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POLITICS OF LOSS AND MOURNING IN “İFTARLIK GAZOZ” FILM

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses, in accordance with *İftarlık Gazoz* film, how dissident representation strategies produced an opportunity for the subordinate groups labelled as "lives with worthless loss" to be formed as "lives with worthy loss" "grievable" lives. The discussion particularly includes arguments about the representation of Adem, the film's main character who dies on the 61st day of his death fasting, as "lives with worthy loss" and "grievable". At this point, it is emphasised that the character is represented in accordance with "norms of similarity", "social norms", "national ideals". In the study, there is a debate about the establishment of a "life with worthy loss" and its relevance to social norms and ideals, and its relation between the political qualities and sanctity. The hegemony struggle between dominant groups and subordinate groups in the study is based on J.C. Scott's (1990) hegemonic interpretation. In this context it is seen that subordinate groups use the language, norms and values of the dominant in a way to serve to their recognition struggle and a resistance which goes on underhanded. In this respect, in the film *İftarlık Gazoz*, the prominence of the dominant language and social norms in the representation of Adem's character is regarded as a part of dissident representation strategies.

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, *İftarlık Gazoz* filmini ele alarak, muhalif bir temsil stratejisinin, egemenler tarafından “yaşanmaya değmeyen hayatlar” olarak işaretlenen tahakküm altındaki kişi ve grupların, “kayıpları değerli”, “yasları tutulabilir” hayatlar olarak kurgulanabilmeleri için nasıl bir imkan ürettiğini tartışmaktadır. Tartışma özellikle filmin baş karakteri olan, film evreninde ölüm orucunun 61. gününde hayatını kaybeden Adem’in “kaybı değerli” ve “yası tutulabilir” bir hayat olarak temsil edilmesine yönelik tartışmaları içermektedir. Karakterin “benzerlik normlarına”, “toplumsal normlara”, “ulusal ideallere” uygun bir şekilde temsil edilmesi tartışılır. Çalışmada “kaybı değerli” bir hayatın kurgulanması ile o hayatın toplumsal normlara ve ideallere uygunluğu, siyasal niteliği ve kutsallığı arasında ilişkiler olduğuna yönelik tartışmalara yer verilmiştir. Tahakküm altındaki gruplar ile egemenler arasındaki hegemonya mücadelesi kuramsal olarak J.C. Scott’un (1990) hegemonya yorumuna dayanmaktadır. Bu bağlamda tahakküm altındakilerin, egemenin dilini, normlarını ve değerlerini, tanınma mücadelesine ve alttan alta sürmekte olan bir direnişe hizmet edecek bir şekilde kullandıkları öngörülmektedir. Bu bakımdan *İftarlık Gazoz* filminde, Adem karakterinin temsiliyetinde egemenin dilinin ve toplumsal normların öne çıkması, muhalif temsil stratejilerinin bir parçası olarak değerlendirilmektedir.

INTRODUCTION

If a life is not seen as a “life with worthy loss” and is not mourned publicly; the social legitimacy, sanctity and political character of that life remain in question. That life is not recognised as “a life worthy of being lived”. In this context, the loss and mourning processes become politicised as elements that uncover the value of life. Thus, a struggle / negotiation process between the subordinate groups and the powerholders to make sense of loss and to determine what is feasible comes to the forefront. One of the means of this struggle and negotiation is representation. While the powerholders try to build “lives with worthless loss” by representing the subordinate groups in a distorted way or by completely excluding the visual and auditory regime, due to their political interest; subordinate groups try to take advantage of human capacities such as sympathy, empathy, identification, mercy, compassion, and pity for making their losses visible. At this point representation is of vital importance for the subordinate groups. Loss and mourning-oriented politics, thus enter the field of cinema. In this study, by considering the dissident cinema as a tool to serve the recognition struggles of the subordinate groups; in “İftarlık Gazoz” film, I discuss how an opportunity is produced for people or groups who are prevented from being seen as “lives with worthless loss” to be seen as “lives with worthy loss” and included in the mourning stage.

Here I, first, would like to explain why I am headed to this topic. Before I started writing this thesis I had a specific interest in the films produced by the subordinate groups in Turkey. Produced by independent producers, these films are usually of great interest, especially for film festivals, due to their storylines challenging dominant representations, and historical understandings. Yet, these films hardly show any appearance in commercial theatres, and reach “mainstream cinema viewers” or “general audience”. Even when the films are on main distribution networks, they still continue to be promoted as “festival films”. I began to think about the films produced by subordinate groups, what kind of audience they are aiming for and who they usually “talk” about hoping that answer to these questions would provide some clues to the films' narrative politics and objectives. My view is that these narratives serve to produce a kind of mythology that

facilitates the group members to stay together rather than serve the recognition struggles of the subordinate groups; the groups that were trapped in their own language and that the language and perception of the "other", the target of the recognition struggles. The "other" I refer to is the people and groups who appear to have embraced the regime of reality produced by the dominant ideology. By denying their facts and removing them from reality, the subordinate groups are rendered vulnerable; so they must own their own facts and realities, and create artworks that support the symbolic conditions of their union. Another approach to struggle for recognition is the "other" of Hegelian interpretation. In this context, the dismissal of the prevailing codes of the society and constructing the narration in politically correct manner in dissident cinema might create challenges for the recognition struggles. As a matter of fact, the struggle for recognition does not always carry a "politically correct" character, but also includes a negotiation between the powerholders and the subordinate groups. With this in mind, I decided to consider the dissident movies that are recently produced in Turkey, especially regarding their narration politics. My initial goal was to open up the debate on narration politics that are structured in an introvert and monological character, to discuss the negative effects of this situation on the recognition struggle. Later I decided to shift my focus on a more "possible" example for recognition struggle and in which I think the "other's" language is not missed. This "possibility" can also be thought through a cinematic language that transcends the distinction between dissident cinema and mainstream cinema, which responds to the emotions that mainstream cinema audiences expect from a film. Then, I encountered with the work, *Domination and the Art of Resistance* by J.C. Scott (1990/2014) where he compared the rhetoric of the subordinate groups and discussed within the context of the struggle for recognition. Scott's work can be considered as a theory of hegemony that interprets the struggle / negotiation between powerholders and subordinate groups from the standpoint of subordinate groups. Scott centralises the concepts of "hidden transcript" and "public transcript", thus stratifies the politics of narrative and discourse of the subordinate groups. While the public transcript is seen as a system of discourse designed to affirm and naturalise the power of the ruling elites; the hidden transcript, a second and entirely contrary form of the public

transcript, is interpreted as a political culture that the subordinate groups produce for the listeners different from the public transcript behind the stage where they can gather far away from the power. (p. 50) According to Scott, there is a third area of discourse outside these areas. In this third area, along with being a “sterilised”, more “legitimate” version of the hidden transcript, the double meaning is interpreted as an area designed to hide the identity and intentions of the actors. The debate on Scott's “third domain” envisions a struggle for recognition of “dual language” and “dual conscious” on behalf of subordinate groups. (p. 75) I think thought Scott's approach could also provide a specific opportunity for debate about dissident cinema. This is aimed at a dissident cinema idea that takes advantage of the “non-political truth”, the codes of the mainstream cinema and the emotional politics. And this presupposes that the values and norms put forward by the powerholders are used in a manner that serves the politics of recognition by subordinate groups. This suggestion can be seen as one of the standing points of my thesis. Another point of my study draws from Judith Butler's works, *Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning* (2004/2013) and *Violence and Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable* (2009/2015). In these studies, Butler analyses sovereign power politics on the losses and mourning processes of the subordinate groups. She suggests that “the value of life” can only emerge in the conditions of life that “loss is valued”; when a life is not “grievable” there is no life. Butler's work shows that the “frames” that cause the devaluation of the losses of subordinate groups are effective in a wide range of meanings, ranging from where life begins, to where human beings can determine as people, as living things. Through these discussions I started to think about how dissident politics can provide an opportunity to make the losses of the characters framed as people with unworthy losses thus they are not mourned publicly as “worthy” again. According to Butler (2009), the epistemological capacity necessary to be able to perceive a life, depends on the fact that life is a life if it is produced in accordance with norms that characterise it as a life. “We come to feel only in relation to a perceivable loss, one that depends on social structures of perception.” (p. 50) Butler's proposals establish a relationship between being "perceptible" and "conforming to norms". This is seen as an opportunity in terms of opposition politics because according to Butler (2009),

“normative schemes are interrupted by one another, they emerge and fade depending on broader operations of power.” (p. 4) My arguments have expanded in the context of norms, breaking norms and how this situation could be used in the dissident representations. In this process I have benefited from the thoughts of different thinkers about how to organise a “life worthy of being lived”, a “life with worthy loss”. While the normative establishment of life came to the forefront in Foucault's discussions, the discussions of Agamben and Hannah Arendt highlighted the relationship between the establishment of a life worthy of being lived and the political character of that life.

During these discussions, I encountered with the film, *İftarlık Gazoz* (2016). Rather than the artistic qualities of the film, the narrative and narration politics caught my attention. In the film, while a death fasting character is located at the centre of the diegesis; the character was represented so as to fit the social norms, similarity norms and national ideals. In this context, I thought that *İftarlık Gazoz* film could create a suitable foundation for the establishment of a “life worthy of being lived” and for discussions of norms to solve norms. Another reason for my interest in the film is that although it can be interpreted as a dissident film by the character, the plot and the theme; the narrative and narration is structured for the mainstream audience profile. I think this is in parallel with the debate J.C. Scott sustained in the context of dissident discourse strategies and the film uses the language of the dominant group in a way that serves the struggle to be recognised by the strategy of a dissident discourse. Thus, *İftarlık Gazoz* film is in the centre of this research, to create a discussion on loss and mourning with dissident representation strategies. My main questions are: What kind of an opportunity can dissident cinema create for individuals or groups whose loss is deemed worthless to be represented as worthy lives and included in the stage of the mourning?

One of the conceptual framework this study is located is dissident representation strategies. While there has been significant number of work on the representation of the subordinate groups especially in the cultural studies literature and cinema studies in Turkey, these studies are often structured at the point of decryption of power schemes. Studies on dissident representation strategies still remain limited especially in the context of Turkey. One study that deals with

dissident representation strategies is Umut Tümay Arslan's *Popular Cinema and Left Politics* (2001). In his work, Arslan points out the importance of dissident filmmakers to produce films with popular codes in the name of the cultural hegemony struggle. According to Arslan, it is important to produce alternative forms and discourses outside the popular culture field, whereas opponent filmmakers need to produce popular narratives that respond to social concerns, worries, and the need for social affection. This approach has also contributed to my work by offering a sharp turn alternative to popular cinema for dissident cinema. Another study that deals with dissident representation strategies is Zeynep Özarlan's doctoral dissertation on the *The Function of Cinema in Terms of Social Opposition Within Social Communication* (2006). The feature that differentiates Özarlan's work from cultural discussions and other debates in cinema studies is that Özarlan is not limited to placing the concept of opposition in a historical and cultural context. Özarlan, while not focusing on reception analysis, has specific suggestions on how the film he takes into consideration directs the audience. This situation is also an alternative to a popular tendency in cultural studies and cinema studies. Cultural studies and cinema studies often deal with films by isolating them from the intentions of the producers and the feelings and thoughts of the audience. Another work I have benefited from in the context of dissident representation strategies is the feminist cinema theorist, Kaja Silverman's *The Threshold of the Visible World* (1996/2006). Silverman conducts discussions on how to model a political and dissident cinema by addressing concepts such as political ecstasy, opposition leap in her work. Silverman discusses the issue in a psychoanalytical context, focusing on concepts such as political ecstasy, identification, empathy, and sympathy.

When we put the dissident cinema at the centre as a concept rather than dissident representation strategies, there is a growing literature under the titles of political cinema, diaspora cinema, third cinema, feminist cinema, minority cinema, and Kurdish cinema in the context of Turkey. Beyond addressing how the dissident narrative and narration strategy works and how the dissident cinema fulfils its function in the context of the recognition struggle, these studies are mostly limited to reveal the themes of the films, interpret the geographical positions of the

characters they handle in the context of the “other”, debate how previously similar characters were represented by the ruling ideology in Turkey or how their representations were hindered and give the historical background of dominant mechanisms. Another conceptual framework this study draws from is the relationship between loss, trauma, mourning and cinema. The work in this area in Turkey has recently emerged in relation to the culture of remembrance, and intersect with the studies of cultural memory. In her PhD study, *Cinema and Social Memory: Traumatic Representations in Recent Turkish Cinema* (2012). Sevcan Sönmez discusses the representation of traumatic events in the Turkish cinema. Sönmez analyses films in terms of their formal characteristics, beyond meaningful interpretation in cultural codes. By providing traumatic representation strategies, she contributes to the dissident narrative strategies. Another work in this area is Fatma Tanış's master thesis, *Collective Mourning Play in Movies: 'Babam ve Oğlum' and 'Beynelminel'* (2010). The study examines *Babam ve Oğlum* and *Beynelminel* films and discusses how films can create the possibilities for mourning the lives of social traumas. Using the concepts of individual psychology, the study analyses how the films prepare a mourning scene and make a healing plan. My study follows a line from the controversy over the politics of loss and mourning to implementation of the laws on the loss and mourning in the dissident cinema.

In the first chapter, first I presented Foucault's discussions on how sovereign power determine life and death and how this was transformed. In Foucault's discussions, debates about how bio-politics transformed sovereign power' scheme came forward. Later, I gave a discussion of Agemben's interpretation of the relation between the setting of a life as a life worthy of being lived and the political character of that life. In these discussions, the concept of “bare life”, which is shaped by the separation of “zoe” and “bios”, came to the forefront. In the second part of the first chapter, I discussed the role of loss and mourning processes in the formation and structuring of communities. In this context, I discussed Vamik Volkan's concepts of “selected trauma”, “connection object” and the function of loss on the imagining communities in relationship with memory politics. In this section, the analysis of the political function of mourning and loss gave meaning to the exclusionary politics of the powerholders towards the loss of subordinate

groups. Then I discussed the manifestation in the politics of loss and mourning. In this section, by focusing on Judith Butler's "mourning hierarchy" concept, I particularly carried out a debate on the power discriminatory schemes for the losses of subordinate groups, and the possibility of a dissident representation politics in the opposite direction to these schemes. In the final part of the first chapter I addressed the politics of loss and mourning in Turkey. I discussed how the politics have transformed in recent years, with reference to the memory politics that were put into effect during the foundation period of the Republic of Turkey.

In the second chapter of the thesis, I contextualized *İftarlık Gazoz* film within the history of the dissident cinema by addressing the transformation of the dissident cinema in the world and in Turkey. In this chapter I also discussed the concept of "New Turkish Cinema" and the historical process that enables the dissemination of productions challenging the official ideology in Turkey, and the importance of loss and mourning-oriented politics. Further a discussion about the "audience" of dissident films in Turkey, and the aspects that differentiates *İftarlık Gazoz* other oppositional or dissident films.

In the final chapter, I analysed *İftarlık Gazoz* film to address dissident representation strategies that produce an opportunity for the death fasting people labelled as "lives with worthless loss" to be formed as "precarious" "grievable" lives. In my analysis, I benefited from the discussions by Foucault, Agamben, Arendt and Butler about the construction of a "life worthy of being lived". My analysis drew from the framing of the head character in conformity with social norms, similarity norms and national ideals; the use of child images in the film; and how a nostalgia film contributes to the character to be seen as a "grievable".

CHAPTER 1

POLITICS OF LOSS AND MOURNING

In this chapter I discuss how loss and mourning politics are put in place in the representation scene, taking into account the function of loss and mourning in the organisation and structuring of communities. Powerholders, as they are known, exclude the losses of subordinate groups by framing them as "worthless" lives or by removing them from reality. They try to prevent the formation of alternative political communities by preventing public mourning on behalf of these losses. Those under domination struggle for the recognition of their losses that are usually excluded from visual and auditory regimes, to find them a place in public mourning.

In the chapter, first, I dealt with the transformation of sovereign power' dominance and decisiveness over life and death. Then I interpreted the function of the new power technologies in classifying life as a worthy of being lived / unworthy of being lived, grievable/ungrievable. Theoretically I use the theoretical frameworks by used the relationships between Foucault's bio-politics and fascism; Agamben's bare life and the legitimacy of violence; and Hannah Arendt's nation-state citizenship and human rights. I address the function of loss and mourning in envisioning the community, and show examples of dissident politics benefiting from the political potential of mourning. Finally, I developed a discussion on loss and mourning politics in Turkey.

