalently gives the same orientation of interpretation, and the occasional change of placement adds disruption locally to refocus attention and place a greater emphasis of the narrative. Verbal elements like these do not tell the story of their own but they are stability proponents of the system of grid to guarantee the consistency of the entire system. Their engagement with images is wholly mediated by flow, which aligns the rhythm of text and repetition of the visual image.

More importantly, transition dynamics are also controlled by flow in extended sequence, especially the modulation between decelerated (D-1 D-22) and accelerated (D-64 D-94) narrative segments. Flow is the coherence of the system in the face of frequent transition shifts in that variation is fixed in a greater structural logic. Consequently, even difficult transitions between scene-to-scene, subject-to-subject, and action-to-action do not become unreadable as belonging to the same narrative flow. This shows that flow does not destroy complexity but patterns of progression that are intelligible are organized.

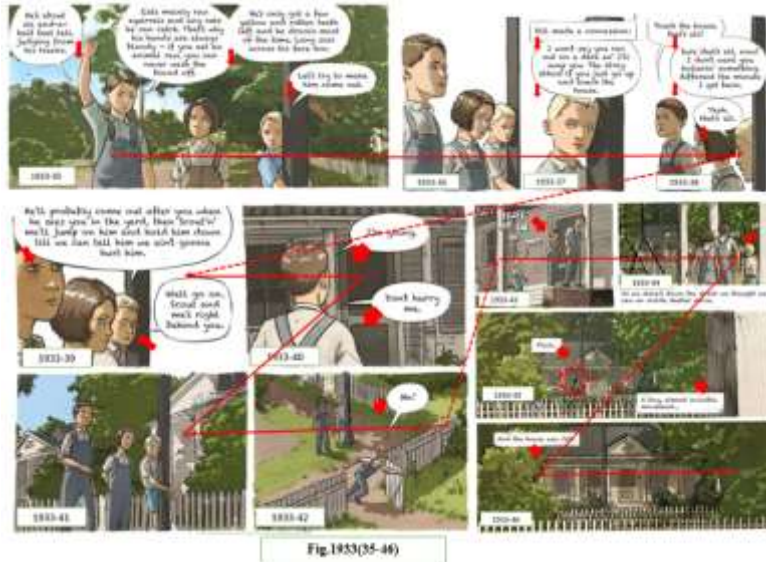
In general, the most demonstrative manifestation of flow as a meta-organizing principle is in Fig. D (17). The nine-grid system, controlled variations, caption positioning, and transition shifts, all depict the idea that narrative meaning in graphic adaptation is not made up of single multimodal decisions but through orchestration of these decisions within a flow-controlled system. In this sense, flow is the facilitating architecture of comics narration and structures not only sequence but also thought, rhythm and interpretive coherence throughout the entire narrative field.

## **4.2. To Kill a Mockingbird**

### **4.2.1.1933: Flow as Regulator of Social Tension and Developmental Perception**

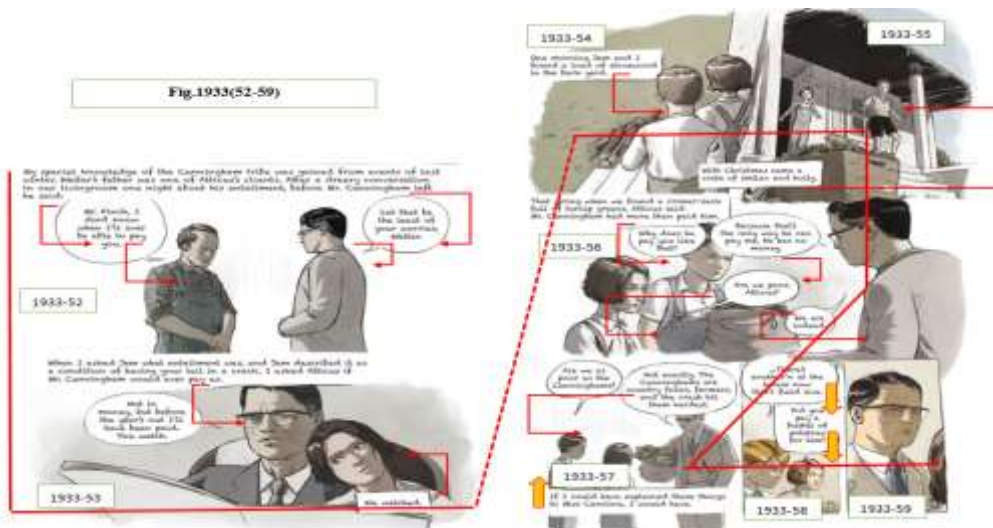
In the 1933 sequence of *To Kill a Mockingbird: A Graphic Novel*, C-Fw is a regulating meta-structural system, which includes C-M, C-Fr, C-I, and C-W into a

consistent system of narrative development. In contrast to the sequences analyzed above in the adaptation of *1984*, where flow is the main regulator of the ideology and spatial-temporal limitation, in this case, flow organizes the progressive development of social consciousness, emotional tension, and childhood perception in the changing perception of the Finch children of their surrounding world.



