Migration And Identity Representations In Contemporary Art Practices

Çağdaş Sanat Pratiklerinde Göç ve Kimlik Temsilleri

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Abstract

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Migration is one of the prominent themes of contemporary art and one of the most common research topics in the field of social sciences that deals with social problems. This article aims to ensure that both immigrants and local people understand how migration affects human identity, to show that contemporary art as an interdisciplinary study can benefit this issue, and to discuss aesthetic expectations for contemporary art.

Nowadays, interdisciplinary studies have become quite common. Like other fields, art includes practices that can provide a common working area with many disciplines. Social sciences are one of the primary areas in which art cooperates. Interdisciplinary studies between arts and social sciences mainly concern cultural issues. People benefit from various channels to express themselves individually in the changing socio-political environment.

The research has been designed with a scanning model and interpreted based on data from the relevant social sciences according to the themes of contemporary art examples. The findings obtained in the research are discussed in five sections. The first section, titled 'Representations of Identity In Contemporary Art,' aims to provide a basis for the research before moving on to the effect of immigration on identity by briefly summarizing that the theme of identity has been the focus of attention of contemporary artists in various aspects in recent years. This section also includes aesthetic discussions of contemporary art. Contemporary art examples related to the theme of migration are divided into four sections. In this context, it is limited to the individual effects of migration, such as lack of belonging, alienation, identity uncertainty, and the universal effects of globalization.

The study reveals how contemporary artists produce works that can explain social problems with more creative solutions, using different techniques and interdisciplinary application methods, and thus make the phenomenon of migration, which is the subject of research in various disciplines of social sciences and one of today's important problems, better and more understandable. However, artistic solutions that differ from the expectations of art lovers cause aesthetic debates.

Keywords: Contemporary Art, Interdisciplinary Art, Globalization, Migration, Identity.

Genişletilmiş Özet

Göç, sosyal bilimler alanında yaygınlaşmış araştırma konularından birisi olduğu kadar, toplumsal sorunları ele alan çağdaş sanatın da öne çıkan temalarından birisidir. Bu makalenin amacı hem göçmenlerin hem de yerel halkın göçün insan kimliğini ve aidiyet duygusunu nasıl etkilediğini anlamasını sağlamak, disiplinler arası bir çalışma olarak çağdaş sanatın bu konuya fayda sağlayabileceğini göstermek ve çağdaş sanata yönelik estetik beklentileri tartışmaktır.

Günümüzde disiplinler arası çalışmalar oldukça yaygınlaşmıştır. Sanat da diğer alanlar gibi birçok disiplinle ortak çalışma alanı sağlayabilecek uygulamalar içermektedir. Sanatın iş birliği yaptığı alanların başında sosyal bilimler gelmektedir. Sanat ve sosyal bilimler alanları arasındaki disiplinler arası çalışmalar çoğunlukla kültürel konuları kapsamaktadır. Değişen sosyo-politik ortamda insanlar bireysel olarak kendilerini ifade edebilecekleri çeşitli kanallardan yararlanmaktadır.

Yapılan araştırma, tarama modeliyle desenlenmiş ve güncel sanat örnekleri temalarına göre ilgili sosyal bilimler alanındaki verilere dayanılarak yorumlanmıştır. Araştırmada elde edilen bulgular beş bölümde ele alınmıştır. Çağdaş Sanatta Kimlik Temsilleri başlıklı ilk bölümde son yıllarda kimlik temasının çeşitli yönlerden çağdaş sanatçıların ilgi odağı olduğu kısaca özetlenerek göçün kimlik üzerine etkisine geçmeden önce araştırmaya temel oluşturulmak amaçlanmıştır. Bu bölümde ayrıca çağdaş sanatın estetik tartışmalarına yer verilmiştir. Göç temasıyla ilgili verilen çağdaş sanat örnekleri ise dört bölüme ayrılmıştır. Bu kapsamda çalışma, göçün aidiyetsizlik, yabancılaşma, kimlik belirsizliği gibi bireysel etkileri ve küreselleşmenin tanımladığı evrensel etkileriyle sınırlandırılmıştır.

"Kültürel Parçalanma Olarak Küreselleşme" bölümünde, göçün kimlik üzerindeki etkisine bir temel oluşturmak amacıyla küreselleşme ile kültürel parçalanma arasındaki ilişki tartışılmaktadır. Ülkelerin göçü kolaylaştırmaya yönelik politikalarının da etkisiyle göçmenler belirli coğrafyalarda daha fazla yaşam alanı bulmaktadır. Böylece göçmenlerin yoğun olarak yaşadığı bölgelerde kültürlerarası iletişim ve etkileşim artmaktadır. Sınırların ortadan kalkması ve göçün yaygınlaşması

küreselleşmenin bir parçası olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Bu bölümde örneklendirilen Ebru Dede'nin çalışmasında dünyada yaşanan olaylara ülkelerin farklı siyasi ve kültürel bakış açılarını içeren gazete küpürleri bir araya getirilmiştir.