1.1. GRIEVABLE LIFE

In her work about the politic importance of grief and loss in the construction of societies, Judith Butler (2009/2015) states that in order for a life to be considered as a hurt and lost life, at first it must be grasped as a living life. Imperceptible lives that are not considered as a life, have never been lived or recorded properly. Therefore, they are ungrievable. The epistemological capacity to apprehend a life is partially dependent on that life being produced according to norms that qualify it as a life or, indeed, as part of life. (p.9). The schemes that lead to our comprehending or not grasping the lives of others as lost or hurt lives are determined politically. These

are the ruling processes themselves. In this respect, a discussion of the loss and mourning politics becomes meaningful when it is addressed with a political discussion of the boundaries of life. Butler points out that this insight has the capacity for thinking about "life" in cellular biology and the neurosciences, since certain ways of framing life informs those scientific practices. (p.9)

Foucault (1976/2007), discusses the rights of the sovereign power over life and death, and the power over their life, from the *patria potestas*, which gives the Roman family head, the children and their slaves the opportunity to use their lives, to grant them a life and to take back that life. Later, the right to the sovereign is a softened form of the right given to the Roman family, which is not an absolute and unconditional right. It comes into play when the life of the sovereign is in danger. In such case, the sovereign can demand their citizens to endanger their lives. The sovereign uses the right to survive only by putting the right to kill in action, that is to say, his power over life is established on, his right to demand death. In this context, "power of life and death" is the right to take life or let live. Foucault suggests that this juridical form must be referred to a historical type of society in which power was exercised mainly as a means of deduction, a subtraction mechanism, a right to appropriate a portion of the wealth, a tax of products, goods and services, labor and blood, levied on the subjects. Power in this instance is essentially a right of confiscation, this right, reaches its zenith with the privilege of taking over life to extinguish it. (pp. 99-100) Since the classical period there have been transformations in the power mechanisms. According to Foucault, the ruling of the powers over the life has turned to incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimise, and organise the forces under it; instead of destroying the forces to which they subjugate. (p.101-103) This transformation seems to be a breaking point in terms of the relationship Judith Butler has established between "living life" and "normative establishment of life". Instead of ending life, the sovereign power has inclined to build it, classify it, attribute value to it or ignore its value. According to Foucault (2007), after the 17th century, the power mechanism that regulates life has developed in two ways. The first one centred on the body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimisation of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic

controls, all this was ensured by the procedures of power that characterised the disciplines: an anatomos-politics of the human body. The second is the bio-politics of the population that takes body in the centre as the base of biological processes, produces regulatory mechanisms and is interested in data such as fertility, birth and death rates, health level, life span. The power of killing symbolised by the ruling authority with the body discipline and population politics, was replaced by the body management and leaving the life to be operated as a calculator. (p.102-104) Thus, the population is classified biologically as appropriate, useful, inappropriate, and useless. Biologically appropriate ones are taken under protection; whereas useless and inappropriate ones are destroyed (by increasing death risk for some people, political death) directly or indirectly. (Taylor, 2014, p. 144) At this point, Foucault (2002) brings forward the racism issue and questions the how the decision of killing, call for death by the power comes into question when the power has been transformed into a form of multiplication of life, extension of life, multiplication of life chance, evading accidents. According to Foucault, all the modern-state structures in which bio-politics is mentioned as a fundamental mechanism of power have passed through racism. Foucault interprets racism as a way of creating a distinction between the ones to die and the ones to live. Racism puts on a traditional relationship, the proposals of “if you want to live, kill” proposal into action by the bio-politics bringing. The killing of the others at this point symbolises the death of a downward and bad race; for the life of a healthier and pure race. Thus the understanding of the enemy will also transform and expand to include the dangers in the population. Foucault interprets societies with norming and bio-politics as societies in which racism is also dominant and deals with Nazism, in which this has led to a catastrophe. Nazism is interpreted as a state in which; new ruling mechanisms reach the high point, biological regulations are applied persistently, unique qualities of biological coincidences are regulated, the right to kill and leave dead clashes with the authority. (p.260-262) Foucault's arguments provide an explanation of how a life worthy of being lived is determined by bio-politics.

Another debate about how to determine a life worthy of being lived is carried out by Agamben. In his work *Homo Sacer*, Agamben (1995/2013) analyses the political violence that the powerholders apply to subordinate groups by the concept

of *homo sacer*. Homo Sacer is a person judged by the society due to a crime and killing him is not interpreted as murder. Agamben describes homo sacer as “bare life”. (p. 90) According to Pinar Ecevitoglu (2009), Agamben uses the term bare life in reference to terms *zoe* and *bios* meaning life in Ancient Greek. *Zoe* refers to the biological existence of all living things whereas *bios* does not only refer to the biological life but also to a certain life style, in other words life of a qualified person. *Bios*, is equipped with the qualities of a life including politic rights. In this context, killing is not legitimate. (p.86-87) However bare life as *zoe* is open to violence. The bare life which is isolated from all kinds of life design and seen only as a biological existence will be killed or left to die by political powers. (p. 89) According to Agamben (1998/2013), political violence in Ancient Greece has transformed but continues. In all modern states there is a ruling system in which dominating life transforms into dominating death and bio-politics can transform into the politics of death; this system is supported not only by lawyers but also by doctors, scientists, experts and priests. (p. 147) In this context, Agamben exemplifies the work that was written by Karl Binding and Alfred Hocke in 1920, entitled *The Release of the Destruction of Life Devoid of Value: Its Measure and Its Form*. The study addresses specifically how to create a jurisdiction against euthanasia claims, but it expands into a debate about how the allowable life taking can be expanded in the context of the killing of third persons. In this context, it is tried to answer the question of whether there is any life that has no value for itself and society, by losing the qualification of legal value. Among the writers, Bilding treats the “idiots” without treatment as such people with no purpose, no will to live or die. Bilding suggests that the decision to kill such people should be given by a commission consisting of a doctor, a psychiatrist, and a lawyer, claiming that killing these people are legally, socially or religiously legitimate. (p. 166) entitled *The Release of the Destruction of Life Devoid of Value: Its Measure and Its Form*, is important as it shows how the decisiveness of sovereign power on life and death is associate with bio-politics and the point that the exclusionist character inherent in bio-politics can reach. This is in parallels with Foucault's perspective on racism before. In other words, the bio-politics schemes for those considered human beings and whose lives are valuable turn into racism by working together with the schemes for the ones belonging to the political

community. "Every "politicization" of life necessarily implies a new decision concerning the threshold beyond which life ceases to be politically relevant, becomes only 'sacred life'". (Agamben, 2013, p. 167) The introduction of this threshold leads to the determination of what is worthless is legitimate to be destroyed. According to Pinar Ecevitoglu (2009), each additive-political order is based on a "good life", bios design. (p. 90) Salih Akkanat (2011) states that with a similar approach, the origins of the political community and the law are based on a separation and exclusionary action. The founding relationship that binds law to violence, is the prohibition of bare life. (p. 181) Agamben (2013) points to the work of Hannah Arendt in this context, bringing the concept of human rights to the agenda and deals with Arendt's definition of the relationship between the collapse of the nation state and the loss of human rights. According to Arendt's argument, the rights of being a citizen of a nation state are lost once they leave the citizenship of that country. In this context, the destiny of human rights and the destiny of nation states are parallel. (pp. 152-153) This puts forward the relation between the value of a life and being a "sacred" member of the community. With Ecevitoglu's argument, it loses the rights to live out of bios design, just as the Jews can be sent to the collecting camps after their nationality is removed. (p. 159) Agamben points out that the refugees produced a similar conflict. The refugees break the continuity between people and citizens, between birth and nationality, so put the original fiction of modern ruling in crisis; on the other hand, it reveals the fragility of bare life by deepening the conflict between citizenship and human rights. (pp. 158-162)

Thinkers such as Foucault, Agamben, Arendt offer us specific approaches regarding to what kind of frames shaped lives worthy of being lived and whose losses are worthy. These "frames" that determine the boundaries of life and death are differentiated according to the ideology of the community and the social norms, and they are effective in the process of giving the meaning of loss. The lives that are not members of the political community, and the norms outside of the norms of the biopolitics are considered as bare lives. Thus, these lives are not seen as a loss and are moved to a place where they are not mourned. Why do the powerholders regulate the loss and the mourning of the subordinate groups? Why are subordinate groups struggle for the recognition of their losses and mournings? The simple respond to

these questions would be the significance of loss and mourning in the construction of the the identities. In the following part, I will discuss the meaning and significance of loss and mourning for society.

1.2. LOSS, MOURNING, COMMUNITY

Judith Butler (2004) suggests that the congregation is to be reconsidered within the context of the loss and mourning concepts, pointing to the founding and transforming influence of loss and mourning in her book *Precarious Life*:

Many people think that grief is privatizing, that it returns us to a solitary situation and is, in that sense, depoliticizing. But I think it furnishes a sense of political community of a complex order, and it does this first of all by bringing to the fore the relational ties that have implications for theorizing fundamental dependency and ethical responsibility. (p. 22)

A discussion parallel to Butler's suggestion was carried out by Vamik Volkan (2005). Vamik Volkan, by commenting on the similarities between the law-oriented reactions of individuals and large groups towards loss and mourning, interprets the concepts used in the individual psychology literature such as the "selected trauma" and "connection object" between building the organisation and loss of the community. Selected trauma is a mental representation shared by group members of a great catastrophe, a humiliation and despair against the enemy in the history of large groups. According to Volkan, the sharing of these loss-oriented images links the individuals within the group over the years. Therefore, representation of historical losses is one of the important elements that determine group identity. According to Volkan, if group members cannot mourn for their losses, and if the feelings of helplessness and humiliation cannot be reversed, the psychological tasks are completed and the images of trauma are transferred to the next generations. This situation is expressed as "inter-generational transfer of trauma". (p. 8) By commenting on selected trauma as an infection of the mourning period, Volkan states that such images can be used, for example, by political leaders, in such a way that groups can have dangerous consequences, in order to promote social movements. For example, Serbian leader Sloban Milosevic has portrayed the losses of the *Battle of Kosava* on June 28, 1389, before the Bosnian genocide, and the rituals produced by the loss of Prince Lazar who is sometimes identified with the

figure of Jesus in Serbian mythology; thus organised a hostility against Bosnians by producing an emotional field that would initiate the process of revenge. (p. 9) This example is important as it shows the political consequences of mourning, such as anger and hatred. According to Judith Butler (2009/2015) open mourning is associated with outrage and tremendous political potential of the outrage that has caused unbearable loss. The reason for the prohibition of Plato's poems is the possibility of disrupting the order and hierarchy of the political authority by disrupting public order, soul regulation and hierarchy. (Butler, 2015, p. 43) The rageful potential of loss and mourning reveals the exclusionary politics towards the losses of subordinate groups. This situation is about the capacity of loss and mourning's becoming a political opportunity in the name of subordinate groups.

Another dimension that Vamik Volkan (2017) discusses in the context of social mourning is the national monuments. Volkan defined these monuments as "connection objects". Connection objects represent a lost person or thing by helping one's mourning. (p. 92) Volkan addresses the parallelism between the function of the connection objects and the function of national monuments through the example of 2nd World War Memorial opened by the Second World War Orphans Network (AWON). According to the Volkan, AWON members treat the monument as a "connection object" linking them to their deceased fathers. The monument revived the grief and mourning process, orphans, symbolically re-embraced their father, who had no graves. (p. 93-95) Volkan argues that the objects of national connection may also have negative consequences. The negative picture is shaped especially by the hope that the community can regain the lost one and the desire to keep the mourning process alive. Such a desire can produce a sense of revenge. If the cause of trauma is seen as "others", the community will produce a new political ideology for revenge. Volkan exemplifies the ideology of Megali Idea (Great Idealism), which the Greeks reacted to after the struggles of separation from the Ottoman Empire, in response to many losses in the Ottoman times. Vamik Volkan's works address the functions of loss and mourning of the community in the context of relations between social identity and cultural memory in particular.

Volkan interpretation of the monuments as connection objects creates an opportunity for the artworks to be discussed as connection objects. (s. 97-98) A

discussion in this direction was carried out by Cihan Tuğal (2012). In his work, *1915 Remembrances and the Construction of the Armenian Identity*, Tuğal argues that works of art can function as a "connection object" while emphasizing the importance of the lost images that the literature reveals in the reproduction of the Armenian identity. According to Tuğal, remembering the massacres and losses with literature is important for the Armenian community to remain psychologically alive and to maintain the social integrity of the survivors. (p. 127-149) Another study on the functioning of loss and mourning of the community is by Haluk Özdemir with the title of *Searching for Diaspora Ararat: Armenian Identity and Genocide Appeals*. Özdemir's work is important as it shows the viewpoint of dominant groups towards the loss of the other by the parallel proposals of ideology in Turkey. According to Özdemir, the Armenian diaspora centred on genocide as an identity politics in the face of the lack of a geographical foundation that holds the community in the same place and in the face of the danger of assimilation and the inability to produce all cultural and historical values. Losses united the Armenian diaspora around a common cause, ensuring the continuity of the Armenian identity by carrying out tasks for succeeding generations to sustain this case. (p.75-97) In his work, *A Counter-Strike Study: Hrant Dink Remembrance*, Serhat Celal Birdal (2013) traces how the undertaking of the loss of the "other" can transform the formation of the community. Pointing out that mourning process is an opportunity for ego to reproduce itself, he draws attention to the transformative effect of mourning on community. Mourning is precisely the value of what has been lost and loss itself is embodied in the mourning process. (p. 4) Birdal sees similarities between individual mourning processes and social mourning processes. With the loss of Hrant Dink, Turkish society realizes that, the society lost not only a loved one but also intellectual and abstract value. (p. 7) Along with the mourning period that began on the death of Hrant Dink, losses that have been experienced a century ago and left unsymbolized have also come into the surface. The mourning process produced a culture of confrontation, cracking the domination over the dominant cultural memory and historiography in Turkey. According to Birdal, a view that cannot bring loss back, but recognises what is lost is capable of producing a mourning exercise to think of a new political community, which can begin to transform the future without

getting stuck in nostalgia. (p. 11) Birdal's work shows the relationship between mourning processes and opposition politics. As in the example of Hrant Dink; it points out that some mourning processes can create a possibility to reconfigure some meanings fixed within the national character with the area of emotion they produce.

Similar argument has also been presented in Mica Nava (2002)'s work. Nava claims that the mourning rituals of Diana Spencer, the Princess of Wales, known as Princess Diana, allowed a more inclusive construction of the British nation. She claims that Diana's work towards AIDS patients, young homeless people, black mine victims, and many marginalised groups made a new sense of death; visibility of illegal immigrants, thousands of black, brown, non-Catholics, Muslims, Catholics participating in mourning rituals increased through the media; the media is reacting to this process in a short time claiming that they are accepting new faces of this very ethnically structured mourning and nation. (p. 108-120) Nava's work has also hinted at how the representation functions in the politics of loss and mourning politics as in the media's representation of loss and mourning.