This sequence is founded on a more or less linear reading sequence, and it portrays how the society of Maycomb was hierarchical and socially stratified. This linearity is formal and functional, in the sense that flow models narrative progression in the way regulated exposure to sociality, with each moment being revealed in stages and through so doing, a meaning is generated by accretion rather than disclosure. Flow in this aspect is a controlling developmental mechanism and the reader is guided out in stratified levels of perception and emotion intensity.

On the selection of moment narrative time is flowed out in the shape of the incremental progression of action and cognizance particularly in the developing sense of strength and social stratification in the mind of Scout. Asp -Asp and Sc -Sc changes in panels (e.g., 1933: 53-56) are the continuation of day-to-day events that result in cognitive and emotional knowledge. Flow does not emphasize dramatic rupture, instead it diffuses tension to micro-moments in a way that allows meaning to be constructed in a process of interpretive interventions.



The flow-controlled form in this image which is also reinforced by C-I which constructs contrastive social identities through visual coding. The aggressive posture, rough appearance, and clash body language of Burris Ewell is juxtaposed with the self-control of other characters and their very modest and controlled disposition, which helps to underline the problem of the differences by classes and cultures. These images are not independent symbolic objects but they flow together to make a system of relationships in which meaning is produced by contrast, repetition and sequential arrangement. It is the inter-iconic relations that generate visual meaning and not the interpretation of individual images and flow that bring the relations together in the sequence, in the terms of Groensteen.

C-W contributes to this system with the assistance of short emotionally charged dialogue, which introduces the immediacy of the classroom conflict, but rather than functioning alone, verbal elements are built into the flow structure, the time and place of verbal elements determine their strength of interpretation. The talk is coordinated with the visual, and the meanings in the text are revealed in harmony with the visual and spatial evolution by the actions of Miss Caroline (rising unease) and Burris (disobedience). Flow is hence the coordinating factor that aligns intensity of the verbal and timing of the story.

There is also another layer of flow, namely psychological containment, provided by the framing of the close-up moments of Dill in 1933 (5, 26, 37). These small scopes of vision emphasize innocence and lack of social knowledge, but the broad scopes enable the narrations to be stretched to the environment and societal world. The alternation of restriction and expansion is not accidental but structural, which advocates flow as an intervention process between subjective perception and social reality.

Overall, it can be seen that in the 1933 sequence, C-Fw is a developmental and affective organizing principle, which structures narrative meaning according to controlled pacing, framing variation, and multimodal synchronization. Flow is no longer, as in 1984, the management of strictly ideological flow, but is instead the creation of social consciousness and emotional multiplicity. It is a fusion of spatial, visual and verbal, in order to create a system of continuous experiences, in which meaning is constructed progressively, in contrasts, and in layers of interpretations.

#### ***4.2.2.1934: Flow as Integrator of Emotional and Ethical Development***

C-Fw produces a sense of coherent description of personal and family conflict in the 1934 sequence in an amalgamation of C-M, C-Fr, C-I, and C-W. The sequence captures two significant narrative lines, namely the experience of Scout with mean-spirited

schoolboys 1934 (56-67) and the experience of Scout with Francis 1934 (68-100). Flow coordinates sequence panel sequencing, pacing and multimodal coordination in both arcs to provide psychological subtext, moral education as well as social interactions.

The episode with schoolboys (Scout) is designed in the first arc in a way that it is emotionally developed and thematically resonant. C-Fw regulates the rhythm of the narration by regulating the decision of the moments: the panels alternate the violent motion of Scout and her reflective thoughts and the cool and cool manner of Atticus on one side and the world around on the other side. The flow is what modulates the size of the panels moving between gigantic establishing panels and to thin verticals and close-ups, guiding the reader eye, and determining the rate of perception. This measured pace adds to the emotional appeal and enables the readers to absorb Scout vulnerability and internal conflict and the power of calmness which Atticus possesses. C-Fw fits the visual framing and verbal information but there is a very minimal amount of dialogue and with accuracy to allow only reflexive pauses without breaking the narrative rhythm.



Fig.1934[56-67]

The Christmas scene is an illustration of C-Fw ability to cope with stratified social and moral conflicts. At first, the flow is sustained in a consistent, linear development using middle-sized panels that show the interaction of the family, which strengthens the quietness and the everydayness of the Finch family. Francis is provoking Scout and the flow is actively growing and this change is echoed by the Sub-Sub and Act-Act transition which is agitated psychologically and heightened physically. The size and composition of

the panel varies with the intensity: tight and overlapping panel is employed to render a stronger intensity, the strategic placement of verbal messages (e.g., provocative comments of Francis on top of his close-up) ensures that the verbal meaning is crossed with the visual one to provide the maximum emotional and ethical impact. Uncle Jack slows down flow by increasing the spacing between the panels to enable it to be reflected and resolved.