Küreselleşme kapsamında göçün kültürler üzerindeki etkisi kısaca anlatıldıktan sonra, "Göç: Sınırların Ötesinde Evsizliğe Yolculuk" bölümünde göçün bireysel nedenleri ve sonuçları araştırılmıştır. Çok yönlü bir nüfus hareketi olan göç, esas olarak bir kültürden diğerine yerleşme ve kültürel değişim yaratmaktadır. Göç, geleneksel kültür ile hiçbir zaman ulaşılamayan ve geri döndürülemeyen yeni çevre arasında bir geçiş sürecidir. Göç sonucunda karma kozmopolit kimlikler oluşmakta, herkes birbirine yabancılaşmakta, aidiyet anlamındaki 'ev' erişilemez hale gelerek evsizlik hissi yaratmaktadır. Bu bölümde örneklendirilen Mehmet Çeper'in fotoğraf çalışması da sınır bölgesinde göç etmek isteyen ancak ne varış noktasına ulaşabilen ne de geri dönebilen bir göçmeni göstermektedir.

Araştırma sürecinde tespit edilen göçün kimlik üzerindeki etkisinin temelinde yer alan değişim hayalinin yarattığı hayal kırıklıkları "Evsizlik ve Yabancılaşma" bölümünde ele alınmıştır. Evsiz hissetmek, umudunu kaybetmenin bir sonucudur. Göçün sebepleri ister zorunlu olsun ister daha iyi bir gelecek hayali olsun, umudun yolcusu olan göçmenler zamanla hayal kırıklıkları yaşayabilmektedir. Kültürel uyum sorunları ve çeşitli ekonomik zorluklar, göçmenlerin ne tam orada ne de tam olarak burada hissetmemesine neden olmaktadır. Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz'ın 'Şeffaf Çadır' adını verdiği interaktif enstalasyonunda katılımcılar, burada yaşayan yerinden edilmiş kadınların özel eşyasını görebilmekte ve çadırın üzerine istediklerini yazarak onların hayat hikayelerine müdahale edebilmektedirler. Böylece bu etkileşimli eser, kendi evine yabancılaşan göçmenlerin evsizlik duygusunu yansıtmaktadır.

Göçün kimlik üzerindeki etkileri incelendiğinde göçmenlerin gittikleri ve geldikleri yerler arasındaki boşluklarda yüzen hayaletlere benzetildiği görülmüştür. Bu araştırmalar 'Küresel Özneler: Hayaletlerin Kimlikleri' başlıklı bu bölümde yer almaktadır. Çağnur Öztürk'ün 'Kayıp' isimli portrelerden oluşan serisinde ise, kimliği belirsiz ve isimsiz göçmenleri gösteren silinmiş yüzler bulunmaktadır.

Çağdaş sanatçıların toplumsal sorunları açıklamaya çalışırken farklı teknik ve yaratıcı çözümlere yönelmesi çeşitli estetik tartışmalara yol açmaktadır. Sanatta estetik konusu zaten yüzyıllardır farklı görüş ve tartışmalara konu olmuştur. Çağdaş sanatı yorumlamanın zor olmasının nedeni, çağdaş sanat eserlerinin, sanat tarihinde bilinen klasik standartlardan farklı özelliklere sahip olmasıdır. Bu farklılıklardan bazıları, çağdaş sanatın tasarımdan farklı olarak işlevsel olmaması, ayrıca geçici olabilmesi ve yarım kalmış gibi görünebilmesidir. Bu farklılıklar giderek çeşitlenmekte ve dolayısıyla değerlendirme kriterleri alışılmadık derecede artmaktadır. Bu nedenle bir sanat eserinin değerinin ölçülmesi her zaman göreceli olmuştur. Çünkü sanat eseriyle olan bağımız algılarımızla ve hafızamızla ilgilidir. Algılama ve hafıza kişiden kişiye değişmekle kalmayıp, aynı kişi için bile farklı zamanlarda farklı boyutlar kazanmaktadır. Her ne kadar sanatseverlerin beklentilerinden farklı sanatsal çözümler estetik tartışmalara neden olsa da göç temalı çağdaş sanat eserleri, göçmenler ve yerel topluluklar arasındaki ilişkilerin geliştirilmesinde önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Göç temalı çağdaş sanat eserlerini daha iyi anlamak için çağdaş sanatçıların, küratörlerin ve sanat yazarlarının iş birliği içinde olması ve disiplinler arası çalışmalar yapmaları yararlı olacaktır.

Çağdaş sanat eserlerinin anlamı ve dolayısıyla yorumu tek taraflı ya da sınırlı olmamalıdır, dolayısıyla bu eserlerin anlaşılması daha geniş bir süreçte gerçekleşecektir. Bu doğrultuda ele alınan makalede incelenen sanat eserlerinin sosyal bilimler alanında yapılan araştırmalara dayalı yorumlarında objektif bir değerlendirme sunulmaya çalışılmıştır.

Araştırma sonucunda göçün küreselleşmeye olan etkisinin yanı sıra göç sonrası yaşanan hayal kırıklıkları, sosyal çevreye uyum sağlamada yaşanan zorluklar, ana dilin zarar görmesi ve kültürel arka plan, aidiyet duygusunun eksikliği ve kimlik belirsizliği gibi bireysel etkilerin de olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Çalışma, çağdaş sanatçıların farklı tekniklerle ve disiplinler arası uygulama yöntemleriyle, toplumsal sorunları daha yaratıcı çözümlerle anlatabilen eserler ürettiklerini ve böylece sosyal bilimlerin çeşitli disiplinlerinde araştırmalara konu olan ve günümüzün önemli sorunlarından biri olan göç olgusunu nasıl daha anlaşılır hale getirdiklerini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çağdaş Sanat, Disiplinler Arası Sanat, Küreselleşme, Göç, Kimlik.