1.3. POLITICS OF LOSS AND MOURNING IN REPRESENTATIVE STAGE

According to Judith Butler (2013), "the public sphere is constituted in part by what can appear, and the regulation of the sphere of appearance is one way to establish what will count as reality, and what will not." (p. 17) This regulation aims to determine whose lives can be marked as lives lost and whose deaths will count as deaths. This will result in the authorities trying to control the regimes of vision and hearing. (p.17) While some lives are marked as lives lost and grievable in the representative scene, some lives are represented as "bare lives" by the concept of Agamben (2013), because their life free from their political qualities, or they are completely excluded from the stage of representation. The stage of representation thus acts as an instrument of humanisation and humanity's expulsion. Judith Butler (2013) interprets notions of humanisation / dehumanization through Levinas's concept of face. According to Levinas, "face" is the one that cannot be killed or if not at all, meaning "you will not kill". The ability to gain visibility in the face of representation might provide legitimacy for the subordinate groups. However, Butler

states that in the media the face is not only used for humanitarian purposes, but that personalisation does not always humanise it. She refers to the appearance of Usama bin Ladin, Yasser Arafat, Saddam Hussein in the media. Laden is transformed into the "face of terror"; Arafat is transformed into "face of deception"; Hussein is transformed into "the face of contemporary tyranny". (p. 135-144) In other words, in terms of humanization / dehumanization, the frames that give meaning to those faces are more important than the visibility of the faces, and in that context, the media representation strategies that interpret those faces. Butler (2013) deals with how the media devises build the mourning and loss scene in this context. For example, the names, photographs, stories, the reactions of their families who have lost their lives in the 9/11 attacks are published in details whereas the names of thousands of Afghans, their photographs, stories, testimonies or thousands of Palestinian children killed by Israel have not been found in the media for the victims of the US Army. (p. 47) Likewise, photographs of torture made for prisoners in Ebu Garip Prison were also blocked by suggesting that photographs should not be suitable for Americanism when they appear in the United States. (Butler, 2015, p. 66-75) These exclusionist frames devoted to the loss of others have not only inclined to the ones out of nation. Gays who were killed during the 9/11 attacks also did not find any place on the announcement pages. The lives of these persons were not considered appropriate for the idea of national identity. (Butler, 2013, p. 49) Butler interprets this as a tremendously important political issue, describing it as "a discriminatory distribution of public mourning". (Butler, 2013, p. 43) Obituaries in media are also the tools for nation building by making a life publicly grievable and note-worthy. As Butler stated, "if there were to be an obituary, there would have had to have been a life, a life worth noting, a life worth valuing and preserving, a life that qualifies for recognition". (Butler, 2013, p. 49) The examples given by Butler on death announcements in the media emphasize the importance of being a legitimate member of a political community and the importance of norms, in the construction process of national mourning. Bio-politics and various norming mechanisms are devoted exclusively in this process. How can those who are not seen as missing, be constructed as valuable figures in the representation scene?

Jennifer Petersen (2007) developed a discussion on the discourse of the media

in 1998 after the murder of a "gay" citizen named Matthew Shepard who was the victim of a murder in the United States. With Shepard's death, for the first time a gay person was acknowledged as the subject of national mourning and entered the agenda of media in the American context of religious intolerance, hate crime laws, and the size of homophobia (p. 1-2) According to Petersen, the media has encouraged audiences to identify with Shepard; and the discourse was defined by the similarity norms people could identify with Shepard. Shepard was framed in such a way to allow the identification of general public through statements such as "the son of someone" "a beautiful American child", "a person with American dignity", or "neighbour's child". By underlying Shepard's delicate physical structure, youthfulness and innocence, media combined the rhetoric of lynching and crucifixion and that resulted in the settlement of the innocent victim role. What Petersen emphasizes in her work, is the transformation that loss is undergoing as it becomes a national mourning object. As Shepard turns into a national mourning image, he is represented in a nominal character as a young, handsome, white figure with a well-educated, future-oriented, tolerant, cosmopolitan character and his noncompliant sexuality is kept as far back as possible. (Petersen, 2007, p. 23-25) The public norms that determine how to live for mourning, are more influential than those that determine who is more important than the others, and that emotions are regulated in the name of mourning. According to Petersen, the stereotypes put forward by the media also lead to the finding of appropriate objects of sympathy, grief and anger. (p. 6-7) Brian Ott and Eric Aoki (2002), who worked on the same subject, claim that Matthew Shepard was transformed, filtered and rebuilt as a national mourning figure. (p. 483) According to Ott and Aoki, the murder of Shepard was stripped of the personalised, social and political context of the murder, and framed by a "tragic narrative". (p. 496) Those who commit murder in such a picture are not considered as the members of the society; they are rather presented as ruthless killers and uneducated souls, whereas Shepard was represented with the proper orientation of his identity. (p. 490-491) What is outstanding about the debates over Shepard case is that the subject, who is excluded from the public mourning stage because she/he is not considered legitimate according to normative schemas, could become legitimate and accepted to the stage only after being re-framed through

other normative schemas. The point is that just like the social organisation of the body; the image of the loss is also re-edited through social norms. Butler, in parallel with this proposal, points to the legitimate figures of the national mourning scene: the ones with visible loss are usually married, heterosexual, happy, and monogamist. (Butler, 2013, p. 47) Butler states that it would be a mistake to think the operation of norms as deterministic. Normative schemas are interrupted by one another, that they emerge and fade depending on the broader operations of power. (Butler, 2013, p. 11) In other words, others who are excluded from certain norms may be re-framed as legitimate figures through different norms. This is also supported by the complex and contradictory nature of modern ethics. According to Saime Tuğrul (2014), modern ethics have an intertwined and sometimes conflicting character, and the contemporary individual is placed in the middle of this tension. (p. 210) By bringing forward the values such as "secular ethics", homeland, nation, commitment to the community and suggesting that the person is sacrificed in the name of family, homeland or superior values; the approach which finds expression as "human rights ethics" assumes that every human being has the same basic rights and freedoms as every other person in the universal dimension. Universal rights are determined by the human rights ethics and around the principles of humanity, equality and liberty to establish horizontal coherence with others. Authentic ethic is based on conscientious account of singular subject and developed within the context of self-culture. In authentic ethics, one does not depend on the congregational sentiment. The principle of equality in the ethics of human rights maintains its significance by the notion of rights without losing its main foundation. (p. 211-214) The intertwined and conflicting character of modern ethics might create cracks from time to time in the fixed meanings of human beings, worthless losses, and the non-grievable. Even if there is no possibility to be recognised in this context, the possibility of a cognition towards the other may be the subject.

Here, I would like to clarify my point with a recent example. Aylan Kurdi, a three-year-old Syrian child, drowned in the water along with his mother and his brothers due to the infiltration of the inflatable boat carrying them as they were trying to pass through from the Bodrum district of Muğla to the island of Kos on 2 September 2015. Before the war in Syria, he lived with the status of "stateless" and

with the start of the war he was accepted to Turkey with guest status. His three-year-old body was found on the shores of Bodrum. The photograph of his inanimate body, had been widely distributed in the national and international media. After the incident, Turkey and the Canadian States offered citizenship to Aylan Kurdi's father. Aylan Kurdi image was brought to the agenda on a basis that various ethical values and norms were intertwined and conflicted. Aylan Kurdi, as stated by Arendt, has lost a protective umbrella for the nation state and secular ethos as a refugee. His body was constructed as a "bare life" until his death. With his child death, it has become the object of human rights ethics and the objects of pity and compassion politics. The photograph that was widely circulated in media, turned into a global mourning object, and printed on the national currency on the 100th anniversary of the founding of Finland in 2017. With Vamik Volkan's words, Aylan Kurdi as a "chosen trauma" figure, the power of loss and the reformation of mourning, community and political community, shows the function of media.

1.4. REGARDING THE POLITICS OF LOSS AND MOURNING IN TURKEY

It is important to look at the nation building process to discuss the politics of loss and mourning politics in Turkey, because the symbolic establishment of the community is also process of exclusion that involves certain excuses to define the valuable losses for the society. This exclusion mechanism also constitutes the reasons for the recognition struggles and loss politics of the subordinate groups. As widely discussed the foundation of the Republic of Turkey as a nation-state became a matter of concern after the Ottoman Empire lost most of its territory. In this context, it can be said that the Turkish national identity was built on certain losses. At the time the Ottoman Empire lost its lands in the Balkans and the ruler Ottoman elite lost their beliefs of a multinational, highly religious empire. Thus, the intellectuals, officers and bureaucrats of the Balkans, mostly focused on Anatolia, that was regarded as Little Asia and the ideology of nationalism came to the forefront. (Çağatay, 2009, p. 11-12) In this process, the practice a new memory politics was put into practice. Jan Assmann's interpretation of identity as a memory and a memory of remembrance makes this practice understandable. Just as the identity of an individual

is constructed through memory; the group identity can also be established only through memory building. (Assmann, 2015, p. 98) This involves not only the practice of recollection but also the practice of forgetting, and making others forget. According to Ernest Renan; the essence of the nation is that all of them must have forgotten many things including what they have in common. (from Anderson, 1995, p.20) The nation building process involved the construction of a newly formatted common identity, and selected memory, Thus, the memories remaining outside of the official history, and the traumas and losses of these memories, were left out of reality. This process has not only affected non-Muslim minorities but also the Kurds and sects such as Alevism. The pressures intensified after the removal of the Caliphate in 1924, and the removal of Islam from the official religion of the state in 1928. According to Ahmet Yıldız (2001), the civil institutions of Islam such as caliphs and sheikhs, sects and monotheisms were the founding elements of Kurdishness. Since the Kurdish religious and tribal leaders received their authority from the sultanate and the caliphate institutions, the abolition of these institutions had led to the ban on the public manifestations of Kurdish identity, and damaged the legitimacy of traditional Kurdish leadership institutions. This had set the stage for rebellions such as *Piranlı Şeyh Sait İsyanı* (1925), *Ağrı İsyanı* (1929-1930), *Dersim İsyanı* (1937-1938). (p. 241)

Although the pressures on the groups under the domination had somewhat alleviated by the opening of the multi-party allegations, there had been no radical change in politics for the subordinate groups until the nineties. In parallel to the developments in the world since the nineties, in Mithat Sancar's (2016) words, a "memory and remembering projector" and a culture of reckoning in Turkey came to the forefront. Jan Assmann (2015) defines this process as "a memory and recollection fuze", defined by three factors. The first one is the ability to record via new electronic media. Assmann interpreted this as a cultural revolution as significant as the invention of the printing press, and writing. The second factor, that is also connected to the first one, is a "post-culture" as George Steiner has called, in which something now coming to an end. The third factor is that a generation that has witnessed heaviest catastrophes recorded by human history was now saying farewell to life. (p. 17-18) Pierre Nora (2006) refers to two reasons for the rise of memory: the

"acceleration of history" and "democratisation". (p.16, from: Sancar, 2016, p.64) According to Mithat Sancar (2016), what Nora meant by "democratisation of history" was the struggle of the people, communities, ethnic groups for the liberation and freedom accordingly, all forms of minority memories were spreading at a rapid pace because claiming the past was an integral element of their identities for minorities. (p. 65) By calling this "liberation from colonialism," Nora (2002) notes that the explosion in the domain of minority memories has transformed the mutual relationship between history and memory. The memory that associated with loyalty to that time had been attributed to a truth that was more truthful than the 'truth' of history (Nora, 2002 p.6-8, from: Sancar, 2016, p.65). In relation to the rise of memory Szanaider and Levy (2001) commented that cosmopolitanisation that strengthened as a result of globalisation, has led to the emergence of collective memories, and the nation state has lost its monopoly on memory and recollection (pp.10-21, from: Sancar, 2016, p.68)

The unfamiliar processes of historical democratisation, acceleration, globalisation, and the unregistered recording in Turkey, has caused a shock to the official history. Therefore, the debates about loss and trauma, in the case of Turkey, started with the political processes led by the neo-liberalization policies initiated by Turgut Özal in the mid-eighties. Thus, the thesis that nation-state structure, statist economy and strict secularism can not meet the needs of Turkish society has come to the forefront. Thus the paradigm, also called Neo-Ottomanism, based on Turkish-Islamic synthesis and a nation idea that different ethnic identities are overridden by the Muslim identity came on the rise. (Üstünelan, 2012, p. 24) This process has paralleled with the "Second Republic" debates by some liberal intellectuals, by gaining momentum in 2002 when the AK Party, known as a "conservative democratic mass party" came to power in 2002. During initial years of the AKP governments, a number of democratisation steps were taken under the influence of the EU accession negotiations, especially with the efforts of the liberal intellectuals by challenging the founding principles of the Republic. Thus, an appropriate environment for the discussion of traumas that could not be discussed before has emerged. The collective memory of the traumas such as "the Events of 1915", "Şeyh Sait İsyanı (Seihk Sait Rebellion)" in 1925, "Dersim isyanları" in 1928, "6-7 Eylül

Olayları” (6-7 September Events), and the process between the state and the PKK has been brought into discussion. Thus the loss marked by the official ideology as being worthless, have come to the public agenda. The political power of the time has also undergone a series of symbolic steps for the recognition of unrecognized losses. For example; for the first time in the history of the Republic, the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of the time issued a condolence message for the Armenian community for anniversary of the 1915 events on April 23 2014; the acceptance of Nazım Hikmet’s citizenship was announced on the 5th of January 2009; and the laws for the compensation of goods of the minorities that previously confiscated by the state. On the other side, the events such as the demolition of the memorial made by the police to commemorate the losses of citizens killed by warplanes in Uludere district of Sirnak on 28 December 2011, continued to happen. This seemingly complex and contradictory situation is closely related to the memory politics of political power. In the current ruling era, certain losses were brought to light when certain losses were ignored, and these losses were used in the construction of a new memory politics in symbolic restructuring of the community as "selected trauma" and "constituent mourning figures”. One example to this can be the gaining visibility of the losses in the *Çanakkale Savaşı* and *Battle of Sarikamish* instead of *The Turkish War of Independence* in the recent years.

Another element that defined the politics of the loss and mourning in Turkey was the growing tension and conflict between the political power and its opponents. Especially with the people who lost their lives during the 2013 *Taksim Gezi Park Events*, a new loss and politics brought to the agenda again. During the events an intense debate took place over the 15-year-old citizen named Berkin Elvan, who lost his life by the gas capsule hitting his head shot by the police. Elvan's funeral turned out to be one of the most crowded funerals in Turkey, while the loss was not seen as a "public loss" by government officials. Another recent noteworthy event is the coup attempt of the July 15th of 2016. The citizens who lost their lives during the coup attempt were framed as "martyrs of democracy" by the government, and their stories, and testimonials of the relatives were widely made accessible in the media. Their names were given to various public institutions, streets and avenues. Hence there have been changes in the definition of "acceptable citizens" in Turkey. The

transformation of a good citizen also means a restructured mourning scene with a new politics of mourning and loss

CHAPTER 2

POSITIONING IFTARLIK GAZOZ FILM IN THE DISSIDENT CINEMA HISTORY

The concept of dissident cinema has widely been discussed with the literature of revolutionary cinema, militant cinema, political cinema, diasporic cinema, migrant cinema and propaganda cinema. Differences in the definitions of the dominant and the subordinate groups and so in the struggles brought different practices of conceptualisation. Before talking about the dissident cinema in different areas, it would be helpful to explain what “dissident cinema” is meant in this study. The definition by Zeynep Özarslan (2006) meets the general framework of this study:

Dissident cinema is in a structure destroying the sociological facts designed by the dominant ideology, ruining, re-building hence seeing the world critically, ignored, otherized by the dominant ideology, approaching all the national, ethnical, sexual, cultural identities equally and believing that all these identities are enriching, questioning the ones accepted as abnormal by the dominant ideology and expressing that these are also humane, embracing the humane part of sexuality without exploiting and isolating its sociological and cultural context and being able to use it with its all kinds flexibly without being formalist. (p. 107 – 108)¹

The concept of “political cinema” have similarities with the concept of dissident cinema. Asuman Suner (2006) conceptualizes the political film as subjective and unstable, in the ground of its content’s being about concrete sociological and historical events and questioning the dominant ideology (p. 253) Zeynep Özarslan (2006) classifies the dissident films in five categories. The first category involves the films in the times of sociological transformation and historical turning points, affected by aesthetical trends. These were the dissident films affected by the expressionist trends between 1919 and 1930, Soviet revolution aesthetic between the 1920’s and 1930’s, Neo-Realism trend after the World War II, and New Wave movement appearing after 1968. The second category is defined by the geography, and includes the films of third world countries opposing the films of America and Europe. The third one consists of the films that are dissident in production styles.

¹ All translations from Turkish are my own

These are the ones produced under alternative circumstances opposing the studio system, and monopoly of production and distribution. The fourth category contains the films of the dissident identities, including the ethnical, sexual, identities, races, refugees, minorities overlooked by the dominant ideologies. In the fifth group, films political themes take place. (p. 119-120)

The definition of the dissident film in this study falls into the fourth category, involving the groups whose identities were overlooked by the dominant ideology. A part of these films are of course affected by trends like Italian Neo-Realism and French New Wave, however there are also many other dissident films produced with the aesthetic of mainstream cinema. Some of the dissident films produced by big production companies and studios as well as the ones produced by the independent producers. Because of this reason, formal categories and production conditions are excluded from the borders of the study.