Fig.1934(79-100)

C-Fw proves to be the structuring principle in both sequences, which control narrative development, emotional variability and multimodal integrity. In the order of time, direction and rhythm of panel sequencing, C-Fw arranges C-M, C-Fr, C-I and C-W into one system of storytelling. The flow is a mirror of the psychological experience of Scout that becomes the visual-verbal rhythm that makes the meaning on the micro- and macro-narrative level. In simple terms flow mediates the connection between action and emotion and ethical consciousness and this is the reason why Scott McCloud has suggested that the organization of comics is a language that can be employed to construct complex stories (McCloud, 2006).

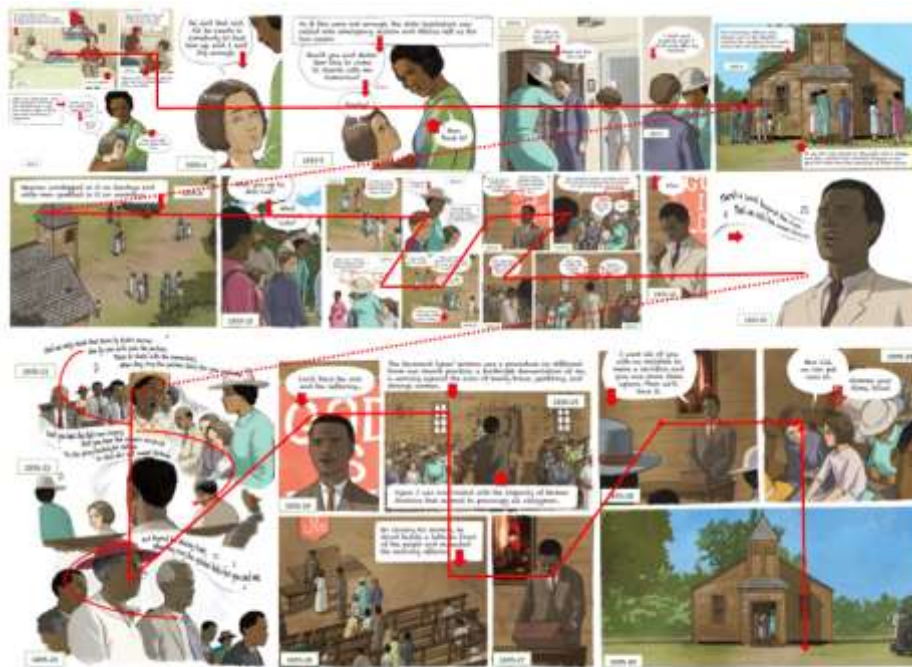
#### 4.2.3.1935: *Flow as Cultural and Ethical Organizer of Narrative Meaning*

Unlike the conflict sequence flow and tension regulates and accelerates in 1935 sequence which demonstrates that flow is a stabilizing and controlling system whereby it organizes cultural exposure, perception of morality and spatial awareness in the church.

The linear, calm and measured rhythm of narration created by C-Fw is indicative of the respectful and culturally founded atmosphere of the church setting. This is a slow rhythmic guiding motion of an interpretation map, slowly guiding the characters and the reading to a social unexplored land, yet, emotionally leveled. Flow in this aspect is not merely the sequence but the mediation of access to a novel field of culture the time of the narrative and the time of the discovery of experience.

On the decision of moment (C-M) plane, flow is used to unify some of the most important social and emotional moments, such as the entry of children, the respectful

presence of the congregation, the authoritative yet respected presence of Calpurnia, rhythmic course of hymns, into a continuous narrative flow. These events are not provided separately but flow dispenses them throughout a manageable time frame, where meaning is stipulated through a slow build-up of social and emotional indicators. This contributes to the interpretation of the story coming up with the rising awareness of Scout to the differences in race and classes.



C-Fr is organized in an excellent flow through a combination of broad establishing shots and objective interior shots. The church is a social environment and the wide shots 1935 (8, 9, 30) are framing the church, but the expressions and interpersonal relationships are located on the foreground with the assistance of medium and objective shots 1935 (18, 20, 24, 25, 26). This spatial-immersion and emotional-proximity alternate is not accidental but is structurally controlled, so that there is a balance between environmental cognition and emotive involvement. Therefore, the flow mediates between the macro-space (community setting) and micro-perception (individual expression) that constitute a stratified interpretative experience.

C-I is used to serve this flow-controlled structure to underscore the facial expression, body posture and symbolic social contrasts between the members of the church. These visual elements are not expressive in nature, but it is by means of them, meaning is created in a sequential logic of relational positioning and repetition. Flow ensures that the visual cues work in the cumulative manner, to generate a developing sense of cultural difference, communal harmony and morality.

