Reading Films Through Different Glasses: Foreign Films in the Context of Turkey

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Introduction

In the globalizing world, Cinema is taking its place in many societies. It is widely used not only as a form of communication within a specific culture and society but as a cross cultural means of communication. When we think of the cinema films in general we think of the famous Hollywood films and the other "modern" films of the similar contexts. Today, a great amount of the cinema films are produced by the American companies. That's why, any study concentrating on the cinema films should also focus on the American culture and the impact of these factors in any other one. Thus, the idea of questioning what we produce and what we consume is becoming more and more important. This paper would be discussing how these encounters effect the society throughout different processes in time. Nowadays, the new theories of social production and consumption are bringing new concepts to our lives. In order to exemplify the point, a short story could be considered.

When The Waters Were Changed

Once upon a time Khidr, the Teacher of Moses, called upon mankind with a warning. At a certain date, he said all the water in the world which had not been specially hoarded, would disappear. It would then be renewed, with different water, which would drive men mad. Only one man listened to the meaning of this advice. He collected water and went to a secure place where he stored it, and waited for the water to change its character.

On the appointed date the streams stopped running, the wells went dry, and the man who had listened, seeing this happening, went to his retreat and drank his preserved water. When he saw, from his security, the waterfalls again beginning to flow, this man descended among the other sons of men. He found that they were thinking and talking in an entirely different way from before; yet they had no memory of what had happened, nor of having been warned. When he tried to talk to them, he realized that they thought that he was mad, and they showed hostility or compassion, not understanding.

At first he drank none of the new water, but went back to his concealment, to draw on his supplies, every day. Finally, however, he took the decision to drink the new water because he could not bear the loneliness of living, behaving and thinking in a different way from everyone else. He drank the new water, and became like the rest. Then he forgot all about his own store of special water,

and his fellows began to look upon him as a madman who had miraculously been restored to sanity. (Shah 1967)

Cinema Film Consumption

As in the story of Shah Idries, the members of the society, having their own way of consumption, could change all of a sudden when they change the way they consume the things. Thus, a claim could be made that the societies consuming the *foreign films* mostly would change their way of life and become what they consume at the end. This would not be a sudden change as in the story, but gradually it could have its effects on the individuals and the societies shaping their expectations, life styles and communication strategies. This claim could also be supported with the efforts of the filmmakers cooperatively struggling to develop a global understanding of the world cultures and traditions in order to produce a more homogenous world. That's why the foreign films and their consumption in the Turkish context should be analyzed deeply in order to understand the society and its dynamics as well as the relationship with the other societies in the global level.

Many people believe that 'You are what you consume'. Similarly, the concept of cinema is becoming gradually more and more covering all levels of the society through the modern technological challenges and home cinemas, VCD and DVD buying and playing facilities. This may be assumed as something good but also, this is not only a problem in Turkey or today, most of the other countries are having dilemmas when the cinema going action is considered. These, either having the technical substructure required as to watch their own home cinemas or watching the films in a 'cinema saloon' as the traditional audiences, somehow consume cinema films mostly. It may be possible to say that even the large or nuclear families having one or more television sets at home are consuming *cinema films* more than the other television programs in circulation. Also, thinking of the classical *cinema audience* in general, it might be possible to see that on one hand, the changing social structure and improving economical conditions put cinema into a distinctive position as to give it a special positioning in the society providing an *intragroup communication atmosphere*. Therefore, apart from the individual choices, popularity of the cinema films and the way they are introduced to the societies, the way they become popular are the questions to be analyzed throughout this paper.

Cinema as the Fantasy World

'Everyone has a dream. A small number of people pursue that dream and an even smaller number have the opportunity, resolve, dogged determination and personal attributes to turn the dream into reality,' says Josh Hall of Gartmore Investment Managers (Nebauer 1996: vii). Today, cinema is the dream of everyone. The concept of cinema is a dream world for many people. It is a dream world to "live in" or to "live with".

Many people would like to "live in" it. It is a lifestyle for many individuals. Some others use the cinema world to "live with": They prefer to watch the films only. Silently consuming the products and searching for a place in those for themselves. Cinema industry is covering all around through their news, ads, and official licensed products, representing or reminding us the famous film themes, scenes or actors/actresses.

Cinema is the *fantasy world* of the past, today and tomorrow. Thinking of the thousands of films produced in a year all over the world, many people contribute to the industry individually either through the first hand experience as the actors, actresses,

directors, camera crew, editors, etc., or through their fantasies. Not the two individuals leave the cinema saloons having identical thoughts or feelings. That is the result of the different perceptions and different backgrounds of the individuals.

There is a psychology of cinema going that has long been recognized and exploited by governmental and educational agencies as well as by commercial interests. The experience of seeing a film emphasizes the vivid visual presentations in which images are already fully established, easily identified and easily followed, even on the elementary levels. Garth (1980: 89-90) states that film is an unusually strong type of communication process, because the viewer is willing, even eager to receive what the communicator has to offer.

Cinema going is an action, a mobility requiring both *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* motivation. The cinema film industry, having its own grantors and concessionaires, introduce a certain aspect of life rather "imposing and teaching" the audience how to live, how to behave, how to sacrifice, how to love, hate and fight as well as how to obey. These deductions lead the masses to shape themselves as to become the ideal "audience" of the cinema films or the 'members [of a] zero-institution' as Levi Strauss calls it. Whereas the concessionaries and their power in the cinema industry are increasing every day through the income they get from the audience, the audience is becoming more and more spell-bound as the circles around them get denser and leaving them no way out.

Cinema going activity is still popular and respectable in any society. The values associated with the cinema going activity could be summed up as the wealth/power or well-being, social/respectable status, education/or being skilful and communication. The action itself could also be associated with the individual values such as love, respect, existence, unity, dignity, sharing, sacrifice, modelling, leading, etc. The "Cinema Going" activity grasps so much of a world that could be reflected in many different words and concepts. It seems that any activity or concept is somehow related with one or more aspects of the cinema experience. Cinema going is not only an individual decision but also a *social habit* or activity. In fact, in its core it also has a kind of a tendency to escape from the reality and even the society. But, contrary to the belief that this escape in never towards out of the society, but into a smaller and rather ambiguous society to share the similar values.