2.1. TRANSFORMATION OF DISSIDENT CINEMA

With the realization of cinema's impact on the public, some states owning the cinema production tools and big production companies started to use cinema for political intentions. With the effect of war conditions, dissident cinema was defined in relation to propaganda. Early discussions were after the Russian Revolution in 1917. In this period cinema was nationalized and cinema schools were founded to produce films parallel to the Soviet ideology. The films produced were distributed to the villages by agitation trains to disseminate the Soviet ideology. (Coşkun, 2009, p. 49) The significance of this period for dissident cinema was the studies of the Soviet film scholars on the concepts such as "identification" and "leap into opposition" which gained importance later on the conceptualization of dissident cinema. Dissident cinema discussions in the Soviet cinema till the World War II were mostly focused on the form. In the discussions the question of how a revolutionist aesthetic could be established became prominent, Soviet cinema can be perceived as a form of dissident cinema as it opposes to the American cinema defined by the capitalist values.

In the early periods of cinema in the United States, some specific groups produced films parallel to the state's ideology. In the United States with a diverse population of different ethnic backgrounds, intensive debates on Western films took place. The films with a scenario based on the struggle between the good and the bad, distorted the images of the Native Americans. One of the most controversial example was *The Birth of a Nation* that was produced in 1915. Due to the racist messages of the film, many incidents took place in the cities where the film was shown. In the film, black people were portrayed as slaves obedient of the order, rapists, or monsters. (Dorsay, 1995 from: Demir, 2008, p. 16) According to Ertan Yılmaz (1997) the film was the first example of the racist approach in cinema justifying the dominant mentality and ideology (p. 42) The dominant ideology of the time had re-written its own heroic sagas by ignoring the natives' history. Films opposing these distorted representations were produced by the production companies established by black people from 1910's. In these self-representations, black people were not belittled, humiliated, or used only as a subject of humour, in other words were not otherized. (Ilgaz, 2012, p. 56) Blacks were not the only ones whose representations were distorted. For example, in 1917, a declaration was sent to an American newspaper by two Mexican film maker. In the declaration cruelty and obscurantism associated with Mexicans in the fake films were protested. (Chanan, 2003, from: Özarslan, 2004, p. 145) By considering all these, it would not be wrong to say that the dissident cinemas in the early times focused more on the ethnic tension. The same period can also be read through Charlie Chaplin films that were social satires of poverty and depression in the industrializing society.

In the same period, war conditions were shaping the European cinema. People who became poor and psychologically traumatized because of war were represented with a realistic approach. In this period Europe was under the effect of Marxist theories in terms of social movements. With cinema's being nationalized parallel to the Soviet ideology, films opposing to the bourgeois culture in the western Europe were started to be produced. In the 1940's and 1950's Eastern European cinema clearly reflected the Soviet's socialist ideology. (Özarslan, 2006, p. 143) Meanwhile in Africa, films produced by the colonizers from Europe shaped cinema. These films had mostly ethnographic qualities and were produced to be shown in

Europe. Because of this reason the period was known as colony cinema. The term of colony was first used in 1913 in French Cine Journal magazine to document the lifestyles of the colonies. The purpose was to encourage young people of the western countries go to the colonial countries for the development of cinema aiming to improve colonial people's intellectual abilities. (Teksoy, 2005, p. 699) In the films produced in Africa until World War II, the white heroes were being aggrandized, while natives were represented with an aggressive approach as in the case of Native Indians in the United States. French cinema historian Georges Sadoul, defined African cinema in the year of 1960 as:

“Although it has been 65 years since the invention of cinema’s invention, I don’t know one single fiction film that has been directed, starred and talked in their native language by real, hence black skinned, Africans” (Teksoy, 2005, p. 699)

Africans themselves could not make films because the film production tools, and distribution infrastructure were owned by the colonist states. After the 1960's, with national liberation wars, the first dissident films were produced by Africans in Africa. Since the 1960's in many parts of Africa, documentaries of the national liberation war and fiction films of the violence by whites were produced. The concepts of the “third world cinema” and “third cinema” corresponds to this period. Countries adopting a more independent attitude who experienced the World War II, many countries' accepting a socialist administration after the war in Europe, black movement's getting stronger in America, prominence of figures like Fanon, Castro, Che Guevera, guerrilla movements' starting in Latin America, independence declarations in countries like Morocco and Algeria prepared the ideological and the historical conditions of the third cinema. (Odabaş, 2013, p. 13-14) Third cinema speaks to the dissident films which were produced in the so-called third world countries and by minorities and subordinate groups in the United States and Europe. The term was first coined at the end of 1960's in the article, *Towards a Third Cinema* by Argentinian film makers Fernando Solanas and Octavio Gettino. In the article, Hollywood was defined as being for entertainment and the individualized nature of the European cinema was criticized; an alternative production, distribution and demonstration structure, and an alternative cinema aesthetic were introduced.

(Odabaş, 2013, p. 164) Another manifesto affecting the third cinema was published by the Cuban film maker, Julio Garcia Espinosa in 1969 with the title of *For an Imperfect Cinema*. This article criticized the elitist art and the cinema production not being an occupation any longer, and underlined the necessity for the acknowledgement of the art of cinema. The European art environment was criticized for supporting nonsensical art, instead of a calm and self-supportive art serving to the traumas, pain, and relationship (Odabaş, 2013, p. 195-210) When the Third Cinema concept was first used, it was perceived as an anti-imperialist and revolutionary objection, thus Soviet cinema was shown as its antecedent. Films produced by Yılmaz Güney from Turkey, Glauber Rocha from Brazil, Jorge Sanjines from Bolivia, Ousmane Sembene from Senegal, Miguel Littin from Chile, Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino from Argentina were accepted as the samples of Third Cinema. While the concept at first was discussed with a geographical limitation only including the films produced in the third world countries, its scope enlarged later to include the productions by the subordinate groups in different geographies. The reason of the geographical focus was the revolutionary attitude and belief about a new socialist era only emerging in the third world countries. (Armes, 2011, p. 208) Closer to the nineties, even though the revolutionary emphasis in the third cinema did not completely disappear, it was replaced by the concepts such as identity, differences, opposition and alterity.

With the nineties “the third culture” term was suggested. The term which was discussed by Bhabba (1994) suggested the idea that meanings related to culture were not pure and stable, cultural hybridism was essential and culture was a mixture. (Işıkçioğlu, 2005, p. 18) While the idea of cultural hybridism, increased the doubts against national culture and national cinema, the idea of transnational cinema became prominent. In 1989, in his article called *Concept of National Cinema*, Andrew Higson stated that national cinema emerged as a result of the tension between the nations’ itself and international areas, that a national cinema reflects the past, cultural heritage, traditions, common identity and the feeling of continuation in the nation. In the article he wrote in the year of 2000 called *The Limiting Imagination of National Cinema* he problematized the understanding seeing national identity and culture as stable and unchangeable. (Yaren, 2007, s. 27) Another philosopher whose third

culture understanding had a transforming impact on cinema studies was Susan Hayward. In 1993, Hayward perceived the film as the cultural expression of a nation, and in an article she wrote in 2000, *Framing National Cinemas* she found the previous national cinema understanding problematic and pointed out a hybrid culture instead of a homogenous one. (Yaren, 2007, p. 32) Parallel to all these discussions, immigrant film maker generation in Europe started to make dissident films in their new lands. While these films were accepted as a part of the national cinemas of the countries they were produced, they problematized the official ideologies of these countries with their dissident characters. “Beur Cinema” emerging in the 1970’s in France, “Black British” and “Asian British” cinema in England in the same period can be seen as the cinema on the edge of national and transnational cinema. These types of films included themes such as migration, racism, integration, assimilation and unemployment. (Işıkçioğlu, 2005, p. 20-29)

As I tried to discuss in this part, national culture’s and cinema’s becoming discussable, third culture discussions, immigrant identities’ becoming prominent are important developments that affected the last period of dissident cinema. We can state that these developments caused a split in the Turkish cinema which is discussed in the fourth chapter.

2.2. DISSIDENT CINEMA IN TURKEY

There is a common belief that it is only possible to talk about dissident cinema and political cinema in Turkey after the 1960s. According to Mesut Uçakan (2010), the mental character of Turkish cinema started to be shaped after the “Coup” on May 27th, 1960. Although there were films focusing on social themes before that, Uçakan suggest that these films did not carry any ideological purposes. (p. 23) Considerin *Mürebbiye* directed by Ahmet Fehim in 1919 and *Nur Baba* directed by Muhsin Ertuğrul in 1922 were censored, it can be argued that dissident films produced in Turkey before 1960 would not be classified as ideological films.

Another common perspective about dissident cinema is that single party politics from 1923 to 1950 prevented productions in this area. This idea sounds reasonable considering the role of the government in the developmont of cinema. In

its initial years, army initiated and controlled the development of cinema. In 1915 the Minister of War, Enver Paşa watched various war scenes shot by the German army in different fronts and he wanted to build similar structure in the Ottoman army too, by realizing the potential impact of these scenes over people. Thus, *Merkez Ordu Sinema Dairesi* (Central Army Cinematography Office) was founded in 1915 (Özön'e, 1968, p.13-15) After this, departments dealing with cinema production were founded in many public enterprises. Films produced after this were mostly about war, or documentaries about the personal and professional life of the Sultan. In time various films for the interest of the larger public were also produced. (Onaran A. Ş., 1994, p. 13-14)

After the foundation of Republic, the state continued to produce propaganda films. The period between 1923 and 1939 was called as the “*period of actor*”. Muhsin Ertuğrul, the head of İstanbul City Theatres, and the personnel (actors, scenarists, directors) who worked with him had been influential over Turkish Cinema for a long time. (Özön, 1968, p.17) It can be said that productions made during this period were generally parallel to the ideology of *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (Republican People's Party).

Filmlerin ve Film Senaryolarının Kontrolüne Dair Nizamname (Regulation for the films and films senarios) went in operation in 1939. Its content defined ideological limitations of the dissident cinema. With this regulation, it was forbidden to produce films making any state's political propaganda, humiliating any race or nation, degrading fellow state's or nations feelings, making religious propaganda, making political, economic, social, ideological propaganda against the national regime and films thought to be against the common ethic and national feelings, making propaganda against the army, provoking people to commit crime and the ones including scenes which could be used to make propaganda against Turkey. (Özgüç, 1976, p. 12-13) In this context, dissident cinema's history can be read through the history of censorship in Turkey.

Since 1950's with first samples of the socio-realist trend being given, political themes emerged in Turkish Cinema. Especially Lütfi Akad and his cinema became prominent. Akad worked on city life and its conflicts in cinema by making cinema free of its theatric structure. Akad's this vision and production made it possible the

socio-realist and critical cinema to emerge later on. In these years “Köycülük” trend was effective. The idea of provincialism actually started in the late times of Ottoman Empire, became stronger in 1930’s thought life and is distant to the industrial society. It was based on the idea that villages were the places where the national culture was intact and pure. The trend’s impact on cinema is seen in themes such as land and blood feuds, master-worker conflicts, revenge for honour, smuggling in bordering areas, abducting girls, rapes, master’s daughters in love with the poor shepherd or the vice versa. (Özgüç, 2005, p. 125) There is criticism against industrial society just as there is against feudal system and the authority relationships. One of the first examples of this trend whose effect was first seen in literature was given by Metin Erksan with *Karanlık Dünya* which was based on Aşık Veysel’s life story. (Daldal, 2005, p. 68) Some actors getting arrested for the accusation of being a communist while the film was on production, film’s being censored made the film have a dissident appearance. Film’s name whose name thought to be *Karanlık Dünya* was changed to *Aşık Veysel’in Hayatı* by the censorship committee. The film which was rejected by the censorship committee in the first attempt was able to get the permission document with conditions applied. The harvest’s being weak and short, the agriculture methods’ were being too primitive, the two out four girls dancing in the film’s wearing shoes and the other two’s being bare foot were the reasons why the film was banned. (Özgüç, 1976) When other censorship incidents are examined it is seen that the ones who had the authority were against the realities of society being shown as they were, unchanged.

Area of freedom emerging after the Constitution of 1961 offered a more suitable environment for the dissident films to be produced. Many topics regarded as taboo and problem had a place in cinema for the first time in this period. Liberal policies in the period of Democrat Party, newly wealthy people, Westernist intellectual figure, landowners, and different topics such as private property were the topics of dissident cinema. Through the midst of the 1960’s, there was a separation among film makers while discussing what ideology was the best use to convey the socio-realities. Therefore, different dissident trends emerged. *National Cinema Movement* supported by names like Halit Refiğ, Metin Erksan, Duygu Sağıroğlu was ideologically founded on the idea of East and West opposition and refers to the

“*Asian Production Style*”. According to this idea, western modernism is based on class conflicts and these conflicts bore individualism. On the other hand, since individualism didn’t exist in the Ottomans, it wasn’t possible to talk about individualism. Therefore, film-makers support the idea of “National Cinema Movement” think that it is not possible to make films with the idea of individualism which is in the centre of western art. According to them, this is the reason why people are not interested in the art of cinema. Therefore, it is necessary to make anti-individualist cinema such as *Karagöz* and *Ortaoyu* describing the society, not the individual. (Behçetoğulları, 2002, p. 112) National cinema producers made films with an anti-western paradigm and they became the defenders of right ideology in time. The film, *Bir Türk’e Gönül Verdim* produced by Halit Refiğ in 1969 has the character of this trend.

After 1960, another rising dissident movement is *Revolutionist Cinema Movement*. The theoretical frame of this movement basically consists of texts written for *Genç Sinema Magazine* founded by the producers who left the *Sinematek Association*. This movement aims to produce social realistic movies by analysing the social problems in classes. The themes are mainly employee-employer relationship, strikes and union activities, foreign capital conspiracies, individual and social problems caused by unemployment. A distant attitude is adopted against the Yeşilçam tradition and the cinema industry in Turkey which is thought to fool people. It supports a didactic point of view addressing to opinions rather than emotions. In this movement, society is prior than individuals and it is against to the heroic ideology. (Uçakan, 2010. P. 98) *Umut*, produced by Yılmaz Güney in 1970, is shown as the most important example of Revolutionist Cinema. The movie is opposed to the idea using religion as opium and to the capitalist economic system. Another movement appeared in this period is “National Cinema Movement”. The idea of National Cinema has first come up with the article *The Need of National Cinema* written by Yücel Çakmaklı. In the article, Çakmaklı highlights the need of a cinema of which moral values are prior than material values and which cares Muslim Turks’ beliefs and presents the Anatolian authenticity. (İnci, 1996, p.3) In 1974, a group of young people came together in *Milli Türk Talebe Birliği* and founded an association called *Akın Group*. They published an assertion stating that they were

going to try to reflect the religious thoughts and life style in cinema in an isolated way from Yeşilçam. (Onaran A., 1994, p.234) In the declaration, the fight of warning citizens who were enslaved by Marxist and Capitalist doctrines and making them regain their essential personalities are stressed. (Uçakan, 2010, p. 178) *Birleşen Yollar* produced by Yücel Çakmaklı in 1970 is the first example of this idea. According to Nejat Özün, National Cinema is a concept created against the “vicious” productions of Yeşilçam and ideological productions of left-winger producers. (İnci, 1996, p.12) After the 1980 coup, the movie production in Turkey had decreased and because of censorship till the mid-80’s there hadn’t been many dissident movies. In this period with the changes in social life style, the themes about the discovery of one’s own self-were mainly used.

Yeşilçam ideology, populism and traditionalism lost their impact as a result of increasing “individualism”. (Boztepe, 2007, p. 160) Within this period, the producers who used to produce political movies before started moving towards different themes. (Boztepe, 2007, p.162) After the 80s, the appearance of new identity politics ended after different social groups had started expressing themselves in public arena. Feminists, environmentalists, homosexuals’ demands for their rights started to be seen in the movies more. The reflections of this situation can especially be seen in the women movies. The woman figure, which had been represented as an angel or devil till 80s in Yeşilçam, changed form and started to be seen as a strong figure who discovers her sexuality. (Esen, 1996, p.23) Şükran Esen (1996) defines this new woman figure as “Woman has eventually become a human. It might have positive and negative characteristics like a normal human being. She thinks, resists, desires sexual pleasure, makes effort to be a good mum while trying to be successful at work.” (Esen, 1996, p. 23) In the second half of the 80s, with the decreasing pressure and censorship, movies about September 16th started to be produced. In these movies, the themes such as the psychological effects of the military coup, the adaptation efforts of the people who got released from prison, internal feud about the pre-coup period were used.