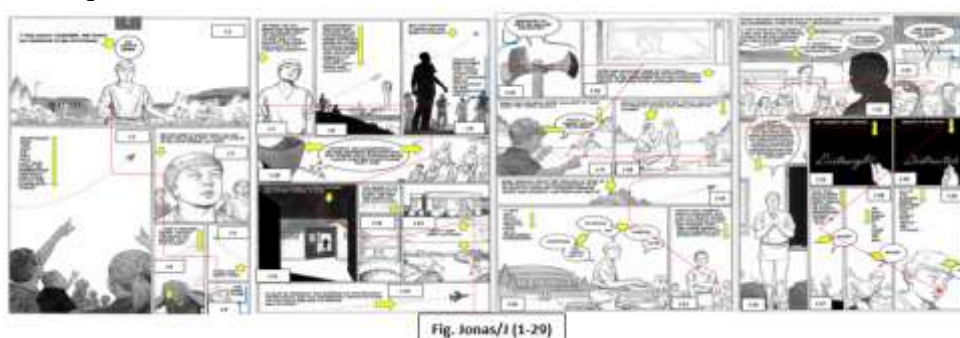
The first system within this sequence is C-W that is a mixture of short conversation, respectful address, and reflective narrative voice. These vocal elements are properly blended with visual continuity such that there are no pauses, accent, tonality shifts that are not in sync with flow rhythm. Rather than interrupting the visual story, the language serves to sustain interpretive continuity that holds a constant emotional tone and focuses the attention of the reader by guiding the reader through the social space of the situation that is evolving.

Overall C-Fw is the main organizing principle that creates the connection between multimodal resources into a logical explanation of cultural encounter and ethical education. It regulates the pace, spatial orientation and perceptual focus and, as a result, the order can shift away of mere description of events and into a structured experience of social understanding. By doing this, flow makes church scene a narrative space whereby cultural exposure, emotional sensitivity and moral reflection is constructed progressively with a regulated multimodal orchestration.

## 5. The Giver

### 5.1. Fig. J (1–29): Flow as Spatial, Temporal, and Cognitive Organizer of Narrative Meaning

The flow is the primary organizing mechanism of structuring the system of multimodal resources in terms of time, space, and thinking, which is used in the sequence J (129), of *The Giver*. The progression is determined by slackened atmospheric motion in which Asp-Asp transfers of C-M regulate the pace of narrative and flow is capable of creating a manageable perceptual setting. Instead of propelling the action forward, flow spreads narrative focus over a well-calibrated succession setting Jonas as the focal point and at the same time creating the spatial and emotional sense of the event of the ill-fated plane and the panic that ensues.



C-Fw decelerates the narrative at the stage of temporal organization of long moments between moments, which causes the reader to construct meaning through observation, rather than through sequential reading of several events. This slowing down allows the creation of a mental map of the narrative space, where Jonas is constantly placed in a role of an outsider and the main point of experience. The hysterical atmosphere of the

airplane incident, then, is not merely acted but rather cognitively through the controlled movement in which meaning is created through accretion and not immediacy.

Flow Structures C-Fr having dynamic game of spatial scale, visual repetition and compositional hierarchy. Jonas is also perpetually put at various levels of framing; close-ups J-3, J-6, J-29, medium close-ups J-16, medium shots J-4, J-7, J-28 and wide shots J-1, J-1213, J-20, and J-27. This systematic composition of visual scales not only turns Jonas into a narrative centralizer, but also an object, which is fixed within discontinuous spatial frames. Such alternation of proximity and distance creates what Groensteen refers to as visual echoes and visual repetition, which reinforces the creation of identity through the assistance of spatial repetition in contrast to the linear narrative.

Under the Groensteen terms of general arthrology, the arrangement has been noted to be an example of non-adjacent panels forming meaning through spatial navigation, that is, the reader is linear and transversal in their movements across the page. Flow thus gives preference to space perusing, over time progression, in order to permit interpretive motionness with the repetitive visual designs. The presence of Jonas in the multiplicity of scales of the panel creates a system of visual parallels that stabilize his centrality in the narrative, and in the dynamics of the environment, he is integrated.

Frame size and shape choices also interact with flow in order to regulate the perception of narrative. J-1 and J-20 refer to big horizontal panels that serve as time slowdowns and extend the perceptual duration and concentrate the sustained attention on the embeddedness of Jonas in the environment. Smaller or irregular panels, on the other hand, bring about a controlled disruption, namely, in the description of the aircraft incident, where fragmented compositions reproduce panic and spatial instability. Rectangular frames will tend to retain narrative continuity, and irregular panel structure suggests disruptions, high emotions or perceptual discontinuity. Flow is then used as the mediating structure which attaches interpretive value to these formal variations.

Flow and frame interaction can guide the movement of the eye, reasoning, and narrative cognition cognitively. Readers are not only sequentially reading but they are creating causality through interpolating between non-adjointing panels both visually and thematically. This is in line with what McCloud theory of closure says that meaning is generated through the cognitive process of the reader in bridging discontinuous visual units. The discontinuity of the effect of closure is attained in this sequence by means of the repetition of the images of Jonas in fragmented panels and recreation of the aircraft accident as an event of dissemination.