Introduction

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The aim of this study is to investigate how migration affects the identities of the immigrants and their sense of belonging, and also how beneficial contemporary art practices show immigration problems.

Migration is one of the common themes of contemporary art and one of the prominent research topics of social sciences dealing with social problems. While contemporary art tries to explain social issues, it turns to different technical and creative solutions, leading to various aesthetic debates. This article aims to ensure that both immigrants and local people understand how migration affects human identity and sense of belonging and to show that contemporary art can benefit this subject as an interdisciplinary study.

The research has been designed with a scanning model and interpreted based on data from the relevant social sciences according to the themes of contemporary art examples. The article consists

of five sections. In the first section, titled 'Representations of Identity In Contemporary Art,' discussions will be presented regarding the contribution of using social issues such as identity and migration as themes in contemporary art to both social sciences and art as an interdisciplinary study. In the following four chapters, contemporary art examples related to globalization, migration, deterritorialization, and identity issues will be interpreted based on research data in the field of social sciences.

Representations of Identity in Contemporary Art

Nowadays, interdisciplinary studies have become widely widespread. Like other fields, art contains practices that can provide a common working area with many disciplines. Social sciences are one of the primary areas in which art cooperates.

Contemporary art representations visually enable us to understand philosophical issues better and thus make important contributions to philosophy (Danto, 2020, p. 21). So art merges with life by addressing social issues, and art is measured by what world realities they enable us to understand. The information presented by art performances becomes more reliable and understandable to the audience. Nowadays, where the way of transferring information is not limited to language and visual communication has become widespread in addition to verbal expression, social scientists are looking for new ways to express themselves through texts and art (Belting, 2020, pp. 260-261). Interdisciplinary studies between arts and social sciences often concern cultural issues. Therefore, identity-themed issues that have come to the fore in the last half-century have become one of the important practices of contemporary art within the cultural and ethnographic framework.

An ethnographic transformation has occurred in contemporary art with conceptual art, which has remained current since the 1960s. With body or performance art within the scope of conceptual art and new techniques and exhibition methods in different areas outside galleries and museums since the 1970s, contemporary art continues to represent the subjectivity discourses of different communities. Art, artists, and art audiences are now going beyond their restrictive definitions and are included in the expanding field of subjectivity discussions within cultural anthropology (Foster, 2017, p. 243). People benefit from various channels to express themselves individually in the changing sociopolitical environment.

Since the last half of the 1980s, the representation of identity politics of different cultures has become the focus of conceptual and contemporary art. It is possible to learn personal experiences in contemporary art representations, which have become the spokesperson of marginalized identities due to differences such as religion, language, race, and gender (Antmen, 2008, p. 295). Thus, while there are discussions about the end of art, art expands the subjects it represents by breaking its boundaries with life. It continues to exist in culture once again, albeit controversial (Belting, 2020, p. 266). On the other hand, in his book The End of Art, Donald Kuspit explains that he finds post-art's attempt to represent daily social issues that have lost human values meaningless, useless, and unaesthetic (2006, p. 180). The issue of aesthetics in art has already been the subject of different views and discussions for centuries.

The problems of determining the aesthetic analysis, meaning, and value of a work of art are the domain of social sciences (Bourdieu, 2006, p. 441). The concepts or theories used to think about, evaluate, and criticize works of art are complex, vague, and flexible, and it is tough to reconcile and structure them (Bourdieu, 2006, p. 449). Interpreting contemporary art is a difficult challenge because contemporary works of art have different characteristics from the classical standards known in art history. Some of these differences are that contemporary art, unlike design, is non-functional and can be temporary and appear unfinished. These differences are becoming increasingly diverse; thus, the evaluation criteria are becoming unusually broad (Smith, 2009, p. 250). Therefore, measuring the value of a work of art has always been relative. Because our connection with the work of art is related to our

perceptions and memory. Perception and memory vary from person to person and gain different dimensions at different times, even for one person.

For example, when viewers of a performative scene try to express through language the process of remembering and interpreting what they watched, it is never possible to express exactly what they perceive (Fischer-Lichte, 2016, p. 271). So, the perception and meaning of a work of art is based on time. The interpretation and criticism of the work in terms of aesthetics and meaning varies according to different cultures and perspectives. In other words, the meaning and interpretation of a work of art are not one-sided and limited (Erzen, 2012, p. 168).

Therefore, there will be no didactic interpretation of the artworks to be examined in this study, but an objective evaluation will be presented by making use of social science research on the potential of migration to affect identity.

Before looking at the potential of migration to affect identity, researching globalization, migration, and alienation will provide a valuable basis for a better understanding of the subject.

Globalization as Cultural Fragmentation

In this section, the relationship between globalization and cultural fragmentation will be discussed to provide a basis for the impact of migration on identity. The disappearance of borders and the spread of migration have been considered a part of globalization.

Globalization refers to a controversial process that needs to be considered not only in terms of capitalism or global imperialism but also in the context of mutual resistance, renewal, and hybridization between the local and the universal in the matter of identity (Şahiner, 2015, pp. 165-166). As migration movements become more widespread, the cultures and histories of different countries begin to merge. So, this new world order, defined as globalization and universalization, affects people's lives economically, socially, and psychologically.