In the studies made in Turkey on the history of dissident cinema, an idea becomes prominent stating that a dissident cinema cannot be mentioned till the 1960's. We can say that with the beginning of socio-realist films' being produced in

the 1950's political cinema culture has started through the themes like poverty, paternalist relationships, underdevelopment on the other hand after 1960's by benefiting from 1961 constitution's relatively convenient environment for freedom of thought and expression dissident cinema makers had conflicts with the government's official ideology and sensitivities like İslamism, Revolutionism, Nationalism. Even if this process was interrupted by The 1980 coup it would continue by the midst of 1980's.

2.3. NEW TURKISH CINEMA / NEW DISSIDENT CINEMA

The term of “New Turkish Cinema” is a result of the efforts towards the history of Turkish cinema's periodization. It separates the movies shot after the second half of 90s from the ones in earlier years by showing structural and thematic transformations as a reason. While Yavuz Turgul’s Movie *Eşkîya* (1996) is shown as the first example of popular cinema side, Derviş Zaim’s movie *Tabutta Röveşata* (1996) is accepted as a starting point of art movies side. (Suner, 2006, p. 34-37) The period when these films were produced was the time of new social movements, the conflict in the context of the effort and capital lost its significance on the other hand themes such as identity, status, humanism, spiritualism, ethnical, religious and sexual identities were put in the centre. (Altunoğlu, 2009, p. 321) Meanwhile in Turkey, this period was a time when people started to raise their voice against the official ideology, the discussions about the identities, memories, and losses of subordinate groups increased, religious communities subordinate by constituent ideology were carried from the side to the centre, discussions on the new constitution became widespread. Some groups have benefited from the discussions of the constituent values to transform the official ideology; on the other hand, as a result of questioning the legitimacy of some conventional values, these discussions have deepened the feeling of ambiguity and monachopsis in some other groups. With the effects of globalization, this situation has caused an intertwinement and sometimes a conflict of various values and sacred. According to Asumen Suner (2006), “New Turkish Cinema” always turns back to the theme of belonging and tells the story of instabilities and conflicts in both popular and art movies segments. Suner, explains

her proposition with the help of “ghost house” metaphor. “Ghost house is a belonging concept which is dreamed, desired, longed for, dreamed as once possessed, idealized, remembered with the feeling of nostalgia and converted to a romantic image.” (p. 15-16) Suner, discusses the belonging crisis in Turkey and the reasons behind this crisis by linking the ghost house figure and homeland concept. The drastic change of Turkish community with the effort of being a part of the globalized world is one of the reasons of this crisis. In this regard, Suner sees the 1980 coup as a turning point. After the 1980's new social movements, new identity policies and new figures in public sphere emerged on the other hand since 1990's it has been seen that groups owning different ethnical and religious identities started to carry their own world vision to the area of politics. (Suner, 2006, p. 19-21) According to Suner, the main problem of new political movies is the issue of belonging and identity and national belonging issue has been problematized in such a way for the first time. (Suner, 2006, p. 256-257) When New Turkish Cinema and Yeşilçam Cinema are compared this disintegration can be seen more clearly. In addition to Yeşilçam cinema's not being homogeneous, it is a cinema in which social types are represented in an appropriate way for the official ideology's point of view where the poor and the rich, the rural and the urban people are connected with marriage bond in the end. As a result, different categories, different conflicts such as ethnic references cannot be seen. Yeşilçam narration finds solutions which are parallel to official ideology, it repeats the solutions in different scenarios and reinforces them and with the concepts of “family” and “nation” in the centre it forms a belonging apprehension. Although New Turkish Cinema has a multi-voiced and dialogical cinema language letting different groups and traumas who did not have representation opportunity before because of being oppressed by the official ideology and letting different ideas to have conflict, it is in a line questioning the belongings produced before rather than producing new ones. In this context, Asuman Suner points out that new political Turkish cinema's thematic and structural connection with independent transnational cinema is stronger compared to the national cinema in Turkey. (Suner, 2006, p.257)

Transforming from national cinema to transnational cinema also means discussing the controversial values in national culture and national cinema again. On

the other hand, this situation is not peculiar to Turkey. In the period when new Turkish Cinema emerged, especially in Europe cinemas like diaspora Cinema, accented cinema, immigrant cinema, diaspora cinema which could be evaluated in different categories were produced. These movies are not only accepted in national cinemas in their own countries, but they also have an identity, which gets beyond the limits of national culture and unsettles the official ideology. According to Dissanayake (1983) when dissident film producers try to express the life, experiences and hopes of ethnic, religious and linguistic minority groups, the homogeneity and legalized meta narration of nation state gets harmed and cultural diversity idea stands out. (p.18, from: Yaren, 2007, 53) Özgür Yaren (2007) mentions that the periods when the nation and national culture were accepted as stable concepts ended and hybrid cinema which cannot be labelled as national is not exceptional anymore. (p.24-32) With its transnational character, New Turkey Cinema provides an opportunity to discuss the social traumas and losses which official ideology never allows to be discussed. At this point the theme “reckon with the past” shines out. Film producers try to restructure the cultural recollection again with the films they make. Dilara Balcı Gürpınar (2016), draws attention to the fact that film producers have found a chance to reckon with the past for the first time in the recent movies. According to Gürpınar, dissident filmmakers started trying to interpret the history of Republic of Turkey from the minorities’ perspectives. In this context, the emphasis was put on the traumatic experiences, which alienated and excluded minority groups had to face with and non-Muslim people were not defined as enemies but victims for the first time. (p. 213-216) Sevcan Sönmez defines New Turkish Cinema as a cinema which questions the nationalist, militarist, male-dominated, segregationist dominant idea, which gives place to the topics dominated and not discussed for years and which addresses to the realities of multinational, multi-cultural lands. According to Sönmez, New Turkish Cinema means discussing the ethnic topics in the movies, dealing with all ethnic traumas and discriminations, researching these traumas, highlighting the minorities’ hidden pains, questioning the supreme and noble values, letting them be interpreted again, destroying the conventional representations, and digging the national memory. (p. 13-14) Ahmet Ergenç (2016), emphasizes the function of movies produced by Yeşim Ustaoglu, Özcan Alper, Hüseyin Karabey,

Kazım Öz, Sedat Yılmaz, Mizgin Müjde Arslan and Taylar Aydın as setting a counter history (p.113), on the other hand, Hüseyin Köse and Özgür İpek, (2016) defines New Turkish Cinema in the context of subalternity. New Turkish Cinema, described as a kind of diaspora cinema by them, gives them a chance to put the minorities and subalterns who haven't been a part of Turkish Cinema for years in the centre. In this regard, Köse and İpek, try to embody the subjects of New Turkish Cinema:

(...)excambium victims, poets who live in the edges of formal cultural life, marginalized left wing organization member youngsters, homosexuals targeted by lynch groups, elders who are apathy victims, unemployed workers, scapegoat neighbours criticized because of their life styles, religions or beliefs, women who are seen as second-class citizens as a result of male-dominated community, nonbelievers who find different explanations from the majority of the community, anarchists who refuse to be dependent on legitimate and obligatory laws of established system, poor and homeless people, anti-militarists and conscientious objectors who refuse to go to the army in the most innocent period of their lives and accept this idea as an ethical principle...etc. (pp.11-15)

2.4. WHOM DO NEW DISSIDENT MOVIES TALK TO?

Dissident film makers tell the story of people and groups whose losses are seen as worthless by the official ideology. This process can also be seen as a part of the recognition struggle of the people and subordinate groups. However, in the reviews made for dissident films, this situation is underestimated on a large scale. In the studies made, while reviews on films' characters, themes and what industrial and socio-political circumstances they emerged take more place, films' relationship with audience and reviews on their interpretation processes are not widely seen. A study in this context requires a discussion on the politics of narration rather than a "reception analysis" At this point, who the message is structured for gains importance. Who tells what to whom with what kind of a narrating politics and representation strategy? A debate in this direction can also provide to question the distinction between popular cinema and dissident cinema, which puts the dissident cinema into a narrow audience profile and to reevaluate the dissident messages found in popular cinema. A debate in this direction was made by Asuman Suner in a study called *Haunted House* (2006) Suner discusses who the new political films are addressed to. According to Suner there is a disunited audience reaction against the films. Disunity is originated from the conflict between the positive criticism and the

low audience number. While these movies get credits and international awards abroad, they don't get the expected reactions in Turkey. This is caused mainly by the manipulation of media. (p. 287) Lale Han Öcal discusses these different reactions by taking the film funds and festivals into the centre. According to Öcal (2013), non-Western narratives are formed with orientalism on their own. Festivals and film funds support these movies for ideological reasons. Öcal explains this situation as "narrative negotiation" and mentions that these movies highlight the local, cultural and ethnic elements and poverty as it is dictated. Öcal claims that the movies present themes which are desired by the Western audience. (Öcal, 2013, p. 180) The "narrative negotiation" used by Öcal provides an opportunity to discuss a politics of narration. Öcal implies that these movies are structured for the Western audience. The movies produced in Turkey are not required to address the Turkish audience but ignoring the Turkish audience perception causes the current situation of dissident cinema; dissident movies are neglected and they are far from recognition for struggle.

Dissident cinema is a great opportunity for forming a counter history to reveal the historical truths and traumas of which representations were prevented by sovereign power. On the other hand, transmitting the messages produced by dissident cinema to wider masses is an aim of the struggle for recognition. In this respect, discussing the potential contributions of language of dominant narratives to the dissident narratives becomes crucial. Here, language of dominant narratives means the codes of the popular cinema demanded by large masses, and politics of emotion which forms this language. Umut Tümay Arslan maintains a discussion about this topic in her article *Popüler Sinema ve Sol Siyaset*. According to Arslan, it is important to produce alternative forms and discourses outside the popular culture field, but "left" should also create popular narratives that respond to concern, anxiety, and need for social compassion. As long as "left wing" does not create alternative narratives, the common representations will be always dominant. Arslan's article is built on the thesis that dissident cinema ignores the dominant narration forms and emotion politics. Ryan and Kellner (1997) who tackle the relationship between popular culture and left politics, mention in their study that left wing politics can solve their problem about political impact only with developing a modifier and

multi directional representation strategy related to popular cinema. According to Ryan and Kellner, although left wing cinema activists who are more educated and whose cultural level is “higher” were able to create a variety by producing pieces in their own cultural interests such as documentary and avant-garde modernism, this variety could not be diffused into dominant main stream narrations. Ryan and Kellner claim that left wing politics lose its chance to be effective by being harsh on “political truth” cinema and banning the audience’s pleasure. (p. 438) Approaches of Arslan, Ryan and Kellner reminds again, the use and intention of reaching a wide audience by problematizing a dissident cinema understanding which denies narrative structure that aims reaching to a broad audience. Discussing the political truth approach brings the strategic expressions and representational politics forward. According to Tül Süalp (2009) being visible and narratable or revealing and expressing yourself means different encounters; disagreements and struggles. (Süalp, 2009, p. 36) According to Stuart Hall, culture is such an arena that both dominant and covertly maintained and recessive ones struggle to exist, to rise, to be effective or to suppress the other one. (From: Süalp, 2009, p. 36) “Covertly maintained and recessive” expressions used by Hall highlight the fact that the struggles against the dominance are not always maintained explicitly. The struggle includes a process like a negotiation, where expressions and norms of dominant are accepted for a while. Within this context, dissident cinema can be interpreted in this regard too. Using various representational strategies, dissident film producers try to give their messages by surpassing the direct interventions of dominants, such as censorship, or the dominations in their distribution network. For this reason, dissident cinema might sometimes put forward the values and norms accepted by the dominant groups to be able to gain recognition instead of being fictionalized with an explicit protest. Similar to this, using the codes of main stream cinema can be seen as a part of this recognition struggle. This approach can be interpreted with the relationship between popular culture and dissident cinema created by Arslan, Ryan and Kellner. All of these propositions revive a different way of opposition and resistance. In this context, it can be beneficial to mention the dominance and opposition analysis of J.C. Scott, which explains the dissident discourse in detail. According to Scott (2014), political lives of subordinate groups do not consist of neither a collective defiance nor

hegemonic compliance, mostly it takes part between these two opposite poles. (p. 210) Herein, Scott brings up the “public transcript” and “hidden transcript” terms. While Scott interprets the public transcript as a system of discourse designed to affirm and naturalise the power of the dominant elites; the hidden transcript is defined as a political culture that the subordinate groups produce for the listeners different from the public transcript behind the stage where they can gather far away from the power. According to Scott, there is a third area of discourse outside these areas. This area can be defined as a "sterilised", more "legitimate" version of the hidden transcript and double meaning includes a politics of disguise and anonymity to hide the identity and intentions of the actors. Therefore, dissident discourse is defined as a mask hiding the real intentions and as a theatrical necessity. (p. 28) According to Scott, most of the rumours, gossips, legends, jokes, songs, rituals answer this description. While this approach criticizes the analysis such as consent, false consciousness, devotion in hegemonic discussions, it also gives an opportunity to analyse the popular culture productions, which were structured with the official ideology's norms, in terms of their dominated narration strategies and recognition struggles.

In this study, I interpret İftarlık Gazoz film with the context of dissident discourse strategies which are discussed by Scott. My effort does not have a claim of revealing the “actual” intentions of the film. Even if the intentions of the film's creators were expressed by their own words, how the film is interpreted by different groups will be controversial. On the other hand, analysing the movie in the third area, which is in between public and hidden transcript will create a chance to discuss the dissident representation politics.

CHAPTER 3

POLITICS OF LOSS AND MOURNING IN “İFTARLIK GAZOZ” FILM

Through the example of *İftarlık Gazoz* film, in this chapter I discuss how dissident representation strategies can produce an opportunity for the death fasting peoples labelled as “lives with worthless loss” to become “precarious” “grievable” lives.

I develop my discussion from three points. First discussion is on the the framing of a life with a “worthy loss” and framing it in accordance with "social norms" and “norms of similarity”. The second one is related to the connection between “a life worthy of being lived” and the sanctity and political character of life. In this, the “sacred life” and “bare life” debates by Agamben are built upon “zoe” and “bios”. The third discussion is that the norms and values put forward by the dominant ideology are used by subordinate groups in a political agenda to serve the recognition struggle.

At the centre of the discussion is the representation of Adem's character, the lead character of *İftarlık Gazoz*, who lost his life on the 61st day of the death fasting. I consider the death fasting people as a group who were repeatedly left outside the boundaries of "acceptable citizenship" at different times in the history of Turkey and whose loss has been considered worthless. In this respect, the differentiating ideologies of the death fasting people are not determinative of my debate.