Flow is also involved in image selection C-I that is, the sequencing of the visual elements (placement of characters, architectural arrangement, point of view, depth of space) in order to generate coherent narrative meaning. Individual pictures are semantically incomplete in themselves; however, in the flow organization, they form

patterns of meaning. Three dominant patterns emerge in J (1–29): (1) depiction of the aircraft incident J-2–4, J-6–10, J-14–15 and J-19, (2) reinforcement of Jonas’s narrative centrality J-1, J-3, J-20, J-20–29, and (3) embedding of Jonas within environmental context J-12–13, J-16–18, J-21, J-23. These patterns demonstrate how flow structures spread out visual units into significant thematic clusters in such a way that the readers can be able to deduce causation and narrative coherence.

Also, C-Fw is used in the verbal (C-W) material and dialogue, captions, onomatopoeia, and inner monologue are combined into one multimodal system. Flow determines the spatial location and the chronological availability of the verbal information in such a way that there is congruency between the textual and visual contents. The speech balloons around Jonas, particularly those in J-20 provide the access to the inner world of thought and assert his subjectivity in the narrative form. Likewise, captions and dialogue are different in terms of density, which provides rhythmic adjustment of reading speed.

Flow also takes on a major role in the narrative rhythm and the text density can also be changed to regulate the rate of reading and the emotional engagement. Panels with low amount of verbal data accelerate reading but on text-laden panels, movement of interpretation decelerates. It is important to note that flow balances these changes in order to maintain the balance between visual absorption and verbal processing such that a balanced multimodal rhythm exists in the sequence.

On the whole, C-Fw is an organizational principle, which brings together time pacing, space organization, visual recurrence, and verbal organization into a system of narration. Flow not only sequences panels in J (1-29), but is an active way of constructing meaning, as it directs perception, controls attention, and facilitates cognitive synthesis. It is the structure of its multimodal qualities that give the flow that makes each of the separate panels a cohesive narrative space in which the identity of Jonas, the vibe of the setting, the unfolding event are all built and read simultaneously.

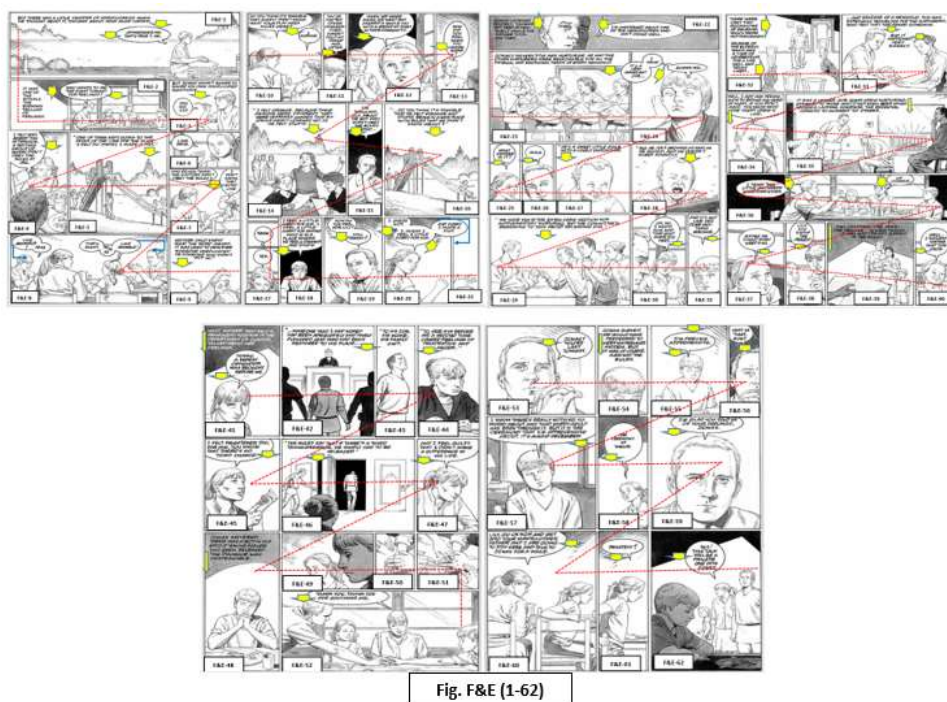
## **5.2. Fig. EF (1–62): Flow as Multimodal Orchestrator of Narrative, Spatial, and Word– Image Meaning**

C-Fw) in the sequence EF (1-62) of *The Giver: The Graphic Novel* plays the role of the major organizing mechanism, which organizes the flow of the reader through panels and temporal, spatial, and multimodal narrative dimensions. The sequence is marked by domestic intimacy and dialogue rhythm where the interaction between people and memories recalled occurs by a regulated alternation of Sub-Sub (Sub-subjective reactions) and Sc-Sc (scene-to-scene) transitions. Flow dictates the distribution of these narrative moments on the page such that meaning is created by organized development instead of the isolated panel interpretation.

In multimodal terms, this would coincide with Kress and van Leeuwen statement that visual composition arranges interpretive relations between elements represented. In

the same manner, the conceptualization of flow as a control of comics presented by McCloud is reflected in the manner in which flow EF (162) organizes narrative progression. In this chain, flow does not only order events, but it also dictates how interpersonal gestures, emotional reactions, and recollective pieces are mentally constructed by the reader. Therefore, flow is inherently the determinant of choice of moment (C-M), as the development of narratives occurs in the form of domestic fragments, in a logical and rhythmically uneven chain.