As the target cinema audience, we are all very active. We are all surrounded by the news about the artists and the producers. The new type of scenario writers or "decision makers" keeps our knowledge updated all the time when we have a newspaper in our hands or when we surf along with the television channels or internet sites. Though it is surprising to see that cinema industry in Turkey is having its hardest days on its national basis, the foreign films in the cinemas have no complaint at all. They seem to be popular in Turkey as they are all around the world since the "global decision-makers" have great campaigns for them to make them blockbusters everywhere in the world.

Mostly, the films consumed have a lot in common. We could even reach the lists of the qualities of what the audience expects from the foreign films in respect to different times in the past or at present. Although the foreign films at present seem to be mostly the Hollywood ones, there were some other national film waves in the past. One other point is that where the films were considered to be the leisure now, these were considered to be one of the mediums to get information and education as well.

The First Foreign Films in Turkish Context

We may discuss the different meanings of *foreign film* in the context of Turkey. What do we mean by *foreign film*? Is it the theme, cast, structure, setting, language, music, director or all foreign based? It is obvious that from the very beginning of the Turkish Cinema History, the

concept of the *film* had a foreign context for the Turkish people. At the beginning there were private screenings for the *private* people. These were usually the important people in the governmental levels of the Ottoman Empire. And these foreign films were first introduced to them in great secrecy. There were mostly the documentary films showing scenes from the other countries ad societies. After getting their approval, these were the first black and white films shown separately for men and women in the public. Children were admitted to both sessions. These films became so popular in the society that in some cities there were continuous matinee sessions giving a chance to the public to watch the same film again and again.

The impact of these films on the society is not known very clearly as there were few reports of these either in the content or on the reflections. But there were the travelling companies generally showing the comical scenes or general introductory passages from city to city or from one culture to another and showing the films they already had on one hand and having the new ones on their way in the visited countries. For the people, not only the film was a new notion but also the electricity, cinema saloon, buying tickets, getting permissions from the others in the family, gathering with friends, etc were all the new aspects of the period. The tickets were so cheap to challenge the people and to let everyone enjoy it. So, the concept of cinema and foreign film created a new context in the traditional Turkish society. Some impacts could be exemplified such as, depending on the newspapers of those days it was claimed that three men divorced their wives because they went to cinema without getting their permission. Two boys were reported to steal two ducks of their neighbours to sell in the market in order to collect the ticket money for the cinema.

Thus, having no native examples, foreign films in the Turkish context started to shape the society from the very first day they appeared. Depending on the reflections of the films, it could also be argued that starting from the very first day of their introduction, the film concept contributed to the social conversation and newspaper articles criticising the films. Especially after the coming of the sound and colour the things were a bit more complicated. Films were not only associated with the foreign culture or scenes but also with a different language and music. So, it was a new era for the Turkish society as well as the others having no access to the other languages. This caused the society to be divided into two halves. The modern ones, having some background knowledge on the linguistic and cultural side of the film and the majority of the society without an appropriate background. The literature gives us clues on how the pupils having their education in private schools in different languages (especially French and German) were motivated to go to cinemas just to practice their language. For them, cinema was the opportunity of learning a foreign language in context, as it is still. So, it could be argued that this split in the society was the beginning of the reading films through different glasses. The society was first the audience only (receiver) than it had a more active and functional role (producer) and lastly became the passive audience again (receiver).

The Coming of The Sound and Colour

The sound and the colour added a lot to the charm and attraction of the films in Turkish society as it could in any other society. The number of the audience was growing and the taste was becoming somewhat more distinctive. This growth was not only to see the film, but also to understand it. The films were shown again and again. The further screenings of the film which had only advertising purposes before, became more meaningful since these were regarded as a help to the people who could figure out the meaning from the context, gestures, tones of voice, etc. The wish was not only to understand the gist of the message any more.

The whole film and every scene in it became very important. Therefore the films were watched in minute detail several times until the whole meaning is deciphered.

Although the idea of going to cinema was related to all levels of the society, not only to the poor or rich ones, with the language element added, it became a little more sophisticated and elite. It would be better to note here that, this kind of gatherings in the society was not only through the affect of the cinema. Classical Turkish nights of Ramadan had also a lot to do with this kind of social gatherings to watch "Karagöz and Hacivat", the famous theatrical figures of the society. But this had no foreign elements in it. From this point of view, it could be argued that the visuals and to some extent the audio effects helped the ones having a little or no access to the culture and the language. Thus the music, the sound and the linguistic elements, multiple meanings, etc were valid and meaningful only for the educated ones.

Here, it could be argued that the rhythm, pitch and tone of voice also contributed to the meaning as well as the visuals. Paralinguistic features as well as the other contextual elements helped the meaning which contains a high percent of the foreign culture elements. It was this time that either just because of the linguistic elements in them or the doze of cultural elements these films emphasized in the foreign films were highly criticized negatively.

