

## TURKISH WOMEN ILLUSTRATOR: NAZAN ERKMEN

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### ABSTRACT

Illustration has come up as a symbol in a cave and is now used as a communication language, a means of conveying messages to the target audience. The illustration, described as an illustration work to explain, exemplify or decorate, has a long and rich background. Nowadays, the illustration emerges as a line coming to existence and a signature of the designer, which adapts to the digital age. Nazan Erkmen, Turkish female Illustrator, is an international illustrator with many qualified works in the field of illustration. With this work, it is aimed to provide a reference about her works and views about illustration, the biography of Nazan Erkmen representing our country abroad with his works, whose works are mostly on children illustrations and who has worked on women.

**Keyword:** Illustration, Illustrator, Nazan Erkmen

### INTRODUCTION

Communication is an activity that an individual constantly learns and keeps alive all his life. The individual learn communication skills afterwards and according to the situation he can improve. (Ketenci ve Bilgili, 2006: 257).

Every situation, object and event that develops around the individual is perceived by the individual with more visual sense. One of the most important senses affecting the individual's mobility is vision, making it easier for the individual to perceive and make decisions when performing the communication process. Thousands of years, human beings who think about communication about vision concept continue to strengthen visual communication in various forms by developing new methods.

### ILLUSTRATION CONCEPT ,BRIEF HISTORY AND TYPES

In the perception of the world, the sense of sight has priority, and communication is provided with visual signs before the language is used. It is an indispensable part of "graphic design" which is a visual communication art (Özdemir et al., 2003: 248).

Illustrations literally means; it is an explanatory picture. Some of the thoughts or events are sometimes applied as they are, sometimes with the influence of interpretations (Tepecik 2002: 79).

The illustration comes from the Latin "lustrare" root, meaning "to understand". It is the name given to a "text" or "visual entities" within the subject. "A more intuitive idea is to explain and illuminate a more effective and productive interpretation of the material to which it is accompanied by a more complex illustration, to revive a story, to revive strange bizarre things, or to increase the emphasis of a message." (Atan, 2013: 25).

The purpose of illustration can also be defined as providing people with different backgrounds and different racial aids to have information about what they see without needing any other intermediary. In this direction, it is possible to say that the illustration is universal. In addition, "illustrations; different and highly personalized ways for functions such as problem solving, ornamentation, entertaining, expression, commenting, informing, inspiration, explanation, training, encouragement, astonishment, fascination and storytelling "(Baldaş and Ipek, 2012: 9). Considering the functional characteristics of the illustration, it is seen as an important design product for many sectors. It can be said that the works created by the artists of illustration are a constructive, qualified and effective means of communication on the individual and society.

Illustrations help define the subject-matter that they are related to and can be perceived in different meanings and dimensions. One of the most important features that distinguishes it from other pictures is its functionality, since it is usually intended to be described in illustrations. The message which is intended to be reflected in the mass carries descriptive and interpreting qualities as a function (Özdemir et al., 2003: 248).

Looking at the short history of the illustration, 30000 BC. In France, the paintings on the ceilings and walls of the Lascaux caves feature staging from the daily life of those drawing them. After the cave paintings, the process continued with the 3200 hieroglyphs of Sumer clay tablets in 3500 BC. The Industrial Revolution in the 1850s, the Golden Age in the 1860s, and the Arts and Crafts Movement in the 1880s. Art Nouveau in 1890, Poster Art in 1890, illustration in 1898 with Illustrations Members' Clubs is an innovative age that has emerged from works that appeal to a wide audience. Art and Crafts art has been introduced as a contemporary and influential tool in today's art by interpreting it in different ways by individual artists (Wigan, 2012: 277-281).

At first time in Turkey that used in the illustrations in the book cover itself showed in magazines and posters. At that time the church was sold well, although the interest was not high, but it was more than that turn. The design of the illustrator's book, according to the printing conditions, had to draw all the writings and even the logos of the publishing house. Reproductions were made with cliché technique. Next came the offset press. For this reason, Illustrators are now just starting to paint subjects. Illustrations have begun to appear everywhere. Illustrations began to appear on food packaging, on tin toys, in magazine and newspaper advertisements, on buses and trolleybuses, on wall calendars, in envelopes, in leaflets, in brochures, in prospectuses, on tiny floors from chocolate and chewing gum.

(Atan, 2013: 27-28).

In a part of the publishing world, in teaching, scientific, technical and professional paintings; illustrative illustrations that emphasize elaborate details; while in the other part, illustrations made in various free techniques and styles, which appeal to a large number of people in different areas, are used as powerful means of expression. In creating the illustration, it is important for the artist to express himself in the clearest and most effective way by being fully absorbed by the subject and using different techniques. Basic illustrations of illustrations include broadcast illustrations, commercial illustrations, fashion illustrations, technical illustrations and medical illustrations (Özdemir et.al., 2003: 249).

#### **WHO IS NAZAN ERKMEN ?**

Illustrator artist Nazan Erkmen was born on February 13, 1945 in Balıkesir. She graduated from American Girls' College. The piano section of the conservatory continued until the sixth grade. He worked with pianist Verda Ün (Durmaz, 2011: 188). Nazan Erkmen graduated from the Department of Graphic Arts at the State University of Applied Fine Arts. She completed his undergraduate, graduate and doctorate studies at Marmara University, Faculty of Fine Arts. (<http://turkishpaintings.com>).

She received Associate Professorship in 1994 and professorship titles in 1996. Between 1998 and 2005, she was deputy dean, between 2003 and 2005 she was the head of the graphic design department, and between 2003 and 2005, she was the chairman of the board of the Women Works Library Information Center Foundation. Between 2006 and 2012, she served as the dean of Marmara University Faculty of Fine Arts. She was the Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts of Dogus University between 2012-2018 (Durmaz, 2011: 188).