One of the reasons for the selection of *İftarlık Gazoz* film to address the loss and mourning politics is that the film differs from many recent opposition films produced in relation to the social norms. This is particularly evident in the use of religious themes. The film consists of the themes such as worship, fasting, Ramadan, redemption, sin, which have not found much place in films other than Islamic films in Turkey. Hodja, the Muslim preacher, in the film is represented as a respected figure of the society. I consider this as a possibility to reach the religious sections of the society and overcome the problem of the marginalised perception of the character. The idea in this direction is also reflected in the film commentaries with negative criticism for the film in media. Gülcan Tezcan for example, commented on the use of religious themes in the film in her column published in Star Newspaper:

To be fair, the film contains strong and beautiful messages about respect for religion and believers. At least the secular spectators watching *İftarlık Gazoz* come out of cinema with the knowledge that during Ramadan, while Muslims are fasting, eating and drinking in the open areas are at least discourtesy and disrespect. Of course the only teaching that affects film's main male character, Adem, is not only the discipline that Hasan told and read. In the Qur'an course he went to, what hodja tells about Ramadan, teaches Adem a lesson about being a worshiper that transforms man in the way of being a human being. (*Gülcan Tezcan, İftarlık Gazoz: Oruç Bilinci mi, Solculuk Güzellemesi mi?, Star, 6 February 2016*)

Another element that separates the film from the recently produced opposition films is that the ideological differences are represented as a natural part of everyday life and that a dialogic language is created by including opposite views in the film. The setting of the film is a town in which sometimes different views clash but this does not cause the people to dissociate. The townspeople are constructed like a big family who managed to stay together despite differences of opinion as seen in the films of Yeşilçam. This is supported by the use of positively coded themes in the cultural memory, such as nostalgic songs, to create the sense for the common losses of the "community". In the film, people who have different beliefs and opinions live in peace and harmony. Even after many years the inhabitants of the town come together at the funeral of Adem. The loss of Adem's character is represented as the common loss of the town. This also gives specific clues about the elements that film opposes. In a period when the society is divided into ideological camps, the film highlights, hybridity and multivocality against homogenisation and disaggregation. While this situation is supported by the use of local motives, "Anatolian Muslim understanding" is especially emphasised. *İftarlık Gazoz* produces a reality in which the football, cinema and worship could live together; a clear communication between the religious clergy and citizens drinking alcohol could be possible. This angle was also the subject of debate in film critics. For example, in her article entitled, *Riyakar bir film: İftarlık Gazoz*² Nagehan Alçı implies that the film supported an Islamic interpretation under the name "Aegean Islam":

During the Bush's time, the US described a desirable Muslim by the "moderate Islam" concept. In our case, the Western circles supposedly describe acceptable religions under the name of "Aegean Islam". It will be tolerant to alcoholic beverages, will accept everyone as he/she is, etc. You learn to accept the world outside yourself first! Stop trying to liken religionists to yourself! Stop imagining this society different from it actually is! Instead of being an orientalist outer eye, look inside the land you come from... Unfortunately, in "*İftarlık Gazoz*" and later comments there is a desire to adjust the religious majority of this country. Last week, we met Prof. Dr. Mehmet Görmez, President of Religious Affairs, at breakfast.

² A Hypocritical Movie: *İftarlık Gazoz*

There, Görmez complained about the diligence about the Religious Affairs in the media and the efforts to disgrace it, and he talked about the efforts to embarrass the believers. I saw a similar effort in the subtext of “İftarlık Gazoz”. The struggle for “civilised” religious people. Or a message “to be” in the “Ak Party” Turkey they imagined as a uniform type. (Nagehan Alçı, Riyakar bir film: İftarlık Gazoz, Milliyet, 2 February 2016)

In another review the film was described as “the cinematic counterpart of the ‘Anticapitalist Muslim’ and ‘Left Islam’ theses, which became more visible during the gezi movement” (*Gülcan Tezcan, İftarlık Gazoz: Oruç Bilinci mi, Solculuk Güzellemesi mi?, Star, 6 February 2016*)

These comments, of course, varied according to the context in which the film was addressed. For example, Sadık Albayrak, comments that the film looks at the society and history consciously, honestly, with love, and with class conscious and revolutionary perspective. He suggests that the film brings people’s joy, enthusiasm, rudeness and grace. The sense of authenticity developed with class-oriented attitude and a realistic view from the side of empathy, provides an excellent interpretation of the film. (*Sadık Albayrak, İftarlık Gazoz: Yüksel Aksu’dan devrimcilere saygı duruşu, İleri Haber, 5 March 2016*)

As the differences in the critics reveal the interpretation of a film is a highly subjective process. In this work, I am more interested in what kind of representation strategy may have been pursued to transform the criminalised lives into “life worthy of being lived” and “lives with worthy loss”. I argue that the film has created a legitimate possibility by using social norms and similarity norms. These schemes can be assessed in the context of J.C. Scott’s (2014) dissident discourse strategies. J.C. Scott considers the dissident politics as a performance, a mask hiding essential intentions, and a theatrical necessity. In a similar manner, İftarlık Gazoz follows the mainstream narrative codes, mainstream cinematic sense of emotion, and use humour. The lead actor, Cem Yılmaz, is one of the popular figures of Turkey, known with his comedic identity and played the main characters in many popular films. The film was on the main distribution networks, and was also promoted and discussed about in mainstream television programs.

In the following after giving a brief summary of the film, I, firstly, discuss the portrayal of death fasting people in Turkey by taking into account the main character’s political identity. I provide a perspective on how the “lives with worthless loss” are constructed in Turkey by including the discourses on the exclusion of the

death fasting people and groups by looking at the newspaper commentaries. I then discussed the representation of Adem's character, in the film. As Adem's character is presented more in his childhood throughout the film, I have also included a discussion on the concept of childhood and the innocence of the child; how this modern rhetoric provides functions for political purposes; and how this opportunity could be used in cinema. In the film, the appearance of the character as a child creates a possibility for the construction of “life worthy of being lived”.

Secondly, I discuss the use of the nostalgia theme in the film that produced the possibilities for Adem's character as a “social loss”. I talk about the “melancholy of the rural” and “the lost town” themes which have been rising in Turkey in recent years. Thirdly, I placed a discussion about the death of the main character by creating opportunities for character's sanctification and gaining justification. I talk about the sanctification function of sacrifice. Finally, I problematize the recognition struggle in the film through concepts such as “infantilization” and “pathos”.

3.1. A CHARACTER WITH A WORTHLESS LOSS: ADEM

Adem's character lives in an Aegean town in the 1970s. He is a successful student in the fifth grade. As it is summer holiday, he starts to work as an apprentice of a soda seller. While he works, he becomes friend with Hasan, the son of the landlord, and also the Dev-Sol (Revolutionary Left) member. For Adem Hasan represents different ideas, and values than the majority of the town. Hasan gives Adem books to read and increase his class consciousness. As Adem continues to work as apprentice, Ramadan month starts. When Adem finds out that the girl he likes from the school is fasting, he also wants to fast. But his family opposes to these ideas on the ground that he is too young for this. Therefore he decides to fast secretly. He tries to sell sodas as he tries to cope with hunger and the summer heat. He tries to keep in mind the information he heard from others that if he breaks fasting, he has to fast for 61 days to make up for it. After a long and difficult day, he falls asleep by the fountain. Under the influence of the dream he had, by forgetting that he is fasting, he drinks one of the sodas he carries with him. Edhan (call for prayer) is recited after a short while and Adem realises that he broke fasting early.

On his way home, people ask Adem where Hasan is. Adem takes these people to the farm where his family works. The people in the car shoot Hasan. About ten years after this, we see Adem in a prison while death fasting. At the end of the 61st day Adem dies in the month of Ramadan. The town hall bid farewell to his last journey. The first appearance of Adem in the film is, in the prison when he is fasting, and carried on a stretcher for doctor intervention. The loudspeakers in the prison are playing the song titled *Türkiyem (My Turkey)* voiced by *Müşerref Akay*, one of the symbolic songs of the 1980s used during tortures in prisons. While the prison was constructed with the images of the official ideology, the sale of food seems to be directed at breaking the actions of death fasting prisoners. The guards selling food were represented in a cheerful and pleasant way, unlike the death-fasting people. Some guards are humming the song *Türkiyem*. In this context, the narrative frames Adem, the death-fasting, against the official ideology. This narration in the film coincides with the perception of the death fasting in Turkey. At this point, it will be useful to take a look at the history of the death-fasting people and groups in Turkey and to make the function of the loss and mourning politics of the film clear. The history of hunger strikes in Turkey dates back to the early 1980s and public debates on the hunger strikes also start in 1980s. In 1982 the first death fast was witnessed. Four prisoners lost their lives as a result of hunger strike for forty-three days, to protest the torture and conditions in Diyarbakır Prison. (Akkoç, 2012 from: Ova, 2013, p. 107) Political detainees in Istanbul Metris Prison in 1984 also started a hunger strike against the torture practices and to claim the right to wear civilian clothes instead of prison uniforms. Four people lost their lives when the government did not step back. In 1996, hunger strikes started in Eskişehir Prison to protest cell type application. After 69 days of strike, 12 prisoners lost their lives. The hunger strike, which was the longest and with the highest death rates in Turkey after 1980, started on 20 October 2000. More than 120 prisoners lost their lives in hunger strikes against F-type prisons and anti-terrorism laws. (Özkaya, 2011, p80 from: Ova, 2013, p108) So how do hunger strikes and death fasts were received by Turkish public? Nalan Ova (2013) comments on the perception of the hunger strikes by looking at the discourse in the newspaper commentaries. Ova argues that hunger strikes were framed as a challenge, blackmail and threat to the state. (p. 112)

According to the Ova, hunger strikers are reflected as persons acting with the oppression and enforcement of terrorist organisations, and their requests are seen not as human demands but as political demands. (p.113) In the first chapter, I discussed the political nature of life as being of the important elements to classify a life as a life worthy of being lived or not. This approach is one of the propositions that stand out in Agamben's conceptualisation of "sacred life". According to Agamben (2013), the loss of political character turns life into a "bare life" and thus open to violence. It is also possible to assess the human / political distinction in this context, which stands out in debates about death fasting. Here, the expression of human demands seems like a reference to universal human rights at first glance but it can be interpreted in essence as an expression of a tendency towards political rights and an indirect consequence of abstraction from human rights. Here, Arendt's discussions can be exploited and carried out in the context of the rights of refugees. Arendt (1979) points to the position of refugees as nation-state citizens, stating that they can no longer benefit from human rights when they lost their citizenship:

The of human rights built on the assumptions of a perfect human being was destroyed at the very first moment when people believing it confronted those who had lost all their other qualities and special relations except for them being human beings" (Origins, p. 299) In the nation-state system, the supposedly sacred rights of human beings cannot be protected and they lose their realities when they lose their citizenship rights. (p. 299, from: Agamben, p. 152)

Life that loses political quality, cannot make use of human rights. It is also possible to evaluate the actions of death fasting people as terrorist acts in this context. Death fasts are treated as "acts of violence" so that the violence towards people, is directed against their bodies framed as a threat to the "nation" and the citizenship and political qualities of these persons are made controversial. Nalan Ova, in her work, treats these discourses in "hunger strikes as a violent act" part: "Violence" refers to attacking the unity of the nation. (p. 108) The following expression in the article is remarkable: "With the hunger strikes, the people of Turkey are being put into a death tunnel" (p.115)

Debates about hunger strikes open up the dominance of power over life and the social institution and political potential of the body whereas, it gives specific clues on how "life worthy of being lived" and "lives with worthy loss" are devised. In articles dealing with hunger strikes, the lives of death fasting people are seen as

"worth living" for two reasons. The first reason is a religious reference. The lives of death fasting individuals and groups are valuable because life is "sacred" as it is entrusted to man by God. (İnceođlu, 1998, p. 38, from: Ova, 2013, p. 109). In an article parallel to this idea, Eyüp Can describes the "value" of the body as follows:

The body is the most sacred trust granted to us. No lawsuit can be more sacred than that emancipation. As everyone life is a trust to themselves, no matter the guilt of prisoners in prisons, their life safety in the first place is entrusted to the state. It's aid tomorrow. People who go to the hunger strike in prison are human beings, even supporters of PKK. Let's not sacrifice a single prisoner in the silence of death while sacrificing animals on a sacred day. Make the prisoner live so that the state lives! (Eyüp Can, Mahkûmu Yaşat ki Devlet Yaşasın, Radikal, 24 October 2012)'

The second approach to the "value" of the body and of life is based on citizenship. Death fasting people's losses are valuable because "ultimately" the death fast people are citizens of the Republic of Turkey:

The people on hunger strike are citizens of the Republic of Turkey after all. The state should act like a mother and extend its favourable hand to its citizens; solve this and should not allow citizens to die. They do what they do; Whether they revolt the state, or oppose it, it must act as the mother state.' (Salih Tuna, İdam, Açlık Grevi ve Bisiklet, Yeni Şafak, 14 November 2012)

In the İftarlık Gazoz film, we encounter Adem for the first time as a death fasting person. In this part where much information about character is not given, it will naturally be appreciated that the character is viewed by the audience with social prejudices against the death fasting people and groups. The film continues with the childhood of Adem's character. This time Adem is represented as a "life with worthy loss". In the following part, I have interpreted the process of being constructed as a "life with worthy loss" by considering how Adem's character is represented in his childhood.

3.2 RE-FRAMING WITH SOCIAL NORMS

In the first part, I have presented the debate about the fact that the people and groups whose losses are seen as worthless are considered to be accepted only when they are reframed with social norms and norms of similarity. In this section, I deal with the process of re-framing Adem's character with social norms and norms of similarity. This process can also be interpreted in the context of character's "sanctification" and "gaining legitimacy". In İftarlık Gazoz, the representation of

Adem as a "life with worthy loss" is constructed through the images of his childhood. As is known, the child image has the capacity to create empathy in people and groups of very different ideologies. This is related to the way in which children and childhood are constructed and interpreted in today's society.,

The images of childhood contributes to the legitimization of the character. According to Mine Tan (1989), the child is always a bearer of hope, a part of the desire to defeat humanbeings' own extinction. Childhood is also a social concept and constructed through norms and values as in any other social concepts. (p. 72) Phillipe Aries (1960) points out to the social organisation and the changing character of childhood. According to Aries, the concept of childhood wasn't a matter of discussion before the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There was no separate words to describe children, and art denied child morphology. It was nnly in ancient Greek that childhood was represented in a realistic way. (from: Tan, 1989, 77) Kemal İnan (1999) underlines the transformative influence of the Enlightenment, Renaissance and Reform in the interpretation of childhood. According to İnan, before these developments, children in Europe were perceived as sinner and insignificant entities under the influence of a Christian accent. This situation has begun to change in the fifteenth century. By overcoming the Calvinist sinful child concept, the children were interpreted as pure, clean figures, as sources of innocence and joy. With the saviour child myth, it was thought that the child could serve as a superior asset to the renewal of the social life. Evil and imperfection were connected not to children's nature but to social conditions (pp. 195-197) According to Nazan Çiçek (2012), the child began to appear as a "tabula rasa" bearing a potential of development, born without sin after the seventeenth century in Europe. This new child image was interpreted as a child who needed to be protected, promoted and loved by underlying the innocence, and vulnerability (p. 73) The perception of the child's innocence was not only the result of modern child imagination produced by modernity; it was also influenced by various beliefs and manifestations in culture. In Islam, for example, the child's sense of sinlessness and innocence comes to the forefront. In the Islamic culture, children who did not reach puberty are seen in the same category with children receiving punishment and responsibility, people with mental illnesses and sleeping persons. So they have no legal responsibilities. (Bukhari, 1992 from: Çolak,

2001, p.119)

The understanding of the child's innocence finds place for itself in almost all modern societies whereas it also lays the foundation for the use of child images with political intentions. Hamid Reza Sadr (2002) gives clues about the political functions of children's images in his work on Iranian cinema. According to Sadr, the poetic realism of Iranian cinema was built around the narrative of children. These films aimed to present a social critique without making it too obvious. According to Sadr, this problem had been solved by child characters, and thus the collective critical thoughts were constructed through children's presence. Children were the glorious sculptures of man and woman and functioned as a microcosm of the society, enabling them to talk about unspoken topics and ask questions that could not be asked. This situation of the Iranian cinema should of course be read together with the prohibitions. After the revolution, many actors had to leave their professions in cinema, and singing, dancing, sexual themes in the film were forbidden. (pp. 227-238) According to Karen Lury (2010), Hamid Reza Sadr implied the implicit capacity of children for social criticism. Lury comments that, using children in the cinema is a legitimate way of overcoming various sanctions that restrict the appearance of women in the cinema. By agreeing with Sadr about the potential of the child in for social criticism, Lury emphasizes the Laurent Berlant's concept of "infantile citizen". This concept refers to the tension between children and "infantile citizens", national mythologies and norms. The insistent folly of "infantile citizen" against national mythologies gives it a tremendous power to correct and reconstruct the machine of national life. In this context, Lury expresses that the child has the opportunity to challenge the values of the nation state. (pp. 283-294)

It is not an objective judgment to say that childhood is used for ideological purposes in *İftarlık Gazoz* film, since it can be regarded as an intention reading on behalf of the producers of the film. In the film, however, it can be argued that Adem's childhood has created an opportunity for the character to be framed as a public loss. At this point, the innocence of childhood and understanding towards sinlessness comes into play.