Unless differences within multiculturalism are treated fairly and equitably, democracy will remain an illusion or contradiction. While these struggles for multiculturalism continue, the issue of identity politics will remain a subject open to research (Laclau, 2003, p. 12). It is becoming increasingly impossible to bridge the distances between the universal and the local (Laclau, 2003, p. 93). Based on this data, it can be said that the spread of migration also affects the merging of cultures within the scope of globalization. Integrating immigrant communities with local people becomes of primary importance.

The phenomenon of globalization, which defines an important change process characteristic of our age, enables immigrants to improve their relations with the local people compared to the past. Before globalization, immigrants were forced to comply with the more repressive policies of local public systems and had limited communication with their home countries. Globalization has made migration more accessible and flexible than before, making relations with the homeland more accessible (Adıgüzel, 2022, pp. 179-180). With the influence of countries' policies to facilitate migration, immigrants find more living spaces in specific geographies. Thus, intercultural communication and interaction increase in the regions where immigrants mostly live.

In geographies where immigrants commonly reside, intercultural and interethnic activities and interactions generally differ. It is possible to summarize this distinction by dividing it into two: intercultural activities within the state's borders and transnational cultural communications that transcend the state's borders. The term multiculturalism encompasses increasing ethnic diversity. In this context, it is investigated how multiculturalism fundamentally changes the ethnic composition of the nation state's population (Gerdes et al., p. 113). Because postmodernism is not about the history of cultures but about the current conditions of geography. Thus, identity-based on cultural background loses its importance, and we move towards a process of disidentification, which becomes deterritorialized and alienated from oneself (Akay, 2002, p. 20). So, it can be said that differences within this ethnic composition gradually turn into hybrid cultures, and cultures dissolve their local

characteristics into each other. In addition, it can be interpreted that losing local cultural characteristics creates a feeling of deterritorialization.

Within the concept of deterritorialization, there is a re-acquisition of place and homeland but an avoidance of having a fixed identity. This situation, which affects people's lives, results from global modernity (Tomlinson, 2004, p. 202). Although postmodernism aims to solve the problem of individual freedom, it has increased social identity debates. Postmodernism brings a discourse that considers knowledge and ethical values in a pluralistic and relative context (Şaylan, 2006, p. 298).

The rationalism aimed at globalization loses its validity in this complex third-world proposal (Chambers, 2019, p. 118). Therefore, globalization may have various detrimental effects that are open to discussion. For example, the usefulness of intercultural interaction, universalization, globalization, westernization, and modernization is controversial, as it causes damage to local cultural characteristics (Balcıoğlu, 2007, p. 48).

Various problems arise in creating common values in the process of multiculturalism created by migration. Groups are formed due to differences and prejudices, and cohesion between these groups is limited. Ethnic regions are forming, and the distinctions between these regions are becoming increasingly rigid (Gemini and Çatal, 2019, p. 57).

Multiculturalism has the risk of separating cultures and emphasizing differences. In this context, independent groups whose differences are emphasized are formed, and the concept of interculturalism is mentioned instead of multiculturalism. On the other hand, the discourse of interculturalism favors increasing mutual exchanges and interactions to bring the distances closer rather than clarifying the distinctions between different cultures. The aim is to highlight similarities rather than xenophobia (Çelik, 2008, p. 330). Efforts to highlight similarities in order not to marginalize immigrants and to bring people from different cultures closer to each other, while glorifying and increasing the similarity, on the other hand, cause the differences, which are actually cultural richness, to disappear. Thus, in line with globalization policies, all world cultures are brought closer to each other within the scope of shared cultural values.

In general, immigrant identities that surround the whole world can be traced in an integrity that transcends borders and is chained to each other (Kastoryano, 2000, p. 250).

Figure 1. Ebru Dede. "The World is Our Home", mixed material. (Transparent print papers and pen on plastic plate), 2007.

Reference: Image courtesy of Ebru Dede.

Ebru Dede's artwork (Figure 1) contains prints of newspapers from different countries on transparent paper inside plastic plates and some drawings of silhouettes of people arguing. As stated in the text of the work in the artist's catalog, when she was an Erasmus student in 2007, she met many people with different cultures from many world countries. While experiencing intercultural relations in L'Aquila, Italy, full of Erasmus students, she states that she felt like the world was her home. Being involved in various cultural perspectives allowed her to experience human relationships that are sometimes controversial and sometimes embracing and caring for each other. She was aware that such different perspectives, of course, stem from each person's own country's culture, traditions, and political views that are intended to be reflected. The artist, who thinks that the authority of every country uses the local press to impose specific ideas on its people, placed newspaper clippings symbolizing all these different thoughts in a round plate to represent the world (Dede, 2007).

This work summarizes the different perspectives on language and the different political perspectives that language represents.

Migration: A Journey to Homeless Across Borders

After briefly explaining the impact of migration on cultures within the scope of globalization, the individual causes and consequences of migration will be investigated in this section.

As a result of the precursor of globalization, cultural hybridization and deterritorialization (Tomlinson, 2004, p. 193) create a kind of illusion of freedom in people and a desire to migrate. People may choose to migrate for many reasons, not only to be free but also to achieve goals related to their social and personal lives. The reason for migration may be compulsory, for professional or touristic purposes, or in the hope of a better life. However, reverse migrations are also observed (Balcıoğlu, 2007, p. 82). The concept of diaspora is frequently used in studies on the causes and consequences of migration. The scope of this concept is gradually expanding. The concept of diaspora today includes not only people who are forced to live in another country by being separated from their homeland due to forced migration and genocide but also all communities who voluntarily migrate and live outside their homeland in the hope of a better life (Adıgüzel, 2022, p. 174).