C-Fr works as the material actualization of flow, as the structural unit by which time and space organization is made visually available. Frames are meaning constructions, which determine the extent, angle and emphasis of every narrative moment. The page structure in EF (19-17) and EF (1-62) indicates that the number of panels per page (nine, twelve, ten, nine, twelve, ten) varies considerably, as well as the variety of panel sizes and orientations (large, medium, small, very small and narrow). This difference explains the control of framing choices in terms of narrative focus and perceptual priority.



Massive horizontal surfaces in EF-2, EF-8, EF-36, EF-52 extend the visual and time frames and create collective spaces like the family at a dining table. These panels act as a base through which readers can be placed in the larger social setting. Smaller panels, in their turn in EF-6, EF-11, EF-15, EF-17, EF-25, EF-31, EF-37, EF-54, EF-56, EF-58 and EF-61 isolate smaller amounts of micro-interaction, such as glances, gestures, trans Vertical frames highlight bodily positionality and personal subjectivity, whereas horizontal frames are expansive to the relationality of space in the common table.

But decisions made by framing only have narrative meaning when they are arranged by flow. The control, of the sequencing and spatial navigation of these framed moments, the control of the eye of the reader, in a quantifiable rhythmic expansion and contraction, is C-Fw. The effects of pacing created by the alternation of large and small panels are dynamic: big panels slow down reading to stimulate attentive thought, whereas groups of small panels speed up the conversation and interactional pace. In this meaning, flow is the way that discrete frames are incorporated in a continuous narrative path.

The C-Fw and C-Fr interaction therefore yield a multimodal rhythm which replicates the natural pattern of family interaction. The changeability of panel structure is an indication of the change of focus of attention in the dialogue exchanges where meaning has been spread among several speakers and points of view. This confirms the theory of arthrology developed by Groensteen, where meaning is created not just through linear development, but also through inter-relational networks of page panels.

Image selection (C-I), in this model, is also informing by flow, in that it defines the organization of visual information, including the location of characters, body language, space and detail in the environment, in a way that creates sequences with meaning. The individual images do not operate independently but gain meaning in their context of being part of the flow-structured system. There are three prevailing visual patterns in EF (160): (1) shared family interaction at the dining table in EF-8, EF-14, EF-35 and EF-46, (2) concentrated interpersonal responses and emotional expression in EF-6, EF-12, EF-15, EF-22 and EF-24 are the patterns showing establishment of thematic coherence by flow by distributing visual repetition and variation.

Flow also brings up three significant functions of meaning-making, namely, emphasis and salience, temporal continuity, and relational understanding. To begin with, the focus is created by making the reader shift his/her attention to visually or emotionally meaningful aspects on structurally appropriate points. A number of larger or more central panels like EF-1, EF-8, EF-14, EF-35 and EF-46 are salient both because of the framing and because of the sequential placement which gives them thematic salience. Second, the temporal continuity is by the sequencing of gestures, dialogue and responses under controlled conditions to generate a rhythm that appear like the conversation flow. Thirdly, the relational understanding comes about as the readers trace mentally the associations between the characters, the space, and the emotional communication between the characters in the consecutive panels.

These functions represent the theory of closure proposed by McCloud that continuity between separate visual items is produced by the reader, and the arthrology proposed by Groensteen that emphasizes the network of relations between panels. This is also confirmed by Kress and van Leeuwen which demonstrate that informational hierarchy and interpretive emphasis in multimodal texts are regulated by visual composition.

Flow also controls verbal (C-W), which includes dialogue, captions, and speech balloons in the page spatial-temporal arrangement. The conversation in EF (1 62) is written in a stifled and monotonous style, since the emotional atmosphere of the story world is regulated. The absence of contrapuntal speech or expression typographical difference justifies a restricted communicative rhythm. Flow ensures that verbal information is received at the right time in parallel with the visual information and speech and action are in tandem.

This interaction of words and images is therefore flow relative in nature. The sense of verbal elements is given by its place in spatial associations with the visual frame but the sense of images is given by the link to the textual information. Internal monologue after panels of facial expressions as in EF-24) boosts emotional inference but serial captions such in EF-56 put narratives into prospect. This is how the typology of word image interaction of McCloud particularly, the interdependent and additive relationships on the basis of flow to create interpretative coherence, works.

Lastly, C-Fw plays the most important role in multimodal narrative construction. It integrates a framing, imagery, as well as word system into a single system that regulates the pacing, emphasis, relationship process, and cognitive interaction. In this orchestration, the family dinner sequence, the readers get to enjoy a feeling of group interaction and subjectivity simultaneously, a complex interpretive experience that is reflective of the complexity of social communication in living.

In brief, flow is not simply an engine of sequencing, but a multimodal thinking machine, which organizes the narrative meaning through synthesizing spatial organization, temporal rhythm and word-image interaction. EF (1 62) is used to explain how comics generate meaning by means of coordinated variability in which controlled irregularity in framing and pacing, create emotional richness as well as interpretive coherence.