The first framework for the childhood of Adem is established on the scene where Adem runs with the other children in the school. In this scene, Adem

disappears among other children, melts and anonymises in the crowd and he becomes like any other child. The uniforms children wearing also strengthen this perception. This representation can be regarded as part of the representational politics for “normalising” the “marginality” of the character. Adem is just like any other child. Yet, “normalisation” of Adem's character go beyond the construction of Adem as any child. Adem is represented as a child suitable for social ideals. Kemal İnal, in his work titled *The Ideal Child of Paternalist Politics* (1999), deals with the ideal image of a child in the foundation of the Republic. According to İnal, in the establishment process of the Republic, child was approached in a similar way to the establishment of the nation. “Ideal child”, was interpreted within the republican and nationalist values. Instead of what exist, the founding leaders implied what should exist. "Qualities" such as being mentally intelligent and resourceful, being physically beautiful and being able to be strong, being proud in the personality context and being zealous are brought to the forefront. (p. 201) Adem's character may also be framed as a child in the film universe in accordance with the national ideals mentioned. Adem was represented as a proud, honest and contented character on the first scene of character's childhood. He is one of the three students with commendation certificate. Adem is shown as an example to other children by their teachers. He is seen a child to be an engineer or a doctor, the ideal professions of the society. The perception of Adem as a child in accordance with the national ideals is also reinforced in a conversation with the "leftist" youth. Adem answers the young people who ask him what revolution by talking about the “The principle of Atatürk”. This statement suggests that the character prizes the values of the national education policy. Marking Adem as a child with national ideals create an opportunity for his loss to turn into the loss of the nation. The nation might lose a "precious" child, an ideal child, whom it has cultivated.

Another element used in the film to frame the normative scales of Adem's character is the use of religious themes. As it is known, religiosity, which is not regarded as a necessary element to be a “good citizen” after the establishment of the Republic, has reached an important place in the deconstruction of a desirable citizen as a result of a process that started with the AK Party government in the 2000's. Adem is also represented as a pious child, not only a child in accordance with the

national ideals. In the film universe, this image is constructed especially with Adem's character during the month of Ramadan, searching for the ways of fasting despite the pressure of his family and his close surroundings. The character begins to fast secretly, despite all the difficulties that he experienced during the day. He continues to fast until the last moments of the day. Yet, right before the last minute of the fasting Adem forgets about his fast and drink water from the foundation next to him. Child Adem believes that he needs to fast for 61 days to make it up the broken fast. In the film an impression is created that Adem, who accidentally broke his fast pays the penalty of fasting by death fasting. This impression is be strengthened by the fact that the character dies during Ramadan and the funeral of the character is performed by the imam of the town with tears. The faithful personality of the character is an effective factor in representing Adem as a person with social norms accepted by the society. Adem is a faithful child with normative schemas and national ideals. Thus, the loss of Adem's childhood is meant more for the collective mourning scene. This situation enhances the juxtaposition of the collective memory in Turkey with a perception of the loss of childhood, which is already strong. Nurdan Gürbilek (2012), in the text titled *Acıların Çocuğu*³, handles the perception of the loss of childhood in Turkey through a postcard popular in the eighties:

Beside the famous stars, naked women, soldiers and landscapes, there are always painful children's postcards on mobile counters in Şişli, Beşiktaş and Aksaray. Eyes filled with tears, a beautiful face, sad eyes and enduring children's postcards. Twenty years ago, one of them was very famous. It was the picture of a little boy who was twisting his lips desperately, tears rolling down his chubby cheeks. Then posters were made; grocery stores, to coffee shops, to workplaces. Most liked by the long-distance drivers who travelled between the big city and rural areas. The child looked at us with teary eyes for a long time from the giant poster hanging on the rear windows of intercity buses in those years. He doesn't look like loser, brunette, neglected country boys that symbolised the pain and ignorance in this country. He had smoothly scratched hair, big blue eyes, clean clothes, a bright face. He came from a good family, rather than being born into pain, he was exposed to pain afterwards. (p.37)

Gürbilek, presents the poster's popularity by explaining that people are not opposed to the child as cruel adults but rather as oppressed and victimised, putting themselves in the place of the child. People are watching their own pain in the face of the poster and they are in fact pitiful to themselves. The boy in the poster; becomes the symbol of the innocent victim, the punishment of the innocent and victim of an unfair law. (p.39) Gürbilek continues by arguing that the poster child is

³ "Children in Times of Pain"

a blonde boy:

As for the blondness of the kid on the postcard: At least in this example, the Turkish society seems to have found the sad child hero not to his own brunette children, who remind him of the true causes of his childishness, as the Eastern, the underdeveloped and the poor, but on the face of a Western boy's face, for the reasons we don't know. Just like smiley blonde boys in children's books, blue-eyed chubby children who appear on baby products or babies ads, Yeşilçam's clean-faced street children, Ömercik, Sezercik or Yumurcak; despite the orphanage on this face, it is purified from all spiritual dirt, ambition or violence caused by suffering during childhood. A grieving but resilient and suffering but honourable image, free from all the negative emotions that accompanied the pain, was also a metaphor of social pain to the degree that it was frozen. (p 39-40)

Gürbilek's comments indicates that "national fantasies" are also effective in the sociality of suffering and loss. Adem character in *İftarlık Gazoz* is represented as one of the "beautiful children" mentioned by Gürbilek, and is a candidate to become a "connection object" for a past loss of the community, just like the "crying child" on the postcard. In *İftarlık Gazoz* film, the schemes for framing Adem's character as a "life with worthy loss", "precarious" character can also be read through the characters around Adem's character. Adem's family and the community serve to purify the "marginality" of the character in the viewer's perception. In the film, Adem's family is described as poor, labourer, honest, religious, and modest. This perception is strengthened when the family is defined by the police as "familiar and harmless". Cibbar Kemal, who worked as an apprentice with Adem, is also represented as a loved character by the community. When town people have a problem, they come to Cibbar Kemal character. Cibbar Kemal plays the intermediary role in solving the problems. Cibbar Kemal is also represented as a "good citizen". This view becomes clear in a scene where Cibbar Kemal explains his political views. In a debate with "leftist" youth, Cibbar Kemal expresses to marginalised left-wing youth that "there is no need for extremism while the Halk Partisi (People' Party) is standing": "God created the world, Atatürk saved the homeland." The town Adem lives serves to the "normalisation" process of his character. The town is framed as a place where people live in a mutual love and respect. Citizens and state officials live in harmony in the town. Especially the theme of tolerance comes to the forefront. Despite the occasional debate, nobody forces anybody to change their political opinions and beliefs. This is particularly evident in the dialogue between the Imam character and the citizens drinking alcohol and in the conversations between the leftist young people and religious labourers. Religious regulations are occasionally

stretched due to the simple needs of daily life, such as watching a film, or football match on the television. For instance, the Ezan (call for prayer) is delayed from time to time for cinema, or the duration of prayer is shortened for football matches. The representation of the space in this way is important for the legitimacy of Adem character. Adem, his family and people in his hometown are represented in accordance with social norms and national ideals. From this point of view, it can be said that the film creates an appropriate basis for empathy, sympathy and identification for the audience, legitimization of Adem for the national mourning, and sanctification of the character.

3.3. NOSTALGIA THEME AND LOSS POLITICS

Another element I think is effective in framing Adem's character as a "life with worthy loss" in *İftarlık Gazoz* is the use of the nostalgia theme. According to Özge Özgüden (2006), the weakening of the traditional family structure in Turkey, especially in urban regions, brought a transition from traditional ties to modern ties and a longing for the past. This situation created a serious emotional tension in many parts of the society. As a consequence, popular nostalgia films in recent years established a hesitant relationship with the past and the rural; the past and home are usually constructed as melancholic and pleasant areas. (p. 203) Asuman Suner (2006) argues that the purity and innocence are associated with goodness and the "haunted house" themes in the popular films of recent years. This haunted house is often placed in the countryside and identified with the past and childhood. (p. 49) According to Suner, the rural environment in nostalgia films is structured like a big family environment with a small, outwardly closed, sincere structure, similar to *İftarlık Gazoz* film; it is conceived of as a "sheltered shell", which protects the person from the problems of the external world, and which has a sense of familiarity and sincerity. (p. 60) The towns of the provinces, while being somewhat sad, are never constructed as gloomy and dark. On the contrary, it is often very joyful and fun. On the other hand, this image of happiness carries some kind of fragility. (pp. 59-60) According to Suner, in nostalgia films, the happiness that defines rural life is well thought out to be not long, and an anticipation of an upcoming change is produced. Suner therefore points out that the narrative structures of nostalgic films are based on

a secret before / after and internal / external opposition:

The “happiness” atmosphere established in the movies belongs to the former, and it is the “evil” that will trace it personally as a period of “happiness”. The disappearance of the end of happiness and the disappearance of innocence (childhood) always comes from an external intervention. The harmonious integrity, purity and sincerity from the inside is destroyed by an evil force from the outside. In each film the story ends at the point where innocent childhood, hidden in the sheltered shell of the town, ends with an external intervention, and when the protective shell of the house is irreparably fragmented. (p. 61)

Suner's and Özgüden's comments on the nostalgia cinema in Turkey point to a lost past and a collective melancholy. The town in the country has been lost. The nostalgia cinema itself is built on this loss. In *İftarlık Gazoz* film, the town is constructed as a "place of happiness" too. This perception is supported by themes such as nostalgic songs and summer theatres encoded in positive memory in the cultural memory; people eat at large feasts, work in harmony in large groups, they worship together whereas negative events in the same period in Turkey are excluded from the town image. The happiness and peace of mind in the film world will be deteriorated by those who are coming from “outside”, as Suner has stated. Thus, while a town of happiness is lost, the town is framed with other losses in the cultural memory. It is not only the lost town, but also the “social childhood” as used by Asuman Suner. In this context, loss is social. Thus, Adem's character, the character at the centre of a fictional town and the metaphor of childhood's lost happiness, can be framed with other losses in the cultural memory. Thus, the loss of Adem is articulated in the loss of a time, a place, a chance to stay together and a multicultural life.

3.4. THE POLITICS OF VICTIMISATION AND ADEM'S CHARACTER AS A VICTIM

Many dissident narratives in New Turkish Cinema end with the death of their main characters. *İftarlık Gazoz* film also finished with the death of Adem, death fasting character. It is possible to interpret this situation in terms of putting it in the form of a dissident representation strategy, which emphasises mercy and compassion. On the other hand, these deaths in opposition films can also be read through a kind of symbolic sacrifice mechanism. Victimisation creates a suitable ground for a character to be viewed as a “grievable” loss. According to Agamben

(2006), the act of sacrifice brings an initial story to the legislative body of the community that has yet to occur. The victim forms the foundation and history of the community. On the other hand, sacrificing, which is killing, is a way of sanctifying life. (pp. 162- 163, from: Tuğrul, 2010, p. 109) According to Saime Tuğrul (2010), the community is based on common violence; social unification is possible through “sacred tremor”. After the shock created by the killing process comes unification; after the act of guilt comes restoration; after demolition comes rebuilding. Everything that needs to be sustained starts with a sacrifice action. (pp. 133-134) According to Rene Girard (2003), sacrifice is primarily aimed at eliminating disputes, rivalries, jealousy, disputes between relatives and to rebuild community harmony, to rebuild social unity. (p.11, Tuğrul, 2010, p. 114) Saime Tugrul points out the relation of the sacrificial mechanism to the concepts of separation / unification and inside / outside. It is the basic character of sacrificial rites are that both the resemblance and the uniqueness of the victim, and the acceptance of it from outside the community to the inside. In this context, the person to be sacrificed is first subjected to “otherness” and violence. Then it is taken back into being accepted as sacred by the act of killing. (Tuğrul, 2010, p.127) Tuğrul's approach provides a perspective on the relation of sacrificial function to sanctification. It can be said that the death of the character Adem in the İftarlık Gazoz film serves to “sanctify” the character.

3.5. RECOGNITION STRUGGLE IN “İFTARLIK GAZOZ” FILM

Charles Taylor (1996) states that identity is shaped, in part, by recognition or its non-recognition, and often by misrecognition of others. For this reason, “non-recognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being” (p. 42) This viewpoint constitutes the dominant paradigm, especially in the cultural studies literature. For this reason, studies on the representation of “other” are common in the literature of recent cultural studies. For example, according to feminist theoreticians, women are pushed to adopt a humiliating image of themselves by patriarchal society. The imagery built on the woman's secondary position is so

internalised that even if the objective obstacles to women's progress are removed from the centre, women may not be able to benefit from new possibilities and they are condemned to suffer the loss of their self-esteem. (Taylor, 1996, p. 42) This similar debate continues on black people. According to this view, the white society presents a humiliated image of their long-suffering black people. Some blacks have not been able to resist this image and see themselves as unworthy, turns this into the most powerful tool in the pursuit of their oppressed position. (Taylor, 1996, p. 43) At this point self-representation emerges as an essential means of overcoming epistemological violence. According to Judith Butler (2013), “who gain representation, especially self-representation, have a better chance of being humanized, and those who have no chance to represent themselves run a greater risk of being treated as less than human, regarded as less than human, or indeed, not regarded at all.” (p.143) On the other hand, self-representation is not enough for the recognition struggle because recognition struggle will again be directed to the “other”’s consciousness and gaze. Tül Akbal Süalp (2008) expresses this situation as follows: “Those who want to talk and make a voice find themselves forced to use the method of comparison and language used by the dominant and determinant side. It is a necessity for them to be understood and to make their troubles comprehensible. ”(pp. 33-34) On the other hand, this does not always mean the victory of the dominant groups; it is possible to interpret subordinate groups using the language of the powerholders and instrumentalizing them as a part of the recognition struggle. In the second chapter, I addressed a discourse that does not overlook the language and the gaze of the powerholders but is not condemned to this language and view via J.C. Scott’s (2014) approach. According to Scott's approach, the discourses and sayings of subordinate groups differ as those towards powerholders and towards the ones within the group. A similar approach that separates the discourses of people and groups also takes place in William Randall's work *The Stories That Make Us* (2014). According to Randall, the individual and group discussions for them consist of four layers. One of these layers is the way people tell their stories to others. Each layer predicts a different viewer / reader and story. (p. 80) In this context, the characters of İftarlık Gazoz film seem to be meaningful in framing social norms and norms of similarity in the name of

legitimacy in the “public transcript” (i.e. re-framing the legitimate language of the dominant groups). Indeed, it is not possible for a dissident cinema to serve as a recognition struggle ignoring social norms and prevailing cultural values because the potential watchers of the dissident cinema, who have established their conscience and political preferences over the values and norms of the powerholders, seem to have embraced the values that the official ideology put forward. *İftarlık Gazoz* film has a different appearance in this respect than the opposition films produced in the last period. By establishing a language that does not completely exclude the public transcript, the film has become visible and a matter of debate, even in media that operate in parallel to the official ideology, unlike many opposing examples *İftarlık Gazoz: Oruç Bilinci mi, Solculuk Güzellemesi mi?* article published by Gülcan Tezcan in Star Newspaper, points to the language of the film is peaceful with “society” values. While Tezcan interprets this situation in the history of Turkish cinema, she also opens a special parenthesis to the relationship with film’s religion:

With the rise of cinematographers, directors, screenwriters and actors of Anatolian origin in our cinema, visible differences in the Istanbul-based sector have begun to emerge. Due to the identity problem that we have experienced in a hundred years of history - except for a few directors like Mehmet Erksan, Lütfi Akkad and Halit Refiğ - we cannot keep a language that is peaceful enough with its values, whereas there has been a serious break since the 1990s. Yeşilçam traditionally left its place to a different and much more individual cinema. In this process, filmmakers who are fed from Anatolian culture carry a peaceful attitude with their own identities and carry these “local” tones that are necessary for a cinema with identity. Yılmaz Erdoğan; The late Ahmet Uluçay who left a firm yeast with a single film; Çağan Irmak and Yüksel Aksu are the most known names on this line.

...