Since the reasons for migration are to reach better conditions, escape from bad conditions, or be forced to leave, migration has positive and negative consequences. On the positive side, migration creates new social interactions, enabling people from different cultures to unite and establish marriage and other social connections. As a result of these interactions, new perspectives are gained, and new lifestyles are formed by being nourished by different cultures. On the negative side, it creates problems in social life, such as discrimination, ethnic and cultural problems, imbalances, exclusions, and, thus, pacification (Dere, 2018, p. 2780). The reasons for this perceived exclusion and imbalance are the immigrants' feeling of not belonging and disappointment caused by the loss of their own culture.

A feeling of helplessness occurs because it has become impossible to preserve local cultural values after migration. In an increasingly globalized and metropolitan world, preserving local cultural history and returning home has become impossible (Chambers, 2019, p. 106). It is also challenging to get used to the place of migration. This in-between situation causes the feeling of being stuck between different cultures. Therefore, migration is an issue that needs to be addressed from multiple perspectives.

As a versatile population movement, migration creates settlement and cultural change from one culture to another. Migration is a transition process between a traditional culture and a new environment that can never be reached and cannot be reversed. It shakes the building blocks of traditional and new cultures and creates hybrid values (Balcıoğlu, 2007, p. 58). As a result of migration, composite cosmopolitan identities are formed, everyone becomes alienated from each other, and 'home' in the sense of belonging becomes inaccessible, creating a feeling of homelessness (Chambers, 2019, p. 107).

Since the problems experienced by individuals affect cultures socially, they create a need for public administrations to rearrange both local government and international relations policies according to these problems. As the practices of public administrations regarding the presence of immigrants need to be sufficiently robust solutions, they generally provide local identity but, on the other hand, cause a weak sense of belonging. It is doubtful that these solutions are pragmatic, democratic, and rational political attitudes (Kastoryano, 2000, p. 261).

Problems experienced by immigrants in their new countries include issues such as social aspects of the legal regulation of their new status, employment problems, and housing and social assistance regulations. In addition, the mutual adaptation problems of immigrants with the local people create various social and psychological problems. The experiences of immigrants who have to change their lifestyles during this adaptation process, who are excluded due to their cultural differences, and who expect to be tolerated include complex problems that can be solved in the long term (Artemyeva and Chernov, 2016, p. 6123).

Ameliorating the effects of migration, which affects human life in many aspects, should not be limited only to management policies but should also be supported by various studies in different areas. The features of art that do not direct people didactically, that can offer different perspectives, expand the horizons, and direct people to think more objectively, can be a healing power.

Figure 2. Mehmet Çeper. "Tramboline", photography, 2011. Reference: Image courtesy of Mehmet Çeper.

In his photographic work (Figure 2), Mehmet Çeper emphasizes the impossibility of migration by showing that neither arrival nor return is possible with his performance by jumping from the trampoline at the border. Thus, the freedom or dream of a better future achieved by migrating does not come true. Or the immigrant cannot break away from the past he wants to escape from. No matter the reason for migration, the process repeats itself like a cycle. A person who desires to migrate is forced to survive by hanging in the air or wavering between leaving and returning.

Homelessness and Alienation

In the research process, it has been observed that the impact of migration on identity is primarily related to alienation and feeling homeless. Feeling homeless is the result of losing hope. When dreams of big changes for the future do not come true, the impact of disappointment is excellent. The studies from which these findings have been obtained will be briefly discussed in this section.

Whether the reasons for migration are compulsory or for the dream of a better future, immigrants who are the passengers of hope may experience disappointments over time. Cultural adaptation problems and economic difficulties cause immigrants to feel neither entirely from there nor fully here (Balcıoğlu, 2007, pp. 17-18). The effects of migration may vary from person to person. While some immigrants can continue to live with their own cultural identities, some can melt and assimilate into the local dominant cultural characteristics (Adıgüzel, 2022, p. 176).

While the effects of immigrants vary, it is possible to generalize their needs. The need of immigrants is to adapt to the country they immigrate to. This need for adaptation of immigrants leads to the formation of collective identity constructions in various forms that the public can accept as a result of the practices of public administrations. This collective identity turns into an eclectic structure shaped by immigrants' national origins, the political structure of the country they immigrate to, mutual interactions, and negotiations (Kastoryano, 2000, p. 247). It is important to negotiate between the values, habits, and behaviors of immigrants from the past and the bonds and interactions they establish with their new social environment. The effect of being accepted by the social environment is important in gaining a sense of belonging.

Social harmony is also related to public administration policies. While public administrations in countries where immigrants are settled try to implement various policies to ensure social harmony, local people also show various reactions towards immigrants by determining their social acceptance limits. While these reactions may be positive, such as acceptance and tolerance of living together, they may also show negative characteristics, such as xenophobia and racism (Adıgüzel, 2022, p. 162). It is inhumane to exclude people or even show hostility towards them because of their differences. People cannot suddenly change themselves; it is debatable whether change is necessary.