Adaptations from other films and sources

It is very important whether the film has a unique or an adapted story. The films are expected to be the reflections of that society and there is a general tendency to consider the adapted films as the outsiders of that society. Considering the factors as Barthes described such as *credibility-acceptability*, *understandability*, *situationality*, *intertextuality* and *informativity* sometimes it is very important to be a part of that culture and that society. Otherwise, whatever the story is, it would have no impact on the audience. This is a danger especially for the foreign originated films.
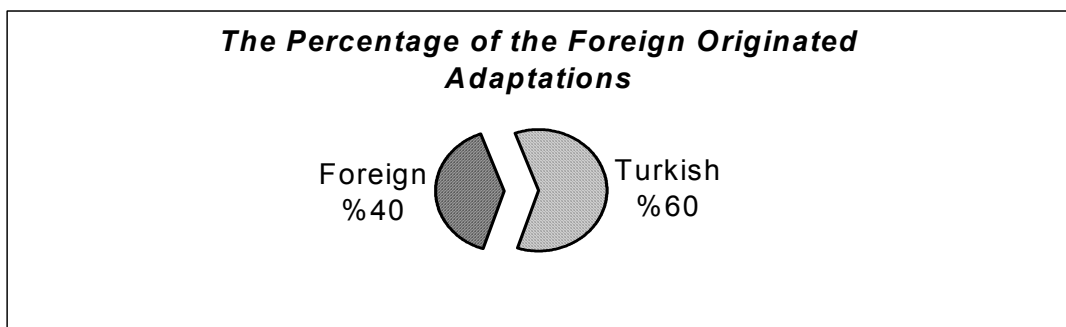

Fig. 1 The Percentage of the Foreign Originated Adaptations

As we look through the different units of time in the past, we could easily see that, native or foreign, certain plots and themes become more popular than the others, certain types of characters were much more emphasized than the others, and certain actions in the films got more applause by the audience. In the past, Turkish Cinema has experienced a long period in which there were so many adaptations from literature, other cultures and other films. Especially if the early ages and beginning of the Turkish Cinema is to be considered, it would be easy to see that the number of the adaptations was higher than the number of the unique

films. Thus, we may claim that the Turkish films of those times still were the foreign films in their themes, plots, directors and casts.

Origin	Number	%
Turkish novel/short story	424	45.88
Foreign Films	195	21.10
Foreign novels	93	10.06
Anonymous stories/songs	41	4.43
Foreign Cartoons	40	4.32
Real Life Stories/Biographies	37	4.00
Turkish theater play	32	3.46
Foreign theater play	27	2.92
Turkish Cartoons	13	1.40
Turkish films	11	1.90
Television Serials	10	0.8

Fig. 2 The number and percentage of the adapted films in Turkish Cinema

Considering their origins, these adaptations would be ranging from the television serials to foreign novels or biographies. Mainly the adaptations of literature could be seen as a major class, but the number of the foreign films adapted is also very high. As one of the mostly used categories, adaptations of foreign literature could be accepted as a motivating factor for the beginning of Turkish Cinema. Since, the cinema itself and all its dynamics were foreign for the Turkish Society of those times; most of these adaptations were warmly welcomed because the audience was yearning to become a part of the unknown world of cinema. The films were just one of the few opportunities to bring the unknown worlds or parts of the "others" into the Turkish culture and social life. Although it is hard to say that it was neither the motivation nor the consciousness of bringing different blends or issues to be discussed, it was the technical and economical factors forcing the filmmakers to project their products in this way.
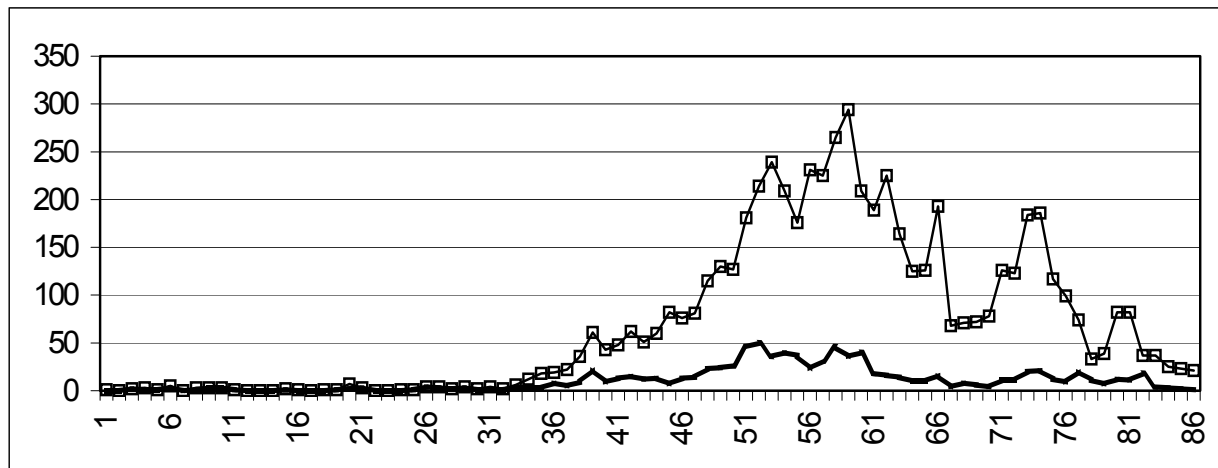

Fig. 3 The Rate of Adaptations and Unique Stories in Turknish Cinema between 1900-1999

Although the rate of adaptations was not so high during the whole process, especially at the very beginning, the percentage of the adaptations even reached up to the level of %100. But these were the years of difficulty in terms of technical and economical support to be provided.