### **5.3. Fig. C-12: Flow as Temporal Regulator, Multimodal Integrator, and Cognitive Structuring Device in Ceremonial Narrative**

In the C-12 sequence C-Fw incorporates multimodal narrative in the temporal, spatial, visual and verbal planes. This ritual is accomplished by a long and strictly framed series of panels, in which flow regulates the giving and receiving of narrative moments (C-M), the discrete ceremonial actions into an experience of continuous and increasingly accelerating time. The prevailing structure of moment-to-moment (M-M) transitions, including the approach of the Chief Elder, address, deliberate pauses, and announcement of the assignment Jonas is given, exemplify how flow creates meaning in terms of incremental time development.

On top of this temporal structuring, C-Fw forms these micro-moments into a logical flow of narrative simulating real-time experience. The controlled slow pace of the panels creates a lasting rhythm that prolongs the feeling of time in the reader, increasing

suspense. This temporal stretching is especially pronounced in the time lag before Jonas is assigned in which the flow matches the time of narrative with the psychological time of anticipation and uncertainty of Jonas. Flow, in its turn, is not only sequencing logic but a process, which regulates affective temporality, creating tension with the controlled deceleration of the narrative.

Flow also incorporates C-Fr by organizing the spatial hierarchy and visual focus on the sequence of the ceremony. Frames are alternated between the long establishing shots of the stage and spectators and the close-up shots which focus on facial expressions, gestures and emotional reactions of the characters. The bigger panels are used in forming the ceremonial space as an institutional space shared, and the smaller panels are used to direct interpretive attention towards Jonas and key actors such as the Chief Elder. Such alternation of macro- and micro-visual shots creates a dynamic swing between shared vision and subjectivity, allowing the reader to feel the ceremony as a shared event and as a highly personal event of emotional anticipation and tension.

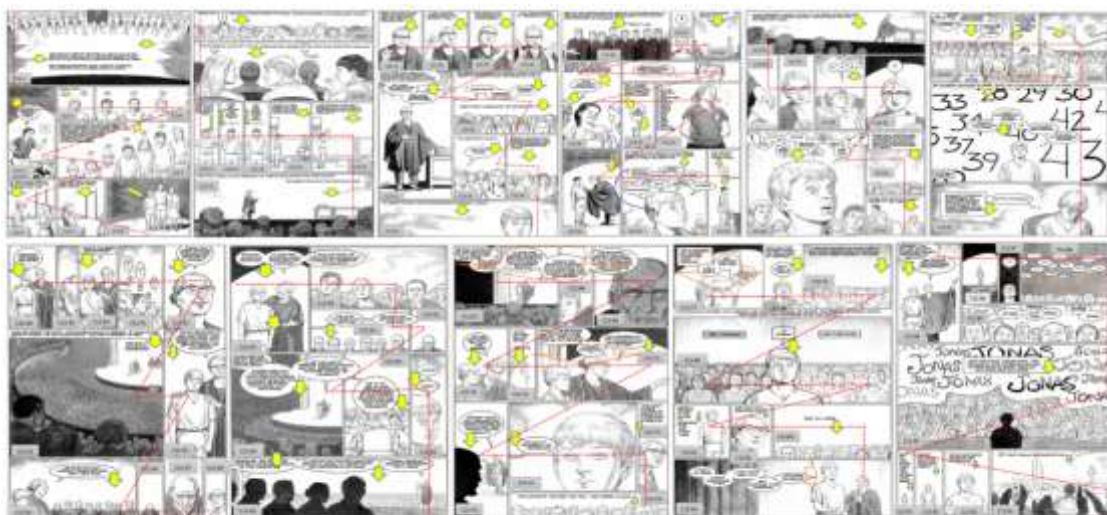


Fig. C12 (1-94)

In a multimodal sense, this spatial structuring corresponds to the theory of visual composition of Kress and van Leeuwen that underlines that the meaning is produced by the arrangement of representational and interactive objects in a structured visual field. Likewise, flow in comics is the mechanism that works to regulate the sense of spatial relationship between panels by the viewer and their focus of attention that moves between different focal points within the page.

C-I is also subservient to the organizing role of flow because it defines how visual content is allocated within the narrative sequence. The pictures of the C-12 series show a variety of ritualized aspects, such as the organized sitting of the audience, formal poses of

the officials, the movement of children to the stage, and the very subtle emotional face of Jonas and other people in the scene. Flow controls the sequence of these visual elements and makes sure that meaning is created by positioning than by defining meaning in isolation. Flow creates a multi-perspectival narrative form through the repetition of the switching of focalization between Jonas and the Chief Elder and the audience.

This relational organization is akin to the idea of arthrology created by Thierry Groensteen that argues that a networked system is created by the panels where meaning is created due to spatial and translinear relations between images. Flow actualizes this network through sequencing panels in a way such that it exposes the procedural format as well as the emotional movement that the readers are able to understand the ceremony as both an institutional performance and an affective experience.