Where you come from, your origins, your past, and your native language cannot be erased to adapt to the place you migrate to. Past culture cannot be ignored, but it can be fragmented. Cultures melt into each other, become complex, and hybridize. Hybridizing cultures gain a new direction. This new direction is full of gaps open to questioning and criticism. On this cracked ground, the experiences of speaking, expressing oneself, writing stories, and thus gaining identity are constantly reshaped. Although language reveals existence and language exists before itself, the experiences of revealing existence in this complex language and cultural mobility are variable. Therefore, its durability and safety could be improved. All stories in this complex environment point to otherness and create self-alienation (Chambers, 2019, pp. 43-44). Self-alienation and feeling marginalized arise from cultural changes and conflicts.

These cultural changes in people's lives lead to material and spiritual changes. While spiritual changes occur more slowly, material changes occur more rapidly, creating a 'cultural gap' in people. The feeling of cultural emptiness leads to various social problems, such as changing the traditional behavior of immigrants, not being able to adapt to the environment, and not being able to integrate with their environment. These social problems cause them to become alienated from the city they live in (Balcıoğlu, 2007, pp. 89-90). So, being alienated from the city you live in leads to unhappiness.

The ability of immigrants to adapt economically and socially to the country in which they settle and to be happy depends on the local people's acceptance and adoption processes. Being accepted by the local people and being able to integrate with them is as important as the economic needs of immigrants. It is a long and challenging process that will likely take a few generations for immigrants to meet these needs and feel at home. Generations that have been born and raised in a different country after their parents migrated have to try to maintain a balance between the cultural values that prevail in the local society while trying to preserve the cultural values of their ancestors. They will likely experience various tensions and conflicts in this process (Adıgüzel, 2022, p. 163). The tension in the regions where immigrants experiencing these internal conflicts are mostly settled reaches more remarkable levels, affecting local government policies.

The political communication methods of local public administrations, which have a complex structure with the presence of immigrants, tend to accept their 'right to be different' in ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and other aspects. These regulations it is intended to compensate for the exclusion, marginalization, and alienation of immigrants. However, it is debatable whether it will be possible to reach democratically inclusive solutions for the existence of immigrants locally and universally. Accepting these differences creates new distinctions (Kastoryano, 2000, pp. 262-263).

Moreover, when the reason for migration is primarily political, it leads to a tendency towards sharper and more radical politicization, the formation of an aggressive diaspora, and group psychology that is more resistant to adaptation to the environment (Ekici and Tuncel, 2015, p. 14). The existence of political immigrants is suppressed, disturbed, alienated, and ignored with the prejudice that they 'haunt' wherever they reach beyond the borders (Saybaşılı, 2011, p. 14).

In addition to the problems caused by exclusion, adapting to a new country may have other adverse effects. For example, developing common behaviors, making habits similar, losing cultural values, and creating a new language by finding common aspects of different languages may be possible.

Languages that are not differentiated and corrupted, but unfortunately, they are spreading in this weakened state. Thus, returning to the raw, unchanging, and 'authentic' state of language and culture is no longer possible (Chambers, 2019, p. 121). This situation significantly affects adherence to the mother tongue. Those who migrate risk losing both their culture and their native language. The mother tongue, which is at risk of losing, comes from psychologically libidinal identification with the mother. Therefore, inhibiting or forgetting the mother tongue and getting used to another language is a period that affects the subconscious, like breaking the bond with the mother. Anxiety and fear may be experienced (Keskinöz Bölen, 2018, quoted in Madendağ, 2020, p. 156).

As a result of all these effects, searching for fragmented local cultural history and traditions is a 'longing for authenticity' and a romantic endeavor. Like the 'mirror phase,' the effort to find one's essence and past becomes a protracted process and moves toward the beginning of alienation (Chambers, 2019, pp. 101-102). As a result of migration, belonging to a particular country and having a consistent and stable identity becomes questionable. With the hybridization resulting from interactions between cultures, new diaspora formations, constant flux, and the feeling of displacement, immigrants begin to become strangers to their own homes (Saybaşılı, 2011, p. 21).

While it is impossible to find their own home, we have to face the actions, experiences, and differing languages of individuals who long to search for their homes in the uncertain world. We face disruptions, collapses, and new expansions in languages, histories, and cultures (Chambers, 2019, p. 135). For example, immigrants feel like a 'spooky guest' and 'ghost' in their homes because they do not have the full authority to reside in their homes (Saybaşılı, 2011, p. 32). Because the sense of belonging has been lost.

A sense of belonging is possible by defining identity. Identity is not limited to innate characteristics. In addition, cultural identity is acquired later through family ties, past culture, established dominant culture, standard memory, common future dreams, and sharing and relationships with the social environment. Immigrants living far from their homeland must be able to imagine their past culture, mother tongue, customs and traditions, traditional arts, and national symbols from a distance to regain them. The cultural identity reproduced with the dream of reaching this distant culture is defined as diasporic identity. While individual identity answers the question 'Who am I,' in contrast, diasporic identity is related to cultural identity, which answers the question 'Who are we.' Through diasporic identity, the cultural characteristics of the distant homeland are fictionalized, creating an element of resistance against the exclusionary, standardizing, and oppressive attitudes of local dominant cultures and the nation-state (Adıgüzel, 2022, pp. 178- 179).

Figure 3a, b, c: Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz. "Transparent Tent", interactive artwork, 2013-2023.

Reference: Image courtesy of Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz.

The installation of Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz (Figure 3a, b, c) is one of the artworks of the group exhibition named 'I do(n')t Want To Return Home' curated by Ahmet Ergenç in Istanbul Feshane – A 23 in 2023.