Later on, this percentage was lowered through authentic Turkish stories in films. When we look at the production year, this film was just one of the adaptations covering only %10 of the general Turkish film production.
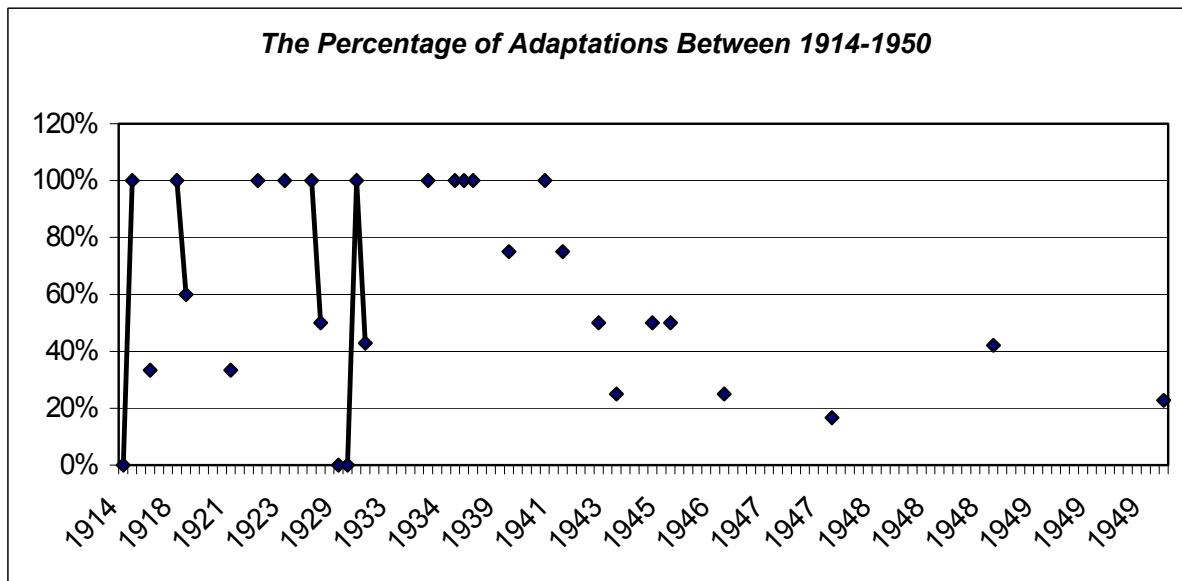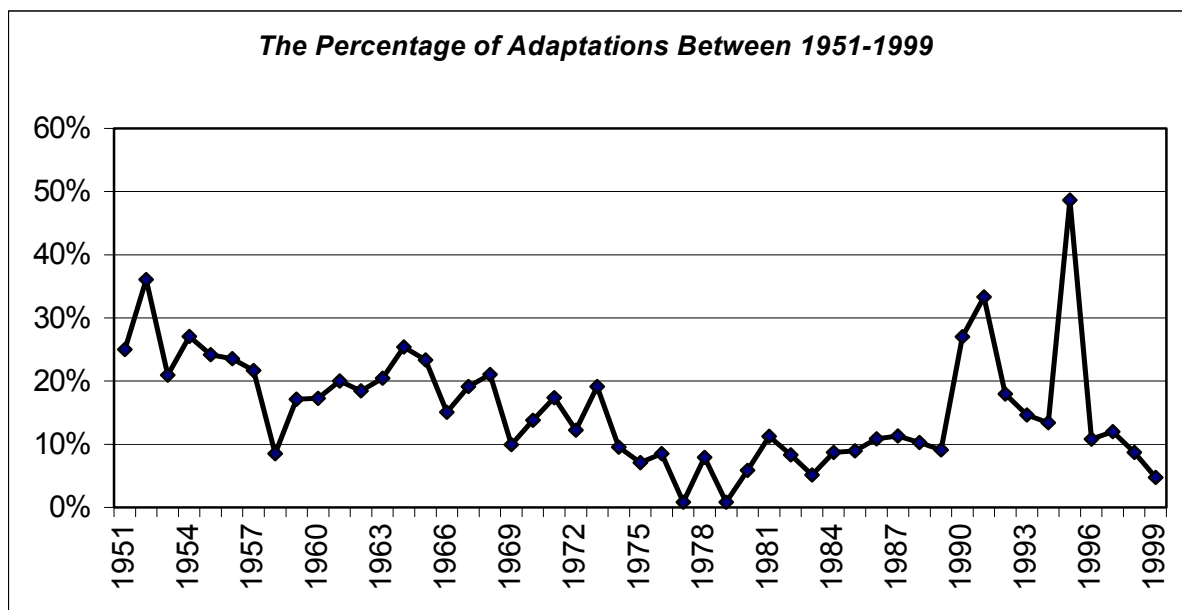
Fig. 4 The Percentage of Adaptations Between 1914-1950

Fig. 5 The Percentage of Adaptations Between 1951-1999

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The first Turkish films appeared with the effect of the foreign films

Throughout those times, films, not only specific ones but the foreign films in general were blamed to cause a kind of social corruption, giving bad examples for the Turkish women and children. Because these were representing so many examples of disapproved behaviours such as disobedience, seeking for love, giving extracts from the lives of guilty people or even a scene of crime. The criticism was harsh and in a way it had a positive effect on the side of the Turkish filmmakers to make their own films starting at the very early times in comparison with the other societies. The critics had an important effect on the audience and the films were either accepted or rejected just after a few screenings. It was a kind of a social agreement. Later on it could be possible to see the film reviewers in the cities, not only in the big cities but also in the little ones. Therefore, it could be claimed that the movements of the local journalism and advertising campaings were also the side effects of film business.

All of a sudden, there were many films in the market, having the foreign titles but the more common, local or cultural themes. The other quality to be mentioned is the convenience of the title as a "film title". This was a way of marketing the films. Thus, the audience having different references in their mind could be drawn into the cinema. Such as the titles *The Great Mystery*, *The Unknown Woman*, *The Day to Come*, etc. On several occasions it is possible to see how the foreign effects could meet the audience and how these foreign originated films had more success than the authentic Turkish ones. It is unbelievable to see how these films reflect their origin challenging for the audience just from the very beginning through their titles such as *Samson*, *Cezmi Band 007,5*, *Anjelik in the Ottoman Palaces*, *Killing*, *Female Killing*, *Fantoma: Meet me in İstanbul*, *Killing Against the Killers*, *Killing In İstanbul*, *Killing: The Dead Cannot Talk*, *Anjelik and İbrahim the Mad*, *Red Mask*, *The Masked Five*, *The Return of the Masked Five*, *Süperman against Fantoma*, *Zorro*, *The Revenge of Zorro*, *Red Kit*, *Zagor*, *Alaeddin's Lamp*, *Kinova*, *Captain Swing*, *Lassi*, *Cinderella*, *Simbad*, *Zagor*, *Zapata*, *Donjuan 72*, *Carmen*, *Sabu*, *Batman*, *Tarzan*, *Emmanuella*, *Pink Panther*, *Kolombo*, *Badi*, *Ninja the Night Fighter*, *I Love You Rosa*, *Monte Kristo*. These films try to secure their places in the market, through their familiarity of their names in the society. It is interesting to see that most of the films were named after famous cartoons having a target audience of the literate people following the cartoons of those years.