To be fair, the film contains strong and beautiful messages about respect for religion and believers. At least the secular spectators watching *İftarlık Gazoz* come out of cinema with the knowledge that during Ramadan, while Muslims are fasting, eating and drinking in the open areas are at least discourtesy and disrespect. Of course the only teaching that affects film’s main male character, Adem, is not only the discipline that Hasan told and read. In the Qur’an course he went to, what hodja tells about Ramadan, teaches Adem a lesson about being a worshiper that transforms man in the way of being a human being. (*Star*, 6 February 2016)

Tezcan's article, in addition to a personal opinion and negative criticism, gives clues about that the new opposition films have reached a “conservative” audience profile, unlike any other. *İftarlık Gazoz* film that creates a reality in accordance with the public transcript and it can be problematized in the context of accepting the language

imposed by the dominant ideology. On the other hand, I think that a criticism in this respect comes from ignoring the political agendas and strategies of the parties, interpreting the struggle/negotiation between the powerholders and the subordinate groups a politically correct line. The struggle for recognition is not a process in which the views and consciousness of the powerholders are ignored. These kinds of struggles are often carried out within the linguistic system that the sovereign power constructs while it involves an open or under-handed negotiation process. In this context, has a dialogic character.

Another aspect that can be problematized in the context of the for recognition struggle is the assertion that the representation of Adem's character through childhood is an opportunity to be seen as a “grievable” character. This proposition can be problematized in the context of the concept of “infantilization” in the literature of cultural studies. For example, Issac Julien and Kobana Mercer (1994) argue that the white master, in his works, treat black man slaves as “boys”; black women athletes still called “girls”_and that the majority of South American whites are “boys” in adult black men. This means that such processes of “infantilization” can be read through a castration function. (pp. 137-138, from: Kirel, 2010, p.374) Dibyesh Anand (2007) In his work of centralising Tibetan representations by Westerners, he states that the act of childlessness is produced by a regime of reality, for which the other cannot decide for himself or foresees that he cannot fulfil his responsibilities. (p.38) The return of “the other”as a child on the stage of representation is not a rare occurrence in Turkish cinema. The other is considered to be a child, perhaps not to be recognised as an adult. Indeed, the recognition of character as a child does not mean that the character is recognised by political identity. This situation can be interpreted in a similar way in İftarlık Gazoz film. The representation of Adem's character as a child rather than a death fasting youth can be problematized in the name of a recognition struggle in the sense that the character's political identity gives rise to the ability to identify a larger mass of audience with a back warding his political character. In this context, Judith Butler (2009) can be used via her debate on recognition and cognition:

Recognition, is the stronger term, one that has been derived from Hegelian texts and subject to revisions and criticisms for many years. Apprehension, is less precise, since it can imply marking, registering, acknowledging without full cognition. If it is a form of knowing, it is bound up with sensing and perceiving, but in ways that are not always or not yet conceptual

forms of knowledge. (pp. 4-5) (...) If recognition is an act or practice undertaken by at least two subjects, and which, as the Hegelian frame would suggest, constitutes a reciprocal action, then recognizability describes those general conditions on the basis of which recognition can and does take place. It seems, then, that there are still two further terms to understand: apprehension, understood as a mode of knowing that is not yet recognition, or may remain irreducible to recognition; and intelligibility, understood as the general historical schema or schemas that establish domains of the knowable. (p. 6)

If we go by Butler's proposals, İftarlık Gazoz film does not make a direct contribution to the recognition struggle, but it contributes to the strengthening of the possibilities of cognition that can serve the recognition struggle. The use of childhood can also be evaluated in this context.

Another aspect that can be problematized in the name of the struggle for recognition is a compassion / agitation politics that I think is shaped by the use of music in conformity with this cathartic end, with formal elements, a cathartic ending, with "strategies" such as "infantilization" and "victimisation". Critics in this context will point to the "hierarchy" established between pitying or merciful and pitied and forgiven. For example, Elizabeth Spelman (1997) critically interprets the concept of compassion in this context and warns that compassion can strengthen the patterns of economic and social dependence responsible for the suffering of the other. (p. 7 from: Ahmed, 2015, p. 35) Milan Kundera (1987) analyses "hierarchy" in "mercy" and "mercy politics" terms, through word origins:

In languages that derive from Latin, "compassion" means: we cannot look on coolly as others suffer; or, we sympathize with those who suffer. Another word with approximately the same meaning, "pity" (French, *pitie*; Italian, *pieta*; etc.), connotes a certain condescension towards the sufferer. "To take pity on a woman" means that we are better off than she, that we stoop to her level, lower ourselves. That is why the word "compassion" generally inspires suspicion; it designates what is considered an inferior, second-rate sentiment that has little to do with love. To love someone out of compassion means not really to love. (s. 20)

Another criticism in this respect is edited by Tül Akbal Süalp (2006), in our films, on our crying experience for the "other":

When the dominant ideology asks: "Mirror mirror, tell me, is there anybody who is as beautiful, intelligent, talented, scientific, technologically equipped with the means of production, more consent, seizing outcome with force as me?" it expects the mirror to say "No, there is no such man!" or being Robinson Crusoe and in a strange place, re-names a person who already has a name; it no longer works in such a rude and brute way. More implicit, more processed, even technologically shaped, even made. But still all forms of representation of nature, woman, Third World continues to be described in a similar and overlapping state of the marginalised states. How funny, how simple and naive is it? But why is it ever funny enough, not primitive enough, and each time it makes a share of ourselves from these accounts, its spiritual purification and emptiness emerge; Can we cry on the pathos of these accounts? (Süalp, 2009, p.35)

Akbal, in her text, explains what she means by the notion of pathos. Pathos is used in the sense of emotionality, the ability to make emotional, qualities that awaken emotion, power or ability to awaken compassion and sympathy, to enthusiastic expressions and grandeur. (p. 35) The debate conducted by Akbal, centred on the concept of pathos, is maintained by Serpil Kirel (2010) through third world accounts.

The use of the “pathos” should be questioned in the accounts of the Third World. While this concept is being questioned, the answers of the questions ‘for whom?’ and ‘what does it mean for whom?’ should be sought. There are things it will tell us when we examine the areas of use of feelings and emotions in the framework of ruler-dependent relations. It is the point that the purification and the use of “emotion” during purification are directly related to cinema. The awakening of feelings of mercy and compassion can be considered as a clue to the field where the other regimes are most prominent. (P. 415)

It is possible to find traces of Akbal and Kirel's approaches in *İftarlık Gazoz* film. This will be evident by the resolution of the formal uses that stand out in the final stages of the film. The viewers, especially on the scenes where the character of Hasan was shot, where the character of Adem lost his life and on the scene of the funeral with slowing techniques, close-up shots, use of music and pathos and therefore a sense of pity and compassion. This has also been a criticism in conservative media. Niyazi Karaçay criticizes the film's emotional politics in the article titled “Agitation of *İftarlık Gazoz*”:

The movie marketed its story as natural, funny and entertaining; it emphasises this from the poster to the trailer and even to the actor. But as such in general, this film takes a very different pace in the last 20 minutes than the context and story and instead of leftist lyrics, turns into a sharp propaganda, a heavy political message, and death fasting lyrics. We are witnessing what the director means to make laughing in the whole film and finally to cry correctly... The leftist but sympathetic Hasan is offering sodas at the fast-breaking feast to the workers that he does not want to fast. Afterwards, a group of "monsters" from Ankara in a vehicle, understood from the dirty beards that they are idealists, look for Hasan and they find him scattering soda during the İftar meal. With automatic weapons out of their luggage, they riddle Hasan with holes in front of everyone. From now on, we are witnessing that emotional intensity and agitation are given intensively in the presence of intimate music ... In such a propagandistic film, I tried to summarise the emergence of comedy and entertainment market by giving a role to a popular figure as Cem Yılmaz. In Turkey, the desire to exploit a stereotypical emotion that is always and very well done in Turkey, to be seen in the eyes of the spectator with agitation and propaganda, an expectation to create an apolitical effect, and an to carry enthusiasm to the top are some of the desired issues... (Niyazi Karaçay, *İftarlık Gazoz'un Acitasyonu*, Haksöz News, 1 February 2016)

Kirel's and Akbal's proposals have valid grounds in the context of demanding a representation politics that promotes recognition, rather than pity and mercy politics. On the other hand, I think that criticism of representation politics, which encourages compassion and mercy, are on a “politically correct” line, at a time when the politics

of emotion for the other is still intensely organised on a hate basis. İftarlık Gazoz film has been on screen for a total of 28 weeks, meeting with 1,031,094 viewers, and broadcasted by mainstream television in Turkey. Although the main character does not take part in political identity throughout the most of the story; it features a death fasting character that is defined by dominant ideology as “life with worthless loss”, “ungrievable” lives and the loss of this character is framed as a “worthy of being lived” in the film.

CONCLUSION

In this study, I analyzed the 2016 production, *İftarlık Gazoz* film written and directed by Yüksel Aksu, to discuss how dissident representation strategies can produce opportunities for the reconstruction of subordinate groups labelled as "lives with worthless loss" and excluded from the public mourning scene as "precarious" and "grievable" lives. Theoretically, I benefited from Foucault, Agamben and Arendt's discussions on the ruling schemes that claim the "value" of life. Foucault's discussions on how the sovereign power determines life and death and how this determination is transformed via bio-politics, came to the forefront. Foucault's arguments are about "positive" relations between being able to see a life as "worth living" and "life with worthy loss" and constructing it in accordance with social norms. In Agamben's discussions over the distinction between "zoe" and "bios" and in Hannah Arendt's debates about the relation between human rights and nation-state citizenship, the relationship between the "value" of a life and the "political nature" of that life is emphasised. That "political character" may be a citizen of a state or member of a religion. I discussed the function of loss and mourning in the formation and structuring of communities, by benefiting from Vamık Volkan's "connection object" and "selected trauma". Volkan, underlines the importance of historical losses and traumas in the formation of identities, and provide a framework for the political capacity of loss and mourning. This also gives meaning to the exclusionary politics of the powerholders for their losses and traumas subordinate groups. The arguments of Butler about "mourning hierarchy" in the American media helped me to develop my discussion about the representations of the loss and mourning politics, Butler points out that the losses of subordinate groups cannot find a place in the media whereas the losses found in the media are only suitable losses to "social norms" and "national ideals".

For a discussion on the dissident cinema, I first looked at the transformational process in the dissident cinema's relationship with loss and mourning politics. In this context, I talked about the rise of the third cinema, the development of independent transnational cinema, and the emergence of films produced by minorities and immigrants. Then, I built a discussion about the dissident cinema in Turkey. I

interpreted the development of the dissident cinema in Turkey, in relation to the official ideology. I included opinions on the political characters of the cinema in the 1960s. While it was difficult to see oppositional themes in cinema until the 1960s, the dissident cinema continued to develop after the 1961 Constitution until the 1980 coup. In this time period, dissident cinema differed as “Islamic Cinema”, “National Cinema”, and “Revolutionary Cinema”. In the post-1980, a period of stagnation started through the discussion on “New Turkey Cinema” I looked at the characters of new dissident films. I argued that the identity politics and remembering culture have come to the forefront in cinema. Changing political atmosphere of Turkey against the founding ideology of the Republic established the basis for the rise of the dissident cinema again. Thus various social traumas that have not been found place in the representation scene before could find voice in the Turkish cinema. I have also looked at the narrative and narration politics of the dissident cinema and its relations with the audience of dissident films. The arguments in this direction are supported by J.C. Scott’s discussion on, the discourse of subordinate groups in a layered, inwardly and outwardly manner. At this point Umut Tümay Arslan’s text “Left Politics and Popular Cinema” provided an opportunity for discussion about dissident narrative and narration politics. Arslan’s text contains a controversy that the dissident cinema could expand the field of influence by not denying the codes of popular cinema and the feelings that people need to see. I consider *İftarlık Gazoz* as a film that puts Arslan's thought into practice and opens a space to discuss the complex relationship between dissident cinema and popular cinema.

For the analysis of *İftarlık Gazoz*, I looked at the representation of death fasting Adem character as “grievable” and a “life with worthy loss” Adem's character takes place in the film with his childhood instead of a death fasting youth. As a child, Adem is framed as poor, pious, honest, respectful to his elders, successful in his classes, loved by his teachers, and exemplified by other students. It is possible to say that the character of Adem is appropriated to “social norms” and “national ideals”. The construction of Adem's character as a child creates a special situation in that it can be represented as a grievable character. In my study I evaluated this situation based on the understanding of the innocence of childhood. I discussed the social foundation of childhood, the political potential of the perception towards the child’s

innocence, and how this potential was used in the politics of representation. Another factor I find important in framing Adem's character as a grievable character is the powerful use of the nostalgia theme. The theme of nostalgia in the film is effective in the perception of the character as a social loss by establishing a relationship between the loss of Adem's character and the loss of the town that was conceived as a "happy place of childhood" by Turkish society.

In this work, I claim that the framing of Adem's character in accordance with social norms, norms of similarity and national ideals produces a possibility for owning the loss of the spectators who seem to have adopted the public transcript. My discussion in this direction can be problematized by the argument that the value of the dominant ideology and the regime of reality are accepted. However, such an argument presents a dichotomous perspective to the struggles between the powerholders and subordinate groups. To break such dichotomy, I used an alternative approach by benefiting from J.C. Scott's analysis of resistance. Scott argues that subordinate groups sometimes use the language, norms, and values of the powerholders as a strategy of performance and resistance. From this perspective, the representation of Adem character with social norms and ideals can be interpreted as a dissident strategy for the abolition of norms by the norms.

My work benefits from different disciplines. This created various difficulties in presenting a holistic view and carrying out an in-depth discussion on behalf of varying disciplines. I tried to overcome this difficulty by taking a film at the centre of my discussion. Although I developed my discussion around *Iftarlık Gazoz* film, I would not consider this study a thesis of cinema. Rather, this work is about dissident representation strategies. There is a growing literature on dissident cinema however the work on dissident representation strategies in Turkey remains limited in Turkish sources, studies in this area are usually around the concept of propaganda, and how audience is guided by a narrative politics is not adequately addressed.

While starting to my study, I thought of benefiting especially from cinema studies with a focus on the concept of "political ecstasy". However, the debates in the political ecstasy fall in the area of psychoanalysis and around the concepts of identity, empathy, sympathy. This led me to think that a debate on this side could have only deepened with a reception study. Yet I did not want to develop my studies

towards the direction of reception study, therefore I gave up improving my study in this direction. However, I think further research in the area of reception looking at how audience make sense of the elements of empathy, sympathy, and identification would present a more in-depth understanding of the dissident representation strategies of "politic rapture" and "opposition leap".

In this study, I addressed the opportunities the dissident filmmakers could use as recognition struggles in the dissident cinema. Through the example of *Iftarlık Gazoz*, I discussed the conditions dissident cinema could carry the potential of political ecstasy. I analysed the messages produced by considering the film as a text. The analysis was contextualized through the questions of "who", "to whom", "with what intentions", "what kind of messages" are delivered. Further studies are needed to discuss the complexity among the messages of the film, intention of the filmmakers, and the interpretation of the audience.

My work can be expanded in a few ways. The concept of witnessing is one of these directions. The research in this area in the media literature involves discussions on how to take charge of the "other", interpretation of the pain of the other, emphasis on pity, and compassion in this process of meaning. Another direction the work may expand is the sociology of emotions. A research on the emotions dissident cinema facilitates, and the engagement of the audience with these emotions would provide a broader view on how spectator guided towards "political ecstasy" and the politics of emotions.

The dissident cinema, with its audio-visual capacity, can produce alternative perspectives. The emotions produced by the dissident cinema creates a possibility for the substitution of the negative emotions constructed through dominant ideology with alternative emotions. This possibility is, of course, very limited, given that the accounts of the ruling ideologies and the emotions that they organise are continually reinforced in different circles. However, I believe that every attempt of challenging established realities creates a crack in the politics of the powerholders for the naturalisation of the public transcript, an important issue for the prevention of potential violence against subordinate groups. Although it might sound unrealistic to imagine that the dissident cinema may have a direct effect on the recognition struggles for those under domination, it can be argued that the dissident films

indirectly contribute to the recognition struggles. The efforts of censoring the content or preventing their release itself shows the political potential of dissident films. I think it is an important issue that dissident films reach wider audience by adapting the codes of popular cinema and the normative schemes of the dominant ideology. İftarlık Gazoz film speaks to this need. This study was an opportunity for me to deepen my interest in speaking under domination. I will continue my studies in this direction.

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