Erkmen, known for her illustrations and cover designs for children's books, has shown over a hundred books between 1989 and 2006. She has published many illustrations in various journals and daily newspapers. Andersen was nominated for the award in 2007-2008 from Turkey and has won awards for illustrations to be made. Postage stamps were printed by the General Directorate of Postal Service with the international Intercept stamps (Tables and Legends), Atatürk and under the title of April 23. Erkmen is also a master artist who successfully represented our country abroad. Yugoslavia, Japan, Slovakia, Korea, Iran, Italy, Germany and many other countries. She has opened 27 personal exhibitions in Turkey and has participated in 23 mixed exhibitions abroad. She is also a scientist who has been proven by national and international publications that she has made (Ermur, 2011: 188).

It is seen that Erkmen is an illustrator and an educator who has a high sense of social sensitivity and aims to raise collective beneficiaries. It is noticed that the projects they are involved use are graphic arts as a powerful tool to incorporate students and often to build social awareness. The "Children's Marriage Poster Competition" organized by 2014 to attract attention to children who are married at a young age and to create a society consciousness is one of Erkmen's projects. Selected posters in the scope of the competition have been exhibited in many places for this purpose. Some of the selected works have been featured in various magazines and internet pages, emphasizing the importance of the subject. The film, posters and billboard works on "Violence Against Women" took place in Kadıköy Square (Baldaş and İpek, 2012: 230) with the participation of the Marmara University Faculty of Fine Arts students and Kadıköy Municipality.

In 2014, the Faculty of International Arts and Media of the Roman College of Art and the Fondazione Foundation of Rome selected the Far East and Nearly Selected Female Artists (Republic, 2014), who devoted their work and lives to women and children's rights. TÜMBİAD 2014 (All Bürokat and Businessmen's Social Solidarity Association) has been selected by Turkey between March 8 International Women's Symbol of Women in the week. In addition, he accepted Erkmen as "the Artist of the Year Award" (Baldaş and İpek, 2012: 231) as a name that is actively participated in the women's movement by the Turkish University Women's Association and as a name that does not give up until the end of the possibilities and skills for the empowerment of women.

### NAZAN ERKMEN'S WORKS

Erkmen is in the process of studying with the Turkish illustrator Nazan Erkmen with his superior technique and unlimited imagination in his works "Dreams and Nightmares." Erkmen looks at the world with his eyes on a butterfly and he adds the nightmares to his 'Butterfly Dreams'. Women, like 'a dead young girl's soul emerges from the grave as a butterfly', believe in the power of the storm that nature will emerge in the spirits of this feminine power that is capable of everything.



**Figure 1.** *Dreams and Nightmares*

Erkmen's work, which is one of the female artist illustrators who focuses on women and children in their works and defends their rights in their lives, will lose their ideals, deceived thoughts for many years with their wisdom and hands. Only and only he will be able to acquire the values that he can and will only relieve his ailments and fight for. "In the context of the concept, Palazzo Fandango Incontro was exhibited at the Roman Cultural Center. The Erkmen Italian Foundation, Fondazione Roma (IULM) and International University of Languages and Media (IULM) have participated in this exhibition organized by IULM International Language and Media University.



**Figure 3.** *Freedom as a woman*



At the exhibition "ArtTurkey JAPAN" (NITTOTEN 7) organized by the organization of the Japanese Art Center, Erkmen was awarded the Bungei Special Award for his work "Scream" and "Sadness" which "pain and sadness of women massacred every day".



**Figure 4.** *Scream and Sadness*



**Figure 5.** *Scream and Sadness*

Erkmen again represented the women using orange, embers, and contrasting purple blues in his work called The Empress Women. The burning oranges represent a bit of burning, burning, ashes, and the resurrection of women who were murdered like the Emperor Anka birds.



**Figure 6.** *The Emperor Anka Birds*

In his illustrations for children's books, the book mentions that, in order to effectively express what the author says, a good composition, together with the main idea, message, space, time and figures, will be transmitted in the best way and successful products will emerge. While creating his illustrations, he says that he made many drawings and reached the best drawing. Describing the formation of a drawing as a birth (Baldaş and İpek, 2012: 232) continues as follows.

"Drawing for children is a different feeling, a different world of imagination, pure, immaculate, discovering that a child still lives in it, being able to make children laugh with it, creating majestic worlds for them, loving animals, crying for a broken tree, drawing and expressing persecuted animals a feeling of genuineness that desires the ability to direct their love to

animals and nature. I do not know these things, but I love my work so much that I work so hard that the pictures I make for children are the most beautiful, the most glorious. "(<http://www.oncevatan.com.tr/roportaj/cok-calismak-olene-kadar-cok-calismak-h116414.html>)



**Figure 7.** Illustrations for children's books

## CONCLUSIONS

When we look at the past, we are confronted as an important art and design element for designers and artists, starting from cave paintings and continuing with miniature Turkish culture. Especially when the messages related to any subject are transmitted to the target group and used with other design elements in the solution of the design problems, it has amazing results for the target audience.

In this direction, the illustration shows itself as an element used by many artists in their designs. Especially the number of female artists and designers who use the illustration effectively increases. One of these artists and designers is Nazan Erkmendir.

As will be seen in the study, Erkmendir's international and national prizes, books illustrations that he has made for children, especially the exhibitions he has opened on "women", and the projects he has created, scientists and academicians, a sensitive individual, a good academician, and an artist / illustrator.

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