It could also be argued that the social communication atmosphere that a film causes would have an opposite correlation with the size of the city. In other words, the bigger the city is the less the conversation, the smaller the city is the more the comments and rumours are. The "film viewing committees" were to report about the films before they go to the public. Thus, these "film readings" aimed to decrease the level of the negative critics and the corruption of the society. But, depending on the "readings" or the tolerance level of the different committee members at each different city, the same film could go to the public space or banned. Thus there were standards for it. Later on, a "national censorship committee" was established to function for all over the country to maintain the equality in all cities. But this was a rather short period, soon came the war and the far films and newsreels arrived with a high level of information in them. There were objective information as well as the multilayered ones depending on the interpretation. This was another "reading" through different glasses. Although it was very cheap there were only few cinemas left during the war time and the audience were mainly the females. It might be argued that the impact of those war scenes shown in the films were reflected by the women audience when they stand by their husbands, fathers, brothers or sons during the war of independence as understanding, passionate and helpful women worriers.

Soon came an enjoyable period after the war. The films originated from the west and east countries introduced and emphasised the musicality of the cinema more. Mostly Egyptian or Indian films full of oriental music effects challenged the society. This time, the language was not that much of a barrier and the subjects were much more appropriate for the Turkish family structure stressing the unity of the family, divinity of love and sacrifices for it for a lifetime.

Original Turkish Films

Soon Turkish films had an attack beginning to appear more than the foreign ones. In fact they were there from the very beginning. Having cheaper adaptations from the "good" and "successful" films, having high expectations but low box-office rates and low profits. There was something wrong with it. The "readings" were the main cause of it. A film having a high box-office and a good job in the west was failing in the country. The tastes of the society were somewhat different. The starting with the new introduction of Turkish films, having a higher standard and more appropriate topics ended with thousands of films a year through the following two decades.

In general these were the adaptations or different versions of the foreign films but a kind of a Turkish context is created for all. A kind of a self censorship helped the film producers to make up appropriate stories having a poor girl and a rich man or vice versa and a happy end. The same plot is produced thousand times, but each time there was the audience waiting for the new version. Till the happy end many things happened, such as looking each other for a certain time, severe misunderstandings, cruel members of the family, children born without a wedding ring were the main ones to be mentioned. This became so popular that the audience, expecting the same story given in a different order each time, was going to the cinema just to cry for the poor girl and see how much she suffers until she gets to the happy end. This was the most popular time for cinema in Turkey. Not only the Turkish films but also the foreign films were in their highest point in popularity.

By the 1970's the economic crisis left the cinemas into the cruel hands of the depression and again the cinemas lost their audience and were closed one by one. The ones standing were either showing cheap foreign films having highly sexual elements in them or few films of high quality which were not enough to challenge a high portion of the society or the traditional family. This was also the time for the introduction of television and the foreign films in a different context. It could be claimed that during this time, the audience learned to have multiple readings for the same film and comparative readings through TV and Cinema contradiction. There appeared to be some "choices" as to which one to be watched, etc. Through the technological devices such as a TV set for each family and a video later on, the cinema atmosphere is created at home again. The individuals having a television set were just a few at those times and a foreign film and all the others brought a different social context. The neighbours and close relatives were paying frequent visits for the TV serials such as Dallas which created a common social context for all societies just like Turkey.

Whose Story Is It?

Different or contradictory readings are necessary in cinema. It is not only because of the possible differences of individual interpretations but also the differences of the cultural signs each individual might have. Dostoyevski, claims that exaggerations are inevitable in art (Todorov 1995: 32). For him, in order to show the thing we want first we should deform it

and reform it again just to make sure that it's been perceived by the others around us. It is just like colouring the piece of object to be analyzed under the microscope (Todorov 1995: 57). Just like the cubist painter reduplicating his object in his paintings, the national films reflect and reduplicate the object, in this case the society they handle in their reflections. In fact, it is the same character we see in different films. It's just that we see the character from different angles. It is just the same person, being in the same audience watching different films. Thus, the task here is just to find out the rhyme of the poem, to be aware of the rhythm of the music or the cycling of the same text realizing the unity in each different piece (Todorov 1995: 91). In this respect, the structure and its function could be seen within the same codes in the similar cycles (Propp 1985: 17). Perhaps that's why most of the cinema films whether original or adapted have similar plots and codes in them. Once being successful and widely accepted the codes were used in a nationwide scale.

Barthes, claims that the things changing are just the structures not the content. The classical works of art are the ones giving us the things having never-ending cycles such as love (Adanır 1994: 72). The way we modify the changes or the extension of the cycles we produce would make it novice. That's why it's possible to come across with similar stories even within the distance cultures.

Lyons mentions the importance of "naming" in his book (Lyons 1979: 215-223) and the arbitrariness of naming. Though it is not planned, this naming would have an enormous function within the lives of individuals effecting their whole actions. This is the way to make the audience or the readers, "the receivers of the messages". And these messages should be pointed to a certain place in their lives. This is a "call" for everyone. But, some of them would react to it immediately and openly and some secretly and through a delayed response (Lyons 1979: 214). After the perception of the call and understanding of the message, the characters of the story would have independent images, free from the text (Kıran 2001: 84).

When we read the foreign films in the context of Turkey, we may also ask the question of "whose story it is". Usually, it is the approved theme of the audience which is reflected on the screen. But the directors mainly say that they have that film because the audience urged for it or vice versa. So, it is also the dilemma, whether we have we have our own themes structured through our own myths and dreams or were these just the impacts of the things we've watched so far.