Through the installation named 'Transparent Tent' of Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz, the viewer is not only the viewer but also the participant of this interactive artwork. People can write whatever they want in this transparent tent. So everybody can see inside the tent and interfere with the life stories of displaced women living in tents. The tent has special items, but the women are not visible. Non-resident women have signs but not themselves. Thus, this installation shows us the feeling of homelessness of immigrants alienated from their homes. The invisible and misplaced body phenomenon also leads us to research ghost identities.

Global Subjects: Identities and Ghosts

When the effects of migration on identity are investigated, it has been seen that immigrants are likened to ghosts floating in the gaps between the places they leave and arrive. These researches

will be included in this section titled 'Global Subjects: Identities of the Ghosts.' First of all, it is helpful to explain individual and collective identity briefly.

Identity formation, which has individual and social dimensions, is possible through comparison and construction between the individual's self and the distinction between others. Others' view of the individual is also important. Just as it is important whether immigrants feel like immigrants or not, it is also important how much others see them as immigrants (Adıgüzel, 2022, pp. 177-178). Therefore, identity formation carries both the spiritual dimensions of our inner world and includes emotional influences by being affected by the social environment.

As individuals on the move, immigrants are influenced by and hybridize the cultures of different countries. Thus, immigrants create collective identities, Which are shaped by the relationships and feelings of belonging established by immigrants moving between different places. In this context, collective identity is relational and positional (Yazgan, 2016, p. 289). Since positional influence is related to ties with the social environment, it is necessary to investigate how these ties affect the sense of belonging and human psychology.

Immigration creates many psychological problems because it causes immigrants to weaken their ties with the environment they live in. Because being in harmony with one's social environment is an important factor in being psychologically healthy. It is known that the social environment in which people live causes changes in individual habits, attitudes, and behaviors. Since migration causes the social environment to change, problems of being unable to adapt to a new social environment also cause individual tension and psychological trauma (Ekici and Tuncel, 2015, p. 19). Immigrants go through a mourning process due to the shock and losses caused by the transition from one culture to another. When this culture shock and mourning come together, a shock and transformation occur in the identities of immigrants (Madendağ, 2019, p. 275). Based on this information, it is possible to make the following comments: While some changes positively affect psychology by providing innovations and development, on the other hand, sudden disruptive changes can have negative consequences due to problems of not being able to adapt at the same pace.

Immigrants who have also lost their roots in the past and live in uncertainty have no confidence in the future. It is difficult to adapt to the social life where they live, and going back will not restore their old reputation to the same extent. When they realize that other people's lifestyles and cultures in their social environment are different from their own, they become introverted to avoid getting lost in this environment and protect themselves. Failure to adapt may lead to different defense mechanisms, and thus, they may face the danger of losing their own essence, purity, and sincerity (Balcıoğlu, 2007, p. 45). Because this results in not existing either here or there.

The identities of immigrants are likened to ghosts, as their presence in the places they migrate to is questionable, they are marginalized, they remain in the shadows, they always remain at the borders, and are never included in the frame (Saybaşılı, 2011, p. 51). This degeneration caused by migration creates confusion in the sense of individual identity, reduces the love people feel for each other, and causes a crisis of trust (Balcıoğlu, 2007, pp. 56-57). The feeling of trust is related to how we perceive messages from the social environment.

Multicultural (hybrid) individuals try to understand which culture they belong to. Instead of questioning the similarities or differences of these people concerning this or that culture, it would be helpful to accept them as the hybrid culture they are (Çelik, 2008, p. 330). Because the identities of immigrants, which include multiculturalism, have a transitive structure that navigates different networks within this multiculturalism and tries to come together at a single point, and therefore, cannot be limited to a fixed definition (Saybaşılı, 2011, p. 78).

Suppose immigrants are not accepted as they are. In that case, they experience problems such as dissatisfaction due to their dreams or hopes not being fully realized, inconsistency in their identities, feeling insecure, and not being able to adapt adequately to the new environment, and this may cause them to experience some neurotic psychiatric disorders (Balcıoğlu, 2007, p. 70). For example,

immigrants may tend to ignore the present between their longing for the past and their desire to be happy in the future (Madendağ, 2019, p. 276). As a result of this situation, the identities of immigrants are mentioned as ghost communities whose reality is questioned (Kastoryano, 2000, p. 256). One reason or consequence of their inability to define their existence is that immigrants cannot determine their borders. Immigrants constantly question their boundaries, feeling haunted by another culture (Saybaşılı, 2011, p. 22). People need to gain a sense of material and spiritual belonging to determine their material and spiritual boundaries.

When immigrants settle in a new country, they experience the division between 'mine' and 'yours.' If they can learn to overcome this process of division and become 'we,' they can manage to adapt (Madendağ, 2019, p. 276). The way to learn to be 'us' is not only to insist on sticking to the mother tongue but also to get used to using the new language, that is, to struggle with a complex process such as multilingualism (Akhtar, 2018, quoted in Madendağ, 2019, p. 277). Language is one of the most important tools for us to adapt to our social environment in terms of how we perceive others and express ourselves.

Since immigrants undergo radical change, they may behave incompatibly and unstable towards their social environment. The basis of these behaviors that can turn into action is the need to feel safe and prove oneself. When people begin to lose their balance, they react by taking action. Radical changes in human life can create a shock effect, damage the sense of trust, and lead to actions (Balcıoğlu 2007, p. 32). Relationships with the social environment affect psychology as much as relationships within the family.