Flow also incorporates C-W through the coordination of verbal and visual mode. The sequence is formal pronouncements of the Chief Elder, explanatory remarks, and little conversation or self-examination. Flow is what defines the exact correspondence between verbal utterances and the visual events, which makes multimodal coherence. Indicatively, the reading of tasks is accompanied by pictures of children walking forward, which further consolidates the connection between the institutional language and the ceremonial act. On the other hand, when there is verbal restraint or silence, there are moments when panels focus on the facial expression of Jonas, and visual elements have increased emotional importance.

This coordination is indicative of the multimodal theory by Kress and van Leeuwen that highlights the fact that meaning is created by the orchestration of semiotic resources across modes. Verbal and visual elements in this sequence do not exist separately, but they work as interdependent elements, arranged by the flow to generate a whole narrative meaning.

C-Fw integrative role has a great influence on the reader cognition and interpretive engagement. The large series of panels forces the reader to work hard to create a continuity between sequential visual and verbal units. Flow offers a logical sequence of cognition with the help of which readers are able to compile disjointed information into a logical story of procedural sequence, social stratification, and emotional conflict. Flow is provided by means of controlled pacing and sequencing so that the institutional structure and the intensity of the psychology are not disclosed at the same time.

Inferential reading is also supported by this process since the reader is expected to interpret some minor visual codes like changes in posture, changes in attention of the audience, and pauses in speech. The work of cognitive narratology and especially the work of Neil Cohn on visual narrative comprehension stresses the idea that the reader actively constructs meaning through constructing bridges between panels. Flow helps to carry out

this inferential process by arranging visual data in a foreseeable yet tense order that promotes anticipation, emotional understanding, and cause and effect reasoning.

Subsequently, this leads to the C-12 sequence being more orchestrated as a multimodal narrative system instead of a mere representation of ceremonial events. The decisions of moment, frame, image, and words are combined in a consistent organization to form an institutional meaning, emotional tension, and narrative anticipation all at the same time through the interconnected action of flow. The ceremony is thus stratified narrative experience: a ritual of formal social interaction, a collective experience of observation and a psychologically charged experience to Jonas.

On the whole, C-Fw is a primary organizing principle, which coordinates multimodal resources in the C-12 sequence. The flow creates a logical structure of narrative in a series of 94 panels that form a ceremony through time pacing, space combination, visual hierarchy, and verbal correspondence in order to increase the reader engagement and understanding. It is this orchestrating role which makes the Ceremony of Twelve so clear in structure as well as in emotional intensity of the graphic narrative system.

## **6. Conclusion**

This paper aimed to analyze the construction of meaning in the interaction of words and image in graphic adaptations of canonical novels, using the framework offered by Scott McCloud of the Five Choices, moment, frame, image, words, and flow. The study has shown that graphic narrative meaning is created via a highly systemic and dynamic system as opposed to semiotic elements in isolation, with a comparative multimodal analysis of nine representative sequences based on *To Kill a Mockingbird: The Graphic Novel*, *The Giver: The Graphic Novel* and *1984: The Graphic Novel*.

The main conclusion of the research is that flow (C-Fw) is the meta-structural principle of graphic narrative construction, which controls the way all the other decisions are interacting with each other in the sequential panels. Although moment, frame, image, and words play a distinct role in sense-making, they cannot have an interpretive value until they are ordered up through flow, which controls pacing, transitions, spatial correspondence, and thinking. In this regard, flow is a sort of invisible grammar of graphic narratives, the way readers navigate through time, space, and narrative information.

Flow is structural consistency and contextual flexibility of flow in the three texts. In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, it helps to gain ethical and social insight by slowly leading readers through the culturally stratified terrain and changing moral consciousness. It controls temporal perception, cognitive awakening in *The Giver*, balancing the order of institutions and new subjectivity. It turns into an ideological control mechanism in *1984*, generating restricted, linear, and repetitive narrative movement indicative of psychological

and spatial containment. Even though there are these differences, flow will always structure multimodal resources into coherent narratives.

The paper also finds that the Five Choices by McCloud are analytically different but in practice act as an integrated system that operates through flow. This questions the fact of purely segmented readings of multimodal theory, and endorses a more integrated model of comic narrative analysis. Also, the results support the applicability of the relational framework and multimodal discourse theory proposed by Groensteen in that meaning is created in sequential and spatial relationships as opposed to solitary visual or verbal units.

Finally, the paper contributes substantially to the field, as it redefines the sense of flow as a meta-architectural principle of meaning-making in graphic stories, which can be applied to all forms and ideologies. It shows that the interplay of words and images is essentially ordered by sequential orchestration that flow is central to the coherence of the story and depth of meaning. Such understanding does not only enhance the theoretical frameworks that have been applied to comics and multimodal analysis, but also introduces the prospects of interpreting the graphic adaptations as multifaceted, unified semiotic systems.

Lastly, this research indicates that future studies can extend the research on how flow functions in other genres, cultures and digital graphic narratives, and as such, increase its usefulness of flow as a generalizable analytical instrument in multimodal discourse analysis.

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