Having Multiple Identities

In order to have a deep analysis of the impacts of the foreign films in a Turkish context it would be better to consider the audience and the various "identities" related to such an audience. At the very beginning, he was just an observer. As an observer, the individuals or the society have no responsibility or image in the society. Later on, they became the producers. Being a producer is an important thing, and his "producing his own story" responsibility or identity was approved by both the culture, society and the audience.

Yet, we always have the "others" in the society. These kept on having another identity of their own on other hand: The identity of being the observer of the others was also a dilemma without knowing too much about ourselves and others. Thus, having multiple identities also caused having different codes to read the film and the understanding the "symbolism in the film".

The duration of the film is seen as the time spent to understand the world, the other cultures and their values. These bits and pieces about the films or their cumulative effects on the individuals or the audiences, could be gathered through a systematic analysis to make this era a more precious one. The reflected world and the different meanings at each layer could

be deciphered in different ways. Through these analysis, not only the dynamics of the society but also the social, cultural, ethical and linguistic structure of it as well as the certain qualities of the given era and local atmosphere could be analyzed. Thus, through this analysis the film would mean more than it could give us as a film.

Films and different readings of films require interdisciplinary studies such as the sociology, psychology, politics, economy, parenthood and childhood studies as well as communications and linguistics. Films could demand not only a structural analysis of each level but also a functional and notional one. The analysis of discourses would give us many clues and data for interpretation at the levels of society and individual level such as the interpersonal communication styles and the impacts of the social communication on the individual. These impacts could be on the decision making processes as well as the critical and evaluative thinking ones effecting the choices and behaviors of the individuals.

The Present Situation

After such a short synopsis of the past, when we look at the present situation, it would be easy to see that, foreign films in a Turkish context has a lot to do with the "readings" of different layers. The cinema films, Tv films and VCD-DVD films having a foreign language and culture element in them are still very fashionable. Nothing has changed much. Still there are arguments whether these are harmful for the society or not. There are still stereotypes in the forms of the stories or characters. Yet, when the impact of all these different processes on the audience is considered such outcomes could be mentioned:

- Throughout the time, the audience has developed a kind of a "taste" through the access to different types of films, genres and types.
- This taste has a lot to do with their "readings" of the film today.
- It takes only a few minutes them to state their likes or dislikes in the television channels.
- Search TV, Interactive TV, Cinema Channels, Pay TV, Cable TV are all welcomed in the society. These are the access to the different foreign films. Some part of the audience still has the language barrier though they watch it and "read" it through their context and background.
- They developed a sense of humour for the previously rejected sitcoms, and other comics, so that they could understand the humour now.
- Some certain films are associated with the old ones. The audience usually tends to rely upon their own experience to categorize the films. For example, German films were mostly associated with the war, French ones with love, kingship and sword, Italian films have the bases of mafia or gang clubs, British films were not that funny, American films were just Indian or cowboy films, Egyptian or Indian films were romantic or melodramatic musicals.
- Such a period helped Turkish cinema to produce many films regarding the taste of the audience in general and creating many musical films as well as the child stars.
- When we look at the audience it would be interesting to see that out of all the programs broadcasted in 1999, 2925 of them (32,9 percent) were the foreign films. The ones preferred much were having the linear type of storytelling vs playing with the order or sequence of the story. The puzzle type of films were slightly rejected and the audience preferred to know the clues rather than waiting for the end of the film. A simple story in the film were preferred instead of having a primary and a secondary or more stories within the same film.

- If we'd like to give examples of the extend the foreign films and the acceptance level of the society, it could be said that the average person watched minimum 1278 foreign films throughout 1999. The maximum reaches up to the 3700. Regarding the number of the films shown as 2925, this shows the preference of the audience as to watch different halves of films on different channels of television. So, it is interesting to see that although having "barriers" in them considering their cultural, contextual, linguistic aspects, it is really unbelievable that in some part of the country, people use three different satellite dishes to watch these films.

- There appeared new situational comedies, thus the language plays, riddles, multiple meanings and messages for different layers begun to appear as a conclusion. There could be some stereotypes borrowed from the other "foreign" films but these again put in a Turkish cultural setting in order not to be refused by the audience.

- There is always the problem of translation and synchronization affecting the understanding and interpretation of the message. Thus the films, having messages through various references and repetitions were liked more. Such a "filling the gap" type of understanding is becoming more popular not only among the older generation but also the younger one. The coherence and cohesion elements in the film have an important factor to be "read" by different levels of the society. Direct or indirect meaning, metaphors and similes should also be regarded.

- The intertextuality (music and culture as well as the language), the informativity (the type and level of information within the text), intentionality (the intention of the film, the main message or the underlying messages of it) and situationality (where and when the events take place) of the films affect their acceptability in the society. Sometimes, it would be easy to see that the general tendency towards the war films or the films containing highly religious context would be low.

- Today, foreign films have a promotional side, such as being popular among the youngsters, university participants. It is a reflection of modernity in the society. Also the promotional side goes hand by hand with the other type of consumption such as the menus for McDonald's, sound tracks of the famous films and all the other by-products of the films could be regarded as an important motivation factor in the society.

- The watchings in cinema and on television bring along different "readings" of the same film considering the divided or undivided attention, reception aesthetics and hermeneutics factors.

- The length, the topic and the characters of the films as well as their actors and actresses would have an impact on not only on the individual but also on the society.

- With the help of the technology giving a chance to everyone to watch the same film in a different language through pay TV or digital broadcastings would also have a different impact on the audience. It wouldn't be the films they would be changing in 1/3 of a minute but perhaps the language. Having high expectations from the western societies most of the people would have enough motivation to watch the foreign films in its own language rather than in its Turkish translation. The foreign films in this context would be seen not only mere modern stories for the adults but also as the context providing social, cultural and linguistic communication atmosphere.