The emotional turmoil experienced by immigrants during the transition from one country to another can be compared to the experiences of children whose parents divorced. In such a period, children are in alliance with one of their parents against the other in their inner world. Immigrants who experience this process, which causes anxiety disorders, idealize one of two different cultures and begin to think that the other is worthless. If one has a more sensitive personality, the disappointment of immigration may lead one to hate the culture of both countries. If this hatred has developed as a defense against the guilt of having immigrated, it can be overcome with time and love (Akhtar, 2018, quoted in Madendağ 2019, p. 276). Being accepted is not only about the people we meet but also about the looks and behaviors in the environments where communities come together, such as train stations, etc.

The discourses of art that are not based on culture, language, or race, and their nonverbal appeal to everyone equally, can help understand the uncertainty that immigrants feel in their identities, and thus, art can be considered as a stage of acceptance of immigrants.

Figure 4: *Çağnur Öztürk. "Face Series: Lost",35x40 cm (each), oil on canvas, 2023.*

Reference: Exhibition page on instagram: @evedonmekistemiyorum.

In the series of faces named 'Lost,' Çağnur Öztürk (Figure 4), there are portraits with invisible facial details. These portraits show us unidentified and anonymous immigrants who are lost. The face series is one part of the artwork of the group exhibition named 'I do(n')t Want To Return Home', which was curated by Ahmet Ergenç in Istanbul Feshane in 2023. In the exhibition text, it is stated that the

theme of this exhibition has been inspired by Zafer Aracagök's experimental narrative of 'I do(n't Want To Return Home.'

Aim and Method

This study aims to investigate how migration affects the identities of immigrants and their sense of belonging, as well as how beneficial contemporary art practices show immigration problems. The research has been designed with a scanning model and interpreted based on data from the relevant social sciences according to the themes of contemporary art examples.

Limitations and Findings

In this article, where the impact of migration on identity is interpreted through contemporary artworks based on social science research, discussions of contemporary art themes and practices are also included. Immigration is an issue that can be addressed from many different perspectives. Since this article aims to discuss the impact of migration on identity through contemporary works of art, it is limited to the individual effects of migration, such as lack of belonging, alienation, and uncertainty of identity, as well as its universal effects defined by globalization. As a result of the research, it has been determined that, in addition to its effect on globalization, there are individual effects such as disappointments after migration, difficulties in adapting to the social environment, damage to the native language and cultural background, lack of a sense of belonging and uncertainty of identity.

It is possible to see countries' different political and cultural perspectives on the events taking place in the world in the artwork of Ebru Dede. In his photographic work, Mehmet Çeper shows an immigrant who wants to migrate to the border region but can neither reach his destination nor return. In Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz's interactive installation called ''Transparent Tent'', participants can see the private belongings of the displaced women living here and intervene in their life stories by writing whatever they want on the tent. Thus, it shows the feeling of homelessness of immigrants alienated from their homes. In the series of faces named ''Lost'' of Çağnur Öztürk, there are portraits that show us unidentified and anonymous immigrants.

Although artistic solutions that differ from the expectations of art lovers cause aesthetic debates, contemporary works of art with the theme of migration can play an important role in improving relations between immigrants and local communities. To better understand migration-themed contemporary artworks, it would be beneficial for contemporary artists, curators, and art writers to collaborate and publish interdisciplinary texts. However, the perception of contemporary works of art, whose meaning is not one-sided and limited, spreads over a more comprehensive period. Therefore, an objective evaluation has been tried to be presented in the interpretations of the works of art examined in this study, based on research in the field of social sciences.

Result and Discussion

This study has revealed how contemporary artworks exemplified the phenomenon of migration, a research subject of various social sciences disciplines and one of today's important problems, is easier to understand. Unlike classical works of art, different application methods of contemporary art provide better opportunities to express social themes.

Contemporary art's focus on social issues enables the discovery of creative methods in application techniques. These new methods differentiate the appearance of contemporary works of art from the audience's expectations. Artistic solutions that differ from expectations cause aesthetic debates. The differentiation of images increases the distance between contemporary art and the audience. However, understanding the theme and realizing the creativity in the subject's expression eliminates these distances between the audience and contemporary works of art. To solve this

problem, contemporary artists, curators, and art writers should publish interdisciplinary texts in which viewers can better understand contemporary works of art.

Contemporary artworks about migration problems can enable people who dream of migrating for various reasons to foresee the homelessness, belonging, and identity problems they may experience while migrating or after migrating. In addition, they can do better planning before taking the risk of migration, solve their problems in the country they are in, and engage in intercultural exchange with short-term trips.

Contemporary works of art that show the problems of globalization, lack of belonging, and identity caused by migration can visually express the emotions experienced by immigrants, and these works can ensure that immigrants do not feel alone and that local communities can be more sensitive and kind towards immigrants.

Collaboration between social scientists researching the theme of migration and contemporary artists working on this subject can help them find standard solutions to the migration problem.

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Conflict Declaration

It is declared that any material or moral benefit has not been provided at any stage of this study.

Statement of Publication Ethics

All rules specified within the scope of the "Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive" have been complied with throughout the entire process, from planning to implementation of this article, data collection, and data analysis. None of the actions mentioned under "Actions Contrary to Scientific Research and Publication Ethics," the second part of the directive, have been carried out. Scientific, ethical, and citation rules were followed during the writing process of this research. There was no tampering with the data collected. This study has not been sent to any other academic publishing environment for evaluation.