The Impact

Considering the three hundred cinema films shown in a year just a few of them are the national ones and the thousands of the programs shown in television channels (8870 in 1999) 2925 of them were in the film category, it would be hard to say that foreign films have no

effect on the audience. 32.97 % of the television programs were the foreign films and 27.31 % of them were the Turkish films. When we look at the effects of them on the community it would not be easy to them all at once. Foreign films in Turkish context today force the audience to cope up with the stream. The popularity of the Cinema films and the other effects of the media chain should show all its impact in a certain time limit. Time factors are as important as the economical, political, social, geographical scope of the concessions; the concessionaires are, after all, attempting to realize, over a considerable period of time, profitable returns on the investments made by them. Today cinema films and the cinema going activity could highly be associated with the popularity. From the point of view of the film producers it is almost inevitable to create a kind of a pseudo-demand for the popularity of the films as it is also irresistible for the pseudo-audience since it is a kind of an expected encounter after having all the information through the other products such as the news and ads surrounding them. It is believed that the re-cycling ads and programs about the films put such a pressure on the audience, become so informative that the audience is forced to see the film at the end in order to fulfill and complete the previously given information all about it. But all this should take place in a certain time cluster. This is another force for the audience.

In a way, the audience is forced to go to the cinema before its VCD or DVD versions are released or a television channel agrees to show the film. It is not only getting the current information or keeping themselves updated but also to have something to say about their own experience. It's not only going with the stream, it is more prestigious to have the information before anyone else. Only in this way they could keep their places in certain upper groups of the society. By going to the cinema, the individual feels himself getting ready to get the drop on someone. Because in the competitive, aggressive nature of man's world, where the threat of defeat is never-ending, only the lucky to survive. The competition is so strong and the lifestyle often depends on learning to be the fast, being the first to move with the starting signal. It's just keeping a steady eye on the surrounding circumstances; the victory goes to the one who gets the drop on the other. The struggle for success is perhaps more competitive than in the films they watch. It may seem to be a very innocent detail but it has a very cumulative effect when you get the jump on the others. That's why most of conversations start with the question of 'Did you watch the movie last night? Or Did you see the new film?' The people lacking this opportunity are considered to be stagnating and usually excluded from the discussions about the things what is seen. The people having similar experiences are accommodated at a different level of the society, establishing a different group, having a shared agenda. In a way, in order to keep up with the balance the individuals are forced to go and see the film. This might cause a kind of coercive power (power that derives from ability to remove another's actual choices or perceptions that choices are available. Power that derives from force or the threat of force.) All these factors and messages establish a kind of "metacommunication" rather than the real communication (of the film) with the audience.

The exposure to the message or rather the popularity of the message becomes more effective with the media combinations. People in the developed countries usually do not rely upon a single medium for their information. But, the media combinations make the messages seem to be more effective than they are in fact. In this case, television and radio provide more instantaneous coverage, but the print medium provides the detail that fleshes out the story. It is difficult to conclude that one medium has more influence on public attitudes than another when it comes to the popularity of the films. People expose themselves more to the medium that they like and trust most. The general tendency is that people watch television but they rely on printed material for in-depth coverage of current events, critical commentary, controversial issues, and opinion positions.

Considering the information got through this metacommunication, namely the ads, news and personal experiences of watching the film, it's all "hush-hush". It's just a type of

communication on a certain type of communication. As in the lines of Diken and Laustsen (Diken and Laustsen 2001) there is a rule of the cinema goers club: 'You do not speak abut the Films' but rather treat this knowledge as a secret that unites the members of the smaller prestigious society. Because 'if information becomes all too obvious, its attraction would disappear'. If there is a piece of information you get by the grapevine, it is whispered into your ear with the understanding that you will not pass it on to the others. You feel honored and excited. You are one of the special few to get this information. You cannot wait. You must quickly find other ears to pour the information into! And so the information, secret as it is, begins to spread—nobody knows how far! At the end it's all the part of the metacommunication but not the communication itself!

Ordinary people become stars

The question is that why the people would like to be the audience? It's just because that people like to be some part of the mysteries and myths. That's why they create myths or contribute to the created ones. At this point, we may consider all the information and the ads and metacommunication of the films as a type of myth creation. And people would like to be part of it through either talking about it or buying objects related to the film themes or actors/actresses. It is believed that the by-products of the films sell more than the film itself. Film-book-television tie-ins help assure an audience. Movie soundtracks can also be very profitable tie-ins as well as the toys and other accessories for children or family. Video Homes, DVD-VCD formats also become more popular for those who would like home entertainment or to have their own film archives/collections.

Considering the big Hollywood studios and the amount of money spent for even a single film and a total of thousands of films in a year, the budget for the cinema films is becoming higher and higher everyday as well as the institutionalization of the cinema films and their producers. Yet, the target "audience" lack such an advantage and the individuals are left alone on purpose to face all the ads and popularity to make their decisions only to the extent that which film to choose rather than choosing or not. That's why the ordinary people become stars themselves after watching the film.

Cinema films as an escape

Today, in most of the countries as in Turkey, cinema films and cinema saloons are looked at as the points of escape from the real society. Although the cinema saloons are always considered to be the "public places" rather than the places for the individuals, these are used now for different purposes requiring different readings at different layers. Perhaps, the ironical point or rather a dilemma should be underlined here is that these saloons both have the function of escaping from the social realities for the individual, yet bringing the individual into another pseudo-society that everybody experiences the same adventure throughout the film but nobody knows each other or talks to each other apart from accepting this silent membership of the secret intrasocial enjoyment. Thus, cinema going is usually associated with being sociable, individually being involved in an activity such a going out, taking place in the society, planning for something, etc. But, this habit is usually implanted with the values and traditions, attitudes and expectations of the society.

When we look at the films from the point of the view of individual, cinema films tell us stories: Stories of the others. Thus, going to cinema films would be interpreted as a kind of willingness to take part in that storytelling action, rather passively at the beginning and

gradually expanding the moral of the stories, previously told, into our individual attitudes, behaviours and expectations. Every story would have a certain type of impact on the masses and the individuals. The problem is 'whose story it is' and 'how willingly we accept those stories' to interfere our own individuality. Each story is a passage leading the individual to communicate with his/her "self" or "identity", whereas it may make more sense to argue his/her "position" in life, society, his/her identity and "the others".

Cinema films are the confessions of the others—or perhaps the "self". It is a kind of the redistribution of the values arising from an experience: the love, pain, sin and the mistakes or happiness of the others. Thus, the individuals going to cinema are just the "observers" of the "others" who would also take some lesson from what they have been told.

Perceptions die hard. Those stories would certainly have an impact on the readers as being the pieces of the same big puzzle or different puzzles to shape the non-existing world of the individual to lead him/her to built a "better" self and a more pleasant world. Once the perception is achieved there would certainly be connotations and denotations related to it. Thus, the stories are never left behind, but rather added to each other and accommodated just like the *1001 Tales* carried through a lifetime to be revised, implemented, reshaped and remembered. That means every film, and every bit of the film (scenes, colours, characters, music, feelings, moral, etc.), would build a different layer in the world of the individual and the "self" would be the total interpretation of these different stratificational "self's". Depending upon the different readings made by the different readers throughout the time, these stratificational layers could have different meanings and interpretations.

Fearing asks the questions: What is the nature of the impact of the content of motion pictures on the audience? What do people get out of the films they see and why? And he answers.

> The question is raised regarding the stimulus value of the motion picture. This is a question of the cultural values in our society which films express and the extent to which films communicate these values. In order to understand this extraordinarily complex process which involves both expression and communication, it is necessary to know something about the content of the film, the psychological needs of the persons who are exposed to it, the immediate setting, and the social and cultural forces operating on the persons who make films and the audiences for whom they are intended. (Fearing 1972: 120)

It is frequently expressed that films are "pure entertainment" providing a means of escape from the world of reality. An opposing view pretends to put the films into a point far from being "just/mere" entertainment or "escapist" entertainment; films have definite and presumptively bad effects on the population. For these, Hollywood is the synonym for sin and its main function is to provide "dreams" for millions. Since the essential role of motion pictures in our society is to entertain and amuse or to afford an opportunity for a harassed and anxiety-ridden population to "get away from it all" by escaping into a land of fantasy.

The term "entertainment" is psychologically ambiguous (Fearing, 1972:122). It might be very interesting to see that different cultures and societies show different reactions to the same film. Thus, the popularity and entertaining factor attributed to that film would be just a vogue one. In fact, the popularity of the cinema films mostly owes too much to the decision makers. Here we see not only the promotion of the activity of cinema going but also the consumption of the films and all the film related products. Thus, cinema is introduced to the society as a kind of industry covering most of the other industries as well as many social, economical and political functions related to the communication areas.

Attitudes regarding the nature of the impact of motion pictures assume that films have effects but they are reciprocal to the socially determined needs of the audience. This view assumes that there is a broad functional relationship between the thematic content of films and the needs of the mass audience. Each film is another exposition to the audience to introduce a wide variety of situations, and thus provided with patterns of behavior which the audience may accept or reject. Thus each film creates a motivation for the individual and the mass audience to watch for another.

Considering the Consumer Motivation Process, motivation refers to the underlying drives that contribute to our purchasing actions (Arens, 1996: 114). These drives stem from the conscious or unconscious goal of satisfying our needs and wants. Needs are the basic, often instinctive, human forces that motivate us to do something. Wants are "needs" that we learn during our lifetime.

One of the differences of the Foreign films in the Turkish Context we could take the examples of European Cinema. European Cinema is its putting the world in the orbit of a rather "emotional" perspective rather than putting it into the "power" based position. Similarly, the world we live in, or the world of the future either is reflected optimistically, in which everything is drawn as positive, mature and respectful, or it is reflected rather pessimistically, in which there would be no place for beauty, goodness, or the individual values, yet everything is beastly bad, cruel and ugly.

Watching a foreign film means a journey to some unknown place, culture and identity. One other quality of the European cinema is its giving place for the symbolic text structure. At the level of the construction of the symbols, the thing aimed is just the transfer of the meaning through less but consciously chosen and referents distributed throughout the text.

Ideology and Belief

Cycling is a concept including all the concepts of production, consumption, the product, the producer and the consumer. The cycling texts would be depending on most of these concepts as the structure of the text. It is possible to create new texts and new cycles of the given texts by just putting the structure in a different order. They may seem very alike and perhaps these all different texts could be called as allomorphs. Yet, with all these ingredients and having different portions of each time would cause a new cycle and thus a new text, similar to the original but different and unique one. Thus, although they look alike, all these new cycles would be different texts and unique ones sharing the same formula and base. Once the cycling begins it is almost impossible to stop it without producing further samples of it. Each cycle would bring a new concept into focus and each cycle means a change, a transformation and a different perspective. Each new cycle requires re-evaluation and re-interpretation of all again. Consequently, each new cycle gives birth to innumerable new ones. The point the human being is reached is just the result of all these re-cycles and re-evaluations. (Öcel 1999)

Therefore, the things cycling in fact are the things fitting into the ideology and the believes of the society. These cycling figures and themes soon become stereotypes. Within stereotyping, there is a connection between representation, difference and power.

However, we need to probe the nature of this power more fully. It is a power in its not only economic exploitation and physical coercion sense, but also in

broader cultural or symbolic sense -including the power to represent someone or something in a certain way. It also includes the exercise of symbolic power through representational practices. (Said 1978)

"Orientalism" has been stereotyped in various ways especially in the European films. To most of the people "Orientalism" was the discourse by which European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period (Said 1978). Similarly, "Modernism" has been stereotyped in various Turkish films as well. Thus, we may claim that a new era had started: the people watching the foreign films would even find a slice of their own life in those. This would be their own reflection of culture, language and identity. And probably, through the foreign films reflecting such an indirect and blurred picture of us we would discover ourselves more through different readings of the same texts.

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